The Effect of Gender and Native Language of the Students on the Pronunciation of the Voiced and Voiceless /th/ English Sound

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Abstract: It is not beyond belief that for learners of a foreign language the pronunciation of that language is occasionally and somehow challenging to acquire. Particularly for Iranian students who have got different native languages in different areas of the country makes it an extremely perplexing activity for students to acquire such languages and correct pronunciations of the words of such languages. So there must be some factors affecting their pronunciation of such English controversial sounds. In order to become familiar with such factors the following study is carried on aiming at determining whether there is an association between such factors as students' gender and also native language regarding the correct pronunciation or mispronunciation of the words which contain the voiced and voiceless /th/ sound for nonnative learners of English who are Iranians with two diverse native languages, Arabic and Persian.

The statistical analysis indicated that there seemed to be no significant statistic association between gender and correct pronunciation of the words. The results also showed that students with Arabic native language pronounce the /th/ sound accurately and clearly in comparison to those students whose native language is Persian, while the Persian native language students mostly pronounce this sound incorrectly. The findings revealed that the reason that most of the Persian native speaker students didn't know how to pronounce this sound could be because of the lack of this sound in their native language and accordingly they had never acquired and used such a sound. The findings also depicted that one more significant reason which could be taken into consideration in this regard is lack of knowledgeable teachers who model and teach the students how to pronounce the sounds correctly.

The knowledge and acquaintance of EFL instructors, materials developers, and policy makers with these differences may hopefully offer benefits to them in order to teach the target language sound system in a more beneficial way and help the learners in order to better understand the differences and provide acceptable and beneficial teaching materials for the students.

Keywords: gender, native language, pronunciation

1. Introduction

On the subject of the pronunciation of the English sounds there are different point of views, some of the scholars in this area believe that all the learners ability to learn a language is the same for learning a first or second language, some other disagree and believe that teachers have problems in solving the students' pronunciation problems. It is so crystal clear and out of debate that Communication is essentially reliant on true pronunciation. True and accurate pronunciation is what makes the conversation easy to understand and follow, for conversers. Good pronunciation is essential for speaking and understanding spoken English well, accoding to Farzaneh, & Movahed (2014, p. 3186) As cited in Mirzaei et al (2015) "Even with a rich lexicon in the second language and familiarity with the structures and systems of the L2, our messages cannot be expressed correctly without correct pronunciation, rhythm, and intonation (Varol, 2012)."

It is also necessary to point out that there is no doubt that the learner of a second language would like to speak like native speaker, in order to do so they must do their best in order for their pronunciation of the words be like the native speaker. As a result, "the more similar one's pronunciation is to that of a native speaker, the more likely his speech will be recognized as intelligible and understandable (Derwing& Munro, 2005)."(ibid)

Becoming proficient at pronunciation in English as a Foreign Language context, where there is no native speaker available to model and follow makes it an extremely perplexing activity for students to acquire such languages and correct pronunciations of the words of such languages. As Geylanioğlu, & Dikilitaş, (2012) put it "The difficulty posed by pronunciation is closely related to little exposure to interaction with native speakers, distinctive phonological system of L1 as in Turkish, a shallow orthographic language" (p. 38). So it is not astonishing if we come across the fact that learners of a foreign language consider learning the pronunciation of that language so difficult to acquire and understand unless they have highly educated teachers with correct pronunciation and sufficient practice.

Ahmadi et al (2014) believes that pronunciation involves far more than individual sounds. She states Roach, 2004 definition of pronunciation as the sum of three components, which these three components are sounds, stress and intonation.

Khamkhien (2010) in other words define pronunciation as a global construct which consists of segmental (namely; consonant and vowels) and suprasegmental (that is to say: stress, intonation, rhythm, rate, volume) elements. He also exemplifies many studies in the area of speaking skills, "including speaking assessment (e.g., Chen, 2001; Li, 2003; Wang 2003), phonology language acquisition (e.g., Altmann, 2006; Waylan et al., 2006), problems of teaching and learning speaking skills (e.g., Goodwin, 2001; Lazaraton, 2001)" (ibid p.758).

He states that while concentrating on speaking skills, pronunciation is getting more attention in many EFL classrooms ever since it is acknowledged that students must predominantly attain it as an essential skill for the reason that it can influence accuracy and comprehension (Celce-Murcia et al., 2000; Derwing et al., 2006; Hahn, 2004).(ibid)

Hismanoglu (2009) mentions another perspective regarding the teaching of pronunciation. He believes that it is a substantial part of foreign language teaching. According to him sounds play an important role in communication, so consequently foreign language teachers must attribute appropriate significance to teaching pronunciation in their classes. While that's not the case most of the times, foreign language teachers in many countries neglect this point.

