

Mother Tongue Interference in Learning  
English Pronunciation by Speakers  
of Palestinian Arabic

by  
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I would like to express my gratitude to my advisor,  
Dr. Walter Lehn for supervising this study. Dr. Lehn helped  
me in every possible way so as to achieve the goal of  
writing this thesis. I admit that he contributed much to  
this study and without his continuous guidance, it would not

The thesis was defended successfully on  
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I would also like to thank Miss Julia El-Husary for  
her help and patience in typing this thesis.

I owe a great deal to my parents and to others  
for their love and encouragement. God for their help.  
I would not have been able to succeed in life.

Talib Muhammad El-Husary

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Wajih Mohammad El-Hussein

## A B S T R A C T

This paper reports the results of a study of mother tongue interference in learning English pronunciation by speakers of Palestinian Arabic. The primary aim of this study is to point out whether or not interference occurs and its effect on the process of learning English.

The research consists of two parts. Firstly, a contrastive analysis of the sound systems of the learner's mother tongue and the target language, Palestinian Arabic and English.

Secondly, the researcher's observations in the schools and the Teacher Training Center, were recorded, concerning the pronunciation mistakes committed by the pupils. The pupils observed are in the fifth, sixth and seventh grades in three girls' schools in Ramallah. In addition to this, different classes at the Ramallah Women's Training Center, having trainees from Gaza and the West Bank, majoring in different fields, were observed.

The predictions of the research are discussed in relation to actual mistakes made by the students.

The findings are:

1. Palestinian students face difficulties when they

learn the English sounds, especially those that are not found in Arabic.

2. The problems Palestinian students face are not confined to one area of pronunciation but they include consonants, vowels and diphthongs.

3. The problems faced are not all of equal difficulty.

4. In producing certain English sounds, Palestinian students are influenced by the way they are uttered in Arabic.

This study points out some problems, discusses their causes and their educational implications, and makes recommendations to help remedy the weaknesses and finally lead to better English pronunciation by Palestinian students.

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### INTRODUCTION

No one can deny that English has become the language of international communication. It has become a world language spoken by a considerable proportion of the world's population.

In countries where it is not the native tongue, English is the most widely-taught foreign or second language. For a well-observed period, everything that can be considered important and that happens daily is printed in the press in English or mostly spoken over the radio all over the world. This is true for Europe, America and the East, as well.

If you speak English, you find somebody to understand you wherever you go. If you read English you are able to keep in touch with all the world without having to leave your home.

Why did English spread in this way? This is clearly a result of the political and economic conquest, as the industrial revolution first started in England. The spread of English was directly connected to the British conquest in



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

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If you speak English, you find somebody to understand you wherever you go. If you read English you are able to keep in touch with all the world without having to leave your home.

Why did English spread in this way? This is simply a result of the political and economic conquest, as the industrial revolution first started in England. The spread of English was directly connected to the British conquest in

various parts of the world where the conquered had to learn English.

Wherever England sent forces and occupied territories, English began to spread among the inhabitants of such territories, though they, originally, spoke completely different vernaculars. This, of course, is true for Palestine where English began to spread immediately after the British occupation. But the decline of Britain as an Empire did not decrease the importance of English among the learners and speakers.

As America replaced Britain in many territories of the world, English continued to spread in order to enable peoples of these countries to communicate with the Americans. Still, many consider it a prestige to speak English and identify with the Americans. To meet the needs of these people, English is now taught at the universities, schools and institutes in many countries.

English as language of science can be considered in the light of the fact that science first developed in Europe. As English - not any other European language - was largely spoken outside Europe, it was the only possible channel through which scientific discoveries and inventions could be passed to the world. One can see catalogues about radios, T.V. sets, machines, etc., in English although these

are produced in countries other than England.

One can notice the large numbers of papers and magazines specializing in science, published and read all over the world. Television films on scientific topics are cast in English. Scientific laws and theories are taught in English in the universities. The libraries are full of thousands of books in science, all written in English.

Students specializing in any scientific field cannot do without using English, as many of their books are written in English.

#### English and the Palestinians

This aspect can easily be traced back to the early twenties of this century when the British Mandate was imposed on Palestine and thus English replaced Turkish as the foreign language in Palestine. English was taught as a school subject in the very few schools opened in Palestine then, apart from some Christian missionary schools that used English as the language of instruction. Thus, in Palestine, English was taught as a foreign language.

English was introduced, first, in the fourth grade and on to the end of the secondary cycle when students would sit for the Palestinian Matriculation Tests.

English was used as the first official language in

government departments in Palestine. Next came Arabic and Hebrew.

The status of English in schools did not change in the West Bank and Gaza during the Jordanian and Egyptian regimes in these areas. English continued to be taught in schools, teacher training colleges and universities. It is now introduced in the fifth elementary class, though it is taught in some kindergartens right from the beginning.

During the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, the only change that has occurred is that English is now taught at a higher level in the three universities - Birzeit, Najah and Bethlehem.

#### Purpose of Learning English

As a Palestinian teacher in the schools and Teacher Training Centres, the researcher has always been faced with this question - Why do we learn English? Certainly, this question can be answered on different levels, but generally the answer would be:

We learn English because necessity calls for it, conditions and circumstances demand and impose it.<sup>1</sup>

The Palestinians learn English not because English has a priority over Arabic but because it has a utilitarian

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<sup>1</sup>Wadie S. Khoury, English for Arabs by an Arab, (Jerusalem: Unpublished manuscript, 1973), p. 4.

purpose. They can use it in certain areas, e.g. at schools, in commercial correspondence, business affairs and cultural affairs as a good number of Palestinians continue their higher education outside the Arab world where English is the medium of instruction.

Many Palestinians earn their living by selling locally-made goods to the tourists who visit Palestine. They can communicate with them through English.

Some argue that Palestinians have to learn English to keep in touch with the latest developments in different aspects of life. Still others argue that we have to learn English as it is imposed on us.

It is we who benefit from English, not the reverse. The benefit the English get by trying to spread their culture is only a by-product.

It's not very rational to reject English chauvinistically just because it is the language of a former colonial power, if it has a certain place in certain resources invested in it in the country concerned.<sup>2</sup>

#### Which English to be Taught

Another question we are often asked is about the English to be learned and taught in Palestine. It should be stated here that no one English dialect has priority over

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<sup>2</sup>Brian Harrison, English as a Second and Foreign Language, (London: E. Arnold Ltd., 1974), p. 15.

the other English dialects. We cannot decide which dialect is the best and therefore should be taught. Generally, one can say that some kind of English which would be acceptable in any part of the country and in any class of society, should be taught.<sup>3</sup> The Palestinians should learn the English they can hear all the time from their teachers, on the radio, etc.

Keeping the purposes of learning English in mind, one can say that Palestinians should learn English to the level where they are able to understand what others say in English, express themselves in English, read with understanding what is written in English and express themselves in writing correct English. Only then, the level of English learnt is satisfactory.

### English in Palestinian Schools

English is taught as a school subject in the Palestinian schools but not as a means of instruction. It is introduced in the fifth grade and this might be the reason for the lower level of English in our schools.

In the government-run and UNRWA schools, English is introduced in the fifth grade at the rate of 5-6 periods

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<sup>3</sup>Ida C. Ward, The Phonetics of English, (Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons Ltd., 1962), p. 1.

weekly. Language and literature are focussed in the curriculum, though at a low level. Students in the government schools sit for the Tawjihi Exam at the end of the secondary cycle.

UNRWA schools follow the aural-oral approach in teaching English, whereas the government schools are free to use any method. Mostly they use the grammar-translation method.

In the private schools, English is introduced right from the beginning in the kindergartens. Additional class-periods in English are assigned for the students. These might be the reason for the high level of English among graduates of such schools.

Thus performance in English at national schools is not better than it is in government and UNRWA schools in the West Bank.

### Exposure to English

After learning English for eight years at schools, Palestinian students come out with poor English especially at the productive level, speech. The reasons for this include textbooks, teaching methods, tests, opportunities to practise the language and the teacher.

One aspect of language practice is practised by

Palestinian students in their daily life, mainly the passive side, listening. This is done with the radio, television and the cinema. The active side, speech, is not practised in this case.

The only chance our students have, to practise their English is with the tourists who come to Palestine. This is limited largely to Jerusalem and Bethlehem.

#### English as a Foreign and/or Second Language

The difference does not lie in the fact that English is not the mother tongue of the learner but in the usage of English by its learners.

When English is taught as a school subject and the stress is on the practical side of the language, it is taught as a foreign language. This is the case in Palestine. The learners are motivated directly towards the practical use of English.

But only a minority are interested in the idea that it is an effective key to understanding of another culture.<sup>4</sup>

But when English is the means of instruction in the schools and universities, although the learners are not native speakers of English, it is taught as a second language. Sometimes it is used as a means of communication among

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<sup>4</sup>Harold B. Allen (ed), Teaching English as a Second Language, (New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1965), p. 4.



speakers of many languages in the same country. Thus it is used as a lingua franca as in India. In this case English is fundamental to the life of its learners.

### Interference and Facilitation

These two terms are dealt with when there are problems in learning English by foreigners.

Interference is:

The added difficulty in learning a sound, word or construction in a second language as a result of differences from the habits of the native language of the students.<sup>5</sup>

But facilitation means:

Ease in learning a sound, word or construction in a second language as a result of the similarity with the native language of the student.<sup>6</sup>

As Arabic and English have two different sound systems, the Palestinians face difficulty in learning English phonology. Where the two languages are similar, it is easy for the learner, but where the two languages differ, a problem in learning is created for the Palestinian learner. Interference occurs as a result of the transfer of the mother tongue habits to the target language. For this reason, you find the Palestinian speaking English with an Arabic accent. Palestinians face difficulty on both the receptive and

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<sup>5</sup>Robert Lado, Language Teaching, (New York: McGraw-Hill Inc., 1964), p. 216

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

productive levels concerning the new sounds they are learning. Interference is significant in the area of the sound system.

