

Pronunciation Difficulties and Challenges in the Field of Research in Jordan

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Abstract: This paper presents the current evidence regarding English pronunciation challenges and problems in the Jordanian context by reviewing related literature. The present study was carried out to determine the extent to which pronunciation research regarding challenges is carried out in Jordan. The available literature on pronunciation is limited to phonological variances, consonants' and vowels' variations, syllable structure differences and similarities, and mother tongue as an effective element. In order to achieve this objective identifying pronunciation difficulties and challenges in the field of research in Jordan, this study followed systematic literature review (SLR) framework adapted from previous studies in this regard. The findings revealed that one of the key problems in learning English language pronunciation is related to the socio-psycho variables e.g., anxiety, self-confidence, motivation, attitudes and so on noting that studies investigated did not present these factors in detail and they focused more on the role of learners' native language, exposure to language, phonemic variations and vowels, and syllable structures' differences. Hence, future studies in this regard are recommended to investigate the challenges related to anxiety, self-confidence, motivation, attitudes and their role on affecting pronunciation teaching and learning.

Keywords: Pronunciation, English, EFL, Literature Review, Jordan.

الصعوبات اللفظية والتحديات في نطاق البحث العلمي في الأردن

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المستخلص: تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى البحث في تحديات ومشاكل الصعوبات اللفظية التي تواجه متعلمي اللغة الانجليزية في الأردن، حيث تسعى وبشكل تفصيلي إلى تحديد المواضيع التي تم مناقشتها وتناولها فيما يخص هذه الصعوبات اللفظية وتحديد العوامل المؤثرة التي حددتها تلك الدراسات والتي لم يتم التطرق لها في تلك الابحاث في الأردن في سياق اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية (EFL). تقتصر الأدبيات المتوفرة في هذه الدراسة حول العوامل المرتبطة بالاختلافات الصوتية فيما يتعلق بالاحرف والأنظمة الصوتية الاخرة كالمقطع الصوتي وغيره. ولتحقيق هدف الدراسة أي تحديد الصعوبات اللفظية والتحديات في نطاق البحث العلمي في الأردن، تم اتباع إطار مراجعة الادبيات بصورة منهجية منظمة (SLR)، حيث تم تبني هذه المنهجية من دراسات تناولت نفس الهدف في بيئة اخرى. أشارت نتائج هذه الدراسة إلى أن إحدى المشاكل الرئيسية في تعلم لفظ اللغة الإنجليزية بشكل عام تتعلق بالمتغيرات الاجتماعية والنفسية، كالثقة بالنفس، الدافعية، القلق، والتوجه علما أن الدراسات الادبية في الأردن لم تذكر هذه العوامل بشكل تفصيلي في دراساتها الواردة في هذا البحث ورزكت على دور اللغة الأم للمتعلمين، والتعرض للغة، والاختلافات والفروقات الصوتية، واختلافات بنية المقطع. وعليه، توصي هذه الدراسة بالتركيز على العوامل الاجتماعية والنفسية لدى متعلمي اللغة الانجليزية في الاردن عند دراسة الصعوبات اللفظية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: اللفظ، اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، الدراسات الأدبية، الأردن.

1. INTRODUCTION

English is now the preferred language in many countries throughout the world. Many foreign languages are said to be difficult to understand, and learning them is often a challenging undertaking. English is one of those languages that is both difficult to learn and difficult to teach (Shawashreh, 2020).

Pronunciation is an important in other domains. Indeed, first impression during job interview that will be noticed and evaluated is pronunciation (Almaqrn & Alshabeb, 2017). EFL Arab learners face real challenges and difficulties when learning English pronunciation. In this vein, many researchers found that Arab speakers of English pronounce the sound /p/ as /b/ (e.g., Alfahaid, 2015; Hago & Khan, 2015). In addition, the vowel /ε/ is more problematic for EFL Arab learners (AL Eissa, 2003; Kalaldehy, 2016) and many researchers concluded that EFL Arab learners face difficulties associated to this sound (e.g., Al Fallaj, 2013; Eshassah, 2016).

