AN INVESTIGATION OF PHONETIC AWARENESS AMONG EFL TURKMEN TEACHERS IN IRAQ

2022
MASTER THESIS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

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Prepared as
Master Thesis

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KARABUK
January 2022

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THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that in my opinion the thesis submitted by HUSSEIN HIJRAN AMEEN AL-BAYATI titled "AN INVESTIGATION OF PHONETIC AWARENESS AMONG EFL TURKMEN TEACHERS IN IRAQ" is fully adequate in scope and in quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of English Languege/Applied Linguistics.

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DECLARATION

I, at this moment, declare that this thesis is the result of my work, and all information has been obtained and expounded under the academic rules and ethical policy specified by the institute. Besides, I declare that all the statements, results, materials not original to this thesis have been cited and referenced literally.

Without being bound by a particular time, I accept all moral and legal consequences of any detection contrary to the statement as mentioned earlier.

Name & Surname: HUSSEIN AL-BAYATI

Signature:

FOREWORD

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ozkan Kırmızı for the continuous support of my Master's study and related research, for his patience, motivation, and immense knowledge. His guidance helped me in all the time of research and writing of this thesis. I could not have imagined having a better advisor and mentor for my Master's study.

Besides my supervisor, I would like to thank the staff of the English Department (Karabuk University–College of Art) for their effort.

Last but not the least, I would like to thank my wife for supporting me spiritually throughout writing this thesis.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my almighty supervisor Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ozkan Kırmızı and to my soulmate, my wife.

ABSTRACT

Effective communication could be accomplished by articulating and decoding an utterance comprehensibly. Incorrect articulation of specific English phonemes may result in misunderstanding or wrong decoding of utterances. Studies have shown that EFL learners encounter difficulties producing specific English phonemes due to mother tongue influence and insufficient practice. Thus, the present study aimed to scrutinize the importance of pronunciation for EFL teachers in producing intelligible utterances and the inherent difficulties that the EFL teachers confronted as they are teaching the English language. The participants of the study are 100 EFL teachers (their native language is Turkmen, and English is their second language). The data was collected through a pen-paper and an online Liker-type questionnaire. The data were analyzed via SPSS (version 26). The questionnaire has three sections. The first section surveys the participants' demographic background. The following sections are as follows: self-perception (15 items), pronunciation practising section (14 items, and preferred methods of teaching pronunciation (13 items). The participants of the study were EFL teachers since they represented an appropriate sample for the study, and random selection was used to select the participants. The results of the study indicated that pronunciation is a vital factor that strengthens EFL teachers' verbal communication and assists them in distinguishing the distinctive phonological rules between their native and target language. Moreover, there are some fossilized pronunciation phonemes that EFL learners confront hardship in articulating intelligibly. Therefore, the proper methods investigated to remedy such a problematic sound articulation mechanism that EFL teachers confronted through the teaching process.

Keywords: Audio articulation model, bilingualism, core sounds, intelligibility, Cross-linguistic interference, phonological rules, verbal communication.

ÖZ

Etkili iletişim, bir ifadeyi anlaşılır bir şekilde dile getirmek ve deşifre etmek suretiyle gerçekleştirilebilir. Belirli İngilizce ses birimlerinin yanlış telaffuzu, yanlış anlaşılmaya veya ifadelerin yanlış kodunun çözülmesine neden olabilir. Araştırmalar, İngilizce öğrenenlerin anadil etkisi ve yetersiz uygulama nedeniyle belirli İngilizce fonemleri üretmede zorluklarla karşılaştıklarını göstermiştir. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma İngilizceyi İngilizce öğretmenleri için anlaşılır ifadeler üretmede telaffuzun önemini ve İngilizce öğretmenlerinin İngilizce öğretirken karşılaştıkları doğal zorlukları incelemeyi amaçlamıştır. Çalışmanin katılımcıları 100 İngilizce öğretmenidir (ana dilleri Türkmence ve ikinci dilleri Ingilizce). Veriler, bir basili ve çevrimiçi Likert tipi bir sormaca aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Veriler SPSS (versiyon 26) ile analiz edilmiştir. Ankette üç bölüm bulunmaktadır. İlk bölüm, katılımcıların demografik geçmişini araştırır. Sormacada bulunan bölümler şöyledir Kişisel değerlendirme (15 madde), telaffuz alıştırma bölümü (14 madde ve tercih edilen telaffuz öğretme yöntemleri (13 madde) Çalışmaya katılanlar, çalışma için uygun bir örneklemi temsil ettikleri için İngilizce öğretmenleriydi ve Katılımcıları seçmek için rastgele seçim kullanıldı.Çalışma sonuçları, telaffuzun İngilizce öğretmenlerinin sözlü iletişimini güçlendiren ve ana dilleri ile hedef dilleri arasındaki ayırt edici fonolojik kuralları ayırt etmelerine yardımcı olan hayati bir faktör olduğunu göstermiştir.Ayrıca, bazı fosilleşmiş telaffuz fonemleri vardır. Bu nedenle, İngilizce öğretmenlerinin öğretim sürecinde karşılaştıkları böylesine sorunlu bir ses artikülasyon mekanizmasını düzeltmek için uygun yöntemler araştırılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İşitsel-artikülasyon modeli, İkidillilik, temel sesler, anlaşılabilirlik, diller arası etkileşim, sesletim kurallar, sözlü iletişim.

ARCHIVE RECORD INFORMATION

Title of the Thesis	An Investıgatıon of Phonetıc Awareness Among Efl Turkmen Teachers in Iraq
Author of the Thesis	Hussein HIJRAN AMEEN AL-BAYATI
Supervisor of the Thesis	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ozkan KIRMIZI
Status of the Thesis	Master's Degree
Date of the Thesis	2022
Field of the Thesis	Applied Linguistics
Place of the Thesis	KBU/LEE
Total Page Number	82
Keywords	Audio articulation model, Bilingual people, Core sounds, intelligible, cross-linguistic interference, Phonological rules, Verbal communication

ARŞİV KAYIT BİLGİLERİ

Tezin Adı	Irak'ta Efl Türkmen Öğretmenlerinde Fonetik Bilinçlerinin İncelenmesi
Tezin Yazarı	HUSSEIN HIJRAN AMEEN AL-BAYATI
Tezin Danışmanı	Doç. Dr. Özkan KIRMIZI
Tezin Derecesi	Yüksek Lisans
Tezin Tarihi	2022
Tezin Alanı	Uygulamalı Dilbilim
Tezin Yeri	KBU / LEE
Tezin Sayfa Sayısı	82
Anahtar Kelimeler	İşitsel artikülasyon modeli, İki dilli insanlar, Çekirdek sesler, anlaşılır, diller arası etkileşim, Fonolojik kurallar, Sözlü iletişim

ABBREVIATIONS

AAM : Audio Articulation Model

BP : Brazilian Pronunciation

CLI : Cross-linguistic Influence

EFL : English Foreign Language

FL : Foreign Language

FLPA : Foreign Language Phonological Awareness

PA : Phonological Awareness

SPSS : Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

TL : Target Language

SUBJECT OF THE RESEARCH

An ınvestıgatıon of phonetıc awareness among efl turkmen teachers ın ıraq.

PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of the current study is to scrutinize the importance of English pronunciation to EFL Turkmen teachers, and the inherent difficulties that they encounter during teaching English pronunciation to EFL learners. Also, the proper methods that facilitate teaching such fossilized sounds.

METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

This research was conceptualized as a non-experimental quantitative study. The data were collected using a questionnaire, and the questionnaire tools used to measure respondents' phonetic awareness, in three areas: The importance of pronunciation, self-perception, and the preferred method of teaching English pronunciation to EFL learners. The importance of phonetic awareness of EFL Iraqi Turkmen teachers and the fossilized sounds that they confront difficulties in pronouncing them were sought through cross-linguistic influence. Also the proper method in manipulating such difficulties concerning articulating such fossilized sounds was sought through the audio articulation model(Demirzen, 2010).

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The current study was conducted with 100 EFL Iraqi Turkmen teachers (56 male and 44 female). The participants are teaching the English language to EFLTurkmen learners at primary, intermediate, and secondary school.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS / DIFFICULTIES

The current study is conducted on 5 Likert-type scales, and the number of the participants are 100 EFL Iraqi Turkmen EFL teachers.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Background to the Study

Pronunciation is an essential part of FL learners' phonological awareness; thus, it reinforces the communication process through decoding the oral language phonemes intelligibly. Yavuz & Keser (2019) examined the importance of pronunciation in verbal communication among EFL learners. They revealed the crucial role of pronunciation in enhancing EFL learners' decoding of the English language sounds intelligible.

Committing an error in producing specific utterance pronunciation results in misunderstanding and communication breakdown and will hinder the incorrect articulation of an utterance during the interaction process, leading to unintelligibility. Sebane (2019) stated that the incorrect pronunciation process arouses the wrong decoding of an utterance, resulting in misunderstanding and delay in processing the utterance intelligibly.

This thesis aims to scrutinize the importance of being aware of the phonetic awareness of EFL Turkmen teachers in Iraq (Turkmen language as their native language, and English as their Foreign language) concerning pronunciation. The Iraqi Turkmen language alphabet is the same as the Turkish language alphabet since it shares the same distinctive features between the Turkish language and English language pronunciation, like incorporating silent phonemes. Each letter in the Turkmen language is pronounced while the English language incorporates many silent letters; for example, the letter (k) is silent if it occurs at an initiative poison of a word followed by the letter (n) while it cannot be silent in the Turkmen language. Also, the absence of certain phoneme like /w/. This research also endeavours to inspect how such linguistic awareness can assist foreign instructors, manipulating the inherent difficulties of teaching foreign language pronunciation to non-native English language speakers. Furthermore, the present study also endeavours to predict the aspects of difficulties that bilingual people encounter while they produce a specific part of an utterance, using their target language pronouncing systems rule, and it inspects the consummate method of teaching pronunciation that can be adopted by the EFL teachers.

1.2. Research Questions

1. Are there any potential significant differences concerning the importance of pronunciation to EFL teachers'?
2. What are the inherent difficulties that Turkish EFL teachers confront during the learning/teaching process?
3. Do EFL teachers' beliefs about the potential significance of the English pronunciation teaching method change based on age, gender, experience and educational level?

1.3. The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to identify the crucial role of teaching pronunciation on the part of EFL teachers at state schools in Tuz- Khuramatu, Iraq, and examine the problematic aspects of teaching pronunciation that EFL teachers suffered from while they were teaching English language pronunciation as a foreign language to their students. Moreover, the preferred methods of teaching English language pronunciation to EFL learners were sought after through a questionnaire investigating the participants' opinions about the best methods to teach EFL pronunciation that succour in reinforcing foreign language learners' performance proficiency. The findings of this research will facilitate EFL teachers' pronunciation tasks and reduce the effort and time required to reach the desired target.

1.4. Problem Statement

A limited number of studies have been conducted on phonological linguistic awareness concerning difficulties, importance, and preferred teaching pronunciation to EFL learners together. While some studies only addressed problematic aspects of Turkish and English pronunciation, other studies were mainly limited to pupils with preliminary phonological linguistic awareness case studies (Durguno lu & Öney, 1999; Ünal & Dixon, 2017; Yılmaz et al., 2020). Similar studies can be found in the literature (Branum-Martin & Tao, 2014; Demirzen, 2010; Erjan, 2018; Turgay, 2021). They investigated the incorrect articulation of the core sounds that FL learners or novice FL teachers encountered during pronouncing an utterance incorporated of mono or multi problematic phoneme and potential causes that contributed to such mispronunciation of

specific English sounds. They concluded that EFL learners' or teachers' mispronunciation was related to influential factors like mother tongue and lack of specific phonemes in the EFL learners' or teachers' native language. Furthermore, the importance of intelligible pronunciation for communication was studied by researchers (Candan & Inal, 2020; Kissova, 2017; Yürük, 2020). These studies stated the significant role of pronunciation in decoding the articulated and received phonemes; thus, the wrong interpretation of the articulated utterance resulted in misunderstanding and an intelligibility gap between the communicators. They found out the importance of articulating English sounds, specifically the sounds that EFL learners encountered difficulties in pronouncing correctly.

The present study inspects the inherent difficulties of teaching pronunciation that bilingual teachers confront during their teaching process. It will demonstrate the importance of pronunciation to Turkmen English language teachers and direct contact with the main impediments they experience while teaching English pronunciation to EFL learners.

Moreover, revealing pronunciation problems that EFL teachers encounter during their interaction with their students will enable them to choose the appropriate pedagogies in teaching English pronunciation to the EFL learners and surmount any obstacles that may hinder the learning process in the future.

1.5. The Significance of the Study

This quantitative study is made with the aim to contribute critical information and knowledge concerning Turkmen EFL teachers' phonetic awareness. It scrutinizes the importance of EFL teachers' phonetic awareness in surmounting any inherent difficulties that May arise from insufficient phonetic knowledge through adopting the proper pedagogical during the teaching process.

This research will contribute to cease any potential difficulties that may Turkmen EFL teacher's encounter while they are teaching English pronunciation to their students, especially in the area of teaching fossilized sounds, since it inspects respondents' (Iraqi Turkmen EFL teachers) phonetic awareness and any potential problematic tasks that may confront during teaching English pronunciation. Iraqi Turkmen EFL teachers will

benefit from the findings of this research in remedy any potential inherent difficulties concerning the articulating and pronouncing English sounds, especially the fossilized sounds. Thus it reduces the required time and efforts of teaching English pronunciation to non-native English students. Also, it contributes to assisting Iraqi Turkmen EFL teachers to choose the proper method in teaching English pronunciation.

1.6. The Method of The Study

This thesis was conceptualized as non-experimental quantitative research. Thus, the researcher employed a 42-item questionnaire to collect data. The questionnaire has four sections. The first section surveys the participants' demographic background. The following sections are as follows: self-perception (15 items), pronunciation practising section (14 items and preferred methods of teaching pronunciation (13 items). The questionnaire items were a modified version of the instruments adapted and developed by (Sarikya, 2013) concerning pronunciation practising tools and self-perception sections. And (Burgess & Spencer, 2000; Foote et al., 2011; Bus, 2015) concerning the preferred method of teaching pronunciation section.

The researcher selected 100 EFL teachers for this study through voluntary participation. Random selection was used in the selection of the participants. The participants' age ranged between 24 and 30 or over with average experience in teaching between less than a year and more than ten years. They were teaching at primary and secondary school at TuzKhurmatu city in the north of Iraq. Ethical permission was obtained from the general supervisor of English teachers in the city.

The participants were informed about the questionnaire's objective, and the required time to fill the questionnaire did not spend more than 55 minutes. The questionnaire was administered in pen and paper form and online form. The data were collected using a questionnaire and analyzed using SPSS (V 26) to reveal any correlation between dependent and independent variables.

1.7. The Limitation of the Study

The current study incorporated some limitations that could be mentioned as follows:

1. Research design: The research was designed as non-experimental quantitative research; a Likert-type questionnaire was used to collect data.
2. Sampling: The number of participants assigned to this study was 100 teachers.

