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The Role of Mimicking Native Speakers in Enhancing Students' Accent and

Pronunciation

The Case Study of Third Year EFL Students At Mohamed Seddik Ben

Yahia University, Jijel.

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Master Degree in

Didactics of Language

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this Master dissertation entitled "The Role of Mimicking Native Speakers in Enhancing Students' Accent and Pronunciation" is entirely my own work except for the literature I used which is all listed in the list of references.

BOULAHIA Amina

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BOUHARICHE Leyla

…………………………….

Jijel, …………………...

Dedication

I dedicate this humble work which has finally seen light to

the most loving people surrounding me:

My dear and precious parents

My little brother "Yacine"

All my brothers and sisters

My lovely niece and nephew "Sousou" and "Mimoun"

All my relatives

To "Sidret el Mountaha" and Loudjein"

To my loyal, truthful, caring and loving friends

To whoever happens to read this dissertation

God bless you all

Meena

Dedication

To my dear and precious parents

To my beloved sister Samira, the most warm-hearted in this world and her lovely husband. I am grateful to them for their sincere love, support and compassion

To my uncle Lakhdar, most kind man

To my dear and closed friends especially Leila, Amel, and Shada.

I dedicate this humblework

Leyla

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Abstract

This dissertation investigates the role of mimicry as an effective pedagogical technique and makes contribution to the study of mimicking Native speakers among EFL learners as a good way to raise up the level of their foreign accent and pronunciation. To support this aim and support the research hypothesis, both a questionnaire and an interview were administered to third year English LMD students with sixty (60) students as a whole population. Underpinned by a theoretical framework to make a deep echo on the pedagogical system, the theoretical part of this study encompasses both accent and pronunciation as major features that learners usually seek to achieve when acquiring a new language. It also provides extra information about mimicry and its important and impactful role in acquiring a native-like accent and pronunciation. Besides, it presents an overview of the teaching and learning theories along with the modern methods that promote and support mimicry such as Linguistic Mimicry Approach. The participants' answers are analyzed and presented in tables. After the discussion of the findings, the results obtained show that mimicry is worthy used by the majority of EFL students and that they seek to acquire a native-like accent. Therefore, the research hypothesis which stresses that, if students have an opportunity to mimic native speakers, their foreign accent and pronunciation will get more native, is positively confirmed. Accordingly, some pedagogical recommendations are suggested. So, mimicry can be one of the most efficient ways that helps learners enhance their foreign accent and pronunciation.

Key Words: Accent awareness, mimicry, listening comprehension, pronunciation.

List of Abbreviations and Symbols

CNN: Convolution Neural Network; a US TV Channel

e.g.: For Example

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

ESL: English as a Second Language

FLL: Foreign Language Learner

i.e.: That is to say

L2: Second Language

LMA: Linguistic Mimicry Approach

LMD: License Master Doctorate

NSs: Native Speakers

SCT: Socio-cultural Theory

SL: Second Language

TV: Television

UK: United Kingdom

VS: Versus

%: Percentage

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General Introduction

Within the field of EFL education, learners usually struggle a big deal and seek various ways to have a satisfying accent that could be intelligible and sounds more native. One best technique that paves the way towards a native-like accent is mimicking the native speakers of the target language. Despite the fact that this can be a bit controversial in the area of language teaching because mimicry receives the least attention from teachers, it is seen by a large number of scholars and theorists as a social phenomenon that yields fruitful results and benefits for speakers who tend to enhance their accent.

In this research paper, we attempt to shed light on the role of mimicry coupled with its influence and importance as a key element and a vital component in the learning process and acquiring foreign accents and pronunciation,. As researchers in this modest project, we try to stress the prominent advantage of mimicry in that it exposes learners to a free environment through which they are able to mimic Native speakers and get the opportunity to speak and react in a way that mirrors real-life communication. Indeed mimicking a NS plays an important role in promoting learner's accent and pronunciation, for it is considered as a paramount technique that speeds up learning and makes it pleasurable and more fun. As playwright George Bernard Shaw once said: "imitation is not just the sincerest form of flattery, it is the sincerest form of learning".

In this present study, we add extra weight to some different elements that support mimickers during the learning process such as listening comprehension that has gained a greater prominence in language teaching and is considered as a primarily condition that leads to the emergence of other skills. Therefore, learners should first listen carefully before starting mimicking. Obviously, it is quite fascinating to have a native-like accent which makes one better understood among wider audience. Thus we draw attention to accent in general as it is referred to in the first chapter of this research. Besides, similar attention is paid to how mimicry contributes to accent acquisition and

how the improvement of accent along with right pronunciation can be more successful when learners tend to mimic Native speakers. In addition to that, since the most important part of learning English as a SL rests on production, we present an overview of the English pronunciation with much more emphasize on segmental and supra-segmental features.

In a nut shell, throughout our research we explore the possibility that learners may reach that sort of native accent if they possessed a positive viewpoint to imitate a NS model. By doing so, they should take into account the considerable factors that may interrupt the process of mimicry as well as the way they mimic a NS.

Based on the theoretical perspective, mimicry was referred to in the previous learning theories. For instance, Vygotsky in 1986 presented his view that supports mimicry or imitation as it is more than an automatic copying or repetition of the model behaviour, but rather it is a process that involves the learner's intelligence and so leads to a creative reproduction. Also, mimicry had been the basic element of the early learning theories such as the Direct Approach and the Audio-lingual method as mentioned by Richards and Rodgers (1986). Most importantly, we point out to the most significant work about mimicry by Yates (2003), Teaching Linguistic Mimicry to Improve Second Language Pronunciation.

In accordance with these perspectives and views, the present research paper sheds the light on mimicry as a facilitator technique in the learning process and so explores the role of mimicking Native speakers to acquire a native-like accent.

1. Statement of the Problem

Mimicry contributes a great deal in enhancing students' accent and promoting their speaking skills, so they may sound more native and fluent as well. However, it is neglected by most teachers. Similarly, it still encounters a deep ignorance among EFL students, for it is perceived as hard and raises a challenge for most of them especially for those who are shy. Besides, it requires practice

and training on the part of the learners. As the proverb goes, "practice makes perfect". The difficulties of mimicking Native speakers among EFL students may also be related to the differences that lie in the sound system of Arabic and English language. In the case of our university, students are bound to phonetic courses during two years, yet they never get rid of pronunciation errors nor can they master a good English accent which in turns leads to speaking frustrations.

2. The Background of the Study

In this part of the study, it is quite important to point out that our research topic was faced by a lack of recourses which made our process so difficult to materialize. Very few works have been found relevant to our research's objective and context. The following works deal with various points which are taken into consideration to develop this study, e. g. Yates (2003) portraits a vivid picture about the significance of mimicry in his thesis Teaching Linguistic Mimicry to Improve Second Language Pronunciation. He depicts how linguistic mimicry can be adopted by learners and shows its effectiveness and impact on learners' accent and pronunciation. Yates tests the hypothesis that a whole language approach to ESL pronunciation with emphasize on supra-segmentals through the use of linguistic mimicry is more effective than a focus on segmental in improving native speakers' perception of accent and comprehensibility of ESL students' pronunciation of English. More to the point, Yates has created and developed the idea that students should be better taught the segmental features of pronunciation so that they can speak more easily. Along with the integration of linguistic mimicry, they will certainly sound native-like. Yates believed in the success of his method he brought and emphasizes its implication to ESL pronunciation curriculum.

Furthermore, in a study held by Kim (2011) mimicry appears as an alternative measure to assess the oral proficiency of L2 learners. In other words, to test the speaking ability by comparing the results of a mimicry test with the results of a free speech speaking test. Kim in his study, emphasizes that ESL learners will have more access to the input in English ant that they will be

more motivated as a result of applying mimicry test.

So, in view of these studies, it seems that mimicry has become a very necessary process and very important part of students' success.

3. The significance of the Study

➢ **Educational significance:** to help students control the difficulties of enhancing their accent and pronunciation they face during language acquisition process.

➢ **Personal significance:** as future teachers, we are going to see whether the adoption of mimicry by EFL students is worthy practicing for acquiring a native-like accent or not.

4. Research Questions

The present study seeks the answers of the following questions:

- Are EFL students interested in developing a native-like accent?

- Do EFL students practice mimicry?

- What are the factors that hinder mimicry among EFL students?

- What is students' viewpoint towards the effectiveness of mimicry?

5. Research Hypothesis

The main aim of this study is to shed light on the effectiveness of mimicry, we hypothesize that if students have an opportunity to mimic native speakers, their foreign accent and pronunciation will get more native.

6. Aim of the Study

First and foremost, this study aims at drawing attention to mimicry as a facilitator and a suitable solution that students can take advantage of in order to ease the learning process and overcome the speaking frustrations they face when trying to enhance their pronunciation or acquire a foreign accent although the ultimate objective of this research paper is to explore the role that mimicry may carry to promote a foreign accent along with a clear pronunciation and how does it work.

7. Data Gathering Tool

In order to test the hypothesis and come up with preliminary answers for our research, data is collected through the use of both students' questionnaire and interview as the only two instruments of this research administrated to random sample of sixty (60) students for the questionnaire and seven (07) students for the interview from the target population (third year promotion) in English department at Mohammed Saddik BenYahia University, Jijel. Both the questionnaire and the interview clear up the role of mimicking Native speakers in enhancing students' accent and pronunciation.

8. Structure of the Study

The present research paper is divided into three main chapters. The first and the second chapters are devoted to the literature review and deal with different points of view that are gathered for accent, pronunciation, and mimicry whereas the third chapter is meant to be the practical part of this study.

The first chapter presents a brief view of the sound system of English; it deals with individual sounds (with description of manner, place of articulation and voicing), and the prosodic features of pronunciation (stress, intonation, and rhythm).

The second chapter tackles mimicry as a beneficial, pedagogical tool with a clear reference to its definition and some of the factors that may affect students while they mimic.

The third and the last chapter covers the analysis of the findings provided from the students' questionnaire and interview.

Chapter One: Accent and Pronunciation

Introduction

In the process of acquiring English as a foreign language, many students seek to master an intelligible pronunciation for an effective communication. A good pronunciation can be seen through real communication contexts, when learners with clear pronunciation mange to communicate clearly even though they make errors in other areas such as grammar and vocabulary moreover, students with an intelligible pronunciation leave good impression and they are judged to be competent. Conversely, students with poor pronunciation make a discussion unpleasant and misunderstood for both speakers and listeners. Alongside mastering an intelligible pronunciation acquiring a native-like accent is a main goal for many EFL students. They like to copy accents from listening and watching NSs, and then mimic the way they speak for an intelligible and prestige accent. Far from this, few students have the ability to mimic native speakers, and they are truly gifted.

In the present chapter, we seek to provide some definitions of accent and pronunciation and highlight their features and components (segmental, supra-segmental). Also, we refer to accent awareness in which we illuminate the difference between accent and dialect together with accent and pronunciation, a misconception that haunts students oftentimes. In addition to that, we intend to point out the significance of pronunciation as well as the role of teaching/ learning pronunciation.

1.1 Definition of Accent

Accent is a common term that describes the way in which a person pronounces a language. Therefore one can speak without an accent. (Cook, 1989, p. 12) defined accent as "a combination of three main components: intonation (speech music), liaisons (words connection), and pronunciation (the spoken sounds of vowels, consonants, and combinations)".

According to Cook (1989) a lot of people hold the belief that they cannot learn a new accent after a specific certain age. This belief is not only untrue but may cause a sense of frustration for them. Actually, the reality is that they can learn a new accent. For them it is just a matter of learning and practice. For instance, classical musicians can play jazz if they keep practicing. As a matter of fact, the grammar that learners have already studied is totally different from their current. One obvious and significant difference is that grammar and vocabulary are systematic and structured whereas accent is a free form, and it is creative and intuitive.

So, accents are highly expected to change. That is because our accents are not fixed. They change over time as our personal needs change and our sense of our true character develops. Actually, the change in accent may happen without any effort if a person moves to new place and get mixed with different people.

Another point of view came with Moyer (2007) who claimed that accent has been considered as a fundamental part of some foreign language teaching methods such as the Direct Method and the Audio lingual Method.