Kachru (1990) claims that any language is in one of three circles. The language could be as a first language (first circle), second language (second circle), or foreign language (third circle). In regard to second language and foreign language, a second language is the one that a person learns after mastering their mother tongue (first language), particularly if they live in a region where it is widely spoken. A foreign language, on the other hand, is any language (e.g., taught) other than that of the inhabitants of a particular location speak. In this regard, Kachru (1990) gives an example for English language (see figure 1). These three various circles could affect pronunciation learning, especially, in the third circle as learners are going to learn.

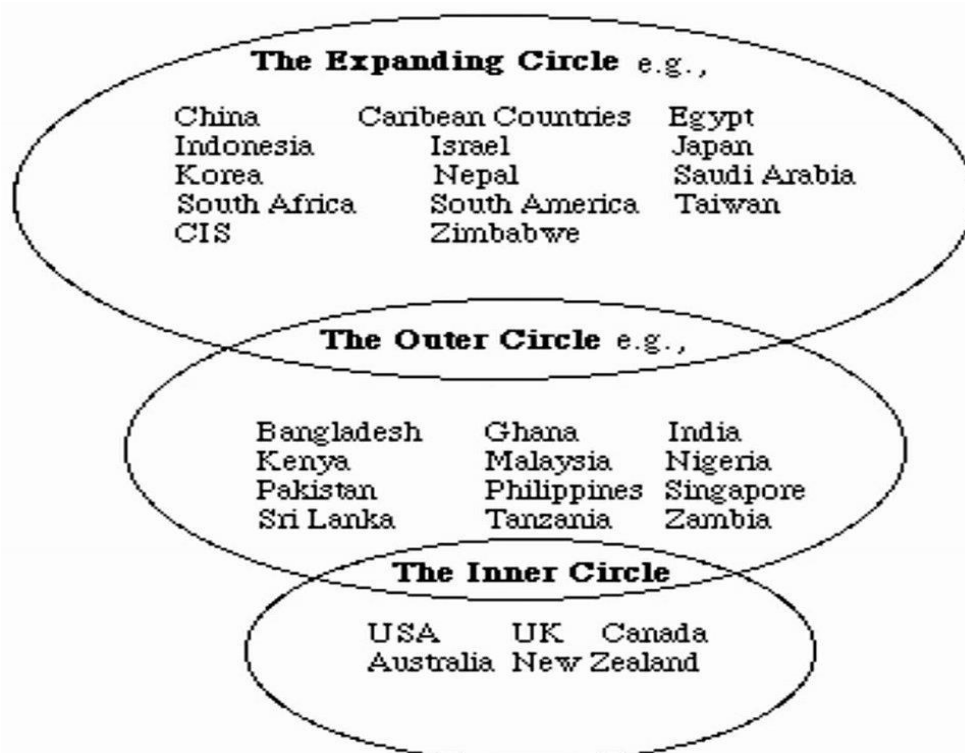


Figure 1: Three concentric circles of world Englishes (Kachru, 1990)

Figure1 shows that English is found in three different circles. It is as a first language/mother tongue in the inner circle. The second circle is called the outer circle and English is a second language. Lastly, the expanding circle, English is a foreign language in this circle. This spread for one language among various backgrounds and countries leads the second and foreign language speakers to improve their pronunciation to communicate successfully. In this regard, Jenkins (1998) says that learners' ultimate aim is to communicate successfully with other non-native speakers of English, more specifically, with those who are from different first language backgrounds. In other words, as Tsojon and Ali (2014) argue when talking with persons outside of one's personal linguistic environment or speech community, accurate pronunciation is essential. In addition, Jenkins (2002) adds that there is a shift in the use of English for international communication as stated by Crystal (1997) and Graddol (1997). Jenkins also argues that there is an urgent need for establishing phonological standards and pronunciation models for English as an international language (EIL).

