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***Error Analysis as a Remedy for Pronunciation Problems:
The Case of Tanzanian Students Learning French***

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Statement of originality

I hereby confirm that this thesis is entirely my own work and that I have written it in my own words. I also declare that the present work contains no plagiarism and that any information taken from published or unpublished sources has been acknowledged in accordance with the standard referencing rules.

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Date: The 24th, May 2015.

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my family in general, to Bizongwako Jean Darcy and Kanyana Belly-Bine in particular, and to all my friends.

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Abstract

This study focuses on the difficulties that Tanzanian students in Algeria are faced with in learning French, in particular at the level of pronunciation. It aims first at investigating the most common concerns for those students; second, it tries to find out the reasons for the errors that occur in the learning process and third, it will give remedial suggestions to overcome the observed pronunciation problems and to help them become better speakers of the French language. The sample population consists of 20 Tanzanian students of scientific streams at the University of Tlemcen. Two research instruments are used in order to collect the necessary data. The first one is a questionnaire that gathers information on the pronunciation training that the respondents received as well as the sounds that are problematic for them. The second research tool is an audio recording that has helped the researcher to collect the speech samples. The collected data is analysed quantitatively and qualitatively before being interpreted in relation to the hypotheses of the study. The results show that the most common pronunciation errors made by the Tanzanian students concern the presence of new sounds in the target language: the French uvular fricative [ʀ], the front rounded vowels [y], [œ], [ø], [ə], the nasal vowels [ɔ̃]; [œ̃]; [ɛ̃] in particular, and the silent letters in general. They also reveal that the main sources of those errors lie in the influence from both Swahili and English, the learners' first and second language respectively. Finally, it is suggested that focusing on the observed errors during the teaching process can help the Tanzanian students improve their pronunciation performance.

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List of Abbreviations

AMEP: Adult Migrant English Program

CPH: Critical Period Hypothesis

CA: Contrastive Analysis

EA: Error Analysis

General Introduction

In our everyday life, the most common and easiest way to communicate is through speech. From time immemorial, people have always preferred speech to other means of communication to express their ideas and feelings and successfully interact in their communities. Any communication process requires that the speaker and the listener understand each other, otherwise it breaks down. One of the most important factors to ensure effective communication is good pronunciation without which communication is hard or even impossible. Having good knowledge of grammar and lexis is important, but a good pronunciation is essential and can even cover gaps in other aspects of language such as grammar. Good knowledge of grammar without understandable pronunciation does not ensure successful communication. It is very embarrassing and frustrating for a non-native speaker with good command of grammar and lexis to fail to make himself/herself understood by a native speaker (Harmer, 2001).

Many language learners have understood the paramount importance of pronunciation and made it their ultimate goal, knowing that poor, heavy, unintelligible pronunciation hampers communication and can stand in their way towards success. The concept of good pronunciation does not necessarily refer to native-like pronunciation. Instead, it is synonymous to intelligible pronunciation which has been defined by scholars as the pronunciation that can be understood by the listener without any particular effort (Abercrombie, 1991; Munro&Derwing, 1999). They claim that native-like pronunciation is extremely difficult to attain for adult learners. Factors such as critical period hypothesis, socio-psychological states, amount of exposure and use of the target language, personality, influence from the learner's native language as well as universals can explain the extreme difficulty of attaining native-like pronunciation (Brown, 2010). Despite proofs of adult learners who have succeeded to eradicate the foreign accent in their language, this belief in Critical Period Hypothesis is still widespread in the field of language teaching. Researchers and teachers have come to an agreement that the ultimate goal of pronunciation teaching should be the attainment of intelligibility rather than the development of native like speech patterns (Celce-Murcia, 1987; Morley 1991).

In spite of its immense importance, pronunciation has been neglected in language teaching for many years. Brown (2001) says that pronunciation is still a marginalised skill in many language program. Teachers as well as researchers have long given pronunciation very little attention if at all. This was mainly due to a lack of trained teachers in the area of pronunciation. Another reason was the absence of pronunciation-related items in the language teaching literature. The teaching of pronunciation was restricted to minimal pair drills with practically no interest in prosodic features. It is until the last decade that more interest was given to pronunciation teaching. Surveys showed an increase of pronunciation literature in language textbooks (Orlando, 2013). However, a lot still has to be done so as to solve pronunciation problems that always occur in the learner language.

It is in the perspective of developing the area of pronunciation teaching that the present study has been undertaken. Every year, Algeria welcomes hundreds of foreign students, mainly from the African continent, among them those young Tanzanian students. Tanzania is a country located in East Africa. Swahili is its main language and English the second language. The medium of instruction is English in secondary education. So, most Tanzanian students come to Algeria with practically no knowledge of the French language. That is why they must be trained in French for a year before they start their academic careers. The University of Tlemcen is among the universities that host a big number of Tanzanian students and the training in French is delivered there by the *Centre d'Enseignement Intensif des Langues* (CEIL: Centre of Intensive Teaching of Languages).

However, it is noticeable that after the instruction they get in French, the Tanzanian students still display considerable pronunciation errors. So, the concern of this study is to investigate the most common errors they make. It also aims at finding out the sources of those errors before suggesting remedies that might improve their pronunciation performance. So, the following questions are put forward:

- What are the most common pronunciation errors made by the Tanzanian students in learning the French language?
- What are the main sources of those errors?

Thus, this study will try to find arguments for the following hypotheses:

- The most common pronunciation errors made by the Tanzanian students in learning French concern the front rounded vowels [y]; [œ]; [ø]; [ə].
- The difficulties encountered by these learners of French pronunciation are mainly due to the presence of new sounds in the French sound system, but also to the influence from the languages they speak, Swahili and English.

Throughout this work, the researcher will try to prove whether the above hypotheses are true or not. The sample population consists of 20 Tanzanian students from the University of Tlemcen. Two research instruments will be used in order to investigate the students' pronunciation errors and their sources. First, a questionnaire will give the researcher a clear picture of the background of the students under investigation and their problems in the pronunciation of French. Audio recordings will also be used to collect the respondents' speech utterances which will be analysed in order to find out which French sounds are the most problematic for them.

The present work comprises two chapters that are interrelated to help the reader understand the field of research. In the first chapter, a theoretical overview of the field of pronunciation will be given. It will first present the importance of pronunciation in communication and how it has been neglected in the field of language teaching. Theories that have impacted its teaching will also be given.

The second chapter will combine the methodology used to carry out this study with the analysis and discussion of the results. It will give a description of the sample population under investigation, the tools used to collect data. It will also analyse the data before interpreting them according to the hypotheses proposed. Finally, this chapter will provide some suggestions that can remedy the pronunciation problems of the Tanzanian learners of the French language. The remedial suggestions can also be of great help for the field of pronunciation teaching in general.

Chapter 1: Review of the Related Literature

1.1 Introduction

Over the years, studies have shown how important it is for learners of a foreign language to have a good pronunciation. Some scholars went so far as to say that without an intelligible pronunciation, communication is impossible. It is very common to hear a native speaker asking his/her interlocutor to repeat what they have just said and this can happen many times in one conversation. Pronunciation problems affect not only beginners but also advanced learners. It is in this perspective that the present study has been undertaken. The aim is to find a solution to pronunciation problems encountered by Tanzanians when learning the French language.

This chapter consists of two sections. The first section will be about pronunciation. It will first review the definitions given to pronunciation and its importance for effective communication. It will also show how pronunciation has been neglected in spite of its undeniable importance. In the end, it will explore studies on how and what should be taught in pronunciation. The second section has the objective of reviewing different theories that have influenced the field of foreign language teaching, from contrastive analysis to error analysis through language transfer. However, a special focus will be on error analysis and its particular contribution in language teaching.

1.2 Pronunciation

1.2.1 Definition

Pronunciation is a major component of oral language. It leads to intelligibility, an essential factor of effective communication. Straightforwardly defined, it refers to the way in which people speak. According to AMEP Research Centre (2002), pronunciation is the production of speech sounds that we use to convey meaning. It includes segmental and supra-segmental aspects of a language. Segmental features are speech sounds of a given language and it is important for learners to know accurately how those sounds are uttered. They also have to know the supra-segmental features of the language, i.e., intonation, stress and voice quality. These features are distinctive, i.e. they can change the meaning. When they are not well mastered, they lead to mispronunciation and subsequently misunderstanding.

Richards et al. (2002:175) describes pronunciation as follows: “Pronunciation (also known as phonology) includes the role of individual sounds and sound segments, that is, features at the segmental level as well as supra-segmental features such as stress, rhythm and intonation.” So in the teaching/learning of pronunciation, both segmental and supra-segmental aspects of the language have to be taken into account.

1.2.2 The importance of pronunciation in the communication process

Pronunciation mastery plays a key role in communication. Here, we have to mention that there is a difference between pronunciation and speaking. Speaking is a broader skill that encompasses pronunciation. In other words, pronunciation is a sub-skill of speaking (Gilakjani, 2011). Among the sub-skills of speaking, pronunciation stands out as the most important one. Fraser (2000a:7) says: “with a good pronunciation a speaker is intelligible despite other errors, with poor pronunciation, understanding a speaker will be very difficult, despite accuracy in other areas”. It is obvious then that the knowledge of grammar rules and other aspects of language is not enough to achieve intelligible communication. The pronunciation of words must be good, otherwise the listener gets bored and cannot focus on what is being said. The basis of any communication is a shared code between the interlocutors. Pronunciation is an integral part of the code. If one cannot clearly understand the other, the message will not be passed. Without intelligibility, communication is hampered. So to ensure intelligible communication, the interlocutors must have good pronunciation.

The notion of intelligibility has attracted the interest of numerous scholars especially those interested in the study of pronunciation (Munro, 2008; Abercrombie, (1949); Smith & Nelson, 1985). Smith and Nelson (1985) define intelligibility as the recognition of a word or an utterance. For them, a word or an utterance is considered unintelligible if the listener cannot grasp its meaning. Abercrombie (1949) supports the idea that comfortable intelligibility refers to the pronunciation that can easily be understood by the listener, i.e., without much effort from the listener. He adds that what the learners need is a comfortably intelligible pronunciation. This idea entails that what is important in language learning is not achieving native-like pronunciation

but succeeding with ease to get the message across. Native-like pronunciation is difficult and almost impossible to achieve. Researchers in psycholinguistics have demonstrated that it cannot be achieved after the ‘critical period’, i.e. after early childhood (over 12 years old). Therefore, the goals in pronunciation learning/teaching should be realistic, that is, learners should seek to achieve just intelligible pronunciation. In this vein, Morley (1991) gives us what should be the goals of pronunciation teaching to achieve communicative competence:

- ✓ Functional intelligibility: it aims at developing spoken English which is easy to understand by listeners
- ✓ Functional communicability: is set to develop spoken language that serves effective communication
- ✓ Increased self-confidence: it is set to create a positive self-image
- ✓ Speech monitoring abilities: these will allow students to build up intelligibility, communicability and confidence outside the classroom.

So, the main paradigm in pronunciation teaching has been intelligibility. Its goal is not perfection, considering it too ambitious and probably an unachievable goal for most learners (Chung, 2005). Many teachers have understood that what is important in this global era is not to speak like natives since the majority of speakers of English all over the world are not natives.

However, some scholars have opposed the idea of focusing just on intelligible pronunciation. Griffen (1991) states that the goal in teaching/learning pronunciation should be speaking the language in a natural way, with no indication that the speaker is not “a clinically normal native”. A number of studies have shown that in some domains, foreign accents are not tolerated. This has triggered an increase in accent reduction programs with the ultimate goal being the reduction of foreign accent to the minimum. Some of them go even further by equating foreign accent with unintelligibility.