1.1.1 Accent Awareness

Some students may confuse the concept accent with dialect; it is actually a common misunderstanding. They cannot realize the words the people use from the sound they make. Thus, it is important to make a sharp conceptual distinction between accent and dialect. Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary described accent as "a way of pronouncing the words of a language that shows which country, area or social class a person comes from" (p.7). On the other hand, dialect is defined by the same dictionary as "the form of a language that is spoken in one area with grammar, words and pronunciation that may be different from the other forms of the same language" (p. 402).

From the above definitions we can deduce that accent is restricted more to pronunciation because it covers the sounds of speech. Also, it is considered as a special element of dialect, but not

vice versa. An accent can by associated with a specific region in which its speakers live. One significant feature of accent is that it can be influenced by the mother tongue. Dialect on the other hand is a variation of language that has to do with grammatical and lexical differences.

1.1.2 Accent vs. Pronunciation

As referred to above, accent is a distinctive way of pronouncing a language especially when associated with a particular country, area, or social class. Following this view, Georgie (2014) defined accent as the way a person pronounces a language. Therefore, everyone has an accent regardless of what language they speak. As a matter of fact, an accent can be a 'regional accent' which refers to the place where the speaker grew up. It may be a 'social accent' that may depict the social economic status of the speaker or it can be a 'foreign accent' or 'non-native accent' which reveals glues about the first language as they speak a second language.

Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary gave a clear picture of pronunciation by defining it as "the way in which a language or a particular word or sound is pronounced" (p. 1175).

Georgie (2004) in a similar way gave a brief definition of pronunciation as it is the way we pronounce sounds. In other words, it is the manner we move our mouth to create sounds. He actually summarized the difference between accent and pronunciation in that the way we pronounce words gives as an accent.

1.2 Components of Accent

According to Fleg (1984) the main components of accent are those acoustic differences between native and non-native speakers' segmental articulation and supra-segmental levels. Segmental articulation has to do with segmental-related problems, like saying "tree" instead of "three"; vowels and consonants allophones are also parts of segmentals. Carr (2008) pointed out that supra-segmental levels are considered to be phonological phenomena such as word stress, intonation and tone. As cited in (Foreign Accent Problem of Non-native Teachers of English, 2012,

p.3).

According to Demirezen (2008) people have little control over prosody and intonation thus he had taken upon his himself to analyze them and interpret its parameters. He also stated that each language has its own parameters such as prosody and intonation, rhythm, tempo and melody, which make a language unique and different from one another.(As cited in Foreign Accent Problem of Non-native Teachers of English, 2012, p .3).

From Fleg, Carr and Demirezen analysis we can clearly tell that accent is like pronunciation has segmental and supra-segmental features; segmentals are concerned with vowels and consonants sounds, whereas supra-segmentals are illustrated in intonation, prosody melody rhythm, tempo, intonation, juncture pitch and stress as it is shown in the figure below:

Figure 1: The ingredients of Intonation and Prosody

Figure 1. The ingredients of Intonation and Prosody. **Source: Adapted from Demirezen (2008). (As cited in Foreign Accent Problem of Non-native Teachers of English , 2012, p. 3).**

1.3 Definition of Pronunciation

One crucial aspect of English is pronunciation particularly in communicative competence; as it is stated by Cook that pronunciation is a speaking "sub-skill" which is best learned as an essential part of spoken language (1996). To understand and communicate easily in English; EFL or ESL learners are required to count mastering an intelligible pronunciation. According to (Fangzhi, 1998, p. 39), " It is important to pay attention to pronunciation since it results in whether or not someone's message can be delivered or not " that is to say that a FLL has an intelligible pronunciation when he is capable of transmitting the ideas he wants to share clearly. Therefore, covering a full knowledge of grammar and vocabulary is never enough when the learner lacks a proper pronunciation.

Here is pronunciation definition from some experts' point of view:

According to Cook (1996) pronunciation is a set of habits uses to produce sounds and uttering meaning. These habits are attained through the repetition of sounds over and over again, to be corrected when it is mispronounced. The mastery of the pronunciation of an SL means creating new pronunciation habits and overcoming the bias of the first language.

According to Yates and Zielinski (2009) Pronunciation is the process of producing sounds which are used in uttering meaning. Whereas, to Paulston and Burder (1976) pronunciation is the act of producing a sound system, which does not refer to communication from the speaker's or the listener's point of view.

Richard and Schmidt (2000) "Pronunciation is 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" (p. 429). While pronunciation to Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary (1995) is "The way in which a word is spoken; the way which is pronounced; the way a person speaks the words of a language." (As cited in Astuti, 2011, p. 6).

Pronunciation has been defined by Macarthur and MacArthur (1982) as the process of producing sounds of speech of a language including articulation, intonation, and rhythm; It is also defined as the sound system of a language". (As cited in Al-Taee, 2005, p.1).

1.4 Significance of Pronunciation

As an important part in EFL learning, pronunciation cannot be neglected in classrooms due to its importance. The first thing to notice when a FLL is speaking or participating in class is his pronunciation of the target language. According to Kelly (2000) attaining a proper pronunciation of the target language is vital for FLL. Learners can have a rich vocabulary and a full mastery of grammar rules, yet they can lack an effective communication due to pronunciation weaknesses. That is to say those learners with a good pronunciation skill are the ones to be more understood than others with good grammar and vocabulary baggage.

Pronunciation errors made by learners may impede them from delivering a clear message to the hearer. Hewings (2004) said that weak pronunciation prevents learners from being understood, or fail to understand the message being said to them. Also causes frustration when the learners' speech is wrongly interpreted.

An "essential component of communicative competence" (Kelly, 2000, P. 488) to reach a good level of intelligibility as it is maintained by Wong (1987) good pronunciation is required for non-native speakers so that they can communicate properly. That is to say that an effective communication is the goal to be achieved by learners.

Krachan provided arguments against the explicit teaching of pronunciation in his work (1982) when he stated that pronunciation instructions are useless because it can be acquired by learners. However, Hewings (2004) viewed that a learner's understandable pronunciation has a vital role in his communication skill.

1.5 Pronunciation Features

Pronunciation is divided into two integrated large categories, namely Segmentals and supra-segmentals.

1.5.1   Segmental Features

Segmental features refer to language units such as vowels and constants.

1.5.1.1   Vowels

In English language there are five vowel letters which are: a, e, I, o, and u. However, one letter can represent more than one sound. Vowels as Raoch (2000) defined them are the vowel sounds produced with no obstruction of the air stream while passing from the larynx &to the lips. They occur in the center of the syllable, and they are all voiced. Vowels production is formed when the vibration of the vocal cords occurs in the larynx; therefore the tongue and the lips change the overall shape of the mouth.

Kelly viewed that "Vowels are produced when the airstream is voiced through the vibration the vocal cords in the larynx, and the shape using the tongue and the lips to modify the overall shape of the mouth. The position of the mouth is a useful reference point for describing the vowel sounds" (2000, p. 5).

The classification of the vowels depends on the position of the tongue during pronouncing each vowel as Raoch stated when he said that "The phonetic space of vowels can be determined by the position of the tongue during the process of producing a particular vowel" (Raoch, 2000. p. 14-15). In English language there are three categories of vowels: simple vowels, diphthongs, and triphthongs.

1.5.1.1.1   Simple Vowels

Simple vowels also called "pure vowels" (Kelly, 2000, p. 29) or monophthongs (Tench, 2011, p. 17), are vowels carry only one sound during its production. Merriam Webster Dictionary defined monophthongs as "A vowel sound that throughout its duration has a single consonant articulatory position".

According to Roger and Schmidt (2000) a vowel is where there is remarkable change in quality on the level of producing a syllable. English language consists of twelve monophthongs which are: /iː/, /ɔː/, /ɑː/, /ɜː/, /u/, /ɪ/, /e/, /æ/, /ʌ/, /ɒ/, /ʊ/, /ə/. The figure below shows English vowels within its positions.
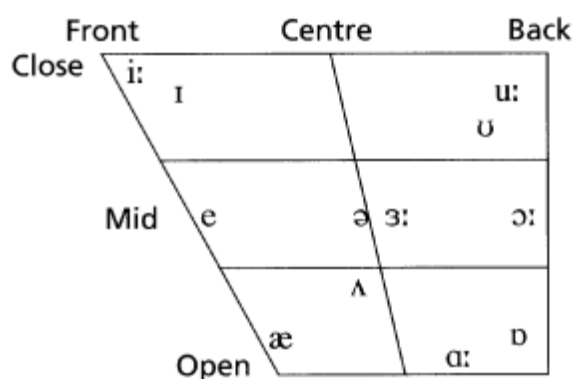
Figure 2. English vowels. **Source: Adapted from Kelly (2000).**

1.5.1.1.2   Diphthongs

Diphthongs to Kelly (2000) are a combination of two simple vowels pronounced together to produce only one sound within one syllable while the starting and the ending sounds are different.

Raoch (1991) clarified that the second vowel of a diphthong becomes shorter than the first one when the glide occurs, that is to say the first vowel is always longer than the second. In English language, there are eight (08) diphthongs which are: /ɪə/, /ʊə/, /eə/, /eɪ/, /ɔɪ/, /aɪ/, /əʊ/, /aʊ/.

1.5.1.1.3 Triphthongs

Triphthongs are the combination of three vowels. (Raoch 1991, p. 18, 19) viewed that "The most complex English sounds of the vowel type are the triphthongs and they can be rather difficult to produce, and very difficult to recognize. A thriphthong is a glide from one vowel to another and then to a third, all produced rapidly and without interruption". Triphthongs are: /eɪə/, /ɔɪə/, /aɪə/, /əʊə/, /aʊə/.

1.5.1.2   Consonants

Consonants are speech sounds produced with no obstruction to the air stream; rather the air passes from the larynx to the lips. They take place at the edge of syllables.

"A speech sound where the air stream from the lungs is either completely blocked (Stop), partially blocked (Lateral), or where the opening is so narrow that the air escapes with audible friction (Fricative). With some consonants (Nasals) the airstream is blocked in the mouth but allowed to escape through the nose."(Richard and Schmitt 2000, p. 110). Consonants are classified on the basis of three dimensions: Place of articulation, manner of articulation and voicing.

1.5.1.2.1   Place of Articulation

Place of articulation refers to the place where the obstruction of the air takes place in the vocal cords. Rodgers (2000). However, Yule (1985) defined the place of articulation as "The location inside the mouth at which the construction takes place" (p. 27).

Yule (1985) stated that Consonants are classified according to their place of articulation into: Bilabials, Labiodentals, Dentals, Palate_alveolars, Velars and Glottals.

1.5.2.1.1   Sounds Made with the Lips

Sounds made with the lips are bilabials and labio-dentals.

- **Bilabials**

According to Yule (1985) Bilabial sounds Occur when blocking or constructing the airflow out of the mouth by bringing both upper and lower lips together; "bi" means two while "labial" refers to lips in Latin. Bilabials are: /p/, /b/, /m/.

- **Labio -dentals**

According to Ogden (2005) these sounds are produced when the lower lip (labio) contact the upper teeth (dental); Precisely when blocking the airflow by curling the lower lip back and raising it to touch the upper row of teeth. Labio-dentals are: /f/, /v/.

1.5.2.1.2   Sounds Made with the Tip of the Tongue

Sounds made with the tip of the tongue are dentals and alveolars.

- **Dentals**

According to Yule (1985) dentals are formed when lightly placing the tip and the rims of the tongue against the upper teeth to produce /θ/ and /ð/ sounds. Kreidler (2004) viewed that through the production of these sounds the air pressed and released between the sides of the tongue.

Dentals are: /θ/, /ð/.

- **Alveolars**

Yule (1985) defined alveolars as sounds produced when the tip and the blade of the tongue touch the alveolar ridge (where the teeth meet the gummy) while raising the tongue to block the airflow. Alveolar are: /t/, /d/, /z/, /n/, /l/.

1.5.2.1.3   Sounds Made with the Blade of the Tongue

Sounds made by the blade of the tongue are palatals.