The older the person, the more difficult it is to combat the interference coming from the native system, and the more it must be a matter of directed, conscious effort.<sup>7</sup>

In chapter two, the researcher will discuss the literature dealing with this topic. The major part of the literature is on the English side, English phonology, but a small amount is directly dealing with Arabic phonology and how it is acquired in the process of learning. This will help to throw light on how the Arabic sound system plays a role in the process of learning the English sound system by speakers of Arabic, specifically Palestinian Arabic. Unfortunately, there is not much literature on Palestinian Arabic, as it is only a dialect of standard Arabic, and not a completely separate language.

Chapter three will deal with the procedure that the researcher followed to collect his data. Two major processes were used to carry out the research. Firstly, a contrastive analysis of the English and Palestinian sound systems, mainly the area of segmental phonemes, was made. This aimed at

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<sup>7</sup>Robert L. Politzer, Foreign Language Learning, (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall Inc., 1965), p. 9.

predicting the areas where speakers of Palestinian Arabic will have difficulties due to certain factors of which interference is the major one. Secondly, the researcher's observations about such predicted mistakes made by Palestinian students at different levels of learning elementary, secondary and post-secondary level - will be stated and discussed in relation to interference of the learner's mother tongue.

In chapter four, the findings of this research will be stated, including the extent of learning transfer or mother tongue interference. If other factors are related to this process, they will also be mentioned and discussed.

Chapter five will deal with the researcher's evaluation of the research in general and the research findings in particular. The researcher will submit and propose certain suggestions to avoid committing such mistakes by our students and later help in improving the process of learning English in this part of the world. The researcher will make recommendations that will serve in this direction.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The topic of learning English as a foreign or second language has been tackled by many specialists. Most of them do not have Arabic as their mother tongue. But much of their work can be of help to the researcher. The researcher has found some works having Arabic as their central topic.

Ibrahim Anis, an Egyptian linguist, studied the Arabic sound system and described it fairly well. He, in fact, classified the phonemes of standard Arabic into consonants and vowels. He denied that there were diphthongs in the Arabic sound system. Anis described the Arabic phonemes in terms of the points and manners of articulation and voicing. As the book is in Arabic, Anis uses Arabic terms in describing the sounds which seem to be literal translations of the English terms. They, most of the time, seem unfamiliar to the Arab readers.<sup>8</sup>

The researcher finds himself, sometimes, in disagreement with Anis, as the latter dealt mainly with standard Arabic. The researcher intends to describe the sound system of Palestinian Arabic stressing the phonemes

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<sup>8</sup>Ibrahim Anis, Al-Aswaat Al-Lughawiyah, (Cairo: Dar Al-Nahdah Al-Arabiyyah, 1961).

and their different allophones.

Raja Tawfiq Nasr, a Lebanese linguist, made a contrastive analysis in different areas, phonology, grammar and syntax. He took the Lebanese Arabic as his model of Arabic, especially in the area of phonology. That is why he considers some sounds phonemes while they are, in fact, allophones of other phonemes. Some of the problems that may arise as an Arab learns English phonology are linguistically, though insufficiently, dealt with in Nasr's book.<sup>9</sup>

Harold B. Allen included an article by Albert H. Marckwardt, in his book of English as a Second Language. Marckwardt distinguishes between the terms foreign and second language and makes it clear that English is taught as a school subject in many countries of the world, thus being taught as a foreign language. In some other countries, English is the means of instruction in schools and universities. At the same time it is the language through which the speakers of many languages in the country can communicate. Thus English is taught and learnt as a second language.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Raja T. Nasr, The Teaching of English to Arab Students, (London: Longmans, Green & Co., Ltd., 1965).

<sup>10</sup>Harold B. Allen, Teaching English as a Second Language, (New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1965).

L.R.H. Chapman describes the way in which the young learners of English are influenced by their mother tongue. Chapman realizes that speakers of other languages, when they learn the English sounds, hear at first only those sounds that are found in their mother tongue. Later, through careful listening and good imitation of the English sounds, they will be able to pronounce these English sounds correctly. Chapman stresses the fact that the mother tongue of the learner greatly influences him when learning English. This influence, Chapman states, is not limited to the area of sounds but includes stress and intonation.<sup>11</sup>

Paul Christophersen describes the English sound system and how the sounds are articulated. He stresses the necessity of forming new habits as one learns a foreign language. He confirms that the secret of language learning is imitation. To do this, the learner must have the chance to hear the sounds of the target language pronounced correctly so that he will be provided with a good model in pronunciation.<sup>12</sup>

Barbara Peterson wrote an article in English Teaching Forum, (ETF) on the pronunciation problems faced by

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<sup>11</sup>L.R.H. Chapman, Teaching English to Beginners, (London: Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd., 1963).

<sup>12</sup>Paul Christophersen, An English Phonetics Course, (Hong Kong: Yu Leun Offset Pr. F. Ltd., 1973).

foreigners when they learn English.<sup>13</sup>

Peterson lists some problems faced by foreign learners of English and shows why such problems are there. She gives the phonetic explanation for the occurrence of these problems. Such problems occur in the area of phonology.

L.G. French discusses the status of English Language as an international language. He describes the teaching of English as such, stressing the importance of having a good teacher, making a good model for his students, thus enabling them to imitate his correct speech.<sup>14</sup>

He is aware of differences in sounds between the learner's mother tongue and his target language. Teachers, he says, should make use of the opportunities offered to them to improve their pronunciation of English in order to teach their students correct English.

In another book, French shows why English and not any other language is taught all over the world. He stresses speech as the groundwork in the process of learning English.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>13</sup>Barbara Peterson, "Common Problems in Pronunciation of English" ETF, (Washington, 1967).

<sup>14</sup>L. G. French, Teaching English as an International Language, (London: OUP, 1963).

<sup>15</sup>L. G. French, The Teaching of English Abroad, (London: OUP, 1950).

Brian Harrison distinguishes between English being taught as a second and a foreign language. He describes how the mother tongue and the foreign language are learnt. Harrison makes it clear that the terms second or foreign should not be used to indicate the level of performance in language acquisition. Harrison tells us why English is so widely learnt outside Britain. He traces this historically, showing that English is the language of America which inherited the position of England in the world.<sup>16</sup>

In his book, An Outline of English Phonetics, Daniel Jones give some examples of mistakes in pronunciation very often made by foreigners who learn English as a foreign or second language. Jones ascribes such mistakes to the fact that the learners try, unconsciously to transfer their language habits to the foreign language which they are learning.<sup>17</sup>

A Palestinian by the name of Wadie S. Khoury, a teacher of English of wide experience states the fact that English has become a world language. He draws our attention to the way a mother tongue is learnt, which he says applies to foreign language learning. Khoury rejects the idea that

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<sup>16</sup>Brian Harrison, English as a Second and Foreign Language, (London: E. Arnold Ltd., 1974).

<sup>17</sup>Daniel Jones, An Outline of English Phonetics, (Cambridge; W. Heffer and Sons Ltd., 1967).



an English teacher who does not know Arabic, can succeed in teaching English to Arabs. Khoury gives advice to teachers of English and tells them where and how to listen to and speak English. Khoury, too, explains why English in particular is to be taught in Palestine. Khoury discusses the influence of the learner's mother tongue in learning English. He lists some errors that Arab students, including Palestinians, commit as they learn the English phonological system.<sup>18</sup>

R. Lado speaks about learning a foreign language and the special problems, in the area of phonology, that a foreigner faces. He distinguishes between the adults and the younger people as they learn English as a foreign language, each having their own learning problems.<sup>19</sup>

Lado explains what is meant by habit formation and transfer in learning language. He gives different examples of phonemes in the two languages - mother tongue and target language - which form a problem for the foreigner learning English.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Wadie S. Khoury, English for Arabs by an Arab, (Jerusalem: Unpublished Manuscript, 1973).

<sup>19</sup>Robert Lado, Language Testing, (London: Longmans, 1965).

<sup>20</sup>Robert Lado, Linguistics Across Cultures, (Michigan: Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press, 1957).

Lado shows how two sound systems of two different languages can be compared. This, of course, is of great help to the researcher.

Omar Othman, a Palestinian, describes briefly the sound system in Palestinian Arabic stressing the vowels and consonants.<sup>21</sup>

A long and clear description of the English sound system including English consonant clusters is given by O'Connor. O'Connor gives some examples of each kind of consonant cluster in English, whether in single words, phrases or compound words.<sup>22</sup>

In the same book, O'Connor describes the English sound system classifying the English sounds into vowels, consonants and diphthongs. Very often, the sounds are described in pictures showing how the organs of speech articulate them. In the last part of the book, lists of sounds in some languages including Arabic, are attached. These lists show the major problems in pronunciation that speakers of these languages have.

Robert L. Politzer deals with the problems of foreign language learning. He also mentions some of the

<sup>21</sup>Omar Othman, Lets Speak Arabic, (Jerusalem: National Press Company, 1976).

