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**Exploring the Impact of French Language on English Language Pronunciation
Among First-Year Students in the Department of French**

*Thesis submitted to the Department of English in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the Degree of Master in Language and Communication*

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Statement of Originality

We hereby declare that this dissertation is entirely the result of our investigation, it does not contain any published material in any university or any other institution. All sources used and references made have been acknowledged.

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Dedication

We dedicate this piece of work to our parents whose love, support and prayers were a source of motivation.

To our dear brothers and sisters, thank you for your constant encouragement.

To our friends, your companionship and motivation have been invaluable throughout this journey.

And to our respected teachers, thank you for your guidance, knowledge, and inspiration that helped shape this work.

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Abstract

Pronunciation plays a vital role in language learning, as it directly influences both intelligibility and communicative competence. In the Algerian context, where French occupies a dominant role in education, learners acquiring English as a second foreign language, often face specific challenges in mastering pronunciation due to phonological and lexical interference between English and French. Therefore, this study aimed to analyze the influence of French phonetic patterns on English pronunciation, to explore the common pronunciation errors in English exhibited by students, and to investigate the various factors impacting learners' pronunciation of English. To achieve these objectives, a mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining a semi-structured questionnaire with a classroom observation checklist directed to first-year students in the French department at the University of Relizane. The questionnaire was administered to a sample of forty (40) students to investigate and gather direct feedback from students about their experiences and sociolinguistic perceptions with learning English and to check their awareness of the phonological interference between the two languages. Additionally, nine (9) classroom sessions were observed and recorded, focused on exploring students' phonetic behavior during English instruction. The findings revealed a notable negative transfer of French on students' English pronunciation, particularly in areas such as vowel articulation, consonant clusters, and prosodic features like stress and intonation. Based on these results, several pedagogical recommendations are proposed to assist English teachers in developing pronunciation-focused instruction that addresses learners' specific phonetic difficulties and supports their confidence and performance in spoken English.

Keywords: pronunciation, French interference, phonological transfer, lexical interference, English as second foreign language, Algerian context

List of Tables

Table 1: Classification of English consonants by place and manner of articulation	17
Table 2: Classification of French consonants	20
Table 3: classification of French vowels system	21
Table 4: Students' gender	41
Table 5: Students' age	41
Table 6: Phonetic features in difficult English words reported by students	45
Table 7: Students' perceptions of English classes in middle and high school	47
Table 8: Students' engagement with English outside the classroom	49
Table 9: Impact of fear of making mistakes on students' pronunciation	50

List of Figures

Figure 1: Various features of English pronunciation	9
Figure 2: Diagram of the human vocal tract showing the major articulators involved in speech production.....	15
Figure 3: learner's accuracy in English pronunciation.....	38
Figure 4: French influence in learner's English pronunciation.....	39
Figure 5: Teacher's involvement in pronunciation improvements	40
Figure 6: Students' responses on the difficulty when switching from French to English.....	42
Figure 7: Students' reported frequency of French interference in English pronunciation	43
Figure 8: Students' perception of the impact of French on their English Pronunciation.....	43
Figure 9: Students' opinions on the most important language for Algerians to learn.....	46
Figure 10: Factors behind the rising importance of English	47
Figure 11: Frequency of pronunciation practice in English classes.....	48
Figure 12: Students' emotional responses to speaking and reading in English	50
Figure 13: Frequency of pronunciation corrections by teacher and classmates.....	51

List of Abbreviation

IPA International Phonetic Alphabet

POA Place of articulation

PI phonological interference

SLA Second Language Acquisition

L1 First Language (as a first foreign Language)

L2 Second Language (as a second foreign language)

FL Foreign Language

EFL English as a Foreign Language

ESP English for Specific Purposes

FLL French language learners

Table of Content

Statement of Originality.....	I
Dedication.....	II
Acknowledgements.....	III
Abstract	IV
List of Tables.....	V
List of Figures	VI
List of Abbreviation	VII
Table of Content	VIII
General Introduction.....	2
Chapter One: Phonological Interactions: Understanding the Influence of French on English Pronunciation.....	6
1.1 Introduction	6
1.2 Pronunciation.....	6
1.2.1 Definition of Pronunciation.....	6
1.2.2 Features of Pronunciation.....	7
1.2.2.1 Segmental Features of Pronunciation.....	7
1.2.2.2 Suprasegmental Features of Pronunciation	7
1.2.3 Approaches to Teaching and Learning Pronunciation	10
1.2.3.2 Communicative Approach.....	10
1.2.4 Importance of Teaching and Learning Pronunciation	11
1.3 English Language Versus French Language	12
1.3.1 Phonological System	12
1.3.2 Consonants and Vowels	12
1.3.2.1 English Consonants	13
1.3.2.1.1 Classification of Consonant Sounds.....	14
1.3.2.2 English Vowels	18

1.3.2.3 French Consonants and Vowels	19
1.3.2.3.1 Classification of Consonants and Vowels Sounds	20
1.3.3 Stress and Intonation	22
1.3.3.1 English Stress and Intonation	22
1.3.3.2 French Intonation and Stress	23
1.3.4 The Sociolinguistics Situation of French and English in Algeria	24
1.3.5 Algerian Educational System	25
1.4 Language Transfer	25
1.4.1 Definition of Language Transfer	26
1.4.2 Types of Language Transfer.....	27
1.4.2.1 Positive Transfer	27
1.4.2.2 Negative Transfer	27
1.5 Phonological Interference	28
1.5.1 Definition of Phonological Interference	28
1.5.2 Areas of Phonological Interference Between French and English	29
1.5.2.1 Consonants Interference	29
1.5.2.2 Vowels Interference	29
1.5.2.3 Stress and Intonation interference	30
1.6 Lexical Influence	30
1.6.1 Definition of Lexical Interference	30
1.6.2 Borrowing and Loan Words	31
1.6.3 Cognates	32
1.7 Conclusion	33
Chapter Two: Methodology and Data Analysis	35
2.1 Introduction	35
2.2 Research Design	35
2.2.1 Sample	35
2.3 Data Collection Instruments	36

2.3.1 Description of the Observation.....	36
2.3.2 Description of the Questionnaire.....	37
2.4 Analysis of Classroom Observation.....	38
2.5 Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire.....	41
2.6 Discussion of the Findings	51
2.6.1 Discussion of the Classroom Observation.....	51
2.6.2 Questionnaire Discussion	52
2.7 Summary of the Findings.....	54
2.8 Pedagogical Recommendations	56
2.9 Limitations of the Study.....	56
2.10 Conclusion	57
General Conclusion	59
Bibliography.....	62
Appendices	67
Appendix 1 Observation Checklist	67
Appendix 2 Questionnaire of the Students.....	68
Appendix 3 Task 01	71
Appendix 4 Task 02	72
Appendix 5 Task 03	73
Appendix 6 information sheet project	74
Résumé.....	75
الملخص	76

General Introduction

General Introduction

English and French, are two globally significant languages have shared a long and complex history shaped by centuries of interaction since the Norman Conquest in 1066, which introduced thousands of French words into English, to the continued prestige of French culture and education throughout the modern era, French has left a lasting imprint on the English language.

While the two languages share some visual and lexical similarities, they differ significantly in terms of phonetics and oral production. These phonological differences can pose challenges for learners who move between the two languages. This is particularly evident in multilingual environments such as Algeria, where French has long played a dominant role in education and administration. This phenomenon remains largely unaddressed in current curricula and it is most visible among university students who are taught in French but are also expected to master English for academic and professional reasons. However, their strong background in French can influence their pronunciation of English, especially in terms of vowel articulation, creating notable difficulties in oral communication.

This study aims to analyze the influence of French phonetic patterns on English pronunciation among first-year students in the French department. Specifically, it seeks to explore common pronunciation errors, and investigate the factors contributing the impact of French language on the pronunciation of English language, including the sociolinguistic and educational factors that may affect learners' oral performance in English.

The examination of the aforementioned issues results in the formulation of the following research questions:

- 1) How do French phonetic patterns influence the pronunciation of English?
- 2) What are the most frequent English pronunciation errors exhibited among French department students?
- 3) What are the key factors that contribute to these pronunciation challenges?

In line with these research questions, the study is based on three key hypotheses:

- 1) French intonation and stress patterns significantly affect the prosody of English spoken by students of the French department.
- 2) Students frequently mispronounce English vowels and consonant clusters due to phonological interference.
- 3) Sociocultural variables such as learners' attitudes toward English and their motivation for learning affect their pronunciation outcomes.

To address these questions and test the hypotheses, this exploratory study integrates mixed-methods. Data are gathered through classroom observations divided into nine sessions, where students are asked to read texts, sentences, and word lists in both English and French to allow a comparative analysis of their pronunciation. While a semi-structured questionnaire administered to 40 students, designed to explore their linguistic background, experience with English and French, and perceptions of language use in academic and social contexts.

This research carries significant value both academically and pedagogically. It raises awareness about how French phonetics can influence English pronunciation, helping both educators and learners understand language interference as a natural linguistic process rather than simply a matter of "errors." The findings provide useful insights for language instructors seeking to improve English pronunciation instruction in multilingual classrooms. Moreover, the study will contribute to the fields of phonetics, second language acquisition, and bilingual education, particularly within the Algerian context.

The structure of this thesis is divided into two chapters. Chapter one provides a comprehensive literature review that establishes the theoretical and empirical foundation of the study. It begins by defining key concepts related to phonological interference in second language acquisition and examines the factors that contribute to it. Then it presents a comparative analysis of the phonological systems of French and English, focusing particularly on segmental and suprasegmental features stress and intonation. These aspects are discussed in relation to their potential to cause interference in English pronunciation among French learners. Relevant theoretical frameworks and previous research findings are also reviewed to support the analysis and to contextualize the study within the broader field of phonetics and language learning.

The second chapter focuses on the practical aspect of the research. It begins by describing the data collection tools used, including questionnaires and a classroom observation

checklist, to gather comprehensive information. This is followed by a presentation and interpretation of the main findings, along with a summary highlighting key insights related to pronunciation learning. Based on these results, the chapter offers pedagogical recommendations tailored to learners' needs. It concludes by discussing the study's limitations and suggesting directions for future research.

Chapter One

Phonological Interactions: Understanding the
Influence of French on English Pronunciation

Chapter One: Phonological Interactions: Understanding the Influence of French on English Pronunciation

1.1 Introduction

Language, as a system of communication, is fundamentally shaped by its sound structure, or phonology. For learners, pronunciation presents one of the hardest aspects to master, especially when the phonological systems of their first and target languages differ significantly. This challenge becomes even more complex in contexts where learners are acquiring a second foreign language (L2), such as English, after having already learned another foreign language like French (L1). To better understand this challenge, this chapter presents the main aspects of pronunciation; definition, features, different methods used to teach pronunciation. These points help prepare for later sections that compare English and French sounds in terms of phonological system and their situation in the Algerian sociolinguistic context, also explore language transfer, phonological interference, and lexical interference.

1.2 Pronunciation

Pronunciation is a key component of language learning that involves the production as well as perception of sounds, stress, and also intonation. This section defines pronunciation. Its important features highlight the way in which people are able to communicate in an effective manner.

1.2.1 Definition of Pronunciation

Pronunciation refers to the way a word is spoken, including the articulation of sounds, stress patterns, and intonation. Especially a way that is accepted or generally understood and its representation of the way a word is spoken Mustika (2010 as cited in Gusdian et al., 2020). Meanwhile Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994, p. 3) define pronunciation as: “The production of significant sound in two senses.”, Researchers claim that the main function of the sounds represents an important element of the language's structural system, and serves to achieve meaning in contexts of use. Furthermore, pronunciation definition taken from oxford dictionary states that pronunciation is the way in which a language, a word or a sound is pronounced. In other words, pronunciation incorporates producing speech sounds in a way that is widely understood, whether in daily conversations or formal communication.

1.2.2 Features of Pronunciation

Pronunciation includes segmental features (individual sounds like consonants, vowels, also diphthongs) along with suprasegmental features (stress, intonation, rhythm, and linking). The way someone talks, and body language play big parts. (Burns & Claire, 2003)

1.2.2.1 Segmental Features of Pronunciation

Segmental features represent the specific speech sounds, including consonants and vowels that function separately within a language sound system. Skandera and Burleigh (2005, p. 17) define segmental as “the segmentation of language into individual speech sounds provided by phonetics.”

- Phonemes are considered as the smallest and distinctive units of sound in a language that can make a difference in meaning between words, Burns and Claire (2003, p. 7) explain that “the sound systems of consonants, vowels or their combinations are called phonemes. Phonemes are sounds that, when pronounced incorrectly, can change the meaning of the word”

For instance,

"bit" /b/ /ɪ/ /t/

"beat" /b/ /i:/ /t/

Changing the vowel sound /ɪ/ to /i:/ changes "bit" to "beat". That vowel sound is a phoneme, and mispronouncing it can cause confusion.

- According to Yoshida (2016) consonants are speech sounds produced through the interruption of the airflow during articulation, usually by the lips or the tongue, for example, *cake* /c/ /k/, *table* /t/ /b/ /l/
- Yoshida (2016) also defines vowels as sounds produced with a smooth airflow, as there is no blockage or restriction in the vocal tract to interrupt the airflow, she states that vowels are the “heart” of words and syllables

1.2.2.2 Suprasegmental Features of Pronunciation

In addition to consonant and vowel sounds, there are additional features that go beyond the level of individual segments these are referred to as suprasegmentals. Thus, suprasegmentals are attributed to “those aspects of speech that involve more than single consonants or vowels” Ladefoged & Johnson (2011, p. 243) According to Gasmi (2022) suprasegmentals refer to the

features, like stress, tone that go along with individual sounds in speech, such as vowels and the consonants, to alter meaning and rhythm. Suprasegmentals are also described as “music of a language” since they deal with other features that shape the overall flow and meaning of speech as intonation, stress, linking. Ladefoged (2006)

- Intonation is the variation of pitch in speech, it helps transmit and convey attitudes, intentions, emotions that are not obvious by the literal meaning of words. According to Yoshida (2016) Intonation refers to the pitch pattern of a word, the rise and fall of pitch in speech allows understanding different types of utterances and reflects the speaker’s attitude or emotional state.
- Word stress is the emphasis placed on one syllable in a word more than the others. According to Yoshida (2016) Word stress refers to the extra emphasis given to one specific syllable in a word that has multiple syllables. For example, by saying “it was a difficult exam” it is a statement, but when we say “it was DIFFICULT exam” we emphasize and confirm how difficult the exam was.
- Linking is the speech process where the final sound of one word connects with the initial sound from the next word, making the words easier to pronounce and allowing speech to flow smoothly. Burns and Claire (2003) define linking as the smooth connection between the final sound of one word and the initial sound of the next, often involving added or omitted sounds to produce natural, connected speech. There are three common types of linking:

Consonant + Vowel:

"Pick it up" → /pɪk__ɪt__ʌp/

Vowel + Vowel:

"Go on" → /gəʊ__ɒn/ (sometimes using a linking /w/ or /j/)

Consonant to consonant:

"Big game" → sounds like just one /g/: /bɪg__eɪm/

The following figure represents features of English pronunciation:

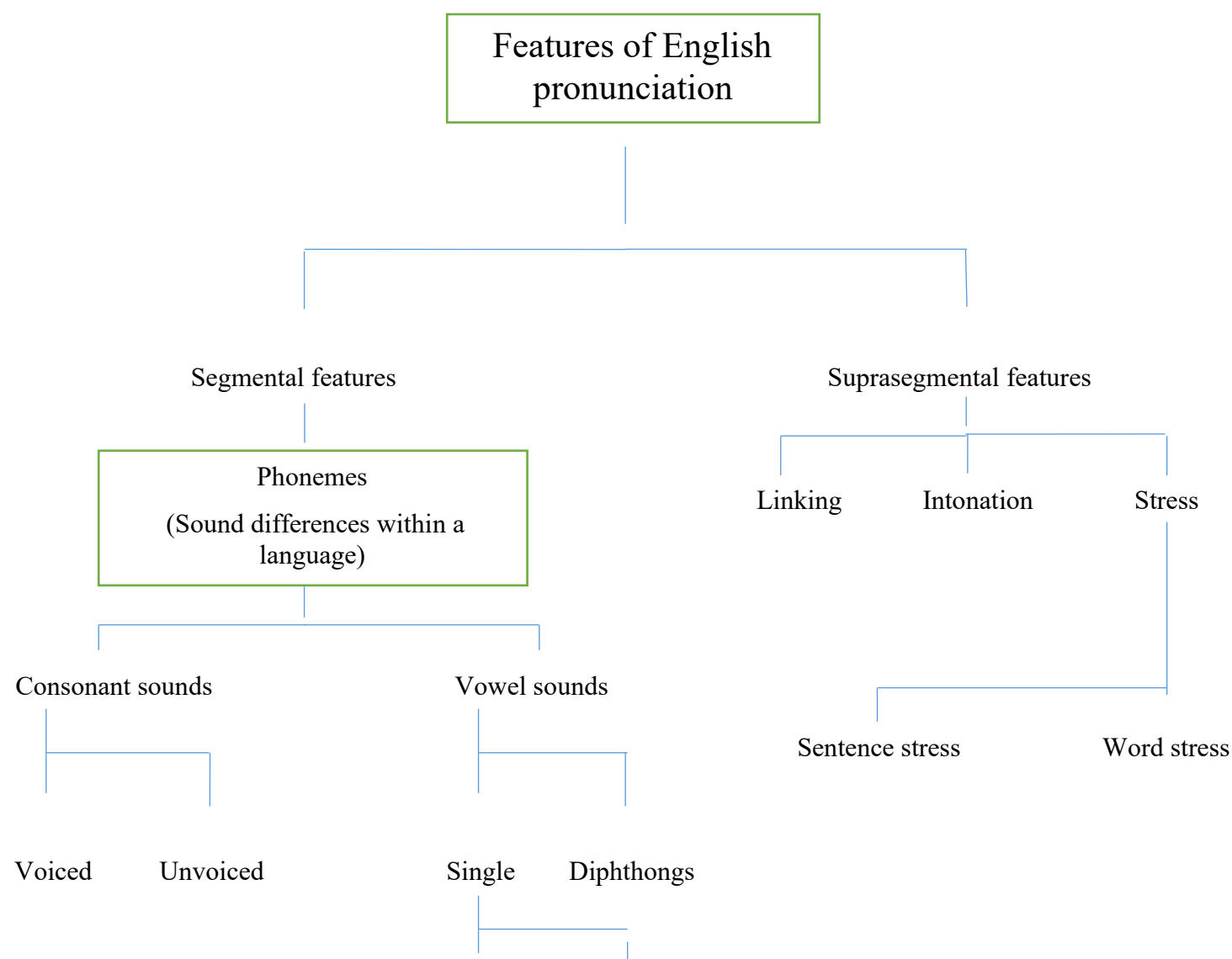


Figure 1: Various features of English pronunciation

The diagram presents an overview of characteristics fundamental to the pronunciation of English. The main characteristics of pronunciation can be laid out into two broad categories: segmental features and suprasegmental features. Segmental features deal with sounds individually referred to as phonemes. Phonemes are sound differences in a language and can be characterized in English in two ways: consonants and vowels. However, consonants can be characterized in two different ways: voiced consonants and unvoiced consonants. Vowels can be characterized using single vowels and diphthongs. Single vowels can be short or long in duration. Suprasegmental features refer to broader features of speech like linking, intonation,

¹Note. Reprinted from *Clearly speaking: Pronunciation in action for teachers* (p. 6) by Burns, A & Claire, S, 2003, National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research, Macquarie University

and stress. Stress can differentiate between sentence stress and word stress. Together, all of these features facilitate how clearly and naturally spoken English becomes.

1.2.3 Approaches to Teaching and Learning Pronunciation

Pronunciation is a crucial element for language learning, and it impacts learners' intelligibility and oral communication. In language teaching the pronunciation method has developed in various ways typically reflecting different underlying theories that focused on repetition and habit formation, and other developed theories focused on interaction and meaningful communication. This section outlines the major approaches to pronunciation teaching and the important features and classroom implications of each approach.

1.2.3.1 Audio-Lingualism and the Oral Approach

Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) stated that the Reform Movement had a substantial hand in the development of the Audio-Lingual Method in the United States and the Oral Method in Britain throughout the 1940s and 1950s. Each of the methods focused on explicit pronunciation instruction. The changes caused by World War II played a constant role in their development. The Audio-Lingual Method in the U.S. was primarily used to aid soldiers and immigrants in acquiring the means to communicate effectively through techniques such as imitation, repetition, and phonetics. Via structured practice, these approaches were targeted at enhancing the pronunciation skills of learners. Freeman (2000) described the Audio-Lingual Method as an oral-based approach that focuses on drilling students in grammatical sentence patterns to promote automatic language use. According to Skinner (2014), the Audio-Lingual Method was built on behaviorist psychology, emphasizing that language learning occurs through conditioning. Both Audio-Lingual Method and the Oral Approach focused on reinforcing correct language habits through repetition and positive feedback.

Both approaches prioritized pronunciation however they also had a significant limitation: as Gilakjani (2012) observed, learners devoted long hours to drilling and repeating individual sounds and combinations rather than engaging in conversational practice that would develop prosodic features like intonation, stress, and rhythm.

1.2.3.2 Communicative Approach

The communicative approach developed as research showed that pronunciation plays an important role in clear communication, especially at the level of interaction. (Brown & Yule, 1983). The communicative approach continues to be the dominant method in language teaching, largely due to the increasing recognition among teachers and scholars of the importance of

pronunciation. (Gardner & Miller, L, 1994) The approach emphasizes that language classes should prioritize communication, with pronunciation seen as an essential part of that process.

The communicative language approach highlights the importance of using language within context, rather than focusing on isolated elements, as Brazil (1994) points out, “Pronouncing individual English words has little value for those aiming to communicate effectively in the language” (p.02). This suggests that speakers should link their speech to the context, which enhances the importance of speaking skills and pronunciation. As stated by Celce-Murcia et al (1996), the communicative approach relies upon techniques and material that were created in earlier methods such as audio-lingualism. The authors have concisely outlined and categorized as follow:

- Listen and imitate technique: which is a characteristic element of the direct method, it was based on the teacher presenting a model that students would then practice by repeating. This technique has been enhanced by using tools such as tape recorders, language laboratories, and the advancement of video equipment.
- Phonetic training: use of articulatory descriptions, articulatory diagrams, and a phonetic alphabet.
- Visual aids: enhancement of the teacher’s description of how sounds are produced by audio visual aids such as sounds-color charts, pictures, mirrors, etc. These devices are also used to production of the target sounds.
- Tongue twisters: a technique from speech correction strategies for native speakers is taught to retrace the steps that many English-speaking children follow.
- Chomsky and Halle (1968) describe a technique grounded in generative phonology that involves changes in vowel sounds and stress patterns through affixation, which is commonly applied when teaching intermediate and advanced learners.

1.2.4 Importance of Teaching and Learning Pronunciation

Earlier language teaching methods tended to neglect learning and teaching English pronunciation; Gilbert (1994) argued that “pronunciation has been something of an orphan in English programs around the world” (p. 38).

With the rise of communicative methods and approaches in ESP/EFL instruction, pronunciation is now integrated into real communication contexts and regarded as equally important as other components of language (Celce-Murcia et al 1996). Morley (1998) emphasized the importance of teaching pronunciation, noting that poor pronunciation can lead

to serious issues for learners, including communication breakdowns, increased anxiety, stereotyping, and even discrimination.

Many scholars agree that learning and teaching pronunciation is essential as it aids the speaker in achieve smooth and successful communication. Burns (2003) stated that pronunciation is commonly the first element that people notice when someone speaks English and if the pronunciation is poor, even strong grammar and vocabulary may not be sufficient to ensure understanding. Hence, teaching pronunciation plays a major role in developing intelligibility in the students, which allows them to produce correct sound clusters that would be recognized as English. To support this notion, Hismanoglu (2006) claims that pronunciation instruction is essential for effective oral communication, as it enhances learners' overall communicative competence. Pronunciation is an important part of learning and teaching English. It is a primary aspect of learning a foreign language because it has a direct effect on the learner's overall communicative competence and performance. In other words, if a speaker's pronunciation is inaccurate, then it may be difficult for a listener to understand. On the other hand, the more accurate the pronunciation of a learner, the more effective the communication.

1.3 English Language Versus French Language

In order to understand the phonological interference that occurs between French and English, it is necessary to acknowledge the fundamental differences between these two Indo-European languages in terms of their phonological system as consonants and vowels, stress patterns and intonation as well as the sociolinguistic and cultural context of each one.

1.3.1 Phonological System

A phonological system is a structured study of sounds in a language, whether English or any other tongue, to be more precise, phonological system are group of phonemes. These sounds are classified into consonants and vowels while individual unit creates words other features; intonation and stress organize them into meaningful words and sentences.

1.3.2 Consonants and Vowels

The distinction between consonants and vowels is essential in phonetics, but to accurately define them is challenging .The alphabet is made up of 26 letters, 5 of which are vowel (a, e, i, o, u) and the rest of which are consonants .A system of phonetic description must be established in order to compare English and French sounds efficiently and, as a result, determine which sounds pose the biggest challenges for French speakers of English. What constitutes a consonant and a Vowel is important, although many writers approach this specific

problem in rather different ways. Surprisingly none of the definitions given by the experts fully and consistently define them. A vowel is defined as "voiced sound in forming which the air issues in a continuous stream" (Jones, 1957, p. 23) in other words a vowel is a sound that is made by allowing breath to flow out of the mouth, without closing any part of the mouth or throat. Additionally, according to Yule (2017, p. 33) "vowel sounds are produced with a relatively free flow of air, and they are typically voiced". However, those definitions are vague, as Roach (2009) notes that sounds as /h/ and /w/ considered to be consonants even when they have no impact on airflow. While others support the phonological method in which the vowels stand in the center of the syllables, whereas a consonant is a sound that occurs in the edges (Cruttenden, 2014).

1.3.2.1 English Consonants

English consonant sounds are an essential part in phonetics and phonology which are labelled consonants (Peter, 2009, p. 27). There are 24 consonant sounds in English which differs from the 21 Consonant letters in the alphabet. Those letters are classified as close sounds. This signifies that different parts of the vocal tract come into type of obstruction against the airflow away from the lungs (the air stream is initiated by the lungs); in other words, parts from the mouth coming into contact alongside each other such as lips, tongues, or teeth, to explain thoroughly to generate speech air must pass from the lung through the vocal tract which include the vocal folds, the nasal cavity or nose and the oral cavity or mouth, the vocal folds vibrate for some but not other and also the air moves through the nose for some only, according to Ladefoged and Johnson (2011):

To produce speech, air must flow from the lungs through the vocal tract, which includes the vocal folds (popularly called the vocal cords, though they are more like thick elastic bands than strings), the nose or nasal cavity, and the mouth or oral cavity. The vocal folds vibrate for some sounds but not for others. Air flows through the nose for certain sounds but not others. But the main creator of speech sounds is the mouth. (p. 14)

In which he explains the main organs that involve in speech production. Consonants are categorized based on their production method. The articulatory description for each consonant includes three pieces of information, the voicing, the place of articulation, and the manner of articulation.

1.3.2.1.1 Classification of Consonant Sounds

Consonants are categorized based on voicing, place and manner of articulation:

A. Voicing

Voiced sounds: are those in which the vocal cords are close together and vibrate, as in [b], [d], [g], [v], [z], and [m]." (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d), Voiced sounds occur when the vocal cords are maintained closely together with moderate tension, allowing air from the lungs to pass through and cause them to vibrate. This vibration generates sound waves that are heard as voiced speech sounds.

Voiceless sounds: Voiceless sounds are produced with the vocal cords apart and not vibrating, as in [p], [t], [k], [f], [s], and [h]." (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d), in their production air moves through the vocal tract without creating vibrations on the vocal fold.

Expressed more clearly by Jones (1957, p. 19) a sound is created when air flow is pushed between the vocal cords that are drawn near together, such phenomenon is called voiced. If they are widely apart, the stream of air passes and no voice is produced, such sounds are voiceless. This distinction is linked to the articulatory energy because every speech sound involves the use of energy according to, English voiceless sounds are fortis; consonants are pronounced with more muscular tension, greater airflow, their articulation is energetic and dynamic. Although lenis is consonants which are produced with less muscular effort, weaker airflow and they are potentially voiced potentially voiced (Roach, 2009).

B. Place of articulation

Consonants are presented with a simple orthographic representation, including all their possible spelling and corresponding International Phonetic Alphabet. These IPA can be found in dictionaries to indicate pronunciation. The place of articulation (POA) refers to the specific location in the vocal tract are narrowed while the sounds are produced Ashby and Maidement (2005, p.36). As Roach (2009, 27) explains that, in English the POAs are ordered from the back to the front to the back of the mouth the POAs that English uses are:

Bilabial: A bilabial consonant is articulated when the lower and upper lips come close together or make contact.

Labiodental: the lower lips move towards or touches the upper teeth.

Dental: the tongue's tip or blade moves toward or touches the upper teeth.

Alveolar: the tongue tip approaches the alveolar ridge, located just behind the upper front teeth

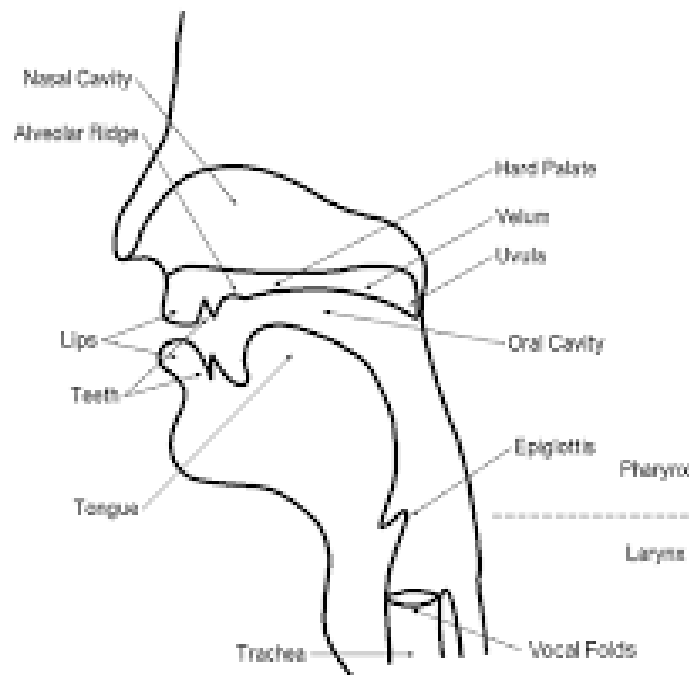


Figure 2: Diagram of the human vocal tract showing the major articulators involved in speech production²

Post alveolar: the constriction is formed immediately behind the alveolar ridge; it can be made either with the tongue tip or the blade.

Retroflex: the tongue tips are curled backward in the mouth; it can be a subtype of post alveolar.

Palatal: the body of the tongue touches the hard palate.

Velar: the body of the tongue approaches the soft palate, or velum

Glottal: the glottis refers to the gap separating the vocal folds. during the production of sound, the constriction at the glottis generates slight turbulence in the air flow moving past the folds.

