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Teaching English as a Foreign Language

**A Comparison of Teaching the Pronunciation Skill Through
Telegram Application with Traditional Strategies among EFL
Learners**

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**By: **

Summer

*IN THE NAME OF
GOD*

Dedication
To My Wonderful Family

Acknowledgments

Thank God to give me blessing to finish this work. I find myself indebted to a number of people while without their generous support and assistance, I would not have been standing here today. I am profoundly grateful to my professors who have taught what I did not know and always supported both psychologically and spiritually me. I sincerely wish to express my gratitude to my supervisor Dr. Seyed Ebrahimi her scholarly instructions and patience in helping me to conduct this research despite all the difficulties. I also wish to express my deep gratitude to my kind friends and colleagues that without their help this effort was impossible. Last but not least I would like to express my deepest thanks to my family who encouraged and supported me with love and affection

Abstract

A Comparison of Teaching the Pronunciation Skills Through Telegram Application with Traditional Strategies among EFL Learners

By:

The present study was done to study if implementing a Social Network (Telegram application) can improve EFL learners' pronunciation. This study was done in Zaban-e-No English Language Institute and 60 male and female participants were selected to establish experimental group (learners working under using telegram application) and control group (students learning under traditional method). After three sessions of training and considering pretest and posttest, statistical tests including descriptive statistics (mean, median, standard deviation, frequency and percentage) and inferential statistics (dependant and independent t-tests, Levene's test) were used for data analysis. The obtained results showed that the experimental group had relatively more improvement in pronunciation skill rather than the control group. However, no significant difference was found between male and female learners in improving their pronunciation. Besides, the students had a positive attitude toward using social network in teaching pronunciation skill. Finally, some suggestions were presented to have a better application of social networks in English learning process.

Keywords: Pronunciation, Intonation, Stress, Social Networking

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Abbreviations

TOEFL Test of English as a Foreign Language

EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second language
OPT	Oxford Placement Test
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CALL	Computer Assisted Language Learning
CR	Contractive Rhetoric
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
L1	First Language
L2	Second language
SMS	Short Message Service
SN	Social Network

Chapter One:

Introduction

1.1. Overview

As technology developed, language learning has always played a crucial role in inter-lingual communication by allowing for the sharing of knowledge and culture between different languages. Thus, advances in technology have changed the way English teaching is getting done. This chapter deals with a whole picture of teaching pronunciation skill through one mobile application, views the problems that are going to be solved by the research results, poses the research objectives along with research questions and hypothesis, embarks the significance of the study, mentions the theoretical frameworks of the study and finalizes definitions of the key terms.

1.1.1. Introduction

Recently a significant theoretical framework shift has been occurred in the field of foreign language learning. The focus of research and pedagogy has shifted from a cognitive orientation to a social orientation, from classroom contexts to naturalistic settings, and from foreign language learning to foreign language use (Wang and Vasquez, 2012). Therefore, some concepts such as input, interaction, authenticity, and collaboration are recognized as critical factors to determine successful foreign language learning.

Thus, new technologies such as weblogs, wikis, and social networks which have been provided to language learners with the potential for a collaboration-oriented and community-based learning environment have been taken into account by many researchers. Among these innovative technologies, social networks are the most popular applications which have been used by teens and adolescents in Iran for about one decade. According to Boyd & Ellison (2007) social networking sites (SNS) are defined as web-based services that allow individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a limited system, articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. The nature and terms of these connections may vary from site to site. What makes social networking websites unique is not that they allow individuals to meet strangers, but rather that they enable users to articulate and make visible their social networks. While SNSs have implemented a wide variety of technical features, they have some visible profiles that display a list of friends who are also users of the system. Profiles are unique pages where one can “type oneself into being” (Sundén, 2003, p. 3).

Moreover, learning English includes learning a number of skills, involving vocabulary, grammar, pragmatics, and so on, and to communicate effectively, language learners need to become proficient in using the semantic, syntactic, morphological and phonological elements of the language being learnt (Hebert, 2002). One of these skills, and perhaps one of the most important is pronunciation, because, despite having a good command of vocabulary and the grammar of the English language, speakers will be unintelligible if they have poor pronunciation. Many learners of English as a second language have major difficulties with English pronunciation, often even after years of English lessons (see Fraser, 2000).

Of all skills and components involved in teaching a foreign language, pronunciation has perhaps received the least amount of attention (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 1996; Kelly, 1969). While some scholars emphasize the importance of this component (Nation & Newton, 2009), others have questioned the effectiveness of teaching pronunciation, especially in the EFL classroom (Purcell & Suter, 1980). The former camp emphasizes the role of pronunciation in effective communication and comprehensibility, alongside its high social value and link to prestige (Gelvanovsky, 2002); on the other hand, those against teaching pronunciation base their reasoning upon biological restrictions (especially among adult learners), as well as inhibiting sociological and personality factors (Richards & Renandya, 2002).

Despite the ongoing debate among these groups, most language teaching experts would agree that comprehensible pronunciation is a common feature among all successful language learners, and intelligible/comprehensible pronunciation is deemed to be necessary for each and every user of the target language (Zemanova, 2007).

Furthermore, even if pronunciation is not desired for its own sake, many scholars believe that a certain level of pronunciation instruction is necessary because achievements in pronunciation often help learners to increase their expertise in other skills (e.g., Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 1996; Jenkins, 1998; Levis & Grant, 2003; Morley, 1991; Zemanova, 2007).

There are two general approaches for teaching pronunciation: (a) “an intuitive-imitative approach” which deals with the learner’s ability to listen and imitate the sounds of a target language without having clear knowledge about the sound system of the target language; and (b) “an analytic-linguistic approach” which in addition to listening and imitation, focuses on

producing the correct sounds in the target language (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 1996, p. 2).

Since the process of learning a second language is highly time-consuming and requires large amounts of input and interaction, incorporating digital technologies in language teaching and learning is necessary and even essential (Blake, 2008).

Nowadays, the internet, technology, and the media, and the use of English in virtual social networks, provide language learners with greater opportunities for meaningful and authentic language use than are available in the classroom (Richards, 2015).

Technological advances and developments in areas such as electronic dictionaries, internet, social media networks, speech recognition technologies, visual displays of features of language production (such as pitch), have provided foreign language learners with tools to practice and improve their pronunciation autonomously and outside the walls of the classroom (ibid).

The teaching of pronunciation has undergone some changes over the past years and it has progressed from the heydays of audiolingualism associated with habit formation, drills, and strict error correction, through periods of disappearance from the language classroom with the decline of behaviorism and structural linguistics and of advent of CLT, to the contemporary approaches that prioritize and give more attention to the segmental and suprasegmental features within their discourse contexts (Hardison, 2009).

In recent years, however, the importance of pronunciation is growing in language pedagogy because of its central roles in speech recognition, speech perception, and speaker identity (Levis, 2007).

Therefore, the purpose of the present study was to examine the effect of using social networks on the pronunciation of Iranian EFL learners to make informed decisions about how the internet can be successfully integrated into the language classroom.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

In today international world, it is not only necessary to understand what other English speakers say but it is also essential to make the speech intelligible for the others. It is difficult for a second language learner to speak with native-like pronunciation. Although English

language makes many English learners and teachers realize the necessity of improving the pronunciation skills, many English students still cope with mispronouncing sounds, misplacing stress in sentences and misusing intonation patterns which can be a matter of habits that our native tongue strongly incorporated into our language patterns. The assimilation of sounds that do not exist in Iranians' native language is a long term process. According to Khodabandeh & Popescu (2017) most of Iranian English learners get confused in the pronunciation of some set of words e.g. most of the English words that have sounds, which do not exist in Persian e.g. /θ/ in "thank" and /ð/ in "this". Also most of Iranian English learners do not differentiate between some vowel sounds which have more than one way of pronunciation e.g. the vowel in "mat" and "mate". Therefore, when the learners fail to pronounce well, it makes them disappointed and they may give up.

On the other hand, the emergence of internet technologies such as weblogs, wikis, and social networks has radically changed education in general and it has created new opportunities for foreign language learning and teaching. Among various internet technologies, recently the use of social networks has been growing (Hardison, 2009). Therefore, the question is how social networks can successfully contribute to EFL students' pronunciation to examine the effect of telegram application as a social network on improving pronunciation of EFL learners.

1.3. Objectives of the Study

Pronunciation is neglected in the majority of language classrooms (Khodabandeh & Popescu, 2017). English teaching practitioners avoid dealing with pronunciation skills for different reasons. Likewise, the lack of attention allotted to pronunciation is also reflected in the amount of research that deals with it. Therefore, the present study has three objectives; firstly it aims at investigating the impact of telegram application as a social network on English pronunciation of EFL learners and secondly it attempts to examine the attitude of EFL learners toward the use of social network in improving English pronunciation. Finally, it aims to find the difference between male and female learners in terms of using telegram application and its effect on improving the pronunciation of the learner vocabularies.

1.4. Research Question

The following questions were answered in this study:

1. What is the effect of using telegram application on English pronunciation of EFL learners?
2. What is the difference between male and female learners in terms of using telegram application and improvement of pronunciation skill.
3. What is the attitude of EFL learners toward the use of social network in pronouncing their learned vocabulary?

1.5. Research Hypothesis

1. Using telegram application significantly affects the English pronunciation of EFL learners.
2. Male and female learners are different in terms of using telegram application and improvement of pronunciation skill.
3. EFL learners have a positive attitude toward the use of social network in pronouncing their learned vocabulary.

1.6. Significance of the Study

Since understanding social network contributions and needs from the learners' point of view are important, this study is significant both pedagogically and theoretically while in former aspect, it helps to give an insight into how EFL learners pronounce the acquired words. Meanwhile it is theoretically important due to regarding facilitating effects of social network on EFL learners' pronunciation which can accelerate effective teaching and learning of pronunciation. To date, various studies have pointed out the benefits and limitations of using web technologies in learning and teaching four skills. This study is significant since it intends to examine the theoretical aspects of the effects of social network applications on pronunciation, to identify the constructive and somehow distractive effects of social

networks, and to discuss the advantages of using social networks to improve English pronunciation.

1.7. Theoretical Framework

This study considered two theories as theoretical framework of the research. First, Lantolf (2000)'s theory was chosen in which he advocated that the sociocultural approach (based on Vygotsky, 1978) is ideal to examine the process of language acquisition due to its emphasis on interaction from within a community of learners. Language and social interaction play a role in human development, and serve as cultural practices that can lead to the construction of knowledge shared by members of the community. In terms of how this might contribute to social networking, virtual connections with other learners and experts around the world can potentially offer a rich environment for socio-cultural language exchange. He believed that social networking tasks can allow users to learn language.

Besides, the chosen task to do this purpose was based on Willis (1996)'s model which consists of a three-phase process. The first phase is called "pre-task" in which the topic is defined and essential pronunciation section are highlighted by the teacher. The second stage is called "task cycle" in which the students perform the task in pairs or groups, and then rehearse their report before presenting it in front of the whole class. The last phase is "language focus" in which specific language features that learners encountered in the task are examined and analyzed. Some practice of language features and feedback on the students' performance are appropriate at this stage. All these three phases were done in social network community as well as in physical environment of the class.

1.8. Definition of the Key Terms

Pronunciation: "The way a certain sound or sounds are produced. Unlike articulation, which refers to the actual production of speech sounds in the mouth, pronunciation stresses more the way sounds are perceived by the hearer" (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 429).

Intonation: when speaking, people generally raise and lower the pitch of their voice, forming pitch patterns. They also give some syllables in their utterances a greater degree of loudness and change their speech rhythm. These phenomena are called intonation. Intonation does not happen at random but has definite patterns. Intonation is used to

carry information over and above that which is expressed by the words in the sentence. (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 272).

Stress: The pronunciation of a syllable or word with more respiratory energy or muscular force than other syllables or words in the same utterance. A listener often hears a stressed word or syllable as being louder, higher in pitch, and longer than the surrounding words or syllables. Different types of stress can be distinguished: Word stress refers to the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a word. A distinction used to be made in long words between stressed syllables of varying degree, i.e. it was said that the syllable with the greatest prominence had the primary stress and the next stressed syllable the secondary stress and sentence stress refers to the pattern of stressed and unstressed words in a sentence or utterance. (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 516).

Social networking: Social network services are computer applications that support the complex arrangement of connected nodes (people) with tools for storing and presenting information as well as communicating, connecting, and interacting with others. They allow users to manage, build and represent their social networks online. They are usually (but not always) made up of other individuals; they might also include the profiles of events, companies, even political parties. They may let you add anyone in the network as your "friend" or contact, or they might ask for all connections to be agreed by both parties (Buzetto-More, 2012).

CHAPTER TWO:
THE REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

The first part of this chapter has been dedicated to definition and background and history of teaching pronunciation. In the second part, the principles, strategies and problems of pronunciation teaching are dealt. Then, the Iranian English learners' problem in pronunciation is taken into account. Social network and learning English are dealt in the next part. Finally, the conducted studies on use of social network on teaching pronunciation in Iran and abroad were examined.

2.2. Definition of Pronunciation

Pronunciation is the act or manner of pronouncing words; utterance of speech, a way of speaking a word, especially a way that is accepted or generally understood, and a graphic representation of the way a word spoken, using phonetic symbols.

Fraenkel (1984) expressed two main steps to learn how to pronounce a language:

- 1) Receptive/list stage: In this stage, we learn to differentiate the significant sounds and pattern by listening to the language.
- 2) Productive/speaking stage : By this stage, we learn to speak or to produce what we have learned before.