Good pronunciation, that is to say intelligible pronunciation, is one of the most important aspects of language that learners should focus on. Listeners can understand what you say only when you have intelligible pronunciation. It can even cover other gaps in other aspects like grammar. In this vein, AMEP Research Centre (2002:1)

states that “Learners with good pronunciation in English are more likely to be understood even if they make errors in other areas whereas learners whose pronunciation is difficult to understand will not be understood, even if their grammar is perfect”. This explains why learners with poor pronunciation are often afraid to express themselves in public no matter how good their grammar is. Good pronunciation boosts confidence whereas poor, unintelligible pronunciation can even have social consequences like anxiety and isolation. It is truly embarrassing when your listener keeps asking you to repeat what you have just said or to rephrase it. It makes you feel downgraded.

AMEP Research Centre (2002:1) supports that “we also often judge people by the way they speak, and so learners with poor pronunciation may be judged incompetent, uneducated or lacking in knowledge, even though listeners are only reacting to their pronunciation.” This hints that for so many listeners, pronunciation is more important than grammar mastery and other linguistic aspects of the language. It is only good pronunciation of the speaker that can help him/her escape those stereotypes.

Learners of a foreign language do not need to focus on pronunciation as much as learners of a second language. For the latter, it is imperative to have intelligible pronunciation as they use the language even outside the classroom setting. For example, in the case of the English language, Varasarin (2007: 10) claims that “In an ESL setting, the students must not only increase their English comprehension for the classroom, but also need to communicate and interact in English outside the class in various situations. Students need to understand and to be understood”. This means that they need the language not only to perform well in the classroom setting, but also to survive in their everyday lives. No one can deny that language barrier can be a hindrance to social inclusion or integration.

In the case of Anglophone students who come to study in Algeria, learning French is a must since the medium of instruction at university level is French. So they need to learn French pronunciation very well as they will always be faced with situations whereby they have to communicate and interact with their peers, their teachers. Besides, they need French outside the classroom since it is the first foreign language in Algeria and many Algerians speak it almost as naturally as French people.

So, students have no choice but to learn French so as to survive in their everyday lives. However, learners of a foreign language can indeed be interested in pronunciation but not to the same extent as second language learners.

Undeniably, pronunciation represents an essential component of language. A learner who first put his/her focus on it can easily access other areas of the language, especially speaking, and will be more likely to survive than learners with poor pronunciation. It is the cornerstone of speaking skills. Harmer (2001) believes that the teaching of pronunciation improves the speaking skills claiming that focusing on sounds and their place of articulation as well as on stress and intonation can improve learners' knowledge of the English language and help them attain intelligibility and comprehension. Therefore, it should always be part of any programme of language teaching.

1.2.3 Important but forgotten

In spite of the importance of intelligible pronunciation, it does not always get the attention it deserves on the part of teachers. Some focus on the grammar and other areas of the language giving little or no interest to pronunciation. In this vein, Eliot (1995) claims that "teachers tend to view pronunciation as the least useful of the basic language skills and therefore sacrifice teaching pronunciation in order to spend valuable time on other areas of language." It is neglected everywhere in the world. In Mexico, pronunciation was labelled as the 'Cinderella of language teaching'. This implies that it was neglected in spite of its importance (Dalton, 2002). Wachs (2011) tells us that the teaching/learning of pronunciation is not valued in language didactics and learners are the first victim of this neglect and lack of training. She supports that « Aujourd'hui, l'enseignement/apprentissage de la prononciation d'une langue étrangère est le parent pauvre de la didactique des langues, peu valorisé par l'institution enseignante.» (1991).¹

Over the years, researchers have carried out surveys to see how much literature on pronunciation is available in the existing body of knowledge. In 1991, Brown

¹ My translation of the French text: "Today, the teaching/learning of the pronunciation of foreign language is the poor relation of language didactics, less valued by the teaching institution".

surveyed the number of books written on pronunciation in Applied Linguistics, Language Learning, TESOL Quarterly and ELT journal over the period 1975-1988. His conclusion was that only 11.9 % of articles were written on pronunciation. This shows how much pronunciation is neglected taking into account that it was a period of time whereby pronunciation was supposed to be fashionable as communicative approaches in language teaching were on the rise.

This neglect of pronunciation is found not only in English language teaching, but also in the teaching of other languages. In his analysis of the amount of pronunciation incorporated in FFL (French as Foreign Language) textbooks produced in France, Loiseau (2008) finds out that there are very few sections devoted to the teaching and learning of French pronunciation. Most of them are for level 1, rarely for level 2, and almost never for level 3. Also, the author found out that these sections devoted to pronunciation are usually placed at the back of the book or in the activity books. This shows how neglected pronunciation is in those FFL textbooks.

Pronunciation training is supposed to start as early as possible. However, in many countries across the globe, it is left to chance or completely overlooked. The consequences are sometimes irreversible. Many learners finish the learning process without getting a chance to improve their pronunciation performances. Other advanced learners lose hope to ever get a good pronunciation. In this vein, Baker (1992:1) states: “Advanced students find that they can improve all aspects of their proficiency in English except their pronunciation, and mistakes which have been repeated for years are impossible to eradicate.” So, pronunciation should be considered as early as the beginning of the learning process to avoid irreversible mistakes.

However, there is some optimism in regard to pronunciation teaching. There has been a little increase in pronunciation research and language teaching textbooks are now incorporating this very important component. Orlando (2013) examines a sample of 15 European FFL textbooks published over the last three decades and finds that there has been a bit of increase in the sections devoted to pronunciation teaching/learning especially since 2000.

The neglect of pronunciation has pushed scholars to find reasons behind this disinterest. Many researchers have given different reasons why pronunciation teaching has not been given the attention and place it deserves. Garcia & Panissal (2010 :68) suggest :

L'oubli de cet aspect primordial est dû, d'une part, au fait que les enseignants ne savent pas comment intégrer l'enseignement de la prononciation dans les cours de langues et, d'autre part, à la croyance répandue qu'il faudrait être un spécialiste en phonétique pour pouvoir enseigner la prononciation alors que, dans d'autres domaines comme la syntaxe ou le lexique, la question de la spécialisation ne se pose guère.²

In this case, teachers do not feel confident enough to teach this major component of speaking skills. Other teachers do not teach pronunciation because they have a misconception or negative attitude towards it. This negative attitude results from the lack of knowledge about what to teach and how to teach it. The majority of teachers do not teach pronunciation because they did not receive any training for that. TESOL programs provide little training, if at all, in pronunciation teaching (Fraser, 1999). In 2002, McDonald investigated the main reasons for teachers' reluctance in teaching pronunciation. After the survey, he gives the results as follows: "The absence of pronunciation in curricula...a lack of suitable teaching and learning materials of a high quality...an absence of a skills and assessment framework with which to map student ability and progress in this area..." (p. 7). He concludes that pronunciation is not given a central and integrated place in the ESL curricula used by the surveyed teachers. In this vein, surveys have been carried out to see how many articles of teacher training in pronunciation are available. A survey of a sample of 2912 articles was conducted. The result is very shocking: only five articles dealt with teacher training. So, it is understandable that teachers ignore pronunciation in their everyday

² My translation of the French text: « The neglect of this crucial aspect is due, on the one hand, to the fact that teachers do not know how to incorporate the pronunciation teaching in language lectures and, on the other hand, to the widespread belief that to be able to teach pronunciation, one needs to be an expert in phonetics whereas in other areas such as syntax or lexis, there is no need of a specialist. »

profession of teaching; they do not receive any training, and even in the literature there are very little insight concerning the pedagogy to use.

Other scholars have also given what they believe could be the reasons pronunciation is overlooked in language classrooms. Naiman (qtd. in Avery&Ehrlich, 2008) collected ideas from his colleagues about why they could not teach pronunciation. Many preferred not to teach pronunciation because they had no expertise in it. Other teachers felt they did not have an ‘ear’ for pronunciation and they decided not to teach it as they would not be helping their students if they did so. Tennant (2007), gives three main reasons:

- The first one is that many aspects of pronunciation are difficult to teach (or at least that is the perception).
- Secondly, he says that unlike a grammatical or functional area of language, it can be quite difficult to build a lesson around a pronunciation point and therefore such points are add-ons to a unit in a course book or a lesson in the class.
- Thirdly, he claims that teachers often feel under-prepared to teach pronunciation and many seem to struggle to learn the phonemic alphabet (although this is certainly less true of many non-native-speaker teachers).

However, the reasons put forward by Tennant do not sound logical. Many teachers who claim that pronunciation teaching is difficult are those who think that it always involves minimal pair drills, phonemes and stilted dialogue. So, one of the main problems is that teachers do not know how to teach pronunciation.

1.2.4 How to teach pronunciation?

Teaching pronunciation is not a computational process whereby learners are required to know all the phonological rules of the language they are learning in a mechanical way. Instead, pronunciation is to be taught in a more relaxed way, in an interactive communicative context. In this vein, Fraser (1999:2) says: “Basing lessons around detailed descriptions of the articulation of sounds, intensive IPA transcription, or lectures on English phonology are also minimal in their effectiveness”. While knowing phonetics and phonology of the language you are learning is helpful, it is

not in itself what is needed for pronunciation classes (Fraser, 1999). So, teachers who claim that teaching pronunciation is very difficult are those who think that pronunciation teaching is about phonetic and phonological rules, minimal pair drills, etc. We may label this conception of pronunciation teaching as ignorance because if the teachers were taught how to teach pronunciation, they would not see it that way. They would understand that pronunciation teaching is only successful when taught in a communicative way. It is in this context that students will understand the very importance of acquiring good/ intelligible pronunciation since it allows them to see by themselves what is wrong in their pronunciation and how it leads to misunderstanding. Fraser (1999:6) explains very well how pronunciation can be taught in a communicative way:

Learners benefit greatly from explicit explanation of how pronunciation fits into the overall process of communication. A very simple model of communication, showing a listener trying to interpret a message on the basis of cues in the speakers' speech, is sufficient. This gives learners a framework within which to understand what goes wrong when they are not understood or are misunderstood, and to gain a clear, practical idea of the nature of linguistic contrast - not just a classroom drill with 'thigh' and 'thy', but the living basis of our ability to communicate in real life contexts.

Thus, it is clear that the main reason why pronunciation teaching was dropped from language classes was this misconception of how to teach it. Many teachers thought that pronunciation should be taught through drills of minimal pairs, and in a computational way which proved to be difficult and boring. Given that most teachers had no profound knowledge of phonetics and phonology applied in actual pronunciation of the language, they decided to overlook pronunciation teaching; they felt incapable or unqualified to teach it.

However, this communicative framework does not require deep knowledge of phonetics and phonology of the language to be taught. It is true that the teacher needs an understanding of the sound system of the target language to teach pronunciation

effectively, but he/ she does not have to be an expert in phonetics, as observed by Avrey & Ehrlich (2008) and according to whom communicative pronunciation teaching should put a particular emphasis on the following areas:

- Meaningful practice beyond the word level
- Task orientation of classroom activities
- Development of strategies for learning beyond the classroom
- Peer correction and group work
- Student centred classroom

Communicative pronunciation teaching proves to be more effective than older approaches and is much easier for both teachers and students. Another question that often arises concerns what to be taught in a pronunciation class.

1.2.5 What to teach?

Pronunciation teaching involves both segmental and supra-segmental features of the language. Segmental features refer to the individual sounds that make a language in terms of vowels and consonants. When learning a second or foreign language, learners need to know how each and every sound is uttered and therefore make a comparison with the sounds of their mother tongue and/or other languages they know. Supra-segmental features, on the other hand, refer to aspects of speech beyond the level of segments, including intonation, stress, timing, phrasing and rhythm. Intonation and stress are the most important ones. Wells (1996) defines intonation as the melody of speech which can be either rising or falling. Allen (1971) gives a more thorough definition, saying that it refers to “the quality of language that includes both rhythm and melody, and is produced by tonal height and depth along with stress, volume and varying length of pause” (p. 74). It is a very important component that should always be present in a pronunciation class. It can change the intended meaning when it is misused. On the other hand, stress refers to the extra force that we use when we are producing some syllables or words. In a word, stressed syllables are those that stand out more noticeable than the others (Jones, 1991), those that are more prominent than others.