- **Palatals**

Palatals are sounds formed when the hard palate and the tongue articulate together. Yule (1985) viewed, that during the production of the palatals consonants, the blade of the tongue contacts the hard palate just behind the teeth ridge. The sounds produced this way are: /tʃ/, /ʒ/, /ʃ/

/ʒ/, /ɹ/.

1.5.2.1.4   Sounds Made with the Back Roof of the Tongue

Sounds made with the back roof of the tongue are velars and Glottals.

- **Velars**

Yule (1985) stated that Velars are formed when raising the back of the tongue to the soft palate to block or restrict the air-stream. According to Murray and Christison (2011, p. 77) "Velar sounds are created when the blade of the tongue touches the soft palate." Velars are: /k, /g/, /w/, /ŋ/.

- **Glottals**

Glottals are produced while the mouth is open. Yule clarified that, "There is one sound that is produced without the active use of the tongue and other parts of the mouth. It is the sound /h/ which occurs at the beginning of have and house and, for most speakers, as the first sound in who and whose. This sound is usually described as a voiceless glottal. The "glottis" is the space between the vocal folds in the larynx. When the glottis is open, as in the production of the voiceless sounds, and there is no manipulation of the air passing out the mouth, the sound produced is that presented by /h/ (1985, P. 30). /h/ as in 'hi' and 'Bahamas'.
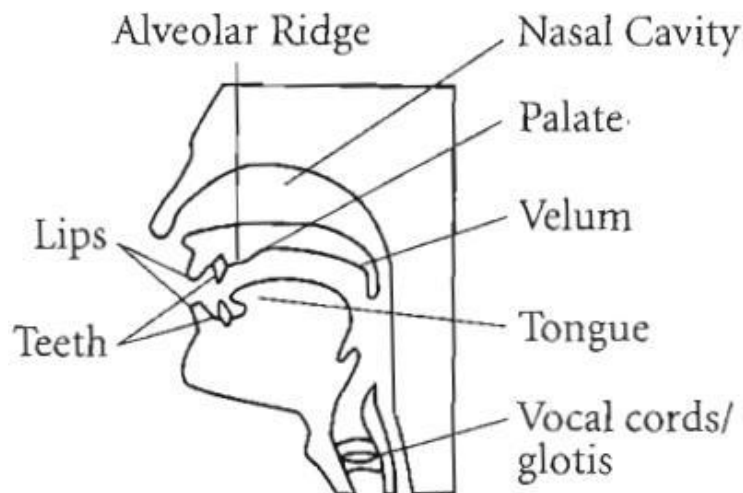
Figure 3. The Articulators. **Source: Lane (2010).**

The figure above illustrates the human mouth and its place of articulation.

1.5.1.2.2   Manner of Articulation

It refers to the way the air stream is affected as it passes out the lungs, the nose and the mouth. According to Richard and Schmidt (2000, p. 399) manner of articulation is the production of speech sounds by the speech organs. It refers to the how the obstruction of the airflow is formed. Consonants to Kelly (2000) are classified according to their manner of articulation into: Plosives, Fricatives, Affricatives, Nasals, Laterals and Approximants.

1.5.1.2.2.1   Plosives

Plosives, also called Stops, are produced by stopping the air stream from the lungs and then suddenly release it." (Richard and Schmidt 2000, p. 515). Plosives are: /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/.

1.5.1.2.2.2   Nasals

According to Kelly (2000) nasal sounds are produced when a complete block of the air occurs at the level of the mouth so that it passes through the nasal cavity, while the soft palate is

lowered. Nasals are: /m/, /n/, /ŋ/.

1.5.1.2.2.3   Fricatives

According to Raoch (2000) "Fricatives are consonants with the characteristics that when they are produced, the air escapes through a small passage and makes a hissing sound" (p. 48). Fricatives are: /f/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /s/, z/, /h/, /ʒ/.

1.5.1.2.2.4   Affricatives

Richard and Schmidt (2000, p. 17) defined affricatives as" a speech sound (a consonant) which are produced by stopping the air stream from the lungs, and then slowly releasing it with friction. The first part of an affricate is similar to a stop; the second part is similar to a fricative". Affricatives are: /tʃ/, /dʒ/.

1.5.1.2.2.5   Laterals

Raoch (2009) defined the lateral /l/ as a consonant in which the tip of the tongue touches the middle of the alveolar ridge so that the air has to pass through the sides of the mouth. Car (1999) distinguishes between dark and clear /l/. Clear /l/ occurs immediately before vowels like in the word "play"; however, dark /l/ occurs after vowels as in "wall".

1.5.1.2.2.6   Approximates

Approximates to Kelly (2000) are formed when two articulators come close together, but not quite close enough to block the air-stream and cause friction. Collins and Mees (2003) point out that approximants are produced when the air sufficiently passes through the articulators causing no friction, since there is no obstacle. Approximants are: /w/, /j/, /r/.

1.5.1.2.3   Voicing

After place and manner of articulation, voicing is the third factor to distinguish between consonants. Jones (2003) clarified that, voicing is when the vibration occurs in the vocal cords while the consonants are produced. In other words, when the vocal cords are closely together and cause vibration, then the consonants produced are voiced. However, when the vocal cords are apart from each other causing no vibration, then the produced consonants are voiceless.

Voiced consonants are: /d/, /dʒ/, /g/ /ʒ/, /v/, /m/, /n/, /r/, /ɹ/, /j/, /j/, /w/, /l/, /ɫ/, /z/, /ŋ/, /ð/.

Voiceless consonants are: /p/, /t/, /k/, /ʃ/, /tʃ/, /θ/, /f/, /s/.

1.5.2   Supra-segmental Features

Supra-segmental features are more effective than segmental features for acquiring a foreign accent. Yates (2003) cited that "Students are taught the daunting International Phonetic Alphabet which is very difficult for even teachers to learn and likewise hard to teach with focus on phonemes. Concentration on individual sounds or segmentals, with boring contactless drills, does not teach a person how to sound like a native English speaker. The rhythm and music of language is what makes a person sound like a native". Prosody is a term that covers stress, intonation, and rhythm. These aspects of pronunciation also referred to as supra-segmentals.

1.5.2.1 Stress

Stress is the prominent emphasis in pronunciation that is given to certain syllable in a word, or to certain words in a phrase or sentence. That is the loudness of the syllable. In English, stressed syllables are louder, longer than non-stressed ones and have a high pitch.

A good stress leads to a good pronunciation. If you do not stress any words, or else you stress the wrong words, the listener will not grasp your sentence and your speech will not sound flat and monotone and very strange. Far from it, if you stress the right words your speech will have a

natural rhythm and melody that will sound so native. Stressing the wrong words leads to different meaning that will sound so native. Stressing the wrong words leads to different meanings. For example:

'I went to the White <u>house</u>'

'I went to the <u>White</u> House'

The first sentence describes a house which is white, whereas the second one indicates the place where the US president lives. (Mojsin, 2009, P. 78).

1.5.2.1.1   Some Rules for Stress

1. Stress the first syllable of:

- Most two-syllable nouns (<u>cli</u>mate/ <u>kno</u>wledge).

2. Stress the last syllable of:

- Most two-syllable verbs (re<u>quire</u>, de<u>cide</u>).

 3. Stress the second-to-last syllable of:

- Words that end in 'ic' (ec<u>sta</u>tic, geo<u>graphic</u>).

- Words ending in 'sion' and 'tion' (ex<u>ten</u>sion, retri<u>bu</u>tion).

 4. Stress the third-from-last syllable of:

- Words that end in'cy', 'ty,' 'phy', and 'gy' (de<u>mo</u>cracy, un<u>cer</u>tainty, ge<u>o</u>graphy).

1.5.2.2 Intonation

Intonation is the music of language. It refers to pitches that rise and fall and it replace punctuation in speech. Through intonation, we can express our feelings and intentions. English intonation signals whether the speaker is telling a simple statement or even a 'yes' or 'no' question.

We can lower our voice to produce a 'falling intonation', but to create a 'rising intonation' we have to raise the pitch of our voice at the end of the sentence. (Mojsin, 2009, p. 95)

 "Intonation is important for intelligibility, because it is used to express intention". (Kenworthy, 1987, p. 19).

Cook (1996) stated that intonation or speech music, is the sound that you hear when a conversation is too far away to be clearly audible but close enough for you to tell the nationality of the speaker. Intonation and pronunciation indicate mood and meaning. Without intonation your speech would be flat, mechanical, and very confusing for your listener.

1.5.2.3 Rhythm and Timing

In phonetics, rhythm is the sense of movement in speech marked by stress timing and quality of syllables. Rhythm characterizes most natural phenomena. It does not exist in the singing of the birds, in the movement of the waves, and in the alternation of day and night.

Kenworthy (1987) pointed out that English rhythm is characterized by the alternation of strong and weak syllables.

English is a stressed-timed language. This indicates that some syllables do not have the same length. Some are longer, some are shorter. In English, it really sounds very awkward to make each syllable the same length. However, many languages such as French, Spanish, and Cantonese syllable-timed which means each syllable has the same length. Because stress indicates meaning, a Native American will not be able to grasp the sense of sentences, or which words are the most important if all syllables are the same length.

1.6 Teaching and Learning Pronunciation

Teaching pronunciation raises students' awareness of different sounds and sounds features, alongside promoting their speaking skills. That is to say that teaching pronunciation is very significant for a better language learning process. (As cited in UKessays.com. 2013).

Teaching English pronunciation is often neglected by foreign/second language classrooms by lots of teachers who ensure teaching grammar and lexis over pronunciation. The reason behind this is that teachers may lack the necessary knowledge to help their students and also lack of time in their pronunciation classes, as it is clarified by Gilakjani (2008). Also, Harmer (2007) clearly stated it out that almost all English teachers give great attention to grammar and vocabulary and practice functional dialogues while give little emphasis to teach pronunciation, yet same teachers think that teaching pronunciation is a problematic issue. Gilbert (1994, p. 38) "Pronunciation has been something of an orphan in English programs around the world. Why has pronunciation been a poor relation? I think it is because the subject has been drilled to death, with too few results from too much effort".

For a successful learning and teaching pronunciation, both teacher and learner have major roles in succeeding this process.

1.6.1   The Role of the Teacher

Teachers have an important role in providing their students with the correct way of pronouncing words. The first thing teachers are required to do is to assist their learners to hear and pronounce sounds from their mother tongue language. The second thing is set the major elements that the students have to focus on. The third point is designing and selecting activities that suit all of the students needs and learning styles and according to the deferent ingredients that could change or affect the pronunciation, as well as raising their awareness towards the importance of such an aspect. Another important step is assessing and evaluating the student development. Moreover, in

order to motivate the learners to a more correct and native-like production of speech, teachers should provide learners with feedback and how they are developing is an essential matter. Šebestová (2007).

1.6.2   The Role of the Learner

In learning pronunciation, learners' role is similar to their role in other aspects of the learning process which is to be responsible and willing to learn. Moreover, learners should respond to the teacher's instructions and take actions towards their English pronunciation learning and improvement, by catching on pronunciation aspects and features that may impede them from be understood as suggested by Oxford (1994).

"Learners can indeed acquire intelligible pronunciation in the second language when they become active participants in their own learning and when the teacher supports their effort by employing a wealth of techniques to aid students in their efforts to improve their pronunciation (as cited in Morad, nd. P. 46).

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, we have dealt with two English language aspects: native-like and intelligible pronunciation? Which are considered as main goals for any majored EFL learner. Both aims are key aspects in the development of a good communication skill. An intelligible pronunciation alongside a native-like accent could be easily established through working on its features, focusing on all its aspects not only vowels and consonants, but also on supra-segmental ones.

Chapter two: Initial Consideration to Mimicry in the Learning Process

Introduction

The natural acquisition of language happens through oral modes. In the development of this acquisition, mimicry usually appears as a prominent technique that has a considerable place within the area of language learning. The present chapter endeavors to portray the ability of mimicry in acquiring a native-like accent and adopting frequently by EFL learners to enhance their foreign accent if they keep mimicking NSs. Plainly, the chapter consists of seven titles that straighten out various points about mimicking NSs. Apparently, it is much concerned with the way learners try to imitate NSs and how mimicry facilitates the path to have an intelligible accented speech and improves of the learners' ability to receive a natural speech and be able to pick up a correct pronunciation. Furthermore, there is a reference to some theories and language teaching methods that agree with the use of mimicry in language learning programs. Finally the chapter winds up listing the major factors that threaten mimicry in addition to the most significant benefits that learner may gain when they mimic.

