UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROJECT

Issues of Consonant Fricative Sound Production among

Kurdish EFL Students

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of bachelor of arts at Salahuddin University College of Education – English Department

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2021-2022

Certification

I certify that this study was prepared by student (Ragdah Amir Naho) under my supervision at College of Education/ Salahaddin University- Erbil in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor in the English Language.

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Acknowledgments

I would like to express the deepest appreciation to my supervisor **Rizgar Q. Mamhood** , who continuously guided me through the process of conducting this research. Without his supervision and constant help this research would not have been possible. I am also grateful to my friends who helped during (collecting the data). In addition, an honest and special thanks to my head of department, **Dr. Rawshan Dizayee** for her help and patience at all times without tolerance.

Dedication

This research paper is dedicated to future Academists in the phonetic and phonological fields.

Abstract

This study aims at investigating the issues of producing fricative consonant sounds and the factors that cause these issues experienced by Kurdish EFL students. A total of ten first year Kurdish EFL Students of Salahaddin University, English Department took part in the study. The tools used for collecting the data were a descriptive questionnaire and an oral pronunciation test. The questionnaire and the oral pronunciation test items were created by the researcher herself. A quantitative method approach was employed to analyze the collected data. The results of the study indicated that student's native language (Kurdish) interferes with pronunciation of the English language, the dominant difficulties were in producing English voiced and voiceless dental fricatives; whereas, the factor of its difficulties were due to the differences between elements of the native language and the target language, and finally the most important factor of mispronounced fricative sounds was that students are not taught pronunciation techniques. The findings have several pedagogical implications which discussed in the discussion section.

Keywords: Fricative sounds, pronunciation errors, sound production, EFL students.

Contents

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. **Background**

Learning a new language holds many aspects. Learning languages-learning centre (2020) states that learning a new language is a complex time-intensive task that requires dedication, persistence and hard work. Learning to speak a new language involves how the sound system is organized, how unites of meaning are organized in these words, the principle by which these words are combined together to form sentences, and the principles by which interaction with other speakers is regulated (Jorda, 2002). Jorda (2002) argues that the speaking skill is important to language learning with the correct production of sound system of the target language.

1.2. **The Scope of the Study**

Speaking a language means knowing the language; therefore, speaking occurs in a natural state with little time for thinking and correction. One of the essential skills in learning a target language is pronunciation because it makes communication possible and more comprehensive. Al yaqoobi, Ali, and Sulan (2016) claim that the relationship between speaking and pronunciation is undeniable; one cannot speak without being able to pronounce the words correctly.

Different nationalities have different problems with different aspects of English pronunciation. Many EFL learners face pronunciation inconsistency and difficulties because of articulating certain sounds in the English language mostly fricative sounds (p, b, t, d, f, v, ʃ, ʒ, h). Spelling in most cases differ from pronunciation and, the availability of so many silent words (4 Difficulties English poses for EFL learners, and how to overcome them - Oxford Royale Academy, n.d). Mother tongue interference causes an undeniable impact on learning a foreign language. Thus, the difficulties of English sound production arise amongst EFL Kurdish students from the fact that the sound systems of Kurdish and English are different in many features.

1.3. **The Problem**

Kurdish EFL students have been learning English as a foreign language for many decades, but very little research has been investigated the issues and difficulties of sound production among college students, especially the fricative sounds (p, b, t, d, f, v, ʃ, ʒ, h). Therefore, it is necessary to investigate what the issues are among these learners.

1.4. **The Aim of the Research**

This paper focuses on investigating fricative sound production (phonology) issues of Kurdish EFL students at Salahaddin University. The purpose of the study is grounded in the theory of the issues of producing consonant fricative sounds amongst Kurdish EFL students at the English language Department at Collage of Education in Salahaddin University. The reasons behind mispronouncing the fricative sounds. Therefore, they need urgent remediation which will be provided after analyzing the collected data of a close-ended questionnaire as well as an oral reading test to achieve specific results. The fundamental question that has not been raised yet is what are the common pronunciation errors in fricative sounds committed by EFL Kurdish students of Salahaddin University. English pronunciation is one of the basic skills that play an important role in learning English (Mukmin, 2020).