Both segmental and supra-segmental features are very important in the process of pronunciation learning. They all work together when we speak and are consequently best learned as an integral part of spoken language (AMEP Research Centre, 2002). They are also complementary, i.e., we cannot study segments and forget stress, intonation, rhythm, etc. or vice-versa. If we do so, we will not be able to communicate effectively in real situations. In the same line of thought, Wachs (2011 :185) says:

Les connaissances linguistiques concernent les aspects segmentaux et suprasegmentaux : enseigner la prononciation c'est enseigner l'articulation de nouveaux sons (ou de sons connus mais à articuler dans de nouveaux contextes) et c'est aussi enseigner le rythme de cette langue. On sait qu'une mauvaise prononciation ou un mauvais rythme peut entraver, voire bloquer, la communication.³

However, many teachers are confronted with the question of which aspects should get more focus than the other. They lack guidance and training as mentioned in the previous paragraphs. They focus more on segmental aspects of the language they teach. In most language classes, vowels and consonants are the basis of pronunciation teaching. Learners are subjected to minimal pair drills, which, in my own experience, are far from being pleasant. The prosodic features such as stress, intonation, rhythm, voice quality are not taught (Busà, 2008).

In traditional approaches of pronunciation teaching, the focus was on segments and this is quite understandable since vowels and consonants relate to writing and as we know the grammar translation method, one example of traditional approaches to language teaching, focused more on writing than on speaking. However, even in communicative approaches which promote the speaking skills whereby supra-segmental features seem to play an important role, the emphasis is put on segments. In her communicative approach to pronunciation, Celce-murcia (1983) admits that

³ My translation of the French text: "The linguistic knowledge concern segmental and suprasegmental aspects: Teaching pronunciation is teaching the articulation of new sounds (Or familiar sounds but articulated in new contexts) and it is also teaching rhythm of that language. We know that poor pronunciation or poor rhythm can hamper, or even blocking the communication".

one of its shortcomings is its incapacity to incorporate intonation and stress. Wachs (2011:89) adds the following: « The communicative approach is evidently interested in the teaching of the pronunciation of phoneme, but still grants too little room to rhythm teaching.” Even a glance at textbooks shows that many teachers overlook those features. After a discussion with some teachers and a scrutiny of a couple of pronunciation texts, McNerney and Mendelsohn (1992) point out that the norm has been to devote much effort and time to segmentals, vowels in particular. They add that supra-segmentals are treated by most teachers as ‘peripheral drills’.

So, why do teachers overlook those important features especially in communication? Many researchers have had their say on this neglect. Burgess and Spencer (2000) say that the majority of second and foreign language teachers see supra-segmental features more difficult to teach and to learn than segmental ones. Their claim can be explained by the fact that most of them received more training in the teaching of segmentals than supra-segmentals. Busà (2008) says that the focus on segmental features is due to the fact that most previous trends in phonetics and phonology were towards individual sounds and this contributed a lot in the description and explanation of sound articulation and acoustics.

However, in spite of their complexity, supra-segmentals are very important in oral communication. Recent approaches have even suggested that they are more important than segmental aspects and that they should be given more ground in pronunciation teaching since they are the cornerstone of the structure of oral communication. Some researchers have proved that teaching supra-segmentals can breed better results than teaching segmentals as far as pronunciation is concerned. Derwing *et al.* (1998) say that learners who follow pronunciation instruction based on prosodic aspects are more successful in communication than those who are subjected to a learning based only on vowels and consonants of the language they are learning. Therefore, it is totally wrong to overemphasize segmental features; supra-segmentals deserve more ground in pronunciation teaching.

It has been proven that prosodic features play a more important role during communication than segmental features. Mcnerney and Mendelsohn (1992) say that

speech sounds can be inferred from the context whereas prosodic mistakes cannot be helped or lessened. They claim: “it is the supra-segmentals that control the structure of information” (p.185). To support this they give an example of a learner saying: “I cooked the meat in a pen”. Here the learner has used the word ‘pen’ instead ‘pan’. However, this mistake does not prevent the listener from guessing the meaning of the learner’s statement; from the context the listener can easily understand the overall meaning of the sentence.

However, a prosodic mistake has much more effect and can alter the meaning of the sentence. Mcnerney and Mendelsohn (1992) gave another example to highlight how prosodic mistake can lead to misinterpretation. If one says: “he went on holiday” and someone else asks him/ her: “where did he go?” with the intention to know the place where he went on holiday but with a rising intonation, this would express a surprise or a need for conformation and not a real question asking about the place he went to on holiday. So here, a misuse of intonation has led to misinterpretation.

Some scholars say that prosodic features should be taught even before segmental ones. Huart (2002) suggests that learners should be made aware of the melody of English as early as the very beginning of L2 learning process. This goes not only for English but also for French and any other language. Learners need to integrate supra-segmentals of L2/foreign language in their mind before learning the sound system. Hodges (2006) has even proposed an order that should be followed in the process of teaching English to non-native speakers. The order should be: word-level stress, sentence-level stress, intonation, consonants, vowels, and linking. In this order, we can see that prosodic elements come ahead of segmental ones, a proof that knowing them is essential to the following steps of the learning process.

Prosodic features are so important that, if they are well taught, they can help the learner near the native-like pronunciation. Adams-Goertel (2013:117) says: “Stress, rhythm and intonation differentiate the fluent from the mediocre second language speaker, and results in a native-like accent which is central to the successful use of a second language.” Though we have made it clear that the foremost goal of pronunciation teaching is intelligibility, we cannot deny the importance of native-like

accent. It remains the reference and the model. Many learners are concerned with attaining or, more realistically, nearing the RP or American accent. Some are even obsessed and are always listening to and watching authentic materials to improve their pronunciation which is a good strategy for better language skills.

Attaining native-like pronunciation is almost impossible but we can at least manage to near it. This is only possible if the language teachers focus on prosodics. A focus on them is one the most influential factors that can lead to native-like pronunciation (Adams-Goertel, 2013). So, it is obvious that supra-segmentals should not be left aside in pronunciation teaching classes or given little attention.

In order to attain effective communicative competency, any pronunciation course should encompass the following parts:

- **Intonation:** intonation is language specific, i.e. each language has got its own and specific melody. The teacher of French must show his/her learners how French intonation is different from English. For example, the most distinctive characteristic of French intonation is the continuation pattern. There is a rising pitch on the final syllable of every rhythm group unlike in English whereby stress can occur on a particular syllable within a word and can then be accompanied by a rising intonation. Anglophone learners need to know how this work and it is the teacher's task to highlight those differences.
- **Stress and rhythm:** The two are interrelated. Scarcella and Oxford (1994) sustain: "Stress contributes to rhythm. Linguists use the term rhythm to refer to the measured movement or musical flow of language..." French, unlike English, is a syllable-timed language. Being used to stressed-timed English, Anglophones learners of French must get to know the rhythm of the new language, and they must learn to distinguish the two types of rhythm. The teacher must show the learners how syllable-timed rhythm sounds like and how different it is from a stressed-timed one.
- **Consonants:** Learners must know all the consonants of the language they are learning. Consonant may look alike from a language to another but realised differently. According to Firth (1992), teachers should make sure

that learners are not substituting a different consonant for the appropriate one, that the students are not omitting some consonants, that the consonant is being articulated properly, in isolation or in clusters, that consonants are not being omitted from clusters, that the consonant is being linked properly in connected speech.

- **Vowels:** vowels differ from one language to another. Like consonants, they may look alike, but are realized differently. Some languages have more vowels than the others. Firth (1992) says that teachers should ask themselves the following questions: do the learners substitute one vowel for another, are the vowel sounds articulated properly, does the vowel have the appropriate length, are stressed vowels longer than unstressed ones, are vowels reduced in unstressed syllables.

So a pronunciation course should cover, at least, intonation, stress, rhythm, vowels and consonants. There are some other aspects of pronunciation that can also be covered but the above listed ones, which incorporate both segmental and supra-segmental features, are the most important.

Thus, the main problem is the lack of training. It is only a better training of teachers that will make the difference. Besides, most teachers teach the way they were taught. So, a radical change of pronunciation teaching programmes is much needed. With the increase of research about pronunciation teaching, we hope that in the coming years there will be an improvement in learners' speaking skills in general and pronunciation in particular.

Achieving native-like pronunciation is very difficult. It is said that very few adult learners manage to speak a second /foreign language without an accent or any other type of interference from their mother tongue. Many studies have been conducted in this area to find out why learners do not succeed to achieve native-like pronunciation. In the following section, we are going to see theories that have influenced the area of second and third language acquisition.

1.3 Theories on second language acquisition.

1.3.1 The Critical Period Hypothesis

Over the years, researchers have investigated the patterns of first language acquisition. One of the most striking milestones in this realm was the discovery of the existence of ‘a critical period’. According to the Critical Period Hypothesis (henceforth CPH), there is a period within which children can easily and naturally (without much effort) acquire a language and beyond which (around puberty) it becomes difficult or almost impossible to acquire it naturally. Penfield and Roberts (1959, qtd. in Singleton, 2001) are believed to be the first to have recognised the existence of a critical period. They contend that “...for the purposes of learning languages, the human brain becomes progressively stiff after the age of nine” (236). But, it is Lenneberg (1967) who developed this idea. He carried out a research on the language recovery among aphasic patients, people who lost the ability of producing or understanding speech due to brain damage. The results showed that there are chances of language recovery for patients who contracted aphasia before puberty. However, patients whose aphasia started after puberty, language recovery chances were almost non-existent. After such evidence, Lenneberg (1967, qtd. in Fledge, 1987) concluded that “language readiness begins around (age) two and declines with cerebral maturation in the early teens” (p.163). Later researches have confirmed the existence of the CPH (Curtis, 1997; Pinker, 1994).

After its undeniable success in first language acquisition studies, CPH has been used by many researchers striving for the explanation of the relationship between age and second/foreign language acquisition. Many findings have concluded that there exists a critical period in second/foreign language acquisition as well (Oyama, 1978; Johnson and Newport, 1989). In their study, Johnson and Newport (1989, as cited in Andy Schouten, 2009) did a research to find out the correlation between age and the degree to which individuals can acquire a second language. They surveyed Chinese and Korean immigrants who arrived in the USA between the ages of 3 and 39. Those immigrants had to study English as a second language. The two researchers subjected them to a test whereby they were asked to judge the grammaticality of a number of English sentences in order to assess their knowledge

of English morphosyntax. The participants were divided into groups according to their age of arrival in the US (age 3-7; age 8-10, age 11-15, age 16-39). The results showed that there is a correlation between the age of arrival in the USA and the subjects' performance on the language test: The performance of the subjects who were exposed to English between the ages 3-7 performed just like native speakers. The 8 to 10-year-old group got very high score but lower than the first group. The next group (age 11-15) performed relatively poorer than the younger groups but obviously better than the last group (age 16 to 39). Johnson and Newport concluded that "success in learning a language is almost entirely predicted by the age at which it begins" (p. 3), and that after the critical period, the attainment of a native-like or near native-like is almost impossible. Johnson and Newport's study focused specifically on morphosyntax.