He also states some reasons for disregarding pronunciation by the teachers while teaching a foreign language in EFL classes in Turkey. He states the first reason is that pronunciation is not integrated into their programs or into the textbooks. The second reason is that the teachers rely on learners to improve their pronunciation through the other activities included in the curriculum without concentrating on pronunciation directly (Seferolu, 2005). And the third reason is that the phonological competence of the teachers, especially non-native ones, is not sufficient enough to teach both segmental features like consonants, vowels, and diphthongs and/or suprasegmental features namely stress, intonation, rhythm, and connected speech of the target language. (ibid p.1697)

2. **Review of the existing literature**

On the subject of the pronunciation of the English sounds so many researches and studies have been done. In a recent study by Mirza (2015), he states that in Lebanon many ESL/EFL students get into the university without enough knowledge of English in general and a poor knowledge of phonetic competence in particular. By mentioning phonetic competence as one of the abilities to communicate regarding pronunciation skills due to Saz, Rodríguez, Lleida, Rodríguez, & Vaquero, 2011 he argues that Students in Lebanon acquire Arabic as their mother tongue, and some of them learn English as their second language (ESL) in schools by using English as the instructional medium. He tries to investigate whether there is a difference among French and English educated students in terms of English pronunciation, he involves some pronunciation learning strategies (PLS) like using phonetic symbols and transcriptions, repeating after the teacher/others, and minimal pair drilling, in order to investigate such differences. He reached the results that PLS helped both groups reduce their mistakes while producing the English sounds, he has been focusing on. He also mentions the point that the students usually pronounce the sounds better if they read them aloud. (Mirza 2015).

In another study by Demirezen and Halil Topal they try to find out the attitudes of Turkish teachers of English towards the reintegration of fossilized pronunciation errors. It uncovers the factors that have an effect on the production of such errors. Their study also discovered that there was not important correlation between the participants' inner views to overcome fossilized errors without taking into consideration that they have participated in any professional pronunciation courses or not (Demirezen and Halil Topal 2015).

One further similar study by Mirzaei, Gowhary, Azizifar, and Esmaeili has been done to compare the way EFL Kurdish and Persian learners acquire English vowels, and their performance in acquiring them.

In this study they applied contrastive analysis hypothesis (CAH) to compare the vowels of Kurdish and Persian with English by the participation of 120 students in the study in order to

investigate the possible dissimilarities between the phonological performance of Kurdish and Persian EFL learners at elementary and advanced levels, which finally they concluded that there are some important differences at the elementary level between the two groups of speakers, which it was not the case in advanced levels. (Mirzaei et al. 2015)

In a recent study by Riaz in Pakistan he tries to find out the ways in which some uneducated native Punjabi speakers pronounce certain English words in comparison to Standard English pronunciation. He suggests 195 borrowed English words by presenting the transcription of different British and North American pronunciation, and he observes that uneducated native Punjabi speakers pronunciation of these words is meaningfully unlike British or American English and considers it due to the first language influence. He finally concludes that the pronunciation of uneducated native Punjabi speakers extremely differs from the standard British or American English and states that it can be called Punjabi English.

He observes that some further sounds particularly schwa is added in the beginning, middle or end of words, and some other sounds, especially vowel sounds are replaced with other vowel sounds which as a result effect or impression of the words is changed drastically (Riaz 2015).

According to Ahmadi et al. (2014) becoming proficient at pronunciation in EFL context, is an extremely perplexing objective for lots of language students in Iran, considering the fact that there is no direct access to native speaker. In their study they observe 40 Ilamian EFL teachers teaching English at different high schools and institutes regarding their pronunciation of the neutral and non-neutral suffixes based on their gender and teaching experience, which none of these teachers had ever experienced studying in an English speaking country. Their results showed that between female and male answers regarding their pronunciation of neutral and non-neutral suffixes there is no meaningful difference.

In another study by Hassan (2014) he investigates learners whose first language is Sudanese Spoken Arabic while pronouncing English sounds what kind of problems they face, in other words what sounds are difficult to pronounce for them and what are the factors which cause that kind of problems. He came to the results that such student's with Sudanese Spoken Arabic language mostly had problems with the sounds which have more than one pronunciation for instance /z/ and /ð/, /s/ and /θ/, /b/ and /p/, /ʃ/ and /tʃ/.