1.5. **The Significance of the Research**

The significance of this research paper lays in the fact that it can help EFL teachers in the English department of Salahaddin University and other English teachers to find out ways to deal with students' fricative sound production errors systematically and comprehensively. In addition, it helps academic students to know their most re-occurring sound production errors in fricative sounds. Hence, finding the suitable solutions will help both teachers and students to have a better

understanding of English language sound system and to overcome the issues that Kurdish EFL

learners face.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1**. The Essence of Fricative Sound Production among Kurdish EFL Students**

English consonants are different in number and manner of articulation compared to the Kurdish language. Fricative sounds are classified as consonants. according to articulatory phonetics which studies the production of sound (Roach, 2001). The fricative sounds consist of 9 sounds [ð, θ, f, v, s, z, ʃ, ʒ, h] that can be divided into five categories depending on the place of the articulation as well as the manner of articulation:

1)Dental fricatives [ð] and [θ]

2)Labiodental fricatives [f] and [v]

3)Alveolar fricatives [s] and [z]

4)Palatal fricatives [ʃ] and [ʒ]

5)Glottal fricatives [h]

Fricative sounds are created as the air passes through a narrow constriction that causes the air to flow turbulently and thus create a noisy sound in all of the fricatives except for /h/ which is produced by partially obstructing the airflow through the oral cavity (Clark et al., 2007). The importance of producing fricative sounds amongst Kurdish EFL students lies in the fact that fricative sounds are mostly produced by combining two or more letters to target fricative phonemes that rely on the vocal cords. Depending on the vocal cord consonant sounds are paired into two groups 1) voiced and 2) voiceless. Voiced fricative sounds are [ð, v, z, ʒ], and those that are voiceless consist of [θ, f, s, ʃ, h] (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2014).

The vocal cords are flexible they close and open while producing speech sounds. Fricative sounds are pronounced through the narrowing of some parts of the vocal cord. When the vocal cords are open, it produces voiceless sounds that are pronounced smoothly without feeling any vibration in your throat. Voiced sounds are produced when the vocal cords are approximately closed which is the reason you will feel a vibration in your throat. Excluding the [h] glottal fricative sound the rest are paired in voiced and voiceless sounds.

2.2. **Types of Predominant Fricative Sound Production Issues**

This part of the study discusses predominant fricative sound production issues of Kurdish EFL students. Pronunciation refers to the production of sound that we used to make meaning and communicate. Pronunciation for any language learner is considered an initial part of language learning which leads us to cast some light on investigating errors that are committed by Kurdish EFL students due to the contrast between Kurdish, their first language, and English as a foreign language. Binturki (2008) stated that learners who found some difficulties with sounds that were unfamiliar thus in return they tended to substitute those sounds with sounds of their language. Pronunciation errors may be attributed to many factors such as defective understanding of semantics, syntax, morphology, Phonology, co-articulatory effects and the letter to sound rules (Mengetal, 2007). Many studies compared English with other languages and derived some of the mismatches between English and those languages in terms of phonological disparities. Asdapour and Rezvani (2005) claim that:

> Kurdish like English belongs to an Indo-European family one of the largest and most significant language families but as a Kurdish speaker who wants to learn the English language, they face some problems because their phonemic system has previously been established this changing those habits is not an easy task (p.5).

Some researchers connect pronunciation problems with the complexity of the spelling system that does not reflect in the pronunciation. Pronunciation issues that Kurdish EFL students face while communicating in English due to the circumstances that the Kurdish phonetical alphabet is composed of 35 letters that produce the same number of phonemes when written down or used to create words. However, the English phonetical alphabet is composed of 26 letters creating 44 sounds known as phonemes. Therefore, Kurdish EFL students face pronunciation issues such as:

• While trying to communicate in the language because of a lack of knowledge about phoneme articulation (combining two or more letters to create a particular phoneme).