Furthermore, most research was done to investigate specifically the correlation between age and the degree of pronunciation attainment. Achieving native-like accent or pronunciation seems to be a holy grail for second language learners who start their learning process after childhood (Long 1990; Patkwocki 1994). According to Scovel (1988), the critical period only exists in the pronunciation domain. He says that among all language acquisition aspects, phonetic production stands as the only area of language performance that possesses a neuromuscular basis. In his early study, Scovel (1969:245) says that "It is the nature of human brain, not its nurture, that crucially affects (L2 pronunciation). The onset of cerebral dominance, which seems to occur around the age of twelve, inhibits the ability of a person to master the sound patterns in a second language without an impinging accent". According to him, success in native-like pronunciation (with no foreign accent whatsoever) is virtually impossible for adult learners. He contends that language learners who do not acquire the neuromuscular structures of L2 before the end of the critical period are unlikely to acquire native-like accent and will always be foreign in their second language phonetic production (see Schouten, 2009 p. 4). Walsh & Diller (1981) have supported Scovel's view in regard with the impossibility of eliminating foreign accent after childhood due to some neurological phenomena. Thompson (1991) investigated the speaking performance of 42 Russian immigrants who arrived in the USA between the

ages of 4 to 42. These immigrants were subjected to a speaking task and their performances were evaluated by a group of native speakers. The latter rated the former's speaking performances on a scale from 1 (native-like accent) to 5 (heavy foreign accent). The results showed the presence of foreign accent in all the collected speech samples. However, Russians who arrived in the US at an early age performed considerably better than those who arrived at a later age. Her results show a clear relation between the age of arrival in the US and the quality of the subjects' speaking performances. She concluded that: "the age at which [the immigrants] arrived in the U.S. was the best indicator of the accuracy of their pronunciation in English" (p.195).

So, based on these results, we can conclude that age is the most important factor that determines whether or not one can achieve native-like pronunciation in his/her second language learning process. This is perhaps the reason why, in many countries in Europe and Asia, the age of learning a second/foreign language has been recently reduced (Gürsoy, 2001). As proponents of CPH claim, the earlier one starts to learn a foreign language, the better will be his/her pronunciation. This hypothesis claims firmly that after puberty, language learners will not be able to speak without an accent from their mother tongue.

However, unlike the first language acquisition realm, a lot of criticism was levelled at the extension of CPH to Second Language Acquisition. Some opponents have come up with evidence that there are language learners who manage to achieve native-like pronunciation after the closing of the critical period. Snow and Hoefnagel-Höhle (1978) conducted an investigation on English speaking adults and children learning Dutch. The results showed that adult learners produced Dutch sounds more accurately than 8-10 year old children (see Fledge, 1987).

Other critics say that the differences in adults/children language learners' speech may arise from different factors other than the differences in neurological maturation. Fledge (1987) gives five potential factors that may explain the differences in speaking performances between adult and children learners:

1. Developmental factors: anatomical differences between adult and children language learners can influence the articulation of different speech sounds of the language being learned.
2. L2 input: Differences in pronunciation between adult and children learners may derive not only from the length of time young and adult subjects have lived in L2 speaking environment but also from differences in the quality and quantity of L2 experience
3. Motivation and affective factors: Differences may also result from the way adults and children feel obliged to pronounce the language they are learning like its native speakers. Affective factors also, degree of esteem for example, can determine the extent to which L2 learners seek practice in speaking L2.
4. Social factors: Learners make a lot of efforts in pronouncing L2 authentically when L2 learning is regarded as prestigious by their community.
5. Incomplete learning: difference in the rate of learning can influence the way child and adult learners speak L2.

Critics of CPH have grown in number over the years and this has made it less credible. However, CPH remains one of the key factors in explaining differences in language learning and more specifically in pronunciation between adult and child learners. Thus, it can be one of the explanations of difficulties encountered by adult learners when learning pronunciation of a second or foreign language. Besides CPH, researchers say that language transfer does influence the pronunciation learning process.

1.3.2 Language Transfer

The transfer theory dates back to the 1950's when Weinreich brought it forward in his work on language contact. Since then, there have been many definitions for language transfer. Also known as linguistic transfer or interference or cross linguistic influence, it basically refers to any influence from L1 that can have an effect in the acquisition process of L2. Weinreich (1953:1) defines transfer as "instances of deviation from the norm of either language which occur in the speech

of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language.” On the other hand, Odlin (1989) gives a more straightforward definition of transfer. He says that transfer is “the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired” (p.27). This definition reflects the existence of two types of transfer: positive transfer and negative transfer. Positive transfer occurs when there are similarities between the two languages while differences between the target language and any other language that has been learnt previously will lead to negative transfer. It is believed that similarities will facilitate the learning process whereas differences will hinder it. The elements which the two languages have in common will be easy for the learner and the different ones will be difficult to learn (Lado, 1957). However, later studies have proved that similarities, though rarely, can also be an obstacle for the learner. Cognates, i.e. similar words from two different languages, can lead to negative transfer. Words from two different languages can look alike while having two different meanings. Those kinds of words are called *false friends* (Cortés, 2005).

The notion of transfer was developed through the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis. In his work *Language across culture*, Lado (1957:2) says: “individuals tend to transfer the forms and meanings and the distribution of the forms and meanings of their native language and culture to the foreign language and culture”. This statement entails that individuals are inclined to use the forms of the language they already know during their learning of another language. As mentioned before, relying on their first language can have either negative or positive impact depending on the similarities or differences that lie between the two languages. This reflects the behaviourist nature of this theory. Behaviourists believe that learning is a set of habits. In their learning process, individuals tend to carry the habits of their mother tongue into the second language. These habits will interfere with those needed for second (or third language) speech which leads to the formation of new habits. So there will be interference between first and second language habits. This results in errors which are eventually treated by the teacher/or learners themselves throughout the learning process.

Language transfer can be found at all linguistic levels. However, it is more prevalent in phonological production. According to Avery and Ehrlich (1992), the nature of a foreign accent is largely determined by the mother tongue of the learner. The influence of the native language phonetics and phonology is stronger than that of other language subsystems (Thomason, 1981). Phonological problems like accent, mispronunciation are often more noticed than any other aspect in the learner's interlanguage. It is very rare to hear a native speaker commenting that his interlocutor (foreign language speaker) has made a grammatical mistake. But we always hear comments that someone has heavy accent, Chinese accent, Spanish accent, Nigerian, Ghanaian accent, etc. This is due to the fact that not only phonological mistakes are easily noticeable but they are also the most frequent ones. These errors reflect most of the time the sound inventory, the prosodic properties and combination rules of the learners' mother tongue or any other previously learned language. To learn new sounds, second/foreign language learners tend to rely on their L1 phonological system; they tend to adapt the L2 sounds to their L1 phonological system and this will result, in most cases, in negative transfer. This idea was first put forward by Nikolai Trubetzkoy in 1939, one of the most known scholars who worked thoroughly on phonology. He said: "The phonological system of a language is like a sieve through which everything that is said passes." (Qtd. in Lian, 1980:8). He continues that every language has its own system. So, every person acquires the system of his/her mother tongue and becomes accustomed to using it to analyse everything that is said. Even when we hear a foreign language spoken, we use our familiar sieve system to analyse it (Lian, 1980). Analysing the phonological system of a foreign language using the mother tongue phonological sieve will result in misinterpretation which leads to mispronunciation of the foreign language, foreign accent. So, in the beginning of the learning process, learners rely very much on their mother tongue's system. However, as the learning process goes on, another system which is neither their mother tongue nor the language being learned will develop. This system contains elements from both L1 and L2 as well as characteristics of its own (neither from L1 nor L2). This system was called by Selinker (1972) 'Interlanguage'. It keeps developing towards the language being learned until it nears it. But, in most cases, it

never becomes as perfect as the target language. One of the characteristics of Interlanguage is fossilisation. It refers to the recurrent occurrence of the same errors, i.e. the failure to eradicate them and attain native-like performance.

1.3.3 The influence of L1 and L2 on the acquisition of L3

The notion of transfer has been one of the core issues of second language acquisition research over the last decades. Most research was carried out to investigate the influence of one's mother tongue on the learning of second/foreign language. However, very little was known about the influence that two first acquired languages can have on the learning of the third language until the last two decades. Now, we are witnessing a growing interest in cross linguistic influence in multilingual settings. In this part, we are going to review studies which have focused on the acquisition of L3 phonology.

Studies have proved that the acquisition of a third language phonology is influenced not only by the mother tongue of the learner but also by other previously learned language (Hammarberg and Hammarberg 1993, 2005; Tremblay, 2006; Wrembel, 2009). The results from these studies have led to the conclusion that L2 plays a role in the sound acquisition of L3. Hammarberg investigated the oral production of Sarah Williams, an English native speaker with German as L2 and Swedish as L3. Her accent was judged by three native German listeners. The results of their judgments revealed that Sarah's speech was L2-accented (with a German accent) in the first stages of the learning process. However, the German accent diminished over time with L1 accent becoming more and more prevalent. The researcher concluded that L3 was influenced by L2 in the first stages and by L1 in later stages of her interlanguage.

Wrembel (2009) carried out a similar study. The case study comprised Polish native speakers who learned German as their second language and English as their third language. His aim was to explore the nature of their L3 accent, i.e. whether their English is German-accented or Polish-accented. The results showed that both Polish and German influenced their English inter-phonology. However, the influence from the two previously acquired languages came in a different order: In the first stages of

their learning, i.e. on the stage of low English proficiency, the influence of German outweighs that of Polish. In later stages of their inter-phonology, there was obvious influence of Polish, their native language. These results confirm Hammerberg's claim: the influence from L2 on L3 is stronger at the initial stage of phonological acquisition.

Tremblay (2007) extended the area of research by testing the effect that L2 proficiency and exposure to it can have on the acquisition and production of L3 words. Thirteen English native speakers whose L2 is French and L3 is German were the subjects of the study. They were divided into 3 groups according to their proficiency in French and according to the amount of exposure they have had to this language. The results showed an overwhelmingly influence of L1 on L3 in all the three cases. The conclusion was that, to influence L3, the learners of L2 must have achieved a threshold level. Otherwise, it is very unlikely to see an influence from L2 on the acquisition of L3. Tremblay's findings suggest that there are factors that determine whether L2 can influence L3 or not.

There are a number of factors that are believed to cause cross-linguistic influence. They can affect both L2 and L3 acquisition. They are divided into two types: learner-specific variables and language-based variables. The former encompasses proficiency, the amount of language exposure and use, the language mode, linguistic awareness, age, educational background. On the other hand, language-based variables include language typology, frequency, word class, and morphological transfer. So, these different variables interact with each other to facilitate the transfer of one or many items from L2 to L3 production (Murphy, 2003).

1.3.4 Error Analysis

1.3.4.1 Background

After World War II, there was a growing interest in language learning especially in the USA. Under the influence of structuralism and behaviourism, studies in the field of applied linguistics became more and more scientific. In the late 1950's, Contrastive Analysis (CA hereafter), one of the most influential hypotheses in second language acquisition, was formulated by Lado in his seminal paper 'Linguistics

across cultures' (1957). CA can be defined as a comparative study of a pair of languages in order to identify similarities and differences. The results of the comparison are subsequently used by teachers or researchers to predict difficulties that learners will encounter during the learning process. Lado (1957) claims that similarities facilitate learning whereas differences make it difficult. So, knowing areas of the language that will cause problems to learners, teachers and researchers tailor the course that shall efficiently deal with them. CA flourished during the sixties before losing its favour in the early 1970's. It was criticized because of its over-predictions and under-predictions, i.e., many errors it predicted were non-existent in the learner's language and on the other hand, some unpredicted errors were found. These shortcomings along with the fall of behavioural psychology made CA look less credible which led to its decline. However, Error Analysis, another model or alternative came to the rescue of CA.