He finally comes to the conclusion that factors that cause such problems are: Interference, the differences in the sound system in the two languages, inconsistency of English sounds and spelling have an effect on Sudanese Students of English (SSEs) competence in pronunciation.

He also states some studies in this regard by (O'Connor, 2003) which according to him the pronunciation mistakes which the English learners make are systematic and not accidental. So "they substitute the sounds that they don't have in their native language, with other sounds which are close to them in the place of articulation e.g. they replace /p/ with /b/, /θ/ with /s/ etc" (Hassan 2014 p.31) Then he mentions some factors which are known as linguistic factors like "the differences of the sound system between the (LI) and the (L2), the inconsistency of some sounds in English language, the mother tongue interference and the influence of spelling on

pronunciation" as the Factors that influence learning English in General, according to different researchers and linguists(ibid p.32)

As Cámara-Arenas (2014) puts it this way, most of the first year students, think of vowels and consonants as very mysterious entities. He mentions that although they pronounce them every day, "most of them do not know how they do it, which means that they must leave to their intuitions the task of pronouncing them differently" (p. 3046). So in his study he tries to "present theoretical support and guidelines for the design of a Native Cardinality Method for the teaching of L2 vowels and consonants to adult students, especially adapted to the teaching of English in Spanish universities" (ibid p. 3044).

In another study by Navehebrahim (2012) she tries to find out Persian speakers who are learning English as a foreign language how they acquire the English phonological system and evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of the pronunciation of the learners.

In this study she mostly concentrates on the articulation of the consonants and production of vowels, she also tries to find the similarities and dissimilarities between the two systems and the possible areas.

Furthermore she tries to discover which phonological features of Farsi speakers of English obstruct when producing English sounds.

She comes to the conclusion that the expectation of Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis that the problems which Farsi speakers of English make is because of nonexistent phonemes /w, □, ð, □/ in the Farsi sound system. That is to say considering the fact that some sounds in Farsi, doesn't exist, that is why some Iranian speakers are likely to be unsuccessful in identifying the difference between the sounds which are linguistically important in English.

In addition she mentions that there no significant difference between the sounds, lexical items, or structures of the two languages and moreover she states according to different studies the Farsi learners of English must learn new English phonemes / w and ð / (Navehebrahim 2012).

In another similar study by Hojjati he has tried to discover the extent to which some EFL university students who are undergraduate could pronounce ten words correctly, these words which are used frequently and are technology-associated loan words are checked with regard to two criteria: the placement of word stress and the pronunciation of words sounds.

He comes to the conclusion that that the rate of occurrences of the errors were fairly high with regard to most of words and very high regarding two of the words, in his quantitative analysis. He also in his qualitative analysis which he had done in order to make use of the literature of contrastive phonetics and pronunciation systems of Farsi and English mentions that it assisted somewhat to clarify a number of the students errors and emphasizing the necessity which more instructive and investigation attention must be devoted to the problems which Farsi-speakers in the area of the pronunciation of loan words are confronting. (Hojati 2012)

In another recent study by Khamkhien he tries to observe Thai learners' knowledge regarding word stress assignment; and to find out probable factors which affect the Thai learners'

pronunciation competence. By scrutinizing 90 Thai learners of English and a test including personal information profile, and 40 selected words systematically taken from two textbooks, he tries to identify the participants' pronunciation competence. He reached the conclusion that most of the participants' English pronunciation was somewhat limited.

He also mentines gender as the most important factor contributing to the participants' test scores, while faculty and years of studying English were not. He furthermore offers pedagogical suggestions to improve teaching and learning English pronunciation in general, and concentrating on the significance of teaching word stress in particular (Khamkhien 2010).

In one further study by Seddighi, (2010 p. 197) she examines phonological differences between Persian and English, comparing segmental and suprasegmental aspects of English and several problematic arrears which Iranian students face, she reached the results that EFL students at three levels confront significant problems in the areas which don't exist in their mother tongue.

In another investigation by Hismanoglu he tries to find out Turkish learners of English pronunciation mistakes which are caused by [θ] and [□] sounds of English by using a pronunciation teaching method called the audio-articulation method which was developed by Demirezen (2004) as a fossilized pronunciation mistake breaker.