• The existence of silent letters in the English language.

• Pronouncing phonemes that do not exist in the Kurdish language.

• Sound from the first language will give interference between sounds of the second language.

• And finally mispronounced words despite their spelling, such as letters presented in different sounds: /s/ could be realized as /z/ when pronounced in. pens and watches.

2.2.1. **Dental Fricative [θ] and [ð]**

The issues of producing dental fricatives refer to the fact that the Kurdish phonetic alphabets do not contain dental fricatives [θ] and [ð]. Therefore, cannot be acquired in infancy. During maturation trying to learn them becomes difficult as there are immediate alternatives to the sounds in the Kurdish language. The manner of articulation of dental fricatives is when the tip of the tongue is against the back of the front teeth that create fricative voiceless [θ] and voiced [ð] (Ward, 2010). The dental fricatives are uncommon types of consonants that are perceptually weak and easily confused with [f] and [v]. As a result of the difficulty in producing dental fricatives, the sounds were placed by sounds that were available in the first language.

2.2.2. Labiodental Fricative [f] and [v]

The labiodental fricatives are produced using the lower lip and upper teeth. As the operative act in passive articulator [f] is voiceless and [v] is voiced (Ward, 2010). The labiodental fricatives are problematic for students to produce depending on the position in the word although they are acquired in the first language of the EFL speaker.

2.2.3. Alveolar Fricative [s] and [z]

The manner of articulation of alveolar fricative is produced when the flow of air out of the body is constricted when the tip of the tongue moves up against the gum line behind your upper teeth almost touching the alveolar rigid to produce voiceless [s] and voiced [z] (Ward, 2010). The alveolar fricatives are also characterized as sibilant fricatives because the tongue is longitudinal to cause air to pass over the teeth and create a hissing sound.

2.2.4. Palatal Fricative [ʃ] and [ʒ]

The manner of articulation of palatal fricatives occurs when the flow of air out of the body is constricted by touching the tongue to the palatal just behind the alveolar rigid at the top of the mouth further behind the teeth which allows voiceless [ʃ] and voiced [ʒ] to be produced (Ward, 2010).

2.2.5. Glottal Fricative [h]

For the final category, the manner of articulation of glottal fricatives is when air flows out of the body by tightening the glottis the part of the windpipe behind the tongue which contains the vocal cords creating a narrow opening through which air passes before entering the mouth resulting in voiceless [h] (Ward, 2010). Glottal fricative often lacks the usual phonetic characteristics of a constant.

2.3. **Techniques for Teaching Fricative Sounds to Kurdish EFL Learners**

One of the ways of overcoming the problem of fricative sound production is training and practising by communicating in the English language to perceive the silent letters and the combinations of specific letters which lead to the production of particular phonemes as well as emphasizing on the manner and place of articulation. The position of the tongue in the production of the sounds should be focused on and properly complemented. In this way, errors in pronunciation may be either errors in how a sound is pronounced or errors resulting from misjudged interpretations of the pronunciation of written words. However, a very important variable to be taken into account in this respect is the students' native language (first language). Teachers must be able to analyze utterances and break them up into three components and they must be able to acquaintance the structural similarities and differences between the native language and the foreign language and analyze errors in pronunciation of new phonemes that are new to the students.

Mischler (2008) believes that phonology has been studied less than areas of language such as reading and writing. Elder (2004) and Khalifa (2020) advised that students should be assisted with a model-based approach to receive specific feedback on their errors and how to correct them especially when it is compared with native speakers' utterances. Regarding the role of native language pronunciation, Celce Murcia (1991) suggested that the learners' first language is effective in the acquisition of the first language transfer is more prevalent in the area of pronunciation than in grammar and Lexicon. Pronunciation plays an essential role in learning a new language; therefore, it is necessary that EFL teachers provide techniques for teaching fricative sounds to Kurdish EFL students, in addition, can be provided through a diverse range of techniques Such as the following:

• By communicating in the target language constantly.