2.1 Definition of Mimicry

Mimicry or imitation is observed oftentimes in our daily life. People usually tend to copy utterances of their surroundings. Generally mimicry can be defined as a remarkable change in behavior as people unconsciously and automatically replicate others either verbally or non-verbally according to (Stel and Vonk, 2010).

(Speidel, G and Nelson, K, 1989) claimed that imitation may hold the face of facilitator of language process; it also can hold the face of jesting and mocking as it can hold other faces. On the other hand, imitation can be a skill, a tendency, intent, a process, or all of them.

(Stel and Vonk, 2010, p. 311) "Mimicry is defined broadly as 'doing what others are doing'. This doing can take many forms, both verbally and non-verbally. For example, one might mimic the words someone uses, the rate at which they speak, or the accent with which they deliver".

(Lindahl, M and Pramling, I, 2002, p. 31) "Imitation is fundamentally interpersonal… imitation viewed as an activity seems to have two major functions, the cognitive and the communicative".

Another view appears with Vygotsky (1986) through which he distinguished intelligent, conscious imitation from automatic coping. He figured out that conscious imitation reveals a sense of understanding the structure and relation between objects, and it does not require repetition whereas automatic imitation basically depends on repetition, i.e. repeating trail-and-error series that involves no sign of conscious comprehension.

2.2 Background of Mimicry

2.2.1 Learning Theories

The concept of mimicry or imitation is very popular and has been mentioned by different scholars in some learning theories throughout the history of language learning. This emphasizes the significant of imitation as a key element in the learning process. This part of our research is meant to adopt the most prominent theories that consider imitation as a crucial building block of language development. These theories are; the behaviorist theory, the socio-learning theory, and the socio-cultural theory (SCT).

2.2.1.1 Behaviorist Theory

According to Graham (2000) behaviorist theory is a learning theory introduced by the American psychologist B. F. Skinner. Its main focus falls on objectively observed behaviors without need to any independent activity of mind. In fact, imitation has a fundamental role within Skinner theory. For him, language is acquired through Operant Conditioning. His theory claims that

children learn to speak by coping the words and sounds heard around them and by having their responses strengthened by the repletion, correction, and other reactions that adults provide. Skinner believed that the acquisition of language requires four key elements which are stimulus, response, reinforcement, repetition. His theory has some advantages such as the lexical development through which the child can copy words that his/ her parents say. Also, the phonological development that enables children to develop regional accents and so can imitate the sounds around them.

2.2.1.2 Socio-learning Theory

Socio-learning theory was introduced by Albert Bandura in 1977. The theory claims that learning occurs within a social context and that people learn from each other via observation, imitation and modeling. (Bandura, 1971, p. 2) stated that "men's capacity to learn by observation enables him to acquire large, integrated units of behavior by example without having to build up the patterns gradually by tedious trial and error. Similarly, emotional responses can be developed observationally by witnessing the affective reactions of others undergoing painful or pleasurable experiences".

According to Bandura's view, people observe others behaviors, then try to imitate them. People are often reinforced for modeling the behaviors of others. Bandura also suggested that the environment reinforces modeling as well. Children pay attention to the models they are surrounded by and mimic them. In this regard, the child is likely to continue performing the behavior if the consequences are rewarding. There are some effects of modeling on behavior in that modeling teaches new behaviors and similarly increases the possibility of similar behavior to happen again.

2.2.1.3 Socio-cultural Theory (SCT)

In agreement with the Vygotskyan perspective, imitation is considered a crucial component in the learning setting. (Vygotsky, L, 1986, p. 188) views that: "in the child's

development…imitation and instruction play a major role. They bring out the specifically human qualities of the mind and lead the child to new developmental levels".

Despite the fact that imitation has always been a matter of stimulus-response learning and habit formation as well as drilling and repletion activities within the behaviorist perspective, the SCT, however, view imitation from a totally different angle. Vygotsky (1986) proved that rather than viewing imitation as a mere automatic coping or repetition of the model behavior, SCT theory conceives of imitation as a transformative activity that involves the learner's intelligence, intentional, and creative reproduction of someone else's mental operations.

2.2.2 Teaching Methods

This part tends to cover the historical perspective of the two main teaching methods which are the Direct Method and the Audio-Lingual Method that were concerned with mimicry in the field of language teaching and learning. It then presents a brief review of the background of these methods with a clear reference to the way they addressed and used imitation in the teaching settings.

2.2.2.1 The Direct Method

It is a method of language teaching arose around the turn of the 19th century, also known as the Natural Method. It became widely known and served to right the shortcomings of Grammar Translation Method. Richard and Rodgers, (1986) said that the specialist in this approach argued that a foreign language could be thought successfully with no need to translate or use the mother tongue because meaning is transmitted directly through demonstrations and actions.

Thus, the main focus of the Direct Method was on the importance of speaking and correct pronunciation. Therefore, it was characterized by the use of imitation and repetition to teach pronunciation.

Briefly, in the Direct Method, the teacher provides learners with a model for a native like speech, and then the learners are supposed to mimic the model and do their best to approximate the model through imitation and repetition.

2.2.2.2 The Audio-Lingual Method

This teaching method which is an oral-based approach is very similar to the Direct Method. It actually appeared during the Second World War when the US army was in a deep need to be orally proficient in languages. Diane (2000) state that, "however, it is very different in that rather than emphasizing vocabulary acquisition through exposure to its use in situations, the Audio-Lingual Method drills students in the use of grammatical sentence patterns. It also, unlike the Direct Method has strong theoretical base in linguistics and psychology […] it was thought that the way to acquire the sentence patterns of the target language was through conditioning _helping learners to respond correctly to stimuli through shaping and reinforcement".

So, the Audio-lingual was another teaching method that drew much emphasis to imitation and repetition because it was highly influenced by the behaviorist view. With a heavy use of dialogs and audio, learners could imitate their model in a good way. (Diane, 2000, p. 37): "after the class is given the dialog, the teacher asks learners to experience repetition and attempt to mimic the teacher's model". The Audio-lingual enjoyed many years of popularity and it was a real facilitator for teachers and students alike.

2.3 Suggested Methods to Promote Mimicry

2.3.1 Linguistic Mimicry Approach

Linguistic Mimicry Approach is a unique approach presented by Yates, B, A, an ESL instructor of speaking and listening on the college level. Yates main aim of Linguistic Mimicry is to promote students' accent and pronunciation through mimicking English-speaking actors from TV programs with much emphasize on supra-segmental features rather than teaching only the

segmental features of pronunciation. From a personal experience, Yates actually faced a big failure when he was a Spanish student. He spent a long period of time studying it and he got excellent grades, but unfortunately he could not speak the Spanish language well until he started mimicking Spanish speakers. In fact, the essence of LMA is that it emphasizes the teaching of supra segmentals in L2 classroom and it heavily highlights its importance as Yates said "the rhythm and music of language is what makes a person sound like a native". For instance, LMA first illustrates rhythmic patterns as basic units rather than sounds or words. Through LMA, students stay always motivated, never feel reluctant to speak and engage   in real life communication. They can be taught techniques so they can imitate the supra-segmental features of the target language. One way of doing so is by memorizing and performing a video script. In line with what Yates has suggested, in this approach, drama techniques are excessively used as the focus has drawn much more to the students' performance. Actually, LMA creates a sort of a calm environment that lowers anxiety and raises self-confidence. Besides, it increases comprehensibility so that learners can integrate the pronunciation of L2 into their personality. Yates (2003, p. 14) claimed that "Linguistic Mimicry addresses psychological factors of pronunciation through the use of dramatic techniques that offer a low-stress environment to diminish students' anxiety and enhance empathy, or integrativeness".

This method should be integrated in the classroom and cover language learning process, for it yields a remarkable development on learners' foreign accent. As Yates suggested, "I think Linguistic Mimicry is a viable approach to pronunciation pedagogy and should be added to ESL pronunciation curriculum". Also, (Yates, 2003, p. 2) states "…Linguistic Mimicry teaches skills for imitating American English supra-segmentals, provides meaningful repetition of segmentals and supra-segmentals, exposes students to real life situation, and addresses the psychological barriers to taking on a new language in a low stressed environment".

2.3.2 Suggestopedia

As reported by Yates (2003), suggestopedia is a teaching method that is used to learn foreign languages through which students learn most effectively. The method was developed by the Bulgarian psychologist Dr. Georgi Lozanov. Suggestopedia is a method that exposes learners to a large amount of the target language through a free environment that provides students with a various kind of activities such as drama performing, puppets, and singing. In other words, a environment that supports the learning of a second language in a natural and spontaneous way. Richard and Rodgers (1986) figured out that suggestions are the essence of suggestopedia method. Rhythm and intonation are related to the musical background that helps to create a good attitude on the side of the learner. Suggestupedia method provides an air of relaxation away from anxiety and tension. There are some activities that are related with suggestopedia such as imitation, question and answer, but the most relevant one is the listening activities which concern the text and the vocabulary of each unit. Using suggestupedia is very interesting, yet it is challenging to do because it does have some limitation despite its helpful benefits.

2.4 Mimicking Native Speakers

2.4.1 How to Mimic

It seems truly fascinating and pleasurable to know that accent is just like music, it goes up and down and once you get it right, you will surely move closer and closer towards sounding like a native speaker. Many learners would ask how can we neutralize our foreign accent?!

Before starting, it is important to point out that it is not easy to utterly shift your own accent to that of a native speaker. So, it is very hard for an Indian for instance to sound like a American with a typical CNN standard pronunciation, or even an English man.

Speidel, G and Nelson, K (1989) stated in their book, The Many Faces of Imitation, imitation can be viewed as consisting of two components; the first one is the observation of the

model behavior and the second one is its reproduction. So, the reproduction of speech requires the observation and analysis of the model. In the first phase, the learner should observe the model consciously and carefully. In this regard, the learner is supposed first to choose an American speaker to be a good model who is likeable and cool in the ear and eye of the learner. The model can be an actress, a newscaster, or a TV show host. Then listen repetitively to that model and double the oral practice as well by trying to mimic the person as closely as possible. The point in that is whenever the learner speaks; he/ she should try to get into the character of that model. In the next step, the learner is supposed to analyze his/ her accent often by recording the voice and comparing it with that of the model and even changing the accent to match the models. The learner may practice the accent out loud until fluency. Later on, try to figure out where do differences lie, discover mistakes and try to correct them, in fact, for most students it is not straightforward, but there are some learners who tend to have a knack to pick up a foreign tongue really easily.

2.4.2 Steps to be Followed When Mimicking NSs

According to Murdoch (2015) a translator and a language coach, there are some ideas that help a speaker sound more like a native. Therefore, learners should take them into consideration while mimicking a native speaker.

2.4.2.1 Intonation

As referred to in the first chapter of this research, intonation is the rise and fall of your voice when you speak. In keeping with Murdoch view (2015) intonation is a common feature in all languages. It you use the same exact intonation of your language as you speak another foreign language, you will certainly, undoubtedly reveal your non-nativeness. Intonation is what makes our voice cherry and musical. Along with other features of pronunciation such as rhythm and stress, intonation has the impact to make one's accent sounds very natively.

2.4.2.2 The Use of Connectors

For Murdoch (2015) connectors are very useful things when trying to mimic a native speaker. They are phrases that do not really belong to our speech or the message we are going to reveal. They are phrases connect thoughts. They can be used to react to something somebody has said or to express your current mood. Connectors may fill the gap of silence when speaking and especially when mimicking NSs. We use them in order to avoid the frustration that appears each time we run out of words.

For instance, if your friend tells you something surprising, e.g. my mother just came back from Canada. You can react with 'has she'?! Or "has she".

You can say 'well', 'so' or 'right' to introduce your next thought.