He came to the conclusion that the audio-articulation method helps Turkish students of English overcome their interdentalization problem in the target language. (Hismanoglu 2009)

3. Significance of the Study

The first objective of the current study is to determine whether there is an association between students' gender with regard to correct or wrong pronunciation of the words which contain the voiced and voiceless th sound for nonnative learners of English who are Iranians with two diverse native languages, some of their native language is Persian while some of them acquire and speak Arabic as the native language in south west of Iran. Consequently the association between students' native language with regard to correct or wrong pronunciation of this sound, would also be taken into consideration as the second and most important objective of this study.

According to the fact that Iran is a multi-lingual and multi-ethnical country, the influence of the students' mother tongue on their leaning of English as a second language could be a very controversial subject considering the fact that many languages and dialects are spoken in different parts of the country, which for instance we can name Persian, Arabic, Kurdish and Turkish. One of these languages which spoken in the south west province of Iran is Arabic. It could also be noted that he native language of the other provinces of this country is mostly Persian which is the formal language of the whole country.

As a result, a learner learning English whose native language is Arabic might have a different pronunciation of some English words which contain the voiced and voiceless th sound in comparison to an English language learner whose native language is Persian.

Consequently, the knowledge and acquaintance of EFL instructors with these differences may hopefully help the learners in order to better understand the differences and teach the target language sound system in a more beneficial way.

4 Research Questions and Hypotheses

1. What could be the reasons for the mispronunciations of the words which contain the voiced and voiceless th sound for nonnative learners of English?

2. is there any relationship between the participants gender with regard to correct or wrong pronunciation of this sound?

3. Is there any relationship between native language of the participants regarding correct pronunciation or mispronunciation of the sound?

4. Could the lack of this sound in the native language be the reason for the mispronunciation of it?

According to the above questions, the following hypotheses are formulated.

H1. There is no relationship between students' gender with regard to correct or wrong pronunciation of this sound

H2. There is no relationship between students' native language with regard to correct or wrong pronunciation of this sound.

5. Methodology

5.1. Participants

In order to reach the aim of this study, a total of 60 male and female EFL learners from Payame Noor University of Mahshahr, Khouzestan participated in the study. The students were 40 females and 20 males half of which were Persian native speakers and the other half were Arabic native speakers, unaware of the purpose of this study. Their ages ranged between 18 to 22 years. Thirty five of the students were specializing in Translation Studies and twenty five of them in English Literature. With regard to the participant's level of English proficiency, all of them were second-year undergraduate students and; consequently, their level of proficiency was pretty acceptable. Participants did not have any connection with any English-speaking friend or family. Moreover they never had lived in any English speaking country. They learn pronunciation in conversation courses wherever they have the chance to listen and speak and in courses where they are exposed to teacher talk.

5.2. Instruments and procedures

Two instruments were used in the study. The first instrument which was used was made of a list of words which contained the 'th' sound the voiceless /θ/ and the voiced in the Initial, Medial, and Final position. This instrument included 30 words of the voiceless and the voiced. These words were chosen based on the frequency of their usage and the observed mispronunciations of students throughout the whole semester.

So the questionnaires were taken to the university which was given to the students randomly. In the first step the participants were asked to read out load the list of the words in order to see how they pronounce these words. Then pronunciations the students uttered were recorded by the researcher For the sake of being able to review and listen to the pronunciation of the participants many times and repeat this process whenever necessary.

The second instrument was an open-ended questionnaire which included three questions in order to find out the idea of the participants about the reasons for the mispronunciations of the words. Furthermore to find out what the teachers have done to improve the pronunciation of these words, and according to their idea how their pronunciation can be improved. The responses were necessary to find out participants mispronunciation was because of their gender or native language or the results could also be attributed to their teacher's performances. The responses were also necessary to find out more about the participants background and or any other further pronunciation training which they might have taken. It was shown that they had no specific course for learning pronunciation. The data were collected and analyzed through spss program version in order to find out the association between gender and native language with regard to correct pronunciation of the English sound. The instrument validity was approved by three experts in linguistics and TEFL. The reliability proved to be 0.74. Then the tables and figures were analyzed descriptively; percentages and the statistics were computed.

6. Results of Inferential statistics

Table 1.