• Correcting the pronunciation errors committed by Kurdish EFL students.

• Teaching students, the combination of two or more letters that results in the production of a single phoneme.

• Introducing students to the silent letter that appear in some words of the target language.

• Playing audio tapes, videos or conversations of the target language so that EFL Kurdish students become familiar with the pronunciation of the target language.

• Teaching students' how to articulate specific phonemes in the target language depending on the place of articulation and manner of articulation.

The points mentioned above are some of the fundamental techniques that play a role in the acquisition of the phonological system of English as a foreign language and can be frequently used inside the classroom in order to overcome obstacles of pronunciation when communicating in the target language.

Chapter Three: Methods

3.1. **Context**

The data of the quantitative study were collected amongst Kurdish EFL students at the English language department of Salahaddin University College of Education Erbil 2021-2022.

3.2. **Participants' Profile and Population**

The population of the study addressed ten undergraduate first-stage students in the Department of English Language College of Education Salahaddin University Academic year 2021-2022. The participants were five female students and five male students. Four of the participants classified their level of English as a beginner and six of them as intermediate. The students were native Kurds whereas, they had no experience overseas in any English-speaking countries. In addition, they hadn't ever encountered a native English teacher.

3.3**. Methods Studied**

The present study is a descriptive quantitative one in which numbers and statistics were used in analyzing the collected data of the closed-ended questionnaire and oral pronunciation test.

3.4. **Tool/ Data Collection**

To answer "what the fricative sound production issues amongst Kurdish EFL students are?" two data collection tools were used to identify the errors and factors that cause mispronounced fricative sounds. For the tools (see the appendix).

3.4.1. **Close-ended Questionnaire**

The close-ended questionnaire was prepared by the researcher herself the questions intended to highlight the reasons for problems and difficulties of producing fricative sounds, to

provide a stable solution for these problems. The questionnaire consisted of (19) items each of which aimed to detect the errors committed by Kurdish EFL students and the factors resulting in such pronunciation errors to be able to diagnose the issues.

3.4.2. **Oral Pronunciation Test**

The oral test was also prepared by the researcher herself it was intended to check the pronunciation errors within the fricative sounds. The oral pronunciation test was designed to get an insight into the production of certain words that reflect certain oral competence as well as containing fricative sounds.

The criteria for designing the oral pronunciation test were according to the complexity of the spelling system that does not always match the pronunciation due to the difference between the number of phonemes and letters in the English language. The words selected were easy ones most of them were either monosyllabic or disyllabic so that the length of the word does not affect the utterance and level of errors that the respondents commit. Moreover, the word selected was to differentiate those that were not reflecting spelling (spelling that does not reflect in the pronunciation) and those of reflected spelling (spelling that reflects in the pronunciation).

Chapter Four: Results

4.1**. Data Analysis**

The present study identifies the common issues of fricative sound production. Therefore, provides factors and causes for such errors in the hope of coming up with solutions that provide more insight techniques for this problem. The results can act as a model to help both Kurdish students and teachers in the English language with their learning and teaching methods.

4.2**. Results of the Close-ended Questionnaire**

The (19) items in the questionnaire were aimed to reflect the difficulties of producing fricative sounds from the students' perspectives. The results of the study verify a belief about the difficulties in pronouncing fricative sounds in the view point of Kurdish EFL students.