As a result to the diffusion of English language all over the world, teaching English as a lingua franca becomes a main concern (Berns, 2008; Hamzah, et al., 2010). Accordingly, there is a need for intelligible pronunciation as it is significant. Jordanian learners learn English as a foreign language (AL-Wreikat & Bin Abdullah, 2010; Al Saidat, 2009). Hence, their pronunciation must be intelligible to enable them to communicate with EL speakers who belong to another EL variety. Asassfeh et al. (2011) and Alhabahba et al. (2016) investigated the difficulties and challenges faced by Jordanian EFL learners. Asassfeh et al. (2011) focused on the difficulties related to communicative competence; they concluded that speaking skill was the most difficult skill among Jordanian English language undergraduates. They concluded that learners face difficulties related to pronouncing English vowels and consonants which are not available in Arabic language. Alhabahba et al. (2016) tried to observe the challenges associated with EL teaching. For example, Alhabahba et al found that the education of EL is still teacher-centered. Their study does not also concentrate on improving lifelong strategies while teaching. Previous studies confirm that some challenges could be because of teaching process of English (Alhabahba et al. 2016). The pronunciation of English, in particular, has the lion's share of research in this discipline, and properly so. Many Arabs seek to perfect their English speaking abilities in order to improve their career possibilities and obtain the attention of potential employers with their English communication skills (Alfehaid, 2015; Kalaldehy, 2016). Pronunciation, according to English foreign language (EFL) students, is the most difficult skill to master. Furthermore, pronunciation is a vital skill and the foundation of oral communication activities of all levels (e.g., Almbark, 2010; Shawashreh, 2020).

In Jordan, English is a language taught after Arabic. It is introduced to students in the first grade at school. It is also an important aspect of university curriculum as all universities include English communication courses in their study schedules. Some university courses emphasize the importance of pronunciation, and these courses include specific sections to address this difficult component of language

acquisition for both students and instructors (Ismael et al., 2015). The Ministry of Education has mandated the Action Pack series as the official and mandatory English language curriculum in all Jordanian public and private institutions. Action Pack focuses more on pronunciation. The series is taught from the first to the twelfth grade. It is founded on the idea that kids learn best when they are given relevant and engaging topics to study as well as functional language exercise (Smadi et al., 2021). According to (Al-Zayed, 2017), many Jordanians are concerned about pronouncing English correctly; especially when some English language students themselves are unable to discriminate between English consonants and vowels and Arabic consonants and vowels. As a result, this study attempted to analyze the content of pronunciation studies conducted among EFL Jordanians to identify their own content and pointed out what were the problems highlighted in these pronunciation in order to guide future studies to investigate problems and challenges that have received little attention.

2. THE REVIEW METHODS

2.1 Introduction

In this SLR, researchers attempt to provide a thorough study of the challenges surrounding pronunciation research in Jordan. We included empirical studies that looked into (1) pronunciation difficulties in Jordan and (2) the obstacles and issues that EFL learners and educators face in the learning and teaching of English pronunciation. We also evaluated other conceptual papers to support our conclusions due to a lack of studies.

Indeed, any literature review has a variety of purposes. These purposes comprise providing theoretical backgrounds for subsequent studies, learning research breadth on any topics of interests, or answering any practical question by understanding what existing research has to say on the matter (Okoli & Schabram, 2010). In fact, the importance of literature review exceeded the basic need of normal research. It becomes a starting point that is known to be solid for all other researchers who are interested in one topic. According to Fink (2005) a literature review must be systematic in which it should follow a methodological approach. It also must be explicit in which it should explain the procedures conducted. Next, literature review must be comprehensive as it must include all relevant materials. Lastly, it must be reproducible in which it means that other researchers should follow same approaches while reviewing same topics.

All these purposes are seen to be equally significant while reviewing literature (Hart, 2018).

2.2 Questions of the Present Study

What evidence is there to show the extent to which pronunciation research is conducted in the Jordanian context?

Sub-questions:

- 1- What are the criteria used to measure the challenges of acquiring intelligible pronunciation for Jordanian EFL learners in the Jordanian context?
- 2- How is the issue of acquiring intelligible pronunciation for Jordanian EFL learners in the Jordanian context?

Table 1 below specifies the population, subject, comparison, outcomes and context (PSCOC) structure of the research questions, following the recommendation from.