<sup>22</sup>J. D. O'Connor, Better English Pronunciation, (London: OUP, 1972).

problems that the learner of the foreign language faces. He points out what phonemes the learner has to hear, as he learns the foreign language, English.<sup>23</sup>

The British linguist R. H. Robins writes about the segmental and suprasegmental phonemes in English. The aspect of velarization in Arabic is clarified in Robins' book. Robin stresses the spoken form of the language - any language. In another part of the book, Robins compares the written and spoken forms of English.<sup>24</sup>

The English sound system is described in Smalley's book. The book illustrates how English sounds are articulated. Drills are also provided for the learner to practise.<sup>25</sup>

Ward tries to answer the question which is very often asked as to what qualifications are necessary for the teacher of English. Three points are included in Ward's answer - ear training, control of organs of speech, and knowledge of theory.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Robert Politzer, Foreign Language Learning, (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall Inc., 1965)

<sup>24</sup>R. H. Robins, General Linguistics, (London: Longmans, Green & Co. Ltd., 1966).

<sup>25</sup>W. A. Smalley, Manual of Articulatory Phonetics, (Michigan: Ann Arbor, Photolithoprinted by Cushing Malloy Inc., 1964).

<sup>26</sup>Ida C. Ward, The Phonetics of English, (Cambridge: W. Heffer and Sons Ltd., 1962).

D.A. Wilkins distinguishes between the written and spoken forms of the language. He shows how the spoken form of the language is stressed now, though in the past, the written form was prominent. Speech is the primary manifestation of language as Wilkins says. In Arabic the written form of standard Arabic and that of the Qur'aan have the greatest emphasis. Local dialects are not considered models of correctness in Arabic.<sup>27</sup>

Yowell Aziz, an Iraqi linguist did some work on mother tongue interference in the area of phonology of the target language. He deals mainly with Iraqi students and what problems they face due to this factor while learning English.<sup>28</sup>

Emphasis in Cairo Arabic is largely studied by Lehn 1963. Emphasis is stated to be more or less similar to what has been called velarization. Emphasis, 'iṭbaq, in Arabic, is defined in relation to other articulatory features such as slight retraction, lateral spreading, and concavity of the tongue and raising of its back.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup>D.A. Wilkins, Linguistics in Language Teaching, (London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 1974).

<sup>28</sup>Yowell A. Aziz, "Some Problems of English Consonant sounds for Iraqi Learners", ELT, (London, 1974).

<sup>29</sup>Walter Lehn, "Emphasis in Cairo Arabic", Language, Vol. 39, No. 1, 1963.

### CHAPTER III

#### RESEARCH PROCEDURE

This study is based on a contrastive analysis of the English and the Palestinian sound systems i.e. a study of similarities and differences between the two languages. The purpose of such a study is to predict pronunciation problems and mistakes of language learners due to the differences between the native and the foreign languages.

This study is limited in that the contrastive analysis deals only with the segmental phonemes. A further limitation is the variety and style of Palestinian Arabic on which it is based, namely that spoken informally by students at the Ramallah Women's Training Center. Thus while it is not limited to a single regional variety or dialect, it represents a cross-section or an overall pattern for Palestinian dialects, thus being more useful for teachers of English to Palestinian students.

The results of the contrastive analysis were considered in the light of observations of pronunciation mistakes made by students at three girls schools in Ramallah and in several classes at the Ramallah Women's Training Center.

The final recommendations reflect both the contrastive

analysis and the observations in classrooms.

### English Sound System

#### Consonants

Consonants are generally made by a definite interference of the vocal organs with the air stream and so are easier to describe and understand. This is the researcher's reason for beginning with the consonants rather than the vowels.

English has twenty two consonant phonemes usually described in respect of three things:

- a. place of articulation
- b. manner of articulation
- c. voicing

Thus, the English consonant sounds are classified into groups according to the above mentioned principles.

#### Stops (Plosives)

In producing stops, the breath is completely stopped at some point in the mouth, by the lips or tongue-tip or tongue-back, and then released with a slight explosion.

English has six stops.

p	t	k
b	d	g

/p/ voiceless bilabial stop

Examples: /pa:k/ park, /pai/ pie, /ʌpə/ upper,

/pi:pl/, people, /tip/ tip.

/p/ has two allophones in English, aspirated [p<sup>h</sup>] and non-aspirated [p]. [p<sup>h</sup>] occurs initially as in [p<sup>h</sup>ʌt] and non-initially if followed by a stressed vowel as in [p<sup>h</sup>ri:p<sup>h</sup>eə]. [p] occurs after /s/ and non-initially if followed by an unstressed vowel as in [p<sup>h</sup>repəziʃn].

/b/ voiced bilabial stop

Examples: /buk/ book, /traibz/ tribes, /læb/ lab.

/t/ voiceless alveolar stop

Examples: /ti:tʃə/ teacher, /kæt/ cat, /bætl/

battle.

/t/ has two allophones, aspirated [t<sup>h</sup>] and non-aspirated [t]. Aspiration of /t/ occurs in the same environments as for /p/.

Examples: [t<sup>h</sup>ʌtʃ] touch, [sti:l] steel, [kʌt] cut.

/d/ voiced alveolar stop

Examples: /leidi/ lady, /da:k/ dark, /wud/ wood.

/k/ voiceless velar stop

Examples: /ku:l/ cool, /skai/ sky, /tuk/ took.

/k/ has two allophones, aspirated [k<sup>h</sup>] and non-aspirated [k] as in [k<sup>h</sup>ʌp] cup, [sku:l] school, [k<sup>h</sup>ik] kick.

/g/ voiced velar stop

Examples: /gud/ good, /bigə/ bigger, /leg/ leg.

### Fricatives

f	θ	s	ʃ	h
v	ð	z	ʒ	

/f/ voiceless labio-dental fricative

Examples: /fu:l/ fool, /lift/ lift, /tʌf/ tough.

/v/ voiced labio-dental fricative

Examples: /vain/ vine, /i:vən/ even, /lʌv/ love.

/θ/ voiceless inter-dental fricative

Examples: /θɪŋk/ think, /nʌθɪŋ/ nothing, /pɑ:θ/  
path.

/ð/ voiced inter-dental fricative

Examples: /ðɪs/ this, /rɑ:ðə/ rather, /su:ð/ soothe.

/s/ voiceless alveolar fricative

Examples: /sɪŋ/ sing, /mɪst/ mist, /bʌs/ bus.

/z/ voiced alveolar fricative

Examples: /zu:/ zoo, /leɪzi/ lazy, /bi:z/ bees.

/ʃ/ voiceless alveo-palatal fricative

Examples: /ʃaɪn/ shine, /æʃɪz/ ashes, /rʌʃ/ rush.

/ʒ/ voiced alveo-palatal fricative

Examples: /treʒə/ treasure, /gərə:ʒ/ garage,  
/pleʒə/ pleasure

/h/ voiceless glottal fricative

Examples: /hæv/ have, /bɪhaɪnd/ behind, /bɪheɪv/  
behave.

### Nasals

m      n      ŋ

/m/ voiced bilabial nasal

Examples: /mu:n/ moon, /sʌmz/ sums, /hɪm/ him.



/n/ voiced alveolar nasal

Examples: /nain/ nine, /mænə/ manner, /neim/ name.

/ŋ/ voiced velar nasal

Examples: /rʌŋ/ rung, /fiŋgə/ finger, /briŋ/ bring.

### Lateral

/l/ voiced alveolar lateral

Examples: /li:v/ leave, /sli:p/ sleep, /meil/ mail.

/l/ has two allophones, clear [l] and dark [L].

[l] occurs syllable initially.

Examples: [liv] live, [læmp] lamp, [lai] lie.

[L] occurs syllable finally.

Examples: [fu:l] fool, [kʌpl] couple, [trəvl] travel.

### Continuant: r

/r/ voiced alveolar continuant

Examples: /ru:t/ root, /tri:/ tree, /traɪ/ try.

### Semi-vowels

w j

/w/ voiced bilabial semi-vowel (glide)

Examples: /wiŋ/ wing, /twɪnz/ twins, /swi:p/ sweep.

/j/ voiced palatal semi-vowel (glide)

Examples: /ju:/ you, /jet/ yet, /dju:ti/ duty.

### Affricates

tʃ , dʒ

As phonetic symbols suggest, these are compound





## Vowels

English has twelve vowel sounds, though sometimes the number is made thirteen. These vowels are described in respect of

- a. part of the tongue raised in the mouth
- b. height of this part of the tongue in the mouth
- c. shape of the lips when these vowels are articulated.

The tongue is divided into front, center and back while the height of the tongue is of three degrees - high, mid and low. The lips have two shapes - rounded and unrounded.

All vowels are voiced and they are made by voiced air passing through different mouth-shapes; the differences in the shape of the mouth are caused by different positions of the tongue and of the lips. The /:/ after the symbol indicates length or tenseness of the vowel. Below is a list of the English vowels.

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10    11    12

i:    i    e    æ    a:    ɔ    ɔ:    u    u:    ʌ    ə:    ə

/i:/ high, front, long, unrounded vowel

Examples: /i:t/ eat, /si:l/ seal, /tri:/ tree.

/i/ high, front, short, unrounded vowel

Examples: /in/ in, /bit/ bit, /siti/ city.

/i:/ is tense while /i/ is lax. This means that in pronouncing /i:/ the muscles of the tongue and the other speech organs are kept tense while for /i/ they are relaxed.

/e/ front, mid, short, unrounded vowel

Examples: /end/ end, /bet/ bet, /ded/ dead,

/æ/ front, low, long, unrounded vowel

Examples: /ækt/ act, /tæp/ tap, /pæk/ pack.

/a:/ back, low, long, unrounded vowel

Examples: /a:m/ arm, /mɑ:tʃ/ march, /dɑ:k/ dark.

/ɔ/ back, low, short, rounded vowel

Examples: /hɒp/ hop, /mɒk/ mock, /mɒsk/ mosque.

/ɔ:/ back, low, long, rounded vowel

Examples: /lɔ:/ law, /sɔ:/ saw, /dʒɔ:/ jaw.