You may also say 'right' or 'I see' to show that you are paying attention to what your partner is saying. Obviously, the use of connectors make speech flow and very similar to that of a native.

2.4.2.3 The Use of Filters

Murdoch (2015) explained that filters are kind of non-words that native speakers use in the middle of phrases and sentences when they are about to say something. Actually, English has a variety of filters. They make speech natural and native like. They are the 'ums', 'uhs' and 'likes' that sneak their way into our speech oftentimes without us even realizing it. Filters differ from one language to the other and are very important for language learners and so are they for mimickers. Non-native speakers will surely encounter that moment in which they need to fill the silence while they search for vocabulary. In such case, the speaker should integrate filters to carry on their speech successfully.

2.4.2.4 Imitate Native Speakers' Mistakes

In line with Murdoch, native speakers may say things which you think incorrect or things that go against the rules that you have learned in class. For instance, some people in some regions in the US say 'you was' instead of 'you were'. They say 'he do' rather than 'he does'.

Actually, it is necessary to make mistakes intentionally. However a learner may pick up something a native say all the time, and drop it into a conversation even if it goes against the rules he/ she already studied.

2.4.2.5 Make a List of Informal Vocabulary and Slang

One of the most important things Murdoch stresses is the use of slangs. For her, Slang is one aspect of language which the student never encounters in the classroom and so, for him, they are informal words. In fact, they are an important part of becoming fluent speaker because they are excessively used by NSs. They may help learners to improve their foreign accent each time they communicate informally. Slang usually creates a sense of belonging and develops a strong cultural blood.

2.4.2.6 Link between Words

Linking helps a big deal in promoting the fluency of learners and makes them sound like a true native speaker because it makes speech sound more natural and flow easily. Just as Mojsin (2009) clarified, non-native speakers usually struggle to pronounce each word alone because they think this way their speech will be clearly understood, however, their speech sounds a bit strange and may give the impression that they are not fluent.

2.5 Listening Comprehension

2.5.1 Definition of Listening

Listening, which is called a Cinderella skill, has a significant role in acquiring a foreign accent. Despite so, schools and universities neglect listening while the other three language skills are highly appreciated and receive central attention. As a matter of fact, listening should be a major area of concern for both learner and teachers. Listening has been defined by many researchers in the field.

(Vandergrift and Goh, 2012, p. 4) "Listening is an important skill: it enables language learners to receive and interact with language input and facilitate the emergence of other language skills. Compared with writing and reading, or even speaking, however, the development of listening receives the least systematic attention from teachers and instructional materials".

Listening is most crucial and primary tool that learners relay on to create their intelligibility in the target language and establishing a background for communication. Good listener will be able to:

➢ Understand the message being told.

➢ Find underplaying meaning in what others say.

➢ Reproduce and imitate what they heard perfectly.

2.5.2 Definition of Listening Comprehension

Conforming to Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) listening comprehension is an active process that encompasses knowing speech sounds, understanding the message of every single word, and comprehending the syntax of sentences.

Researchers use various definitions for the term 'listening comprehension'. According to Brown and Yule (1983) listening comprehension means that a person understands what he/ she has heard. If he/ she learns the text through hearing it, he/ she will understand it.

Brown (2006) stated that the best way to improve listening comprehension is that the teacher should first activate the student's prior knowledge that is already organized in schemata.

2.5.3 Listening Comprehension Strategies

Listening strategies can be steps followed by learners to raise up their learning capacity. They can help facilitate learning to become easier and more enjoyable. In addition to that, they help in developing the overall proficiency of the learner.

Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) cleared up that teaching listening strategies to students has a valuable benefit especially when the teacher increases students' knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and phonology. In fact, strategies are very helpful for learners because they guide and assess their own understanding and answer. The majority of researchers expressed that there are three types of strategies in listening comprehension which are cognitive, meta-cognitive, and socio-affective strategies.

2.5.3.1 Cognitive Strategies

Gilakjani and Sabouri clarify that cognitive strategies are related to understanding and accumulating input in short-term memory or long-term memory so that learners can access them later. Cognitive strategies are considered to be connected to learning activities and therefore, researchers define them as problem solving methods. In other words, they are strategies used by students to help themselves comprehend linguistic input, obtain data, and remember new information.

As a matter of fact, there exist two types of cognitive strategies. Brown (2006) defined bottom-up and top-down processing as follows: top-down means using our prior knowledge and experiences; we know certain things about certain topics and situation and use that information to understand. Bottom-up processing refers to the use of the information we have about sounds, word meaning, and discover makers such as first, then, and after that to assemble our understanding of

what we read or hear one step at a time. Students obviously need both these kind of cognitive strategies to develop their learning.

2.5.3.2 Meta-cognitive Strategies

In these strategies, learners are conscious when listening to the text. They learn how to plan, monitor, and evaluate the information they gathered from the listening part. Such strategies can help learners become self-confident and possess the ability to carry on the activities. (Gilakjani and Sabouri, 2016)

2.5.3.3 Socio-affective Strategies

Students can interact with other speakers outstandingly when they use socio-cognitive strategies. In fact, this kind of strategies has the most effect on the learning context because it gives students the appropriate opportunity to decrease anxiety and become self-confident. (Gilakjani and Sabouri, 2016)

2.6 Factors Affecting Degree of Mimicking NSs' Accents

Throughout the process of mimicking NSs, learners may encounter certain difficulties or be affected by a combination of factors. These factors are briefly summarized as followed:

2.6.1 The Interference of the Mother Tongue

Rana (2016) clarified that the language that learners pick up in their natural environment is called the mother tongue and it seems to be a real hindrance while acquiring a foreign accent. Every language in the world has different varieties and different accents. Therefore, the way we speak is a part of our identity. Usually learners who tend to improve their accent through mimicking a native speaker face some difficulties especially in the beginning because the sound system of the native language is totally different and influences the learners' accent of the target language. Actually, there are a lot of differences that learners may find. The most prominent ones are the combinations

of sounds and features such as rhythm and intonation. The more differences there are, the more difficulties learners will have when mimicking NSs accents.

2.6.2 The Amount of Exposure to Foreign Accents

There is a relationship between the amount of exposure and the proficiency of the learners. The exposure to foreign accents is essential for learners in order to e able to mimic native speakers successfully. The amount of leisure time spent listening to NS plays a crucial role in acquiring a foreign accent. Evidently, it is not necessary for any learner of English to live abroad in order to be able to mimic NSs perfectly, but they should respond positively to the opportunities they have. As Kenworthy (1987) mentioned; if learners are aware of the necessity of the target language exposure and make use of its opportunities, they will be more successful in improving their pronunciation. In other words, most students do not really value the exposure to the target accent, so, they usually fail in mimicking NS. Yates (2003) stated that learners who do not have sufficient exposure to L2 culture, practicing pronunciation by mimicking L2 actors can provide solid contextual segmental and supra segmental practice as well as vocabulary, grammar, and idiomatic expressions throughout a stress free environment of watching videos, TV-shows, movies, radio, and etc.

2.6.3 The Non-native Teacher

EFL learners are exposed to a range of varieties of English, rather than a single one such as British and American accent. Apparently, learners have a natural tendency towards American English since it is widespread in the world. For Zhang, they can easily get access to mimic and speak American accent through different means such as media. However, this process turns out to be more difficult when they attend the classroom environment where the chance to mimic a NS is too limited. For them, the teacher does not sound like the actor they used to watch and imitate on TV-shows, or the newscaster they listen to on the radio. Obviously, every teacher has a distinctive accent and unfortunately the majority of teachers have a non-native accent. So, the student whose aim is to acquire a native like accent will not be able to relay on the teacher as a model all the time.

2.6.4 Personality Factor

Zhang (2009) points out that Personality is another factor that appears to deeply affect learners' productivity whether positively or negatively. Researchers believe that unlike outgoing and confident learners, shy or introvert students who do not want to take part in classroom activities achieve high score on reading and grammar components, but they cannot make access to the practical world and use pronunciation activities. Accordingly, they will not be able to speak fluently and natively. As a result of their introvert, they are supposed to take no opportunity to mingle with their classmate at least and at most to mimic NS. Thus, it seems that shy learners cannot integrate in the process of mimicking NSs and even they try, they will not be able to reach even a near native pronunciation.

2.6.5 Motivation

According to Cann (1992) motivation is the driving force behind the act of learning. When motivation comes from the outside, it is called extrinsic. When it comes from inside the learner, it is then intrinsic. Motivation will only become helpful if the learner himself makes it intrinsic. For instance, a teacher may provide his learners with great amounts of enthusiasm and encouragement to increase extrinsic motivation for them, but later on, this incentive and enthusiasm must come from inside the learners.

As defined by Gardner (1985) motivation is a combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning plus favorable attitudes towards learning that language. According to him, there are two types of motivation; the integrative and instrumental. The integrative motivation refers to learners' desire to engage in communication and assimilate with the numbers of the target language with the intention of participating in the target culture whereas instrumental motivation claims that learners learn a language for the purpose that is related to more functional reasons such as getting a job or passing an exam. Motivation is a crucial component of the learning process. Having a low

degree of motivation will affect learners badly when they tend to mimic NSs and get an accented speech.

2.7 Benefits for Mimickers

Mimicry has a lot to do when acquiring a foreign accent especially GA accent, for it is the more likeable and the most encountered on TV and media. It does facilitate learners' native-likeness. By mimicking native speakers in CNN news, TV-shows, famous speech and so on, learners get a lot of benefits that lead to achieve their proficiency. As Kim (2011) suggested in his research, the learners who are supposed to be proficient speakers are absolutely those who have the ability to grasp what they hear and even reproduce it by mimicking.

Mimicry is a natural way to get a native like accent. According to Kim (2011) learners can produce a very comprehensible accented speech by practicing mimicry on the target language even those adults for whom native like pronunciation sounds hard.

It can create a strong confidence for the learner. Yates (2003) spent many years trying to learn Spanish, but he got nothing but a heavy accent. Thus he started mimicking Spanish speakers in different occasions. In this regard, he became a fluent speaker of the language.

Yates (2003) also discussed that mimicry contributes to the perceptions of native speakers. i.e., mimicry provides the chance for learners first to understand the target speech so they can reproduce it easily.

One good benefit for teachers is that they can make a mimicry test to assess the accent proficiency level. (Kim, 2011, p. 89) added "mimicry has huge potentials not only on language learning, but for language assessment".

Stel, M and Vonk, R (2010) found out that mimicry possesses a positive effect for all relationships. i.e.; mimicry does enhance relationships between people and create an air of empathy for both mimickers and mimickees in social interaction.

Mimicry can promote learners' accent. Each time they mimic a NS, their accent becomes more native like.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we demonstrated that mimicry is the cornerstone of the acquisition process of foreign accents among EFL learners. A major point to be stressed is that mimicking Native speakers has a big influence on learner's foreign accent, but it must be correlated with the exposure to the target accent as much as possible. Learners may use a variety of strategies and techniques to improve their English accent, as they may lose a long period of time without getting a fruitful result. For this reason, we shed light on new methods that promote and facilitate mimicking foreign accent and enable students to cope with it very easily. Mimicry, in fact, provides the most effective experience for foreign language learners. It is only up to them to choose whether they should try it or not.

Chapter Three: Field Work

Introduction

The two previous chapters of this study have represented the review of related literature. This chapter is mainly devoted to the analysis of the research findings. It describes the sample and the method used for data collection. As long as the aim of this research is to reflect the role of mimicking native speakers in enhancing students' accent and pronunciation, and in order to answer the research questions and confirm the research hypothesis, both a questionnaire and an interview were addressed to third year English LMD students at Mohammed Saddik Ben Yahia University.

3.1 Research Methodology

The research methodology section is concerned with presenting and defending the research design used for the sake of answering the research problems, namely, students' intentions towards developing a native-like accent, whether they practice mimicry or not, and their viewpoints towards its effectiveness. This section includes: the research paradigm, population and sample, research instruments, data collection and analysis procedures, data analysis, general discussion and the limitations of the study.