1.3.4.2 Error Analysis defined

It's Pit Corder, a British applied linguist who first laid the foundation of Error Analysis (EA henceforth). Unlike CA that sought to predict errors that would be made by learners of a second or foreign language, EA is concerned with analysing the already made errors and detecting their sources. It involves the collection of the samples of the learner language, the identification of errors in the sample, description of errors, their classification according to their nature and causes. According to Corder (1974), the purpose of EA is to find "what the learner knows and does not know....enable the teacher to supply him not just with the information that his hypothesis is wrong, but also, importantly, with the right sort of information or data for him to form a more adequate concept of a rule in the target language" (p.170). So, identifying the errors and their source helps teachers to take pedagogical measures that will successfully eliminate them.

During the learning process, learners must make errors. They are part of the process and contribute to our understanding of the stages that learners go through as they acquire a second or foreign language. They help researchers to understand the acquisition process which is very important for better pedagogical strategies. It is

worth mentioning that there is a difference between ‘error’ and ‘mistake’. Mistakes are random wrong performances and can be made even by native speakers. They don’t reflect deficiency but rather slips that are normal during oral production and that can be self-corrected. However, errors are systematic and show that the learner still has some gaps in the language he/she is learning. Learners cannot self-correct errors since they are a reflection of their current stage of L2 development or simply underlying competence (Larsen, 1992).

According to Keshavars (see Erdogan, 2005), EA can be divided into two sub-fields: theoretical and applied. The theoretical part of EA firstly focuses on the process and strategies of second/ foreign language learning and how similar those processes are to first language learning. Secondly, it tries to decipher the strategies used by learners during the learning process such as overgeneralisation and simplification. Another strategy that we should not forget is language transfer. Learners use their mother tongue to learn a new language. Finally, this theoretical part of EA seeks to get to the conclusion that concerns universals of language learning; whether there is an internal syllabus for a second language or not. On the other hand, the applied part of EA puts its focus on organising remedial courses by creating appropriate materials and teaching strategies taking into consideration the results of theoretical error analysis.

Errors can derive from two main sources: interlingual transfer and intralingual transfer. Interlingual errors come as a result of negative transfer from the learner’s mother tongue. These errors are very common in the learner language and they show that the learner is investigating and internalizing the new language. They can be phonological, morphological, grammatical, lexico-semantic and they reflect features from the learner’s native language.

As far as intralingual and developmental errors are concerned, they are of great importance since they reveal how learners make hypotheses and concepts about the target language. Those errors are made by almost all learners regardless of their mother tongues. That’s why they are referred to as universal errors. The example is overgeneralisation and simplification errors. They are made in most, if not all

languages. In English, it's very common to hear learners saying "I comed, I buyed, etc." As for French, learners can produce erroneous utterances such as "J' ai offré". So these errors are normal and they are of great help for teachers and researchers in terms of devising the learning materials.

1.3.4.3 Importance of EA

The field of EA boasted a lot of success a few decades ago. This was mainly due to its significant contribution to language teaching. The study of errors helps the teacher as well as the learner to locate the most difficult areas of the target language. It helps the teacher to know how far the learner has progressed and what he/she still has to learn to achieve the set goals (Corder, 1987).

The analysis of errors is important for both the language teacher and the syllabus designer. Erdogan (2005) distinguishes error implications for teachers from error implications for syllabus designers. For teachers, he claims that "errors are a means of feedback for the teacher reflecting how effective he is in his teaching style and what changes he has to make to get higher performance from his students" (p.267). Here, we can draw an analogy between errors and a mirror. The learner's errors are like a mirror for the teacher in which he/she looks at himself/herself and finds out what is wrong and corrects it. As for the syllabus designing, errors are a huge source of items to be incorporated in the syllabus. Designers must select items that will enhance the learners' performance in the target language. To get your learners to perform better, you need to correct their errors. So, the designed syllabus should be based on items that will remedy to the most common errors committed by learners. The correction will surely increase their performance in the target language. Karshavarz (1997) claims that an analysis based on errors can give authentic results on which materials can be designed. So, during the process of designing the syllabus, it is fully legitimate to focus on those areas that cause problems to learners.

Learners commit so many errors that teachers and syllabus designers cannot correct them all. It is important to mention that there exist two types of errors in terms of magnitude: global errors which are those errors that hinder the communication or

distort the message, and local errors which do not present any threat to the understanding of the message. Therefore, the syllabus designers should give priority to errors that can hamper the communication, i.e., global errors.

One of the areas in which learners commit errors the most is pronunciation. Interlingual and intralingual errors are very common in pronunciation and this leads to misunderstanding during conversations. So, it is very important to correct those errors, especially global errors. It is in this perspective that we have undertaken this research to remedy to the most common pronunciation errors committed by Tanzanians learning French as their third language. Their linguistic background is dominated by two languages: Swahili which is their mother tongue and English their second language. So this work seeks to remedy their pronunciation problems and then help them use French effectively.

1.4 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed a number of studies conducted in the field of pronunciation teaching. All researchers agree on the overwhelming importance of pronunciation for successful communication and advocate that it should be given more time and attention in the second or foreign language classroom setting. It has also explored the theories that have influenced the field of language teaching. It was noticed that most works on language teaching concern second language acquisition. Very little work is found in the existing body of knowledge concerning third language teaching. Among the reviewed theories, EA was given most attention. This is due to its important contribution to language teaching. However, during the review, we noticed that very little has been done so far to show the role of Error Analysis in pronunciation teaching. So, the present study seeks to highlight the contribution that it can bring to the pronunciation teaching.

Chapter 2 Research Methodology and Results

2.1 Introduction

Any research work is based on a research problem. The present study aims at investigating the most common pronunciation errors made by Tanzanian students while learning French and the source(s) of those errors. To achieve this goal an adequate methodology and objective results analysis and discussion are required. This chapter give a thorough account of the sample population that was investigated, the research instruments that were used to collect data as well as the data collection procedure. Also, it will provide a complete analysis of the collected data and its interpretation. At the end of the chapter, some suggestions to remedy the observed pronunciation problems will be given.

2.2. Sample population

The population that was investigated comprises 20 Tanzanian students, 15 of whom are male and 5 female. All of them study at Abu Bekr University of Tlemcen. Tanzania has one official language; Swahili but English is used as the medium of instruction in secondary school. Therefore all the Tanzanian students under investigation had two languages in common, Swahili and English, before they start learning the French language.

The year of the first contact with the French language differs from one student to another. Among the 20 Tanzanian students, 4 started learning French language in 2010, other 4 started in 2012 while the rest (12) had their first contact with the French language in 2013. This population was chosen simply because the present study seeks to find a solution to pronunciation problems encountered by Tanzanian students in French. So, the Tanzanian students from the University of Tlemcen are representative enough. It is worth mentioning that the aforesaid university is one of the Algerian universities which host most Tanzanian students.

2.3 Research instruments

To carry out this research work, two instruments were used: a questionnaire and an audio recording.

2.3.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is one of the most common research tools. It is a list of written questions used to collect qualitative and quantitative data. The questionnaire used in this study comprises two types of questions:

-Closed-ended questions are questions which limit the respondent's autonomy to choose the answer. Most of the time he/she is given only two options of answers, i.e. yes or no. In this study, yes or no questions were used because they are very easy to analyse especially when collecting quantifiable data. Another example of closed-ended questions is multiple-choice question which restricts the respondent's answer to a number of options. The respondent is required to choose the best answer (sometimes answers) from the given options. They were of great help in this study especially in questions where the researcher wanted to know the most difficult sounds for the students to pronounce and the source(s) of their pronunciation errors.

- Open-ended questions: they are very useful to collect the respondents' opinions. They are given more freedom to reflect and give an answer of their choice without being forced to choose amongst a number of options. Though they were the least used in this study, they helped the researcher a lot in the collection of qualitative data.

The questionnaire used in this study had at least four sections:

- 1) The first section is made of questions about the background information of the respondents. After mentioning their sex and the course they are taking at the University of Tlemcen, the respondents are asked when they started learning the French language. This question allows the researcher to make a correlation between the period of time the learner has been in contact with the language and his/her performance. The last question of this section asks where the respondents got the training in French language from. It is

important for the researcher to know whether the students obtained their instruction in French from the same university.

- 2) The second section comprises six questions all related to pronunciation. The first two questions of this section seek to know whether the Tanzanian students received any pronunciation training and whether it was satisfactory or not. The next three questions allow the researcher to know, first, whether the Tanzanian students are conscious of their pronunciation problems. Second, it gives information about the students' difficulties in the pronunciation of French sounds. Thirdly, the respondents are asked what they think is (are) the source (s) of their pronunciation errors. The last question of this section seeks to know what kind of efforts the respondents make to improve their pronunciation performance. The information from this section is crucial since the aim of the study is to investigate the pronunciation errors made by Tanzanian students, their source(s) and their remedy.
- 3) The third section consists of only one question in which the researcher inquires about the respondents' attitude towards the French language. Language attitude is very important for this study as it can explain the subjects' pronunciation performance.
- 4) The fourth and the last section consists of one question about the remedy to the errors in French pronunciation made by Tanzanian students. Here, the researcher wants to know what his respondents think is the best solution to their problems.

2.3.2 Audio Recording

It is a research tool used to capture the respondents' speech samples. It is usually used in interviews, interactions and conversations. There is digital and analogue audio recording. Patton (2002) compares digital audio recording with a hammer. He says "as a good hammer is essential to fine carpentry, a good tape recorder is indispensable to fine fieldwork" (p.380). So, in this study, we have opted

for a digital tape recorder for the sake of better audio quality. It was used to record Tanzanian students' speech utterances while they were reading a text containing a number of sounds which the researcher thinks are the most problematic for them. The aim was to collect the pronunciation errors they make in French.

2.4 Data collection procedure

As aforesaid, two research instruments were used to collect the data. First of all, the questionnaire was distributed to the 20 respondents. The study took place at the respondents' hostels. Since male and females do not reside in the same students' hostel, it was not easy for the researcher to contact the female respondents. That is why he looked for someone with the required methodology knowledge to help collect the data. The researcher himself distributed 15 questionnaires to the male respondents while the remaining 5 questionnaires were handed to the female respondents by the helper. Before the respondents consented to answer the questions, they were first told about the purpose of the study and how important its results can be for them and for the generations to come. After that, they were given some clarifications on a certain number of questions and started responding to the questions.

As far as the audio recording is concerned, the researcher and his helper first asked for the respondents' consent to be recorded. After they all accepted to take part in this study, we made sure that all the required acoustic conditions for a good recording were in place. Then, we started to record their speech samples one by one. Finally, all the data was gathered together before the researcher started analysing it.

2.5 Data Analysis

The present research was conducted with the aim of investigating pronunciation errors made by Tanzanian students when speaking French. Also, the investigation intended to find out the chief reasons behind those errors. As mentioned in the preceding section, two instruments were used to collect data for the present study: a questionnaire and audio recording.

In this section, a complete analysis of the collected results is given. The results from each research instrument will be explored. First of all, the answers given to each

question of the questionnaire will be analysed either quantitatively or qualitatively according to the nature of the question. Afterwards, the recorded utterances of the respondents will be analysed in order to identify the most frequent pronunciation errors and their sources.

2.5.1 Analysis of the questionnaire

This part is devoted to the analysis of the questionnaire that was handed to the Tanzanian students. The questionnaire consists of 10 questions.

Section 1: Background information of the 20 respondents

This section gives the background information of the subjects such as sex; the course they are taking at the University of Tlemcen. It also asks them when they started learning French and from where. The first two pieces of information are given before they take on the first question of the questionnaire. As far as the sex is concerned, 15 of the respondents are male, that is 75%; whereas 5(25%) are female.

As for the courses, all the 15 male and 5 female respondents are from 5 different scientific streams: Medicine; Sciences and Technology; Architecture; Biology; Geology. No respondent is from the faculty of letters and languages.

Question 1: The year the respondents started learning the French language

The following table summarizes the answers that were given by the 20 respondents regarding the year of their first contact with the French language.