Descriptive statistics of Gender and correct pronunciation of th sound

			pronunciation		Total
			Correct	Incorrect	
Gender	Male	Count	13	7	20
		% within Gender	65.0%	35.0%	100.0%
		% within pronunciation	36.1%	29.2%	33.3%
		% of Total	21.7%	11.7%	33.3%
	Female	Count	23	17	40
		% within Gender	57.5%	42.5%	100.0%

	% within pronunciation	63.9%	70.8%	66.7%
	% of Total	38.3%	28.3%	66.7%
Total	Count	36	24	60
	% within Gender	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
	% within pronunciation	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%

According to the above table the male performance regarding the correct pronunciation of the words has been slightly better in comparison to female students. 65% of the male students could pronounce the voiced and voiceless th sound correctly in comparison to the 57% female students.

Table 2.

Inferential statistics of Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.313[a]	1	.576		
Continuity Correction[b]	.078	1	.780		
Likelihood Ratio	.315	1	.575		
Fisher's Exact Test				.780	.392

Linear-by-Linear Association	.307	1	.579		
N of Valid Cases	60				

As it is shown in table P= 0.576 so p > 0.05, so the null hypothesis that there is no relation between gender and correct pronunciation is not rejected, consequently confirmed. So there seems to be no significant statistic association between gender and correct pronunciation of the words. Considering the fact that male students performed slightly better while pronouncing the English voiced and voiceless /th/ sound.

Table 3.

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal Phi		.072	.576
Cramer's V		.072	.576
N of Valid Cases		60	

Phi and Cramer's V are both tests of the strength of association. As it can be seen in table 3 the association between the two variables gender and the correct pronunciation of the English sound is very weak.
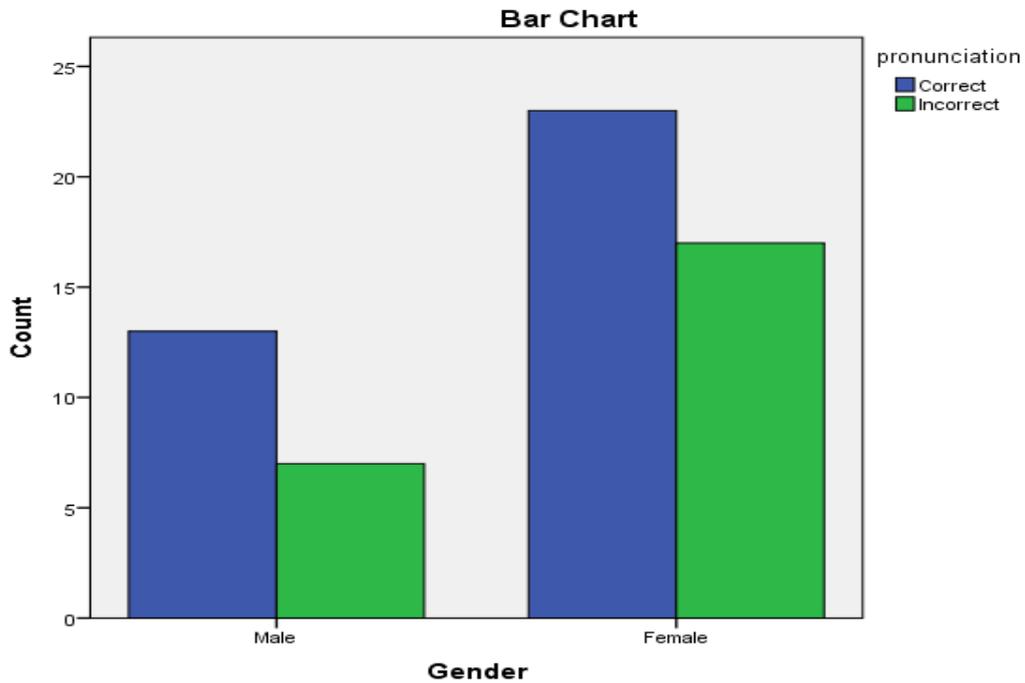
Figure 1.

The results of male and female pronunciation of the English sound based on gender

Table 4.

Descriptive statistics of native language and correct pronunciation

			Pronunciation		Total
			Correct	Incorrect	
Nativelanguage	Arabic	Count	28	2	30
		% within Nativelanguage	93.3%	6.7%	100.0%
		% within Pronunciation	77.8%	8.3%	50.0%
		% of Total	46.7%	3.3%	50.0%

Persian	Count		8	22	30
	% within Nativelanguage		26.7%	73.3%	100.0%
	% within Pronunciation		22.2%	91.7%	50.0%
	% of Total		13.3%	36.7%	50.0%
Total	Count		36	24	60
	% within Nativelanguage		60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
	% within Pronunciation		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total		60.0%	40.0%	100.0%

According to the above table the performance of students with Arabic native language regarding the correct pronunciation of the words has been better in comparison to students whom their native language is Persian. About 93% or most of the students with Arabic native language could pronounce the voiced and voiceless th sound correctly in comparison to the 26% students whose native language is Persian.