Future research could explore the importance of the supra-segmental features and conduct the questionnaire in a different setting by incorporating more participants, novice and senior learners and teachers, to measure the correlation between the dependent and independent variables.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Bilingualism and its Relation to Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness is a broad term referring to the ability to segment an utterance into the minor constituent (phoneme) of a specific language, blending these phonemes to produce comprehensive utterances. Also, it refers to handling speech based on supra-segmental features: intonation, stress, and rhythm (Anthony & Francis, 2005; Bonacina et al., 2019; Frost et al., 2009). Figure (1) illustrates the increasing hierarchy gradient of the learners' phonological awareness difficulties.

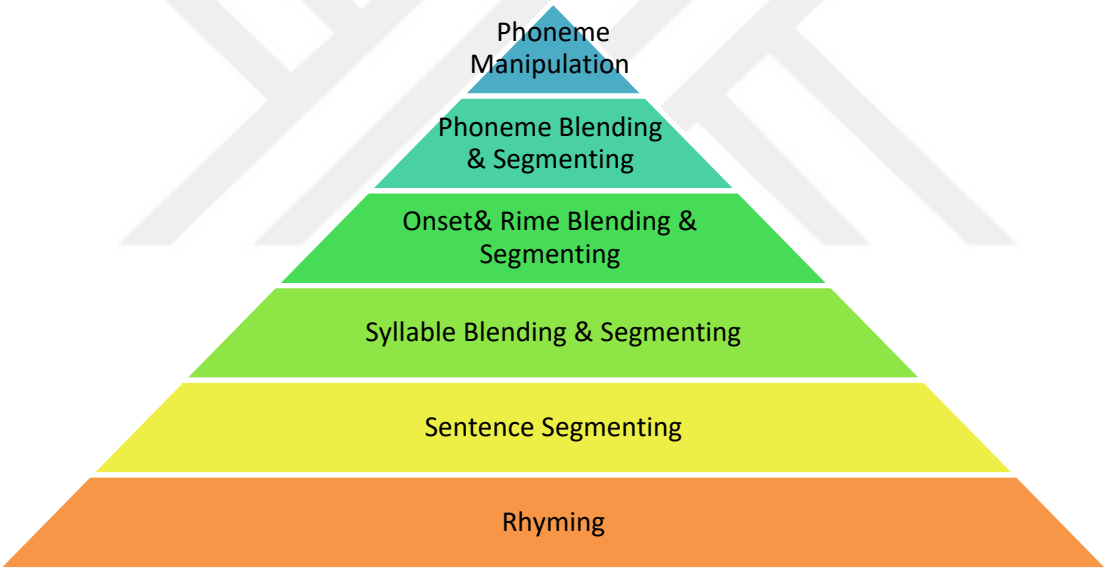

Figure 1. Phonological Awareness Increasing Gradient of Difficulties.

The term bilingualism has been defined by different linguists and scholars depending on their concepts and views. While some linguists have assumed that controlling two languages' aspects was adequate to consider one bilingual person, the others stipulated that they are influent speakers in their native and foreign languages. To consider someone a bilingual person, they had to be proficient speakers in both languages (Bloomfield, 1935).

Pronunciation is considered an essential factor in learning any language. Therefore, teachers must handle it carefully while teaching pronunciation to their

learners because committing errors in pronunciation of foreign language phonemes results in incorrectly articulating utterances, and it would be unintelligible. Hishmanoglu (2006) stated that incorrect articulation of EFL phonemes results in producing unintelligible words.

Furthermore, many studies for decades have inspected the relation between bilingualism and phonological awareness and attempted to demonstrate the impacts of EFL learners' mother language phonological awareness(PA) on their target language PA and the significance of EFL learners' native PA in developing their FLPA outcomes. The profound effects of the EFL learners' native language phonological awareness on their target languages utterance production due to the foreign language learners' mother tongue PA interference with their foreign language inputs (Branum-Martin et al., 2015; Chen et al., 2004; Garcia, 2017; Kreca et al., 2020). They concluded that EFL learners' mother tongue significantly impacts their pronunciation fluency; the mother tongue phonemes' interference with EFL learners' target language sounds or substituting specific sounds is considered an influential factor in misunderstanding or failure in attaining fluency.

Jason et al. (2009) noted that EFL learners' mother tongue PA significantly developed their foreign language PA. They investigated the EFL learners' prior phonological awareness of their native language effects on their foreign language learners' PA in the scope of cross-linguistic Influence. They observed that EFL learners' native language PA significantly impacted developing their FLAP, benefiting from their mother tongue PA rule system to comprehend their FLPA rule system.

In another study, Ataie (2014) studied the relationship between bilingualism and EFL learners' pronunciation achievements. The researcher aimed to reveal the relationship between EFL learners' phonological awareness with their foreign language. The study demonstrated that EFL learners' mother tongue pronunciation awareness has significant consequences on their target language pronunciation fluency. Foreign language learners' mother tongue influenced the EFL learners' fluency. The interference between EFL learners' native and target language PA could result in failures in attaining fluency to the incorrect articulation of specific EFL utterances.

2.2. The EFL Learners' Pronunciation Awareness

The mastery of English pronunciation enables EFL learners to produce intelligible utterances and avoid committing pronunciation errors, resulting in misunderstandings. Castano (2021) considered pronunciation as a fundamental linguistic component that enables EFL learners to communicate intelligibly. He conducted a study on The EFL learners to demonstrate the importance of linguistic components like phonology in reinforcing verbal communication among EFL and the main problematic sounds that EFL learners encounter. At the same time, they attempt to produce an utterance in their target language. He found out that there were some problematic sounds that EFL students confronted difficulties in producing.

In a similar token, Yusriati & Hasibuan (2019) scrutinized the importance of mastering English pronunciation rules, the EFL learners' efforts to enhance their pronunciation awareness, and the barriers that EFL learners' confronted through practising English pronunciation. The study's findings revealed the importance of English pronunciation awareness in producing intelligible utterances, and The EFL learners encountered difficulties pronouncing specific English sounds. Furthermore, some strategies could be followed to improve EFL learners' pronunciation performance.

The EFL learners require to learn English phonemes correctly. They should be aware of the correct articulation of the English phonemes, and to fulfil this, they demanded a professional teacher that taught them English pronunciation like a native teacher. Yakut (2020) conducted a study to highlight the importance of teaching pronunciation explicitly to B1-level EFL students. The results indicated that teaching pronunciation explicitly to the B1-level EFL students strengthened their pronunciation and motivated their communicative performance.

During the Foreign language learning process, EFL learners may encounter some difficulties concerning articulating specific phonemes due to the EFL learners' mother tongue phonological rules system interference. As a result, many problematic sounds emerged, and EFL learners may articulate them incorrectly. EFL learners should know the English pronunciation rules to surmount any difficulties producing specific English sounds (Keysan, 2021; Winarti, 2019). The researchers conducted a study to identify the importance of pronunciation to EFL students. The studies' findings indicated that English pronunciation mastery is a fundamental linguistic component. Some factors like

students' native pronunciation rules interference with their target one may affect English pronunciation mastery.

Similarly, Susanti & Dewanti (2017) adopted a study to investigate the phonological errors that EFL students at Universitas Airlangga committed. The results indicated that the EFL students' most errors were committed to producing specific consonant and vowel sounds that do not exist in EFL learners' native language. Furthermore, Setyaningsih et al. (2019) conducted studies to explore the potential reasons behind EFL learners' difficulties. The results indicated that EFL learners encountered difficulties in articulating monophthong and diphthong sounds.

The significant role of pronunciation to the EFL learners and teachers alike, and the existence of some fossilized sounds that demands appropriate remedy to overcome such difficulties and enhance EFL learners' pronunciation performance, results in highlighting the role of the excellent model concerning teaching English pronunciation professionally and assisting the EFL learners' to overcome pronunciation difficulties due to the wrong adaption of specific approaches in pronunciation teaching or wrong articulation by the model. Bayram (2021) inspected the Turkish EFL instructors' views concerning teaching English pronunciation to non-native English learners. The study's findings indicated the significant role of teaching pronunciation to the EFL instructors who consider it a fundamental factor in teaching pronunciation. Therefore, pronunciation awareness to the EFL learners is an essential component that enables them to produce intelligible sounds and surmounts any potential problematic sounds articulation in their target language. Also, the appropriate method of teaching pronunciation could strengthen EFL learners' pronunciation awareness and motivate them to practice English pronunciation

2.3. Distinctive Segmental Features of Turkish & English Sound Alphabet

The Turkish language differs from other foreign languages with its vowel harmony, and every letter in the Turkish alphabet is pronounced. The Turkish language is characterized as possessing twenty-nine phonemes, and they are divided into two main divisions. The first division represents the consonant sounds that incorporate twenty-one sounds. The other division consists of eight vowel sounds. Turkish consonant sounds differ from the English language in some aspects and state phonological similarities in others. Every Turkish consonant phoneme is

Pronounced except the letter (ğ), which does not occur at the beginning of a word but is preceded by a vowel, and when it occurs at a final position, it is not pronounced but lengthen the preceding vowel. In this respect, it differs from English sounds which possess many silent letters like the letter (k) of the beginning of a word followed by the letter (n), e.g. (Knob /nob/, Knight /nait/). Another distinctive feature of Turkish sounds is the absence of consonant clusters of more than two or three letters, and such phenomena are mostly restricted to some instances. It differs from English sound systems that allow the sequences of two or three consonant sounds in a specific word-formation process. There is no combination of letters to produce one phoneme, i.e., every single letter has its corresponding sound. It differs from English sounds that combine two letters to produce one phoneme (s+h to produce the sound / ʃ/ e.g., share).

The Turkish letter alphabet [ğ], pronounced as fricative velar phoneme /γ/, is always preceded by a vowel. When a vowel is attached to some nouns ending with postvocalic /k/, it is produced as fricative velar/ ğ /by consonant substitution. A similar alternation applies to certain loan-words ending in/ p/ and /t/, which transformed into / b /and/ d/. the final /k/, /t/, and /p/ get voiced when followed by a vowel. Khalilzadeh (2010) demonstrated this phenomenon in his study and said that when these consonants are preceded and followed by a vowel, the phenomenon is known as intervocalic voicing.

Another distinctive feature of Turkish sound is the absence of existing the following phonemes /w, θ, ð, ŋ/, but it exists in the English sound system, also the incorporation of eight monophthong vowels (/a/, /e/, /ı/, /i/, /o/, / ö /, /u/, /ü/) that can be

divide into three parts according to their articulation: [high, back, round]. There are no diphthong or triphthong vowel sounds in the Turkish sound alphabet. On the contrary to this English sound alphabet contains them.

Table 1. Turkish sounds alphabet manner & place of articulation

	Bilabial	**Labio - dental**	**Dental**	**Alveolar**	**Post alveolar**	**Palate alveolar**	**Palate**	**Velar**	**Glottal**
Stops	p, b		t, d					k, g	
affricates					tʃ, d3				
fricative		f, v		s, z	ʃ, 3			γ	h
nasal	m			n					
lateral				l					
approximate						r			
glide							j(y)		

2.4. The Importance of Pronunciation to EFL Learner

Pronunciation is a vital factor in achieving intelligible competence interaction among monolingual or bilingual community members. According to Levis (2018), intelligible pronunciation is a crucial component of verbal communication among community members. To guarantee communicative competence among bilingual learners, we need to be aware of the pronunciation of these languages and the correct

articulation of each phoneme to avoid any misunderstanding that may result from a mispronunciation of specific utterances. Hişmanoğlu(2006) stated that good pronunciation manipulation results in maintaining communicative competence, i.e., correctly pronouncing English sounds enables processing the received sounds intelligibly.

Foreign language learners demand correct decoding of the target language inputs (phonemes). EFL learners' mother tongue phonemes may affect their target language sounds articulation, and then a communication interruption may arise due to

such interference in decoding languages phoneme incorrectly. Thus, EFL learners need to conquer obstacles that may arise from insufficient knowledge or the negligence of practising pronunciation (Aydın & Akyuz, 2017, Cox et al., 2019).

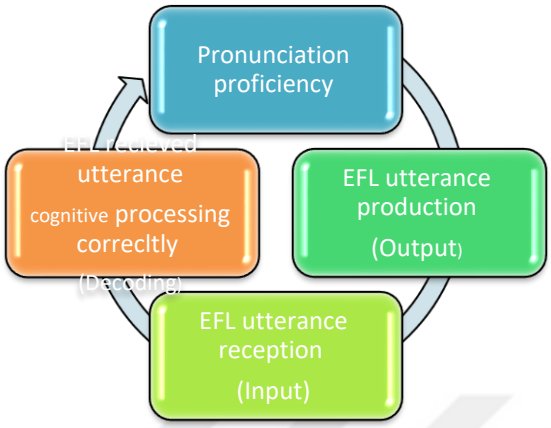

Figure 2. The target language proficiency process.

Hence, teaching target language pronunciation is ideally considered the critical factor that facilitates avoiding any misunderstanding that may arise from wrong decoding of the received utterance due to learners' native language PA during interaction activities. The learners' pronunciation proficiency will be enhanced thoroughly.

2.5. The Inherent Difficulties of Teaching English Pronunciation among EFL Teachers

Because of the distinctive phonological characteristics between EFL learners' sound system and their native language phonemics rule, the crucial role of pronunciation emerged to facilitate the learning process by illustrating the production mechanism of an utterance in learners' target language. Moreover, they can point out differences and similarities between their mother tongue and foreign language phonological rules.

Many studies have recently been conducted to identify the problematic sounds that EFL learners or EFL teachers encountered while learning or teaching English as a foreign language. The main problematic consonant and vowel sounds that EFL learners or teachers confront during their learning or teaching process (Demirezen, 2005a; Khalilzadeh, 2010; Şen, 2019; Zeybek, 2018),. For example the consonant and vowel sounds that they suffered difficulties in articulating them were (e.g. /θ/, /ð/, /w/, /v/, /ŋ/,

/r/ ; /ɪ/, /ʊ/, /ɔ:/, /ƏʊƏ/, /aʊƏ/). The researchers consensually related these pronunciation difficulties concerning the problematic phonemes that have been mentioned above to some factors like the absence of this phoneme existence in the learners' native language sound alphabet (mother tongue language impacts), and insufficient practice/exposure to these problematic phonemes, adopting incorrect approaches in teaching these phonemes to capable users, to conquer obstacles during their production of such phonemes.

Similarly, Ercan (2018) conducted another study to investigate Turkish foreign language learners' pronunciation difficulties during the English language learning process. The participants were 30 Turkish EFL learners in-state schools of Grine, northern Turkish Cyprus. The data were collected through pronunciation tests and case observation by the researcher. The collected data demonstrated that EFL learners had encountered inherent difficulties in articulating specific English sounds. Furthermore, the researcher indicated the fundamental reason for such a severe problem: the learners' native language does not incorporate these phonemes. Moreover, insufficient training and exposure to these sounds could be possible reasons for such mispronunciation of these sounds.