Based on the analyzed date 70% of the students agreed that they were able to pronounce fricative sounds correctly and communicate in English language clearly while 30% chose neutral. On the other hand, 80% of the respondents agreed that pronouncing words in English language is difficult due to the silent letters within the words and the combination of two or more letters to produce a single phoneme while only 20% disagreed with this statement. For example, when it comes to teaching participants from a scale of 1 to 100 all of the participants agreed that they had not been taught techniques of pronunciation. To mention that 60% of the students agreed that they have problems with producing Voiced and Voiceless Dental fricatives [θ, ð] Well 10% were neutral and 30% disagreed. However, 80% of the respondents we're neutral with Pronouncing voiced and voiceless labiodental [f, v] as well as voiced and voiceless alveolar [s, z] fricatives without any issues whereas the remaining 20% agreed that they have issues in pronouncing these sounds. Not to mention 70% of the students agreed with having issues pronouncing voiced palatal fricative [ʒ] and 30% were neutral. 20% of the respondents agreed with having issues Pronouncing

Voiceless palatal fricatives [ʃ] while 30% choose Neutral and 50% disagreed. Moreover,80% of respondents disagreed in having issues producing glottal fricative [h] well the remaining 20% were neutral.

4.3. **Results of Oral Pronunciation Test**

In the attempt of trying to resolve the issues of pronouncing fricative consonant sounds, a list of words was given to students containing fricative sounds depending on their position in the word they were asked to pronounce the words while being recorded, so that researcher could analysis the data correctly.

1. Voiceless dental fricative [θ]:

Based on the research analysis, 60% of the respondents faced difficulties more than expected while pronouncing the set of medial voiceless dental fricative compared to the initial and final sets of the voiceless dental fricative.

2. Voiced dental fricative [ð]:

It is found that 80% of respondents have difficulties producing voiced dental fricative regardless of its position in the word, 40% of the students substituted [ð] for "ز "as explained in the following two cases English [the] was pronounced as [ze], English [brother] was pronounced as [brozer]

3. Voiceless labiodental fricative [f]:

Only 30% of the respondents mispronounced voiceless labiodental fricatives regardless of its position due to the combining of [ph], [gh] that result in [f] phoneme. Such as the following cases [elephant] and [enough] pronounced as [ˈelɪf(ə)nt] and [ɪˈnʌf].

4. Voiced labiodental fricatives [v]:

Surprisingly none of the respondents mispronounced the voiced labiodental fricative despite its position within the set of required words.

5. Voiceless alveolar fricative [s]:

As expected, 30% of students mispronounced voiceless alveolar fricative due to the contrast between the spelling and pronunciation as the following case [dance] pronounced as [dɑːns].

6. Voiced alveolar fricative [z]:

It is found that 30% of students committed errors while pronouncing voiced alveolar fricative because of the written form of the word that differs from the pronunciation as in the following cases [pens] and [exist] pronounced as penz] and [ɪɡˈzɪst].

7. Voiceless palatal fricative [ʃ]:

Only 20% of respondents committed errors while pronouncing voiceless palatal fricative regardless of differences between the written form and pronounced form.

8. Voiced palatal fricative [ʒ]:

The sounds produced while pronouncing the voiced palatal fricative were far from what the actual voiced palatal fricative sounds like because students found producing sounds in combinations difficult and problematic, as a result 80% of the students mispronounce the initial and final set of voiced palatal fricatives such as [genre] [beige].

9. Voiceless glottal fricative [h]:

As expected, none of the students mispronounce voiceless glottal fricative despite its position within the word.

Chapter Five: Discussion

5.1. **Discussion of the Close-ended Questionnaire**

Based on the results and findings the students' difficulties in Pronouncing fricative Consonant are because of these three main reasons:

1. The different elements between the native and the target language is a problem that was spotted when more than 60% of the respondents agreed to having difficulties pronouncing voiced and voiceless dental fricatives [θ, ð] which don't exist in the Kurdish phonology.

2. The second and main factor that causes difficulty in pronunciation is that students are not taught the technique of pronunciation whereas the data shows that all the respondents agreed to this statement.

3. The last issue that causes mispronunciation in English language is due to the availability of silent letters and the combination of two or more letters to produce a single phoneme.