Table 1 Summary of PSCOC

Population	Jordanian learners of English
Subject	Pronunciation
Comparison	Pronunciation difficulties, problem, and challenges
Context	Review(s) of any empirical and conceptual studies of pronunciation difficulties, problem, and challenges in Jordanian context.
Outcomes	Trends of pronunciation challenges in Jordan

2.3 Identification of Relevant Literature

The present study, in this section, explicitly elaborates on the relevant literature works' selection employed throughout this study. We, at the initial SLR stage, adapted from Hamzah et al., (2015) a framework which presents a systematic way when reviewing literature regarding a specific topic. More specifically, this framework allows researchers to follow precise steps as follows: identifying population, then a subject to be investigated. Next, researchers can compare between articles studied to sort them in a way that achieves research's main goal. After that, researchers identify the context of articles presenting specific topics investigated that are associated to a specific issue e.g., pronunciation challenges and problems. In this research, EFL learners in Jordan are the population, pronunciation is the subject of the present article, researchers, later, sorted articles based on the problems of pronunciation highlighted. Lastly, the current study concluded with presenting findings. Such implementation of this framework is to safeguard that the procedures followed to extract relevant data are being adhered to the issues discussed in the current research. Figure 2 illustrates the identifying literature review's process.

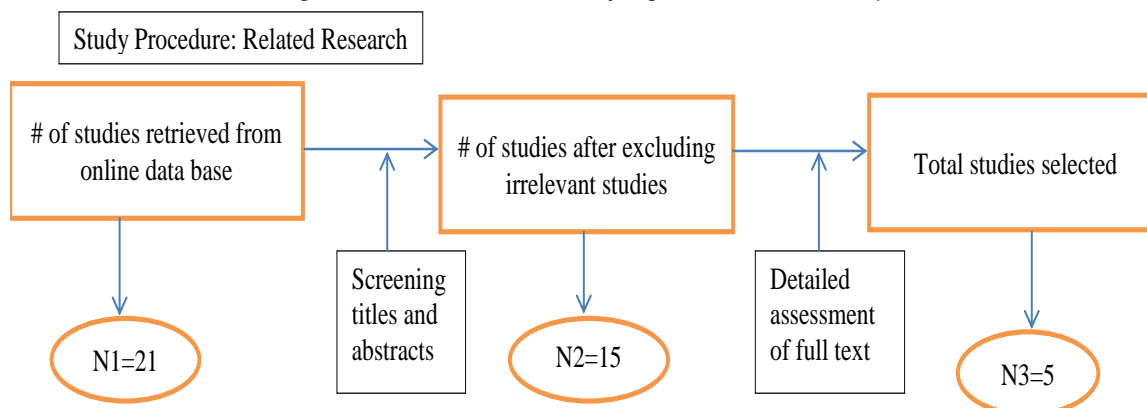


Figure 2 Identifying relevant literature for this study

This study for analysis adopts the following study procedure: during this procedure of collecting data, multiple papers on pronunciation in general were retrieved from a variety of web databases. In Figure 2, "N1" denotes the total number of studies collected, "N2" is for the number of studies after screening titles and abstracts. "N3" is for studies after detailed assessment of full text. We concentrate primarily on challenges/problem/difficulties of pronunciation in Jordan. In this study, the value of 'N3' was the total number of studies used in the investigation. We reviewed a large number of studies on pronunciation and then these studies were narrowed down at the end of the narrowing procedures for further evaluation. In this review, we retrieved literature from a variety of online databases. EBSCOHost, JSTOR, ProQuest, SAGE Journals, Emerald, and Wiley Online Library were used to pull literature from six online databases.

2.4 Studies' Selection

In our study selection, we included both empirical and conceptual works linked with pronunciation research in Jordan. The studies considered for the literature review were published between 2016 and 2022. The detailed eligibility requirements were as follows: 1) English pronunciation errors; pronunciation's problems and solutions; and 2) studies that address mother-tongue effect on EFL pronunciation; phonological errors and L1 Interference the effectiveness of pronunciation teaching for ESL learners in the Jordanian context and 3) studies that investigated the issue of mispronunciation of English plosives; pronunciation difficulties encountered by Arab students in learning English sounds.