Another study was conducted by Turgay (2021). Moreover, he attempted to demonstrate the main English sounds that EFL students confronted during their learning procedure. The study's finding indicates that novice Turkish EFL learners are conflicting in articulating specific English sounds like a mispronunciation of English consonant alveolar sound /θ/and substituted it with other phonemes like /t/ or /d/. Also, the potential causes of such mispronunciation are the absence of such phonemes in learners' target language sound alphabet and inadequate amount of practice or exposure to problematic foreign language sounds. Below, a figure illustrates the prominent problematic English phonemes that FL learners or EFL teachers suffer.

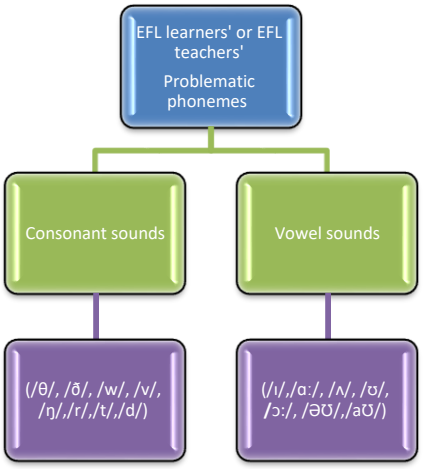

Figure 3. Turkish as English foreign learners' & teachers problematic sounds.

2.6. The Preferred Methods of Teaching English Pronunciation to

2.6.1. EF Learners & EFL Teachers

Due to the essential role of teaching English pronunciation to EFL, learners can avoid any potential misunderstanding that may arise from the incorrect articulation of specific utterances in the target language. Therefore, the need to adopt the proper method in teaching English pronunciation to non-native speakers has been a tangible matter, to master all respects of teaching English pronunciation, specifically the area of inherent difficulties that EFL teachers or learners encountered during the teaching or learning process due to their mother tongue impacts, and cross-linguistic influence appearance, because of insufficient PA of EFL teachers or learners in the target language.

For decades, many studies have been conducted to identify the particular approaches of teaching English pronunciation to Turkish EFL teachers or EFL learners. The possible causes of mispronunciation that EFL teachers or EFL learners confronted while attempting to pronounce an utterance in the English language and the proper teaching of English pronunciation to Turkish EFL teachers or EFL learners were pointed out by the researchers (Şenel, 2006; Şen, 2019; Ustacı & Ok, 2014). They noted that Turkish EFL learners or EFL teachers could generally master English phonemes, and the problematic sounds specifically through adopting specific techniques in teaching English pronunciation like adequate exposure/practice of English pronunciation without

neglecting any phoneme and taking into account special deal with fossilized pronunciation errors through imitation, repetition, etc.

Demirzen (2005b, 2007, 2010), an essential figure in the teaching of pronunciation, conducted a wide range of studies in this field to facilitate Turkish

English language learners' and teachers' teaching procedures and identifying the most critical segmental pronunciation difficulties. Furthermore, the best approaches in teaching English pronunciation have been handled in his studies to concentrate on the fossilization pronunciation errors they confronted during their teaching or learning process.

Demirzen (2010) conducted an experimental study on novice EFL teachers and trainees to remedy the possible fossilized English phonemes that Turkish teachers or learners confront difficulties articulating like native speakers. To manipulate this case, he designed the audio articulation model (AAM). The model's primary concern is facilitating EFL teachers' or learners' intelligibly, articulating the core sound. He concluded that the fossilized sounds like (/ w, θ, ð, ŋ, f,v/) and other vowel sounds could be manipulated and articulated intelligibly through practising and adopting the proper techniques or models in teaching these core sounds to EFL learners and teachers.

The micro-listening and speaking practice in class is a one-time session lasting for 40-50 minutes. The participants were exposed to the corpus of 50-100 words containing the problematic phonemes. Then the corpus words were put in minimal pairs, so the mentor puts an easy utterance(without implementing any problematic sound) with another containing problematic pronunciation sound (e.g., ba<u>d</u> /d/ vs. ba<u>the</u> /ð/) using contrastive analytical hypothesis. And practising the core sounds through imitation and repetition requires self-monitoring and correction and using tongue twister[1], proverb, idioms, etc. The study pre-test and post-test findings indicate an enhancement of the participants' articulation of the English problematic consonant and vowel phonemes.

[1] A tongue twister is a word, phrase, or sentence difficult to pronounce due to a sequence of similar consonant sounds(e.g.<u>Th</u>omas threw <u>Th</u>omasina <u>Th</u>umbtacks).

2.7. Cross-Linguistic Influence

Cross-linguistic Influence emerged with the doctrine that there are some kinds of mutual Influence between two language systems or subsystems (phonology, morphology, etc.). It typically states the different ways in which the learners' mother tongue can affect their target language and vice-versa at a specific area of difficulties, i.e., the Influence will be apparent in the area where the EFL learners demonstrate insufficient linguistic awareness (e.g., phonological awareness). An example of CLI is the Influence of Turkish EFL learners' or teachers' native language sound system on their English phonemes pronunciation, specifically in respect to fossilized sounds, which most EFL learners suffer from because of some factors like the absence of these phonemes in the foreign learners' mother tongue sound systems, and little practice or exposure to the target language sound system. Therefore, phoneme substitution or interference phenomena will emerge to fill the pronunciation gap, which is the potential cause of mispronunciation or incompetent proficiency.

According to Ercan (2018), the problematic sound /ð/was mostly substituted with the sound /d/ as in the words 'southern', which is pronounced as /ˈsʌdən /, since these two consonants do not exist in the Turkish sound alphabet. Hence, Turkish EFL learners tend to produce either /t/, /f/ or /d/ sound instead.

2.8. Audio articulation model (AAM)

Audio articulation is an effective model that has been designed by Demirzen (2010) to remedy the novice EFL teachers or EFL learners' fossilized pronunciation errors, which indicates even the learners with complex linguistic knowledge and maturity encounter difficulties in articulating specific English phonemes. The model's primary concern is assisting EFL teachers or EFL teachers in articulating the problematic sounds correctly without mispronunciation. It can be illustrated briefly in this way. The micro-listening and speaking practice in class is a one-time session lasting for 40-50 minutes to the corpus of 50-100 words containing the core sounds, then preparing the corpus words were put in minimal pair in a way the mentor puts an easy utterance (without implementing any problematic sound) with another was containing problematic pronunciation sound (e.g., bad /d/ vs. bathe/ð/) using contrastive analytical hypothesis.

And practising the core sounds through imitation and repetition requires self-monitoring and correction and using tongue twister, proverb, idioms, etc.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

This study aims to scrutinize the importance of bilingual PA in articulating English sound correctly and demonstrate the inherent difficulties in pronouncing the core sounds that FL teachers or FL learners confronted during the interaction process because of EFL teachers or learners native language PA impacts on their FLPA in the scope of cross-linguistic Influence (Muller & Hulk, 2001). Erjan (2018) stated that TFL learners encountered difficulties articulating specific English sounds due to mother tongue PA interference with their FLPA. Also, it investigates the most appropriate methods of teaching English pronunciation, especially in the area of problematic sounds, through the Audio Articulation Model designed by Turkish linguist, Demirzen (2010). Therefore, the following questions are formulated in this study:

1. Are there any significant differences concerning the importance of pronunciation to EFL teachers'?
2. What are the inherent difficulties that Turkish EFL teachers confront during the learning/teaching process?
3. Do EFL teachers' beliefs about the potential significance of the English pronunciation teaching method change based on age, gender, experience and educational level?

3.2. Research Design

This study is conceptualized as survey research because it endeavours to reveal the relationship among the variables through adopting a questionnaire and detect if there are any interchangeable significances between dependent and independent variables. According to Weisberg et al.(1996) and Lowhorn (2007), the correlation survey research refers to the significant statistical relationship among the variables and measuring any arousal effects from such interchangeable relationships among specific study variables (dependent & independent variable).

3.3. Setting& Participants

The present study took place at primary, secondary, intermediate, and preparatory state schools in TuzKhurmatu, with about 112000 predominant Turkmen. It is located in the north of Iraq. It chose such a setting to study sampling due to the convenience and availability of sampling with the research study area.

The number of participants in the present study was 100 Turkmen foreign English language teachers, 56 of them were male while 44 of them female, and the age range of the participants ranges between 24 and more than 30 years old, they were all teaching at state primary and secondary schools at Tuzkhurmatu city in the north of Iraq. The education degree concerning the participants ranged from some having diploma (degree granted to people who finished two-year institute study after baccalaureate), bachelor and others had a master's degree with experience teaching the English language for more than eight years, and others for less than one year (see table 2).

Ethics approval was obtained from the teachers' head supervisor board at Tuz-khurmatu city before inviting the self-selected participants to express their level of agreement regarding the questionnaire scales. The questionnaire was administered, both online and paper, and pencil. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, most participants preferred the online administration model to share their level of agreement to the questionnaire variables.

Table 2. The participants' demographic information.

Participants' demographic information N=100				
Gender	Male	Female		
	56	44		
Age	24-27 years	28-30 years	More than 30 years	
	N: 26	28	43	
Educational level	Diploma	Bachelor	Master	
	N: 18	63	19	
The number of years teaching	Less than 1 year	4-7 years	More than eight years	
	N: 19	22	59	
Current teaching level	Primary	Secondary	Intermediate	Preparatory
	N: 21	38	26	15

3.4. Data collection tool

In the present study, to collect data, a Likert-type questionnaire was used. It includes 42 items. The questionnaire measures the participants' self-perception scales (15 items), pronunciation practice scales (14 items), and the preferred methods of teaching pronunciation (13 items).

The participants indicated their level of agreement with statements on a 5-points scale ranging from "strongly agree" to" strongly disagree" concerning the first 29 measures. An example like " Teaching pronunciation is an essential part of teaching the English language.". And another 5-point liker scales ranging from" always" to "never" for the following 13 measures. An example like "Phonetic alphabet: I teach it in full to classes.".

sections: The participants' self-perception scales which consisted of 15 items, namely (1,2,3,…,15), pronunciation practice scales which consisted of 14 items, namely (16,17,18,…,29), and finally the preferred method of teaching English pronunciation scales which incorporated 13 items, namely (30 31, 32, …,42). To check the reliability and internal consistency of the items. The researcher used SPSS (V.26) in analyzing collected data, Cronbach's Alpha value of the variables was detected. The participants' self-perception and pronunciation practice 29 items Cronbach's Alpha was .64, considered accepted, but a low-reliability value. According to Ursachi et al. (2015), an Alpha value of .6 - .7 manifests an acceptable value of reliability, and .8 or greater value indicates an excellent value of reliability. Therefore, item no.5, "I spend time teaching stress and rhythm and intonation in my classes." It affected the reliability of the items. The participant might have misunderstood this item because it incorporated supra-segmental features that most EFL teachers neglect their usage. Yurtbasi (2017) stated that most FEL learners supra segmental misunderstanding or errors due to their mother tongue language or negligence in practising these features. Hence, item no. 5 was excluded, and the resultant Cronbach's Alpha value was found .84, a high level of reliability.

3.5. Procedure

All participants were informed with the following questionnaire concerns study: self-perception scales, pronunciation practice scales, and the preferred methods of teaching pronunciation to non-native English language teachers. It would take a maximum of fifty-five minutes. Participants were randomly assigned to the research study. The questionnaire was administered online using Google Docs: Free Online Documents for Personal Use form. The link was shared on Whatsapp groups of English language teachers and other social media. Pen and paper administration was done by personal visit to participants school the researcher, after interviewing the participants, and informed them about the content of the questionnaire, and the purpose of the study, the researcher handed over them a questionnaire in pen and paper format to fill it, later the researcher came again to collect their respondents.

The data were analyzed using SPSS version 26. Then, analyzed data were assessed using post-hoc test results multiple comparisons (Sheffe) t-test and ANOVA one-way test among groups to investigate if the demographics inventories had any significance on the participants' respondents. Then we assessed their significance on thesis primary and secondary hypotheses.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

4.1. Introduction

This research aimed to investigate the importance of EFL pronunciation and utilized this importance in assisting EFL teachers/learners in pronouncing each EFL sounds intelligible. Furthermore, it tried to investigate the core sounds articulating process correctly through adopting the proper methods in teaching EFL pronunciation.

Moreover, this study examined the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The independent variables incorporated demographic information like age, gender, experience, and participants' level of education. In comparison, the dependent variables incorporated of items measure the importance of pronunciation practice, self-perception, and the preferred teaching method (see appendix A). This study inspected any significant differences between the groups based on gender variables and any significant differences among groups based on age, educational level, experience, and current teaching level.

4.2. The Results of the Study

The descriptive statistical analysis of the questionnaire variables indicates significant and non-significant mean differences between groups concerning the questionnaire parts. The tables below present the descriptive statistical analysis results concerning the parts of the questionnaire:

Table 3. Descriptive statistical results for pronunciation practice scale

Pronunciation practice scales	Total number	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Level
1. Teaching pronunciation is an essential part of teaching English.	N	59	25	4	7	5	Strongly agree
	%	59%	25%	4%	7%	5%	
2. I spend time improving the pronunciation of specific English sounds that Turkish students have difficulty with.	N	36	37	8	11	8	Agree
	%	36%	37%	8%	11%	8%	
3. Pronunciation should be taught as a separate class.	N	22	42	4	20	12	Agree
	%	22%	42%	4%	20%	12%	
4. I spend time teaching how to pronounce individual sounds in my classes.	N	25	47	10	12	6	Agree
	%	25%	47%	10%	12%	6%	
5. I spend time teaching stress /rhythm and intonation in my classes.	N	18	40	12	20	10	Agree
	%	18%	40%	12%	20%	10%	
6. I check the pronunciation of unknown words in a dictionary before going to the classroom.	N	60	21	4	5	10	Strongly agree
	%	60%	21%	4%	5%	10%	
7. Pronunciation is essential for students.	N	62	22	1	6	9	Strongly agree
	%	62%	22%	1%	6%	9%	
8. I make sure that my students know about the difference between Turkish and English sound systems.	N	24	53	9	4	10	Agree
	%	24%	53%	9%	4%	10%	
9. Knowledge of the phonetic alphabet helps students become independent learners.	N	31	41	0	10	18	Agree
	%	31%	41%	0%	10%	18%	
10. The amount of time I spend on pronunciation teaching depends on the level of the students.	N	56	29	3	6	6	Strongly agree
	%	56%	29%	3%	6%	6%	
	N	32	52	3	5	8	Agree

11. I enjoy teaching pronunciation in my classes.	%	32%	52%	3%	5%	8%	
12. Pronunciation should be taught as part of a class on speaking.	N	34	39	4	15	8	Agree
	%	34%	39%	4%	15%	8%	
13. Pronunciation should be taught as part of a class on listening.	N	48	40	0	8	4	Strongly agree
	%	48%	40%	0%	8%	4%	
14. Pronunciation should be taught as part of a class on reading.	N	40	35	9	9	7	Strongly agree
	%	40%	35%	9%	9%	7%	
15. Pronunciation should be taught as part of a class on writing.	N	32	39	7	13	9	Agree
	%	32%	39%	7%	13%	9%	

As we can understand from Table 3, 59% of the participants believe that teaching pronunciation is an essential part of teaching English, and 37% of the participants state their agreement with spending time on improving the pronunciation of specific sounds like a letter (v) that pronounced the sound /v/ in the English language, and the sound /w/ in the Turkish language. Whereas 42% state their agreement with teaching pronunciation as a separate class, 40% agree with spending some time teaching stress and intonation, and 60% show their strong agreement with checking the meaning of unknown words before going to a classroom. While 62% state they strongly agree with the importance of foreign language pronunciation to the students, 53% agree that their students are aware of the differences between Turkish and English sound systems. Furthermore, 41% of the participants agree with students being independent learners if they have sufficient knowledge of the phonetic alphabet, and 56% of the participants show they strongly agree with the item that states the amount of teaching pronunciation depends on the students' pronunciation knowledge. Similarly, 52% considered teaching pronunciation an exciting job, and 39% of the participants believe that pronunciation should be taught as part of a class on speaking. Moreover, 48 % of the participants show their agreement with being taught as part of a class on listening, and 40% of the participants agree with teaching pronunciation as part of reading, and 39% of the participants agree with teaching pronunciation as part of a class on writing.