C. Manners of articulation

Beyond the location of articulation, there are several ways in which speech sounds are formed, these methods can either block the airflow briefly or completely in the mouth, or just adjust the shape of the vocal tract by narrowing the space as Ladefoged and Johnson (2014) cited:

²Note: Adapted from Ladefoged, P., & Johnson, K. (2014). *A course in phonetics* (7th)

At most places of articulation, there are several basic ways in which articulatory gestures can be accomplished. The articulators may close off the oral tract for an instant or a relatively long period; they may narrow the space considerably; or they may simply modify the shape of the tract by approaching each other. (p. 15)

These articulatory strategies result in what are known as manners of articulation; which classify sounds according to their constriction type and degree:

Stops: a stop cuts completely the airflow through the mouth; in some consonants the tongue touches the alveolar ridge and cuts off the airflow means there is no airflow through the mouth but in some there is still airflow through the nose which are called nasal stops.

Nasal: nasal stops are commonly referred to simply as nasals, while oral stops are frequently termed plosives, oral stops may be produced as either voiced or voiceless, but nasal stops are nearly always voiced. But English does not use such sounds.

Fricatives: fricatives are consonants formed by creating a tight constriction in the vocal tract; generating turbulent airflow, but without full closure as air forces its way through the narrow passage between articulators such as the tongue and teeth or upper teeth and lower lip, it produces a sustained friction like a hissing and buzzing sound.

Approximants: are sounds where your mouth parts like tongue and teeth come close but don't touch, they are more open than fricatives and never cause air turbulence.

Affricates: are sounds that starts as a stop (complete block of air) and then release into a fricative both are combined in one smooth sound; the release from the stop is slow enough to create brief friction before moving to the next sound.

Laterals: When you make the [l] sound in words like leaf, your tongue tip touches the alveolar ridge (or upper teeth), but air still flows because the sides of your tongue lower, creating an opening. This side opening makes [l] a lateral sound (unlike most sounds where air flows centrally). People may lower either the left or right side (or both). Since the opening is wide enough to avoid turbulence.

Table 1: Classification of English consonants by place and manner of articulation³

Place/manner	stops	fricatives	nasals	affricates	approximants	lateral
bilabial	/p/ pin /b/ bat		/m/ man		/w/ we	
labiodental		/f/ fine /v/ vine				
dental		/θ/ think /ð/ this				
Post- alveolar		/ʃ/ ship /ʒ/ measure		/tʃ/ church /dʒ/ judge		
alveolar	/t/ tip /d/ dog	/s/ sun /z/ lazy	/n/ nap			/l/ leaf
retroflex					/ɭ/ red	
palatal					/j/ yes	
velar	/g/ go /k/ cat		/ŋ/ sing		/w/ wait	
glottal		/h/ hat				

These variations of how articulators interact, whether through complete closure, partial or minimal approximation rise the specific manners of articulation which include: plosives produced by complete oral closure, fricatives “Close approximation of two articulators so that the airstream is partially obstructed and turbulent airflow is produced” (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2014), in other words created through narrow constriction causing turbulence. Nasals where oral closure combines with nasal resonance and finally approximants involve open approximation without turbulence. This systematic relationship methods and their location produce precise phonetic classification; a clear sound (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2014).

³ Note: adapted from *English phonetics and phonology* (4th ed., p46), by P. Roach, 2009, Cambridge university press

1.3.2.2 English Vowels

“In the vast majority of languages, nearly all syllables include a vowel as their central portion or nucleus”; (Ashby & Maidement, 2005, p70). the authors also claim that the vowel serves as the basic unit of sound in speech and is the main element that forms the structure of a syllable. Vowels are sonorant sounds articulated by an unobstructed vocal tract, and they are almost always voiced meaning the vocal cords vibrate during their production. Cruttenden (2014) expands this definition by stating that vowels are “sounds in which there is no obstruction or narrowing of the vocal tract such as would result in the audible friction characteristic of consonant” (p11). This absence of narrowing distinguishes vowels that are characterized by resonance from consonants, which rely on obstruction and turbulence.

Vowels are categorized by the tongue height, placement and the lip shape rather than a precise point of contact or obstruction in the vocal tract. As Belmekki and Djebbari (2008) states “The description of vowels is based more on the tongue and lips configuration than a defined localized contact approximation” (p361). Ladefoged and Johnson categorize vowels based on tongue place; front, central, and back vowels, also classify them according to tongue height; high, mid, or low vowels, and the lips place, if they are rounded or unrounded as the writer’s mention “vowels may be described as being rounded or unrounded “(p20). According to IPA English has 21 distinct vowel phoneme they are: /ɪ/ /ε/ /æ/ /ʌ/ /ʊ/ /i:/ /ɑ:/ /u:/ /aɪ/ /eɪ/ /ɔɪ/ /aʊ/ /oʊ/ /ɪr/ /εr/ /ɔr/ /ɑ:r/ /ʊr/ /ɜ:/ /ɜ:/ /ə/ which are divided into two main categories labelled; monophthongs pure vowel sounds produced with a steady, unchanging tongue position. These vowels maintain a consistent sound quality throughout their articulation. This category is divided into two sub-categories according to their length: long and short monophthongs. The second category is diphthongs; is also known as glides are complex vowel sounds that begin with one vowel quality and glide into another within the same syllable. They involve a smooth movement of the tongue from one position to another. In addition to Triphthongs are sequences of three vowel sounds that involve the tongue moving through three distinct positions in a smooth, uninterrupted glide. They begin with one vowel, transition to a second, and end on a third, all produced quickly and within a single syllable.

Monophthongs:

Short Monophthongs:

/ɪ/ – *bit, busy, myth*

/ε/ – *friend, head, said*

/æ/ – *bat, laugh, candle*

/ʌ/ – *son, courage, rough*

/ʊ/ – *book, could, look*

Long monophthongs:

/i:/ – *seat, machine, people*

/ɑ:/ – *car, heart, father*

/u:/ – *food, blue, moon*

Diphthongs:

/aɪ/ – *my, high, kite*

/eɪ/ – *day, rain, eight*

/ɔɪ/ – *boy, coin, voice*

/aʊ/ – *now, house, loud*

/oʊ/ – *go, show, home*

Triphthongs:

/aʊ/ + /ə/ = [aʊə] → *hour*

/aɪ/ + /ə/ = [aɪə] → *fire*

/eɪ/ + /ə/ = [eɪə] → *player*

/əʊ/ + /ə/ = [əʊə] → *power*

/ɔɪ/ + /ə/ = [ɔɪə] → *loyal*

1.3.2.3 French Consonants and Vowels

French consonants resemble those of English, which is known for its rich and complex phonological patterns. However, French phonology is characterized by a more balanced

distribution of consonants form a symmetrical system, typically categorized by place and manner of articulation, as well as voicing. It includes approximately 20 consonant sounds, including *uvular* /ʁ/, nasal consonants, and the absence of certain dental fricatives such as /θ/ and /ð/, as well as the glottal /h/.

1.3.2.3.1 Classification of Consonants and Vowels Sounds

Schane (1968) and Gess et al (2012) classify French consonants according to the traditional phonological features: place of articulation, manner of articulation and voicing. In the other hand Glanville (2005) classify French consonants according to the voicing; voiced and unvoiced, the vocal cords are involved in the articulation of the voiced consonants. However unvoiced consonants use only breath without the vibration of the vocal folds.

Table 2: Classification of French consonants⁴

Place/manner	plosive	fricative	nasal	lateral	rhotic
bilabial	/p/ pied, peu /b/ beau, tombe		/m/ famille, meme		
labiodental		/f/ enfin, neuf /v/ vous, avec			
alveolar	/t/ temps, été /d/ idée, de	/s/ si, aussi /z/ zone, maison	/n/ nous, une	/l/ le, celui	
Post -alveolar		/ʃ/ chef, riche /ʒ/ jamais, rouge			
palatal			/ɲ/ gagner, ligne		
velar	/k/ que, lequel /g/ gauche, vague		/ŋ/ meeting (borrowed)		
uvular					/ʁ/ raison

⁴Note: adapted from Schane (1968). *French phonology and morphology* (2nd Ed.). And Gess et al (2012). *Phonological variation in French: Illustrations from three continents*

Table 3: classification of French vowels system⁵

Vowel type	vowel	example
Oral (high)	/i/	si [si]
	/y/	tu [ty]
	/u/	Roux [ʁu]
Oral (mid)	/e/	Été [ete]
	/ø/	Peu [pø]
	/o/	Eau [o]
	/ɛ/	Fait [fɛ]
	/œ/	Peur [pœʁ]
	/ɔ/	Porte [pɔʁt]
	/ə/	Le [lə]
	/a/	Là [la]
	/ɑ/	Pâte [pat]
Oral (low)	/ɛ̃/	Vin [vɛ̃]
	/ɔ̃/	Bon [bɔ̃]
	/ɑ̃/	Sans [sɑ̃]
	/œ̃/	Un [œ̃]

In addition to consonants, French vowels also differ from those of English. It employs sixteen vowels: twelve oral and four nasals (see table). (Walker, 2001, p.41).

Unlike English, which includes diphthongs; for example, in the word “face” [feɪs] the vowel starts as /e/ and glides towards /ɪ/. In contrast French vowels are monophthongs, they do not change. For instance, the word “fée” [fe] is pronounced with one unchanged sound, which also indicates that there is no tongue movement during the vowel pronunciation.

The phonological system of English and French differ significantly, especially in terms of their consonant and vowel systems. These distinctions are major source of pronunciation difficulties; often lead to mispronunciation.

These phonological mismatches often result in negative transfer, where French learners apply rules from their first foreign language (L1) phonology when speaking a second foreign language (L2). This does not only affect pronunciation but can also impact listening comprehension, as learners may fail to perceive phonemic contrasts that are not present in their L2.

⁵**Note:** adapted from walker (2001). *french sound structure*

1.3.3 Stress and Intonation

Stress and intonation are essential features of spoken language that contribute to meaning, rhythm, and natural speech flow. They help listeners distinguish between words, emotions, and sentence types, making them key elements in effective communication. Both English and French use them, but each language applies them differently in terms of rhythm, emphasis, and sentence melody.

1.3.3.1 English Stress and Intonation

Pronunciation is not just about producing correct sounds; it is also about choosing the right pitch of sentence and word to reflect the kind of discourse the speaker is engaged in. For example, changing the tone can shift a statement into a question, or show that a speaker is offering or requesting something. Bradford (1988, p.13) notes that intonation is central to effective pronunciation because it guides the listener's understanding of meaning, emphasis, and speaker intention. Moreover, it is an essential element of communication, influencing the progression of interaction and facilitating effective exchange in conversation. While Ladefoged and Johnson (2011) tackle intonation from a phonological perspective introducing it as a suprasegmental feature involving a variation in vocal pitch, they emphasize that spoken languages do not rely on fixed tones. Similarly, Domathoti (2021) explains the physical aspect of intonation: "The vocal cords are capable of vibrating at varying rates ... at which they vibrate is called the frequency of vibration, which determine the pitch of the voice. The higher the frequency, the higher is the pitch and vice versa." In simpler view, intonation is controlled by the vocal folds; when vibrate more rapidly, they produce a higher tone, resulting in a higher voice (going up); however slower vibration produces a lower pitch, leading to a deeper voice (going down).

Another significant feature of pronunciation is stress Underhill (2005qtd in Lasi, 2020, 429) define stress as the emphasize or accent given to a syllable in a word which means that one part of a word is pronounced with more force and intensity, it can louder, longer or different in a pitch. Ladefoged & Johnson (2015) share the same view by addressing stress as a suprasegmental element that applies to entire syllable instead of individual sounds; a syllable is considered stressed when it is pronounced by a greater intensity, often characterized by increased loudness, longer duration, and higher pitch. Adding that the placement of stress can affect a word's grammatical category as in the noun "insult" and the verb "insult" have two different stress position, which helps distinguish their meanings.

The role of stress and intonation in English can make the language challenging other languages speakers. English is a stress-timed language, these rhythmic patterns, oblige learners to not only produce individual sounds accurately but also to manage timing, emphasis, and tonal variation. Consequently, mastering English pronunciation involves greater complexity compared to languages where intonation and stress play a less prominent communicative role.

1.3.3.2 French Intonation and Stress

Different languages have a unique melodic structure. French intonation primarily marked by a series of rising pitch patterns that appear often in speech (Jun & Fougeron, 2000), it is characterized by using a slight rise at the beginning of a sentence and a falling pitch at the end, yes/no questions are usually marked by a final rise, the rising pitch at the end helps the listener recognize that the speaker is asking a question, even if the sentence structure does not clearly indicate it. Additionally French speakers often use what is called an intonation cliché, common tone used in specific context; such as greeting or expressions of surprise and doubt, marked by a stable and fixed tone used consistently in each situation (Di Cristo 1998).

Unlike stress-timed languages such as English, French is often described as syllable-timed, meaning each syllable is pronounced with roughly equal timing. In French, stress usually falls on the last syllable of a short group of words spoken together, rather than on individual words. This final-syllable stress helps shape the rhythm and intonation of speech. Instead of using stress to change meaning or add emphasis, French relies more on pitch changes and speech rhythm to organize sentences and express subtle differences in tone or intention.

The comparison between English and French intonation and stress reveals how these Suprasegmental features serve different communicative function in each language. English, as a stress timed language, is linked to meaning, emotion, and grammatical distinction, and speaker intent. The placement of stress can shift word meaning from a noun to a verb, and intonation can change statement to question or express attitudes. Making pronunciation more dynamic but also challenging for learners, mastering it requires not only accurate sound articulation but also a control over emphasis, timing and pitch. (Schane, 1986)

In contrast, French is syllable timed language, where each syllable receives equal duration, creating an even speech pattern, stress is less about individual word emphasis and more about the final syllable and intonation is distinguished by rising pitch movements, in questions, and the use of fix tones (intonation cliché) in specific contexts. As a result, learners

may struggle with mastering English intonation patterns and stress timing, since these features are less prominent in the other language.

1.3.4 The Sociolinguistics Situation of French and English in Algeria

Algeria has exhibited a combination of different languages, like Standard Arabic, local Arabic, Tamazight, and French. These languages often compete with each other, especially during big changes in the country, like political or social events. French, in particular, plays a strong role due to Algeria's colonial history, and continues to influence education, administration, and daily life. More recently, English has started to gain visibility, especially among the youth and in academic settings, adding a new layer to the country's already rich linguistic situation. This dynamic creates an interesting space to explore the sociolinguistic role of French and English in Algeria.

The existence of French language began when France colonized Algeria for over a century; during this period, France enforced strategies aim to disconnect Algerians from their native language and culture, leading to a strong influence of French in Algerian society. Even after independence in 1962, and despite efforts to promote Arabic through Arabization, French remained widely used especially among the elite and in daily communication. It continues to dominate many areas of life in Algeria, including education, media, and even the way Algerian Arabic is spoken. French is still the first foreign language taught in schools and is deeply embedded in the country's sociolinguistic and cultural identity (Saoudi, 2022)

In the last 20 years, English has gradually become more common in Algeria, although its growth has been uneven, Benrabah (2014, as Ladefoged & Johnson, 2011, p. 243). Saoudi (2022) suggests that English may eventually replace French. He also points out that keeping the French language alive in North Africa, doesn't necessarily guarantee it will last in the future, especially since English is waiting as a strong alternative. Algerians acknowledge the value of learning English and are supportive of it, as it is considered the global language of science, technology, economy and communication. The linguistic landscape already includes many borrowed words such shopping, parking e-mail, and weekend. It is used in various sectors alongside local languages, especially in tourism and international travel; where flight instructions are given in three different languages. It is also present in advertising, media and technology. Major companies like Sonatrach (oil and gas), Ooredoo, Mobilis and Djezzy (telecommunications) offer both general and technical English training to help employees improve job performance and support professional growth. (Chouache & Faiza, 2022). Similarly, English has become widespread across Algeria, particularly in the business sector,

where it is often adopted by small enterprises. Many coffee shop and restaurant owners, for example, choose English names for their establishments, such as ‘Black and White coffee Shop. These names convey a sense of prestige associated with American culture, indicating that Algerians are increasingly turning to English over French.