Table 2.1 Year of the students' first instruction in French language

Year	Number of students	percentage
2010	4	20%
2012	4	20%
2013	12	60%

As we can see in the above table, the 20 respondents did not start learning French in the same year. They started in 3 different period of time (2010; 2012; 2013). Only 4 subjects, that is 20% of the total number of respondents, started learning French in 2010. The other 4 respondents started 2 years later (2012) and the 12 remaining respondents (60%) received their first instruction in French in 2013.

Question 2: the University from which they received training in French language

In this question, the researcher wanted to know whether or not the respondents received instructions in French language from the same university. After analysing the results, it turned out that it is the University of Tlemcen that delivered instructions in the French language to all of them.

Section 2: pronunciation instruction; errors and their sources; efforts for improvement.

This section encompasses core questions that lead us to solving the problem of the study. Answers given to the 5 questions of this section are as follows:

Question 3: The existence of a module of pronunciation in the French training they received.

This question sought to know whether the French course they attended included a module of pronunciation. All the respondents answered the question about having

been trained in French pronunciation during their one-year instruction in French. 18 out of the 20 respondents, that is, 90% recognized that they had a module of pronunciation. Only 2 subjects (10%) did not recognize it.

Question 4: Whether the pronunciation training they received was enough

In this question, the researcher needed to know if the respondents were satisfied with the pronunciation training they received. The following table show the answers given to this question.

Table 2.2 Students’ satisfaction of the received instruction in pronunciation

	Satisfied with the pronunciation training	Not satisfied with the pronunciation training	No answer
Number of students	3	15	2
Percentage	15%	75%	10%

A clearer illustration is given in the following graph

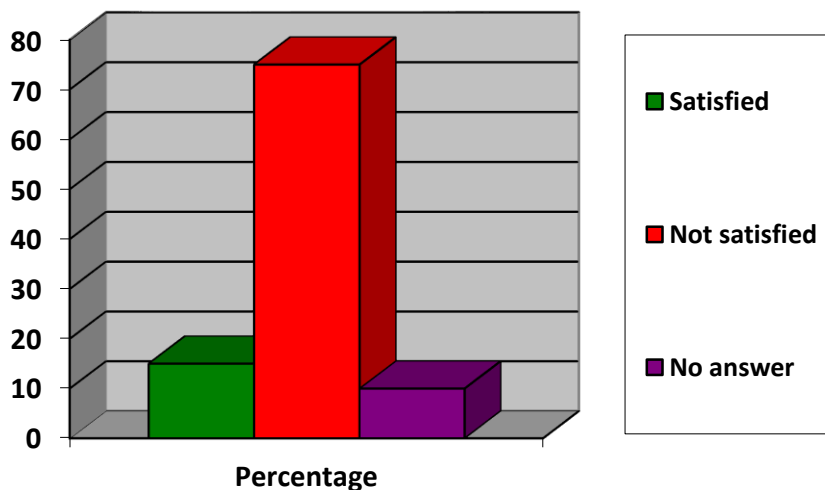


Figure 2.1: Students satisfaction of the pronunciation instruction received

As exposed in the above table and graph, the majority of the Tanzanian students, that is, 15(75%) were not satisfied with the amount of pronunciation training they received whereas 3(15%) said that it was satisfactory. 2 individuals (10%) did not respond since their answer to the previous question was “no”.

Question 5: Whether they have difficulties in pronunciation or not

This question was asked in order to find out whether the Tanzanian students are conscious of the problems they have when it comes to pronouncing French speech sounds and other pronunciation features (prosodic aspects). The majority of the respondents, that is, 18 of them (90%) admitted that they have problems with French pronunciation. Only two individuals (10%) seem to be at ease when it comes to French pronunciation.

Question 6: Mentioning the sounds that are difficult for them to pronounce

In this question, the researcher was investigating the most common errors made by Tanzanian students in the pronunciation of French language. A list of all the 37 sounds of the French sound system was given so that the respondents circle the sounds that are hard for them to articulate. To make things clear, each sound was accompanied with a word that contains it. The following table illustrates the results from this question. Each sound that was circled is given with the number of times it was circled and the percentage.

Table 2.3 Most difficult sounds according to the respondents

Vowels	Frequency	Percentage
[ɑ]	2	11%
[o]	3	17%
[e]	1	5%
[ø]	3	17%
[ə]	3	17%
[œ]	8	44%

[y]	4	22%
[ɛ̃]	1	5%
[œ̃]	3	17%
[ɔ̃]	4	22%
[ɑ̃]	2	11%

Consonants	Frequency	percentage
[R]	8	44%
[j]	5	28%
[g]	2	11%
[k]	2	11%
[l]	1	5%
[ʒ]	1	5%
[w]	1	5%
[f]	1	5%
[z]	1	5%
[h]	1	5%
[ɲ]	1	5%

As clearly exposed in the above table, 22 out of the 37 sounds of the French phonetic system seem to be hard for the 18 respondents who answered this question. 2 sounds - [R] and [œ̃], prove to be the hardest for many Tanzanian students. They were mentioned 8 times each, that is, 44% of the respondents find it hard to pronounce each of the 2 sounds. The sound [j] was circled 5 times, i.e. 28% of the respondents experience difficulty when pronouncing this sound. 22% of the respondents struggle to pronounce [ɔ̃] and [y] while [o], [ø], [ə] and [œ̃] are problematic for only 17% of

them. The sounds [ɑ], [ã], [k] and [g] were circled two times each, that is, each of the 4 sounds cause pronunciation problems to 11% of the respondents. Finally, the sounds [e], [ɛ̃], [k], [l], [ʒ], [w], [f], [z], [h] and [ɲ] were the least mentioned (only once); i.e., each of the 10 sounds is found difficult to pronounce by at least 5 % of the respondents.

Question 7: The sources of the pronunciation errors

The results seek to know what Tanzanian students think is (are) the main source(s) of the errors they make in French pronunciation. The answers as reported by the respondents are displayed in the following table.

Table 2.4 The sources of pronunciation errors according to the respondents

Error source	Number of students	percentage
Presence of new sounds in French	18	90%
Influence from Swahili	4	20%
Influence from English	3	15%
Influence from both Swahili and English	5	25%
Short time allocated to pronunciation teaching	10	50%
Other reasons	1	5%

As summarized in the table, the majority of the respondents (90%) suggest that the reason behind their pronunciation problems is the presence of new sounds in the French sound system. Those who think that the source of their errors is their mother tongue- Swahili, are as many as 20% while 15% suggest that the source is English, their second language. On the other hand, some suggest that the reason why they struggle to pronounce French is the influence from both English and Swahili (25%). Also, half of the respondents (50%) believe that the short time allocated to pronunciation teaching is the source of their pronunciation problems. One respondent

(5%) think that his pronunciation errors are due to some other reasons. It should be noted that most respondents ticked more than one choice.

Question 8: Students ‘efforts to improve their pronunciation performance

The respondents were asked if they make any efforts to improve their pronunciation. The striking majority (95%) said that they do make efforts to better their pronunciation in French. Afterwards, they were asked what they do to improve their pronunciation. The following points are the different efforts they make:

- Watching French TV programs
- Listening to French audios
- Reading books
- Speaking with francophone people
- Imitating native speakers

Section 3: The attitude of Tanzanian students towards French language

This section has only one question. It was asked in order to find out what attitude the respondents have towards the French language. They were asked whether they like French or not. 19 out of the 20 subjects responded to this question. The following table summarises their answers.

Table 2.5 Tanzanian students’ attitude towards the French language

Answers	Number	Percentage
I like French very much	11	58%
I like French a lot	4	21%
I am not sure	3	16%
I don’t like it at all	1	5%

The following graph may express the results more clearly

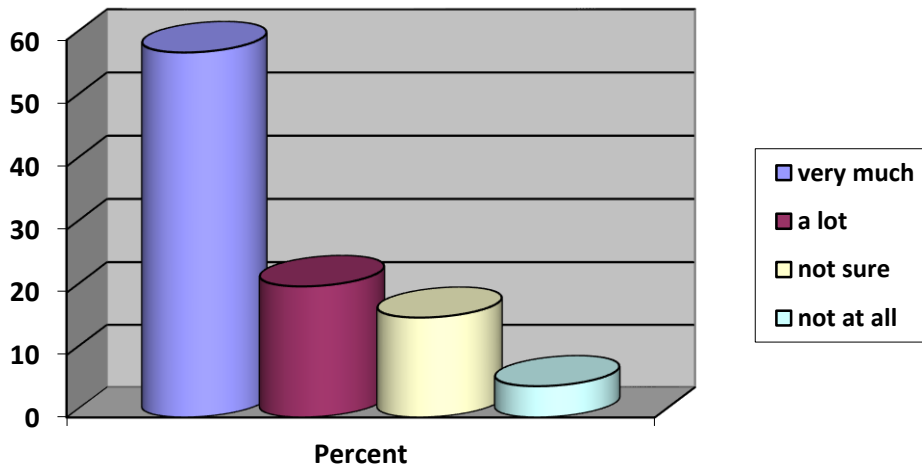


Figure. 2.2: Tanzanian students’ attitude towards the French language

According to the results displayed in the above table and graph, the majority of the students like the French language (58% like it very much; 21% like it a lot). However, some students as many as 16% said they neither like it nor hate it, while 1 (5%) made it clear that he does not like French at all.

Section 4: Solutions to pronunciation problems

This question was intended to know what learners think should remedy their pronunciation problems. The table below exposes the results provided for this question.

Table 2.6 Solutions to pronunciation problems according to the respondents

solutions	Number	Percentage
Focus on the most difficult and unusual sounds	8	40%
Increasing time allocated to pronunciation learning	9	45%
Drills on speaking and reading loudly	18	90%

The following graph gives a clearer picture of the above results

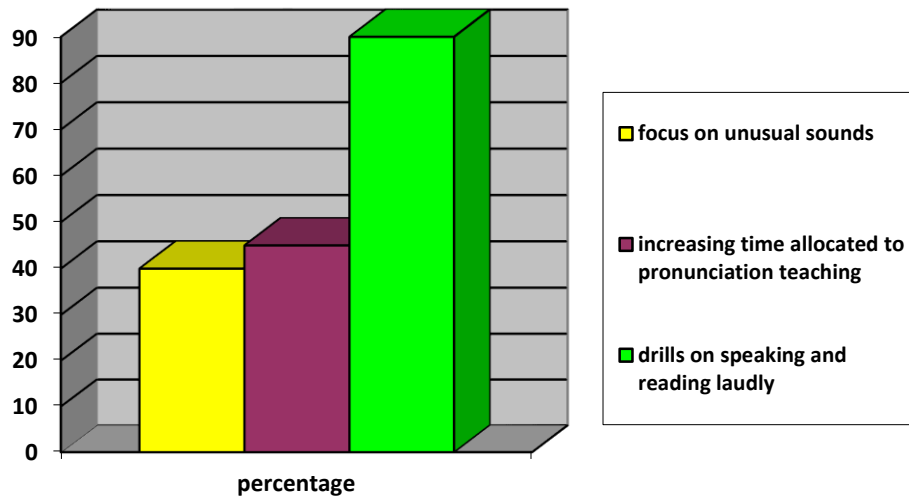


Figure 2.3: Solutions to pronunciation problems according to the respondents

It is worth mentioning that most respondents ticked more than one solution. The above results suggest that most Tanzanian students, as many as 90%, think that drills on speaking and reading loudly would remedy their pronunciation problems. Increasing time allocated to pronunciation is seen as a good solution by 45% of the students while only 40% think that a focus on the most difficult sounds would lead to good pronunciation performance.