Table 4. Descriptive statistical results for self-perception

Self-perception scales		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Level
1. I see myself as a good role model for pronunciation in my classes.	N	31	43	4	14	8	Agree
	%	31%	43%	4%	14%	8%	
2. I need to read more about the phonological characteristics of individual English sounds.	N	26	41	4	16	13	Agree
	%	26%	41%	4%	16%	13%	
3. As a NNEST, I don't feel confident enough in my knowledge of English.	N	29	46	9	8	8	Agree
	%	29%	46%	9%	8%	8%	
4. Being a NNEST is a hindrance in terms of my pronunciation.	N	26	26	6	23	19	Strongly agree/agree
	%	26%	26%	6%	23%	19%	
5. Having a native-like pronunciation is essential for me as a NNEST.	N	14	28	13	25	20	Agree
	%	14%	28%	13%	25%	20%	
6. I need to learn more about stress/rhythm/intonation in English.	N	34	43	5	10	8	Agree
	%	34%	43%	5%	10%	8%	
7. My pronunciation would be better if I spent time abroad.	N	22	38	8	20	12	Agree
	%	22%	38%	8%	20%	12%	
8. I believe NNESTs can speak English without an accent.	N	36	26	6	19	13	Strongly agree
	%	36%	26%	6%	19%	13%	
9. I would ignore my pronunciation in the classroom if my students had a native English speaker teacher.	N	19	45	5	18	13	Agree
	%	19%	45%	5%	18%	13%	
10. I would feel proud of myself if someone told me that I have native-like pronunciation.	N	16	15	4	20	45	Strongly disagree
	%	16%	15%	4%	20%	45%	
11. I need to work on improving my pronunciation of individual English sounds.	N	36	40	5	11	8	Agree
	%	36%	40%	5%	11%	8%	
12. I feel confident about my pronunciation as a NNEST.	N	24	50	4	9	13	Agree
	%	24%	50%	4%	9%	13%	

13. I am aware of specific difficulties; Turkish speakers have with individual English sounds and clusters of sounds.	N	38	47	2	5	8	Agree
	%	38%	47%	2%	5%	8%	
14. As a NNEST, I think it is OK to have an accent.	N	20	40	1	28	11	Agree
	%	20%	40%	1%	28%	11%	

Table 4 presents the results of (descriptive statistic for self-perception). As we can understand from the table, 43% of the participants agree with their self-perception, considering themselves a good role model for pronunciation in their class, and 41% show their need to read more about the phonological characteristics of individual sounds. Also, 46% of the participants believe that they do not have sufficient knowledge of English, and 26% of them considered themselves NNEST is a hindrance in terms of my pronunciation. Whereas 28% agree with the characteristic of having native-like pronunciation is essential for them as a NNEST, 43% agree with their need to learn more about stress, rhythm and intonation in English, and 38% of the participants believe that their pronunciation will be better if the spent time abroad. Furthermore, 36% strongly agree with speaking English without any effect on their accent, i.e., their mother tongue language does not affect their foreign one and vice versa, and 45% of the participants agree with I would ignore my pronunciation in the classroom if my students had native English speaker teacher. Moreover, 45% of them believe that having native-like pronunciation does not affect their phonological linguistic awareness, and 40% of the participants agree with their need to improve their pronunciation of individual English sounds. While 50% of the participants agree with their feeling confident about their pronunciation as NNEST, 47% of the participants state their agreements with being aware of specific difficulties Turkish speakers have with individual English sounds and clusters of sounds, and 40% agree with the item 14 concerning having an accent as non-native English language speakers is ok.

Table 5. Descriptive statistical results of the preferred way of teaching pronunciation.

Preferred way of teaching pronunciation scales		Always	Sometimes	Often	Rarely	Never	Level
1. Imitation and repetition: e.g., learners listen to the teacher or a CD and repeat, trying to imitate as closely as possible.	N	33	43	11	11	2	Sometimes
	%	33%	43%	11%	11%	2%	
2. Phonetic alphabet: I use it to help in teaching.	N	43	33	18	6	0	Always
	%	43%	33%	18%	6%	0%	
3. Drills: e.g., repetition drills contrasting minimal pairs (chip/cheap, fit/feet, bit/beat).	N	30	42	19	8	1	Sometimes
	%	30%	42%	19%	8%	1%	
4. Marking: Having learners mark pronunciation features in a passage of text (e.g., underline the stressed words or draw intonation arrows).	N	28	37	15	12	8	Sometimes
	%	28%	37%	15%	12%	8%	
5. Tactile reinforcement: Having learners feel where/ how they are speaking (e.g., asking them to touch their throats while pronouncing voiced and voiceless sounds).	N	37	27	23	12	0	Always
	%	37%	27%	23%	12%	0%	
6. Interactive media: e.g., online games and animated libraries, pronunciation software.	N	30	38	18	9	5	Sometimes
	%	30%	38%	18%	9%	5%	
7. Drama and role-play: e.g., practicing and performing dialogues in pairs or groups, paying particular attention to pronunciation.	N	23	41	19	15	2	Sometimes
	%	23%	41%	19%	15%	2%	
8. Visual aids: e.g., diagrams of the vocal tract, representations of how a sound is articulated.	N	40	33	13	13	1	Always
	%	40%	33%	13%	13%	1%	
9. Focus on rules: Explicitly teaching English phonetic and phonological rules and showing how they differ from Turkish phonetic and phonology rules.	N	34	40	19	6	1	Sometimes
	%	34%	40%	19%	6%	1%	
	N	26	42	17	12	3	Sometimes

10. Recordings: Having learners record and listen to their pronunciation.	%	26%	42%	17%	12%	3%	
11. Phonetic alphabet: I teach it in full to classes.	N	23	43	20	10	4	Sometimes
	%	23%	43%	20%	10%	4%	
12. Body movement: e.g., having learners step, clap, tap.	N	24	25	28	14	9	often
	%	24%	25%	28%	14%	9%	
13.Mirrors: Having learners observe their articulation in a mirror.	N	15	17	13	17	38	Never
	%	15%	17%	13%	17%	38%	

Table 5 shows(preferred way of teaching pronunciation). As we can understand from the table, 43% of the participant believes that sometimes using imitation and Repetition in learning a foreign language, and 43% of the state that they always use phonetics alphabet in teaching foreign language demonstrate the importance of being aware with the phonetic alphabet of the foreign language. While 42% of them demonstrated that they sometimes prefer to use drills: e.g., repetition drills contrasting minimal pairs(chip & cheap, fit & feet) in teaching pronunciation, 37% state that they are sometimes marking pronunciation features like stress or intonation arrows in a passage text that may assist the learners in being able to produce interrogative sentences with rising tone and response with falling tone and so on. Also, 37% of the participants believe that the preferred way of teaching a foreign language can always be done through tactile reinforcement, and 38% of the participants state that sometimes using interactive media as an online game can enhance the learners' pronunciation performance. Whereas 41% of the participants stated that they sometimes prefer to use drama and role play: e.g., practising and performing dialogues in pairs or groups paying particular attention to pronunciation, i.e., teaching pronunciation can be done through using speech dialogue between the learners with a concentration on the pronunciation, 40% of the participants showed that using visual aids: e.g., diagram of the vocal tract, representation of how a sound is articulated is always an important matter to be aware with the sounds articulated area and then they can differentiate between their native and foreign language sounds. Moreover, 40% of the participants believe that there is an importance of explicitly teaching English phonetic and phonological rules and showing how they differ from the rules of Turkish phonetic and phonology rule, and 42% of the participants believes that sometimes using recording in teaching pronunciation, i.e., having learners record and

listen to their pronunciation, such thing may help them to reinforce their pronunciation performance and motivate their phonological awareness. Also, 43% of the participants state their opinions concerning the importance of teaching the phonetic alphabet to classes, and 28% of the participants use body movements in teaching pronunciation. In addition, 38% of the participants state that they never use a mirror in teaching pronunciation, i.e., while they produce a specific sound, they don't look at a mirror to be familiar with the mouth shape (spread, round, etc.).

4.2.1. Q1. Are There Any Significant Differences Concerning the Importance of Pronunciation to the EFL Teachers'?

A one-way ANOVA with Sheffe post-hoc test was conducted to compare EFL teachers' scores' difference in English pronunciation between age, gender, experience, and educational level. The results indicated that there was a positive significant mean difference between groups concerning the second section of the questionnaire (pronunciation practice) item (1, 10, 14, 15), and no significant correlation was found among groups for the other item like (2, 3, 4, 12).

4.2.1.1. Variables with positive Statistically Significant Mean Difference (Pronunciation practice: item 1, 10, 14, 15)

One-way ANOVA revealed a positive correlation between the groups regarding age for item '1'. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant mean difference [$F = 3.459$, $p = .035$ ($P<.005$)] in pronunciation practice for EFL teachers among the groups with mean value (2.23) to EFL teachers with 24-27 years groups, (1.052) to 28-30 years groups, and (1.60) to participants whose age more than 30 years groups. The most statistically significant group's value was EFL teachers with 24-27 years (see table 6).

Table 6. The results of Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe) for item '1'

Pronunciation Practice Section	age	Mean	Std Deviation	F	Sig
1.Teaching pronunciation is an essential part of teaching English.	24-27 years	2.23	1.681	3.459	.035
	28-30 years	1.52	.926		
	More than 30 years	1.60	.760		

As we can understand from table (6), the P-value is less than .005(P<.005). P = .035. So, age factor has a significance on the importance of pronunciation teaching to EFL learners with the highest mean value (2.23) to EFL teachers with 24-27 years, (1.052) to 28-30 years, and the lowest mean value (1.60) to participants whose age is more than 30 years (see figure 5).

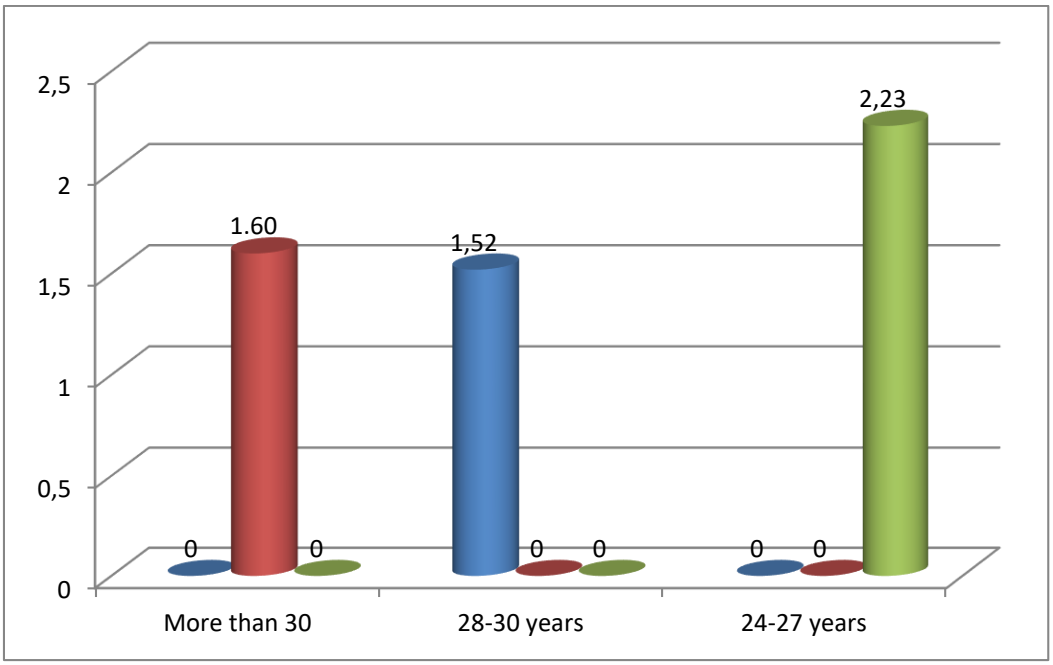

Figure 4. Mean value results for the item (1).

One-way ANOVA revealed a positive correlation between the groups regarding age for item '**10**'. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant mean difference [$F = 4.143$, $p = .019$ (P<.005)] in pronunciation practice for EFL teachers between the groups with a mean value (1.88) to EFL teachers with 24-27 years groups, (2.16) to 28-30 years groups, and (1.42) to participants whose age is more than 30 years groups. The most statistically significant group's value was EFL teachers with 24-27 years (see table 7).

Table 7. The results of Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe) for item '10'

Pronunciation practice section	age	Mean	Std Deviation	F	Sig
10.**The amount of time I spend on pronunciation teaching depends on the level of the students.**	24-27 years	1.88	1.143	4.157	.019
	28-30 years	2.16	1.551		
	More than 30 years	1.42	.626		

Table (7) presents the results of the Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe). As we can understand from the table, the P-value is less than .005(P<.005). P = .019. So, age factor has a significance on the amount of time that EFL teachers spend on pronunciation teaching depends on the level of the students with mean value (1.88) to EFL teachers with 24-27 years, (2.16) to 28-30 years, and (1.42) to participants whose age more than 30 years. The highest mean was the age group (28-30 years), and the lowest mean value to the age group (more than 30 years). The most statistically significant group was EFL teachers with 28-30 years (see figure 6).