2.5 The Extraction of Data and the Assessment of the Present Study Quality

A form was prepared as a checklist to gather appropriate evidence linked to the research topics (pronunciation difficulties, problems, and challenges) in order to confirm the data extraction procedure and assure the validity of this study. This checklist criterion was adopted from Hamzah et al., (2015). Furthermore, the quality of the associated studies was implemented by employing the data extraction form. The study quality checklist was made up of seven primary items on the form (see Table 2). The ratio of answers for each question was used to judge the quality of both quantitative and qualitative investigations: Yes = 1 point, No = 0 point and Neutral = 0.5 point. As a result, the quality score accumulated in total of between 0 (very poor) to 7 (very good).

Table 2: The Checklist of the Study Quality

Items	Answers
Was the article related?	Yes/ No
Were the aim(s) of the study clearly stated?	Yes/ No/ Neutral
Were the participants adequately described? (i.e., students,	Yes/ No/ Neutral

Items	Answers
years of teaching experience, etc.)	
Was the data collection carried out well? (i.e., how study settings may influence data, discussion of procedures)	Yes/ No/ Neutral
Were potential confounders adequately controlled in the analysis?	Yes/ No/ Neutral
Were the approach and analysis well conveyed? (i.e., rationale of the method used)	Yes/ No/ Neutral
Were the findings credible? (i.e., the findings and methods used were well explained and could be trusted)	Yes/ No/ Neutral

3. RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

We give the evidence that was derived from the literature review and data in this part. As previously stated, this investigation found 21 studies that included both empirical and conceptual works. Only five studies were considered suitable for evaluation at the end of the procedure as the evaluation of the retrieved studies, including inclusion criteria, was discussed earlier in this work. Duplicate studies, irrelevant studies, and insufficient abstracts were all factors taken in account. Such findings are true as it agrees with Bani khaled (2012) and Mugableh (2016). More deeply, Bani khaled (2012) conducted an analysis for the available research of English language problems and challenges in Jordan to see what has been ignored in the research field regarding English language problems. Bani khaled (2012) found that pronunciation-related issues were not investigated. In this vein, Hassan (2014) revealed that pronunciation has received little attention among EFL Arab learners. In Jordan, pronunciation is neglected in the field of research (Bani-Khaled's 2012; Mugableh (2016). Hadjah and Jupri (2018) also stated a little amount of attention has been paid to research on Arabic EFL learners' pronunciation issues. It is also highlighted by Hamzah et al., (2019) there is a need to look for more efficient strategies to teach and acquire English pronunciation, and for further experimental study.