Table 5.

Inferential statistics of Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	27.778[a]	1	.000		
Continuity Correction[b]	25.069	1	.000		
Likelihood Ratio	31.271	1	.000		

|					
Fisher's Exact Test				.000	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	27.315	1	.000		
N of Valid Cases	60				

As it is shown in table p < 0.001, so the null hypothesis that there is no relation between native language and students correct pronunciation is rejected. So there seems to be some kind of strong relationship between student's native language and correct pronunciation of the words. Considering the fact that student's whom their native language is Arabic performed better while pronouncing the English voiced and voiceless /th/ sound than student's whom their native language is Persian.

Table 6.

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	.680	.000
	Cramer's V	.680	.000
N of Valid Cases		60	

In table 6 the degree of strength of association by Phi and Cramer's V tests is shown. As it can be seen in table the association between the two variables native language and the correct pronunciation of the English sound is clear.
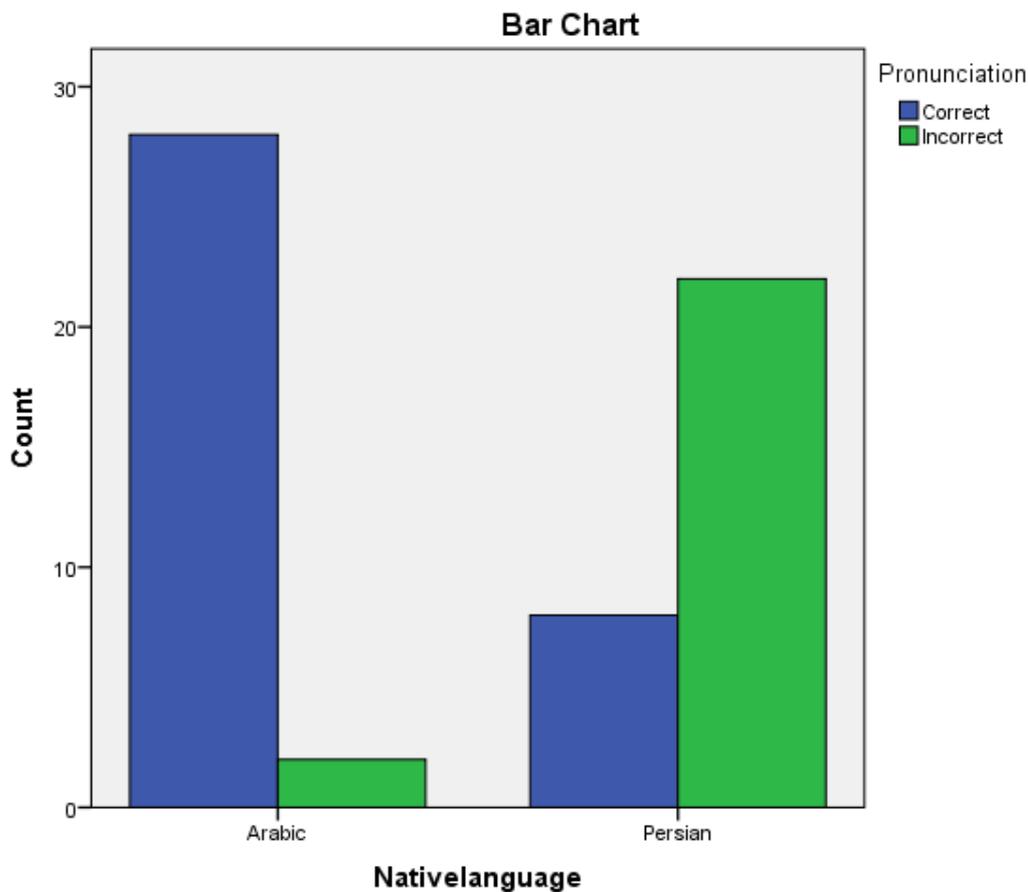
Figure 2.