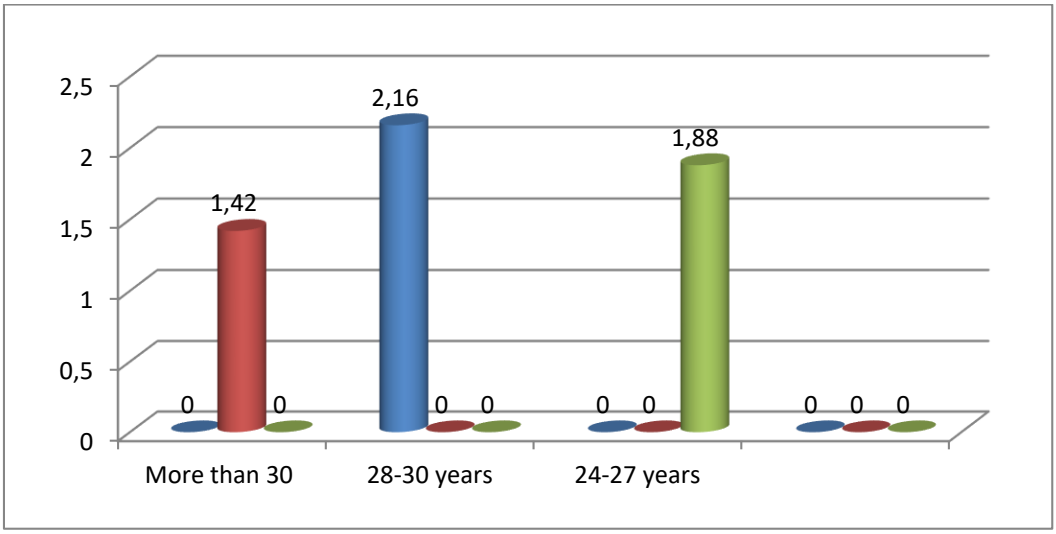

Figure 5. Mean value results for the item (10)

Item'13' one-way ANOVA test indicated significant differences between groups concerning the number of years teaching (24-27 years, 28-30 years, and more than 30 years). The results revealed that there was a positive significant mean difference [*F*= 4.019, *P*= .021 ((P<.005)] between groups regarding the number of years teaching pronunciation with the highest mean value (2.75) to EFL teachers with experience less than one year, (1.95) to 4-7 years, and the lowest mean value (1.90) to participants whose experience more than eight years. The most statistically significant group's value was EFL teachers with experience of less than one year (see table 8).

Table 8. The results of Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe) for item '13'

Pronunciation practice section	experience	Mean	Std Deviation	F	Sig
13. **Pronunciation should be taught as part of a class on reading.**	Less than 1 year	2.75	1.552	4.019	.021
	4-7 years	1.95	.999		
	More than eight years	1.90	1.103		

Table (8) presents the results of the Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe). As we can understand from the table, the P-value is less than .005(P<.005). P = .021. So, the experience factor has a significant on the measure above concerning EFL teachers' beliefs of pronunciation should be taught as part of a class on reading with the

highest mean value (2.75) to EFL teachers with experience less than one year, (1.95) to 4-7 years, and the lowest mean value (1.90) to participants whose experience more than eight years (see figure 7).

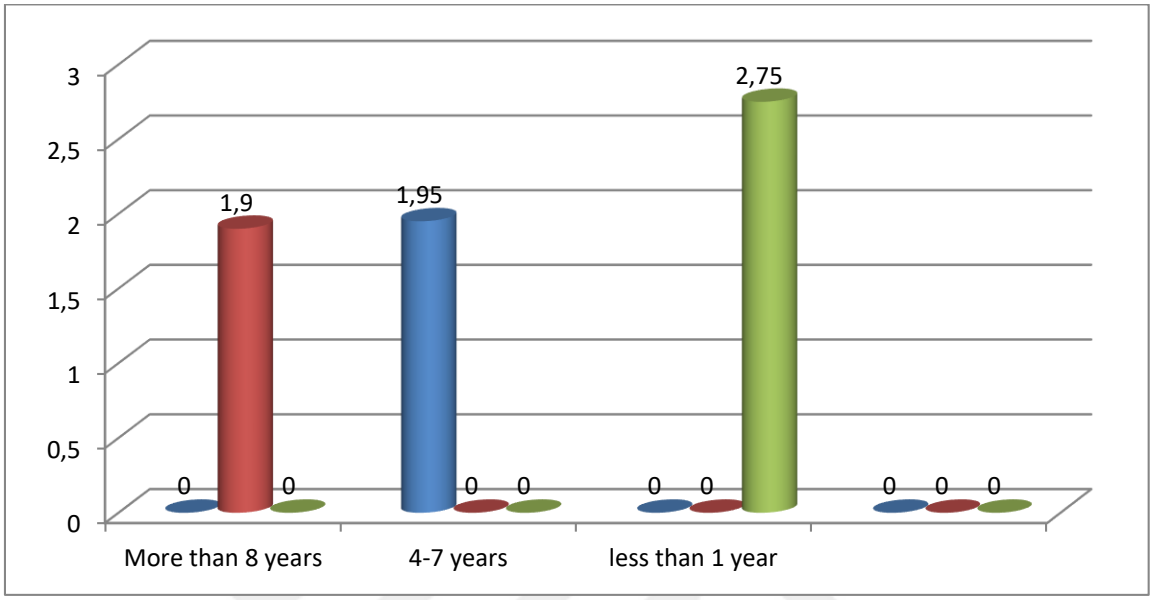

Figure 6. Mean value results for the item (13)

Furthermore, item '14', a one-way ANOVA test, revealed a significant positive difference between groups to education level. The result indicated a significant mean difference [F=7.567, p= .001 ((P<.005)] between groups concerning the participants' education level with the highest mean value (3.28) to EFL teachers with Diploma education level, (2.09) to Bachelor, and the lowest mean value (1.94) to Master. The most statistically significant group's value was EFL teachers with a Diploma education level (see table 9).

Table 9. The results of Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe) for item '14'

Pronunciation practice section	Education level	Mean	Std Deviation	F	Sig
14.Pronunciation should be taught as part of a class on writing.	Diploma	3.28	1.602	7.567	.001
	Bachelor	2.09	1.106		
	Master	1.94	1.124		

Table (9) presents the results of the Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe). As we can understand from the table, the P-value is less than .005(P<.005). P = .001. So, education level has a significant on teaching Pronunciation as part of a class on writing with the highest mean value (3.28) to EFL teachers with Diploma education level, (2.09)to Bachelor, and the lowest mean value (1.94) to Master (see figure 8).

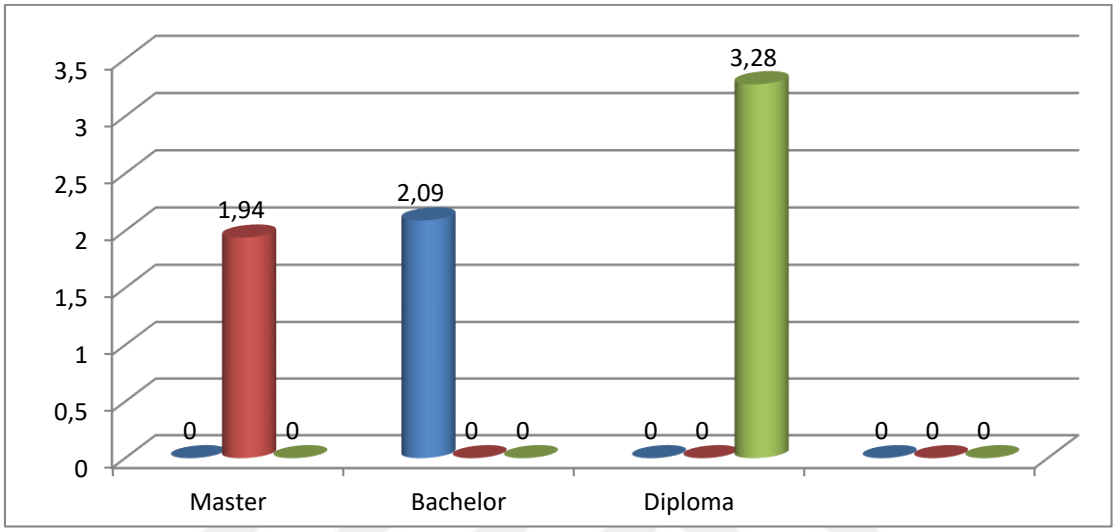

Figure 7. Mean value results for the item (15).

4.2.1.2. Varaibles with Negative Statistically Significant Mean Difference (Pronunciation practice: items 2, 3, 4, 12)

The t-test and One-way ANOVA with Sheffe post-hoc multiple comparison test results regarding pronunciation practice items (2, 3, 4, 12,15) indicated no significant differences. The significant mean differences for the scales were greater than .05, which indicated that there were no statistically significant differences between groups regarding age, gender, the number of years teaching, and education level with P values for the items (2, 3, 4, 12,13) consecutively as follows:

[P= .654, P= .826, . P=983, P=.832, $p \rightarrow$ (P > .05)]

4.2.2. Q2. What are the Inherent difficulties that Turkish EFL Teachers Confront During the Teaching Process?

A one-way ANOVA with Sheffe post-hoc test was conducted to compare the difference in the participants' self-perception regarding the inherent difficulties that Turkish EFL teachers encountered EFL teachers' scores between groups concerning age,

gender, experience, and educational level during the teaching process. The results indicated significant differences between groups concerning the second section of the questionnaire (participants' self-perception) items (17, 26, 28, 29). However, no significant correlation was found between groups for the other items (16, 18, 19, 27).

4.2.2.1. Varaibles with positive Statistically Significant Mean Difference (Self-perception: Items 17, 26, 28, 29)

One-way ANOVA revealed a positive correlation between the groups regarding age for the item ' 17 '. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant mean difference [F = 3.547, p = .033 (P<.005)] in self-perception regarding EFL teachers' pronunciation inherent difficulties between the groups with the highest mean value (2.92) to EFL teachers with 24-27 years groups, (2.68) to 28-30 years groups, and the lowest (2.09) to participants whose age more than 30 years groups. The most statistically significant group's value was EFL teachers with 24-27 years (see table 10).

Table 10. The results of the Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe) for item '17'

Self-perception	Age	Mean	Std Deviation	F	Sig
17. I need to read more about the phonological characteristic of individual English sounds.	24-27 years	2.92	1.440	3.547	.033
	More than 30 years	2.09	1.130		
	28-30 years	2.68	1.514		

Table (10) presents the results of the Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe). As we can understand from the table, the P-value is less than .005(P<.005). P = .033, indicating that age factor has a significance on the item above concerning EFL teachers' beliefs of their need to read more about the phonological characteristics of individual English sounds with the highest mean value (2.92) to EFL teachers with 24-27 years, (2.68) to 28-30 years and the lowest mean value (2.09) to participants whose age more than 30 years. The most statistically significant group's value was EFL teachers with 24-27 years (see figure 9).

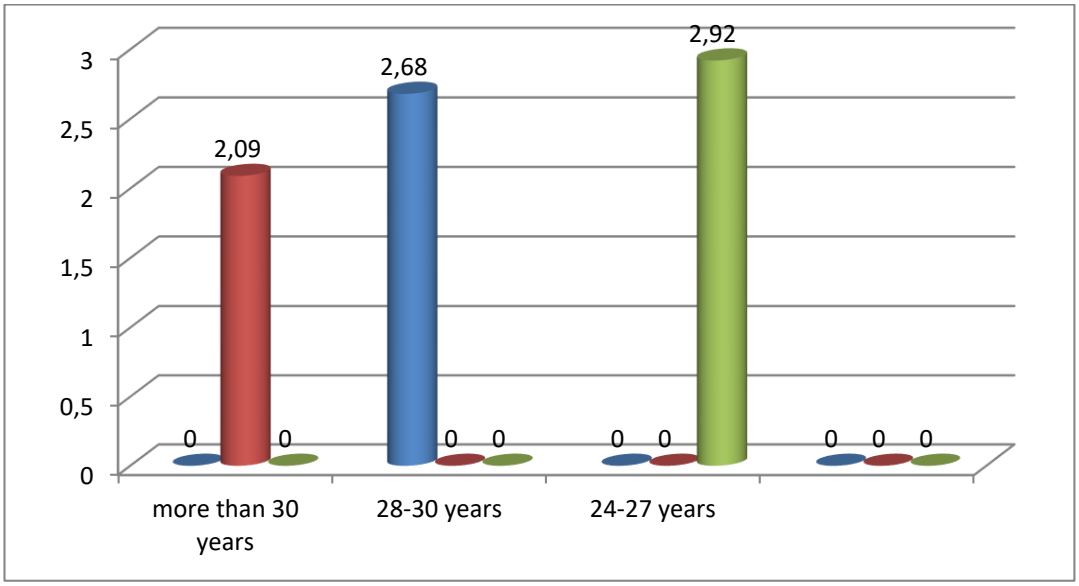

Figure 8. Mean value results for the item (17)

One-way ANOVA revealed a positive correlation between the groups regarding the year teaching English language pronunciation for the item ' 26 '. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant mean difference [F = 7.667, p = .001 (P<.005)] in self-perception regarding EFL teachers' pronunciation inherent difficulties between the groups with a mean value (2.45) to EFL teachers with experience less than one year, the highest mean value (2.86) was to 4-7 years, and the lowest mean value(1.78) to participants whose experience more than eight years. The most statistically significant group's value was EFL teachers with 4-7 years experience (see table 11).

Table 11. The results of the Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe) for item '26'

Self-perception	Experience	Mean	Std Deviation	F	Sig
26.I need to work on improving my pronunciation of individual English sounds.	Less than 1 year	2.45	1.605	7.667	.001
	4-7 years	2.86	1.207		
	More than 8 years	1.78	.974		

Table (11) present the results of the Post-hoc test multiple comparisons Scheffe). As we can understand from the table, the P-value is less than .005(P<.005), indicating

that the experience factor has significance on the item above concerning EFL teachers' self-perception of EFL teachers' need to work on improving their pronunciation of individual English sounds. With the highest mean value (2.45) to EFL teachers with experience less than one year, (2.86) to 4-7 years, and the lowest mean (1.78) to participants whose experience more than eight years (see figure 10).

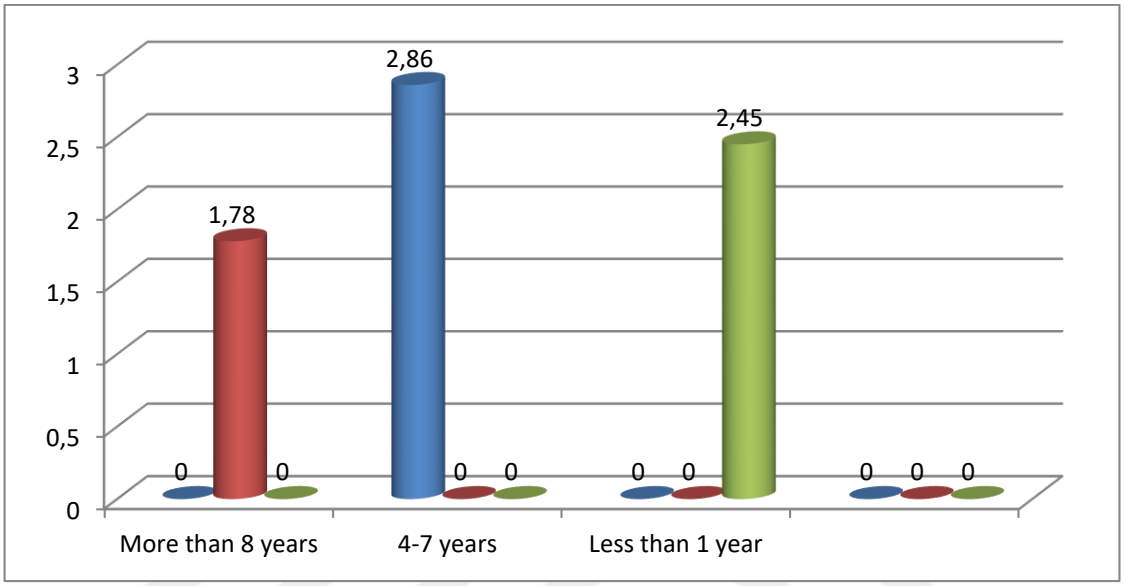

Figure 9. Mean value results for the item (26)

One-way ANOVA revealed a positive correlation between the groups regarding the number of years teaching English for the item ' 28 '. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant mean difference [$F = 4.737$, $p = .011$ ($P<.005$)] in self-perception regarding EFL teachers' pronunciation inherent difficulties between the groups with a mean value (2.65) to EFL teachers with experience less than one year, (1.68) to 4-7 years, and (1.86) to participants whose experience more than eight years. The most statistically significant group's value was EFL teachers with experience of less than one year (see table 12).