/u/ back, high, short, rounded vowel

Examples: /wʊd/ would, /kʊk/ cook, /gʊd/ good.

/u:/ high, back, rounded, long vowel

Examples: /u:z/ ooze, /ru:t/ root, /fu:l/ fool.

/ʌ/ central, low, short, unrounded vowel

Examples: /ʌp/ up, /kʌt/ cut, /rʌf/ rough.

/ə:/ central, mid, long, neutral vowel

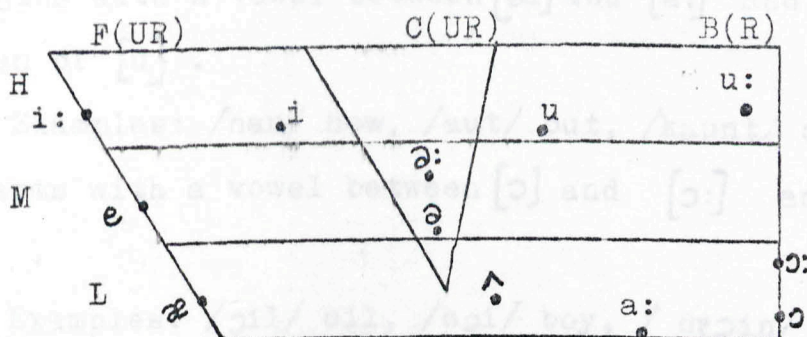
Examples: /bɜ:d/ bird, /tʃɜ:tʃ/ church, /kə:nəl/  
colonel.

/ə/ central, mid, short, unrounded vowel

Examples: /əbaʊt/ about, /kɒləd/ coloured,  
/tʃaɪnə/ China.

The Oxford Learner's Dictionary adds another vowel symbolized /ɒ/ as in the words /obei/ obey and /novəmbə/ November.

TABLE 2  
ENGLISH VOWELS



### Diphthongs

A diphthong is a sequence of two vowels which occur as the nucleus of a syllable. It differs from a pure vowel in that its quality gradually changes from that of one vowel towards that of another.

English has the following diphthongs.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
ei	ou	ai	au	ɔi	iə	eə	uə	ɔə

Below is a description of these diphthongs.

/ei/ begins with a sound in the neighbourhood of [e] and moves towards [i].

Examples: /greit/ great, /leik/ lake, /leim/ lame.

/ɔu/ begins with a sound approximately midway between the half-close and half-open positions of the tongue, and it

moves from there towards the position for [u] .

Examples: /out/ oat, /lɔud/ load, /ɔun/ own.

/ai/ begins with an open vowel somewhere between [æ] and [a:] and it moves towards [i] .

Examples: /bai/ buy, /ai/ I, /traɪ/ try.

/au/ begins with a vowel between [æ] and [a:] and moves in the direction of [u] .

Examples: /hau/ how, /aut/ out, /kaunt/ count.

/ɔi/ starts with a vowel between [ɔ] and [ɔ:] and moves to [i] .

Examples: /ɔil/ oil, /bɔi/ boy, /dʒɔɪn/ join.

/iə/ diphthong begins with [i] and moves to [ə] .

Examples: /niə/ near, /aɪdɪə/ idea, /hiə/ here.

/eə/ begins with [e] and ends with [ə] .

Examples: /heə/ hair, /beə/ bear, /ðeə/ there.

/uə/ begins with [u] and moves to [ə]

Examples: /pjʊə/ pure, /kjʊə/ cure, /tuə/ tour.

/ɔə/ diphthong begins with [ɔ] and ends with [ə] .

Examples: /mɔə/ more, /fɔə/ four, /dɔə/ door.

TABLE 3

ENGLISH CLOSING DIPHTHONGS

ei, ai, ɔi, au, ɔu

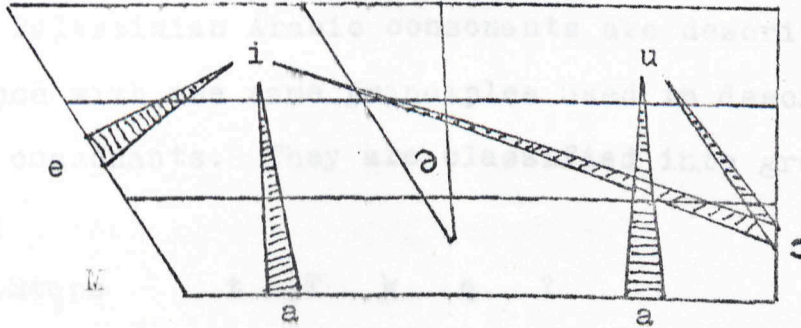
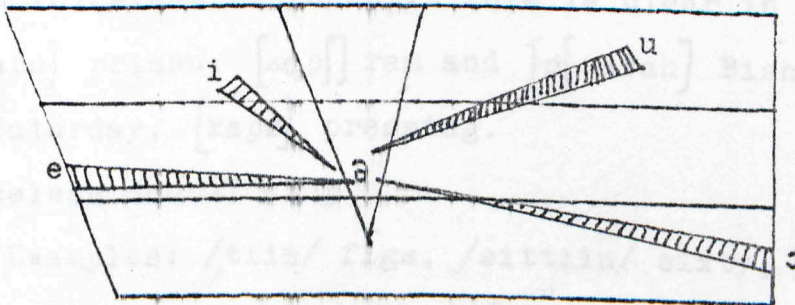


TABLE 4

ENGLISH CENTERING DIPHTHONGS

iə, eə, uə, ɔə





## Palestinian Arabic Sound System

### Segmental Phonemes

#### Consonants

Palestinian Arabic consonants are described in accordance with the same principles used in describing the English consonants. They are classified into groups as follows:

Stops            t    T    k    q    ʔ

                  b    d    D    g

/b/ voiced bilabial stop

Examples: /baab/ door, /Tabiib/ physician, /biir/  
a well.

[p] occurs as an allophone of /b/ when it occurs before a voiceless consonant. This is clear in many words e.g. [haps] prison, [kaps] ram and [p]aarah] Bisharah, [sapt] Saturday, [kaps] pressing.

/t/ voiceless dental stop

Examples: /tiin/ figs, /sittiin/ sixty, /haat/ give  
me

/d/ voiced dental stop

Examples: /daliil/ a guide, /walad/ a boy, /waad/  
valley.

/T/ voiceless emphatic stop

In the production of this sound, more than  
velarization is involved. ʔiTbaaq - emphasis - occurs when

the tongue is concave and completely touches the alveolar ridge. Meanwhile the tongue retracts a little. As a result, this sound is produced.

Examples: /Taalib/ student, /waaTii/ low, /māTaaT/  
rubber.

Walter Lehn defines 'emphasis' in part as 'slight retraction, lateral spreading and concavity of the tongue and raising of its back (more or less similar to what has been called velarization).'<sup>30</sup>

/D/ voiced velarized, emphatic stop

Examples: /Dariiir/ blind, /Damiir/ conscience,  
/maaDii/ past.

[D] occurs as a regional variant and thus replaces /D/ in many areas e.g. [Dʌl] lost his way, [marʌD] disease, [Diliʒ] rib.

/k/ voiceless velar stop

Examples: /kaas/ a glass, /makaan/ a place,  
/bukrah/ tomorrow.

[tʃ] replaces /k/ in many areas of Palestine but it is considered only a variant e.g. [tʃalb] dog, [tʃaal] measured, [sitʃar] sugar.

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<sup>30</sup>Walter Lehn, 'Emphasis in Cairo Arabic', Language, V. XXXIX, No. 1, p. 30.

/g/ voiced velar stop

Examples: /siigaarah/ cigarette, /inigliizii/ English.

But [g] frequently occurs as a variant of /q/ in Palestinian Arabic. This will be discussed later.

/q/ voiceless uvular stop

Examples: /quum/ stand up, /waqit/ time, /daqiiq/ precise.

But /q/ has many regional variants to replace it. These are [ʔ], [g], [k], [dʒ] as in /qanaah/ canal which has the following pronunciations: [ʔanaah], [kanaah], [ganaah] and [dʒanaah].

/ʔ/ voiceless glottal stop

Examples: /ʔumm/ mother, /saʔal/ asked, /ʔab/ father.

[ʔ] occurs as a variant of /q/ as previously mentioned especially in the speech of city dwellers.

### Fricatives

f    θ    s    S    ʃ    x    ɣ    h

ð    z    ʒ    ʒ    ʒ

/f/ voiceless labio-dental fricative

Examples: /fuul/ beans, /Tifl/ child, /raf/ shelf.

[v] occurs as an optional variant of /f/ in [Divdaʒ] frog, [narvaz] he got angry, [tal ʔaviiv] Tel Aviv.

/θ/ voiceless inter-dental fricative

Examples: /θamiin/ valuable, /maθiil/ similar to,  
/baθ/ transmission.

[s] and [t] replace /θ/ in certain areas in Palestine. Examples: /maθalan/ for instance, is uttered as /masalan/ and /matalan/. The same speaker never uses the three variants but usually only two.

/ð/ voiced inter-dental fricative

Examples: /raðaað/ spray, /ðanab/ tail, /ðirwah/ top.

[z] and [d] are two regional variants which replace /ð/ in certain areas e.g. /kaðab/ lied, is uttered [kazab] and [kadab] .

/s/ voiceless alveolar fricative

Examples: /sanah/ year, /ʔinsaan/ man, /ʔibliis/  
Satan.

/z/ voiced alveolar fricative

Examples: /ruz/ rice, /naziif/ bleeding, /faaza/ won.