This situation highlights the dynamic linguistic shift occurring in Algeria. While French continue to hold a strong cultural and institutional presence due to historical factors, English is growing as a tool for international engagement and modernization. The coexistence and competition between the two languages reflect broader social, economic, and political trends shaping Algeria’s linguistic future.

1.3.5 Algerian Educational System

The Algerian educational system reflects a complex balance between French and English, where each language plays a distinct role shaped by historical, social, and global factors. After the independence of Algeria in 1962, the teaching and learning of French language continued all the materials was thought in French but after the Arabization reform each material was thought by its language. French is thought in primary school for three years, four years in middle schools, and three years in high school in addition to pursuing higher education.it has gain the place of FL in Algeria (Boubekeur, 2021) . In the other hand English, in 1993, the minister of national education, introduced English into the fourth grade of primary education, giving pupils the option to select either English or French as their FL (laib1993), however French remain the predominant foreign at primary school, and the minister project was paused for unknown reasons.

In 2019, the minister of education suggested a new reform which carries teaching English in primary school like French and promoting it a universities stating that “the French language does not get us anywhere “Ghani Lamine in his newspaper article (As cited in Boubekeur, 2021).the most important step was implementing English in scientific research , the idea was welcomed from both professors and students and The main goal behind encouraging the use of English at Algerian universities was to draw in international students. (Boubekeur, 2021).

1.4 Language Transfer

Language transfer is a fundamental concept in second language acquisition, that reflects how a learner’s existing linguistic knowledge affects the learning of the target language. This

section explores the definitions, processes, and impacts of language transfer as discussed by major scholars.

1.4.1 Definition of Language Transfer

Selinker (1972, as cited in Nesrine, 2015) identifies multiple major mechanisms within second language learning, like the effect of the learner's native tongue (language transfer), the use of past education, methods for learning along with communicating in the second language, as well as the inclination to overgeneralize principles of the target language. Language transfer, specifically, has been a central topic under discussion in SLA research for many decades. There have been continuing debates among several linguists as well as scholars regarding this topic. Odlin (1989, p. 27) defines language transfer as the meaningful, true influence that directly stems from the core similarities as well as key differences between the target language (L2) and another language that a learner has not yet fully acquired. This influence can occur at many levels. Such levels include calculated, linguistic, discursive, and also practical ones. Corder (1993) points out that:

If anything, which can be appropriately called transfer occurs, it is from the mental structure which is the implicit knowledge of the mother tongue to the separate and independently developing knowledge of the target language. The evidence for such a process is presumably the persistent occurrence of incorrect mother-tongue like features in the learner's performance. (p. 25)

This draws attention to the cognitive processes involved in language transfer, emphasizing how learners may dependably expand their understanding of a new language (L2) by drawing on their prior linguistic expertise (L1). Corder's central focus regarding the mental structures plus implicit knowledge strongly suggests that transfer is not just a surface-level phenomenon. Rather, it seems to be a deeply rooted cognitive process. The constant presence of L1-like errors during L2 performance offers further support for the idea that learners' native language plays a meaningful role in influencing their second language development.

While Odlin (1989), Corder (1993), and Selinker (1972) offer valuable insights into language transfer, each scholar approaches the concept from different angle. Odlin emphasizes cross-linguistic influence, Corder highlights cognitive processes, and Selinker introduces the concept of interlanguage. Building on these perspectives, language transfer is the cognitive and linguistic process by which learners draw on their existing knowledge of one language to acquire or use another language, influenced by perceived similarities and differences between the languages, this process could also occur between first and second foreign languages, it

integrates the cognitive, linguistic, and developmental aspects of transfer, providing a comprehensive framework for understanding its role in second language acquisition.

1.4.2 Types of Language Transfer

There are two forms of language transfer as Ellis (1994) has noted that “language distance can affect L2 learning both positively and negatively.” (p.338), language distance refers to the degree of similarity or difference between the two languages.

1.4.2.1 Positive Transfer

Positive transfer refers to the process of using rules from the acquired language on learning the target language, therefore; the learning process is facilitated, Ellis (1994, as cited in Houssos, 2020, p. 272) reveals that positive transfer facilitates the learning process of a second language; That is to say, the existing background of a language can serve as a beneficial foundation, easing the process of learning a second foreign language. The similarities of features in vocabulary, phonetics, along with syntax, coupled with grammar between a learner's native language as well as the target language can facilitate and simplify the process of second language acquisition by reducing cognitive load in addition to improving comprehension. As stated by Odlin (1989, as cited in Houssos, 2020):

Similarities between native language and target language vocabulary can reduce the time needed to develop good reading comprehension... Similarities between vowel systems can make the identification of vowel sounds easier... Similarities between writing systems can give learners a head start in reading and writing in the target language... And any similarities in syntactic structures can facilitate the acquisition of grammar: Learners speaking a language with syntax similar to that of the target language tend to have less difficulty with articles, word order and relative clauses. (p. 272)

Positive transfer facilitates second language acquisition (SLA) by allowing learners to use their native language (L1) knowledge as a foundation for learning a second language (L2), The similarities in vocabulary, phonetics, syntax, and grammar between L1 and L2 enhance comprehension and reduce learning time. For example, shared cognates or phonetic systems can accelerate vocabulary acquisition and pronunciation accuracy.

1.4.2.2 Negative Transfer

This type of transfer occurs when the language patterns of the acquired language and the target language are different. These differences make the learning process difficult, and lead

learners to make errors in terms of forms and pronunciation in the target language, According to Troike (2006) Language interference is the inappropriate application of L1 rules or structures in FL use. Nevertheless, the terms language interference and negativetransfer are often used as equivalents. Similarly, Odlin (1989) and Murphy (2003) claim that negative language transfer is a phenomenon that refers to the misapplication of linguistic patterns and aspects as a part of the first language into the target language, either in speaking or writing. While many scholars associate this phenomenon with the influence of an individual's mother tongue on additional languages within their linguistic repertoire, language interference is not solely attributable to the first language.

In this study, negative transfer refers to the process by which a learner's existing knowledge of one language, whether their first language (L1) or another acquired language like a first or second foreign language, influences their writing forms or pronunciation of a target language (L2) in ways that depart from L2 rules. This phenomenon occurs when linguistic features from a previously learned language are inappropriately applied to the L2 for instance, phonological patterns and lexical usage, leading to systematic errors additionally negative transfer extends beyond L1 influence; it can also originate from any previously acquired language within a multilingual individual's linguistic repertoire, especially when those languages share similar patterns and structures (e.g., French and English).

1.5 Phonological Interference

Phonological interference is a major factor leading to mispronunciation of English as a foreign language. The influence of one language's phonological features can be observed in areas such as vowels, consonants, stress, and intonation.

1.5.1 Definition of Phonological Interference

Phonological interference (PI) refers to the influence of a L1 sound system on the pronunciation of L2, it involves the transfer of phonemes, stress, or intonation patterns (Odlin, 1989, Ellis, 1997). In other words, when a learner's L1 influences their L2 pronunciation, phonetic patterns of L1 are transferred to L2. As Weinreich (1968) explains, phonological interference occurs when a bilingual speaker applies the sound system of the first language (French) to the second (English), often due to the differences between the phonological structures of the two languages. In simpler view a bilingual may unconsciously replace unfamiliar L2 sound with the closest equivalents from L1. As he further explains that PI is mainly results from differences in the set of phonemes between languages in contact such as

French and English, often leading to errors in pronunciation which effect the intelligibility of the L2.

1.5.2 Areas of Phonological Interference Between French and English

Phonological interference between French and English arises from structural differences in their sound systems, affecting areas such as pronunciation of consonants and vowels, stress placement, and intonation patterns.

1.5.2.1 Consonants Interference

The phonological system of English and French differ significantly, especially in terms of their consonant and vowel systems. These distinctions are major source of pronunciation difficulties; often lead to mispronunciation. The most notable contrast between the two languages consonants involve differences in place and manner of articulation English includes several phonemes that are either absent in French or articulated differently, Among the most problematic are the voiceless and voiced dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/, as in think and this , do not exist in French and are often replaced with /s, /t/,/z/,or/d, For instance think maybe pronounced as sink or tink ,and this as zis or dis as these phonemes plays a distinctive role in English. Another area of difficulty is the English rhotic /ɹ/ which is typically replaced by the French uvular /ʁ/, thus effecting the clarity of rhotic sounds, also tend to palatalize certain plosives; /t/, /k/, and /g/, when these occur in initial or medial positions. Devoicing of voiced consonants and the mispronunciation of consonant clusters; Initial consonant clusters especially those beginning with /s/like street, spring also pose challenges, often adding a vowel to facilitate pronunciation. In addition to devoicing of final voiced stops e.g. /b/, /d/, /g/may also occur because final voicing is less common in French. (Swan & Smith, 2001)

1.5.2.2 Vowels Interference

Vowels often cause more serious errors in speaking in English especially for whom their 1FL is French. English vowels system distinguishes between /ɪ/ versus /i:/, which does not exist in French. Consequently, it leads to confusion between minimal pairs such sheep and ship. Reduced vowels /ɪ/ and /ʊ/ are often replaced by their counterparts' /i/ and /u/, leading to confusion in words such as *pool* and *pull*. French nasal vowels and front rounded vowels (/y/, /ø/, /œ/) have no English equivalents. The vowel /æ/ as in cat has no equivalent in so it is replaced by /a/ or /ɛ/. Moreover, diphthongs in English are replaced by monophthongs in French as such, the diphthong /aɪ/ in time may be simplified to /a/, affecting clarity of speech. (Swan and Smith, 2001)

1.5.2.3 Stress and Intonation interference

Beyond consonants and vowels, stress and intonation are also areas where L1 interference is pronounced. In French, stress is regular and usually falls on the last syllable of a word or a phrase and emotions are not involved.

In English stress patterns change from word to word and must be memorized, this results in speakers of French speak English with an even pitch which make their speech soft and it may confuse the listener. French speakers already acquired that fixed syllables and are faced by the non-fixed stress which leads to problems (Swan & Smith, 2001)

1.6 Lexical Influence

The linguistic relationship between French and English represents one of the most significant and long-lasting examples of language contact. This extensive contact has led to a notable vocabulary overlap between the two languages, manifested through various phenomena including borrowing, loan words, and cognates. The historical, political, and cultural connections between French and English-speaking regions have created a dynamic exchange of vocabulary that continues to develop in today's globalized and digitally connected world.

1.6.1 Definition of Lexical Interference

The term lexical interference, originally from physics and later adopted by psychology, was introduced into linguistics by members of the Prague School. Austrian linguist Hugo Schuchardt (1950 as qtd in Abduhamidovna, 2020) emphasized that language mixing is not merely the result of borrowing words, but rather a deeper process of adaptation and simplification between contact languages. It is also defined as the influence of one language on another in terms of vocabulary usage, where words, expressions, or meanings are transferred across linguistic boundaries. Pavlenko (2014). He further highlights that such interference is often systematic and shaped by cognitive, social, and contextual factors.

From a cognitive viewpoint, lexical interference results from the co-activation of both language systems in bilinguals. Kroll et al. (2015) argue that even highly proficient bilinguals experience lexical interference because both languages remain active during language processing.

In multilingual settings, lexical interference is often influenced by the status and domains of use of each language. In their study of language contact in postcolonial societies, Bullock and Toribio (2012) show that dominant or high-status languages like English or French

often contribute more lexicon to minority languages than vice versa. This is evident in Algeria, where French continues to contribute significant vocabulary situation while English has gained prominence as the global language of science, technology, and international communication.

1.6.2 Borrowing and Loan Words

Language contact often results in lexical borrowing, leading to the integration of foreign words into a language's vocabulary. Lexical borrowing refers to the adoption of words from one language into another. Haugen (1950) provides a foundational classification of these processes. He identifies three main types of borrowing: loanwords, loan blends, and loan shifts.

Loanwords involve the direct adoption of a word from one language into another, often with minor phonological adjustments. For instance, English borrowed *entrepreneur*, *Symphonie*, and *psychologie* from French. Conversely, French borrowed English-origin terms such as *technology*, *statistic*, and *information*, particularly in fields like science, media, and business (Durkin, 2014).

Loan blends combine elements from both the source and recipient languages. While pure examples of blends are limited in this list, related constructions can be seen in terms like *technologie de l'information* in French, which blends the borrowed word *technologie* with a native structure to mirror the English *information technology*.

Loan shifts occur when a native word in the borrowing language takes on a new meaning due to the influence of a foreign equivalent. For example, the French word "*contrôle*" originally meant "to verify" or "to inspect," but under the influence of the English word *control*, it is increasingly used to mean "to dominate or manage."

As Baugh and Cable (2013) describe, over 10,000 French words were borrowed into English during the Middle English period, many of which are still in use today. Similarly, Walter (2001) points out that French, during its imperial and colonial expansions, incorporated English terms, particularly in modern technological and cultural domains. Loanwords are direct borrowings with minimal phonological or morphological adaptation. French loanwords in English span numerous semantic domains, reflecting the various areas of French cultural and intellectual influence throughout history.

In the domains of law and administration, French has contributed terms such as "justice," "court," "judge," "jury," "attorney," "plaintiff," "defendant," and "evidence." These terms reflect the Norman French influence on the English legal system following the Conquest.

The culinary domain features numerous French borrowings, including "cuisine," "restaurant," "chef," "menu," "appetizer," "entrée," "dessert," "café," and "cuisine." These terms reflect the historical prestige of French gastronomy and its influence on international culinary practices.

In fashion and luxury, French has contributed words such as "couture," "boutique," "chic," "elegant," "fashion," "style," "luxury," and "prestige," reflecting France's historical leadership in these domains.

The arts and culture domain includes French borrowings such as "ballet," "theatre," "art," "music," "literature," "renaissance," "baroque," "genre," and "critique," highlighting the significant French contribution to Western artistic and cultural traditions.

1.6.3 Cognates

According to Hockett (1958), cognates are words that originate from the same ancestral language and typically share phonological and semantic similarities. This concept has been expanded in bilingual studies to include true cognates; words with similar form and meaning, and false cognates, which appear similar but differ in meaning (Dijkstra, Grainger, & Van Heuven, 1999).

Their presence in English and French is significant in second language acquisition as Saugera (2017) emphasizes that these cognates often preserve similar forms and meanings, making them useful for learners but also a source of confusion when meanings diverge.

Cognates can act as a kind of shortcut, allowing learners to make educated guesses about word meanings without needing explicit instruction every time. This can boost confidence and accelerate comprehension, particularly in reading. However, this similarity can also be misleading when words appear identical or nearly identical but carry different meanings. In such cases, learners might assume they understand the word correctly when they actually don't, this can cause small but frequent mistakes that are hard to notice and correct.

The influence of the French language on English extends far beyond vocabulary and reaches into pronunciation and word recognition, particularly through the presence of cognates. The large number of shared or similar-sounding words between French and English is not accidental but the result of deep historical and lexical contact. These cognates, whether true or false, play a critical role in shaping how learners perceive and pronounce new vocabulary. Because many borrowed French words in English retain elements of their original French phonology such as stress patterns or vowel qualities, learners often transfer French-like

pronunciations into their English usage, consciously or not. This highlights how lexical borrowing does not only affect meaning, but also pronunciation patterns, especially in formal and academic registers where French-origin words are most common.

1.7 Conclusion

Exploring the phonological differences shows that mastering a language is not about only learning new word or sounds. it requires learners to adjust habits deeply rooted in their first language. In Algeria where French has a strong influence, the shift toward English presents both opportunities and challenges. Recognizing the specific areas of interference is not only useful for improving pronunciation and communication but also essential for developing more effective teaching strategies. By addressing both the phonological and lexical difficulties, educators can help learners move from imitation towards true language competence.