Table 12. The results of Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe) for item '28'

Self-perception	Experience	Mean	Std Deviation	F	Sig
28.I am aware of specific difficulties; Turkish speakers have individual English sounds and clusters of sounds.	Less than 1 year	2.65	1.663	4.737	.011
	4-7 years	1.68	1.041		
	More than 8 years	1.86	.888		

Table (12) presents the results of the Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe). As we can understand from the table, the P-value is less than .005(P<.005). P = .011, indicating that experience factor has a significance on the item above concerning EFL teachers' awareness of specific difficulties Turkish speakers have with individual English sounds and clusters of sounds with the highest mean value (2.65) to EFL teachers with experience less than one year, (1.68) to 4-7 years and the lowest mean value (1.86) to participants whose experience more than eight years(see figure 11).

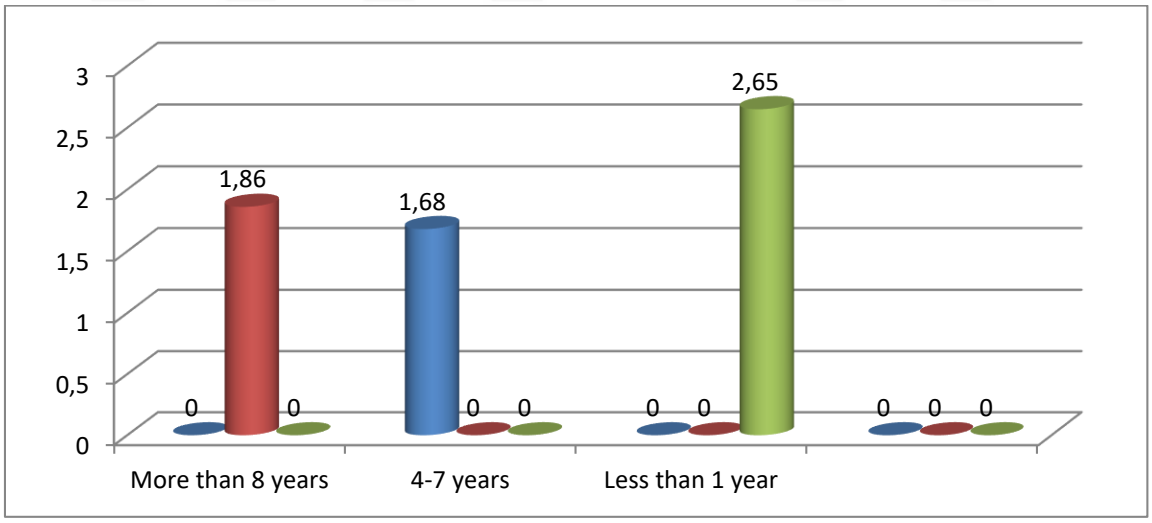

Figure 10. Shows mean value results for the item (28)

One-way ANOVA revealed a positive correlation between the groups regarding the number of years teaching English for item ' 29 '. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant mean difference [F = 5.789, p = .004 (P<.005)] in self-perception regarding EFL teachers' pronunciation inherent difficulties between the

groups with mean value (3.50) to EFL teachers with Diploma education level, (2.65) to Bachelor, and (2.00) to Master. The most statistically significant group's value was EFL teachers with a Diploma education level (see table 13).

Table 13. The results of Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe) for item '29'

Self-perception	Education level	Mean	Std Deviation	F	Sig
29.As a NNEST, I think it is OK to have an accent.	Diploma	3.50	1.534	5.789	.004
	Bachelor	2.65	1.307		
	Master	2.00	.894		

Table (13) presents the results of the Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe). As we can understand from the table, the P-value is less than .005(P<.005). P = .004, It is indicating that education level has a significant on non-native English Teachers' opinion concerning the item (I think it is OK to have an accent) with the highest mean value (3.50) to EFL teachers with Diploma education level, (2.65) to Bachelor, and the lowest (2.00) to Master (see figure 12).

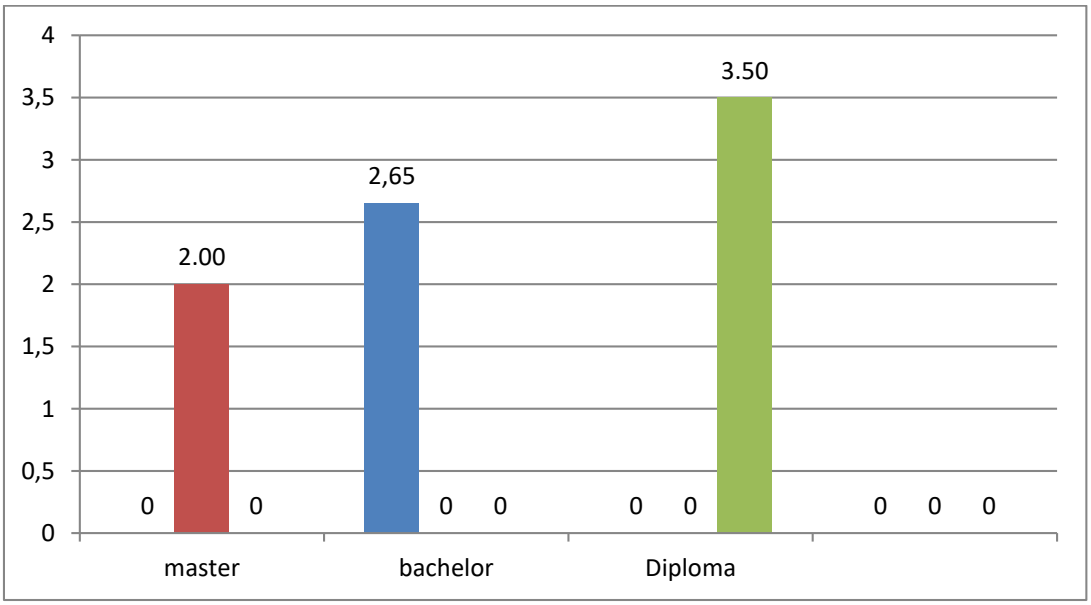

Figure 11. Mean value results for the item (29).

4.2.2.2. Varaibles with Negative Statistically Significant Mean Difference (Pronunciation practice: items 16, 18, 19, 27)

The t-test and One-way ANOVA with Sheffe post-hoc multiple comparison test results concerning the EFL teachers' self-perception of teaching English pronunciation for the other items like (16, 18, 19, 27) indicated no significant differences. The significant mean differences for the scales were more remarkable than .05, which indicated that there were no correlation differences between groups regarding age, gender, the number of years teaching, and education level with P values for the items mentioned above consecutively as follows:

[P=.235, P=.341, P= .343, P=.710 , $p \rightarrow (P > .05)$]

4.2.3. Q3. Do EFL teachers' beliefs about the potential significance of the English pronunciation teaching method change based on age, gender, experience and educational level?

A one-way ANOVA with Sheffie's post-hoc test was conducted to compare the EFL teachers' scores concerning their beliefs about the potential significance of English pronunciation change between groups regarding age, gender, experience, and educational level. The results indicated that there was a positive significant mean difference between groups concerning the third section of the questionnaire (preferred method in teaching English pronunciation) items (32, 37, 38,40, 41), and no significant correlation was found between groups for the other items like (33, 34, 42).

4.2.3.1. Varaibles with Positive Statistically Significant Mean Difference Regarding EFL Teachers' Preferred Method in Teaching Pronunciation(items 32, 37, 38, 40, 41)

One-way ANOVA revealed a positive correlation between the groups regarding teaching English pronunciation for ' 32 '. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant mean difference [F = 3.560, p = .032 (P<.005)] in EFL teachers' preferred method of teaching pronunciation between groups with a mean value (1.95) to EFL teachers with experience less than one year, (2.55) to 4-7 years, and (1.95) to participants whose experience more than eight years. The most statistically significant group's value was EFL teachers with 4-7 years experience (see table 14).

Table 14. The results of the Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe) for item '32'

EFL teachers' Preferred Method of teaching pronunciation		Mean	Std Deviation	F	Sig
32.Drills: e.g., repetition drills contrasting minimal pairs (chip/cheap, fit/feet, bit/beat).	Less than 1 year	1.95	1.099	3.560	.032
	4-7 years	2.55	.858		
	More than 8 years	1.95	.887		

Table (14) presents the results of the Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe). As we can understand from the table, the P-value is less than .005(P<.005). P = .032, indicating that experience factor has a sign on the tool above concerning EFL teachers' preferred way of teaching through Drills: e.g., repetition drills contrasting minimal pairs (chip/cheap, fit/feet, bit/beat) with mean value (1.95) to EFL teachers with experience less than one year, (2.55) to 4-7 years, and (1.95) to participants whose experience more than eight years. The highest mean value was to the experience group (4-7 years), and the lowest mean value to group (more than 8) (see figure 13).

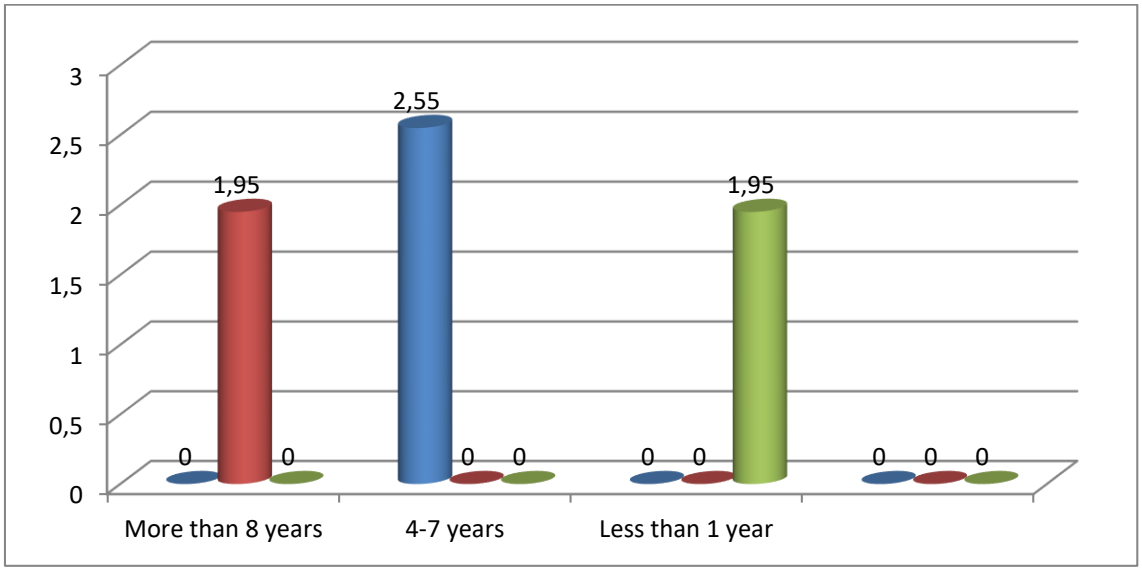

Figure 12. Mean value results for the item (32)

One-way ANOVA revealed a positive correlation between the groups regarding participants' gender for item ' 37 '. The results indicated a statistically significant mean

difference [$F = 4.514$, $p = .036$ (P<.005)] in EFL teachers' preferred method of teaching pronunciation between groups with mean value (1.82) to EFL male teachers, and (2.27)to EFL female teachers. The most statistically significant group's value was EFL female teachers (see table 15).

Table 15. The results of the Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe) for item '37'

EFL teachers' Preferred Method of teaching pronunciation		Mean	Std Deviation	F	Sig
37.Visual aids: e.g., diagrams of the vocal tract, representations of how a sound is articulated.	Male	1.82	.956	4.514	.036
	Female	2.27	.169		

Table (15) presents the results of the Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe). As we can understand from the table, the P-value is less than .005(P<.005). P = .036, indicating that gender factor has significant on the preferred way of teaching English concerning visual aids tool with the lowest mean value (1.82) to EFL male teachers, and the highest mean value (2.27) to EFL female teachers (see figure 14).

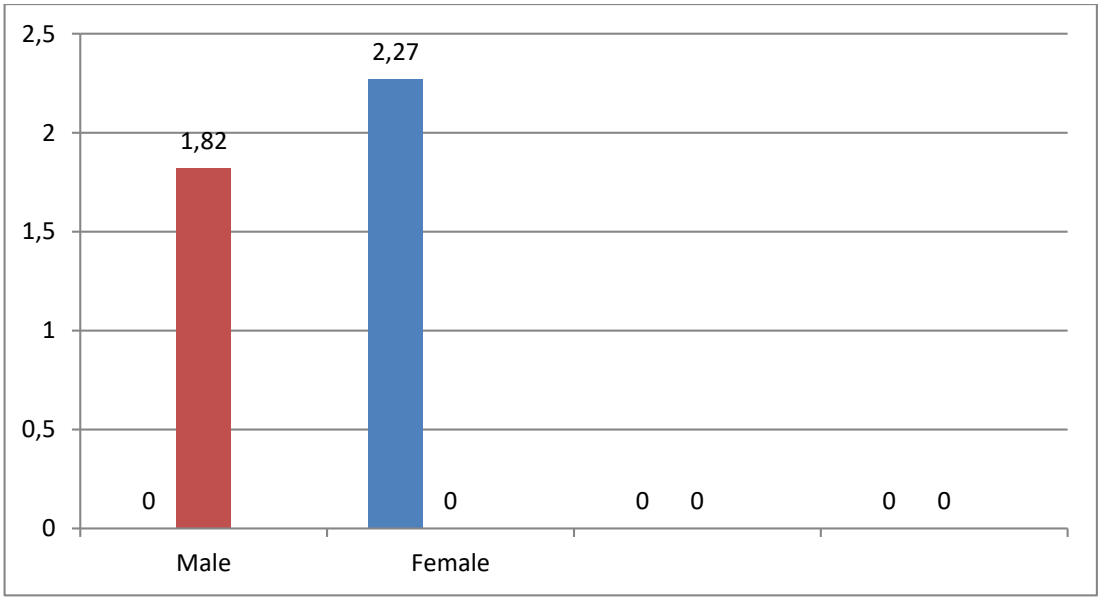

Figure 13. Mean value results for the item (37)

One-way ANOVA revealed a positive correlation between the groups regarding participants' educational level for item ' 37 '. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant mean difference $F = 4.17$, $p = .011$ (P<.005) in EFL teachers' preferred method of teaching pronunciation between groups with mean value (2.50) to EFL teachers with diploma education level,(1.97) Bachelor, and (1.56) to Master. The most statistically significant group's value was EFL teachers with a Diploma education level (see table 16).