/S/ voiceless emphatic fricative

Examples: /Soom/ fasting, /baSaal/ onion, /qaraS/  
stung.

/D/ voiced emphatic fricative

Examples: /Dil/ shadow, /maDali/ umbrella, /Dana/  
he thought.

/ʃ/ voiceless alveo-palatal fricative

Examples: /ʃaaj/ tea, /ʃamaal/ left or north,  
/maʃruuʔ/ project.

/x/ voiceless velar fricative

Examples: /xalʌs/ finished, /xaajif/ afraid, /mux/  
brain.

/g/ voiced velar fricative

Examples: /gaab/ disappeared, /bagl/ mule, /faraag/  
space.

/ħ/ voiceless pharyngeal fricative

Examples: /ħaafi/ bare-footed, /mustakil/ impossible,  
/ħaalah/ condition.

/ʕ/ voiced pharyngeal fricative

Examples: /ʕaalii/ high, /maʕii/ with me, /balaʕ/  
swallowed.

/h/ voiceless glottal fricative

Examples: /taah/ lost his way, /haawi:/ amateur,  
/zahrah/ flower.

Affricates                      dʒ , tʃ

/dʒ/ voiced alveo-palatal affricate

Examples: /dʒamiil/ beautiful, /madʒaal/ field,  
/wadʒih/ face.

[ʒ] voiced alveo-palatal fricative. This sound occurs as a regional variant of /dʒ/ especially in the speech of ladies and city dwellers e.g. [ʒamal] camel, [ħaʒah] article, [wiʒʒ] face.

/tʃ/ voiceless alveo-palatal affricate

[tʃ] occurs as a variant of /k/ in Palestinian Arabic

in some rural areas.

Examples: /tʃil/ eat, /tʃirsi/ chair, /fitʃir/  
thought.

Nasals m, n

/m/ voiced bilabial nasal

Examples: /miin/ who, /naam/ he slept, /namlah/ ant.

/n/ voiced alveolar nasal

Examples: /naas/ people, /feen/ where, /manaarah/  
minaret.

[ŋ] occurs as an allophone to /n/ as in [bæŋk].

Lateral l

/l/ voiced alveolar lateral

Examples: /lanaa/ ours, /loon/ colour, /maljaan/ full.

/l/ and /L/ are two phonemes. /l/ occurs in all positions except in the word /ʔaLLaah/ God or contiguous to /TDSʔRL/. Thus L is emphatic.

/L/ Examples: /faDL/ virtue, /SaLaah/ praying, /baTaL/  
hero.

Vibrant r R

/r/ voiced alveolar vibrant

Examples: /riim/ deer, /marah/ cheer, /suur/ wall.

/R/ occurs as a different phoneme from /r/ e.g. /Raas/ head, /maRaD/ illness, /faRD/ imposition.

Semi Vowels

w, j







TABLE 6  
SOME PALESTINIAN ARABIC CONSONANTS  
WITH THEIR REGIONAL VARIANTS

Manner of Articulation	Labio-dental	Dental	Inter-dental	Alveolar	Emphatic	Alveo-palatal	Palatal	Velar	Pharyngeal	Uvular	Glottal
Stops	vl vd	t d	θ ð	θ ð z	D θ ð z	tʃ dʒ		k g		q	ʔ
Fricatives	vl vd										
Affricates	vl vd										
Nasals	vd										
Lateral	vd										
Vibrant	vd										
Semi-Vowels	vd										

1. q: ʔ, k, ɣ, ʕ, dʒ
2. k: tʃ
3. dʒ: ʒ
4. D: θ: ʔ
5. θ: s, t, ʔ
6. ʒ: z, d

## Vowels

Palestinian Arabic has the six vowels which are found in the Standard Arabic. In addition to these, Palestinian Arabic has some other vowels.

Arabic vowels are described in respect of:

- a. part of the tongue used in uttering these sounds.
- b. height of the tongue in the mouth while producing the vowel.
- c. shape of the lips - rounded or unrounded.

In writing these vowels, letters or signals put over or under the consonant letters are used to represent them. These vowels are described below.

1. /ii/ \_\_\_\_\_ /i/

/ii/ high, front, unrounded vowel

Examples: /siin/ letter, /fiil/ elephant, /maalii/  
my money.

/i/ high, front unrounded short vowel

Examples: /bis/ cat, /brindʒi/ very good, /9i\reh/  
companionship.

2. /aa/ \_\_\_\_\_ /a/

/aa/ low, front, unrounded, long vowel

Examples: /bilaadii/ my country, /banaa/ he built,  
/ʔawlaad/ boys.

/a/ mid, central, short unrounded vowel

Examples: /saraq/ he stole, /ʕaraq/ sweat or wine,  
/man/ who?.

3. /uu/ \_\_\_\_\_ /u/

/uu/ high, back rounded long vowel

Examples: /ruus/ heads, /darasuu/ they studied,  
/muus/ knife.

/u/ high, back, rounded short vowel

Examples: /kul/ eat, /ʔiqʕud/ sit down, /bintu/ his  
daughter.

4. /ee/ \_\_\_\_\_ /e/

/ee/ mid, central, long unrounded vowel

Examples: /beet/ house, /seel/ stream, /Seef/  
summer.

/e/ mid, central, short unrounded vowel

Examples: /qireʃ/ plaster, /binet/ girl, /rimeʃ/  
eye-lash.

5. /oo/ \_\_\_\_\_ /o/

/oo/ low, back, long rounded vowel

Examples: /lookh/ board, /qoos/ bow; arch, /sooT/  
whip.

/o/ low, back, short rounded vowel

Examples: /noT/ jump, /Tox/ fire, /kob/ pour.

All of these vowels have allophones marked by  
lowering and/or retraction of the tongue adjacent to /S, ʒ, T,  
D, R, L, q/.

Thus Palestinian Arabic has the following vowels:  
/ii, i, aa, a, uu, u, ee, e, oo, o/.

TABLE 7  
PALESTINIAN ARABIC VOWELS

	F(UR)	C(UR)	B(R)
H	ii	i	u
M	e	ee	a
L	aa		oo o

### Diphthongs

Palestinian Arabic does not have diphthongs. Arabic vowels are never diphthonged. They are always pure ones, though some linguists do consider some of them diphthongs.<sup>31</sup>

This researcher disagrees completely with these linguists and holds the opinion that Palestinian Arabic has no diphthongs. To support this view, the researcher notes the following.

1. Diphthongs are formed by combining two vowels, to make one sound unit as in /plei/, /moist/, /klei/, /hai/ (play, moist, clay, high). But Arabic words which are confused for diphthongs have only a vowel - long or short - followed

<sup>31</sup>Yowell Y. Aziz, 'Some Problems of the English Diphthongs for the Iraqi Learners', English Language Teaching (ELT), XXIX, No. 1, p. 69.

by a semi-vowel e.g. /ʔawwalan/ firstly, /bajaan/ statement, /ʔajwa/ yes.

2. Palestinian Arabic never allows two vowels without a consonant between them. This shows clearly that diphthongs do not occur here.

In the structure of Palestinian Arabic, sequences of different vowels, or of more than two identical ones, occur only with intervening consonants, thus representing more than one syllable.

### Predictions

The researcher's purpose in drawing this contrastive analysis is to predict the problems that Palestinian students may face as they learn English pronunciation. Generally, and it is evident that those sound elements in the target language which are similar to those in the learner's mother tongue present no problem for him. On the contrary, it is assumed that they will facilitate his learning. But the sound elements which are different, or absent in the learner's mother tongue, present a learning problem to him.

Based on this assumption, the researcher can make the following predictions concerning learning the English

sound system by Palestinian students.

1. Consonants:

a. /p/, /v/, /ŋ/ due to their nonexistence as separate phonemes in Palestinian Arabic.

b. /r/, /r/ which are phonetically different being a continuant in English and a vibrant in Arabic.

c. /θ/, /ð/ for the Palestinian learners whose Arabic does not include these sounds.

d. The /dʒ/, /ʒ/ English contrast for those learners whose Arabic does not have them.

e. /l/, /L/ though both sounds occur in Arabic.

2. Vowels

Theoretically, all English vowels appear on the chart of Palestinian Arabic vowels, thus presenting no learning problem for the Palestinian students.

3. Diphthongs

As Arabic does not have diphthongs, the researcher predicts that English diphthongs present a major learning problem for the Palestinian learners.

4. The English phonemes /t, k, b, d, g, f, s, ʃ, h, z, m, n, l, w, j,/ do not present a problem to the Palestinian learner of English pronunciation as they are all found in his mother tongue.

These predictions will be discussed in the light of the findings of this research, which is to be done in the next chapter.

This chapter deals with the results of the research concerning the learning process of Arabic sounds by Palestinian students in Jordan. It is based on the observations of learning Arabic sounds by our students who were trained to learn Arabic sounds over the last five years and were taught English as a foreign language.

In addition to this, the researcher will talk about their learning problems, besides factors other than the Arabic and English sound systems.

## CHAPTER

### RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

In this chapter, the researcher will discuss the findings of the research and will try to explain the reasons for the learning problems of the students. The researcher will also try to explain the reasons for the learning problems of the students in terms of the Arabic and English sound systems. The researcher will also try to explain the reasons for the learning problems of the students in terms of the Arabic and English sound systems. The researcher will also try to explain the reasons for the learning problems of the students in terms of the Arabic and English sound systems. The researcher will also try to explain the reasons for the learning problems of the students in terms of the Arabic and English sound systems.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESEARCH FINDINGS/CONCLUSIONS

This chapter deals with the results of the research, concerning the learning problems in English sounds by Palestinian students in addition to the researcher's own observation on learning English phonology in our schools and Teacher Training Centers where students from all over the West Bank and Gaza are learning English as a foreign language.