2.3. Teaching Pronunciation

The usefulness of teaching pronunciation is a widely debated subject in the language teaching context. As mentioned above, while pronunciation activities were stressed in some decades, they took a back seat in others depending on the teaching method that was popular during that particular time.

The traditional position of SLA researchers has been that instruction does not lead to native-like levels of ultimate attainment in terms of phonology, and some authors believe that teachers can do little to influence the natural course of English phonological development with its often less than satisfactory results. According to Silveira (2002) , pronunciation instruction was absent from the second/foreign language (L2) classroom for a long time due to the conventional beliefs that pronunciation is not important, cannot be taught, and can be “picked up” by learners. Jones (1997) believes that arguments against the explicit teaching of pronunciation rely on two basic assumptions about the acquisition of second language

phonology: first, based on the critical period hypothesis, claims that it is virtually impossible for adults to acquire native-like pronunciation in a foreign language; and the second, arising primarily from the work of Krashen, insists that pronunciation is an acquired skill and that focused instruction is at best useless and at worst detrimental.

Learning English language with teaching media like social network will bring students to learn easily and make them interested. The teacher should be a good model to the students, otherwise; the students will imitate bad pronunciation and lead making mistakes. Teacher should produce the accurate sounds and their productions of speech to the students in order to make the students really understand how a correct pronunciation is produced.

Harmer (2000) stated that concentrating on sounds, showing where they are made in the mouth; making students aware of where words should be stressed give them extra information about spoken English and help them achieve the goal of improved comprehension and intelligibility.

According to Jones (1997) teaching pronunciation is teaching about aspects that influence meanings of sentences through segmental phonemes. It is important to teach, because pronunciation is a basic sub-skill in speaking. Therefore, good pronunciation avoids misunderstanding in communication.

When people say, for example, “soap” in a situation such as a restaurant where they should have said “soup,” the inaccurate production of a phoneme can lead to misunderstand. It happens because Indonesian students have difficulties in pronouncing English words due to influence of students’ seventh language and environment. (Jones, 1997)

He stated that the student of spoken English or any other spoken language is faced at the outset with difficulties of five kinds in the matter of pronunciation. They are as follows:

- 1) He must learn to recognize readily and with certainty the various speech-sounds occurring in the language, when he hears them pronounced; he must more over learn to remember the acoustic qualities of those sound;
- 2) He must learn to make the foreign sounds with his own organs of speech;
- 3) He must learn to use those sound in their proper places in connected speech;

4) He must learn the proper usage in the matter of the ‘sound-attributes’ or ‘prosodies’ as they are often called (especially length, stress and voice pitch);

5) He must learn to catenate sounds, i.e. to join each sound of a sequence on the next, and to pronounce the complete sequence rapidly and without stumbling (ibid).

2.4. The History of Teaching Pronunciation

According to Morley (1991) in the 1940s, 1950s, and into the 1960s pronunciation was viewed as an important component of English language teaching curricula in both the audiolingual methodology developed in the U.S. and the British system of situational language teaching. In fact, along with correct grammar, accuracy of pronunciation was a high-priority goal in both systems. Although these two schools of language teaching developed from different traditions, as Richards and Rodgers (1986) point out, they reflected quite similar views on the nature of both language and language learning

He (ibid) believed that the pronunciation class was one that gave attention to phonemes and their meaningful contrasts, environmental allophonic variations, and combinatory phonotactic rules, along with structurally based attention to stress, rhythm, and intonation. Instruction featured articulatory explanations, imitation, and memorization of patterns through drills and dialogues, with extensive attention to correction.

The major change that has occurred today is that articulatory phonetics approach as the conceptual basis for teaching pronunciation have been abandoned, but the sound system is a point and a comprehensive framework, one that focuses on communicative interactions and functional language use (ibid).

Morley (ibid) stated that in the late 1960s, 1970s and into the 1980s, a lot of questions were raised about pronunciation in the ESL curriculum. There were questions about the importance of pronunciation as an instructional focus, questions about whether or not it could be taught directly at all, questions about the assumption it could be learned at all under direct instruction. The effect was that more and more programs gave less and less time and explicit attention to pronunciation; many programs dropped it entirely. While the number of textbook and teacher reference publications in other segments of the ESL curriculum increased dramatically, very little new material on pronunciation appeared.

In the 1980s and into the 1990s, a growing interest in revisiting the pronunciation component of the ESL curriculum for adults and young adults was found. An important part of this movement has been pronunciation developments in several ESP areas: that is, programming for specific-purpose attention to pronunciation (i.e., academic, occupational, etc.) (ibid).

A number of teacher resource books on teaching pronunciation and/or speaking skills appeared during the 1980s as well such as Brown and Yule (1983), a broad “armoury of strategies and tools” (p. ix), with a concentration on the communicative use of language by speakers (ibid).

In this review, it becomes clear that the decades of the seventies and eighties were important periods of development in teaching pronunciation. A number of changing views on pronunciation learning and teaching emerged. Coincidentally, some of the need to rethink both principles and practices came about as the result of the pressing urgency of student needs.

2.5. The Materials in Pronunciation Teaching

2.5.1. Vowels

According to Jones (1958) vowels are some of the continuous voiced sound produced without obstruction in the mouth unaccompanied by any frictional noise. Jones (1958, p.15) in his book “The Pronunciation of English” classifies the vowels into 5 based on the position of the tongue:

(1). Front vowels, in the production of which the ‘front’ of the tongue is raised in the direction of the hard palate. For example, /i:/ in /fi:d/ feed.

(2). Back vowels, in the production of which the ‘back’ of the tongue is raised in the direction of the soft palate. For example, /u:/ in /fu:d/ food.

(3). Central vowels, when the position of the tongue is in the middle or in the intermediate of front and back. For example, /ɜ:/ in /bɜ:d/ bird.

(4). Close vowels, when the tongue is held as high as possible consistently with not producing a frictional noise. For example, /i:/ in /fi:d/ feed and /u:/ in /fu:d/ food.

(5). Open vowels, when the tongue is held as low as possible as in /a:/ in /fa:

ðə / father.

2.5.2. Consonants

According to Kelly (2000, p.47) consonants can be described in terms:

1). The place of articulation

(a). Labiodental: Sound which is articulated by the tip tongue against the upper teeth; e.g. /f/

(b). Dental: Sounds articulated by the tip tongue against the upper teeth. e.g. : / ð /

(c). Alveolar: Namely sounds articulated by the tip or blade of the tongue against the teeth-ridge; e.g. normal English /t/

(f). Palatals: Namely sounds articulated by the back of the tongue against the hard palate; e.g / j /.

(g). Velars: Namely sounds articulated by the back of the tongue against the soft palate; e.g. /k/

(h). Glottal: Namely sounds articulated in the glottis; e.g / h /.

2). Manner of articulation

(a). Plosive: A complete closure is made somewhere in the vocal tract, and the soft palate is also raised. Air pressure increases behind the closure, and is then released 'explosively', e.g. /p/ and /b/

(b) Affricative: A complete closure is made somewhere in the mouth, and the soft palate is raised. Air pressure increases behind the closure, and is then released more slowly than in plosives, e.g. /t/ and /d/

(c). Fricative: When two vocal organs come close enough together for the movement of air between them to be heard, e.g. /f/ and /v/

(d) Nasal: A closure is made by the lips, or by the tongue against the plate, the soft plate is lowered, and air escapes through the nose, e.g. /m/ and /n/

(e) Lateral: A partial closure is made by the blade of the tongue against the alveolar ridge. Air is able to flow around the sides of the tongue, e.g. /l/

(f) Approximant: Vocal organs come near to each other, but not so close as to cause audible friction, e.g. /r/ and /w/

2.5.3. Diphthongs

Kelly (2000) stated that diphthongs are sounds, which involve a change in quality during their production. It is the combination of vowel sounds. Diphthongs are represented phonetically by sequences of two letters. The first showing the starting point and the second indication the direction of the movement. There are three kinds of diphthongs. They are (closing) diphthongs, falling diphthongs, centering diphthongs.

(1). Raising or Closing Diphthongs: The position of the tongue when the second vowel is pronounced higher than the first one. For example:

- /ai/, like in time /taim/, fine /fain/
- /ei/, like in make /meik/, take /teik/
- /i/, like in boy /boi/
- /au/, like in now /nau/, how /hau/
- /əu/, like in no /nəu/, go /gəu/

(2). Falling Diphthongs: The position of the tongue when utters the second vowel is lower than the first one. For example:

- /i ə/, like in fear /fiə(r)/, hear /hiə(r)/
- /ə/, like in pure /pjə(r)/

(3). Centering Diphthongs: The position of the tongue when utters the second vowel is at the central. For example:

- /ə/, like in fore /fə(r) /, more /mə(r)/
- / εə /, like in there /ðεə /

2.5.4. Supra-segmental Phonemes

Kelly (2000) stated that Supra-segmental phonemes are classified into seven classes; they are:

- Stress. Stress is the pressure of breath with which sounds are produced.
- Intonation. Intonation is the changes in the music of the voice while producing speech.
- Pause. Pause is the silent between parts of an utterance.
- Juncture. Juncture is a very short time of pause. It is the space in speech between sounds or words.
- Rhythm. Rhythm is the beat of language. It is the stress-time. Meaning between two primary stresses is the same.
- Pitch. Pitch is the height and/or direction (up-down contrast level of pitch can distinguish word. For example, in Chinese there are four levels of sounds that can differentiate meaning.
- Length. Length is the long or short a phoneme should be pronounced.

Stress: According to Jones (1958, p.57), the force of the breath with which a syllable is pronounced is called stress. Stress varies from syllable to syllable. Syllable which are pronounced with greater stress than the neighbor syllables are said to be stressed.

It is in fact generally sufficient to distinguish two degrees only-stressed and unstressed. Stress syllables are marked when necessary by ‘placed immediately before them, thus father, 'f:ə, arrive, ə'raiv, opportunity, pə'tju:niti, what shall we do? '(h)wtəlwi:'du. .

The same words and sentences are not always stressed in the same way.

Variations are sometimes necessary for making the meaning clear, and they are eventually needed due to rhythmical considerations. Thus, the word injudicious when simply taken to mean “foolish” would have stress on the third:

'diəsyllable, thus he was very injudicious, hi:wəz'veriindu:'diəs, but when used in contrast with judicious, the chief stress would be on the first syllable, the stress on the third being only secondary,

e.g. that was very judicious,

tʷəz'veridu:'diəs, and the answer is I should call it injudicious,

'aiədʰk:lɪtveri'indu:diəs.

Untrained speakers often fail to bring out contrast of this kind properly.

In '(h)wtəlwi:'du:, '(h)wt'lwi:'du:,

'(h)wtəl'wi:du:, the variations of stress actually modify the meaning of the words.

The word unknown, noun, shows clearly how rhythm may affect stress. Compare an unknown land, ən'noun'lnd with quite unknown, 'kwaitn'noun.

When isolated the word would generally be pronounced, the two syllables having equal stress. The rhythmical principle underlying these changes is a tendency to avoid consecutive stressed syllables when possible (Jones, 1958).

e). Intonation: Jones (1958, p.59) states in speaking, the pitch of the voice, i.e. the pitch of the musical note produced by the vocal chords, is constantly changing. These variations in pitch are called intonation (or inflection). Intonation is thus quite independent of stress, with which it is sometimes confused by beginners. Fluctuations in pitch either involve a rising pitch or a falling pitch. Intonation is found in every language and even in tonal languages, but the realization and function are seemingly different. It is used in non-tonal languages to add attitudes to words (attitudinal function) and to differentiate between wh-questions, yes-no questions, declarative statements, commands, requests, etc. Generally speaking, the following intonations are distinguished:

- Rising Intonation means the pitch of the voice rises over time [u];
- Falling Intonation means that the pitch falls with time [p];
- Dipping Intonation falls and then rises [pʷ];
- Peaking Intonation rises and then falls [ʷp]

2.6. Principles in Pronunciation Teaching

According to Penny (2006), principles in teaching pronunciation are:

a). Having a Suitable Curriculum

When teachers teach something, they start to help students acquire some primary concepts on which they can build more complex understanding. For example, when teachers teach science, they make sure students have a basic understanding science before teach them about science. It is absolutely the same as teaching pronunciation, before teachers teach pronunciation, they should have a rough curriculum for teaching pronunciation to access material relevant in particular situation.

b). Being the Student Center

Teachers have to know how to make students understand information given. For example, for teachers who cannot pronounce some English sounds need to have more knowledge about pronunciation. Additionally, the teachers can give more explanations to students. At that time, students learn through teachers experience how to pronounce English sounds.

c). Helping Learners Become Self-reliant

Many students have wrong perceptions about what is involved in learning pronunciation – or in learning a language in general. Teachers have to tell the students that pronunciation is a sub skill that involves remembering and practicing. Sometimes, different students' accent makes they lack of confident in learning pronunciation. They feel embarrass to pronounce English word, but they can learn from their mistakes. Teachers' roles are to help students feel confident to pronounce English words.

d). Giving Opportunities to Practice.

In fact, pronunciation is a sub skill of speaking skill. Teachers' role is giving training to students to pronounce English words and giving correction to students in pronouncing English words. Sometimes students wriggle out of practicing English pronunciation by saying they are embarrassed. In this case, teachers have to make students more feel confident in practicing pronunciation.

A good method in teaching pronunciation is to use several repetitions saying together in the chorus. Then choose one student for individual rehearsal, choose another student again, and so on. Sometimes students will get bored with this. However, the material is useful and challenging; students love this kind of work (ibid).