3.2 Research Paradigm

The current study is conducted through the use of a mixed approach, i. e. triangulation; which accordingly refers to the use of a mixed methods research to incorporate both basic views about the phenomena understudy. Mertens and Hesse-Biber (2012).

Data is gathered using both quantitative and qualitative paradigms. The two methods were mixed together for they seem to have appropriate answers to the research questions.

A quantitative paradigm highlights an importance of examining large groups of randomly selected participants. Zoltán maintained that "Quantitative research involves data collection procedures that result primarily in numerical data which is then analyzed primarily by statistical methods. Typical example: survey research using a questionnaire analyzed by statistical software such as Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)."(2007, p. 24). Quantitative data were obtained from the administration of a questionnaire, which was meant to figure out whether third year students at the English department at Jijel University practice mimicry as an attempt to promote their accent and pronunciation or not. Also, it was aimed at knowing their viewpoints about the effectiveness of this technique.

Qualitative data gives great importance to studying small samples of individuals seeking direct and further understanding from the participants' points of view. Stake Denzin & Lincoln (1998) described qualitative research as: "multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (p.2). Qualitative data were derived from conducting an interview with students. The purpose behind the use of this research tool is dig for further explanation concerning the research questions. Also, it was used to check the results of practicing mimicry on students' speech; whether they adopt an English accent while speaking or not.

Due to the nature of this study, the researchers opted for the integration of both quantitative and qualitative paradigms in data collection and analysis. The integration of the two methods gives deeper investigation of the research problem and shed light upon diverse viewpoints as it was confirmed by Mertens and Hesse-Biber (2012) "Quantitative and qualitative data can be mixed for the purpose of illustrating a more complete understanding of the phenomena being studied" (p. 78).

3.3 Setting and Participants

This study was conducted within an EFL context, which is very familiar to us in English department at Mohammed Saddik Ben Yahia University, Jijel. It was carried out by taking random samples from third year LMD students which consists of sixty (60) students. The main cause behind choosing a small sample is the time limitation we faced and some other practical reasons.

- **Students**

Students played a prominent role in the conduct of this study. The main interest of this research falls on discovering whether EFL learners use mimicry as a technique to acquire a native-like accent or not and their viewpoints towards its effectiveness. This study mainly addressed third year English students. The choice to work with them was intentional and purposeful because they have been taught Phonetics for two years and Oral Expression for about three years, which means that they already have enough background and deep insights about English pronunciation, now they seek to acquire a native-like accent. So, it would be more trustworthy to deal with them.

3.4 Research Instruments

The nature of this study required a variety in data gathering instruments, including a questionnaire and an interview. The two instruments addressed third year students at the English department at Jijel University.

3.4.1 Students' Questionnaire

The current research implemented a questionnaire for the sake of gathering information from different informants. Investigating whether third year students use mimicry to promote their accent and pronunciation or not and their viewpoints about the effectiveness of this technique were the purposes behind using a questionnaire.

The questionnaire is of great importance in conducting any research study. It is used by most researchers for its effectiveness in collecting a large amount of data from big numbers of informants in a short period of time. According to Richards (2005) "Questionnaires are one of the most common instruments used. They are relatively easy to prepare, they can be used with large numbers of subjects, and they obtain information that is relatively easy to tabulate and analyze" (p. 60). Questionnaires enable researchers to illustrate the participants" views, perceptions and thoughts as it is emphasized by Polit and Hungler (1997) "a questionnaire is a method of gathering information for respondents about attitude, knowledge, belief and feelings"(p.466).

The questionnaire consists of 17 questions as total so as to get "systematically collecting data on your everyday practice and analyzing it in order to come to some decisions about your practice should be" Wallace (1998, p. 4). Each question targets a distinct aim for the same general purpose of this study.

The student questionnaire was administrated by the researchers to sixty (60) third year students in English department of Mohammed Saddik Ben Yahia University, Jijel on May 3[th,] 2018. The researchers were present during the administration of the questionnaires in order to keep student well informed and provided by enough explanations in case they would misunderstand anything. The students were aware of the aim of the research and that their answers will be taken into consideration just for the sake of this study. At last the questionnaires were handed back.

3.4.2 Students' Interview

The second instrument used in this research was the interview. It was designed to collect qualitative data.

There are different types of interviews, but the one that serves best the aim of this research is the semi-structured interview. According to Dowsett (1998) "the semi-structure interview is quite extraordinary the interactions are incredibly rich and the data indicate that you can produce

extraordinary evidence about life that you don't get in structured interview or questionnaire methodology" (p.53). It consists of a set of questions which were prepared in advance by the interviewer, as well as other new questions which were emerged during the interview by the interviewer seeking further clarification for certain points. As Teijlingen said (2014) a semi-structured interview contains "Predetermined questioned, but order can be modified based upon the interview's perception of what seems most appropriate. Questions wording can be changed and explanations given: inappropriate questions for a particular interviewee can be omitted, or additional ones included" (p. 17).

The aim of the interview is dual. Firstly, it seeks to review the data already gathered from the students by means of the questionnaire and to figure out whether the students adopt an English accent while speaking or not.

In this current study, the interview is used as the second tool to investigate the students' use of mimicry to enhance their accent and pronunciation and their opinions about its effectiveness. The interview consists of a set of open questions and it was conducted individually with seven third-year EFL students at Mohammed Seddik Ben Yahia University, on May 23rd, 2018. The students were randomly chosen and they took short period of time to have a look at the questions and to get a clear idea about the topic before starting answering the interviewer questions.

3.5 Data collection and analyses procedures

3.5.1 Data Collection Procedures

The questionnaire was designed and implemented with EFL third year students at Jijel University. It was distributed and collected in one daytime. The researchers were present to provide participants with the necessary explanation in case facing difficulties in answering the questions. Hence, the questionnaires were filled out by students and then handed back to the researchers.

In addition to the questionnaire, an interview was conducted with seven (07) third year students in the English department at Jijel University. It was conducted individually with the presence of both researchers. Participants took few minutes to take a look on the questions so that they can get an idea about the discussed topic. The interviews were recorded by the researchers.

3.5.2 Data Analyses Procedures

The data of this research were gathered by means of questionnaire and interview. After having distributed and collected students' questionnaire; each question was well examined starting from the students' age, gender, their choice to study English … to the factors that may affect students' while mimicking native speakers. After having analyzed all the questions, its data were comprehensively displayed through the use of tables for they bring more clarity to the statistics in order to be more understood. Concerning the interviews, researchers carefully listened to the records of each interviewee and attentively interpreted its results according to the research aim.

3.6 Data Analyses

3.6.1 Analysis of Students' Questionnaire

Section One: Background Information

Four questions are included in this section; they encompass students' age, gender, their natural choice to study English; whether personal or imposed, and the reason behind their choice to study English. The ultimate goal of this section is to become aware of some information that shapes the background of the students.

Question 1: Age.

Table 1

Students' Age.

Age	subjects	%
18-20	5	8.33
21-23	49	81.66
24-26	6	10
Total	60	100

From the above table, the result unfold that there are three age groups in this sample. The great majority of the students (81.66%) almost share the same age which is between 21-23; whereas the students from the rest categories 18-20 and 24-26 have very small percentages which represent the number 05 and 06 for each category. From this result, one may have the impression that the respondents have different opinions and abilities due to the variety of their ages.

Question 2: Gender.

Table 2

Students' Gender.

Gender	subjects	%
Male	18	30
Female	42	70
Total	60	100

The result shown in the above table displays a remarkable imbalance in the number of male and female. It actually reveals that female outnumber male by reaching a big number that represents (70%) which is, in fact, the vast majority. So, they reach a large population that represents 42

students from the whole number; whereas, male have a small number which is 18 student (30%). From this result, we can deduce that female are more likely to engage in the field of foreign languages and are ready to speak languages while male may draw their interest to something else.

Question 3: How was your choice to study English?

Table 3

Students' Choice for Studying English.

Options	Subjects	%
Personal	56	93.33
Imposed	4	6.66
Total	60	100

This question tends to discover the reality behind students' choice for choosing English as the main subject to major in at college. Participants' answer clears up that the greatest majority of students (93.33%) have a personal choice in studying English, and only four respondents (6.66%) were obliged to major in English which mean they do not have the freedom of choice concerning their personal matter. Therefore, those who make a personal choice are supposed to be highly motivated and successful than the rest.

Question 4: students' choice of studying English

Table 4

Students' Reason behind Choosing English.

Options	Subjects	%
Because I love it	32	53.33
To travel and speak with natives	10	16.66
To get a job and build a future carrier	15	25
Others	3	5
Total	60	100

There are different views concerning the reason why third year students have chosen to study English. (53.33%) of learners have chosen English for the sake of their interest, namely, because they like it, or they see it as an open window to the world. (25%) of students have the reasons for professional opportunities such as getting a job. (16%) have the tendency to travel to English speaking countries and interact with native speakers which can be a big benefit for them because they are likely to improve their pronunciation and a get a native-like accent. Whereas, (5%) of them were obliged to study English which may cause some problems in their future.

As far as the second part of this question is concerned, the students were asked to give other reasons behind their choice for majoring in English. Here are three answers that are worth to be mentioned:

➢ English is the most commonly spoken language in the world.

➢ I am interested in learning foreign languages.

➢ It was imposed.

Section Two: Accent and Pronunciation Acquisition

This section includes (06) questions which encompass both accent and pronunciation. The aim of this section is mainly to figure out how student treat accent since it is a prominent feature of the language. Also, it shows students' opinion about accent and whether it has the same importance as pronunciation. Question 1 and 2 are yes/ no questions provided with necessary explanations. However, questions 3, 4, 5 and 6 require ticking the preferable answer.

Question 1: Do you adopt an English accent when speaking?

Table 5

Students Adoption of English Accents.

Options	Subjects	%
Yes	43	71
No	17	28
Total	60	100

The aim of this question is to know whether students support the idea of having a native-like accent or not. Following the above results, it appears that (71%) of the English students, which is the highest percentage, tend to adopt an English accent while they speak and they are much exited about that what may reveals the reality that they expose themselves to the English language very often. Whereas (28.33%) of students said no, which gives the impression that this category of learners has no interest to speak English with an accent.

The second part of this question required a specification for the accent students aim for when speaking.

Table 6

Accents Adopted by Students.

Options	subjects	%
American English	24	40
British English	11	18.33
Mixture	15	25
No answer	10	16.67
Total	60	100

As far this question is concerned, the results seem to be varied. As it is displayed in the above table, the main accent students try to copy when speaking is American accent as stated by (40%) of the participants; whereas (18.33%) aim for the British accent. The good portion of third year students who resemble (25%) of all the participants adopt a mixture of the previously mentioned accents, when (16.67%) did not express their views.

Question 2: Do you think that acquiring a Native-like Accent is important for Foreign Language Learners?

Table 7

Students' Viewpoints towards Acquiring a Native-Like Accent.

Options	subjects	%
Yes	49	81
No	11	1.83
Total	60	100

This question points out the importance of having a native-like accent for learners; whether they prefer to acquire a native-like accent or not. The result as counted in the above table display the vast majority of students (81%) believe that acquiring a native-like accent is a significant step that foreign language learners have to take into consideration. From this point of view, we may get the idea that this category of students aim to speak language beautifully with the perfect accent. They do not only care about what they say, but also how they say it. Simply, they reject the idea of sounding like a complete foreigner when speaking a foreign language. on the contrary, the second category that consists of 11 student, have a very small percentage (1.83%) which means they totally do not see that one should acquire a native-like accent.

In this question students were asked for justifications concerning their opinions towards the importance of acquiring a native-like accent when speaking. The answers for those who are for acquiring a native-like accent were as follow:

➢   It enables students to interact with native-speakers.

➢   To pronounce words correctly.

➢   When learning a language, students must master it from all its aspects.

For those who were against acquiring a native-like accent, their justifications were as follow:

➢   Acquiring a native-like accent is hard to be achieved.

➢   The most important thing is produce an understood speech.

➢   The Algerian accent they use is not considered to be wrong.

Question 3: What are the different ways do you use to improve your English accent?

Table 8

Students' Ways of Improving their English Accent.