5.2. **Discussion of the Oral Pronunciation Test**

This study provides evidence that the students' first language, Kurdish, has an effect on the pronunciation of speech sounds of the English language. The data show that there are some examples in which language transfer was clear as shown in voiced dental fricatives. The participants made some pronunciation errors due to the absence of the sounds in their first language whereas, they substituted the target language sound for the native language sound. According to the oral pronunciation test, this problem was spotted with regard to the two cases mentioned above Kurdish [[ز was substituted for English [ð]; the word [the] was rendered as [ze].

Phonological comparison between Kurdish language and the foreign language identifies major differences across the two languages. The differences between alphabets of English and the

students' native language are the unfamiliarity of students to pronounce fricative consonants in daily language and communication. The inconsistency between the written words in English to the sounds also plays a major role in students' pronunciation difficulties (Bui ,2016; Isnarani, 2018; Razak, 2010).

The results of the study demonstrate that the Kurdish EFL students struggle with different phonological problems resulting from three main sources

1) The difference between Kurdish language and English language phonemes

2) The interference of the native language (Kurdish) within the foreign language,

3) Finally, the problems of teaching EFL pronunciation due to the poor teaching techniques.

Chapter Six: Conclusions and Recommendations and Limitations

The present paper was an attempt to derive a list of issues of producing fricative sounds made by Kurdish EFL students' that aimed in tackling the factors that cause difficulties or problems during fricative sound production. Therefore, a close-ended quantitative questionnaire and an oral pronunciation test were carried out to identify the problems of mispronounced fricative sounds.

The result of the data concluded that the voiced and voiceless dental fricatives were amongst the problems of Kurdish ELF students as a result the students' tended to substitute them with letters of their native language. The data also highlighted that students' committee mistakes pronouncing words that were not of reflecting spelling (spelling that is not the same as the pronunciation), and finally the most salient factor that need to be considered is that students had not been taught pronunciation techniques.The significance of this paper lays in the fact that after identifying the issues of fricative sound production EFL teachers' can now cure this issue by obtain a stable constructive method to reduce the pronunciation errors of Kurdish EFL students'.

It would be wise if EFL teachers took into account the issues of sound production that students' encounter when communicating in the target language.

According to the results of the study we can recommend the following:

• The EFL teacher should be mindful of the essence of pronunciation while teaching English.

• The EFL teacher needs to raise students' consciousness in the importance of having lucid Pronunciation and provide enough time for practicing pronunciation.

• Students should be allowed to listen to English audio tapes, videos, and conversations to gain familiarity with the pronounced words.

• The EFL teacher should be obligated to teach students' techniques of pronouncing the phonemes.

• The EFL teacher should be aware of the comparison between the students' native language (Kurdish) and the foreign language (English)

• Students are recommended to recording their speeches while communicating in English language and replay it to analyse their errors while speaking in the language.

• Students should emphasise on being involved in the target language as much as possible.

It should be noted that this study was carried out amongst a population of ten students. Therefore, the analyzed data of the questionnaire could have reached more specific factors if the data had been collected amongst a larger group of respondents. In addition, to the oral pronunciation test, it must be mentioned that psychological factors like anxiety or excitement could have influenced the students' pronunciation of sounds in an unfavorable way, while their voices were being recorded. Thus, their pronunciation performance might have been affected negatively since they were under the pressure of making errors so the results would surely be better if the recording had taken place in a natural environment like a classroom.

Chapter Seven: Experience and Reflection

As a start of my experience sharing, I would like to state that while conducting this practical research writing paper, when I needed time, it went by really fast, but when I wanted it to pass it ironically, simply did not.

As a reflection of my writing experience, I wrote about what I found meaning in. The importance of this topic must have been written purely from the eye of an EFL student throughout. I'm pleased and proud that my experience is quite backed up. I have been a part of an EFL class and observing EFL teachers and students throughout my four years in university that has guided me towards a good direction concerning what to focus on while writing. During my experiences as a student, I was also helping other students with their English studies informally outside of classes as a good start for engaging in teaching which gave me a clear and more honest vision of what was really going on from the teacher's perspectives and the student's perspectives without the pressure of having to perform well in front of anyone in the classroom.