2.7. Strategies in Pronunciation Teaching

According to Kelly (2000, p.16), there are some strategies in pronunciation teaching:

a). Drilling

Drilling is main way of pronunciation practice in classroom. Basic form of drilling involves teacher saying a word or structure, and getting students to repeat it. Aim of drilling is to help students achieve better pronunciation of language items, and help them remember new item. Drilling often follows a process known as eliciting. It is to encourage students to bring up a word, phrase or structure as they study before. Teachers generally use prompts, pictures, mimes etc, to help learning process along.

Teacher's main role of drilling is to provide a model of the word, phrase or structure for students to copy.

b). Chaining

Chaining is used to drill long sentences involving difficult words and sounds. Teachers separate certain words from sentence, and model them separately for students to repeat, and gradually build the sentence up until they become complete sentences. There are two kinds of chaining:

(1). Back chain

Students are drilled to pronounce sentences and build up parts of the end of the sentences from the end, gradually add to length.

Students' mistake in pronounce certain part of word will be drilled by teachers separately. Each part of sentence is modeled by teachers, and repeated by students.

Example :

.....would've told.

.....if I'd seen him.

(2). Front Chain

Students are drilled to pronounce sentences and build up parts of start of the sentences from the start, gradually adding to its length. Students' wrong in pronounce certain part of word will be drilled by teachers separately. Each part of sentence is modeled by teachers, and repeated by students.

Example:

If I'd seen him....

I would've.....

I would've told him.

(3). Substitution Drilling

Substitution drilling is another important and useful variation. This involves drilling a structure, but substituting items into the sentence being dealt with, as follow:

Teacher : it's in the corner

Student 1: it's in the corner

Teacher : it's on the table

Student 2 : it's on the table.

(4). Open Pair Drilling

Question and answer drills might be set up across the class, by one student asking, another responding, and so on. For example, a big letter Q and a big letter A written on cards. Teachers will invite students to question each other and respond in turn across the class.

Student 1: have you ever been to Paris?

Student 4: yes. I have

Student 5: have you ever been to New York?

Student 2: no I haven't.

(5). Giving Feedback

Giving feedback is making correction which is used by teachers in order to reduce errors made by students in pronunciation. Giving more feedback will help students accurately in their own use of language. When teachers give feedback, they should have different kinds of correction techniques or strategies. For instance, teachers give feedback by practice rising and falling of their intonation, giving one that is chosen for student which is true or false, and writes some correction in blackboard. By giving feedback, teachers actually can reduce students' errors. Consequently, students will be more confident in pronounce pronouncing English words.

2.8. Problems of Pronunciation

Many students have problems in learning English especially in spoken English language. There are many problems faced by students to study pronunciation according to Harmer (2007, p.250). They are as follows:

1) What students can hear

Some students have great difficulty hearing pronunciation features which we want them to reproduce. Frequently, speakers of different first languages have problems with different sounds

2) What students can say

Learning a foreign language often presents us with the problem of physical unfamiliarity (i.e. it is actually physically difficult to make the sound using particular parts of the mouth, uvula or nasal cavity).

3) The intonation problem

Some of us (and many of our students) find it extremely difficult to hear tunes or to identify the different patterns of rising and falling tones.

According to Gerald Kelly (2000, p.13), there are two main problems in teaching pronunciation:

1). Pronunciation tends to be neglected.

2). When it is not neglected, it tends to be reactive to a particular problem that has arisen in the classroom rather than being strategically planned.

There are two reasons that pronunciation tends to be neglected. First, teachers are lack interest to teach pronunciation. Secondly, teachers do not know how to teach pronunciation due to having lack of knowledge of pronunciation theory. When pronunciation is not neglected, it tends to be reactive to a particular problem that has arisen in the classroom rather than being strategically planned.

Teachers need to improve their practical skill in teaching pronunciation. Additionally, students show considerable enthusiasm for pronunciation.

Students feel enthusiastic, because pronunciation is something that would help them to communicate well. Therefore, both teachers and learners consider that pronunciation is very important in a language learning process.

To solve these problems, pronunciation teachers need:

(a). A good grounding in theoretical knowledge

Before teaching pronunciation, teachers firstly have to know how to pronounce words, so teachers when teach students can give good pronunciation to students imitated.

(b). Practical classroom skills

Teachers necessarily have strategies of how to attract students. Consequently, materials presented by teachers will be easily understood by students.

(c). Access to good ideas for classroom activities.

It is necessarily for teachers to teach pronunciation attractive. So, students will not get bored with available materials. They will get more enthusiastic in learning pronunciation.

d. Pronunciation Test

Brown (2004, p.3) stated that a test, in simple terms, is a method of measuring a person's ability, knowledge, or performance in a given domain. A test is first a method. It is an instrument—a set of techniques, procedures, or items—that requires performance on the part of test-taker. Second, a test must measure. Some tests measure general ability, while others

focus on very specific competencies or objectives. A test measured an individual's ability, knowledge, or performance.

Furthermore, according to Hughes (2003, p.8), there are some purposes of testing in teaching learning process:

- 1). To measure language proficiency.
- 2). To discover how successful students have been in achieving the objectives of a course of study.
- 3). To diagnose students' strengths and weaknesses, in identifying what they know and what they don't know.
- 4). To assist placement of students by identifying the stage or part of a teaching program most appropriate to their ability.

Obviously, pronunciation is tested globally in different types of conversational exchange, interview, reading aloud, etc., that go on in the classroom. What seems to be insufficient is the testing of accuracy-that is, testing to assess the learner's management of specific features, segmental or suprasegmental.

This insufficiency is due to two main causes. First, many teachers do not consider it useful to test specific features. This attitude is based on the belief that the mastery of specific features, taken individually, does not matter much in real-life situations where the context always provides the clue for the learner to interpret what he hears (Heaton 1988, p.64) or to make him understood even if the ideal quality of phonemes is not reached. Therefore, it is possible for people to produce practically all the correct sounds but still be unable to communicate their ideas appropriately and effectively. On the other hand, "people can make numerous errors in both phonology and syntax and yet succeed in expressing themselves fairly clearly." (Heaton 1988, p.88)

Taking segmental phonemes and word stress as illustrations, this article explores some ways of testing specific features of English pronunciation, both as a teaching activity and as part of an examination. The ideal way of testing pronunciation is actually listen to the learner. However, since this is not always possible or suitable, the alternatives discussed below can be used for testing segments and word stress (ibid).

2.9. An Overview of Teaching Models

To sum it up, according to Ur (2009, pp.2-5), teachers of ESL have the following ways to choose from in order to introduce a teaching model in their classroom:

1) Teachers can base their English lessons on the Standard English model which includes comprehensible and acceptable features recognizable worldwide. It is usually based on one or two predominant native varieties (British English, American English). Introducing only the Standard form, however, eliminates the possibility to encounter the great number of idioms, vocabulary, grammar and spellings that are included in many English varieties.

2) Teachers can also decide for a native model which is favored by many students and teachers as it is well defined and codified. The question is which variety of native model to choose from as there are many native model varieties around the world.

3) Another option to elect from is the diverse model, which enables to teach also some of the local variations. This model is probably the most ideologically embraceable, even though it requires some kind of codification. As this way presents a very flexible way of teaching, it is difficult to design a syllabus for it.

4) In order to improve student's intelligibility, teachers can introduce so called common core model into the classroom. This method should be universally comprehensible and easily achievable. However, it is not proved whether this model includes all the most common language features used worldwide or not. (Ur, 2009, 2-5)

2.10. Why to Teach Pronunciation?

As the character of ELF is strengthened every day, the necessity of clear communication between non-native students is inherent. However, "a great number of EFL teachers neglect teaching pronunciation and they rather focus on grammar and vocabulary". (Harmer 2005, p.183) But how can mastering grammar rules and vocabulary perfectly help students make their speech intelligible? It is proved that speakers whose pronunciation is listener friendly are able to lead a successful conversation even with their grammatical mistakes better than speakers whose grammar obeys all the rules. (Gilakjani 2016, p.1)

Pronunciation teaching so proves to be an essential part in every English lesson. Pronunciation activities do not only help students to be confident of different sounds and sound features, but it most importantly helps students to improve their spoken skills. Focusing on where the sounds are in the mouth and which syllables are stressed in the words fortifies students' comprehension and intelligibility. (Harmer 2005, p.183)

In connection with this, Gilakjani (2016, p.8) claimed that teaching pronunciation should be more than just training individual sounds or isolated words. Pronunciation needs to be viewed as an essential part of communication. Therefore, in order to consolidate pronunciation skills (both comprehension and production), it is crucial to incorporate pronunciation activities into classroom through various materials and tests. Good pronunciation skills do not only bring speakers confidence to communicate but it also improves their listening comprehension, the basis of an accomplished conversation.

Here are some of the main reasons why incorporating pronunciation activities into every English class should take a key role:

- Using wrong sounds in words or wrong prosodic features in sentences may lead to misunderstanding as it is very difficult to work out what the speaker is saying.
- Even though it is clear what the speaker is saying, his/her pronunciation makes listeners feel unpleasant as speaker's accent is distracting or too heavy. It can undermine speaker's confidence as well as it can make the listener think that the speaker lacks proper knowledge of English language. (Gilakjani 2016, p.3)

The only image of some of these unpleasant situations happening at some international meeting advocates the fact that teaching pronunciation has its inherent part in English language teaching (ELT). Following Gilakjani (2016, p.3), only communications where speaker's English is pleasant to listen to and where it is clear what the speaker is saying are the goals of pronunciation trainings. In connection with this, Harmer (2005, p.185) claimed that the way how to achieve clear communication is not getting students to produce correct sounds or intonation, but it is rather the way to show them how English is spoken in the real world. The more students get exposed to some audio or videotape materials, the greater chance that their intelligibility gets improved.

2.11. Affective Factors in Pronunciation

The fact that some students are able to acquire a reasonable knowledge of English in few months and the others are not able to reach the same level within some few years leads this paper to the topic of factors which influence attaining English pronunciation.

As noted by Shoebottom (2014), some of these factors can affect acquiring pronunciation skills prosperously (e.g. determination and hard work in training pronunciation skills), some of these factors are far beyond human control. Generally, two main groups of the factors can be distinguished; internal and external.

2.11.1. Internal Factors

These are the factors which are incorporated into student's individual language.

- **Age:** It is proved that children are the most talented ones in terms of acquiring EFL. However, adults can achieve a reasonable progress in obtaining pronunciation skills successfully if they are well motivated and determined.
- **Personality:** Students who are of introvert character are usually afraid of expressing themselves orally; they do not rather look for any opportunities to speak. On the other hand, students who are of extrovert character are usually seeking for taking part in every conversation possible, ignoring their mistakes.
- **Motivation:** It is important to distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Students who are intrinsically motivated exhibit greater interest and enjoyment in their English language development. Students who need to study English in order to take a better job or to communicate with relatives who live in an English speaking country (so they are extrinsically motivated) are also likely to achieve better results.
- **Experiences:** Students who have already been exposed to some foreign language have greater chances to acquire a new language easier than students who have never encountered one.
- **Cognition:** It is believed by some linguists that the cognitive abilities that are stronger with some students than with some others can lead to faster language progress.
- **Native language:** Students who try to acquire a foreign language which belongs to the same language family as their native language have greater chance than those students who try to master a language from a family group that is different from their native tongue (Shoebottom, 2014).

2.11.2. External Factors

These factors characterize the particular language learning situation.

- **Curriculum:** It is important to expose students of ESL to such a workload which is appropriate for their studying needs.
- **Instruction:** It depends also on teacher's teaching skills and abilities how successful students are in terms of their language development. In addition to this, students who are exposed to some ELT also in other subjects reach greater progress.
- **Culture and Status:** It has been noticed that students whose culture possesses a lower status than the culture whose language they are exposed to achieve the language skills slower.
- **Motivation:** It is proved that students who are continually supported to better their language skills by their families or teachers reach a greater success.
- **Access to native speakers:** Students who have the possibility to meet with native speakers lose the fears to communicate. Native speakers provide a linguistic model and an appropriate feedback for students. (Shoebottom, 2014)

2.12. Pronunciation in Classroom

The reasons why it is important to incorporate pronunciation teaching into the classroom have been already presented. This part is going to show some of the ways that can help teachers to draw some of the pronunciation activities into the class.

2.12.1. When to Teach Pronunciation?

According to Harmer (2005, p.186), the first thing teachers need to do is to decide when to include pronunciation teaching into an English lesson. There are some possibilities to choose from:

- **Whole Lessons:** if teachers decide to devote the whole lesson to teaching pronunciation, it does not necessarily mean that the entire lesson needs to be based just only on training pronunciation. Students may be asked to deal with listening skills or vocabulary stock before aiming on pronunciation tasks. In addition to this, it is no sensible to focus on pronunciation of sounds only, it is rather advisable to practice connected speech, sentence stress and intonation.

- **Discrete Slots:** Inserting short, separate pronunciation parts into English lessons can prove extremely beneficial as it can refresh every English lesson. These short pronunciation sections, where one week phonemes and another week intonation can be practiced, are very popular among students as they welcome being not bothered with pronunciation tasks too long. However, pronunciation is not a separate skill; it is an essential part of our communication. That is the reason why longer sequences or even the entire lessons should be devoted to its teaching.

- **Integrated Phases:** Making pronunciation tasks an integral part of lesson activities seems to be a successful way of dealing with pronunciation. Pronunciation tasks may be drawn e.g. in almost every listening activity as students may pay attention to pronunciation features they listen to or they can just imitate intonation.