Options	Subjects	%
Mimicking native speakers	20	33.33
Interaction with native speakers	13	21.66
The use of audio-visual means	26	43.33
Others	1	1.66
Total	60	100

This question tends to discover the different means that third year students use in order to enhance their foreign accent. According to the answers above, a considerable number of students of 26 with a large percentage (43.33%) prefer to practice their accent through the use of audio-visual means which, in fact, a good choice. (33.33%) of students seek to promote their English accent through mimicking Native speakers; whereas, the rest of the population (21.66%) prefer to interact directly or indirectly with native speakers. There is only one student (1.66%) who does not have a means at all.

This question required other means students use to develop their foreign accent, but none of them has set his opinion.

Question 4: How much do you agree with the following statement?

"The most important thing is to master an intelligible pronunciation and not a native-like accent".

Table 9

Students' Agreement with the Above Statement.

Options	subjects	%
Strongly agree	25	41.66
Agree	19	53.33
Disagree	13	21.66
No answer	03	05
Total	60	100

The aim of posing this question is to know whether accent is the most important thing for students, or they prefer to only have a pronunciation that is understood for everybody. Table 5 demonstrates these results: (41.66%) of the participants have strong agreements with the above statement. (31.66%) totally disagree; whereas (21.66%) agree with this view. There are three participants as shown in the table above did not give their opinions.

Question 4: How would you rate your pronunciation level?

Table 10

Students' Viewpoints towards their Pronunciation Level.

Options	subjects	%
Very good	05	8.33
Good	32	53.33
Average	22	36.66
Weak	01	1.66
Total	60	100

This question attempts to know how third year English students evaluate their level of pronunciation. What they really think about it. 32 students (53.33%) consider their level to be good. (36.66%) of them think it is average. Whereas (8.33%) which represents only 05 students from the whole population believe that they have a very good level of pronunciation. There is only one student (1.66%) who thinks his level is weak. This indicates that most participants have not yet mastered the required level of pronunciation.

Question 6: When learning English pronunciation, which of the following items you find easy to master?

Table 11

Students' Easiest Pronunciation Feature to Master.

Options	subject	%
Phonetic transcription	15	25
Stress	14	23.33
Intonation	17	28.33
Rhythm	14	23.33
Total	60	100

Question 07 aims at discovering which language feature that seems easier for students to master. Table number six (06) shows that (28.33%) tend to master intonation more than any other feature. (23.33%) find that stress is less difficult. The same percentage gained by another category of learners support rhythm. Whereas the rest few students (25%) are able to master phonetic transcription.

Section three: Mimicry

This section is made up of eight questions whose purpose is to highlight the role of mimicry in language learning, students' viewpoints towards its effectiveness and how learners can take advantage of it.

Question 1: Are you Familiar with Mimicry in Foreign Language Learning?

Table 12

Students' Familiarity with Mimicry.

Options	subjects	%
Yes	34	56.66
No	26	43.33
Total	60	100

The purpose of this question is to figure out whether students are really aware of mimicry. Also, we draw the attention to it as an effective technique in language learning in general and acquiring a native-like accent in particular. So, the table above exhibits the fact that (56.66%) are familiar with mimicry which raises the possibility that they can take advantage from it and use it in their learning journey. While (43.33%) which represents a considerable number of students 26, unfortunately, are not really familiar with it which means they have no idea about it.

Question 2: Do you like to Mimic Native Speakers?

Table 13

Students' Viewpoints towards Mimicking Native Speakers.

Options	subjects	%
Yes	53	88.33
No	07	11.66
Total	60	100

The reason behind posing this question is to see whether students have a tendency towards mimicking Native speakers or not. According to the aforementioned result, the majority of students (88.33%) said yes. They actually tend to mimic native speakers which may give the impression that this category of students are very active and that they look for new professional ways to promote their foreign accent and make it sound more native. Whereas the rest of the population (11.66%) that consists of 7 students is really a small number, answered no.

Question 03: How much do you tend to mimic Native speakers?

Table 14

Students' Frequency of Mimicking NSs.

Options	subjects	%
Often	25	41.66
Sometimes	27	45
Rarely	04	6.66
Never	04	6.66
Total	60	100

Among sixteen informants, a considerable percentage of them (41.66%) have a good tendency to mimic Native speakers oftentimes which means these students are extrovert to the English language, self-confident and they consider mimicry as an appropriate solution. (45%) of them as the biggest percentage like to practice mimicry only sometimes. The result also shows that (6.66%) of the participants have a little chance which means they do mimic rarely. Whereas the rest stated that they never mimic. From these points, we can conclude that most of students have a fine tendency to mimic NS, a thing that helps them develop a good ear so they can acquire an American native-like accent.

Question 3: Which kind of mimicry are you interested in?

Table 15

Students' Preferable Type of Mimicry.

Options	subjects	%
Linguistic (verbal) mimicry	42	70
Gestural mimicry	15	25
Both	03	05
Total	60	100

The purpose of this question is to know which kind of mimicry students prefer to use in order to develop their level of proficiency in language learning. In line with the findings presented in the table above, (70%) of the informants master linguistic mimicry and they seem to benefit from it. (25%) prefer to practice gestural mimicry and this can possibly reveals that they encounter some difficulties in speaking and that's why they avoid linguistic mimicry which is, in fact, an effective tool when it comes to accent acquisition. Also, former the result we found out that (5%) of the participants practice both kind of mimicry.

Question 4: Do you think mimicking native speakers helps you improve your foreign accent and pronunciation?

Table 16

Students' Viewpoints towards the Effectiveness of Mimicry.

Options	subjects	%
Yes	37	61.66
No	13	21.66
Somehow	10	16.66
Total	60	100

This question aims at determining the importance of mimicry for third year students. According to the result shown above, (61.66%) represents 37 participants who really believe mimicry helps them enhance their foreign accent and pronunciation. While (21.66%) of them have answered nos, which indicates their negative opinion towards mimicry in that it is not a suitable solution that helps them develop a native-like accent. Unexpectedly, (16.66%) of the participants which represents 10 students gave the answer somehow.

Question 5: Do you have a role model (an actor, a TV-show host) that you like to mimic ?

Table 17:

Students' Having a Role Model.

Options	subjects	%
Yes	40	66.66
No	20	33.33
Total	60	100

This question was chosen carefully to figure out whether students are really interested in mimicking NSs or not. Actually, students' answers indicate (66.66%) have a real model that they like to mimic in the real life context. This means that this kind of learners are really interested in enhancing their accent and pronunciation, while (33.33%) of them answered no which reveals the reality that they do not attempt to have a model which in turn reflects their negative side towards mimicry and that they are not even motivated in doing that.

Question 6: As you listen to native speakers, do you compare how you pronounce words with the way they do?

Table 18

Students' Comparison of their Pronunciation with Natives' One.

Options	subjects	%
Often	59	98.33
Sometimes	01	1.66
Rarely	00	00
Total	60	100

This question aims to discover if students are interested to make their accent sound more like that of a native when they listen to NSs. (53.33%) of the participants said they sometimes try to compare their accent with native speakers' while listening. (45%) said they always do. Whereas (1.66%) of them answered they rarely do. There is no single participant that answered never.

Question 7: From your point of view, which of the following elements may affect the students while mimicking native speakers?

Table 19

 Students' Choice of Factors Hinder Mimicking NSs.

Options	subjects	%
Mother tongue interference	28	46.66
the target language amount of exposure	05	8.33
The non-native teacher	10	16.66
Motivation	17	28.33
Others	00	00
Total	60	100

Concerning the elements that may affect students while mimicking NSs, students' answers varied: (46.66%) as the vast majority thinks that the interference of the mother tongue highly affects the process. (28.33%) of the informants' answer was motivation. (16.66%) claimed that the non-native teacher. Finally, (8.33%) which represents only 5 students answered the amount of exposure to the target language. but they did not add any other element that can affect the process of mimicry.

3.6.2 Analyses of the Students' Interview

Interviewee 1

The first interviewee reported that she is totally for developing a near native-like accent, the thing that she keeps working on. She always tends to listen to natives on YouTube, TV and also through chatting with them on social media. She thinks that mimicry is the most effective way to acquire an accent because it allows her to catch the exact pronunciation of words. According to her "this is how she learned English".

Interviewee 02

The second interviewee showed a big interest towards developing her accent, to her "acquiry a natice-like accent alongside fluency and accuracy is what I am working on now". Most importantly, she prefers listening to NSs in normal situations not acting a particular scene; the thing which makes the speech sound spontaneous. In other words, she studies NSs when speaking; she analyzes the pitch the stress, the rhythm and their tone so that she can mimic them easily. She believes that mimicry is the best way to promote one's accent and pronunciation because if one wants to sound like NSs when speaking, he/she must listen to the actual people.

Interviewee 03

The third interviewee held that he lately became interested in developing a foreign accent particularly a British accent; however, his main focus was solely on acquiring a clear pronunciation. He reported that "I always watch UK prime minister's speech and I really like her accent that I want to mimic her alot". To him, the mimic technique is an excellent means of reaching a good level of accent and pronunciation.

Interviewee 04

The fourth interviewee stated that he is not interested in acquiring a native-like accent; rather, his main concerns is striking up a clear speech and have a crystal clarity in his communication in English "the most important thing to me is to deliver a clear message". He said that he usually listens to NSs but does not try to mimic the way they speak because speaking with a foreign accent to him is quite hard and almost unreachable. This student had never tried to mimic NSs, so he could not state his point of view concerning the effectiveness of mimicry; rather, he said that he would for sure give a fair shot trying this technique in case he changes his mind about enhancing a foreign accent.

Interviewee 05

The fifth student revealed that the most important thing to her is deliver an understood message to people, yet she is interested in promoting a native-like accent. She frequently listens to NSs and she has so much fun trying to imitate them. She stresses that the more she listens to NSs, the more she has the chance to correct her pronunciation errors. To her mimicry is very effective, yet it is not the only tool to develop her accent and pronunciation "to acquire a native-like accent one should first start reading about the accent he wants to have". She said that the first step towards the required level of speaking is to work on mastering English segmentals and supra-segmentals.

Interviewee 06

The sixth interviewee declared that she has already mastered an intelligible pronunciation; her major focus now is adopting a native-like accent, "a native-like accent is flavor I want to add to my English". She often practices mimicry; she said that this is how she has adopted an impressive American accent. To her mimicry is very beneficial, she learned much from it in her attempt to enhance their accent and pronunciation.

Interviewee 07

The last interviewee said that both accent and pronunciation are equally important for any EFL learner, so that one can sound competent and comfortable at the same time able of delivering a clear speech. She declares that she follows "I follow a youtuber and I truly try to mimic her accent each time", which is why she keeps listening and imitating her language. To her mimicry is a very significant technique in promoting one's level of speaking because it helps her a lot in figuring out the exact pronunciation of many words.

To sum up, according to the results obtained from the interview, six of the interviewees are for developing a native-like accent, when they all agreed that they have already mastered the required intelligible pronunciation, since they have been majoring in English for three years which

is an enough period of time to be able of conveying a clear speech in English. Only one student stated that he is not interested in acquiring a native-like accent, what really matters to him is delivering a clear message to the hearer.

Concerning practicing mimicry to enhance accent and pronunciation, five students stated that they always tend to listen to NSs, analyze the way they pronounce words and then try to imitate. To those students, this is how they learned to speak English. However, two students said that they usually listen to NSs, but they have never tried to imitate the way they speak. To them, it is quite hard to pronounce words as a NS does; whereas, a near native-like accent is a dream out of touch to them.

From the interviewees' answers, mimicking native speakers is the most effective technique to promote an accent and pronunciation. They stated that NSs are the origin of the English language, thus mimicking them is the optimum way to get similar accent and pronunciation.

3.6.3 A Brief Comparison between Students' Questionnaire and Interview

The students' questionnaire and interview approximately indicate the same results that most EFL students at the English department of Jijel practice mimicry to enhance their accent and pronunciation. The two research instruments reveal that students are very interested in mimicking native speakers for a batter improvement of their accent and pronunciation. Moreover, they see that this technique has a positive impact on their speaking skill. Thus, we can clearly tell that there is no contradiction between the results of the two instruments.

