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**Pronunciation Difficulties Encountered by  
English Language Teachers at Basic level  
Schools Diagnosis and Remedy  
(A Case Study of Port Sudan Locality)**

A Thesis Submitted in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of M. Ed (ELT)

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## ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the difficulties of pronunciation that English Language Teachers at Basic Level Schools (ELT at BLS) in Port Sudan Locality face when teaching English language. It aims first at investigating the most common prominent pronunciation errors for those teachers. Second, it attempts to find out the reasons for the errors that occur in the teaching pronunciation and third, it will give remedial suggestions to overcome the observed pronunciation problems and to help them become better speakers of the English language. The sample of this study was fifty BLS, from Port Sudan Locality. Three research instruments are used in order to collect the necessary data. The first one is an observation which carried out as focused observations as practical classroom observations are considered the best way to achieve the aim of this study. The second research tool is an audio recorded (seventy recorded lessons). The third research tool is pronunciation tests. The collected data is analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively and being interpreted in relation to the hypotheses of the study. The results show that the most common pronunciation errors made by the (ELT at BLS) concern the presence of new sounds in the target language not found in Sudanese Spoken Arabic (SSA); the English dental fricative /θ/ and /ð/, voiceless bilabial plosive /p/, voiced labiodental fricative /v/ , voiced plato-alveolar fricative /ʒ/, mid central /ɜ:/ and mid front /e/. In other words, the main sources of those errors lie in the influence from the English teachers' first language (SSA). Based on the findings, the study concluded that factors such as interference, the differences in the sound system in the two languages inconsistency of English sounds and spelling militate against Sudanese English language teachers' competence in pronunciation. Finally, the researcher has proposed a number of recommendations some of these are the English teacher's textbooks should include in introduction of any lesson the phonemic transcription of the most difficult words, in order to minimize the mistakes in pronunciation. English teachers should be given in-service training courses in phonetics and phonology to enable them read the symbols of phonemic transcriptions.

## المستخلص

يركز هذا البحث علي صعوبات النطق التي تواجه معلمي اللغة الانجليزية في مرحلة الاساس عندما يدرسون اللغة الانجليزية. حيث يهدف البحث أولاً علي تقصي اكثر اخطاء النطق شيوعاً والتي تسبب صعوبات لمعلمي اللغة الانجليزية، ثانياً معرفة العوامل التي تقف وراء ذلك اثناء عملية التدريس، ثالثاً ايجاد بعض المعالجات التي تساعد معلمي اللغة الانجليزية علي التغلب علي هذه الصعوبات ليصبحوا أفضل المتحدثين في اللغة الانجليزية. عينة هذه الدراسة الاساسية كانت خمسين معلماً للغة الانجليزية بمدينة بورتسودان بولاية البحر الاحمر, ثلاث أدوات استخدمت في جمع البيانات هي الملاحظة وسبعون حصة مسجلة بالاضافة الي اختبار في الصوتيات. الاول هو الملاحظة والتي طبقت كملاحظة ميدانية في الصفوف الدراسية والتي تعتبر افضل وسيلة للوصول لهدف البحث، الاداة الثانية هي التسجيل الصوتي (سبعون حصة مسجلة) والاداة الثالثة كان اختبار النطق. حيث تم تحليل البيانات التي تم جمعها من الناحيتين الكمية والنوعية والتي ربطت فيما يتعلق و فرضيات الدراسة. وأظهرت النتائج أن أخطاء النطق الأكثر شيوعاً لمعلمي اللغة الانجليزية هي غياب هذه الاصوات في لغتهم الام مثل: الصوت الاحتكاكي الاسناني الثاء والذال، الصوت الهمسي الشفوي الانفجاري /p/، الصوت الجهري الشفوي الاسناني الاحتكاكي /v/ والصوت الجهري الحنكي السنخي الاحتكاكي /ʒ/. اما اصوات الحركات فهي مثل /3:/ و /e/. وبمعني آخر ان المصدر الاساسي لهذه الاخطاء هي اللغة الام. بناءً علي النتائج توصلت الدراسة الي ان هنالك بعض العوامل التي تسبب هذه المشاكل وهي التداخل اللغوي، الاختلاف في نظام الاصوات، تضارب النطق في بعض اصوات اللغة الانجليزية، والنظام الاملائي الذي يعيق معلمي اللغة الانجليزية من تعلم النطق بكفاءة. وفي النهاية قد اقترح الباحث عددا من التوصيات منها يجب أن يشتمل كتاب معلم اللغة الانجليزية في بداية كل درس القراءة الصوتية للكلمات الاكثر صعوبة، وذلك للحد من الأخطاء في النطق. وبالاضافة

الي ذلك ينبغي ان يتم تدريب معلمي اللغة الانجليزية علي كيفية قراءة الرموز الصوتية في علم الصوتيات.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

In the light of the results of this study, the researcher suggests the following recommendations:

1. First of all, it has been suggested that the observed errors should get particular attention during pronunciation teaching.
2. Also, focusing on these errors during the designing textbooks writing process to include at the beginning of each lesson of the English teacher's textbook the phonemic transcription of the most difficult words, would improve the English teachers' pronunciation performance.
3. English teachers should be given in-service training courses in phonetics and phonology in order they can be capable to read the symbols of phonemic transcriptions. In other words phonetic training and exercises on the most problematic sounds.

4. New smart phones technology can also prove helpful in this regard. Language learning applications in smart phones can benefit English teachers in multiple ways; learning pronunciation, using talking dictionaries, practicing sounds and so on.
5. English language teachers should become familiar with the IPA symbols and display competence in phonemic transcription.
6. In order the English teachers' errors do not transfer to the pupils, (ELT at BLS) should master that features of 'word phonology', namely, consonants, vowels, word stress, phonotactics and simplifications (elision, assimilation and epenthesis) as well as the features of 'discourse phonology', namely rhythm and intonation. The researcher's opinion is that, all (ELT at BLS) should be taught special courses in phonemic transcription in specific and pronunciation courses as general. This certainly would improve the English language teacher's pronunciation ability, which in turn reduces the English pronunciation errors.