- **Opportunistic Teaching:** Pointing out a pronunciation problem when it has just arisen in the course is a good way of introducing pronunciation into the class. It is enough to devote a minute or two to some pronunciation issue so that fluency of the lesson is not interrupted a lot. (Harmer 2005, pp.186 - 187)

It is worth noting here that the suggested ways of introducing teaching pronunciation into a classroom do not necessarily need to be engaged separately. A lot of teachers mix the possible ways altogether according to the syllabus and timetable flexibility. (Harmer 2005, p.187)

2.12.2. What Pronunciation Aspects to Teach?

Setting out the factors that are necessary to be taught represents one of the key roles before inserting teaching pronunciation into a classroom.

- **Phonemic Chart**

One of the important attributes that go hand in hand with teaching pronunciation is the phonemic chart. Of course it is possible to get along without introducing the phonemic symbols at all (saying the words enough times to make students realize the sounds or sound differences or picturing the sound production by making a schema of mouth and lips movement).

However, knowing the phonemic symbols makes it easier for students to be able to read a word even without hearing it. Moreover, if students are aware of the phonemic symbols, teachers can introduce a great number of pronunciation games for them. These games do not rather need to focus on phonemic transcription of words, but they would better deal with

recognizing the various sound symbols. Using the phonemic chart in this way is undoubtedly beneficial for both the teachers and the students as it is easier to explain pronunciation mistakes. (Harmer 2005, p.186)

2.13. Examples of Pronunciation Areas

Another important aspect in teaching pronunciation is to decide what features of pronunciation are crucial to be focused on. Following Harmer (2005, pp.187-198), teaching pronunciation of sounds, words stress, sentence stress, intonation and connected speech are the pronunciation areas teachers should draw their students' attention to.

2.13.1. Sounds

Students may be asked to deal with particular sound(s) in order to realize how this/these sound(s) is/ere made in their mouth and how it/they can be spelled. There are many ways how the individual sound(s) can be trained. (Harmer 2005, p.187)

Here are at least some of them:

- *Identifying the particular sound(s) in the words*

1. Choosing out such words (out of *bird, word, worm, curl, heard, first, lurch*) which contain the / \bar{Q} :/ sound. (Harmer 2005, p.187)

2. Here is an example mentioned by Hewings (1993, p.7) where students are asked to put the words from the box to the correct sound. Afterwards, students practice saying the words.

- *Contrasting two sounds that are very similar*

1. Concentrating on two different aspects of pronunciation usually starts with a listening activity followed by practicing the difference between the sounds.

For example: *ship chip*

sherry cherry

washing watching (Harmer 2005, p.188)

2. Following Baker (2006, p.27), another option how to deal with minimal pairs is suggested in her book *Ship or Sheep*. Students can practice the minimal pairs by photocopying the minimal pair activities from the entire book. Having done so, students cut out cards from the minimal pair activities so that each sound remains separate. Having turned all the cards upside down, students can play a game. One student chooses two cards and reads the sentences aloud. If these two sentences comprise the minimal pair sounds, the student keeps

these two cards and can play again. If not, another student continues. A student who collects the most of the cards wins. Below, there is an example of minimal pair activity provided by Baker (2006, p.15)

- *Finding out which sound students hear*

Students may be asked to listen to a recording and to distinguish which word they hear. For example: Small *shops/chops* are often expensive.

The *dishes/ditches* need cleaning. (Harmer 2005, p.188)

- *Tongue Twisters*

Introducing tongue twisters does not only help students in terms of improving their pronunciation, but it also brings some fun into the classroom.

For example:

You **will hear each of these tongue twisters three times.**

1. Vincent vowed vengeance very vehemently.
2. Betty and Bob brought back blue balloons from the big bazaar.
3. **Lesley** loves Roger, but Roger doesn't love Lesley. Roger rather likes Lucy.

(Baird, p.2012)

As noted by Tennant (2007, p.2), the most crucial thing in teaching individual sounds is to weight up whether it is really necessary to teach sound differences. The fact is that many words are difficult to be misunderstood solely on the basis of mispronounced sounds as they can be easily clarified by the context. On the other hand, this fact does not want to proclaim the idea that individual sounds should be obeyed. The feature which helps teachers to decide depends on the characteristic of the teaching class. If there is a monolingual class to be taught it is advisable to focus on practicing sounds which are difficult for speakers of this language. If there is a multilingual class, however, it is important to find out which sounds predominate as troublemakers in this particular teaching group.

2.13.2. Word Stress and Sentence Stress

Practicing stress in words, phrases and sentences is a prominent part of teaching pronunciation as mispronunciations can lead to a change of meaning. (Harmer 2005, p.191)

Some of the ways for practicing stress are as follows:

- *Marking the stress in words*

1. As noted by Harmer (2005, p.191) one way of signing the stress in new words is to write these words on the board and to show students which syllable is the stressed one.

2. Below, there is a pronunciation activity included by Hewings (1993, p.39) Students are practicing word stress by guessing which word in the word group does not match the stress pattern provided on the left side. Afterwards, students listen, repeat and check their answers.

- *Marking the stress in phrases and sentences*

1. Students are asked to listen to the minimal pair sentences and notice the stress included in them. Afterwards, they are tasked to mark the stress in the sentences they listen to. (Baker 2006, p. 16)

2. The next sentence stress activity includes training rhythm, students practice saying the important words louder and quicker. (Baker 2006, p.17)

Following Tennant (2007, p.2), practicing word stress is regarded more important than practicing individual sounds as it may completely change desirable meaning. As English words do not give the same stress to all the syllables they mention, a great number of speakers suffers acquiring the stress pattern which is different than that one of their mother tongue. In addition to this, putting stress on the wrong syllable may cause a lot of trouble as well, as the shifted word category can change the meaning of a word (e.g. the word *present* as a *noun* or as a *verb*). Training stress in phrases and sentences meets a great importance as well. Misused stress in a sentence can cause communication breakdowns, not only in terms of productive skills (speaking) but also in terms of receptive skills (listening).

2.13.3. Intonation

Focusing students' attention to activities practicing intonation can strengthen their ability to convey meaning, mood and the ideas they are claiming. (Harmer 2005, p.194)

Here are some of the ways for training the intonation:

- *Different meanings*

1. Students may be asked to practice intonation on just one particular word in order to realize the different ways how it can be said. Students are, for example, asked to question their teacher *yes/no question*. The teacher, by giving only the positive answers, shows his/her own feelings. So, for a question *Are you happy?* The teacher may give a neutral answer, an answer which expresses a surprise for being asked and so on.

2. Students may be also questioned to match the intonation to a picture expressing various emotions, according to what the teacher's intonation means this time.

(Harmer 2005, p.194)

- *Falling and rising intonation*

First, students listen to the same sentence with the aim to recognize its different intonation patterns. Afterwards, in the next part of listening, they are asked to distinguish whether the conversations sound friendly or unfriendly, formal or informal. (Bowler and Parminter 1992, 24)

Bowler, Bill and Sue Parminter. 1992. *Headway Pre-Intermediate Pronunciation*.

- *Connected Speech*

As noted by Tennant (2007, p.3), practicing connected speech is probably the most important aspect out of all pronunciation teaching areas. Communication is not only about producing the individual sounds separately; it is rather about joining these sounds together. A lot of students of EFL cope with understanding native speakers as they are unable to distinguish these sounds in the flow of conversation. It is more than advisable to include practicing connected speech from the very start of learning English language.

Here are some of the pronunciation exercises for practicing connected speech:

- *Hearing different forms*

Students are asked to listen and to get aware of the contracted forms of the verbs *had* and *would* as these are widely used in a connected speech. Afterwards, they are asked to practice the contracted forms themselves. (Bowler and Parminter 1992, p.46)

- *Connected speech in written form*

In some pronunciation activities, students may be exposed to the written variations of connected speech in order to find out the corresponding full forms. (Hewings 1993, p.51)

- *Understanding connected speech*

Students are asked to listen to the sentences and to write them down. (Hewings 1993, p.49)

2.14. Pronunciation Problems of Iranian Speakers

As it has already been mentioned by Tennant (2007, p. 2), before incorporating any of the pronunciation activities into the class, it is always advisable to identify the pronunciation problems in the concrete study group. In this chapter, some of the most common pronunciation mistakes of Iranian speakers are going to be presented with the aim to provide an overview of the key problems that should be eliminated during English lessons.

2.14.1 Vowel Sounds

According to Millin (2011), as there is a direct link between spelling and pronunciation in Persian language, Persian speakers may have problems with English sounds. In addition to this, all the Persian syllables are equally long, which is not the case in English language. Therefore, Persian speaker mostly struggle with pronouncing the schwa sound /ə/.

2.14.2. Consonant Sounds

• /θ/ and /ð/ sounds

Following Millin (2011), Persian speakers cope with a difficulty in acquiring the sounds /θ/ and /ð/. These sounds do not exist in the Persian phonetic system and Persian speakers tend to replace these sounds with other ones, e.g. /f/ or /s/ for /θ/ and /d/ or /dz/ for /ð/.

With the aim of eliminating /θ/ and /ð/ pronunciation mistakes, Poslušná (2009, p.100)

recommends practising the “th” sound in these sentences:

I think we should do those things.

I am so thirsty I would drink a thousand glasses of water.

They are over there.

I thought a thought. But the thought I thought was not the thought I thought I thought.

Thank the other three brothers. (Poslušná 2009, p.100)

• /w/ sound

As noted by Poslušná (2009, p.97), another problematic sound that can cause misunderstandings is the /w/ sound. Persian speakers usually pronounce it in the same way as the Persian /v/ sound. It is important to make Persian speakers realize the difference between these two sounds, e.g. by mentioning some minimal pair words (*west-vest, wailveil, wet-vet...*).

- **/r/ sound**

As stated by Millin (2011), whereas /r/ sound should be pronounced only at the beginning of words, Persian speakers are likely to pronounce it in the middle or at the end.

- **/ŋ/, /g/, /k/ sounds**

These sounds are usually confused in words where “ing” ending appears, e.g. (*thingthink, sing-sink*). (Millin 2011) Persian speakers often pronounce the “ing” as /ink/ instead of /iŋ/. (Poslušná 2009, 103)

- **/s/and /z/ sounds**

Persian speakers usually struggle with differentiating between voiced /z/ sound and unvoiced /s/ sound. (Millin 2011)

- **/p/, /t/, /k/ sounds**

These sounds are usually not aspirated by Persian speakers; or they are over-aspirated in the middle or final position of a word. (Millin 2011)

2.14.3. Stress and Intonation

The most significant distinction between Persian and English languages is that whereas Persian is a syllable timed language, English is a stressed timed language. This leads to pronouncing English weak forms the same way as the strong forms. (Millin 2011) In addition to this, in terms of intonation, Persian speakers might sound very unfriendly while speaking English; as the Persian intonation is more flat than the English one. (Poslušná 2009, p.105).

2.15. Internet and Social Networks in Learning Modes

In any teaching-learning situation, learners can respond at ease for communicative mode of teaching. According to Madhavi (2010), communicative method for learning languages combines extensively, high-quality content with flexible and interactive multimedia

technology. This comprehensive language learning method can act as a total solution for self-teaching, as well as teaching support to formal courses. Through a wide range of activities, a variety of skills could be developed in a learner. A learner needs to communicate in oral and written comprehension, as well as oral and written expression.

Besides, digital communication between groups of students and between students and teachers has become popular during the last decade through various channels: Email, SMS, social networks such as Facebook groups, Twitter, and recently WhatsApp. Each one of these tools has different characteristics that influence its suitability for learning purposes (Calvo, Arbiol & Iglesias, 2014).

The basic building block of a social network is the profile. Profiles have pre-established fields that users can fill in with demographic information and descriptions of their interests (cultural and otherwise), photos, and sometimes other types of media (e.g., songs, other images, and videos). Profiles do not always represent common individuals. Some profiles are made for celebrities in which the communication is less personal and more promotional, while other profiles may represent groups, events, causes, products, and other phenomena.

Profiles can be linked in a number of ways. The most important type of link is the 'friend list.' The other users with whom one has declared a connection are called 'friends,' regardless of the level of intimacy of the relationship (Vie, 2007), and the list of this group figures prominently in one's personal profile. On many SNSs, users can perform searches based on profile fields (e.g., demographic information, likes and dislikes, etc.) to see, for example, which users have listed a particular interest or go to a certain school.

Identity is also established by the communication that takes place on personal profiles (boyd & Ellison, 2007; Vie, 2007). Prominent on the personal profile is a place for messages from one's friends. These messages are public, at least to one's other friends, and can be done with words alone or by sharing images or sometimes videos. At the top of the Facebook profile is a status update of maximally 180 characters. On MySpace it is called a headline and may be up to 255 characters long.

2.16. Social Network Site Impact on Learners' Performance

Today's students are exposed to all types of technologies in many aspects of their lives (Browning, Gerlich, & Westermann, 2011). On a daily basis they use desktop computers, laptops, E-readers, tablets, and cell phones to actively engage in social networking, text

messaging, blogging, content sharing, online learning, and much more (Cassidy, Griffin, Manolovitz, Shen, & Turney, 2011).

Online social networks (OSNs) have permeated all generations of Internet users, becoming a prominent communications tool, particularly in the student community. Thus, academic institutions and faculty are increasingly using social networking sites, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, to connect with current and potential students and to deliver instructional content. (Paul, Baker, Cochran, 2012)

On the contrary, some authors and researches disagree with the previous statement, such as Lenhart, et al., 2010; Tiryakioglu & Erzurum, 2010; Chen & Bryer, 2010 says that despite the popularity of social media for personal use only a low percentage of students and faculty use them for academic practice. Online social networking (OSN) sites, such as Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp, are used on a regular basis by many millions of people. The majority of this online networking community is made up of teens and college students. However, as results the authors found that corroborating the work on the impact of social media on academic performance, participants who accessed Facebook one or more times during the study period had lower grade point averages.