2.5.2 Analysis of the recording

In this section, the researcher sought to know what errors are made by Tanzanian students through analysing their recorded speech samples as they were reading a text comprising 112 words some of which containing sounds which are assumed to be difficult for them. The following table displays the mispronounced sounds with statistics of the respondents with incorrect pronunciation.

Table 2.7 Tanzanian Students' pronunciation errors according to the audio recording

Words	R P	S P	N S	N S I	percentage
-Une -plus -union -population	[y]	[u]	20	18	90%
superficie	[i]	[ie]	20	14	70%
-Habité -habitants	[a]	[ha]	20	6	30%
-Deux	[ø]	[u]/[ju]	20	9	45%
-Beau	[o]	[ju]	20	6	30%
-Fleurs -peuple -Oeuvre - Jeune	[œ]	[o]or[u]	20	11	55%
-Important	[ɛ̃]	[i]	20	3	15%
-main	[ɛ̃]	[e]/[æ]	20	13	65%
-Orientale -territoire	[R]	[l]	20	19	95%
-regorge	[ʒ]	[g]	20	2	10%
-regorge	[ə]	[e]	20	3	15%
-Lundi	[œ̃]	[e]/[u]	20	11	55%
-Sont	[ɔ̃]	[ɔ̃t]	20	1	5%

-Comptant	[Ø]	[p]	20	15	75%
-Riche	[ʃ]	[tʃ]	20	1	5%
-Population	[sjɔ̃]	[ʃn]	20	1	5%
Dynamique	[i]	[ai]	20	4	20%
-Faune	[o]	[u]	20	1	5%
-Montagne	[n]	[gn]	20	1	5%
-Grand	[ɑ̃]	[ɑ̃d]	20	1	5%
-union	[jɔ̃]	[iən]	20	2	10%
Touristique	[u]	[uə]	20	2	10%

RP: Correct Pronunciation SP: Students' Pronunciation NS: Number of Students NSI: Number of Students with Incorrect pronunciation

As it can be seen in the table, a lot of sounds were mispronounced, some by almost all the students, others by just a few of them. The results show that six sounds were mispronounced by more than half of the students. The sounds -r- [R] and u- [y] were incorrectly pronounced by almost all the respondents (95% and 90% respectively). The sound -p- in comptant, which is normally silent in French, was pronounced by 75% of the respondents. Other sounds that were mispronounced to a large extent are -ie [i] (70%); -ain [ɛ̃] (65%); oe/eu [œ] (55%); -un- [œ̃] (55%).

On the other hand, some sounds were mispronounced but by less than 50% of the respondents. Those sounds are -eu-[ø] (45%); silent h in "habité" (30%); -eau [o] (30%); -y-[i] (20%); -e[ə](15%); im-[ɛ̃](15%); -g-[ʒ] (10%); -ion [jɔ̃](10%); -ou-[u] (10%); -ont [ɔ̃](5%); -ch-[ʃ](5%); -au-[o](5%); -and [ɑ̃](5%); -gn-[n](5%); -tion[sjɔ̃] (5%).

2.6 Discussion of the main results

The main aim of the questionnaire administered to Tanzanian students was to investigate the pronunciation errors they make in French. Also, it was intended to find out the sources of those errors and what the learners think can remedy their problems. As far as the recording is concerned, it had the same aim as the questionnaire, specifically question 6 which is to find out what pronunciation errors the respondents make in French. In other words, the recording aimed at verifying the veracity of the answers given in the questionnaire, precisely question 6. With these objectives in mind, the investigator tried to verify the hypotheses of this study which are:

- The most common pronunciation errors made by Tanzanian students in using French concerns the French round front vowels [y], [œ], [ø] and [ə].
- The difficulties encountered by Tanzanian students in French pronunciation are mainly due to the presence of new sounds in the French sound system and the influence from both Swahili and English.

For the sake of better understanding the respondents, the researcher needed to investigate their background information. The results showed that all 15 male and 5 female respondents are students in scientific fields. This can explain their pronunciation problems since there is no time devoted to pronunciation training in scientific fields. Also, the results revealed that the respondents received their training in French from the University of Tlemcen but in three different years. The first group received their instruction in French in 2010, the second group in 2012, and the last one in 2013. It was noticed that students who started learning French in 2010 had better pronunciation performance than those who started later.

In the second section, the results revealed that the Tanzanian students did not receive enough pronunciation training. While 90% of the respondents admitted that they received training in pronunciation, only 15% were satisfied with it. The majority said that the pronunciation instruction they obtained was not satisfactory. The striking majority (90%) also recognize their deficiency in French pronunciation.

2.6.1 The most common pronunciation errors

The results from question 6 as well as those from the recording confirm that students have serious problems in French pronunciation. The questionnaire results revealed that [ʀ] and [œ] are the hardest sounds for most students. The statistics also showed that a good number of learners have problems with [ʃ], [y], [ø], [ə] and [œ̃]. The results from the recording are almost the same as those of the questionnaire. Most Tanzanian students struggled to pronounce the sounds [ʀ] and [y]. The silent letters in words like *superficie*, *comptant* and *habité* were erroneously pronounced. Also, the sounds [œ̃];[ø], [ɛ̃];[œ] were mispronounced to a large extent. This leads to the conclusion that the most difficult sounds for Tanzanian students are [ʀ], [y], [œ], [ø], [ə], [ʃ], [œ̃]; [ɛ̃] as well as silent letters. The presence of all the front round vowels ([y], [œ], [ø] and [ə]) among the most difficult sounds for Tanzanian students confirm our first hypothesis. However, the same hypothesis failed to predict that silent letters ([h] in *habité*; [p] in *comptant*; [ə] in *superficie*) and sounds like [ʀ], [ʃ]; [œ̃]; [ɛ̃] are also problematic. It should be noted that the Tanzanian students do struggle to pronounce other sounds but here we selected the ones that are commonly problematic.

2.6.2 The sources of the most common errors

To understand the sources of the most common errors, we need, first of all, to compare the English and French sound systems, and secondly the Swahili and French sound systems.

Comparison between English and French sound systems

Each language has its own sound system. Languages may even originate from the same family but still have different phonologies. English and French, though deriving from different language family, have a lot in common. However, our concern here is to draw the differences between the two languages. We are going to analyse what new sounds an Anglophone can expect to come by while learning French for the first time.

Vowels

French has 16 vowels. The following sounds cannot be found in English language:

- The front rounded vowels [y], [œ], [ø], and [ə]
- The nasal vowels [ɔ̃], [œ̃]; [ɛ̃]; [ɑ̃]
- The semi-consonant [ʁ]

Consonants

The main differences between English and French consonantal systems are:

- Consonants that are alveolar in English are dental in French ([t]; [d]; [s]; [z]; [l]; [n]).
- The sound [h] is silent in French. The most frequent [h] is the “h non-aspiré” as in “habit”, hôtel”. The “h aspiré” can be found for example when a word is preceded by a definite article as in “le haricot”.
- [p]; [t]; [k] are not aspirated at the beginning of words as it is in English.
- The sound [ʁ] is pronounced back in the throat, it is uvular fricative.
- Most of the time, the grapheme “ch” is pronounced [ʃ] (e.g. chercher), but it can also be pronounced [k] in words of Greek origin (e.g. chaos)
- The grapheme “gu” and “qu” can be pronounced in three different ways: [g]; [gu]; [gʁ] and [k]; [kw]; [kʁ] respectively.
- Final f; l; c; r are silent in some instances and pronounced in other instances. For example in the words “oeuf”; “mer”; “lac”; “avril”, the final consonants are pronounced but in the words (nerf; estomac; habiter; outil), the final consonants are silent. So, learners have to memorise those exceptions.

Swahili and French sound systems

The two languages are from two different families. Swahili is a Bantu language widely spoken in the eastern part of Africa especially Tanzania and Kenya. It can also be found in DRC, Burundi, Uganda, Rwanda, Zambia and Mozambique. It is one of the official languages of the African Union. Here, we are going to give a short description of its phonological system. Swahili has 5 vowels and 36 consonants

sounds. Unlike European languages (French for example), every Swahili sound is pronounced. Its syllables ends with a vowel just like most Bantu languages.

Vowels

All Swahili vowels can be found in the French vowel system. However, the following French vowels cannot be found in the Swahili vowel system:

- The nasal vowels [ɔ̃], [œ̃]; [ɛ̃]; [ɑ̃]
- The front rounded vowels [y], [œ], [ø], and [ə]
- and [ɛ], [ɑ], [ɔ]

But, some of these vowels can occur in English which is that Tanzanians' second language. So, the only vowels that will be new to the Tanzanian students are the nasal vowels and the front rounded vowels.

Consonants

Swahili has more consonants than French. The main differences between the two languages' consonantal systems are:

- The consonants [b], [d]; and [g] are plosive whereas in Swahili they are implosive. But this will not cause problems to Tanzanians learners of French since they learnt those plosives in English which is their second language.
- The consonant [ʒ] does not exist in Swahili but it does exist in English language.
- French [R] is a voiced fricative velar whereas its counterpart in Swahili ([r]) is alveolar flap or trill. Besides, most Tanzanians do not differentiate [r] and [l] when they are speaking. So, the French [R] can be difficult for learners to pronounce.

After discovering the main differences between French and English sound systems on the one hand, and French and Swahili sound systems on the other hand, we can move onto the sources of the discovered errors. Statistics have showed that the uvular

[R] is the hardest sound for them to pronounce. Many respondents pronounced it as [l], i.e., confusing it with lateral [l]. This can be explained by the fact that in Swahili, many speakers do not differentiate the two sounds in their everyday informal use of that language. In other words, [R] and [l] are merged. So, the Tanzanian students learning French are influenced by Swahili when they articulate this sound. This phenomenon is referred to as negative transfer.

As for the front rounded vowel [y], very interesting results were found. Most of the Tanzanian students pronounce it as back rounded [u]. This can be explained by the fact that they are used, in their mother tongue Swahili, to pronouncing words as they are spelt, i.e. Swahili is a language with transparent orthography. The notion of orthography was elaborated by Katz and Frost (1992) who distinguish transparent orthography from deep one. In transparent or clear orthography, it is easy to guess the pronunciation of a word from its spelling whereas in deep orthography, the relationship between spelling and pronunciation is so irregular that in some instances you cannot guess the pronunciation of a word from its spelling (the case of English and French). So, it is legitimate to say that the respondents were influenced by the orthography of their mother tongue Swahili in pronouncing the vowel [y] as [u]. In other words, mispronouncing it comes as a result of negative transfer from the mother tongue. This also applies for the silent letters as well as the sound [ə] which was pronounced as [e] by many students. These errors are referred to as interlingual errors.

Another case of negative transfer was detected during the investigation but not to a large extent. The concerned sounds and group of sounds were h- [silent];- ou-[u]; -y-[i]; -g-[ʒ]; -ch-[ʃ]; -and [ɑ̃]; -gn-[ɲ]; -ion[jɔ̃]; -tion [sjɔ̃]. They were respectively pronounced as [h]; [uə]; [ai]; [g]; [ʃ]; [ɑ̃]; [gn]; [iən]; [ʃn]. If we carefully look at these realizations, we notice that the students pronounced the target sounds/group of sounds in English. In other words, they were influenced by the English language. So, this is negative transfer from the students' second language, i.e. English.

On the other hand, the results also revealed some cases of intralingual errors. During the recording, it was noticed that Tanzanian students have problems with sounds like [œ] and [ø]. For example, two different realizations for the sound [œ]

were found: some students pronounced it as [o] and others as [u]. As for the sound [ø], one group pronounced it as [u] and another one as [ju]. The same kind of errors were also found in the pronunciation of the nasal vowels [ɔ̃], [œ̃]; [ɛ̃]. Some students pronounced [ɔ̃] without nasalization, i.e. as [ɔ]. While the sound [œ̃] was realized either as [u] or as [e], its mid-front nasal counterpart [ɛ̃] was pronounced either as [e] or as [æ]. These vowels do not exist in English or in Swahili sound systems as we have seen it in the above given comparison between the three involved languages. The occurrence of these errors can be explained by the fact that students are still in the learning process and have not yet managed to adopt the sound system of the target language.