Chapter Two

Methodology and data analysis

Chapter Two: Methodology and Data Analysis

2.1 Introduction

The current chapter details the methodology used to explore the influence of French phonology on the English pronunciation. It describes the research design, participants, data collection tools, and the procedures. In order to validate the aim, and hypotheses of the study it adopts a mixed method; a structured classroom observation was selected as primary collection instrument, supported by an observation checklist and recordings, focusing on identifying the French interference in segmental and suprasegmental features and teachers' role, to complement the observation, a semi-structured questionnaire was also employed, including both open-ended and close-ended questions. The chapter also includes an interpretation and discussion of the observed interference and questionnaire responses, following it by discussing the limitations encountered during the research process and offers pedagogical recommendations based on the results.

2.2 Research Design

The research investigates the impact of French language on English language pronunciation among FLL (French language learners). This study adopts exploratory, mixed-methods approach, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments, specifically, a structured classroom observation in a form of checklist, supported by audio recordings of students' during the sessions. Additionally, a semi-structured questionnaire directed to students to gather direct feedback on their perception and experiences with learning English, explore their linguistic background, and test their awareness of the phonological interference.

2.2.1 Sample

The study was conducted in the second semester of the academic year 2024/2025 at Relizane University; the selected population of this research consisted of first-year license students in the French department who study English language as a module. The sample included three (3) groups for the classroom observation. For the questionnaire, a total of forty (40) students were selected.

Before finalizing the sample, an initial session of classroom observation was conducted to ensure that the selected students were appropriate for the objectives of the study. This

preliminary observation confirmed that the learners met the necessary criteria for investigating phonetic interference from French in their English pronunciation.

The selection of first-year students from the French department was guided by specific considerations:

Those students have a good grasp of English in the past years of their education, making it easier to identify specific phonetic interference from French.

The learners are in the beginning of their specialized studies in the French department, the effect on their English pronunciation can be clearly observed.

These characteristics make them an appropriate sample for investigating pronunciation issues, and the findings may inform teaching methods and materials in multilingual higher education contexts.

2.3 Data Collection Instruments

To achieve the objectives of the study, it employs a mixed-methods integrating both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of French language on English language pronunciation and the factors behind it. This approach allows gathering of both observable phonetic and phonological patterns and collect students' opinions towards the awareness of the phonological interference between the two languages,

Two main tools were selected for data collection: structured classroom observation and a questionnaire. The structured classroom observation was chosen because it allows to directly witness students' natural pronunciation patterns in order to identify how French phonetics influence English pronunciation. It also provides a systematic and objective account of specific behaviors to identify patterns, frequency, and consistency in pronunciation-related actions. The questionnaire, on the other hand, was used to gather direct feedback from students about their experiences with learning English and the impact of French on their pronunciation. It also serves to complement the observational findings providing a clear image about the factors that cause the French influence on English pronunciation. Together, these tools provide a more complete picture of the phenomenon under investigation.

2.3.1 Description of the Observation

To gather valuable data, a structured classroom observation was conducted with the aim of identifying how French phonetic patterns influence students' English pronunciation. The observation involved three different groups of students, carried out over nine sessions each lasting one hour, to ensure a systematic and focused observation, a structured checklist was

used. It was divided into three (3) main sections: **accurate English pronunciation features, English mispronunciation affected by the French language, and the teacher's role.** The checklist included a total of seventeen (17) items, each targeting specific aspects of pronunciation and instructional support. The selection of these items was guided by insights gained from the literature review, particularly those related to common phonetic and phonological differences between French and English. A rating scale was applied to each item (1: Well observed, 2: Fairly observed, 3: Not observed) to assess the extent to which each behavior was noticed during the session. In addition to the checklist, classroom sessions were audio-recorded. The purpose of recording was to ensure accuracy, also allow for repeated listening during analysis. During the sessions participants completed reading tasks including an English passage, list of cognates and reciting sentences in both languages in order to detect the French influence in different areas.

2.3.2 Description of the Questionnaire

The semi-structured questionnaire was directed to a sample of 40 first-year students of the French department. It was designed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data through a combination of close-ended (multiple-choice, Likert scale) and open-ended (short written response) questions. The aim was to investigate and gather direct feedback from students about their experiences, emotional responses, and sociolinguistic perceptions with learning English and the impact of French on their pronunciation and cross-check the observational findings providing a clear image about the factors that cause the French influence on English pronunciation. The estimated time to complete the questionnaire was approximately 10 to 15 minutes. The collected data was intended to support the analysis of phonetic interference collected through the observation on teacher and learner attitudes towards the influence.

2.4 Analysis of Classroom Observation

Section one: Accurate English pronunciation

This section includes four (4) items: clarity and accuracy of English vowels, correct articulation of English consonants, appropriate rising and falling intonation in a sentence, correct articulation of English consonant, appropriate rising and falling intonation in a sentence and correct syllable and word stress placement.

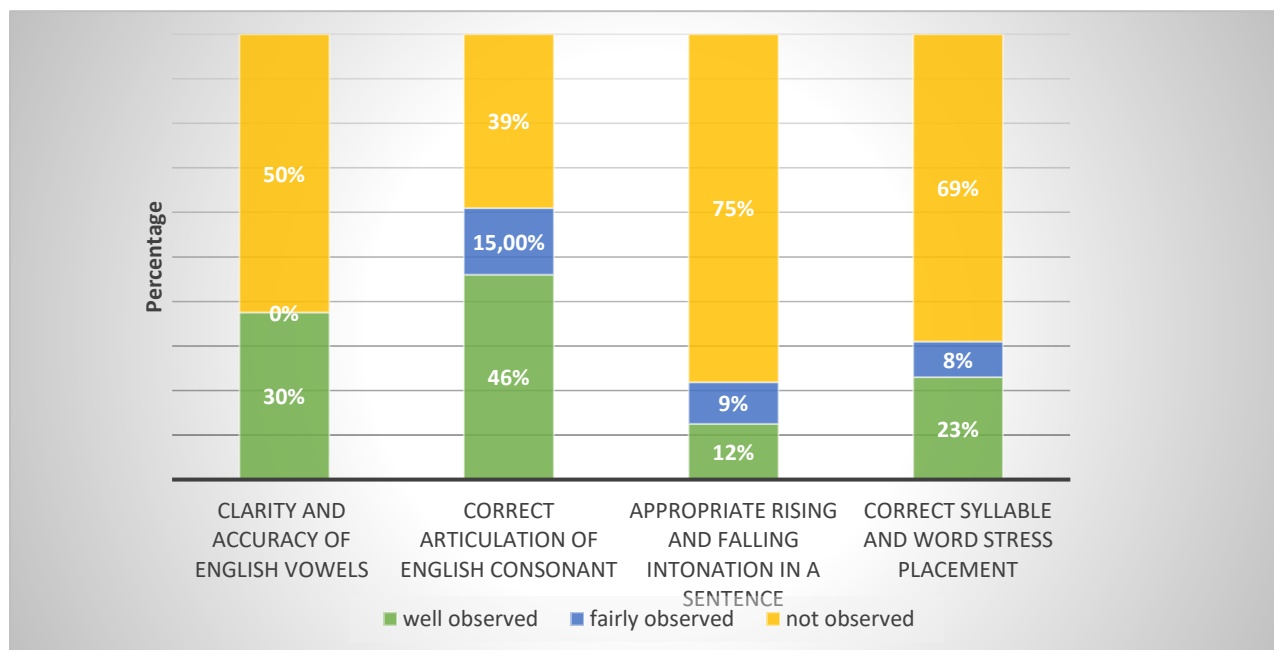


Figure 3: learner's accuracy in English pronunciation

As shown in the figure above, the clarity and accuracy of English vowels production were not observed in 50% of the sessions. This indicates that the majority of FLL struggled with articulation, either mispronouncing or replacing them with their French equivalent. In contrast, accurate vowel articulation was clearly observed in only 30% of the sessions.

Regarding consonant production, proper articulation noted in 46% of the sessions, while 15% was fairly observed characterized by a hesitation and immediate self-correction, however in 39% of the session's consonants were misarticulated especially in long words and in pronouncing silent consonant like the /p/ in psychology and Errors also occurred with consonant digraphs such as "gh," "ph," "th," and "gn,"

Another item was included, the appropriate rising and falling intonation in a sentence reading the sentences in an appropriate intonation was well observed in only 12% of the sessions and fairly observed in 9% where students showed signs of uncertainty while reading, but in 75% of the sessions, proper intonation was not observed, referring to a significant difficulty in

sentence's pitch. Lastly, the syllable and word stress placement, the accuracy was evident in 23% of the sessions learners managed to read word using the right stress placement either for verbs or nouns, fairly observed in 8% of the sessions and not observed in 69% of the sessions most of the students read words using an equal and even stress without paying attention to the kind of words or their meaning, suggesting that stress remains a challenge for students.

Section two: English mispronunciation affected by French language

We proposed this section for the sake of observing misarticulation of consonant, dropping final consonant, difficulty in pronouncing consonant clusters, pronouncing English r in French uvular "r" [ʁ], equal stress on all syllables, and overemphasis on final syllable.

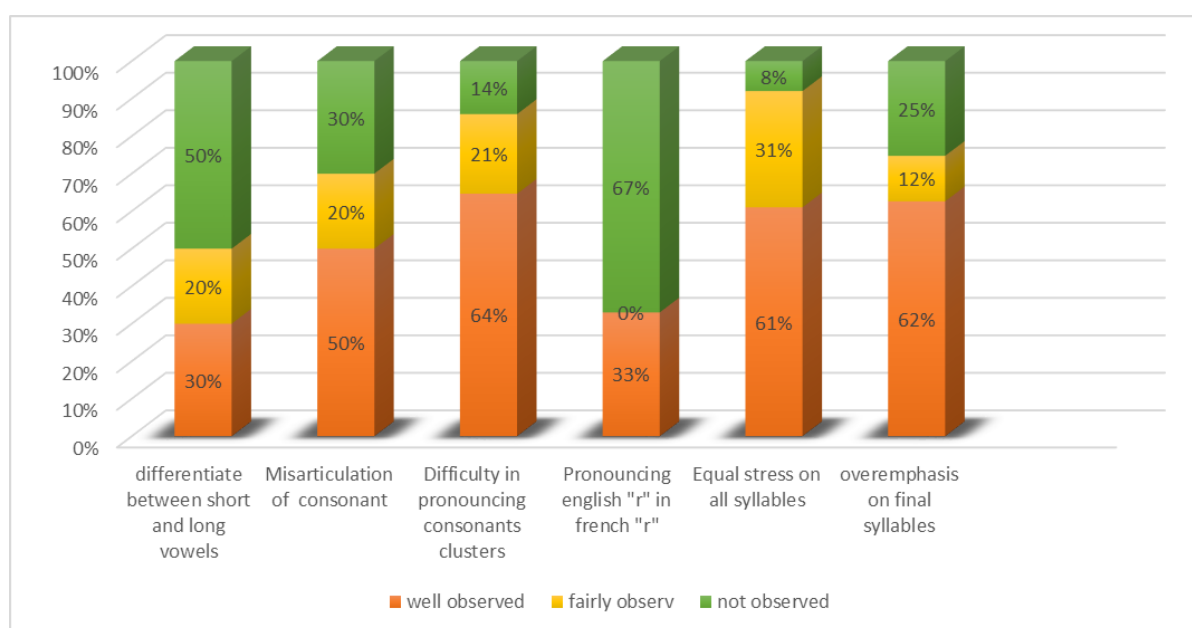


Figure 4: French influence in learner's English pronunciation

The distinction between short and long vowels in English was challenging. We noticed that 50% of the sessions, students had a difficulty distinguishing between short and long vowel sounds in words like note /nout/, name /neim/. In 30% of the sessions, students were able to make this distinction well, while in 20% the distinction was fairly observed.

Misarticulating consonants, in 20% of the sessions we observed that learner mispronounced certain consonants, articulating consonant sounds in French language. However, in 50% of the session the mispronunciation was not observed at all; the students differentiate well between French and English consonants, and in 30% of the observation sessions, the misarticulation of the consonants was fairly accurate characterized by the immediate correction while reading and speaking.

Difficulty in pronouncing consonant clusters, in 64% of the sessions the issue was well observed which indicates that learners clearly struggled with consonant clusters in words like tragedy, statistic, entrepreneur, symphony and catastrophe (appendix), students tried to pronounce such words adding vowels or omitting some consonants. In 21% of the sessions the struggle of consonants clusters was fairly observed in 21% of sessions identified by reading at a slow pace or they show hesitation at the point of consonant clusters. In 8% of the sessions the issue was not observed, the learners were able to produce the clusters accurately.

Section 03: teacher's role

The items addressed in this section are: the teacher simplifies instructions for students, the teacher correct the student's mispronunciation, the teacher asks students to repeat the corrected answers, and the teacher explains the difference of pronunciation between the two languages.

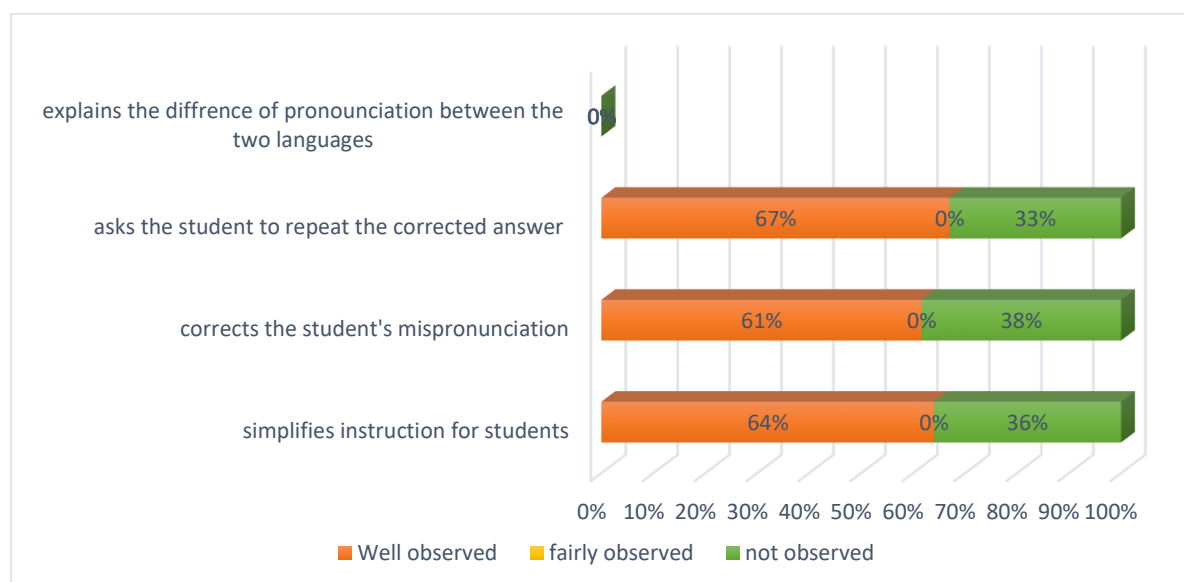


Figure 5: Teacher's involvement in pronunciation improvements

The teacher simplifies the instructions of any activities in 64% of the sessions. However, in 36% of the sessions this role was not observed.

In 61% of the sessions observed, the teacher actively correct student's mispronunciation which is a positive element that indicate the teacher's attention to phonological accuracy. On the other hand, the behavior was absent in 38% of sessions.

Another behavior was mentioned, the teacher asks the students to repeat the corrected answers, the figure above shows in 67% of sessions the teacher, the teacher encourages students to repeat the corrected answers, which is a good instructional strategy although in 33% of the

observations, this technique was not implemented indicating that the teacher miss some mispronunciation.

The last item is the teacher explains the difference of pronunciation between the two languages was entirely absent during the nine sessions

2.5 Analysis of the Students' Questionnaire

Section01: Background information

Question01: Participants were asked to indicate their gender

Table 4: Students' gender

Gender	Number of students	Percentage
Male	03	7.32%
Female	37	92.68%
Total	40	100%

As shown in the Table 2.1, (7.32%) of the students are males. However, the great majority of the students are females, with (92.68%) of the whole population. This means that females are more motivated to study the English language than males. And this represents the nature of the population in the overall French department.