2.17. Studies on Social Network and Learning English

Haider and Chowdhury (2012) conducted a study based on a survey of the Communicative English Language Certificate (CELC) course run by the Foreign Language Training Center (FLTC), a project under the Ministry of Education, Bangladesh. Their study was done on 425 learners who had completed the CELC course at the selected four centers of FLTC. According to the findings obtained by these two authors it can be concluded that the FLTC project is doing a creditable task by offering quality English language teaching employing Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) facilities to the learners of Bangladesh. This study also manifests some weaknesses of the program delivery, teaching approaches and learning support. Some of these problems are not surprising because the program was still evolving and experiencing the changing practices during the study. These led to some of the instructors' difficulty in getting themselves at ease with the computer based materials and technological instruments quickly.

Park and Son (2009) investigated factors influencing EFL teachers' employment of computers in their classrooms in order to find out EFL teachers' attitudes toward CALL and ways to improve CALL practice in schools. The results of their study indicated teachers' positive and favorable attitudes toward the employment of the computers. They regarded

computer technology as a helpful teaching tool which can improve ways of teaching through providing students with different language inputs and increasing students' learning experiences in real and authentic contexts. It was also reported that external factors including lack of time, insufficient computer facilities, rigid school curricula, textbooks and lack of administrative support put negative effects on the implementation of CALL in the classroom. Internal factors like teachers' limited computer influence teachers' decisions on the employment of CALL.

Nachoua (2012) in a study entitled "Computer-Assisted Language Learning for Improving Students' Listening Skill" found that CALL is a motivating method and computers are valuable instruments in second/foreign language classes to improve students' listening skill. Also, participants in experimental group (CALL) outperformed those in control group. Students' performance was improved in grammar, vocabulary, writing and listening. Furthermore, many parameters indicated that significant progress was attained in the group receiving a CALL teaching.

In an attempt to assess the effects of mobile on vocabulary learning, Thornton and Houser (2005) conducted three studies in a Japanese university. First, they surveyed the students regarding their use of mobile phones. The result of the survey revealed that students used their mobiles frequently for sending SMS and emails than talking with their families and friends. Based on this finding, they conducted two counter balanced studies to compare the usefulness of delivering of vocabularies via different mobile media. In one experiment they compared sending some short mini lessons to students' mobiles' emails to presenting them on paper. In another one they compared sending lessons via SMS to presenting them on paper. In the next phase of this experiment they compared the effect of lessons, length on learning. They found no significant difference between long and short lessons. So they concluded that the effect of the frequent study was more important than the quantity of materials presented in a lesson.

In another study by Thornton and Houser(2005) a phone sized website was developed to present students some idioms in Japanese and English along with some animation to illustrate them. All in all, these studies showed that mobiles phones can be useful in presenting foreign language materials to students.

In the same line, Lu (2008) used a counter balanced design to investigate the usefulness of short message service (SMS) on 30 vocational high school students, vocabulary retention. In the first week of a two week experiment, one group received 14 target words via SMS and the other group received the same material on paper. In the second week the two groups changed

their media; that is mobile group became paper group and the paper group became mobile group. At the end of each week, an immediate post test, and three weeks later a delayed post test was conducted. The results of the tests showed that both groups regardless of the medium had improved compared to the pretest. But generally mobile group scores were significantly better than the paper group. It's worth mentioning that their scores diminished in the delayed post test. This result underscores the effect of regular reading of vocabularies and it urges to find a way to investigate whether learners read frequently the lessons provided them via SMS. A comparison of students' scores on mobile phone and paper showed that there is a positive relation between reading frequency and vocabulary gain. Also at the end of the experiment the participants were interviewed to find their attitude towards mobile assisted language learning. The information gained by interview showed that generally students had positive attitudes towards mobile vocabulary learning and liked to continue learning vocabulary with the aid of mobile.

Warchauer (2004) indicated that the random access to Web pages would break the linear flow of instruction. By sending E-mail and joining newsgroups, second language learners can also communicate with people they never met before and interact with their own teachers or classmates. Shy or inhibited learners can be greatly benefited through the individualized technology-learning environment, and studious learners can also proceed at their own pace to achieve higher levels. Many concepts and cognitions are abstract and difficult to express through language the language teaching area. It seems that computers can make up for this shortage by using the image showing on the screen. Nunan (1999) reported that —interactive visual media which computers provided seem to have a unique instructional capability for topics that involve social situations or problem solving, such as interpersonal solving, foreign language or second language learning (p. 26).

2.18. Studies on Social Network and Learning English in Iran

Barani (2011) investigated the relationship between CALL and listening skill of Iranian EFL learners. His results suggested that there was a statistically significant difference between CALL users and nonusers in favor of the experimental group ($p < .05$).

Ghalami and Ahangari (2012) explored the impact of CALL on enhancing Iranian EFL learners' task-based listening as a motivating device to improve formation of positive attitudes. Their findings indicated that there was a meaningful difference between the experimental and control groups; that is to say, the participants in experimental group

performed better than those in control group and obtained a higher average. The motivation of the experimental group participants was also higher compare to those in control group.

Edalati Shams (2013) investigated the effects of hybrid learning on Iranian EFL learners' autonomy in vocabulary learning. Hybrid Learning (HL), according to Bärenfänger (2005, as cited in Edalati Shams, 2013), is a learning approach including traditional classroom learning, computer-assisted language learning (CALL), and self-directed learning (SDL). According to Edalati Shams' findings a few of the learners manifested a considerable level of autonomy in learning from the outset. They were used to watching movies, reading books, listening to music, surfing the net, and gaming in English and outnumbered others in posts and comments they published on the weblog. The quantitative analysis proved that these already autonomous learners obtained the most significant gains throughout this HL course regarding both vocabulary knowledge and level of autonomy. Learners, mostly, had positive views on employing modern technology for the purpose of learning. The need for learner training and the significance of computer literacy were both expressed by the learners and witnessed by the researcher throughout the course. CALL and traditional classroom learning played complementary roles and each supplemented the disadvantages of another. Drawback to the use of weblogs observed in this course was regarding the a-synchronicity of communication in a weblog. Regarding the learners' responses to the autonomy questionnaire at the beginning and end of the course, a statistically significant difference was found between the mean scores of the two sets of scores the learners got at the questionnaire which means that there was an improvement in the learners' level of autonomy after participating in the HL course (ibid). To sum up, the results of Edalati Shams (2013) indicated that learners' autonomy level and vocabulary knowledge increased at the end of HL course.

Fatemi and Alisahi (2015) explored the effect of employing smart board in enhancement of English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners' speaking and listening skills. Forty lower-intermediate EFL students were selected from Kashmar, Iran. They were assigned to control and experimental groups. Participants in experimental group were provided with a smart board as a teaching tool while those in the control group were taught using a traditional white board. Smart board was found as an effective tool in educational contexts which can significantly influence learners' academic performance and autonomy. These results provide pedagogical implications for utilizing smart board as an effective educational tool in EFL contexts where technology will replace traditional teaching techniques and even teachers; as a result autonomous EFL students will learn independently from their teaches.

Alemi and Lari (2014) investigated the effectiveness of short message service (SMS) on Iranian university students' vocabulary learning and retention. To this end, 28 university students were chosen to take part in the experiment. After administering a pretest and during 16 weeks of experiments, they were taught almost all words of Academic Word List (Coxhead, 2000) via SMS. At the end of the experiment, they were given a vocabulary test, to see the effect of mobile technology on their vocabulary learning and retention. Then, their pre and post test scores were compared using a dependent t -test. The result of t-test for vocabulary test ($t = 10.63$ $p < .05$) showed that their vocabulary knowledge had improved significantly in post- test compared to pre -test. Also they were administered a delayed post-test the result of which showed that besides having a positive effect on vocabulary knowledge, SMS affects students vocabulary retention positively. The result of this study can have pedagogical implication for language teachers, in that they can use SMS as a useful way of teaching large numbers of vocabularies.

In a study conducted in Iran, Derakhshan and kaivanpanah (2011) assessed the effectiveness of SMS on university students' vocabulary learning. During the experiment which lasted for seven weeks, the participants were taught fifteen to twenty words each session and were asked to work in groups to talk about the words. Then the experimental groups were told to send a sentence for each word taught in class to researcher and to three of their classmates. The participants of the control group were asked to write sentences on paper and bring it to the class. The practice of producing output helped to make input comprehensible for students. According to cognitive psychologist shaving opportunity to produce language helps to make input more comprehensible and learners can construct their own understanding of the language (Warschauer & Meskill, 2000). The result of the post test showed that the experimental group had higher scores than the control group; that is they outperformed the control group in vocabulary retention. Also a delayed post test was administered two weeks later to compare the long term effect of mobile vocabulary learning. It was found that there was no significant difference between the two groups. This result is in line with Lu (2008) in that the participants, scores diminished in the delayed post- test and none reached the significant level. However, in both studies, experimental group had more vocabulary gain compared to control group.

Kabiri and Khatibi (2013) studied two hundred and fifty Iranian EFL learners concerning their use of mobile devices. Drawing on questionnaire and interview data, the paper examines how far the devices were embedded in the personal and professional lives of these learners, most of whom were aged 25-36. All had experience of online and distance education, and

most worked in education or training. The study revealed some innovative uses of mobile devices, a selection of which is reported in this paper. The paper links the findings to wider debates about the changing relationship between learners and educational institutions, and the role of mobile devices in enabling individuals to engage in learning conversations. Data are provided on which devices were used by the learners and for what purposes, and the paper explores the implications of these findings for educators.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of using telegram application on English pronunciation of EFL learners. Therefore, this chapter presents the design of the study. It provides relevant information regarding the participants of the study, the material, and the instruments which are used, the process of conducting the research study and the way through which the collected data are analyzed.

3.2. Participants

60 lower intermediate EFL learners both male and female were chosen from Zaban-e-No English Institute and they participated in a homogeneity test which is OPT test involving grammar and vocabulary tests. Then, the participants were randomly assigned into two independent groups in which the experimental group was taught pronunciation by using telegram application, while the control group was taught under traditional pronunciation teaching all in three sessions.

3.3. Instruments

Two instruments were used in this study: First two researcher-developed English pronunciation tests (pre-test and post-test) and then a standard questionnaire.

3.3.1. English Pronunciation Test

An English pronunciation test (pre-test, post-test) was developed by the researcher consisting of oral test and written test including multiple choice and open ended questions to check the students' pronunciation. Cronbach's Alpha was used to measure the reliability of the test. In order to confirm the validity of the test, three professors in Azad University were asked to read it and give their opinions. Pre-test was given to know about the participants' English pronunciation before treatment and post-test clarified the effectiveness of using social network on English pronunciation and finally the learners' pronunciation were measured through comparing their scores with the scores of pre-test and post-test.

3.3.2. Questionnaire

In order to check the students' attitude on using social network and its effect on language learning and pronunciation a standard questionnaire by Yikay et.al (2014) was used. The questionnaire was designed by a research team in order to obtain the best possible output. The questionnaire consists of different forms of questions, namely Multiple Choice Questions, Open-Ended Questions, Yes/No Questions, and Scaled Questions (Likert Scale and Ranking Scale). These questions have been designed and brainstormed by the team to obtain required information for research purposes. A series of Likert-Scale questions were given to the students. The reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed through Cronbach's alpha and its validity was confirmed by consulting with some experts in English learning.

3.4. Materials

The participants of this study were chosen from lower intermediate level learners who study *American English File Itextbook*. Therefore, three vocabulary sections were chosen from the vocabulary bank of this textbook and pronunciation of each section were taught in three sessions regarding intonation and stress in both word level and sentence level. The vocabularies covered different topics such as food, social life and exercise. To do this purpose, the new words from the chosen texts were taught and their pronunciations were practiced.

3.5. The Research Design

An experimental group and a control group separately participated in two different situations of teaching pronunciation firstly through using telegram application and then through traditional method of teaching and the results were compared. Both pre-test and post-test comprised the same instructor, vocabulary bank, teaching time and testing time.

3.6. Data Collection Procedures

An experimental group and a control group separately participated in two different situations of teaching pronunciation in the classroom by using telegram application and also the other group through traditional method of teaching vocabulary.

In the former situation “telegram” social network was used while through which many online users can chat and have social interactions. In addition, the application is mostly used via cellphones which make the people able to make groups and invite other users to join. All the participants of the experimental group were asked to install this application on their cellphones and they were also trained to run the application on mobile phones and tablet PCs and join online groups. Then, three phases of teaching pronunciation were used in each session. Thus, pre-task was done in which the topic of vocabulary section was defined and essential vocabularies were introduced by the teacher and the students typed them on their device and they were allowed to check them up in online dictionaries in order to listen to vocabularies pronunciation, follow them in different examples in order to check the stress and intonation of the vocabularies in both word and sentence. The second stage which is called “task cycle” was done in telegram groups where the participants were classmates. So, the students were allowed to chat and talk about the pronunciation, intonation and stress of vocabularies in word level and in sentence level and rehearse their report before presenting it in front of the whole class. The last phase was “language focus” in which specific language features that learners encountered in the task were examined and analyzed by online testing. Some practice of language features and feedback on the students’ performance were appropriate at this stage. For example they could give comment on each other’s’ performance by using stickers and etc. and they could be introduced as the strategies to improve the pronunciation of the learned vocabularies.