In addition to this, the researcher will talk about other learning problems caused by factors other than similarity and differences in the two sound systems.

#### FINDINGS

##### CONSONANTS

1. Having made the contrastive analysis of the English and Palestinian Arabic sound systems, the researcher found that the two systems are not completely different in respect of the kind of sounds they have. In fact, the researcher found that b, t, d, k, g, f, s, z, ʃ, h, l, m, n, w, j, are found in the English and Palestinian Arabic sound systems as separate phonemes.



2. The researcher has found that p, v, ɣ in English do not occur in Palestinian Arabic as separate phonemes. In learning these sounds, the Palestinian students have a problem on both receptive and productive levels i.e. hearing and producing these sounds.

Palestinian Arabic has [p] as an allophone of /b/. [p] occurs in the following words: [kapʃ] ram, [deps] juice, [daʃʃ] rock. It occurs before a voiceless sound after a short stressed vowel.

/v/ does not exist in Arabic; it is clear that Palestinians do not have a great difficulty in uttering this sound knowing that almost everybody says the words: villa [vilə], [narvaz] he got nervous, [tal aviiv] Tel Aviv and [vərʌndə] veranda correctly.

/ɣ/ does not exist in Palestinian Arabic and thus presents a problem for the Palestinian students as they learn the English sounds. It is often pronounced [ɣɛ] by Palestinians. This, the researcher noticed, is a lasting problem for our students. [ɣ] generally occurs as an allophone of /n/ next to voiceless consonants. e. g. [ɣuɣɣ] neck, [ʃaɣɣ] hanging, [baɣk] bank, [laɣg] new.

3. /t/ /d/ are dental in Arabic while they are alveolar in English. Thus the difference is phonetic not phonemic. /r/, /r/ are also phonetically different being a continuant in

English and a vibrant in Arabic.

4. /θ/ /ð/ in Arabic have [s], [z] variants.

Palestinian students whose Arabic does not have this contrast, face a problem in learning them as they learn the English sounds. They pronounce the and thing as [zə] and [siŋ].

5. The /dʒ/, /ʒ/ do not occur in Palestinian Arabic as separate phonemes. [ʒ] occurs as a variant of /dʒ/ in Palestinian Arabic. Thus our students do not hear [ʒ] apart from [dʒ] and pronounce pleasure, treasure, measure, leisure as [pledʒə], [tredʒə], [medʒə] and [ledʒə] replacing [ʒ] by [dʒ] which they have in their Arabic.

6. /t /, /ʃ/ both occur in Arabic but not as separate phonemes. [tʃ] occurs in Arabic as a variant of /k/ but /ʃ/ exists as a separate phoneme. Sometimes /ʃ/ replaces /tʃ/ in the speech of some especially city dwellers, thus pronouncing /ti:tʃ / and /tʃə:/ as [ti:ʃ] and [ʃə:] .

7. /l/ , /L/ exist both in Arabic but Palestinian students face a problem in producing the dark /L/ in English though they have the emphatic L in their Arabic. This is not a serious problem and can easily be overcome with practice.

8. Palestinian students often fail to aspirate the English stops p, t, k when they occur initially or at the beginning of a stressed syllable. This is a hard habit to

break as the speaker is usually understood whether he aspirates or not and thus aspiration is considered unimportant, if indeed he is aware of it.

### VOWELS

Though the researcher could not make specific predictions of pronunciation problems in the area of vowels, he is sure that some really exist and our students face them as they learn the English vowels. These are listed below.

1. Palestinian students do not care for the differences between certain English vowels as they are not separate phonemes in Arabic. The differences are phonetic and thus they are often interchangeably used by our students e.g. /e/ is replaced by /i/ in English words like /hid/ for /hed/ and /rid/ for /red/.

The difference between these two sounds in Arabic is not so important as the speaker is understood easily in both cases.

Another example is replacing /ɔ/ by /u/ as in the words /pɔt/, /nɔt/, /bɔks/ pronounced /put/, /hut/, /buks/.

2. Palestinian students tend to give the English vowels the full quality they have in strongly-stressed syllables although they need to be reduced and our students need to learn to reduce these sounds.

3. Palestinian students usually start the English syllable starting with a vowel sound, with the glottal stop /ʔ/ as Palestinian Arabic never allows a syllable not starting with a consonant sound e.g. /i:t/ and /əbaut/ are pronounced /ʔi:t/ and /ʔəbaut/.

### DIPHTHONGS

As Arabic vowels are never diphthonged, Palestinian students have problems in this area of English diphthongs. But the problem here differs from one group of diphthongs to another due to their way of formation.

Below are the researcher's findings and observations.

1. Palestinian students have no problem at all in hearing or producing the English diphthongs /ɔi/, /ai/, /au/. They easily hear and produce words like /bɔil/ boil, /hai/, high, /nau/ now. This is because phonetically, Arabic has similar diphthongs e.g. /ʔajwah/, /ʔwajeh/, /ʔawalan/, /ʔawaan/, /boojah/, O.K., a little, first, time, paint.

2. /ei/ and /ɔu/ are no problem for Palestinian students if their goal is to get accepted pronunciation but if their goal is to get native-like pronunciation, they make a problem for them. Arabic seems to have similar sounds e.g. /leef/ why, /ween/ where, /leel/ night and /joom/ day, /soom/ fasting, /loom/ blame.

3. /iə/, /eə/, /ɔə/, /uə/ are difficult for our

students to hear and produce. They usually replace them by pure vowels /i:/, /ə:/, /ɔ:/ and /u:/ e.g. /kliər/, /be:r/, /mɔər/, /pjuər/ are pronounced /kli:r/, /bə:r/, /mɒ:r/, /pju:r/.

In this chapter, we will discuss the implications of these findings for the development of the English phonology of the Palestinian students. The English phonology of the Palestinian students is directly influenced by what is called 'transfer from the mother tongue to the target language'. In the way the Palestinian students articulate certain sounds in Arabic, affects the way they articulate the similar sounds in English. For example, the Arabic sound /t/ and /tʰ/ are normally produced in the alveolar area while they are alveolar in English. The failure of Palestinian students to articulate the difference in the quality of these two sounds is due to the fact that they participate in the Arabic sound system and do not have in their English.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, the findings of this research will be discussed in relation to the hypothesis and educational implications of these findings. The hypothesis of this paper says,

"The fact that Arabic and English do not have the same sound systems creates a problem for the speakers of Palestinian Arabic and interferes negatively in the process of their learning English Pronunciation."

The fact that a learner carries the habits he has developed in learning his mother tongue, to the foreign language he learns, appears clearly in the case of Palestinian students learning English phonology. In this area, the Palestinian students are directly influenced by what is called learning transfer from the mother tongue to the target language, English. The way the Palestinian student articulates certain sounds in Arabic, affects him in producing the similar English sounds e.g. /t/ and /d/ are dentally produced in Palestinian Arabic while they are alveolar in English. The failure of Palestinian students to articulate them correctly results in a difference in the quality of these sounds. Consequently, this participates in the Arabic accent Palestinian students have in their English.

Negative interference of the mother tongue is clear in many examples previously mentioned in the findings.

On the other hand, Palestinian Arabic facilitates its students' learning the English phonology, in the area of the sounds available in the two languages e.g. b, t, k, m, n and many others. This is an example of facilitation in learning a foreign language.

As the researcher's aim in this research is to help improve the teaching/learning process in our schools and helping Palestinian students to have a mastery of the language, he believes that students must have a total mastery of the English sound system.

This is essential as speaking is the major language skill to be acquired in learning a foreign language. This, of course, is preceded by good hearing of the sounds and producing them properly. Students are able to express themselves only if they hear others, understand them and respond to them in speech.

The researcher believes strongly that many of the problems faced by our students in the area of phonology originate in lacking a good model - a good teacher - to imitate his speech and similarly the lack of the chance to practice the language on the spoken level, both in the class and outside it.

At the same time, the researcher is quite certain that mastering the English sound system alone, by Palestinian students, does not necessarily result in a good spoken English. Other language features such as stress, intonation, juncture and pause play an equal role in producing a good proper spoken English.

work as a teacher of English at schools and Teacher Training Centers in the West Bank.

1. The schools in the West Bank and Gaza should be provided with teachers who have the proper training in the area of teaching English as a foreign language. Such training should include equipping the teachers with the suitable teaching methods that can lead to the final goal of teachers i.e. teaching English properly. This training includes too, having the teachers aware of the differences between the sound systems of the two languages, Arabic and English. These teachers should also know something of applied linguistics that enables them to apply their theoretical knowledge in the actual process of teaching English. This is important, the researcher believes, as he is quite aware that many teachers of English in the West Bank and Gaza are not qualified to teach.

2. To enable good teachers to carry out their duty properly, schools should provide them with the necessary teaching aids. Such equipment includes radios, tape-recorders, records, record players, tapes and if possible video-tape sets.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher would like to recommend the following, hoping that this would enhance the process of learning English in general and speech in particular, by Palestinian students. The researcher's recommendations are a direct product of this research and the researcher's own observations during his work as a teacher of English at schools and Teacher Training Centers in the West Bank.

1. The schools in the West Bank and Gaza should be provided with teachers who have the proper training in the area of teaching English as a foreign language. Such training should include equipping the teachers with the suitable teaching methods that can lead to the final goal of teachers i.e. teaching English properly. This training includes too, having the teachers aware of the differences between the sound systems of the two languages, Arabic and English. These teachers should also know something of applied linguistics that enables them to apply their theoretical knowledge in the actual process of teaching English. This is important, the researcher believes, as he is quite aware that many teachers of English in the West Bank and Gaza are not qualified to teach.