Table 16. The results of the Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe) for item '38'

EFL teachers' Preferred Method of teaching pronunciation		Mean	Std Deviation	F	Sig
38.Focus on rules: Explicitly teaching English phonetic and phonological rules and showing how they differ from Turkish phonetic and phonology rules.	Diploma	2.50	1.043	4.17	.011
	Bachelor	1.97	1.911		
	Master	1.56	.629		

Table (16) presents the results of the Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe). As we can understand from the table, the P-value is less than .005(P<.005). P = .011, indicating that education level has a significant on EFL teacher believes concerning the importance of focusing on English phonetic and phonology rules teaching and demonstrating how they differ from Turkish phonetic and phonology rules with the highest mean value (2.50) to EFL teachers with Diploma education level, (1.97) to Bachelor, and the lowest (1.56) to Master (see figure 15).

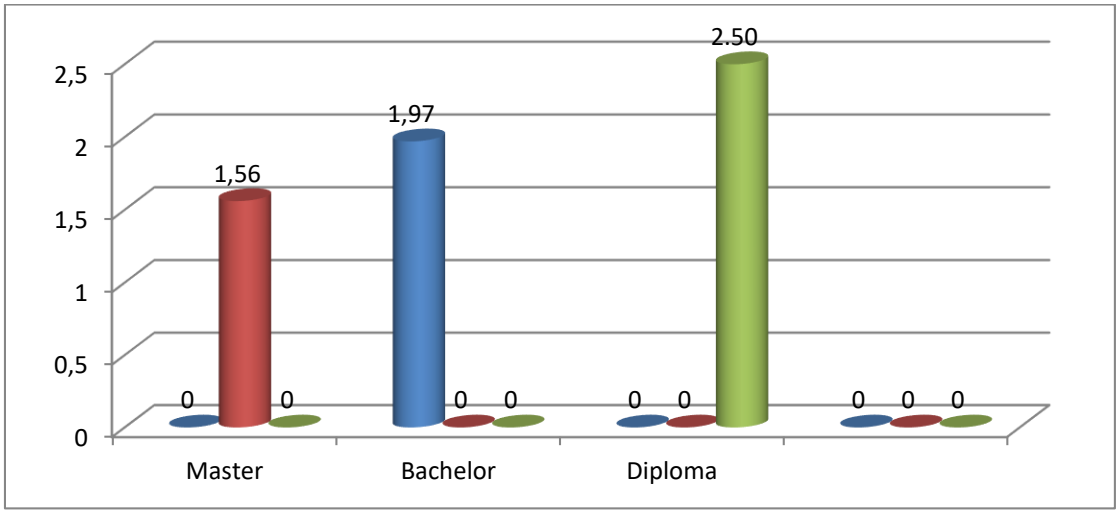

Figure 14. Mean value results for the item (38).

An independent sample T-test analysis revealed a positive correlation between the groups regarding participants' gender for item ' 37 '. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant mean difference [F = 1.939, p = .001 (P<.005)] in EFL teachers' preferred method of teaching pronunciation between groups with a mean value (2.45) to the male EFL teacher and (2.09) to the female EFL teacher. The most statistically significant group's value was male EFL teachers (see table 17).

Table 17. T-test result analysis for item '40'

EFL teachers' Preferred Method of teaching pronunciation		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	F Value	P Value
40. Phonetic alphabet: I teach it in full to classes.	Male	56	2.45	1.205	1.939	.001
	Female	44	2.09	.802		

Table (17) present the results independent sample *t*-test analysis. As we can understand from the table, the P-value is less than .005(P<.005). P = .001, indicating that participants' gender has a significant on EFL teachers' opinion concerning the preferred method of teaching English phonetic alphabet in full to classes, with the highest mean value (2.45) to male EFL teachers and the lowest mean value (2.09) to female EFL teachers (see figure 16).

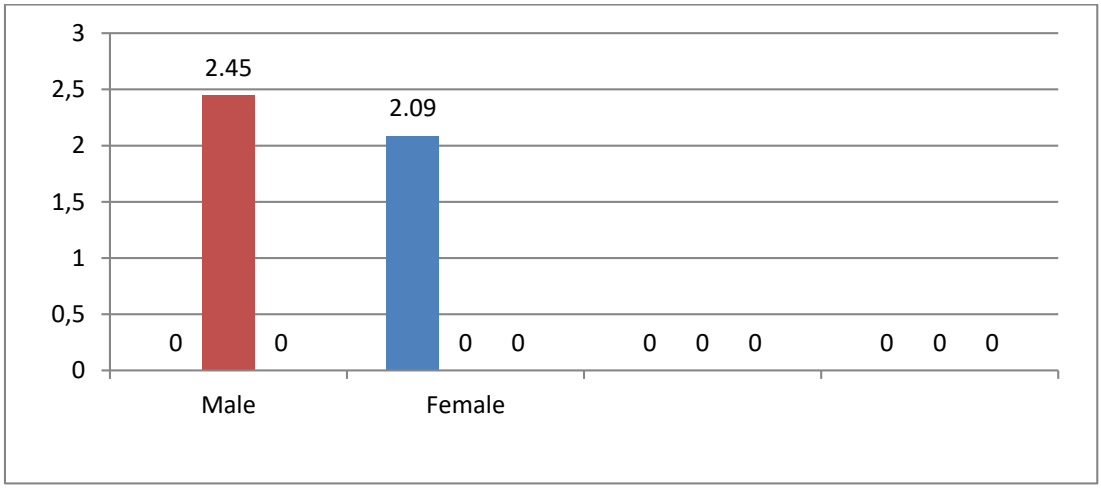

Figure 15. Mean value results for the item (40).

One-way ANOVA revealed a positive correlation between the groups regarding participants' educational level for item ' 41 '. The results indicated that there was a statistically significant mean difference [$F = 4.514$, $p = .036$ (P<.005)] in EFL teachers' preferred method of teaching pronunciation between groups with mean value (3.28) to EFL teachers with diploma education level, (2.68), (1.44) Bachelor, and (1.44) to Master. The most statistically significant group's value was EFL teachers with diploma education level (see table 18).

Table 18. The results of the Post-hoc test multiple comparisons (Scheffe) for item '41'

EFL teachers' Preferred Method of teaching pronunciation		Mean	Std Deviation	F value	Sig value
41.Body movement: e.g., having learners step, clap, tap.	Diploma	3.28	1.127	11.873	.000
	Bachelor	2.68	1.205		
	Master	1.44	.727		

As we can understand from the table, the P-value is equal to or less than .005(P≤.005). P = .005, indicating that education level has a significant on the preferred way that EFL teachers' adopt in teaching English pronunciation to non-native English

speakers with the highest mean value (3.28) to EFL teachers with diploma education level, (2.68), (1.44) Bachelor, and the lowest means (1.44) to Master (see figure 17).

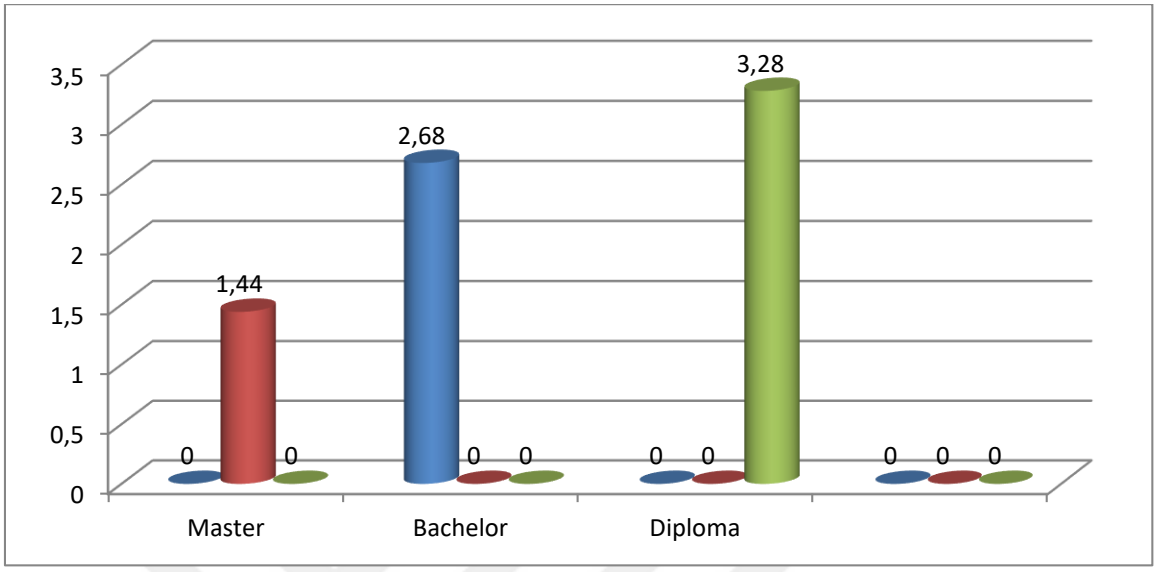

Figure 16. Mean value results for the item (41).

4.2.3.2. Varaibles with Negative Statistically Significant Mean Difference Regarding Items like (33, 34, 42)

One-way ANOVA with Sheffe post-hoc multiple comparison test results concerning the EFL teachers' self-perception of teaching English pronunciation for the other items (33, 34, 42) indicated no significant differences. The significant mean differences for the items were more remarkable than .05, which indicated that there were no correlation differences between groups regarding age, the number of years teaching, and education level with P-values for the items mentioned above consecutively as follows: [P=.332, P=.095, P= .906 (P > .05)].

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION & DISCUSSION

5.1. Introduction

This study attempted to reveal the importance of pronunciation to EFL learners and the potential difficulties EFL teachers encounter when teaching English pronunciation to non-native English language learners.

The significant findings of current studies indicate that pronunciation is an essential part of learning the English language. It assists EFL learners in articulating English phonemes, specifically the problematic sounds intelligibly. Moreover, the results indicate that EFL learners encounter difficulties articulating specific English sounds due to PA interference with their target language PA and insufficient phonological practice or knowledge. Furthermore, the preferred method in teaching English pronunciation is detected using drills incorporating minimal pairs, diagrams demonstrating articulating English sounds, etc.

Whereas limited studies were adopted to scrutinize the importance of English pronunciation to EFL teachers or learners like (Yürük, 2020), others endeavoured to reveal the problematic sounds that EFL teachers/learners encountered during the teaching process and the proper method of teaching English pronunciation to EFL teachers or Learners like (Demirzen, 2010). Accordingly, the current study aimed to demonstrate the importance of pronunciation to EFL teachers, the inherent difficulties that EFL teachers specifically confronted in teaching English core sounds, and the best method to teach English phonemes to EFL learners. For this purpose, the following questions were formulated: Are there any potential significant differences concerning the importance of pronunciation to EFL teachers'?, What are the inherent difficulties Turkish EFL teachers confront during the learning/teaching process?

Do EFL teachers' beliefs about the potential significance of the English pronunciation teaching method change based on age, gender, experience and educational level?.

The participants of the present thesis were EFL teachers, Whose L1 is Turkmen language or Turkish. They teach at primary and secondary state schools in TuzKhurmatu city (north of Iraq). The data were collected through administering pen-paper and an online Likert-type questionnaire. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS (Version 26). The results of the present study demonstrated a positive and negative significant correlation between independent and dependent variables.

5.2. Discussing the Major Results of the Study

5.2.1. Are there any potential significant differences concerning the importance of pronunciation to EFL teachers'?

This question was formulated to inspect the importance of English pronunciation for EFL teachers. Aydın & Akyuz (2017) stated the importance of pronunciation to EFL learners to conquer any misunderstanding that might arouse from incorrect pronunciation. Their study indicated the significant role of the age factor in learning EFL pronunciation. The first section of the questionnaire, 'practicing pronunciation', was adopted to examine the importance of pronunciation to EFL teachers or learners.

The current study indicated similar results to (Aydin & Akyuz, 2017) regarding the age factor. The results of collected data analysis indicated that there is a statically significant mean difference among age variable groups, concerning the importance of teaching pronunciation with high mean difference value to younger age group 24-27 and 28-30 years consecutively, while the other group stated a less significant mean value. Concerning the age factor, the participants stated their strong agreement with the essential part of pronunciation in learning the English language (see appendix B). Furthermore, the participants show strong agreement regarding the amount of time EFL learners must master English pronunciation depending on their phonological knowledge. The results showed a significant correlation between participants' age and time teaching pronunciation to EFL learners. The age group, 28-30, stated their strong agreement with the highest mean difference value. This result indicated that the amount of teaching pronunciation depends on the phonological awareness that EFL learners possess. Relatively, Cox, et al. (2019) stated that insufficient phonological knowledge results in mispronunciation and misunderstanding of the articulated utterance. Therefore more practise of FL pronunciation was demanded depending on the FL learners' PA.

Moreover, the participants strongly agree on the importance of teaching pronunciation through reading activities benefitting from the phonemic transcription while reading specific text or literary work. The results showed a significant correlation between participants' experience and the subscale. The participants express their strong agreement with the highest significant mean difference value to participants with less than 1-year experience and less value to the other experience groups. The result indicated that EFL teachers with low experience (less than one year) demonstrated their level of agreement with the importance of practicing pronunciation through reading skills. They believed that correct articulation of specific reading text could make sense of the word we produce, and others decoded them intelligibly. Likewise, Ovezova & Nuryagdiyeva (2021) stated that pronunciation enables students to understand EFL learners' utterances while reading specific written text.

Furthermore, the importance of teaching pronunciation through the writing activities scale indicated a compelling statistic mean difference value between participants' educational level group and the subscale. The most significant mean difference was to the participants with a diploma degree, while the others' mean differences score was close. Participants with diploma degrees showed their agreement with the item concerning the importance of teaching pronunciation as part of the class on writing. The participant demonstrated the importance of pronunciation in writing skills. To write down specific utterances, you have to possess the ability to decode the produce utterance correctly. Otherwise, you are going to segmenting it incorrectly due to wrong interpretation and write down incorrect utterances. Hişmanoğlu (2006) stated that incorrect decoding to specific utterances results in wrong interpretation and incorrect decoding.

5.2.2. What are the inherent difficulties that Turkish EFL teachers confront during the learning or teaching process?

The second question aimed to reveal the inherent difficulties EFL teachers or learners encountered during the learning process. To answer this question, the second section of the questionnaire, "self-perception," was adopted. Previous research investigated the problematic sounds that EFL learners confronted (Ercan, 2018). The findings of the study revealed number of problematic sounds like /v/,/w/, /ð/, /aʊ/,etc.

that Turkish EFL encountered during the learning process. Relatively, the present study indicated similar results regarding the age factor. The results of collected data analysis indicated that there is a statically significant mean difference among age variable groups concerning participants' self-perception. Regarding participants need to read more about the phonological features of the English individual sounds scale. The result indicated a high mean difference value to the younger age group 24-27 years, while the other group stated a less significant mean value. Concerning the age factor, the participants agreed to read more about the phonological characteristic of the individual English sound (see appendix B). The result of this item reveals the participants' insufficient knowledge of EFL phonological characteristics.