Participants in the control group received ordinary classroom pronunciation instruction in three sessions. In order to teach the pronunciation of new words, the learners were asked to close their books and then the procedure in the theoretical framework were adopted here too.

Finally, a post-test was administered to the students in both groups to check their pronunciation learning and the last step was a delayed test which was given to the students two weeks later in order to check the students’ pronunciation in both control group and experimental group.

3.7. Data Analysis Procedure

The collected data were analyzed by using different statistical means such as t-test, Leven test, Mann–Whitney test to interpret the data obtained and to compare the pronunciation in both control and experimental groups.

Chapter Four

Data Presentation and Results

4.1. Introduction

This chapter contains the descriptive findings and the inferential findings. To determine the effect of telegram application as a social network on improving pronunciation of EFL learners to see how much it may be applicable in solving the problematic areas of pronunciation, ANCOVA and dependent and independent t-test were used to compare two methods of teaching pronunciation and to know the difference between male and female learners and to examine their attitudes toward using this social network application.

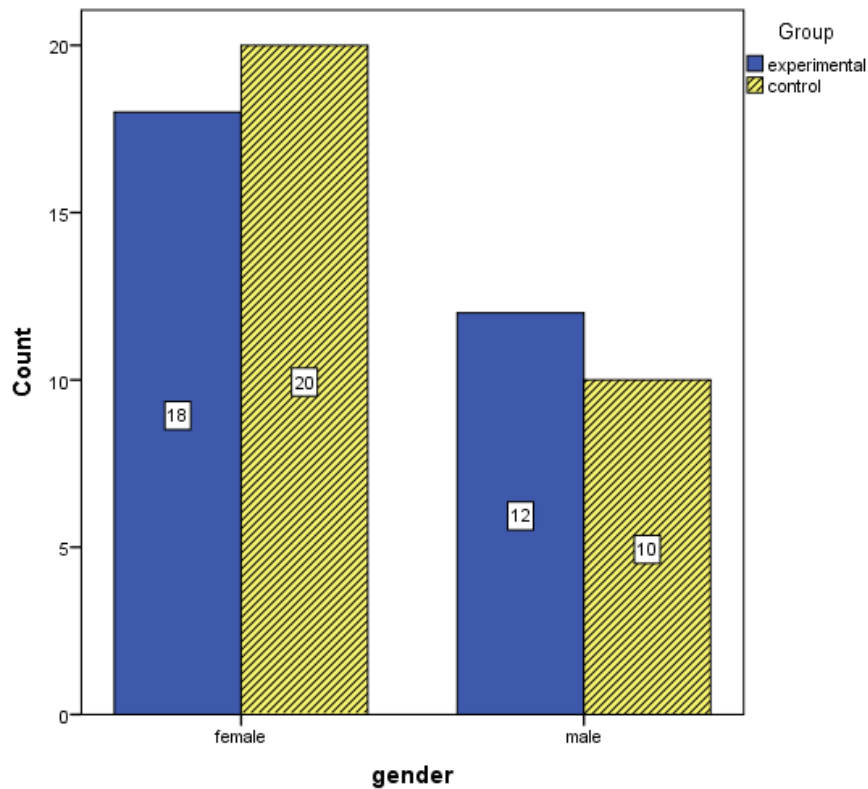
4.2. Demographic Information

4.2.1. Frequency Distribution of Students according to their Gender

According to data analysis, 30 students (50%) were female and 30 students (50%) were male and each experimental group contained 18 female students and 12 male students and the control group contained 20 female students and 10 male students. The table and graph below show the frequency distribution of the students by gender.

Table 4.1 *Gender distribution of the students*

Group * gender Cross tabulation					
			gender		Total
			female	male	
Group	Experimental	Count	18	12	30
		% within Group	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
		Count	20	10	30
Group	Control	% within Group	66.67%	33.33%	100.0%
		Count	30	30	60
		% within Group	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	30	30	60
		% within Group	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%



Graph 4.1. Box graph of frequency distribution of students according to their gender

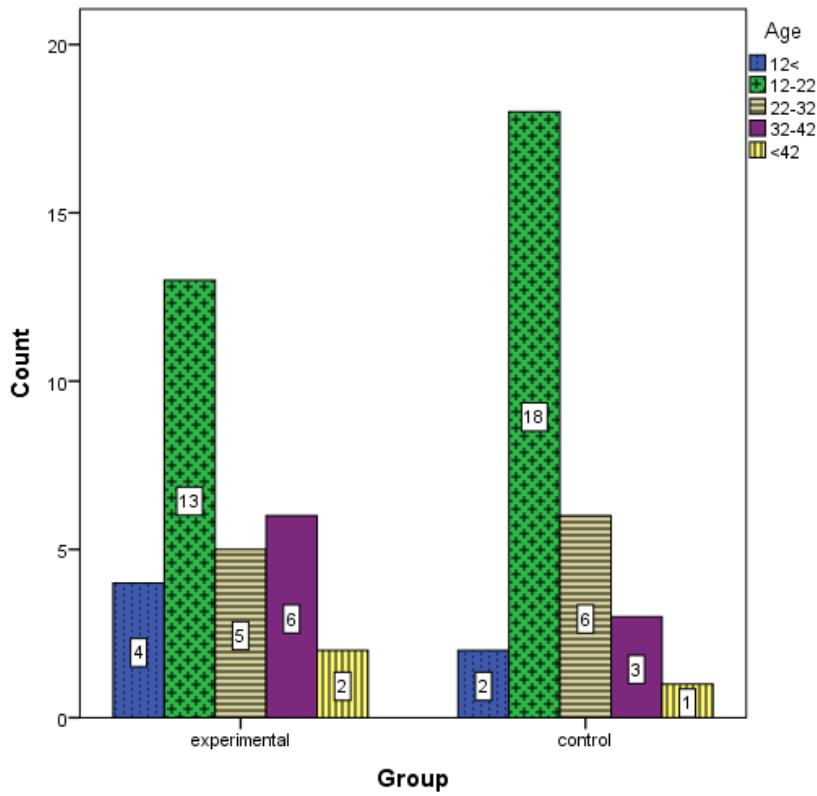
4.2.2. Frequency distribution of students according to their age

According to data analysis, in term of the students' age among 60 subjects, 6 students (10%) were lower than 12 years old, 31 students (51.7%) were between 12-22, 11 students (18.3%) were between 22-32, 9 students(15%) were between 32-42 and 3 students (5%) were higher than 42. Table 4.2 showed the frequency distribution of students according to their age.

Besides the box graph of frequency distribution of students according to their age was shown in graph 4.2.

Table4.2. Frequency distribution of students according to their age

		Group * Age Cross tabulation					Total	
		Age						
		12<	12-22	22-32	32-42	<42		
Group	Experimental	Count	4	13	5	6	2	30
		% within Group	13.3%	43.3%	16.7%	20.0%	6.7%	100.0%
	Control	Count	2	18	6	3	1	30
		% within Group	6.7%	60.0%	20.0%	10.0%	3.3%	100.0%
Total		Count	6	31	11	9	3	60
		% within Group	10.0%	51.7%	18.3%	15.0%	5.0%	100.0%



Graph 4.2. Box graph of frequency distribution of students according to their age

4.3. The Analysis of Research Hypothesis

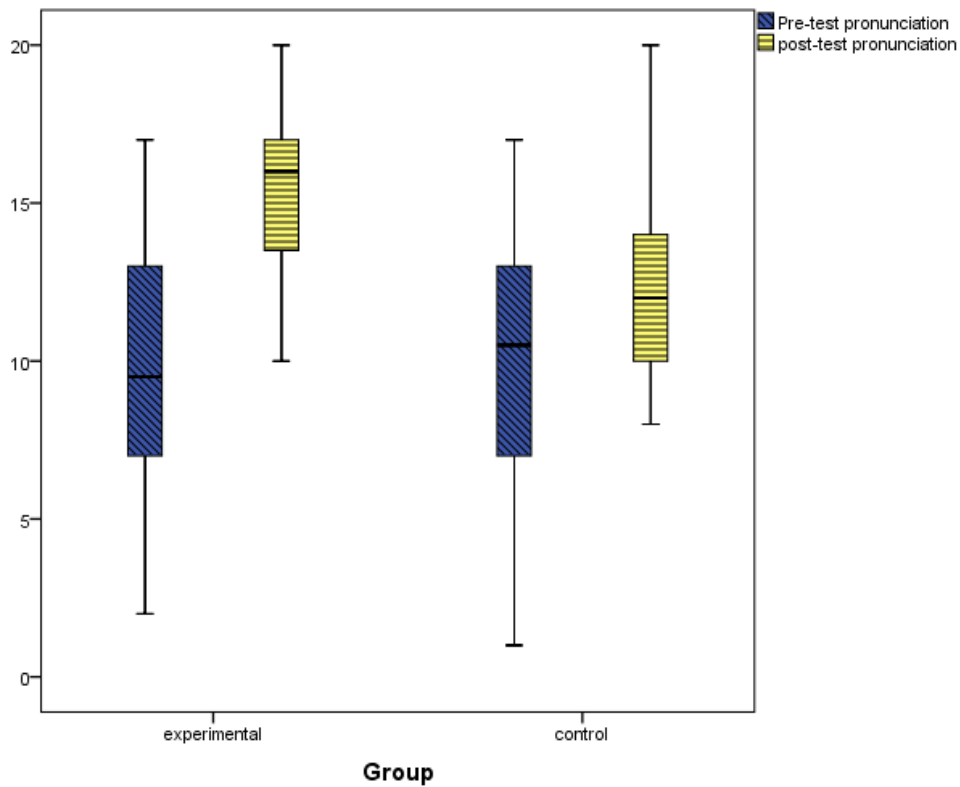
4.3.1. Analyzing Hypothesis 1

H1. Using telegram application significantly affects the English pronunciation of EFL learners.

Table4.3. *Descriptive statistics of pre-test and post-test scores of pronunciation in experimental and control groups*

Group Statistics				
	Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-test pronunciation	Experimental	30	9.67	0.68
	Control	30	9.63	0.81
Post-test pronunciation	Experimental	30	15.22	0.52
	Control	30	12.27	0.63

Among 30 students who were thought through using telegram application, the mean scores of pronunciation in the pretest was 9.67 and in the post-test, it was measured 15.22, while regarding 30 students of control group who were thought through the traditional strategy, the mean scores of the pretest in the pronunciation was 9.63 and in the post-test it was measured 12.27 (Table 4.3). Also in the following box graph, according to the median, interquartile range and variation range, distribution of the pronunciation scores of students in the control group and experimental group has been considered (Graph 4.3).



Graph4.3. Box graph to compare mean scores of pre-test and post-test of application and traditional strategy groups

Table4.4. Homogeneity of coefficient (slope) regression

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects							
Dependent Variable: post-test pronunciation							
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power ^b
Corrected Model	354.764	3	118.255	18.367	.001	.496	1.000
Intercept	752.67	1	752.67	116.904	.001	.676	1.000
Pretest	199.935	1	199.935	31.054	.001	.357	1.000
Groups	42.936	1	42.936	6.669	.012	.106	.718
Pretest * Groups	5.748	1	5.748	.893	.349	.016	.153
Error	360.548	56	6.438				
Total	12052.188	60					
Corrected Total	715.311	59					

To evaluate the homogeneity of regression coefficients (slope), a GLM analysis of variance two-factor was used and as it has been shown in the Table 4.4, p value is 0.349 that is higher than the significance level of 0.05. As a result, it can be concluded that data follow Homogeneity of covariate regression *coefficients* (slope), thus, ANCOVA test can be used.

Table4.5. ANCOVA analysis to examine the effect of telegram application on pronunciation

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects							
Dependent Variable: post-test pronunciation							
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power ^b
Corrected Model	349.016	2	174.508	27.156	.001	.488	1.000
Intercept	750.729	1	750.729	116.823	.001	.672	1.000
Pretest	217.740	1	217.740	20.211	.001	.373	1.000
Groups	129.879	1	129.879	33.426	.001	.262	0.993
Error	366.295	57	6.426				
Total	12052.188	60					
Corrected Total	715.311	59					

a. R Squared = .488 (Adjusted R Squared = .470)

b. Computed using alpha = .05

Regarding ANCOVA table, since the calculated p value is 0.001 which is lower than significant level of 0.05 ($\alpha=0.05$), therefore, H0 is rejected at this level (H1 is accepted). Thus, the mean scores of the pronunciation in telegram application group (15.217) were significantly higher than the mean scores of the pronunciation in the traditional strategy group (12.275). Therefore, using telegram application significantly affects the English pronunciation of EFL learners. Finally, regarding partial Eta squared, the impact of using telegram application on EFL learners' pronunciation was measured 26.2% (Table 4.5).

4.3.1.1. The Model Validity

Normality of Scores

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was used to examine the normality of score distribution of pronunciation among telegram application and traditional strategy groups in both pre-test and post-test.

Table 4.6. *One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test*

		post-test pronunciation
N		60
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	13.746
	Std. Deviation	3.482
	Most Extreme Differences	
	Absolute	.108
	Positive	.092
	Negative	-.108
Test Statistic		0.108
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.077

Since p-value which is calculated value in Kolmogorov - Smirnov test was higher than 0.05 in all variables, so normality assumption of data distribution was not rejected. Therefore, there is no violation from statistical model and it can be concluded that both pre-test and post-test scores in telegram application and traditional strategy groups are confirmed (Table 4.6).