2. To enable good teachers to carry out their duty properly, schools should provide them with the necessary teaching aids. Such equipment includes radios, tape-recorders, records, record players, tapes and if possible video-tape sets.

With these in his reach, the teacher can do his best to teach the foreign language.

As our students face the problem of hearing the English sounds apart from their Arabic sounds, tapes having recorded material can be of great help to the students. Tapes can be used at school to listen to and at home by students to listen and mimic. Tapes having well-designed drills and exercises can help eliminate weaknesses of the students in the English phonology. Tapes can complete the teachers work started at school if properly used by students at home.

3. As our students' mother tongue is Arabic, the textbooks used in schools should be designed in a way to include drills, exercises, games and dialogues that directly deal with the problems that our students face while learning English, due to the differences between the sound systems of the two languages. If done properly, this would be of real importance in the teaching process in our schools.

In addition to this, the teachers of English should be given the freedom to design and create any relevant means to help their students learn the English sounds properly. They should also be encouraged to use the teaching method which they think suits the material they teach. They should encourage their students to mimic as well as they can the voice, tone, speech and the manner of the native speaker, if

available, or the trained teacher. Concerning the proper age for starting teaching English, the researcher believes that the earlier it is done, the better. This should be done at an early age when the children are capable and ready to imitate the strange sounds of English.

### Suggestions to Teachers of English

As a teacher of English, having a purpose of eliminating the pronunciation problems that our students face as they learn the English sound system, I would like to make the following suggestions based on the findings of this research.

I. To teach the /p/, /b/ contrast to Palestinian students the teacher should first get his students hear the /p/ apart from /b/. To achieve this aim, the teacher can drill the /p/, /b/ contrast using minimal pairs, phrases or sentences having these two sounds. The teacher should show his students how the /p/, /b/ are articulated. He should draw their attention to what he does with his lips, what happens to his breath and the puff of air that comes out of his mouth as he opens his mouth and utters the /p/. One more important thing to draw their attention to is to let them feel the vibration or nonvibration (voicing & voicelessness) of the vocal cords as he pronounces the /b/, /p/. As the problem is mainly with the /p/, the teacher may tell the students that this sound occurs in certain Arabic words like [sapt], [kapt], [hapt], [rapT].

To drill the /p/, /b/contrast, the teacher may use minimal pairs, phrases or sentences having these sounds.

#### A. Minimal Pairs

/p/	/b/
pay	bay
pair	bare
pat	bat
Paul	ball
pie	by

#### How to teach

1. Read each column separately while students are listening.
2. Read each column separately and let the students repeat the words after you.
3. Read the words across and let the students repeat them after you.
4. Ask the students to close their books. Read words at random and let the students tell you which column the words belong to. This tests their receptive ability.
5. Repeat as often as necessary.
6. Ask the students to use the words in sentences, for additional oral work.
7. For additional written work, give the students the words for dictation or ask them to use them in written sentences. Use only the words that are familiar to the students because your purpose is to improve their pronunciation and not to

develop their vocabulary.

### B. Phrases

/p/

pay the price

up to the point

please the prince

/b/

the boy's job

a big bed

to buy a boat

/p/ and /b/

the best part

a book about a prince

stop the bear

### How to teach

1. Read each set of phrases separately.
2. Read each phrase separately and let the students repeat after you.
3. Ask the students to use the phrases in different oral sentences.
4. Give the phrases for dictation, for addition written work.

### C. Sentences

/p/

I hope to prove my point.

She wants to pick the plants.

He took a trip to that place.

/b/

The bird sat on the branch.

Bring me the big box.

Both boys are bright.

/p/ and /b/

Pat put the box on the table.

His brother is a pleasant person.

They want to sleep in the club.

### How to teach

1. Read each set of sentences separately
2. Read each sentence separately and let the students repeat after you.
3. For additional written work, give the sentences for dictation.

II. To teach the /n/, /ŋ/ contrast, the same procedure recommended above may be used. As /ŋ/ occurs in Palestinian Arabic as a variant of /n/ it should be taught in relation to /n/. The student should be aware of how /ŋ/ is articulated. He should feel the vibration of his vocal cords by holding his throat with his fingers, the air coming out through his nose instead of his mouth and the back part of his tongue raised to close the air passage in the mouth while the /ŋ/ is articulated.

Students should be trained to hear /ŋ/ apart from /n/.

#### A. Minimal Pairs

/n/

thin

win

/ŋ/

thing

wing

sin	sing
ran	rang
sun	sung

## B. Phrases

/n/

thin skin

not then

run around

/ŋ/

sing a song

a young king

a strong wing

/n/ and /ŋ/

the king and the queen

next spring

not in the morning

## C. Sentences

/n/

My friend's skin is very thin.

We saw the moon at night.

He knows none of the names.

/ŋ/

The singer is singing a song.

He is thinking of something.

Thank you for everything.

/n/ and /ŋ/

Spring is a nice season for fishing.

The young queen went on a trip alone.

He is hanging the sign on the window.

III. The /v/, /f/ contrast is not a problem for Palestinian

students, though /v/ does not exist in Arabic as a separate phoneme. It occurs in some borrowed words.

The /v/, /f/ contrast may be taught in the same way suggested for teaching /p/, /b/ and /ŋ/, /n/ contrasts.

Students should be aware of the way the /v/ is uttered. Their attention should be drawn to the fact that the upper teeth touch the lower lip, the vocal cords vibrate and the air comes out of the mouth making a friction sound, as the /v/ is uttered. They should hear /v/ apart from /f/. This contrast can be drilled using the following.

#### A. Minimal Pairs

/f/	/v/
few	view
fail	veil
fine	vine
off	of
safe	save

#### B. Phrases

/f/	/v/
a beautiful flower	save your voice
a famous family	a heavy wave
the fruit from the farm	never in the village

/f/ and /v/

a very fine view

to prove the fact



the driver and his wife

### C. Sentences

/f/

The food is on the fire.

This is a fine forest.

I read the facts before I left.

/v/

Have you proved what you believe?

Give me seventy-seven words with v.

Leave the cover on the bed.

/f/ and /v/

Her voice is very beautiful.

She moved very fast before me.

I forgot to move the heavy fruit.

IV. As the /t/, /d/ contrast in English is phonetically different from the Arabic /t/, /d/, teachers should show their students how these sounds are produced. They should tell the students to raise the tips of their tongues to touch the alveolar ridge behind the upper teeth. Thus the English /t/, /d/ can be produced, keeping in mind the vibration of the vocal organs or no vibration, and the stoppage of the air in the mouth as these sounds are produced. To drill this contrast, the suitable material can be used as suggested above. The teacher can easily design drills for this purpose.

V. /θ/, /s/, /t/ and /ð/, /z/, /d/ contrasts can be taught in drills. But before drilling, the students should be shown

how these sounds are produced. When this is done, and the students are able to hear these sounds apart from each other, drilling can be done.

The teacher shows how /θ/ and /ð/ are produced, by putting his tongue between his teeth letting the air come out making a friction sound and asking the students to hold their vocal cords to feel the vibration when pronouncing /ð/. Another part of the problem is that Palestinian students have to hear /θ/, /ð/ apart from /s/, /z/ contrast. Below are drills for this purpose to be carried out as previously suggested.

#### A. Minimal Pairs

/θ/	/s/	/θ/	/t/
thin	sin	thought	taught
think	sink	through	true
thick	sick	three	tree
worth	worse	both	boat

#### B. Phrases

/θ/

nothing thin

north and south

health and strength

/s/

to say yes

to taste the sweets

the last piece

/t/

a short boat

to cut a tree

bright city lights

/θ/ and /s/

to say something

thin and sick

both sides

/θ/ and /t/

turn south

a lot of things

a right method

C. Sentences

/θ/

He thinks of everything.

She has something in her mouth.

That thing is worth nothing.

/θ/ and /s/

What is the length of this street?

Last Thursday was a nice day.

It is safe to go south.

/θ/ and /t/

Little things mean a lot.

He tried to tell the truth.

He felt healthy.

To teach the /θ/, /z/ and /ð/, /d/ contrasts, the students should hear /θ/ apart from /z/ and /d/ and notice how /θ/ is produced by putting the tip of the tongue between the upper and lower teeth, having the friction sound coming out of the mouth and vocal cords vibrating as this sound is produced. To drill this sound in relation to /z/ and /d/, the following material can be used.

#### A. Minimal Pairs

/θ/	/d/	/ð/	/z/
thee	d	though	zoo
there	dare	weather	wise
they	day	father	his
then	den	breathe	breeze
leather	ladder	writhe	rise

#### B. Phrases

/θ/

gathered together

with them

this and that

/ð/ and /d/

good weather

with a friend

either good or bad

/θ/ and /z/

those boys

that zoo

a wise father

C. Sentences

/θ/

They saw their friends there.

I gave them that book.

We went without them.

/θ/ and /d/

Hold these papers together.

We did what they wanted.

I have no doubt about that story.

/θ/ and /z/

There are lions in the zoo.

VI His father is on his way here.

The others are not.

VI. To teach the /dʒ/, /ʒ/ contrast to Palestinian students, the teacher should enable the students to hear /ʒ/ apart from /dʒ/. They should know how /ʒ/ is articulated by putting the tip of the tongue against a point midway between the alveolar ridge and the palate. Vocal cords can be felt vibrating when this sound is articulated. To drill this sound the following material may be useful.

A. Words having /ʒ/ (Minimal Pairs are not available)

/ʒ/

measure

leisure

version

/dʒ/

George

John

virgin

garage                  June

pleasure                job

B. Phrases

/dʒ/ and /ʒ/

a huge provision

a large garage

John's treasure

C. Sentences

/dʒ/ and /ʒ/

George found a treasure.