The analysis of the most common errors has led us to the conclusion that there are two main sources of pronunciation problems:

- the influence from the students' linguistic background, i.e. Swahili and English;
- The complexity of the target language sound system due to the existence of sounds that are new to the Tanzanian students.

These two sources of errors made by Tanzanian students in the pronunciation of French are exactly the ones predicted by the researcher in the beginning of the research. In other words they confirm the second hypothesis of the study. According to the respondents, the best reason why they struggle in pronunciation is because French has a number of sounds that they are not familiar with. So, their view comes to reinforce the veracity of this hypothesis.

2.7 Remedy suggestions for the observed pronunciation problems

Pronunciation errors are among the most difficult challenges to overcome for adult language learners. Grammar and other aspects of the target language can easily be assimilated but it takes time to master pronunciation features. It is no wonder to find a foreign language speaker with good knowledge of grammatical and lexical features but with very poor pronunciation.

Given the importance of pronunciation in ensuring efficient communication, the aim of this study was not only to investigate the pronunciation errors and their sources but also to find a way to remedy those errors. This section will provide some solutions to this matter.

First of all, the importance of errors should not be neglected. Scholars have demonstrated that one of the ways of going about pronunciation problems is by analysing the errors and their sources. Knowing the learners' pronunciation errors is very important for the teacher. It tells him/her what segmental and/or suprasegmental features the learner has not yet assimilated. For example, according to this study, Tanzanian French language learners have problems with the sounds [R]; [y]; [œ], etc. So, the teacher should put a special focus on those problematic errors while teaching. The teacher should also inform the learners about their most common errors and explain to them why those errors are common, i.e. their sources.

The detected errors can also be important during syllabus designing. If Tanzanians students struggle more to pronounce the sound [y] than [o], syllabus designers are then supposed to incorporate in the textbooks more items on [y] than on [o]. In other words, the more problematic a sound is the more focus it is given in textbooks. So, one of the best solutions for the Tanzanian students' pronunciation problems is to focus on their errors both during material designing and teaching process. This can improve their pronunciation performance and then help them communicate more efficiently.

Furthermore, pronunciation training needs to be given enough time and attention. Despite the existence of a module of pronunciation during their training in French, most students said that it was not satisfactory. So, we conclude that one of the reasons of their poor pronunciation is the lack of enough time allocated to pronunciation. Allocating enough time to pronunciation teaching would help improve the students' pronunciation performance.

According to the results, the solution most favoured by the Tanzanian students is drills on speaking and reading aloud. This shows that they enjoy learner-centred approaches. So, the teacher should give them time to express themselves in the

classroom through speaking and reading drills. These kinds of exercises can also boost their confidence.

Finally, the results have shown that the students have positive attitudes towards the French language. The different efforts they make to improve their pronunciation testify that they want to be better speakers of French language. Most of them rely on movies, books and audio materials to train themselves in pronunciation. As we all know, some materials are not adequate for beginners. So, teachers should help their learners select materials that are relevant to their language level and can help them improve their pronunciation in French.

General Conclusion

The main objective of the present study was to explore the most common pronunciation errors that Tanzanian students make in learning the French language and their potential sources before giving suggestions that can remedy those errors and improve the students' communicative competence.

Since the medium of instruction in Algerian universities is generally French in medical and technical streams, Tanzanian students must learn it in their first year in Algeria before starting their university careers. However, it is noticeable that in spite of the one-year training they receive in the French language, they still struggle with pronunciation. Sometimes, they fail to pass on the message they intend to due to their poor pronunciation. This reduces their confidence and hinders their academic and social integration.

The research was carried out from the assumptions that the errors they have in common concern front rounded vowels [y]; [œ]; [ø]; [ə] and that their sources are the influence from both English and Swahili on the one hand, and the complexity of the French sound system on the other hand.

The first chapter has covered different works carried out in the field of pronunciation. It has presented the importance of pronunciation in communication and the way its teaching was neglected until the last decade. An account of the theories that have influenced the field of pronunciation teaching was also given. Among those theories, Error Analysis attracted more attention due to its importance in solving pronunciation problems.

The research methodology used in this study was fully described in the second chapter. After analysing the data that was collected through the use of a questionnaire and an audio recording, the investigator started to interpret the main findings by comparing them to the hypotheses of the present study. With regard to the first hypothesis, the results showed that the most problematic sounds for the Tanzanian students are:

- The velar fricative [ʀ]

- All the front rounded vowels [y], [œ], [ø], and [ə]
- The nasal vowels [ɔ̃]; [œ̃]; [ɛ̃]
- The silent letters in general

As we can see, the results have confirmed the first hypothesis which predicted that the front rounded vowels are the most problematic sounds. However, they have also shown that the same hypothesis failed to notice other sounds that are commonly mispronounced by the Tanzanian students. As far as the second hypothesis is concerned, the results confirm that the main sources of the student's errors are the influence of their linguistic background which comprises Swahili and English. Through the analysis of the types of the observed errors, we also conclude that they originate from the complexity of the French sound system, i.e. the presence of unknown sounds in the French language.

At the end of the study, some suggestions are given in order to remedy the pronunciation problems encountered by the Tanzanian students. First of all, it has been suggested that the observed errors should get particular attention during pronunciation teaching. Also, focusing on those errors during the syllabus designing process would improve the students' pronunciation performance. It is also suggested that pronunciation teaching should be given more time and that language classes should be more learner-centred. The teachers should help their students in the selection of adequate auto-learning materials.

To conclude, the present study has achieved its main aim which was to investigate the most committed pronunciation errors by Tanzanian students and their sources as well as to give remedial solutions to those problems. However, it has not investigated the errors related to prosodic features which are of paramount importance in the field of pronunciation. This is due to the lack of the required material to carry on such a study. Besides, an involvement of the teachers would have given a broader understanding of the situation. So, future studies in this field should involve teachers and include not only segmental but also suprasegmental features of the French language.

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Appendices

1. Questionnaire on pronunciation teaching and learning

This questionnaire was devised in order to collect data about pronunciation challenges faced by Tanzanians in French language. Answering correctly to the following questions would be of much help not only for me but also for the teaching and learning of the French language for foreigners in general and Tanzanians in particular. Thank you in advance.

Sex:

Course:

1. When did you start learning the French language?

.....

2. In which university did you receive the training in French language?

.....

3. During your French language training, was there a special module of pronunciation of French language?

Yes

No

4. Was the pronunciation training you received enough?

Yes

No

5. Do you have difficulties in the pronunciation of French language?

Yes

No

6. If yes, circle, in the following list of French sounds, the ones that are the hardest for you to pronounce:

[R] (**r**ire) ; [Ø] (**d**eux) ; [oe] (**s**œur) ; [y] (**t**u) ; [ə] (**j**e) ; [a] (**a**mi) ; [e] (**é**couter) ; [ɛ] (**l**ait) ; [i]

(midi); [u] (**o**ublier); [o] (**e**au); [ɔ] (**s**ol); [ɑ] (**â**me); [ɛ̃] (**f**in); [j] (**y**eux); [ɥ] (**l**ui) ; [w] (**o**ui)

[ɔ̃](**o**ncle); [ɑ̃](**q**uand); [œ̃](**l**undi); [p] (**p**etit);[b] (**b**ébé); [t] (**c**ôté);[d] (**d**imanche) ;

[k] (**c**oûter); [g] (**g**oûter); [f] (**f**arine); [v] (**v**endredi); [s] (**s**amedi); [z] (**Z**ambie); [ʃ] (**a**cheter) ;

[ʒ](**j**ouer);[l](**l**ettre); [m] (**m**aman); [n](**n**ez); [ɲ] (**g**agner); [ʲ](**t**iming); [h][**h**abiter]

7. Among the following reasons, which one(s) do you think is behind your problems in French pronunciation :

- Presence of new sounds in French language
- Influence from Swahili
- Influence from English
- Influence from both Swahili and English
- Short time allocated to pronunciation teaching
- Other reasons

8. How much do you like the French language?

Very much

a lot

so so

not at all

9. Do you make efforts to improve your pronunciation performance?

Yes

No

How.....

10. Among the following solutions which ones do you think can help you to rapidly learn French pronunciation

- Focus on the most difficult and unusual sounds
- Increasing time allocated to pronunciation learning
- Drills on reading and speaking loudly

2. Audio Recording

The recorded text:

Tanzanie

La Tanzanie est un pays de l'Afrique Orientale. C'est un grand pays couvrant 945087 km² de superficie et comptant plus de 43 millions d'habitants aujourd'hui. La majorité du territoire est habitée par le peuple bantou. Le Tanzanie est née du l'union de deux pays : Le Tanganyika et le Zanzibar.

La Tanzanie est un beau pays ; ses montagnes sont couvertes de fleurs, ses forêts sont peuplées par une riche faune et une riche flore. Les sites touristiques sont ouverts du lundi au dimanche. Son sol regorge de beaucoup de minerais. Le nombre important de sa population jeune montre l'existence d'une main d'œuvre moins chère et dynamique.

Error Analysis as a Remedy for Pronunciation Problems:

The Case of Tanzanian Students learning French

الملخص

وفقاً للنهج 'تحليل الأخطاء'، يحاول هذا العمل التحقيق في الصعوبات التي تواجه عدداً من الطلاب التanzانيين في تعلم اللغة الفرنسية. فعلى أساس عدد قليل من الأدوات البحثية، تُبرز الأخطاء الأكثر شيوعاً في نطق هذه اللغة: الاحتكاكي اللهوي [R]، الصوائت [y]، [œ]، [ø]، و [ə]، الصوائت الأنفية [ɔ̃]، [œ̃]، [ɛ̃] والحروف الصامتة. ويمكن تفسير وقوع هذه الأخطاء بالنظر إلى النظام الصوتي الفرنسي المُعقّد، ولكن أيضاً نتيجة تأثير اللغتين التين يتحدث بها التanzانيون: السواحيلية والإنجليزية. إنّ التركيز على الأخطاء التي لوحظت خلال التدريس وعملية تصميم المناهج قد تحل مشاكل النطق للغة الفرنسية عند الطلاب التanzانيين.

Summary

Following the Error Analysis approach, the present work investigates the difficulties that a number of Tanzanian students are faced with in learning French. On the basis of a few research tools, it depicts the most common errors they make in the pronunciation of this language: the uvular fricative [R]; the front rounded vowels [y], [œ], [ø], and [ə]; the nasal vowels [ɔ̃], [œ̃], [ɛ̃] and the silent letters. The occurrence of these errors can be explained by the complexity of the French sound system, but also by the influence of the languages they speak, Swahili and English. Focusing on the observed errors during the teaching and the syllabus design process may solve the Tanzanian students' pronunciation problems.

Résumé

Conformément à l'approche 'analyse des erreurs', ce travail tente d'enquêter sur les difficultés qu'un certain nombre d'étudiants tanzaniens trouvent à apprendre le français. Sur la base de quelques outils de recherche, il décrit les erreurs les plus communes qu'ils font dans la prononciation de cette langue: la fricative uvulaire [R], les voyelles antérieures arrondies [y], [œ], [ø], [ə], les voyelles nasales [ɔ̃], [œ̃], [ɛ̃] ainsi que les lettres muettes. La complexité du système phonologique du Français ainsi que l'influence du Swahili et de l'Anglais sont à l'origine de ces erreurs. Ces problèmes de prononciation peuvent être résolus en mettant l'accent sur ces erreurs lors de l'enseignement et sur la conception du syllabus.