Table 4.7. *Levene's test for equality of variances in pre-test and post-test*

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances	
	F	Sig.
Post- test pronunciation	0.025	.874

As it can be seen in table 4.7, the equality of variances in pre-test and post-test has been measured through leven test. Since the calculated p in Leven test is higher than 0.05,

therefore, the variance equality assumption is not rejected. Thus, there is no violation from statistical model and it can be concluded that the variance between telegram application group and traditional strategy group in both pre-test and post-test is the same (table 4.7).

4.3.2. Analyzing Hypotheses2

H1. Male and female learners are different in terms of using telegram application and improvement of pronunciation skill.

Levene test was used to examine the variance equality and since p (significance value) was 0.335 higher than 0.05 , so H0 was not rejected. Therefore, the variance of the groups are equal and a parametric test can be used (Table 4.9).

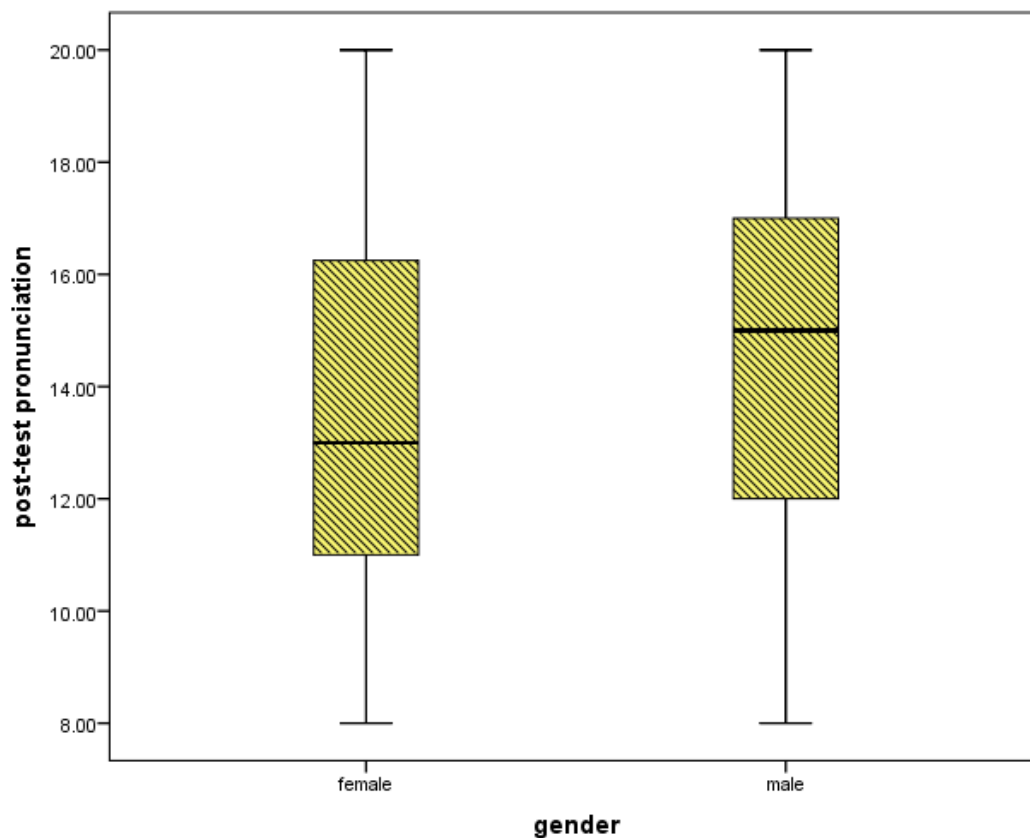
4.8. *Descriptive statistics of pre-test and post-test scores of pronunciation test in male and female students under telegram application group*

Group Statistics				
	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
post-test pronunciation	Female	38	13.33	3.5
	Male	22	14.45	3.4

Table4.9. *Independent t-test in male and female students under using telegram application*

Independent Samples Test											
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper	
post-test pronunciation	Equal variances assumed	.011	.917	-1.204	58	.233	-1.12	0.93	-2.98	0.74	
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.204	45	.231	-1.12	0.92	-2.98	0.74	

Comparing the mean scores of the pronunciation tests regarding the students' gender in telegram application group showed that in the descriptive level, the pronunciation scores of the male students were higher ($M = 14.45$, $SD = 3.4$) than the mean scores of the female students ($M = 13.33$, $SD = 3.5$). According to the equality of variances, an independent t test was used and the results showed that the calculated p value was 0.233 which was higher than the significance level of 0.05, so the null hypothesis is not rejected and it is concluded that there is no significant difference between the two male and female groups. In conclusion, it should be noted that the pronunciation scores of male and female students are not significantly different. Thus, the effect of using telegram application on the pronunciation scores of both male and female students were almost identical (Table 4.9 and graph 4.4)



Graph 4.4. Box graph in male and female students under using telegram application

4.3.3. Analyzing Hypothesis 3

H1. EFL learners have a positive attitude toward the use of social network in pronouncing their learned vocabulary.

Table4.10. *Frequency distribution of the EFL learners' attitudes toward the use of social network in pronouncing their learned vocabulary*

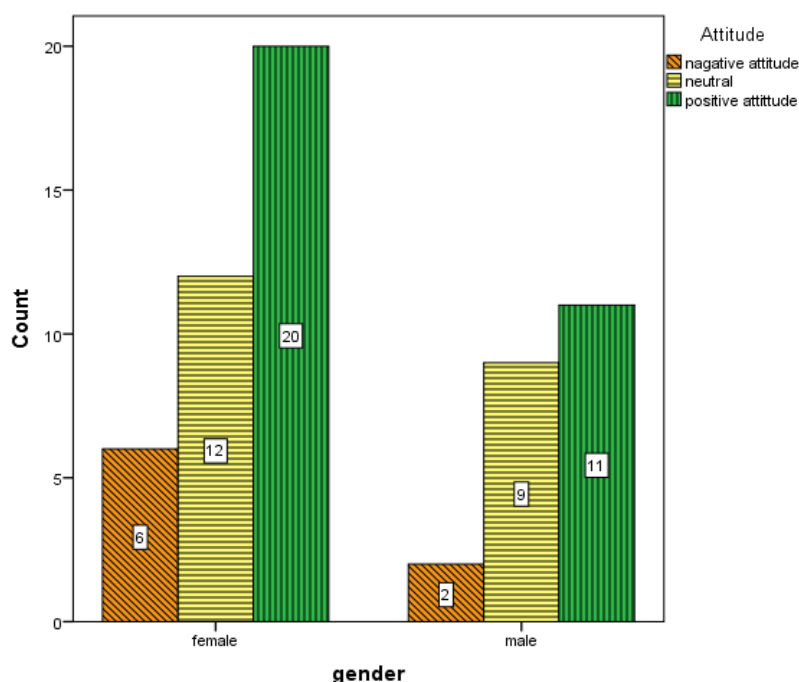
			Frequency	Percent
Female	Valid	Negative attitude	6	15.8
		Neutral	12	31.6
		Positive attitude	20	52.6
		Total	38	100
Male	Valid	Negative attitude	2	9.1
		Neutral	9	40.9
		Positive attitude	11	50
		Total	22	100

According to the table above, among 38 female students, 6 (15.8%) had a negative attitude toward using telegram in order to improve their pronunciation skills, 12 (31.6%) had a neutral attitude and 20 (52.6%) had a positive attitude. In the male group who were 22 learners, 2 (9.1%) had negative attitudes toward using telegram application, 9 (40.9%) had neutral attitude and 11 (50%) had positive attitudes (Table 4.10 and Graph 4.5).

Regarding the test statistic ($t = 2.39$) in female group, since p-value (significance) was 0.022 and lower than the significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$, so at this level H_0 is rejected, and so there is a significant difference between the obtained mean and theoretical mean (test value) and since the value of the t-test and the difference in means are positive, it shows that the obtained mean is higher than the theoretical mean (test value). Therefore, it can be said that female learners have a positive attitude toward using Telegram to improve pronunciation skills. Based on the test statistic ($t = 3.45$) in the male group, since the p value (significance) is equal to 0.002 and it is smaller than the significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$, so at this level H_0 is rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference between the obtained mean and the theoretical mean (test value) and since the t-test and the difference in means are positive, the obtained mean is higher than the theoretical mean (test value). Therefore, it can be concluded that male learners have also a positive attitude toward using telegram to improve their pronunciation skills (Table 4-11).

Table4.11. *One sample t-test scores to examine the attitudes of female and male learners on using telegram to improve pronunciation skills*

Gender		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						Lower	Upper
Female	Attitude	2.39	37	.022	2.84	.43	5.25
Male	Attitude	3.45	21	.002	4.54	1.81	7.28



Graph 4.5. Frequency distribution of the EFL learners' attitudes toward using social network in pronouncing their learned vocabulary

4.4. Conclusion

In this chapter, data analysis was done through results of pronunciation test and questionnaire which were taken from male and female EFL students by using SPSS22. The results showed that using telegram application improves the students' English pronunciation skill. Meanwhile, there is no significant difference between male and female EFL students in pronunciation under using telegram and also both male and female learners have a positive attitude toward using telegram application in improving their pronunciation.

Chapter Five

Results and Implications

5.1. Introduction

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the effect of telegram application as a social network on English pronunciation of EFL learners and to examine the attitude of EFL learners toward the use of social network in improving English pronunciation and also to find the difference between male and female learners in terms of using telegram application and its effect on improving the pronunciation. This chapter provides a summary and conclusions of the study undertaken, the discussions which are drawn, the pedagogical implications as well as limitations of the study along with suggestions for further research.

5.2. Summary of the Study

This study was conducted to examine the impact of using telegram application on improving pronunciation of EFL learners and to know their attitudes toward using social networks in learning English especially pronunciation skill. An experimental group and a control group separately participated in two different situations of teaching pronunciation through using telegram application and through traditional method of teaching pronunciation then the results were compared with the scores of traditional strategy which was taken earlier. Both pre-test and post-test comprised the same instructor, pronunciation test, teaching time and testing time.

Thus, the researcher has conducted an investigation to find out if the use of telegram as a social network in practicing and teaching pronunciation may increase the students' learning, and if this strategy can create a more positive class atmosphere and it is appropriate in teaching pronunciation. Therefore, it was generally an attempt to assess the effectiveness of a CALL strategy among two groups of English learners whose English is a foreign language for them. The first part of this study dealt with stating the problem and reviewing the related literature on pronunciation significance. It was evident with the development of mobile assisted learning and teaching which shifted the attention of the teaching-learning processes from language form to language function, or to language use in accordance with the needs of learners in social community. The second part was an attempt to elaborate on the experiment and the results. To meet this goal, a total of 38 female and 22 male EFL language learners who were studying in Zaban-e-No English Institute were chosen. The subjects were earlier participated in a homogeneity test namely; Oxford placement test. Afterward, a pronunciation test which was designed by the researcher from the American English File textbook was used

both as a pre-test and a post-test to two experimental and control groups. Then, the obtained scores from the administration of this test and the pre-test were correlated.

Using a known statistical evaluation tool SPSS 22, the researcher evaluated the students answers firstly, based on the differences in the students answers according to the experimental and control group results and secondly, based on the differences between male and female students answers to the same test. An experimental study was carried out and data were analyzed using statistical means such as ANCOVA, Leven's test, independent t-tests to evaluate the results of experimental and control groups as well as differences in results of male and female students' tests and also the results of the questionnaire to examine their attitudes toward using telegram.

5.3. Conclusion

The ability to pronounce words effectively is vital to functioning in everyday life. One of the most important challenges that learners will face during the process of second language learning is pronunciation. As it was mentioned previously, according to Wang and Vasquez (2012) the focus of research and pedagogy has shifted from a cognitive orientation to a social orientation, from classroom context to naturalistic setting, and foreign language learning to foreign language use. Then the concept of collaboration is recognized as critical factor to determine successful foreign language learning. According to Foote (2009), one of the choices that the teachers make for increasing students' motivation is learning in small groups as collaboration has a significant effect on promoting active learning. And this collaborative learning takes on variety forms in an active process such as use of computer technology as a medium and tool. Today social network as a facilitator get the students engaged in collaborative learning. Besides, there are many researchers conducting the studies to provide the implications on the use of social network in foreign language classes. Teaching a language implies four skills of speaking, writing, listening, and reading, each of which needs different techniques and activities. Today teaching pronunciation is one of the problems the teachers face with as most of the students are not satisfied with their learning methods. Therefore, students' motivation in learning has become an important fact for the teachers. Here, in this research learning use of social network in pronunciation skill has been studied.

Pronunciation has been recognized as crucial to language use in which the learners' lack of correct pronunciation leads to difficulties in second language learning.

As it was discussed before, learning in social networks can make the learners more motivated in cooperation and this cooperation can lead to students' active learning promotion. In this study the effect of implementing social networks on the pre-intermediate EFL learners' pronunciation improvement has been studied. Here to answer the first and second questions, the data in table 4.1 to 4.9 can help. The data indicates that the learners who used social networks – telegram – benefited from the processes to teaching and improving their pronunciation ability although the difference between the performances of the two groups was not that much significant to indicate deep and significant difference between the two approaches used by the teacher or by the learner in class. In fact, this study shows that use of social network had a positive effect on pronunciation improvement although it was not that much significant between male and female learners.

To answer the second question, the attitude of the learners toward the use of social network on pronunciation skill, the data gathered by a questionnaire was considered. Here, some questions were proposed out of which the required data were proposed and the required data were taken out of the responses provided by the participants.