Moreover, participants' belief concerning work on enhancing their articulating of individual English phonemes. The result indicated a statistically significant mean difference between experience groups and participants' need to practice English pronunciation. The highest mean difference score was to groups experience 4-7 years, and the others were statistically significant, but the mean score was lower. The result indicated that novice teachers confront difficulties with the EFL pronunciation teaching process, and they need more exposure to the EFL phonology to enhance their phonological ability. Plailek (2021) conducted a study to investigate the problematic sounds that EFL learners confront difficulties in pronouncing correctly. The findings of the study indicated that EFL learners encountered hardship in articulating specific English phonemes like /ð/, /θ/, /dʒ/, /ʒ/, and the fundamental factors that resulted in arousing such hardship were EFL learners phonological knowledge and the instruction of EFL teachers. Likewise, Çapan (2021) investigated the problematic sounds that pre-service Turkish EFL teachers confronted. Due to EFL teachers' insufficient phonological knowledge, Turkish EFL learners encountered difficulties with English pronunciation while articulating specific English sounds.

Similarly, the result regarding participants' awareness of phonological difficulties indicated a statistically significant mean difference among the experience group concerning the participants' self-perception concerning the problematic sounds. The highest mean difference was the novice teachers (less than 1-year experience), while the other groups' mean differences were close. The participants show their agreement to difficulties in articulating English individual and cluster sounds (see appendix B). This

point indicated that novice teachers encountered difficulties in articulating EFL individual phonemes and sound sequences. They stated that they confront difficulties pronouncing utterances that the Turkish language lacks or their phonological rules differ. Turgay (2021) conducted similar studies to investigate the problematic sounds that EFL novice teachers confronted. He concluded that EFL novice teachers encountered difficulties articulating specific English sounds due to insufficient exposure to EFL sounds and the absence of these sounds from the learners' mother tongue.

Last but not the least, results regarding the EFL learners' opinion of their possessing an accent indicated a statistical significance. The highest significant mean difference belongs to the groups with diploma educational level, while the others mean differences were close. The participants stated their agreement with the subscale (see appendix B). They agree with the impacts of mother tongue accent on their foreign language pronunciation. The result indicated the influence of EFL learners' or teachers' native language on their target language articulating.

5.2.3. Do EFL Teachers' Beliefs About the Potential Significance of the English Pronunciation Teaching Method Change Based on Age, Gender, Experience and Educational Level?

The last question was formulated to explore the best method of teaching English pronunciation to EFL learners. To answer this question, the third section (the most the appropriate method of teaching pronunciation) was adopted from a similar previous study (Bus, 2015). Bus (2015) investigated the best activities in teaching EFL pronunciation to Brazilian EFL learners. Her study indicated significant and non-significant results concerning preferred activity teaching of English pronunciation. Bus's (2015) study indicated the significant results for some items (e.g., Imitation and repetition, Drills, etc.). The most effective item was the scale regarding EFL learners' repetition and imitation of the articulated sounds. The result indicated that the participant preferred imitation and repetition techniques in practicing English pronunciation. The other subscales' results were negative.

The current study found different results. Whereas Bus's (2015) results indicated that the most effective item was imitation and repetition in teaching pronunciation to EFL learners, the highest significant mean difference was the scale regarding drills that

incorporated contrasting minimal pairs (chip & cheap). Furthermore, the current study indicated a significant difference between gender groups concerning the scale regarding teaching English sounds through visual aids. Using diagram illustrates the mechanism of pronouncing specific English sounds. The present study indicated the highest significant mean difference to the female groups, while Bus (2015) indicated a non-significant scale. Similarly, Putra & Rochsantiningsih (2018) conducted a study to investigate the importance of minimal pair word techniques in enhancing EFL learners' pronunciation fluency. The study's findings found that using minimal pair words techniques improved EFL learners' communicative fluency. Accordingly, Astina (2020) described drill repetition and visual aid techniques in teaching English pronunciation. She narrated the essential role of these techniques in teaching English pronunciation to EFL learners. Furthermore, the role of these techniques in remedying the pronunciation difficulties that EFL learners confronted during the learning process.

Moreover, the current study indicated a statistically significant difference between gender groups concerning the scale regarding teaching EFL phonetic alphabet in full to the EFL learners, also the correlation among educational level concerning the focus on the English language phonological rules. Unlikely, Bus (2015) indicated non-significant results for this item in her study.

In a similar token, according to Demirzen's (2010) audio articulation model, which was developed to manipulate the fossilized sounds pronunciation errors. The model incorporated specific techniques and methods like repetition drills of EFL sounds, articulating minimal pair of words, and using visual aids like figure illustrating English sounds manner and place of articulation, to make EFL learners familiar with the mechanism of articulating English phoneme; furthermore, they will be able to recognize the distinctive phonological rules between learners' mother tongue and their target language.

5.3. Implications of The Study

The implications of the present study enable EFL teachers to identify the importance of English pronunciation knowledge to the EFL teachers. The EFL teachers' can strengthen their utterances articulation and make them intelligible through pronouncing English phonemes correctly. Furthermore, there are specific English

phonemes that EFL learners encounter difficulties in pronouncing intelligibly. These hardships could be surmounted by adopting the most appropriate method of teaching. Also, the potentially significant differences concerning teachers' beliefs and opinion of the most appropriate method that can be adopted in teaching English pronunciation to the EFL learners. EFL teachers can adopt the most appropriate method of teaching English pronunciation to enable EFL learners to produce intelligible utterances. In addition, boosting EFLs' utterances production by motivating EFL learners' cognitive competence and strengthening the self-confidence of EFL learners, which can be accomplished by overcoming the fundamental obstacles that prevent them from producing intelligible utterances.

5.4. Conclusion

The present study aimed to scrutinize the importance of English pronunciation to bilingual EFL learners or teachers and demonstrate the core sounds that EFL learners/teachers encounter. Thus, the best potential methods were inspected to manipulate such an inherent difficulty.

Based on the quantitative analysis of the collected data via SPSS (version 26). The results indicate that Pronunciation is an essential part of learning a foreign language. EFL learners' Phonological knowledge manages them to articulate EFL phonemes intelligibly. Insufficient pronunciation knowledge may result in incorrect production of specific utterances, as result misunderstanding or incorrect decoding can emerge from such conditions. Candan & Inal (2020) stated that incorrect articulating of EFL sounds results in misunderstanding or interpreting the received code incorrectly.

Moreover, The study explores that EFL learners encounter hardship with articulating specific individual English sounds and consonant sequences due to mother tongue PA interference, insufficient PA, or target language incorporating specific phonemes that EFL learners' sounds system lacks. According to Şen (2019),

EFL learners confronted difficulties in articulating EFL fossilized sounds since their native language does not incorporate them, or their mother tongue influences their production mechanism of production-specific utterance.

Hence, The preferred method in teaching English pronunciation is detected. Whereas, Some state their preference with teaching EFL pronunciation by using repetition or contrasting minimal pairs techniques or visual diagrams illustrating the manner and place of articulation and demonstrating the production mechanism of pronouncing English sounds. The others prefer to teach pronunciation comparatively. They showed that pronunciation could be taught better through concentrating on the distinctive features between EFL learners' mother tongue and target language phonological rules. Demirzen (2010) developed an audio articulation model to remedy EFL learners' fossilized pronunciation sound. Audio articulation the model utilizes imitation and repetition techniques of minimal contrasting words, incorporating fossilized sounds pronunciation errors, and diagram or figure illustrating EFL sounds manner and place of articulation.

Based on these findings. English foreign language teachers should allocate sufficient time regarding English pronunciation, and they should not neglect the phonological aspect while teaching the English language. Still, more attention should be attained to the phonemic part of the written text or reading activities. Also, focusing on the problematic sounds that EFL learners or teachers encounter difficulties articulating intelligibly and demonstrating the distinctive phonological features between Learners' mother tongue and their foreign language. Furthermore,

The mentor could adopt the most proper model or approach in teaching EFL pronunciation to overcome any emerged obstacles.

Future studies could examine the importance of the EFL suprasegmental features and the impacts of EFL learners' target phoneme substitution phenomena of specific fossilized English phonemes. As well as, The wrong pronunciation model implication on the EFL linguistic performance.

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APPENDIX (A)

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Participant,

Kindly read the following items carefully and answer them honestly because your appreciated responses will only be used for scientific research purposes.

The questionnaire's objective is to demonstrate the importance of English pronunciation to the EFL learners and inspect the inherent difficulties that EFL learners/teachers confront during the learning/teaching process. Furthermore, the preferred way of teaching pronunciation to EFL learners is going to examine.

Thanks in advance for your honest responses

- **Demographics Information**

Age: 24-27 ☐ 28-30 ☐ more than 30 ☐ Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐

Education level: Diploma ☐ Bachelor ☐ Master ☐

The number of years teaching: Less than one year ☐ 4-7☐ more than eight years☐

Current teaching level: primary ☐ secondary☐ Intermediate☐ preparatory☐

Section (1)Pronunciation practice scales

Items	Strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	Strongly disagree
1. Teaching pronunciation is an essential part of teaching English.					
2. I spend time improving the pronunciation of specific English sounds that Turkish students have difficulty with.					
3. Pronunciation should be taught as a separate class.					
4. I spend time teaching how to pronounce individual sounds in my classes.					
5. I spend time teaching stress /rhythm and intonation in my classes.					
6. I check the pronunciation of unknown words in a dictionary before going to the classroom.					
7. Pronunciation is essential for students.					
8. I make sure that my students know about the difference between Turkish and English sound systems.					
9. Knowledge of the phonetic alphabet helps students become independent learners.					
10. The amount of time I spend on pronunciation teaching depends on the level of the students.					
11. I enjoy teaching pronunciation in my classes.					
12. Pronunciation should be taught as part of a class on speaking.					
13. Pronunciation should be taught as part of a class on listening.					
14. Pronunciation should be taught as part of a class on reading.					
15. Pronunciation should be taught as part of a class on writing.					

- **Section (2) Self-perception scales**

Items	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	*strongly disagree*
16. I see myself as a good role model for pronunciation in my classes.					
17. I need to read more about the phonological characteristics of individual English sounds.					
18. As a NNEST, I don't feel confident enough in my knowledge of English.					
19. Being a NNEST is a hindrance in terms of my pronunciation.					
20. Having a native-like pronunciation is essential for me as a NNEST.					
21. I need to learn more about stress/rhythm/intonation in English.					
22. My pronunciation would be better if I spent time abroad.					
23. I believe NNESTs can speak English without an accent.					
24. I would ignore my pronunciation in the classroom if my students had a native English speaker teacher.					
25. I would feel proud of myself if someone told me that I have native-like pronunciation.					
26. I need to work on improving my pronunciation of individual English sounds.					
27. I feel confident about my pronunciation as a NNEST.					
28. I am aware of specific difficulties; Turkish speakers have with individual English sounds and clusters of sounds.					
29. As a NNEST, I think it is OK to have an accent.					

- **Section (3) Preferred Method of Teaching Pronunciation Scales**

Items	always	sometimes	often	rarely
30. Imitation and repetition: e.g., learners listen to the teacher or a CD and repeat, trying to imitate as closely as possible.				
31. Phonetic alphabet: I use it to help in teaching.				
32. Drills: e.g., repetition drills contrasting minimal pairs (chip/cheap, fit/feet, bit/beat).				
33. Marking: Having learners mark pronunciation features in a passage of text (e.g., underline the stressed words or draw intonation arrows).				
34. Tactile reinforcement: Having learners feel where/ how they are speaking (e.g., asking them to touch their throats while pronouncing voiced and voiceless sounds).				
35. Interactive media: e.g., online games and animated libraries, pronunciation software.				
36. Drama and role-play: e.g., practicing and performing dialogues in pairs or groups, paying particular attention to pronunciation.				
37. Visual aids: e.g., diagrams of the vocal tract, representations of how a sound is articulated.				
38. Focus on rules: Explicitly teaching English phonetic and phonological rules and showing how they differ from Turkish phonetic and phonology rules.				
39. Recordings: Having learners record and listen to their pronunciation.				
40. Phonetic alphabet: I teach it in full to classes.				
41. Body movement: e.g., having learners step, clap, tap.				
42.Mirrors: Having learners observe their articulation in a mirror.				

APPENDIX (B)

RESPONDENTS POSITIVE LEVEL OF AGREEMENTS & FREQUENCIES

- **Section (1) Pronunciation Practice Scales**

Items	Total number	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Level
Teaching pronunciation is an essential part of teaching English.	N 100	59 59%	25 25%	4 4%	7 7%	5 5%	Strongly agree
The amount of time I spend on pronunciation teaching depends on the level of the students.	N 100	56 56%	29 29%	3 3%	6 6%	6 6%	Strongly agree
Pronunciation should be taught as part of a class on reading.	N 100	40 40%	35 35%	9 9%	9 9%	7 7%	Strongly agree
Pronunciation should be taught as part of a class on writing.	N 100	32 32%	39 39%	7 7%	13 13%	9 9%	Agree

- **Section (2) Self-perception Scale**

Items		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Level
I need to read more about the phonological characteristics of individual English sounds.	N	26	41	4	16	13	Agree
	%100	%26	41%	4%	16%	13%	
I need to work on improving my pronunciation of individual English sounds.	N	36	40	5	11	8	Agree
	%100	36%	40%	5%	11%	8%	
I am aware of specific difficulties. Turkish speakers have individual English sounds and clusters of sounds.	N	38	47	2	5	8	Agree
	%100	38%	47%	2%	5%	8%	
As a NNEST, I think it is OK to have an accent.	N	20	40	1	28	11	Agree
	%100	20%	40%	1%	28%	11%	

- **Section (3) Preferred Method of Teaching Pronunciation Scales**

Items		Always	Sometimes	Often	Rarely	Never	
Drills: e.g., repetition drills contrasting minimal pairs (chip/cheap, fit/feet, bit/beat).	N	30	42	19	8	1	Sometimes
	%	30%	42%	19%	8%	1%	
Visual aids: e.g., diagrams of the vocal tract, representations of how a sound is articulated.	N	40	33	13	13	1	Always
	%	40%	33%	13%	13%	1%	
Focus on rules: Explicitly teaching English phonetic and phonological rules and showing how they differ from Turkish phonetic and phonology rules.	N	34	40	19	6	1	Sometimes
	%	34%	40%	19%	6%	1%	
Phonetic alphabet: I teach it in full to classes.	N	23	43	20	10	4	Sometimes
	%	23%	43%	20%	10%	4%	
Body movement: e.g. having learners step, clap, tap.	N	24	25	28	14	9	often
	%	24%	25%	28%	14%	9%	