The English language becomes an obligatory subject that must be learned by students from the preschool level, up to the university level. Kurdistan Region students' learning the English language are taught basic language skills such as listening, reading, writing, and speaking included. Although English might be regarded as a foreign language in Kurdistan region, students will learn language competence however, in reality most of the Kurdish students' do not use English in their daily communications in schools or universities unless it is mandatory. English is still a difficult language to be learned by most of the students considering the differences in structure, grammar, vocabulary, and morphology not to mention the number of letters as well as phonemes.

My experience is mediocre in the sense of sound production errors that I have witnessed during secondary school, high school, and university. The teachers I encountered at secondary school and

high school pronounced most of the English language words incorrectly whilst teaching the lesson that resulted in students' poor pronunciation qualities along with mispronounced sounds when communicating in the target language.

All of my teachers focused on grammar mainly and the curriculum that was required by the Kurdish/Swedish/Finnish/British council educational system, students were taught the English language through grammar- methods known as a method to teach dead languages that were used to teach me and my fellow peers one of the most dynamic languages, English.

I struggled with my language teachers because of the extensive times I would correct their pronunciation mistakes, whereas the other student did not know what errors the teacher performed during the classes not to mention the times I was even considered rude. The reason for that was because my so-called "British" English language was quite good, as good as making some non-native language teachers feel uncomfortable, as uncomfortable as avoiding any of my attempts to participate in the lesson at all cost. As Derwing and Munro (2005, p.389) "confirm that many English teachers are not proficient, lack confidence, and kill the knowledge in pronunciation teaching".

However, my pronunciation college experience in the English Department was much better than my school experience. Back in the first and second stages, furthermore, I got to see more of what was the core issue of pronunciation errors or more accurately, the promotion of mispronounced sounds that I have seen in my country since I was in the centre of metaphorically speaking. "English teacher making factory". Hismanoglu and Hismanoglu, (2010) explain that pronunciation is a fundamental element of learning oral skills in the second language the quality of time and effort devoted to it seems to be largely dependent on the language instructor.

Nonetheless, a glance of what I am trying to convey can be seen in a few situations as whenever I criticized a teaching method or learning theory, I heard a few of my college teachers say that we should give them credit and did not think that using those methods was a bad idea whereas, teachers only focus on the basic skills of language learning instead of paying attention to every feature of language learning because they are the basis of education. I was always hoping that something would change; a new order would be issued a change in the curriculum. Consequently, nothing better happened because the newest rules and regulations came from ministries where none of the ministers were actually specialized in education.

Finally, I would like to mention that most of the students in the English department want to sound like native English speakers yet this dream is yet to be achieved because the majority of the students are still under the impression that they can speak in the English language without committing any errors but in reality, they commit numerous errors when communicating in the target language therefore, if EFL teachers don't give proper weight to this issue and neglect the vital role of communication in a foreign language as the Kurdish idea that says " we have been like this from the times of our ancestors and therefore, we must continue like this", then we will be welcoming a community with a mindset for raising cows and sheep, But definitely not for teaching students an important language like English with no pronunciation factors in a fast-growing globalist and capitalistic times of today.

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Appendix (questionnaire and formal arrangement)

Close-ended questionnaire / Oral Pronunciation Reading Test

Researcher Made Questionnaires and Oral Pronunciation Reading Test Based on the Issues of Fricative Sound Production Amongst EFL Kurdish Student 2021-2022

<u>**Part I:**</u>

Please provide the following information by ticking the correct category that best fits you in the blank spaces:

Gender: male___   female___

Nationality: Kurdish___   Arabic___

Age: _____

Level of education: Undergraduate stage 1___   Undergraduate stage 2___

English teacher: Have you had a native English-speaking teacher? Yes___   No___

Overseas experience: Do you have any experience a board in an English-speaking country?

Yes___   No___

English level: what level is your English language?