Question02: Students provided their age by selecting from given age ranges

Table 5: Students' age

Age	Number of students	Percentage
18-23	37	92.5%
24-29	0	0%
30-35	03	7.5%
Total	40	100%

We note through the table 2.2 that among the 40 participants, the majority (92.5%) were aged between 18 and 23 years old. No students were aged between 24 and 29 years old. A small

portion (7.5%) of the participants were aged between 30 and 35 years old. This indicates that most first-year FLL are in the younger age group of 18–23.

Section 02: Difficulties and challenges of speaking English

Question01: Students were asked whether they experience difficulty when switching from French to English while speaking.

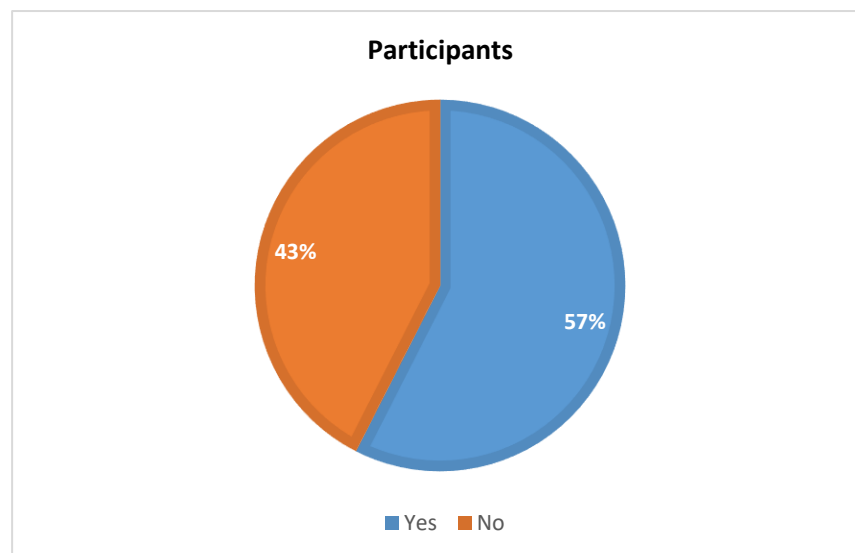


Figure 6: Students' responses on the difficulty when switching from French to English

displayed in the figure 2.1 showcasing the study sample, among 40 participants, 57.5% reported experiencing difficulties when switching from French to English during speaking, while the rest whose percentage estimated at 42.5% indicated that they do not face such difficulties. This result suggests that more than half of the students may struggle with language interference, which could be related to vocabulary, grammar or/and pronunciation, when transitioning between French and English.

Question02: Participants shared how often they pronounce English words with a French accent/patterns.

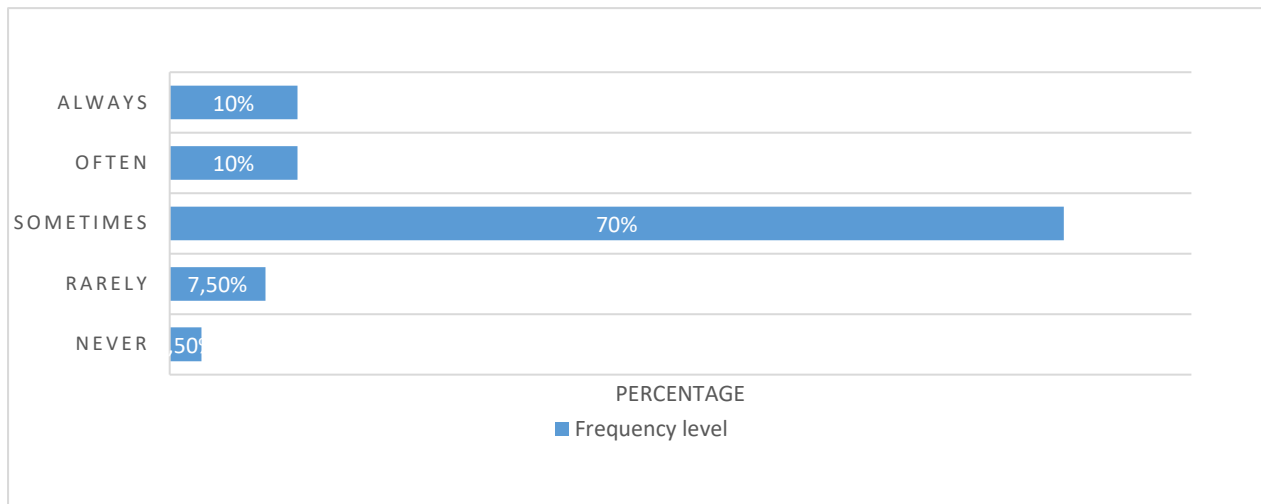


Figure 7: Students' reported frequency of French interference in English pronunciation

As it is shown through the figure 2.2 the majority of students (70%) reported that they sometimes pronounce English words with a French accent. A smaller percentage (10%) indicated that they often do so, and another 10% stated that they always experience this interference. Meanwhile, 7.5% of the participants mentioned that it rarely happens, and only 2.5% said it never happens. These results suggest that pronunciation transfer from French into English is a frequent occurrence among first-year FLL, which could significantly impact their English-speaking proficiency.

Question03: Responses were gathered on how speaking French impacts English pronunciation.

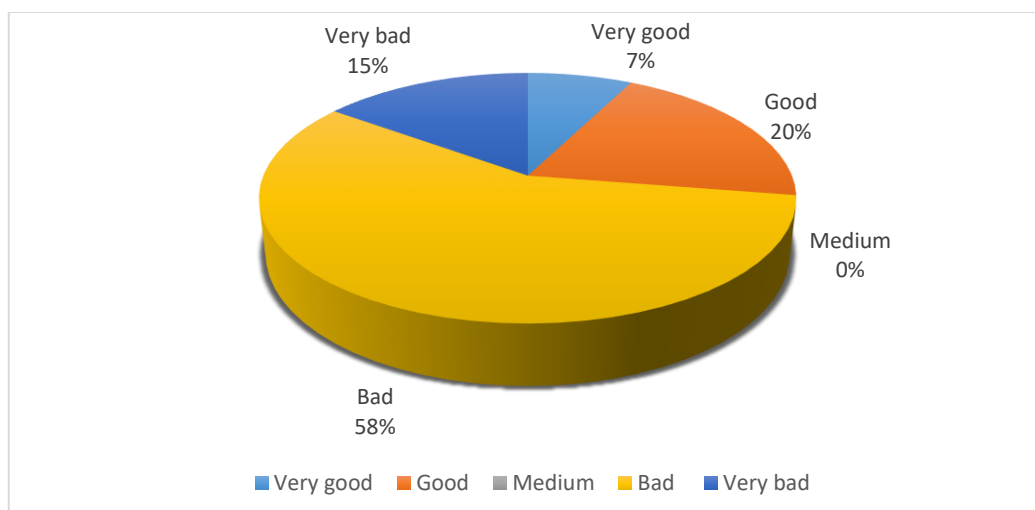


Figure 8: Students' perception of the impact of French on their English Pronunciation

As the figure shows, the majority of students (57.5%) believe that speaking French negatively affects their English pronunciation, selecting "Bad", followed by (15%) who chose

“Very Bad.” In contrast, (20%) felt it had a “Good” influence, and only (7.5%) selected “Very Good.” Notably, no students chose “Medium”. This suggests that many students are conscious of negative transfer from French into English, and have mentioned that is due to differences in phonology, stress patterns, one of the participants said **“I got used to French and I rarely use English”** this explains the nature of French department students’ articulation habits. In contrast, those who consider French helpful mentioned they perceive phonetic similarities and shared vocabulary between the two languages as supportive in pronouncing certain English words, a participant had another interesting opinion said **“Speaking French can have both positive and negative effects on your English pronunciation”**. These contrasting views reflect the complex influence of previously learned languages on English pronunciation development.

Question04: Respondents listed English words they personally find difficult to pronounce due to French phonetic influence.

Table 6: Phonetic features in difficult English words reported by students

Category of Difficulty	Example Words from Students	Explanation
/θ/ and /ð/ sounds (voiceless/voiced th)	<i>Thought, Through</i>	These sounds do not exist in French; students often replace them with /s/ or /z/.
Consonant Clusters & Syllable Reduction	<i>Comfortable, Government, Strictly, Literature</i>	French learners often struggle with consonant clusters or drop unstressed syllables.
Vowel Complexity / Diphthongs	<i>Mutual, Genuine, Assure</i>	Diphthong sounds like /ju:/ or diphthongs don't occur the same way in French.
Word Stress / Rhythm	<i>Confidential, Literally, Unfortunately, Phenomenon</i>	English has stress-timed rhythm; French is syllable-timed, leading to unnatural stress in English words.
Unusual R combinations / R-colored vowels	<i>Rural, Squirrel</i>	The English /r/ is pronounced differently and can be hard when paired with /l/ or in complex structures.

As shown in Table 2.3, students' pronunciation difficulties can be grouped into several common categories influenced by French phonetics. Many reported struggling with English sounds that do not exist in French, such as the /θ/ sound in words like “*thought* and *through*.” Others had difficulty with consonant clusters and syllable reduction, seen in words like “*comfortable* and *government*.” Some responses also reflected issues with vowel diphthongs, word stress, and English /r/ sounds, especially in words like “*mutual*, *confidential*, and *rural*.”

Overall, these results highlight typical areas of interference from French when learning English pronunciation.

Section03: Language Importance and Preferences

Question01: Participants expressed which language English or French they believe is more important for Algerians to learn.

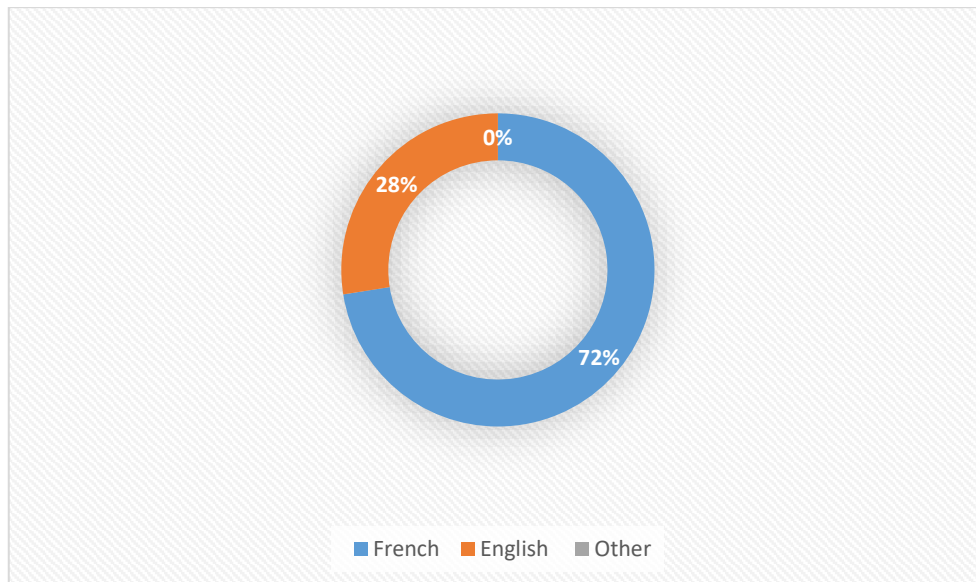


Figure 9: Students' opinions on the most important language for Algerians to learn

As the figure 2.4 demonstrates, a majority of students (72.5%) believe that French is more important for Algerians to learn, while only (27.5%) prioritized English. The study sample showed that this preference is influenced by the historical and institutional presence of French in Algeria, particularly in education, administration, and media. Many students likely view French as more practical in daily life and job markets within the country. On the other hand, those who chose English associated it with global communication, academic opportunities, and international careers, reflecting a growing awareness of English as a global lingua franca. The contrast between these two perspectives highlights the ongoing tension between local linguistic realities and global language trends in the Algerian context.

Question02: Students identified the main reason they believe English is becoming more present and important for learners.

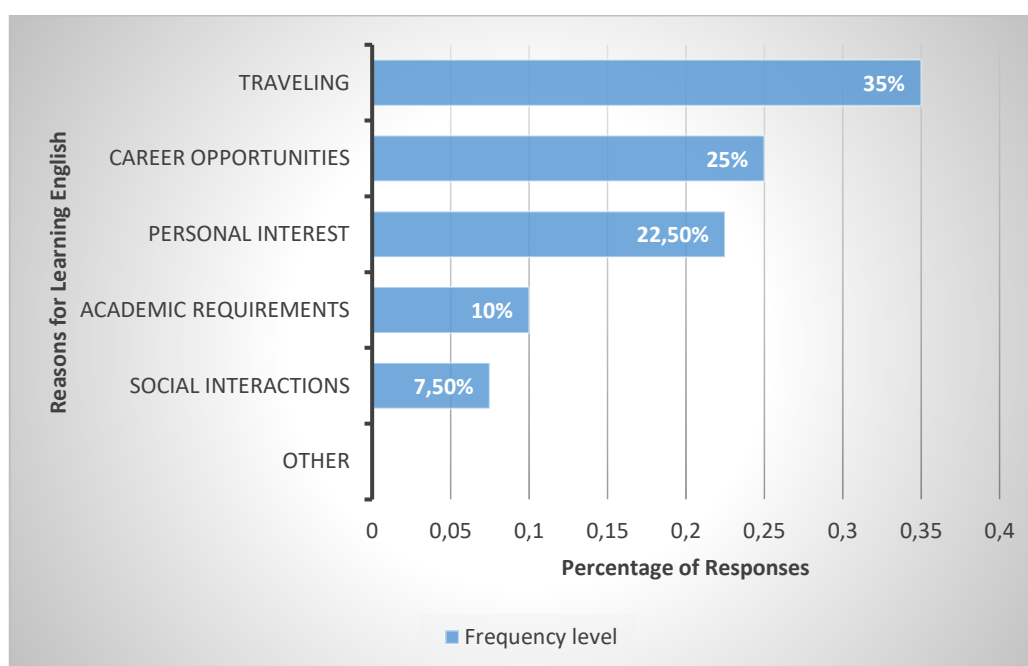


Figure 10: Factors behind the rising importance of English

We note through the figures 2.5 that the most common reason students believe English is becoming more important is for traveling (35%), followed by career opportunities (25%) and personal interest (22.5%). Fewer students selected academic requirements (10%) and social interactions (7.5%), while none chose the “Other” category. These results suggest that students primarily view English as a practical tool for mobility and employment, rather than just a school subject. The presence of traveling and job-related motivations reflects English’s global role in communication and access to international opportunities. Personal interest also plays a significant role, indicating a degree of genuine motivation among learners.

Section04: English Language Learning Experience

Question01: Participants shared whether they enjoyed English classes during middle and high school.

Table 7: Students’ perceptions of English classes in middle and high school

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	35	87.5
No	5	12.5

Looking at the table 2.4, it becomes clear that most students have had a positive experience with English classes during their middle and high school years. The vast majority

of students (87.5%) reported that they enjoyed English classes in middle and high school, while only 12.5% said they did not. This positive attitude toward earlier English instruction may be due to teaching methods, the nature of content, or early motivation to learn the language.

Question02: Students reported how frequently their English classes focus on pronunciation practice.