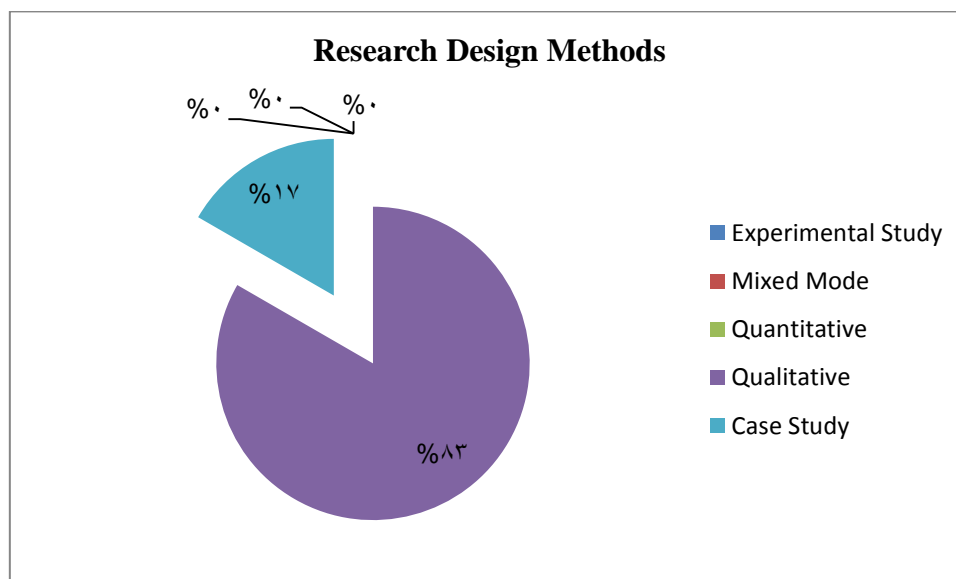


Figure 3: Studies by Research Method Approach

This study managed to identify patterns of research approach that were used by the studies retrieved. As Figure 3 shows the most popular research approach implemented in the studies was the Qualitative Research Approach (83%); followed by case study approach (17%). The least were for the following: experimental study, quantitative, mixed mode, and formal experiment (0%). This could be attributed to the fact that phonological analysis needs a specific qualitative research design, as the selected studies were all aiming to explore pronunciation’s problems, challenges, error, or difficulties. Indeed, Zikmund, et al. (2013) define qualitative data as the data that are associated with textual, visual depictions, interpretations, meaningful characterizations as well as other expression descriptions and they are non-numerical data.

These studies mostly adopted qualitative research designs since this approach agrees with all these research’s aims and questions. Most of these studies aimed to identify the exact challenges, problems, and/or difficulties behind pronunciation intelligibility issues facing Jordanian learners of EFL. These studies employed natural observation in order to observe to what extent the mispronunciation of EFL Jordanian learners interfere with their daily conversation, and interviews as qualitative instruments to see to what extent this kind of mispronunciation affected the communication with non-Arabic speakers of English as well as pronunciation error analysis. Table 3 below shows the quality scores of the retrieved literature review in this study. Tabulated scores in the table were from the study quality checklist (see Table 2) for each study. Most of the studies meet the fair scale: More specifically, 3 studies (60%) and 2 studies (40%) were deemed very good and good, respectively. No studies were very poor and poor.

Table 3 Quality scores

Quality Scale	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Total
	($\alpha \leq 1$)	($\alpha \leq 2$)	($\alpha \leq 3$)	($\alpha \leq 4$)	($\alpha \leq 5$)	
Number of			3	1	1	5

Quality Scale	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Total
Studies						
Percentage %	0%	0%	60%	20%	20%	100%

The following section addresses the SLR's main research question's results and the other sub-questions.

Main Question: What evidence is there to show the extent to which pronunciation research is conducted in the Jordanian context?

The SLR identified 5 studies in the Jordanian addressing various pronunciation difficulties settings. These studies investigated one of the following issues: (1) the problems/challenges of pronunciation; (2) pronunciation errors; and (3) mispronunciation.

Table 4 below presents the most investigated factors in pronunciation studies were consonant clusters, syllable structure, vowel-consonant inconsistencies, and mother tongue, with a total of 3 studies to each factor (60%) showing significant effects on acquiring intelligible pronunciation. Overgeneralization of common rules such pronouncing the (c) as /k/ in most cases, and spelling as some students may pronounce based on spelling structure of words, were the least investigated factors in pronunciation studies with merely one study (20%) showing significant effects on acquiring pronunciation.

Table 4 List of factors investigated in pronunciation studies

No	Factor	Total Studies	Percentage	Significant Effect on Pronunciation	No Significant Effect	Mixed Effect
1	Consonant clusters	3	60%	S1, S2, S4	-	-
2	Syllable Structure	3	60%	S1, S2, S4	-	-
3	Stress Pattern	2	40%	S1, S2	-	-
4	Vowel-Consonant Inconsistencies	3	60%	S1, S2, S3	-	-
5	Mother-Tongue / Interference	3	60%	S3, S4, S5	-	-
6	Overgeneralization of Rules	1	20%	S3	-	-
7	Spelling	1	20%	S3	-	-

The main goal of SLR was to understand how the factors listed above affect the process of acquiring intelligible pronunciation of Jordanian EFL learners. The following sub-questions also highlight some of the issues mentioned in the studies retrieved in the SLR.

Sub-question 1: What are the factors affecting intelligible pronunciation of Jordanian EFL learners in Jordan?