Beginner level___ intermediate level___ upper intermediate level___

<u>**Part II:**</u>

In this part we would like you to tell us whether you agree, are neutral or, disagree with the following Questions and statements by simply ticking the section that is best suitable to you please do not leave any items out.

No.	Questions	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
1.	Are you able to communicate in English language and make the people around you understand you clear?			
2.	I know the sounds in English language?			

3.	I know that there are many kinds of fricative sounds?			
4.	I am able to pronounce fricative sounds correctly?			
5.	Pronouncing words in English language are difficult because there are silent letters within the words?			
6.	pronouncing words in English language are difficult because one has to combine of two or more letters to produce one specific phoneme?			
7.	It is difficult to pronounce fricative sounds?			
8.	The difficulties in pronouncing English fricative sounds refer to the fact that written words in English are inconsistent to the sound?			
9.	I have not been taught techniques of pronunciation?			
10.	Students mispronounce some English sounds because they predict pronunciation from the spelling?			
11.	I have problems with pronouncing voiceless dental fricative [θ]			
12.	I have problems with pronouncing voiced dental fricative [ð].			
13.	I have problems with pronouncing voiceless labiodental fricative [f].			
14.	I have problems with pronouncing voiced labiodental fricative [v].			
15.	I have problems pronouncing voiceless alveolar fricative[s].			
16.	I have problems pronouncing voiced Alveolar fricative [z]			
17.	I have problems Pronouncing voiceless palatal fricative [ʃ]			
18.	I have problems Pronouncing voiced palatal fricative [ʒ]			
19.	I have problems Pronouncing voiceless glottal fricative [h]			

Part III:

In this part we would like you to pronounce the following words that are written below depending on the sound of each fricative and its position within each word

Fricative sounds	Beginning of the word	Middle of the word	end of the word
Voiceless Dental fricative [θ]	Think Thing	Authorities Author	Bath cloth
voiced Dental fricative [ð]	This The	Rhythm Brother	Bathe Clothe
Voiceless Labiodental fricative [f]	Photocopy Fat	Elephant Sulfur	Enough Proof
Voiced Labiodental fricative [v]	Violent Victory	Seven Cover	Above Forgive
Voiceless Alveolar fricative [s]	Snake School	Dancer Messy	Bus Face
Voiced Alveolar fricative [z]	Zip Zebra	Exist Dozen	Boys Buzz
Voiceless Palatal fricative [ʃ]	Shake Shot	National Official	Finish Push
Voiced Palatal fricative [ʒ]	Genre	Television Version	Beige Sabotage
Voiceless Glottal fricative [h]	Home Him	Beehive Redhead	Ah

Abstract in Kurdish language

ئەم توێژینەوەیە لە ئامانج لێی لێکۆلینەوەیە لە کێشەکانی دروست کردن و گۆ کردنی ئەو دەنگانەی بە
لێکخشاندن دروست دەبنو ئەو هۆکارانەی کە کار لە فێرخوازانی کوردی زمانی ئینگلیزی وەک زمانێکی بیانی دەکات. ئەم
توێژینەوەیە بە بەشداری دە خوێندکاری قۆناغی یەکەمی زانکۆی سەلاحەدین بەشی زمانی ئینگلیزی ئەنجامدراوە
راپرسیەک و تاقیکردنەوەیەکی زارەکی وەک ئامراز بەکارهاتووە بۆ کۆکردنەوەی زانیارییەکان کە هەردووکیان لە لایەن
خوودی توێژەرەوە داڕێژراوە.

میتۆدی چەندییەتی بەکارهاتووە بۆ شیکردنەوەی داتا کۆکراوەکان . ئەنجامەکانی توێژینەوەمکە دەریخست کە زمانی
ڕەسەنی خوێندکار (کوردی) کاریگەری لەسەر دەربڕینی زمانی ئینگلیزی هەیە لە پیتە ددانیە خشێنە بێ دەنگ وبە
دەنگەکان بوو.