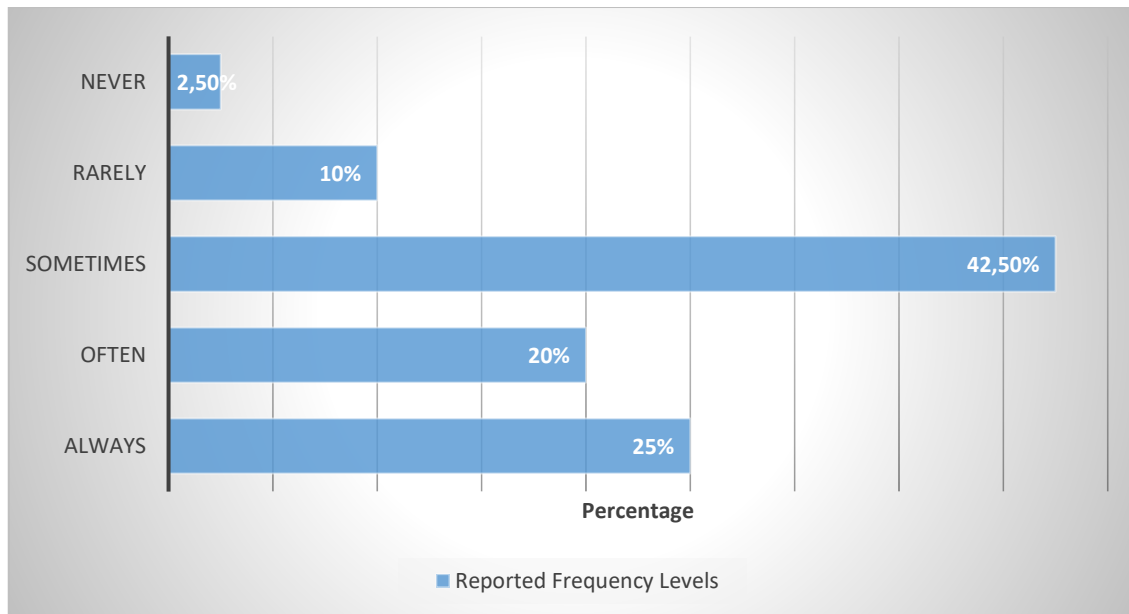


Figure 11: Frequency of pronunciation practice in English classes

According to the figure 2.6 above, the majority of students (42.5%) reported that their English classes sometimes focus on pronunciation practice. (25%) of students said that pronunciation is a regular part of their classes, answering with always, while (20%) mentioned often. Only a small portion of students felt that pronunciation is rarely (10%) or never (2.5%) addressed. These results indicate that while pronunciation practice is included in many English classes, it is not always given consistent attention.

Question03: Responses were collected about how students integrate English into their daily activities.

Table 8: Students' engagement with English outside the classroom

Activities	Frequency	Percentage
Watching English movies/TV shows	13	32.5 %
Listening to English music/podcasts	13	32.5 %
Speaking with friends	8	20 %
Using language learning apps	3	7.5 %
None of the above	3	7.5 %

The data displayed in the table 2.5 shows that students most commonly incorporate English through watching movies or TV shows and listening to music or podcasts, each chosen by 32.5% of respondents. Speaking with friends was selected by 20% of students, while only 7.5% reported using language learning apps or engaging in none of the listed activities. These findings indicate that passive exposure through media plays a more prominent role in students' use of English outside the classroom than active or interactive methods. This may suggest a preference for informal, entertainment-based learning over structured or communicative practice.

Section05: Emotional and Psychological Aspects

Question01: Participants reflected on their emotional response when speaking or reading in English.

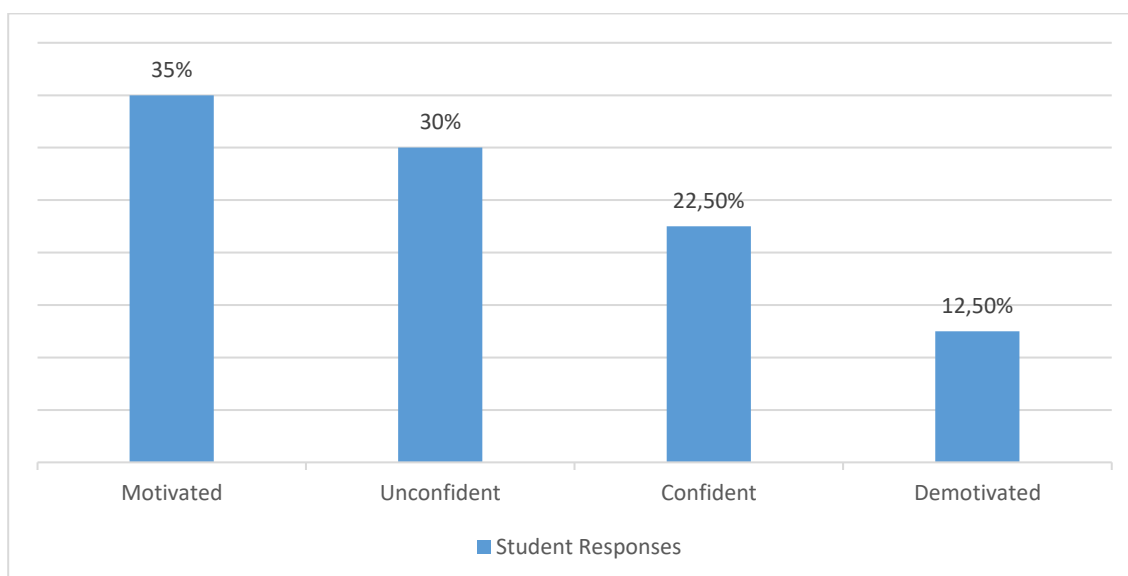


Figure 12: Students' emotional responses to speaking and reading in English

As illustrated in the figure 2.7, students most frequently described themselves as motivated (35%) when speaking or reading in English, followed by unconfident (30%). A smaller group reported feeling confident (22.5%), while (12.5%) indicated feeling demotivated. These results reflect a mixed emotional response: while motivation is relatively high, a significant portion of students still struggle with confidence.

Question02: Students indicated whether fear of making mistakes affects their pronunciation.

Table 9: Impact of fear of making mistakes on students' pronunciation

Response	Number of Students	Percentage
Yes	25	62.5%
No	15	37.5%
Total	40	100%

The table 2.6 reveals that a majority of students (62.5%) reported that fear of making mistakes affects their pronunciation, while (37.5%) said it does not. This highlights the

significant role that psychological factors particularly anxiety or fear play in oral language performance.

Question03: Participants described how often their pronunciation errors are corrected by teachers or classmates.

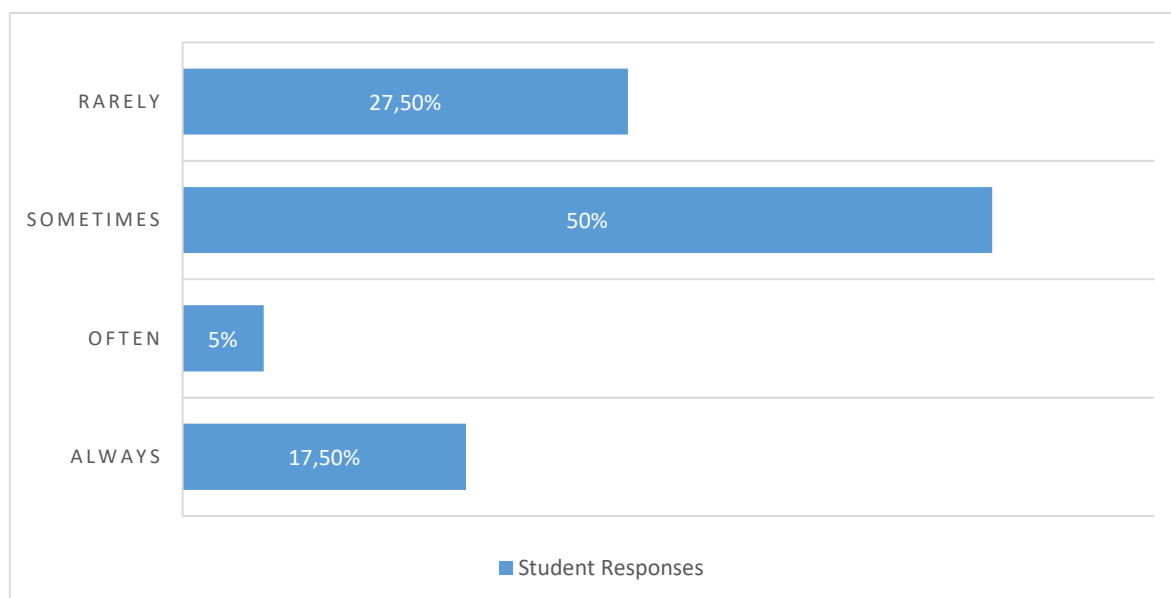


Figure 13: Frequency of pronunciation corrections by teacher and classmates

As the figure shows, half of the students (50%) said that their pronunciation mistakes are corrected sometimes, while (27.5%) said rarely, and (17.5%) said always. Only (5%) reported being corrected often. These results suggest that pronunciation correction is present but not consistent. Many students may not receive enough regular feedback, which could affect their ability to improve.

2.6 Discussion of the Findings

2.6.1 Discussion of the Classroom Observation

The observation data reveals significant challenges faced by FLL in pronouncing accurate English, the data found focus on three main sections: correct English pronunciation, the impact of French on English, and teachers' role. The selected items from sections reflects the strongest French phonology on learner.

One of the most noticed challenges was the clarity and accuracy of English vowels; in half of the sessions (50%) students failed to produce English vowels correctly, often replacing them with their French equivalent, do not differentiate between the two vowels systems', English has larger vowel repertoire than French which has a simpler vowel sound. Learners appeared unaware of these distinctions, leading to mispronunciation.

In addition to vowel confusion, learners struggled with correct syllables and word stress placement. In 69% of the sessions, students applied equal stress to all syllables, repeating the prosodic pattern of French, which often stresses the final syllables of words. In contrast, English stress pattern is more functional and can change the meaning or the grammatical function of the word. The lack of awareness resulted in flat and soft speech.

Another suprasegmental feature is intonation. The appropriate rising and falling intonation were rarely observed, with only 12% of sessions showing accurate tone. Student often read sentences with a monotonous intonation which refers to the intonation found in French because English relies on pitch variation to show emotions, grammatical structure and speaker intention.

French phonological interference was also evident in the mispronunciation of consonant clusters. In 64% of sessions, students had noticeable difficulty with English words containing clusters often inserting vowels between the consonant or omitting consonants entirely. This due to the fact that French uses fewer complex clusters than English. The learners' intention to simplify these clusters reflects a transfer from their first foreign language phonetic rules.

Finally, the role of the teacher emerged as an important factor, though inconsistently applied. In the majority of the observed sessions, the teacher corrected learners' mispronunciation effected by French language and encouraged them to repeat corrected forms. These practices are essential for reinforcing accurate production and helping learners grasp and master the correct pronunciation. However, in a significant number such interventions were either absent or inconsistent including the last item when teacher explains the difference between the two languages' pronunciation which is a crucial factor that help student distinguish between French and English.

2.6.2 Questionnaire Discussion

This section presents an analysis of the data collected from the questionnaire administered to 40 first-year FLL. The findings are organized into five key themes that emerged from the participants' responses: demographics and language background, the influence of French background on English pronunciation, emotional and motivational factors, classroom practices and language use in everyday life. Each theme sheds light on the linguistic challenges students face and offers insights into the factors shaping their English pronunciation development.

The questionnaire began with basic demographic data to provide context for the participants' language learning experiences. The majority of the participants were female (38 out of 40), which reflects a common gender imbalance observed in French language department in Ahmed Zabana university. Most students (37 out of 40) fell within the 18–23 age range.

This age group is particularly relevant because younger learners often have a higher cognitive flexibility for pronunciation acquisition, yet they are also more exposed to phonological interference from their dominant or previously learned languages in this case, French. Their educational background, being rooted first in Arabic and then in French, provides insight into the kind of phonetic habits they may carry over when learning English.

A central focus of the questionnaire was understanding the factors responsible on how French affects students' pronunciation in English. A majority of respondents indicated that they do face difficulties when switching from French to English, with 23 out of 40 confirming this challenge. Furthermore, when we asked about the extent of this influence, 23 rated the impact as “bad” and 6 as “very bad”, while very few viewed the influence positively.

These findings reflect a clear negative phonological transfer from French to English. Students reported a list of English words they find difficulties pronouncing them since they have sounds and stress patterns unfamiliar in French. A list of frequently mispronounced words such as **“thought,” “squirrel,” “comfortable,” and “through”** reveals trouble with consonant clusters, silent letters, and unfamiliar vowel sounds, which significantly differ from French phonetics.

The fact that many students find themselves pronouncing English with French patterns **“sometimes” (28 responses)** suggests that the interference is habitual and subconscious. This reinforces the idea that phonetic habits from L2 (French) are being transferred into L3 (English) pronunciation.

The data also indicates students' perceptions of engaging in speaking or reading English. Although 14 students described themselves as motivated and 9 as confident, a combined 17 expressed negative emotional reactions (12 unconfident, 5 demotivated). This emotional difference suggests that while some students are enthusiastic (motivated) about improving, others are hindered by anxiety and lack of self-confidence, especially when it comes to pronunciation.

Further evidence of this comes from the question on fear of making mistakes. A majority of 25 students admitted that this fear affects their pronunciation, highlighting the psychological

barrier that pronunciation challenges create. This indicates that affective factors like fear, and classroom anxiety play a significant role in learners' oral performance, which is consistent with theories in second language acquisition (SLA).

Pronunciation instruction in class appears to be inconsistent. While 17 students said it is addressed “**sometimes**”, only 10 reported that it is “**always**” practiced, and the rest said rarely or never. This reflects a lack of systematic focus on pronunciation in the classroom, despite students facing significant challenges in this area.

Moreover, when asked how often teachers and classmates correct their pronunciation, most selected “**sometimes**” (20 responses) or “**always**” (7 responses). While correction is present, its irregularity may mean that students do not receive consistent feedback, which is crucial for developing pronunciation skills. Without guided correction, learners may continue reinforcing incorrect patterns influenced by French phonology.

When asked about how they use English outside class, students showed engagement with English through media and music (13 each), though fewer practiced speaking with friends or used language learning apps. This suggests that their reception skills (listening, watching) are stronger than productive ones like speaking, which may contribute to ongoing pronunciation difficulties.

The questionnaire also tackled whether students enjoyed English classes in middle and high school. The vast majority 35 said yes, suggesting a generally positive attitude toward the subject, despite the challenges. However, when asked which language (English or French) they believed was more important for Algerians to learn, 29 chose French, pointing to the strong sociolinguistic influence of French in Algeria’s educational and social systems.

Finally, when asked why English is becoming more present and important, most selected choices are travel (14), career opportunities (10), and personal interest (9). This suggests that learners are motivated by practical, real-world goals, even if their current classroom environment does not yet fully support those ambitions.

2.7 Summary of the Findings

There is strong support for the findings of this research study from the theoretical and empirical perspectives presented in Chapter One, especially with regard to language transfer and phonetic challenges in the target language learning process.

The majority of students in both the questionnaire and classroom observation displayed consistent pronunciation difficulties that align with what Odlin (1989) defines as negative transfer the misapplication of phonological rules from a previously learned language (in this case, French) to English. The distinction between the two languages is evident in the substitution of vowel sounds, the omission of consonant clusters, and in an incorrect stress pattern. Troike (2006) and Murphy (2003) suggest that language interference may occur from not only a learner's first language but also from any prior-acquired language, which reflects the influence of French (L2) on English (L3) in this case

From a cognitive perspective, the findings support Corder's (1993) notion that language transfer occurs from mental representations of the learner's prior linguistic system. The consistent mispronunciations observed in class and reported by students suggest that these errors are not isolated but are rooted in deeply phonetic habits shaped by French phonology. This reinforces the idea that pronunciation errors are often systematic rather than random, as predicted by interlanguage theory (Selinker, 1972).

The data also align with research on pronunciation pedagogy. Despite students' motivation, both data sets show that pronunciation instruction is inconsistently applied, reflecting what Gilbert (1994) called the "orphan status" of pronunciation in English language programs. While some teachers provided correction, few offered contrastive explanations between English and French phonetics, an approach supported by the contrastive analysis hypothesis and the communicative language teaching approach discussed by Celce-Murcia et al. (1996).