The results of student pronunciation of the English sound based on their native language

7. Results and discussion

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The first research question of this study was to find out the reasons for the mispronunciations of the words which contain the voiced and voiceless th sound for nonnative learners of English, who are Iranians in the south west of Iran whom, some them acquire sand speak Persian as their native language and some of the acquire Arabic as their native language. In order to reach this objective some presumption were supposed, like whether that is because of the gender of the students, or their native language.

So according to the second question of this study that is there any relationship between the participants gender with regard to correct or wrong pronunciation of this sound the following hypotheses was formulated.

H1. There is no relationship between students' gender with regard to correct or wrong pronunciation of this sound.

Although According to the statistics and chi square test which was taken into consideration the male performance regarding the correct pronunciation of the words has been slightly better in comparison to female students, which as it was mentioned 65% of the male students could pronounce the voiced and voiceless /th/ sound correctly in comparison to the 57% female students, the reason could be just due to the number of the sample of students, that is the number of female students was much more than male students. So the null hypothesis that there is no relation between gender and correct pronunciation is was confirmed. There seems to be no significant statistic association between gender and correct pronunciation of the words.

Regarding the third question of this study which is about the relationship between native language of the participants and their correct pronunciation and/or mispronunciation of the sound, the following hypotheses was formulated that:
H2. There is no relationship between students' native language with regard to correct or wrong pronunciation of this sound.

According to the above statistics and the results of the chi square test it was shown that the performance of students with Arabic native language regarding the correct pronunciation of the words has been better in comparison to students whom their native language is Persian, as it was mentioned earlier, about 93% or all of the students with Arabic native language could pronounce the voiced and voiceless th sound correctly in comparison to the 26% students whose native language is Persian.

Regarding the last question of this study which was about whether to consider the lack of this sound in the native language of the students whom their native language was Persian to be the reason for the mispronunciation of it, it was proved that most of the students didn't know how to pronounce this sound because they hadn't acquired it and they didn't have it in their native language and consequently they had never used such a sound in their conversations.

8. Conclusion

In order to become proficient at the pronunciation of the English sounds in English as a Foreign Language context, where there is no native speaker available to model and follow, especially for Iranian students who have got different native languages in different areas of Iran makes it an extremely confusing activity for students to acquire such languages and correct pronunciations of the words of such languages.
So it is not beyond belief that learners of a foreign language consider learning the pronunciation of that language so difficult to acquire and understand, but it is not the case in some studies like the present one.

The objective of the current study was to determine whether there is an association between students' gender and also native language with regard to correct or wrong pronunciation of the words which contain the voiced and voiceless /th/ sound for nonnative learners of English who are Iranians with two diverse native languages, Arabic and Persian.

The results showed that although According to the statistics and chi square test which was taken into consideration the male performance regarding the correct pronunciation of the words has been slightly better in comparison to female students, the reason could be the number of female students was much more than male students, consequently there seemed to be no significant statistic association between gender and correct pronunciation of the words. The results also showed that students with Arabic native language pronounce the /th/ sound better than those students whose native language is Persian, and correctly while the Persian native language students mostly pronounce this sound incorrectly and the reason that most of the students didn't know how to pronounce this sound could be because of the lack of this sound in their native language and accordingly they had never acquired and used such a sound. Another significant reason which shouldn't be ignored in this regard is lack of knowledgeable teachers who model and teach the students how to pronounce the sounds correctly.

9. Limitations

This study was conducted using only 60 learners of English who just half of them were Persian native speakers and half were Arabic native speakers, who were chosen from one of the universities in Mahshahr Iran, so sample size could be very small. Consequently the results might be limited to this group of learners only. Also there might be other factors effecting the pronunciation of the students like their out of university classes or at home studies which can be investigated, before conducting such a research. Such influential limitation that could interfere with the results in that the students might have or have not practiced outside their classes.

Also practicing at home could have improved some of the student's pronunciation and their mistakes, which was not taken into consideration during the research.

10. Suggestions and Recommendations

Considering that in this study only gender and native language effect on the student's pronunciation was taken into consideration the following recommendations can be made for future research:

Further research can be conducted with the use of other lists of words or the words and data which were checked and collected in this study can further be used as data for future research. It is advisable to conduct other researches on the relationship between other variables effect on pronunciation with larger sample sizes. Other studies might be carried out considering other

variables effect on the pronunciation like age and previous background or level of expertise of the students on their pronunciation of the words.

This study may be replicated in other contexts for other languages such as Kurdish or Turkish.

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