One of the questions was about the advantages of using social networks as an effective tool in the process of learning pronunciation, because it involves audio recordings, videos, and pictures. And their provided answers showed that everyone likes visuals tools a lot and in case of collaboration it was revealed that the shy learners share in the activities in social network better than face to face, and they can correct each others' errors. They can also feel independent of the teacher. Besides, the learners depend on their own abilities, and they are not afraid of making errors.

Another question in relation with the attitude of the learners toward the implementing social network considered the limitations of traditional methods like writing reflection paper and getting feedback in the lesson. The answers indicate that the class is too crowded, and the teacher has little control over the activities. Another crucial thing was that if a person has good, average or poor commands of English pronunciation, how the usage of social networking sites will affect his proficiency. The gathered data shows that this method can only be used for average and good learners and poor learners cannot improve their pronunciation in social networks. Furthermore, it is not suitable to teach language components and it is only helpful when the learners need no teacher.

But, looking generally on all answers it is clear that they believe the students need their teacher, too. Besides, it cannot improve all the aspects of language and it cannot be said that all the learners are satisfied with this method while this is effective since the learners have time to learn and think of the problems.

Overly, about the second research question on the learners' attitude toward such a learning method, it can be said that based on the collected data, the learners have been fairly satisfied with the use of social network. So it might be said that there are some limitations for them such as lack of teacher's collaboration in overcoming the learners' problem and removing their limitation. Besides, the learners should be controlled as the use of social network has become common among the teenagers and they might use it for something else rather than doing some useful activities.

The results of the study are in line with the findings of Slavin , (1989), Pica, (1994), Gaith, (2003), and Chin (2004), whose results provided evidence for the positive effectiveness of mobile assisted learning strategies on pronunciation.

However, the results of this study are not in line with Kubra Sik (2014) in which she stated that learning English through traditional learning is more effective than the mobile assisted learning strategies. She concluded that when the academical success of the students is considered, deductive teaching and teacher-centered learning is slightly more effective than inductive teaching and mobile assisted learning strategies although this difference is not significant according to statistical data. Another main finding of her study is that lecturers feel better when they teach English deductively. These findings suggest that in teaching English to adult learners, lecturers should be aware of the needs and perceptions of their students.

Besides, the interests of both male and female students were directed to telegram application as a group work which showed that these forms of learning are very helpful tools in presenting and drilling forms of pronunciation, since they draw learners' attention and make these often boring activities more enjoyable. And that is exactly what teachers need when presenting new language – to catch their learners' full attention, to raise their interest in the presented subject and hence also their motivation. At the same time telegram application enables the students to link cooperative learning with real-world team work immediately. When using telegram application in presentation, it is easy to involve learners actively and to

combine the presentation with controlled practice. The presentation of pronunciation with telegram application can be done in lots of various ways, for example in repeating and memorizing the stresses and intonations based on a set of vocabulary for a particular topic. On top of that, those two can be indeed combined and applied together, e.g. in a matching or labeling activity.

Social networks can encourage and reinforce every member of each group to work with emphasis on cooperative partnership and group activities. On the other hand, low level learners can get benefit from their pairs within each group in consulting them and being guided in learning. Also, the role of the teacher has undergone some changes. It turned into guiding his students to learn, encouraging them, and reinforcing them to accomplish the activities they had to do and facilitating teaming.

Since acquiring a second language, involves different areas such as motivation learner`s need, learning environment, interest and language awareness, it is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore the role of interest. In any event, interest, defined by Suzanne as "a unique motivational variable, as well as a psychological state that occurs during interactions between persons and their objects of interest, and it is characterized by increased attention, concentration and affect"(2006, p.70). Therefore, according to the results of this study interest to learning by social networks is a motivational variable that involves not only the emotions but also the intellect, making it a powerful energizer indeed, and the learners like to work together and they feel responsible for each others' learning which can lead to learners language acquisition and make this process happens with a higher speed.

Therefore, strategies like these according to Weimer (2002) diminish test anxiety and reduce the temptation to cheat.

5.4. Pedagogical Implications

According to Moon and Lim (2013) as internet facilitates interactive information sharing and online collaboration most of the teachers are looking for a way to use web-based tools to help the students improve their language skills. In fact, education has been changed in general by internet technologies and social network. based on the result of this study using social network in pronunciation can make the students be more motivated in learning and help them

improve their pronunciation skill as they can learn in a real context by communicating with their participants. They can share their knowledge or ideas about a topic.

To apply such a method, the learners' age and level are two important factors as this method might not be suitable for children or basic level students. Children have to use such facilities under the control of the teacher or their parents and it is not easy to do so. Besides, they might want to try anything new which can be harmful for them. Also before using such methods they have to be familiar with some principles. Therefore, it is too early for them to use these technologies. About the adult, it can be said that they try to follow anything new and more interesting in social network for example, they mostly follow news and they are not that much eager to use these facilities to help them learn something. Besides, their time is more limited than the teenagers' time.

5.5. Suggestions for Further Research

In this study few attempts have been made to study the effect of implementing social network on the pre-intermediate EFL learners' pronunciation improvement. Besides, the attitude of the EFL learners toward this method has been investigated. The present study was done among 60 students of Zaban-e-No English Institute, both male and female.

Clearly the research has covered a limited population of the learners. Therefore, this study can be done in a different context such as school or on teachers rather than students. Besides, it can be done in a larger population to reach a more reliable result.

The present study has been done in Iran by its own particular culture and social characteristics. Then, by expanding the area of the investigation, the result can be more reliable.

Learners carry their dispositions about learning to the classroom and it is a challenging task to satisfy all learners' needs. It is essential that research be conducted and examined based on the learning-orientations of EFL learners at the beginning of their English course. It is essential to understand whether the learners who received education from different regional backgrounds and different types of schools hold similar dispositions. Such knowledge can contribute to better understanding of the differences in their performance and accordingly develop and implement necessary curricula and activities and evaluations.

However, attitude questions that directly measure the impact of the learning activities need to be conducted and correlated with the learning style of learners. Such questions may

enable English instructors to construct new perspectives concerning their instructional choices. Since there are a variety of choices in instructing pronunciation, being aware of learners' learning styles can provide better insights for the English instructors to apply the appropriate approach of instruction and activities. Besides, this could provide more perspectives, insights, and findings.

5.6. Discussion of Limitations and Delimitations

It goes without saying that every study faces a number of limitations and delimitations which cannot be avoided. The first limitation is since the researcher had access to a limited number of participants, it decreased the generalizability of the findings. Second, the time for each class was 90 minutes according to the school rules which was too long and made the students tired. The delimitations of the study were as follow; first, the sample population involved in this study was limited to a specific population in a specified location. Second, the evaluation was concerned with assessing lower intermediate students, so the findings cannot be generalized to other grades. Besides, the test to homogenize the students; Oxford Placement Test (OPT) can be conducted for special studies and therefore may not be applied in different circumstances. For example in this study the students who studied in the mentioned institute were not good enough in vocabularies of OPC while grammar questions were easy to them.

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Appendix

Please put a tick (✓) next to the relevant part

1. Please select your gender.

Male Female

2. Please select your age group.

< 15 years

15-24 years

25-34 years

35-45 years

> 45 years

Please chose the best answer

1. What language do you prefer to use when you communicate with your friends using the social networking sites?

English Persian

2. How often do you use the social networking sites?

a. Daily

b. 3 to 5 times a week

c. Less than 2 times a week

3. As a student, which do you think is the best media to learn English pronunciation from? (more than one answer is possible)

a. Newspaper

b. Social networking sites

c. Magazine

d. Radio

e. Television programs

f. Materials provided in school

4. Do you agree that social networks like Telegram can enhance your English pronunciation?

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

5. How do you rate the English pronunciation of your friends when they communicate with you via telegram and mobile phone?

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

6. Do you think the way of using English in telegram affect the language proficiency of the students negatively?

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

7. Do you think telegram channels and groups are useful for pronunciation learning?
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
8. Can they provide pronunciation knowledge in a new creative manner?
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
9. Are they an effective tool in the process of learning pronunciation, because it involves audio recordings, videos, and pictures?
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
10. Do they promote collaboration (i.e. they are beneficial to share different pronunciations by using them.)
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
11. Do they create a suitable environment for class discussion?
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
12. Does interacting with your friends and teachers outside the class helps you recapitulate the previous pronunciation knowledge of the course topic?
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
13. Do they enable you each time you need to go back to certain pronunciation knowledge discussed before, you find them because they are stored?
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
14. Can you get quick feedback with the help of them?
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
15. Are they more interesting than traditional methods like writing reflection paper and getting feedback in the lesson?
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree
16. Repetition and memorizing are good practices to improve pronunciation in telegram channels and group?
Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

17. Exposure to a big amount of pronunciation in telegram channels and group is a good practice to improve pronunciation?

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Strongly Agree

18. If a person has good command of English pronunciation, how do you think the usage of social networking sites will affect his proficiency?

Positive effect
Negative effect
No relationship

19. If a person has only an average command of English pronunciation, how do you think the usage of social networking sites will affect his proficiency?

Positive effect
Negative effect
No relationship

20. If a person has poor command of English pronunciation, how do you think the usage of social networking sites will affect his proficiency?

Positive effect
Negative effect
No relationship

الف. روزنامه

ب. سایت های شبکه های اجتماعی

ج. مجله

د. رادیو

د برنامه های تلویزیونی

ی. مطالب درسی

۴. به نظر شما شبکه های اجتماعی مانند تلگرام Telegram می توانند تلفظ انگلیسی را تقویت کنند؟

کاملاً مخالف مخالف نظری ندارم موافق کاملاً موافق

۵. آیا تلفظ انگلیسی دوستان خود را هنگام برقراری ارتباط با شما می توان از طریق تلگرام و تلفن همراه ارزیابی کرد؟

کاملاً مخالف مخالف نظری ندارم موافق کاملاً موافق

۶. آیا شما فکر می کنید که نحوه استفاده از زبان انگلیسی در تلگرام بر مهارت های زبانی دانش آموزان تاثیر منفی می گذارد؟

کاملاً مخالف مخالف نظری ندارم موافق کاملاً موافق

۷. آیا فکر می کنید کانال ها و گروه های تلگرام برای یادگیری تلفظ انگلیسی مفید هستند؟

کاملاً مخالف مخالف نظری ندارم موافق کاملاً موافق

۸. آیا آنها دانش تلفظ زبان را به شکلی خلاقانه بیان می کنند؟

کاملاً مخالف مخالف نظری ندارم موافق کاملاً موافق

۹. با توجه به اینکه کانال ها و گروه های تلگرام دارای ویژگی هایی همچون ضبط صدا، فیلم و تصاویر هستند آیا ابزارهای مفیدی در فرایند یادگیری تلفظ انگلیسی هستند؟

کاملاً مخالف مخالف نظری ندارم موافق کاملاً موافق

۱۰. آیا گروه ها و کانال های تلگرام حس همکاری را تقویت می کنند (به عبارتی آنها با اشتراک گذاری تلفظ های مختلف مفید هستند).

کاملاً مخالف مخالف نظری ندارم موافق کاملاً موافق

۱۱. آیا گروه ها و کانال های تلگرام محیط مناسب برای بحث در کلاس ایجاد می کنند؟

کاملاً مخالف مخالف نظری ندارم موافق کاملاً موافق

۱۲. آیا ارتباط برقرار کردن با دوستان و معلمان خارج از کلاس درس دانش قبلی تلفظ انگلیسی شما را تقویت می کند؟

کاملاً مخالف مخالف نظری ندارم موافق کاملاً موافق

۱۳. آیا هر زمان که نیاز به بازگشت به بحث مربوط به نوعی تلفظ خاص که قبلاً مورد بحث قرار گرفته بود باشید می توانید در بخش های ذخیره شده گروه ها و کانال های تلگرام آنها را بازیابی کنید؟

کاملاً مخالف مخالف نظری ندارم موافق کاملاً موافق

۱۴. آیا می توانید با کمک گروه ها و کانال های تلگرام بازخورد سریع از یک پست دریافت کنید؟

کاملاً مخالف مخالف نظری ندارم موافق کاملاً موافق

۱۵. آیا بازخورد گرفتن در گروه ها و کانال های تلگرام جالب تر از روش های سنتی مانند نوشتن نمره ی ارزیابی و یا بازخورد سر کلاس می باشند؟

کاملاً مخالف مخالف نظری ندارم موافق کاملاً موافق

۱۶. تکرار و حفظ کردن شیوه های تمرینی خوبی برای بهبود تلفظ در کانال ها و گروه های تلگرام هستند؟

کاملاً مخالف مخالف نظری ندارم موافق کاملاً موافق

۱۷. قرار گرفتن در معرض تلفظ های مختلف در کانال های تلگرام و گروه ها، تمرین خوبی برای بهبود تلفظ است؟

کاملاً مخالف مخالف نظری ندارم موافق کاملاً موافق

۱۸. اگر فردی تسلط خوبی بر تلفظ انگلیسی داشته باشد، آیا استفاده از سایتهای شبکه اجتماعی بر مهارت او تأثیر میگذارد؟

اثر مثبت اثر منفی بی اثر

۱۹. اگر فردی تسلط متوسطی بر تلفظ انگلیسی داشته باشد، آیا استفاده از سایتهای شبکه اجتماعی بر مهارت او تأثیر میگذارد؟

اثر مثبت اثر منفی بی اثر

۲۰. اگر فردی تسلط ضعیفی بر تلفظ انگلیسی داشته باشد، آیا استفاده از سایتهای شبکه اجتماعی بر مهارت او تأثیر میگذارد؟

اثر مثبت اثر منفی بی اثر