Finally, the lack of focus on suprasegmental features such as stress and intonation observed in the classrooms corresponds with Burns & Claire's (2003) view that these features are often overlooked, yet crucial for intelligibility. This suggests a gap between what the literature identifies as essential for pronunciation development and what is actually emphasized in the classroom.

The findings validate the necessity of tackling negative transfer by incorporating contrastive phonetic instruction, and balancing segmental and suprasegmental features in course designs.

2.8 Pedagogical Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed to improve students' pronunciation and overall phonological competence:

- Educational system should emphasize on phonetic and phonology module and teach it from the middle schools.
- A particular attention should be devoted to designing courses of phonetics and the selection of activities appropriately depends on students' needs.
- Collaboration between teachers of phonetics and oral expression is necessary to obtain good results of teaching pronunciation.
- Giving more roles to students in the classroom to interact and use the language through role plays, debates, and presentations, will highly improve their spelling and develop their pronunciation, providing authentic activities to reflect real-life situations.
- Recording and Self-Evaluation; by having students record themselves reading or speaking, then listen and compare with native pronunciation. This boosts awareness of mispronunciations and helps track improvement.
- Mouth and Articulation Training; teach students how to physically position the tongue, lips, and jaw for problematic sounds (especially those not found in French like /θ/, /ð/, or /ɪ/).
- Interactive Pronunciation Apps; recommend apps like “Elsa Speak”, “English sounds pronunciation” or “Forvo” for individual practice with feedback and native models.

2.9 Limitations of the Study

During the process of conducting this research project, a number of constraints appeared to hinder the accomplishment of this research study; in fact, the following limitations need to be highlighted:

- Due to time constraints, the researcher relied mainly on mixed-methods data collection instruments; therefore, another qualitative research instrument (interview with teachers) is likely to give other insights about the use of pronunciation learning strategies and accordingly triangulate the result of the quantitative data analysis.
- Each group had only one English session per week, so that led to limiting opportunities for extended observation.
- The arrival of the month of Ramadan further reduced class attendance, affecting both data collection and observation consistency.
- We were obliged to design reading activities due to lack of interaction of French students

- Teacher program and tests period limited the process of the observation.

2.10 Conclusion

This chapter revealed that students of first year in French department face ongoing pronunciation difficulties due to the influence of French phonology and inconsistent feedback, despite their motivation to learn English and their interest in the language their pronunciation skills are limited. To address these issues, general pedagogical recommendations call for integrating phonetics earlier in the curriculum, adopting interactive and contrastive approaches, and encouraging more student engagement in speaking activities. However, the study was limited by time, attendance issue, the absence of qualitative tool, which may have restricted the depth of the findings. Nonetheless, the research opens valuable perspectives for future studies and pedagogical reform in Algerian EFL settings.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

This research investigated the influence of French phonetic patterns on English pronunciation among first-year students in the French department at Relizane University. It aimed to analyze how features of French phonology affect learners' production of English sounds and prosody.

This study consisted of two chapters. The first one labelled phonological interaction: understanding the influence of French on English pronunciation, was divided into five sections. It dealt with the theoretical foundation and provided a detailed overview, including the definition of pronunciation, a comparison of English and French phonological systems, the sociolinguistic status of both languages in Algeria, and concluded by the concept of language transfer explaining the definition and types of language transfer and how can both affect language prosody.

The second chapter presented the research methodology and data analysis, including the research design followed by a description of the participants and the data collection instruments used, followed by the analyses of the raw data and interpretation of result. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, combining a structured classroom observation in a form of checklist, supported by audio recordings of students during pronunciation focused sessions. This tool targeted real-time phonological behavior among three groups over nine (9) sessions. Additionally, to further enhance the study results, a semi-structured questionnaire was administered to forty (40) students to gather students' perceptions of their pronunciation challenges and awareness of French interference. The chapter concluded with a set of pedagogical recommendations and limitations of the study.

Based on the data collected and analyzed, the findings confirmed the study's hypotheses; the first hypothesis, which proposed that French intonation and stress patterns affect the prosody of English spoken by students of the French department, was clearly evident in classroom observations findings. The second hypothesis, concerning the frequent mispronunciation of English vowels and consonant clusters committed by students of French department due to phonological interference, was confirmed through both observed patterns and responses to the questionnaire. Finally, the third hypothesis, which linked sociocultural variables such as learners' attitudes toward English and their motivation for learning affect their pronunciation outcomes, was supported by the data showing how emotional factors and classroom dynamics influenced students' oral performance. Furthermore, pronunciation

instruction in the observed classes was found to be inconsistent and lacking in contrastive phonetic explanation.

In conclusion, this study has demonstrated that French phonological interference remains a central obstacle to accurate English pronunciation among French department students. The results call for more structured and phonological informed pronunciation instruction where educational system should emphasize on phonetic and phonology module that directly addresses learners' specific challenges and builds their confidence in spoken English.

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Appendices

Appendices

Appendix 1 Observation Checklist

University of Relizane

Faculty of letters and languages

Department of English

Classroom observation checklist

Observer:

Teacher:

Group number:

Class observed:

Date:

Number of students:

Level:

Time:

Rating scale: 1: Well observed 2: Fairly observed 3: Not observed

Criteria	Statements	Extent of achievement		
Accurate English pronunciation	Clarity and accuracy of English vowels			
	Correct articulation of English consonant			
	Appropriate rising and falling intonation in a sentence			
	Correct syllable and word stress placement			
English mispronunciation affected by French language	differentiate between short and long vowels			
	Misarticulating the consonants			
	Dropping final consonant			
	Difficulty in pronouncing consonant clusters			
	Mispronouncing English schwa incorrectly			
	Pronouncing English “r” in French” r”			
	Equal stress on all syllables			
	Overemphasis on final syllables			
	Not linking words properly			
Teacher’s role	The teacher simplifies instructions for students			
	the teacher corrects the student’s mispronunciation			
	the teacher asks the student to repeat the corrected answer			
	The teacher explains the difference of pronunciation between the two languages			

Notes :

Appendix 2 Questionnaire of the Students

Questionnaire

Dear participants,

This questionnaire is directed for 1st year FFL students and has been developed to investigate factors influencing their English pronunciation and the difficulties they face while learning English, and find the possible solutions. The data will be used for academic purposes and we can assure that your privacy and information you provide will be strictly confidential. Thank you for your cooperation and participation in this study

First section: Background information

1. What is your gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

2. What is your age:

- ☐ 18-23
- ☐ 24-29
- ☐ 30-35

Second section: Difficulties and challenges of speaking English

1. Do you find difficulties at speaking when you switch from French to English language

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

2. How often do you find yourself pronouncing English words in French language?

- ☐ Never
- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Always

3. How does speaking French affect your English pronunciation? Justify

- ☐ Very good
- ☐ Good
- ☐ Medium
- ☐ Bad

☐ Very bad

.....
.....

4. List some English words you pronounce them in French:

.....

Third section: Language importance and preferences

1. Which language do you think is more important for Algerians to learn? Justify in both cases

☐ French

☐ English

☐ Other

.....
.....

2. Why is English becoming more present and important for students?

☐ Personal interest

☐ Academic requirements

☐ Career opportunities

☐ Social interactions

☐ Traveling

☐ Other: _____

Fourth section: English Language Learning Experience

1. Did you enjoy English classes in middle and high school?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. How often does your English class focus on pronunciation practice?

☐ Always

☐ Often

☐ Sometimes

- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ Never

3. Do you incorporate (use) English in any of these activities?

- ☐ Speaking with friends
- ☐ Using language learning apps
- ☐ Watching English movies/TV shows
- ☐ Listening to English music/podcasts
- ☐ None of the above

Fifth section: Emotional and Psychological Aspects

1. How do you feel when speaking or reading in English language?

- ☐ Confident
- ☐ Comfortable
- ☐ Stressed
- ☐ Demotivated

2. Does fear of making mistakes affect your pronunciation?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

3. How often do your teacher and classmates correct your mispronunciation?

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ Rarely

Thank you for your cooperation

Appendix 3 Task 01

The Amazing World of Artificial Intelligence

Imagine a world where robots can think, cars drive themselves, and computers understand your feelings. Sounds like a science fiction movie, right? Well, this is not the future it's happening right now! Artificial Intelligence (AI) is changing the way we live, work, and even play. Think about your smartphone. Have you ever asked Siri or Alexa a question? AI helps them understand your voice and give you the right answer in seconds. When you watch Netflix or YouTube, AI suggests movies and videos based on what you like. It's almost like the apps know you! AI is not just for fun, it also saves lives in hospitals, doctors use AI to find diseases faster and help patients get better treatment. Self-driving cars use AI to avoid accidents and keep roads safer. Even space scientists use AI to explore the universe and discover new planets!

But AI also has challenges. Some people worry that robots might take jobs away from humans. Others ask, "Can we trust AI to make big decisions?" If a robot makes a mistake, who is responsible? These are important questions that scientists and engineers are still trying to answer.

One thing is certain AI is here to stay, and it's only getting smarter! Maybe one day, AI will help solve climate change, cure diseases, or even build cities on Mars. The future is exciting, and AI is leading the way!

ChatGPT (OpenAI) on January 21, 2025

Appendix 4 Task 02

Task: read each pair of words aloud (the first words are in French and the second ones are their English equivalents).

- Corporation _ Corporation
- Hypothèse _ Hypothesis
- Métaphore _ Metaphor
- Investissement _ Investment
- Entrepreneur _ Entrepreneur
- Négociation _ Negotiation
- Évolution _ Evolution
- Psychologie _ Psychology
- Expérience _ Experience
- Symphonie _ Symphony
- Perspective _ Perspective
- Constitution _ Constitution
- Littérature _ Literature
- Tragédie _ Tragedy
- Statistique _ Statistic
- Phénomène _ Phenomenon
- Révolution _ Revolution
- Contrôle _ Control
- Technologie _ Technology
- Musique _ Music
- Climat _ Climate
- Analyse _ Analysis
- Existence _ Existence
- Information _ Information
- Catastrophe _ Catastrophe

Appendix 5 Task 03

Task 3: The following sentences are in both languages English and French read them aloud.

-How are you?

Comment allez vous?

-Why are you late?

Pourquoi tu es en retard ?

-I am a student.

Je suis un étudiant.

-It's a nice weather today.

Il fait beau aujourd'hui.

-It is a good idea.

C'est une bonne idée.

-We are leaving tomorrow.

Nous partons demain.

-Give me your address.

Donne moi ton adresse.

-Could you help me, please?

Pourriez-vous m'aidez, s'il vous plait ?

-Quelle belle journée!

What a beautiful day!

-that's amazing!

C'est incroyable !

-He won !

Il a gagnè !

Appendix 6 information sheet project

Exploring the impact of French language on English language pronunciation

Introduction:

This study aim to analyse how French phonetic patterns influence English pronunciation among first year students in the French department. The research seeks to identify common pronunciation errors and explore the factors causing the French influence on English pronunciation. This study focuses on first year students in French department at Relizane university.

Research objectives:

- To analyse the influence of French phonetic patterns on English pronunciation.
- To explore the common pronunciation errors in English exhibited by students of French department.
- To investigate the factors contributing the impact of French language on pronunciation of English language.

The significance of the study:

This study is important because it addresses :

- Phonetic interference: understanding how French phonetics impact English pronunciation
- Pronunciation accuracy: identifying errors to develop better teaching strategies.
- Language learning: helping students to improve their English pronunciation effectively.

Methodology:

- Research design: a mixed method integrating both qualitative and quantitative instruments (classroom observation, questionnaire).
- Data analysis: phonetic features, errors and statistical analysis.

Ethics approval:

- This research has been submitted for review by scientific committee.
- All the process will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes.

Invetigators information:

- **Researchers:** Kraloua Aida, Berraho Zakaria
- **Supervisor:** Dr Ghani
- **Teacher's name :**

By signing this form, I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet and agree to participate voluntarily, I also allowed the researchers to observe my session and distribute the questionnaire to participants.

Teacher's signature



Résumé

La prononciation joue un rôle essentiel dans l'apprentissage des langues, car elle influence directement l'intelligibilité et la compétence communicative. Dans le contexte algérien, où le français occupe une place dominante dans le système éducatif, les apprenants qui acquièrent l'anglais comme seconde langue étrangère rencontrent souvent des difficultés spécifiques dans la maîtrise de la prononciation, en raison d'interférences phonologiques et lexicales entre l'anglais et le français. Ainsi, cette étude vise à analyser l'influence des schémas phonétiques du français sur la prononciation de l'anglais, à explorer les erreurs de prononciation les plus courantes chez les étudiants, et à examiner les divers facteurs influençant leur prononciation de l'anglais. Pour atteindre ces objectifs, une approche méthodologique mixte a été adoptée, combinant un questionnaire semi-structuré avec une grille d'observation en classe, destinés aux étudiants de première année du département de français à l'Université de Relizane. Le questionnaire a été administré à un échantillon de quarante (40) étudiants afin d'examiner leurs expériences et perceptions sociolinguistiques liées à l'apprentissage de l'anglais, et de vérifier leur conscience des interférences phonologiques entre les deux langues. De plus, neuf (9) séances de cours ont été observées et enregistrées, en se concentrant sur le comportement phonétique des étudiants durant les cours d'anglais. Les résultats ont révélé un transfert négatif notable du français sur la prononciation de l'anglais chez les étudiants, en particulier dans les domaines tels que l'articulation des voyelles, les groupes consonantiques, ainsi que les caractéristiques prosodiques comme l'accentuation et l'intonation. Sur la base de ces résultats, plusieurs recommandations pédagogiques sont proposées pour aider les enseignants d'anglais à développer une instruction axée sur la prononciation, répondant aux difficultés phonétiques spécifiques des apprenants et soutenant leur confiance et leurs performances à l'oral.

الملخص

يلعب النطق دورًا حيويًا في تعلم اللغات، حيث يؤثر بشكل مباشر على الوضوح والفهم المتبادل والكفاءة التواصلية. في السياق الجزائري، حيث تحتل اللغة الفرنسية مكانة مهيمنة في النظام التعليمي، يواجه المتعلمون الذين يدرسون اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية ثنائية تحديات خاصة في إتقان النطق، بسبب التداخل الصوتي والمعجمي بين اللغتين الفرنسية والإنجليزية. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل تأثير الأنماط الصوتية الفرنسية على نطق اللغة الإنجليزية، واستكشاف الأخطاء الشائعة في النطق لدى الطلاب، وكذلك التحقيق في العوامل المختلفة التي تؤثر على نطقهم للغة الإنجليزية. لتحقيق هذه الأهداف، تم اعتماد منهجية مختلطة، تجمع بين استبيان شبه مهيكل وقائمة ملاحظة صفية، موجهة لطلبة السنة الأولى في قسم اللغة الفرنسية بجامعة غليزان. وُزع الاستبيان على عينة مكونة من أربعين (40) طالبًا لجمع آراءهم وتجاربهم ومواقفهم الاجتماعية اللغوية المتعلقة بتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية، والتحقق من مدى وعيهم بالتداخل الصوتي بين اللغتين. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، تم تسجيل وملاحظة تسع (9) حصص دراسية، بهدف تتبع السلوك الصوتي للطلبة أثناء دروس اللغة الإنجليزية. كشفت النتائج عن وجود انتقال سلبي ملحوظ من اللغة الفرنسية إلى نطق الطلاب للغة الإنجليزية، لا سيما في مجالات مثل نطق الحركات، وتكتلات الحروف الساكنة، والسمات النبرية مثل التوكيد والتنغيم. وبناءً على هذه النتائج، تم تقديم مجموعة من التوصيات التربوية لمساعدة أساتذة اللغة الإنجليزية على تطوير دروس تركز على النطق وتراعي الصعوبات الصوتية الخاصة بالمتعلمين، مما يعزز من ثقتهم وأدائهم في اللغة المنطوقة.