The judge expressed his pleasure.

Jamil has much leisure time.

VII. The /i/, /e/ contrast can be taught by having the students notice that in pronouncing /e/ the front part of the tongue is raised to the middle of the distance in the mouth, neither high nor low, whereas for /i/ it is high. They should be trained to hear these two sounds apart from each other. Below are drills for this purpose.

A. Minimal Pairs

/i/                      /e/

fill                    fell

sit                     set

till                    tell

lit                     let

wit                    wet

## B. Phrases

/i/

rich prince

thin fish

six hills

/i/ and /e/

to rest in bed

if it's fresh

left singing

/e/

less fresh

best health

to rest then

## C. Sentences

/i/

Jim is singing.

I think the trip is a bit long.

Did he have his dinner?

/e/

Lehn has the best voice.

Sell her the red dress.

Ben felt well.

/i/ and /e/

It fits well.

His friend is sick.

Bring the dress.

VIII. Our students find the /ou/, /ɔ:/ and /eə/, /ə:/ contrasts hard to distinguish. /ou/ and /eə/ are often replaced by the long vowels /ɔ:/ and /ə:/ as diphthongs do not exist in Arabic. Drills can be used to overcome this problem.

## A. Minimal Pairs

/ou/	/ɔ:/
coat	caught
coal	call
hole	hall
cold	called
low	law

## B. Phrases

/ou/	/ɔ:/
grow old	walk and talk
both coats	saw the salt
sold the coal	all the law
/ou/ and /ɔ:/	
brought the coal	
low wall	
tall old man	

## C. Sentences

/ou/

Their noses were cold.

Show me your new coat.

Please blow the smoke away.

/ɔ:/

Call them all in.

He brought the law book.

The tall man caught the ball.



/ou/ and /ɔ:/

The course is not known.

Notice the tall woman.

He sold me his ball.

To teach the /eə/, /ɜ:/ contrast for our students, attention should be drawn to how they are pronounced. They should be heard apart from each other. These drills can be used for this purpose.

A. Words

/eə/

air

hair

chair

fair

share

/ɜ:/

earth

heard

church

first

sir

B. Phrases

/eə/

a high chair

cold air

a brown bear

/eə/ and /ɜ:/

her fair hair

a bird in the air

care for words

/ɜ:/

serve the girl

worth a third

her world

## C. Sentences

/eə/

He dared to wear a hat.

Where is the bear?

He has a square chair.

/ə:/

It's your turn, sir.

They certainly like to serve.

His work is worth the world to him.

/eə/ and /ə:/

The girl sat on the chair.

She doesn't dare to say a word.

He wears a hat to serve.

The researcher would like to state that these drills are mere examples and the teachers of English can design drills they see suitable to overcome the pronunciation problems that Palestinian students face as they learn the English phonology.

## APPENDIX I

## PRONUNCIATION KEY

## ENGLISH SOUNDS - CONSONANTS

/p/	the first sound in	pot
/b/	the first sound in	bit
/t/	the first sound in	tea
/d/	the first sound in	day
/k/	the first sound in	key
/g/	the first sound in	go
/f/	the first sound in	fire
/v/	the first sound in	very
/θ/	the first sound in	think
/ /	the first sound in	that
/s/	the first sound in	see
/z/	the first sound in	zero
/ʃ/	the first sound in	shame
/ʒ/	the last sound in	garage
/dʒ/	the first sound in	journey
/tʃ/	the first sound in	cheap
/h/	the first sound in	how
/m/	the first sound in	moon
/n/	the first sound in	noon
/ŋ/	the last sound in	sing
/l/	the first sound in	lend
/r/	the first sound in	ring
/w/	the first sound in	why

/j/ the first sound in yes

## PRONUNCIATION KEY

### ENGLISH SOUNDS - VOWELS

/i:/ the vowel sound in deal

/i/ the vowel sound in fit

/æ/ the vowel sound in man

/ə/ the vowel sound in the

/u:/ the vowel sound in root

/u/ the vowel sound in put

/a:/ the vowel sound in farm

/ʌ/ the vowel sound in cut

/ɜ:/ the vowel sound in bird

/e/ the vowel sound in said

/ɔ:/ the vowel sound in jaw

/ɒ/ the vowel sound in hot

/o/ the vowel sound in obey

### ENGLISH SOUNDS - DIPHTHONGS

/ei/ the sound in day

/ɔu/ the sound in own

/ai/ the sound in high

/au/ the sound in shout

/ɔi/ the sound in boil

/iə/ the sound in dear

/eə/ the sound in bear

/ʊə/ the sound in sure

/ɔə/ the sound in door

APPENDIX II  
PRONUNCIATION KEY

ARABIC SOUNDS - CONSONANTS

/b/	the first sound in	/baab/
/t/	the first sound in	/tiin/
/d/	the first sound in	/diin/
/T/	the first sound in	/Tiin/
/D/	the first sound in	/Dab <sup>9</sup> /
/k/	the first sound in	/kaas/
/g/	the third sound in	/siigaarah/
/q/	the first sound in	/qaalat/
/ʔ/	the third sound in	/suʔaal/
/f/	the first sound in	/fuul/
/θ/	the first sound in	/θaabit/
/ð/	the first sound in	/ðaliil/
/s/	the first sound in	/saamii/
/z/	the first sound in	/zamaan/
/S/	the first sound in	/Saliib/
/ʒ/	the first sound in	/ʒill/
/ʃ/	the first sound in	/ʃaaj/
/x/	the first sound in	/xall/
/ɛ/	the first sound in	/ɛaazii/
/h/	the first sound in	/haafii/
/ʁ/	the first sound in	/ʁaalii/
/h/	the first sound in	/haawii/
/dʒ/	the first sound in	/dʒamiil/
/tʃ/	the first sound in	/tʃil/

/m/	the first sound in	/maali/
/n/	the first sound in	/naawii/
/l/	the first sound in	/lanaa/
/L/	the third sound in	/ʔaLLaah/
/r/	the first sound in	/riih/
/R/	the second sound in	/ʔaRRab/
/w/	the first sound in	/walad/
/j/	the first sound in	/jamji/

#### ARABIC SOUNDS - VOWELS

/ii/	the second sound in	/fiil/
/i/	the second sound in	/sin/
/aa/	the second sound in	/naam/
/a/	the second sound in	/fam/
/uu/	the second sound in	/ruus/
/u/	the second sound in	/qum/
/oo/	the second sound in	/loon/
/o/	the second sound in	/xo/
/ee/	the second sound in	/ween/
/e/	the second sound in	/eh/

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تبرز هذه الدراسة بعض المصاعب ، وتناقش مسبباتها وانعكاساتها التربوية وتوصي  
للاسهام في معالجة هذا الضعف والخلوص بلفظ انجليزي سليم لدى الطلاب الفلسطينيين .

## خلاصة

يورد هذا البحث نتائج دراسة حول تدخّل اللغة الأم لدى الناطقين بالعربية الفلسطينية عند تعلمهم اللفظ الانجليزي . والهدف الرئيسي لهذا البحث هو ابراز ما اذا كان التدخّل يحدث واثره على عملية تعلم اصوات الانجليزية لدى الدارسين الفلسطينيين .

يتألف البحث من قسمين : الاول عقد مقارنة تحليلية للنظام الصوتي في لغة الدارسين الام واللغة التي يهدون تعلمها - العربية الفلسطينية واللغة الانجليزية . والثاني يتعلق بتدوين الباحث ملاحظاته بخصوص الاخطاء اللفظية التي ارتكبتها طالبات المدارس وطالبات مركز تدريب المعلمات . والطالبات اللواتي راقبهن الباحث هن طالبات الصف الخامس والسادس والاول الاعدادي في ثلاث مدارس للاناث في منطقة رام الله . اضافة الى ذلك فقد راقب الباحث عدة صفوف في مركز تدريب المعلمات برام الله تضم متدربات من غزة والضفة تخصصن في مواضيع مختلفة .

وقد نوقشت تنبؤات البحث في ضوء علاقتها بالاخطاء الفعلية لدى الطالبات .

واما النتائج فكانت كالتالي :-

- ١ . يواجه الطلاب الفلسطينيون مصاعب لدى تعلمهم الاصوات الانجليزية خاصة تلك التي لا توجد في اللغة العربية .
- ٢ . لا تنحصر المصاعب التي يواجهها الطلاب في جهة لفظية واحدة بل تتدرج على اصوات الشدة واصوات اللين والاصوات المركبة كذلك .
- ٣ . ليست المصاعب هذه بنفس الصعوبة .
- ٤ . يتأثر الطلاب الفلسطينيون عند نطقهم اصوات انجليزية معينة بالطريقة التي ينطقون بها هذه الاصوات بالعربية .

نوقشت هذه الرسالة وأقرت بتاريخ

٨١/٧/١٤ وذلك من قبل لجنة المناقشة التالية :-

- |                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| ٠١ د. ولتر ليين      | رئيسا             |
| ٠٢ د. مارشال جنسلمان | عضوا              |
| ٠٣ د. نقولا تلحمي    | عضوا              |
| ٠٤ د. اجنس حنايسيا   | ممثلا كلية الآداب |

تدخل اللغة الام في تعلم اللفظ الانجليزي لدى الناطقين  
بالعربية - اللهجة الفلسطينية

اعداد

وجيه محمد الحسين

رسالة مقدمة لانتهاء متطلبات التخرج  
لشهادة الماجستير في الاداب في التربية  
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١٩٨١

المشرف : الدكتور والتر لسين

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