The process of investigating the errors, problems, and challenges of pronunciation was measured using various factors, which can be organized as follows: (1) consonant clusters, (2) syllable structure, (3) stress pattern, (4) vowel-consonant inconsistencies, (5) mother tongue / interference, (6) overgeneralization, and (7) spelling. Pronunciation challenges among Jordanian EFL learners have been addressed mostly by investigating the phonological differences between English and Jordanian Arabic. This can be supported by other studies among EFL learners which have also identified such factors. More widely, many factors could affect the learning process of pronunciation. These factors could arise because of phonological differences. The pronunciation challenges faced by language learners could be the same. However, some differences are also there (Hamzah et al., 2017; Hjollum & Mees 2012). This idea is a fact since many researchers found the mother tongue of learners is an always challenge for the pronunciation difficulties (Al-Aqeeli & Jadhav, 2013; Al-Eisa 2003; Hamzah, et al., 2020). That is to say, most of the pronunciation-related studies focused on phonological differences. The dimensions of mother-tongue issues that have been discussed in pronunciation research field were: segmental difficulties (e.g., Ali, 2011; Saadah, 2011), suprasegmental difficulties, syllable structure difference (e.g., Ahmad & Nazim, 2013; Al Saidat, 2010; Kalaldehy, 2016; Na'ama, 2011), spelling, overgeneralization (Al-Zoubi, 2019), stress patterns and consonant clusters (Kalaldehy, 2016).

Moreover, the selected studies have used the following theories (contrastive analysis and error analysis theories) in order to investigate pronunciation difficulties and challenges that face Jordanian EFL learners. Such studies that have investigated phonological differences have employed contrastive analysis and error analysis theories (e.g., Al Damen, 2013; Ali, 2011; Hammond, 1986; Hjollum & Mees, 2012; Khansir, 2012; Kurniawan, 2016; Na'ama, 2011), interlanguage theory, markedness theory, language universals and language transfer theories (Al-Eisa 2003; Rustipa, 2011).

Sub-Question 2

What are the issues of acquiring intelligible pronunciation for Jordanian EFL learners in the Jordanian context?

Although English language scholars have focused on phonological differences and speaking challenges when they investigated pronunciation or speaking challenges in Jordan, these researchers did not include socio-psycho factors e.g., anxiety, self-confidence, attitude, motivation, and such factors that could affect pronunciation. The socio-psycho factors were almost ignored regarding to pronunciation difficulties. In this regard, El Zarka (2013) states that socio-psycho issues and variables should receive more attention regarding pronunciation-related studies. Hady (2016) concluded that sociolinguistics plays a significant role in overall communicative competence improvement for language learners. In addition,

Sao (2016) and Sudrajat (2016) indicated that motivation is one of students' pronunciation problems since students were not motivated to learn pronunciation. In this regard, Sao (2016) pointed out that exposure to the target language is of pivotal importance in language learning in general, and pronunciation acquiring in particular.

Socio-psych factors could be related to personality, attitude, motivation, and some other elements (e.g AL Saidat, 2010). Psychology plays an important role in mastering pronunciation, particularly among EFL learners (e.g., Acton, 1984; Gilakjani & Ahmadi 2011; Sapon, 1952; Zhang, & Yin, 2009). In this regard, it can be said students can improve their pronunciation and they can be more aware of it if they are motivated (Kayaoğlu & Çaylak, 2013). Therefore, it could be noticed that the main factors that could affect learning pronunciation is both phonological differences and socio-psycho obstacles.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Prospects and Challenges

In this paper, we have identified some prospects and challenges in learning the intelligible pronunciation.

In carrying out such research involving more than just several studies, it is important to be aware of what studies have been conducted in that area or in related areas. The present study indicates that pronunciation is still a main challenge that faces Arab speakers of English including Jordanians, due to many factors including mother tongue and some other factors related to phonological differences as it was highlighted by previous studies. Undoubtedly, many researches have been done regarding the issue of pronunciation though very limited articles have inserted the idea of socio-psych factors as some studies recommended further studies to pay attention to attitude, anxiety, motivation, and other socio-psycho factors (Naser & Hamzah, 2018; El Zarka, 2013) in general and none of these from the 5 studies when dealing with pronunciation. More deeply, previous studies have been usually highlighting the issues as being related to phonological differences e.g., syllable structure, mother tongue, consonants' and vowels' differences.

Al Jamal (2007) conducted a study to examine students' attitudes towards their experience of English instruction during their study. EFL students felt weak especially in speaking because they were unmotivated. In this vein, Alkaabi's (2016), Naser and Hamzah (2018) indicated that students are enrolled in classes with positive attitudes to learn English language. Then, their positive attitudes will become negative because EFL students are not motivated well. To keep such positive attitude, students need to be motivated since motivation is the primary urge for learning to begin, as well as the driving power to keep the learning process going (Alzubaidi, Aldridge, & Khine, 2014). Alzubaidi et al. also add that, because motivation is very important, and it affects the outcomes, teachers should focus on motivation in class since it has a significant role on the language learning outcomes.

More precisely, Levis and Levelle (2010) stated that since the beginning the communication approach in the 1970s pronunciation was not presented in the field of pronunciation. This study was previously supported by Brown stating that pronunciation had been marginalized in the field of research from 1975 to 1988. Then, another study was conducted to ensure that pronunciation had been very little investigated between 1999 and 2008 (Deng et al., 2009). Adding to that in Jordanian context, Bani-Khaled (2012) conducted a meta-analysis study to find that pronunciation was ignored in the research field, and this was also confirmed by Mugableh (2016). These studies ensured that pronunciation has to receive further attention in the field of research. As a result for such lack of studies, some studies indicated that teachers of English are unprepared to teach and deal with pronunciation since the main goal to use the language is to communicate (Levis & Levelle, 2010; Shak, et al., 2016). Moreover, there is a lack of pronunciation instruction in teaching a foreign language (Hamzah et al., 2017; Sturm, 2013).

5. CONCLUSION

The primary purpose of this research is to provide a comprehensive review of the empirical literature of pronunciation studies. The study can enhance the understanding of learners, teachers, and researchers regarding the current status of pronunciation and the need to enhance for further studies. This study concluded that recent studies highlight that pronunciation is an important aspect of a language and an important tool for having intelligible communication. Al-Ahdal, Al-Hattami, Al-Awaid, and Al-Mashaqba (2015) added that both English and Arabic languages are from different linguistic families and, as a result, some EFL Jordanian learners face intelligible issues, especially to other English language users. In this regard, Turki (2008) says that the main difficulty which students face during speaking English is pronunciation. Hence, pronunciation is one of the most difficult areas to learn or to teach in Jordanian context. In this regard, several Jordanian researchers concluded that EFL students of the Jordanian universities still pronounce wrongly and face pronunciation difficulties (e.g., Al Eiadeh et al., 2016; Al-Khawaldeh et al., 2016). However, the field of research and goals of teaching pronunciation need further focus.

Furthermore, several studies have demonstrated that the errors made by non-native speakers are systematic rather than random (Hassan, 2014). This suggests that systematic barriers which includes sounds' place of articulation, manner of articulation, and/or other barriers prevent learners from learning the correct pronunciation. Ali (2015) claims that it is important to find student's problems while teaching pronunciation or to try diagnosing the weak pronunciation among students. In this vein, Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) highlighted that the important part of communicative competence is intelligible pronunciation and other language skills can be easily improved with speakers who have intelligible pronunciation than others who do not have intelligible pronunciation. Consequently, learning intelligible pronunciation is a goal for pronunciation pedagogy (Levis & Levelle, 2011). Therefore, mastering

intelligible pronunciation of the target language during learning process of English is necessary. Accordingly, Huwari and Mehawesh (2015) and Ali (2015) recommended further studies on pronunciation issues. Previous studies have focused on pronunciation as a tool for enhancing speaking and communication and some other factors might be included in further studies. More specifically, this literature review outcomes indicate socio-psycho factors are important when teaching and learning foreign language pronunciation. Indeed, learning English language in non-English speaking countries needs a strong motivation to keep learners encouraged to achieve their goals (Altamimi, 2015). Therefore, future studies may consider factors such as motivation, attitudes and/or other socio-psycho factors. This means that linking socio-psycho factors with the idea of phonological differences seems to be significant.

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