3.7 General Discussion of the Findings

This section is concerned with interpreting and discussing the results derived from both questionnaire and interview. After having analyzed the information resulted from both instruments it is high time to discuss these findings in the shadow of the research questions stated in the general introduction. The first research question aimed at knowing whether third year students are interested

in developing a native-like accent or not; the second is to know whether they practice mimicry to enhance their accent and pronunciation; and the third one is to know about students' viewpoints towards the effectiveness of mimicking native speakers in enhancing their accent and pronunciation.

The analyses of students' questionnaire and interview have extracted several conclusions. These conclusions are built on students' answers in both instruments implementation.

3.7.1 Students' Intentions to Develop a Native-like Accent

Relying on the results gathered in the present inquiry from questionnaire and interview, third year English language students are interested in developing a native-like accent. They declare that they have already master the required pronunciation level which enables them to communicate clearly, since they have been majoring in English language for three years which is a considerable period of time for them to master an intelligible pronunciation. According to them acquiring a native-like accent alongside a clear pronunciation is the ultimate goal, and they work hard towards achieving it; for an EFL student who adopts an English language variety sounds more competent and comfortable when speaking unlike other with poor or non native-like pronunciation. The results derived from both tools, also reveal that third year students are well motivated for learning about accent; according to them, they feel sorry for not having accent classes in university.

Concerning the interview results, it speaks volumes that girls who were interviewed adopt a near native-like accent when speaking more than boys, who showed their interest towards developing a foreign accent but they did not seem to reach a noticeable level of native-like fluency.

3.7.2 Students' Use of Mimicry

The results gathered from students questionnaire and interview are the same concerning students' practice of mimicry in enhancing their accent and pronunciation. Most of them stated that they always tend to listen to native speakers through TV shows, You Tube and social media then

analyze their way of articulating words. The analysis lies especially on English segmentals and supra-segmentals, through mimicry these features can be easily mastered in an entertaining way without the boredom of phonemic activities. After having analyzing NSs speech, students try to pronounce words the same way NSs do.

A good portion of third year students practice mimicry through imitating actors in role-plays, they said that it helps them learn how to take part of a personality, and gather new idiomatic expressions, grammar and vocabulary at the same time learning English language in a pleasant low-stress environment.

3.7.3 Students' Viewpoints towards the Effectiveness of Mimicry

The data gained from the two instruments show approximately the same students' viewpoints towards the effectiveness of mimicry. From students' viewpoints, it is proved that mimicry is very beneficial despite the obstacles they came across when mimicking NSs. Thus, it is worth the effort for its help in training the mouth to produce the correct sounds of the English language immediately after listening to NSs, which also helps in overcoming the bad pronunciation habits as well as correcting the mispronounced items. Moreover, mimicry helps students in bolstering their listening skills, especially for those who simply do not have a natural talent for mimicry; they can at least strengthen their listening skills, which is the first step in practicing mimicry. Likewise, students think that mimicry helps them making an improvement in comprehensibility, due to the amount of exposure to the English language.

All in all, third year English students consider the importance of mimicry and seem to be motivated and ready to take advantage of it. Although a considerable number of them are not even familiar with it. Also, they do not consider it a possible technique, for they prefer other means through which they can develop their foreign accent and pronunciation such as; the use of audio-visual aids and the interaction with native speakers via social media. The ability to practice mimicry in a meaningful way appears to be the interest of the vast majority of our informants; this can be

confirmed through their answers that support mimicry. For instance, concerning the questionnaire analysis, we figured out that a big number of learners use linguistic mimicry in their learning process. Also, they tend to mimic native speakers very often and most of them have a model. Similarly, the results obtained from the interview share the same point. Five participants out of seven showed their tendency to listen to native speakers and imitate their way of pronouncing words.

To sum up, it was proved that mimicry is worth practicing among EFL students despite the difficulties they encounter while mimicking native speakers. Students' answers to the questionnaire and the interview affirm that they practice mimicry and think that it is very effective for their accent and pronunciation enhancement. So, after the data are collected and deeply analyzed, it is rightly confirmed that mimicking native speakers enhances students' accent and pronunciation.

3.8 Limitations of the Study

In the field of our research, we faced some restrictions that were really confusing and could impact the result and conclusion of this study such as:

➢ The lack of empirical evidence is the most awkward problem that was haunting us during the journey of conducting this study. It was not really easy to find out sources related to the topic which limited our ability to perceive wider reaching to the contents.

➢ The lack of prior studies on the topic was a real and significant obstacle that prevented us from setting the basis of the literature review. So, it was absolutely difficult to not find former studies that support our research topic especially that our topic is considered to be new on the level of college.

➢ Time, on the other hand, was literally challenging. Obviously, a good research needs an excessive amount of time to complete the literature review. Unfortunate, time was incredibly

limited and much confusing for studying and investigating the research problem taking into consideration all the changes that occur frequently.

➢ Some students were unwilling and reluctant to participate in the act of answering the questionnaire which gave the impression that they were not collaborating.

➢ Another research tool which is the students' test was dropped due to time constraint.

➢ The sample of the research may be considered to be small because it covered only sixty (60) students that participated in the questionnaire and seven (7) students took part in the interview.

Pedagogical Recommendations

Through our experience in conducting this modest research and from the findings obtained, we came up with the following recommendations:

➢ The present paper suggests the integrations of Linguistic Mimicry Approach in EFL classes to enhance their level of accent and pronunciation.

➢ Mimicry should be adapted by EFL students to promote their foreign accent and pronunciation.

➢ Maximizing the exposure to the target accent as much as possible so that learners will get used to the foreign sounds and have a good chance to mimic them.

➢ Encourage students and help them know and be aware of the significance of mimicry in the learning process.

➢ The steps of mimicry should be taken into consideration by students to easily master the foreign accents.

➤ Another important point to be recommended is providing the opportunity to interact with native speakers for learners so that they overcome speaking frustrations and difficulties.

➤ The learning environment should be based on the use of various kinds of audiovisual aids that pave the way for better acquisition.

Conclusion

The present chapter investigated the use of mimicry among EFL students at Mohammed Saddik Ben Yahia University. The investigation revealed many facts. The analysis of the findings from both students' questionnaire and interview with third year LMD students demonstrated that the learners hold a positive viewpoint towards the use of mimicry when acquiring a native-like accent and pronunciation. It is worth mentioning that mimicry is very impactful and has a significant effect on EFL speakers. This point can be more supported through the straightforward revelation they give. We see that most participants really care about having a native-like accent, which in their opinion, develop their sense of belonging, competence, and self-confidence. However, this does not remove the fact that some students get enough of having an intelligible pronunciation which means that all they care about is the delivery of the message. Hence mimicry should be given more attention by teachers for the sake of their students' success.

General Conclusion

In sum, mimicry appears to be a key component in the intelligibility and in the efficiency of speaking and communication. Accordingly, it should be offered special care and attention along with regular practice, so that foreign learners can successfully benefit from it which in turn would have fruitful outcomes on their speaking skill in general and accent acquisition in particular. This study aims to shed light on the effectiveness of mimicry. Thus, we hypothesize that if students have an opportunity to mimic native speakers, their foreign accent and pronunciation will get more native.

Through the first chapter, a review of accent and pronunciation is provided; it delivers a definition of accent, accent awareness that clears up a brief comparison between accent and dialect. It also compares both accent and pronunciation and gives a broader idea about accent components. Similarly, it presents a definition of pronunciation, particularly American pronunciation and its segmental features, namely, vowels, consonants, diphthong, triphthong, and determines place and manner of their articulation. In addition, it provides a description of prosodic features of speech such as stress and intonation accompanied with some rules and examples. At last, demonstrates the role of both teacher and learner.

The second chapter opens with a description of general American accent spelling out its roots and historical background. Basically, it sheds light on mimicry. Hence, it gives some concise definitions of it according to different scholars. Essentially, it draws the attention to the background of mimicry that encompasses some learning theories like the behaviorist view and the socio-cultural theory. Then it examines the major teaching methods for which mimicry was a major concern as in the Direct Method and the Audio-Lingual Method. This chapter, on the other hand, emphasizes on methods that promote mimicry such as Linguistic Mimicry Approach and suggestopedia. It then introduces a list of steps to be followed when students tend to mimic native speakers. There is also much emphasis on listening comprehension since it is considered to be the key element in the learning process in general and in acquiring an accent in particular. In addition to this, it points out a

number of factors that influence the process of mimicry including the interference of the mother tongue and the lack of motivation among learners. Finally, it highlights some benefits that mimickers could gain.

The last chapter is devoted to the analysis of the findings gained from both questionnaire and the interview administrated to third year English LMD students. In fact, the results obtained from the analysis reveal that the majority of students have a sense of awareness and a positive opinion about mimicry and that most of them like to mimic native speakers despite the difficulties they encounter. For instance, the amount of time students spend watching and listening to native speakers. Most importantly, teachers in the classroom are very interested in teaching the segmental features rather than drawing more attention to the supra-segmental features of language which are known to facilitate the acquisition process of language.

In view of this situation, students should adopt mimicry for enhancing their foreign accent and be more attentive to it. Despite the view that mimicry came to be abandoned with a remarkable development of language acquisition theories and communication language teaching, this research may at least be credited for drawing attention to the introduction of mimicry as an impactful technique in the learning process. The majority of the population showed their interest for mimicry as an effective tool that ultimately contributes to the improvement of accent ability.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire

Dear Students,

We are conducting a Master degree research that aims at highlighting the role of mimicking native speakers' accent and pronunciation, in which we stress the effectiveness of this technique as a pedagogical facilitator in acquiring a native-like accent and secure a clear pronunciation. Your precious help and contribution will be highly appreciated as it will hopefully provide our research with valid and relevant data. Thank you.

Questions: You are kindly required to tick the box with the more appropriate answer and provide further explanation if needed. There is no right or wrong answer; we just need to know your point of view about the subject at hand. Your collaboration is much appreciated.

Section one: Background Information

1. Age......................years old

2. Gender:

a. Male ☐

b. Female ☐

3. How was your choice to study English?

a. Personal choice ☐

b. Imposed ☐

4. Why did you choose to study English?

a. Because you love it

b. To travel abroad and speak with native speakers

c. To get a job and build a future carrier

Others, please specify

………………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………………

Section two: Accent and Pronunciation Acquisition:

1. Do you adopt an English accent when speaking?

a. Yes

b. No

Please specify what accent you aim for.

………………………………………………………………………………………

2. Do you think that acquiring a native-like accent is important for foreign language

learners?

a. Yes

b. No

Please justify

……………………..……………………………………………….…………………

………………………………………………………………………………………...

3. What are the different ways do you use to improve your English accent?

 a. Mimicking native speaker ☐

 b. Interaction with native speakers ☐

c. Practice with the use of audio-visual means ☐

Other activities:

…………………………………………………………………………………………

4. "The most important thing is to master an intelligible pronunciation and not a native-like accent".

How much do you agree with this statement?

a. Strongly agree ☐

b. Agree ☐

c. Disagree ☐

5. How would you rate your English pronunciation level?

a. Very good ☐

b. Good ☐

c. Average ☐

d. Weak ☐

6. When learning English pronunciation, which of the following items you find easy to master?

a. Phonetic transcription ☐

b. Stress ☐

c. Intonation ☐

d. Rhythm ☐

Section three: Mimicry (imitation)

1. Are you familiar with mimicry in foreign language learning?

a. Yes ☐

b. No ☐

2. Do you like to mimic native speakers' accent?

a. yes ☐

b. No ☐

c. Sometime ☐

If yes, how much do you tend to mimic native speakers?

a. Often ☐

b. Sometimes ☐

c. Rarely ☐

d. Never ☐

3. Which kind of mimicry are you interested in?

a. Linguistic (verbal) mimicry ☐

b. Gestural mimicry ☐

4. Do you think mimicking native speakers helps you improve your foreign accent?

a. Yes ☐

b. No ☐

c. Somehow ☐

5. Do you have a role model (an actor, a TV-show host) that you like to mimic?

a. Yes ☐

b. No ☐

6. As you listen to native speakers, do you compare how you pronounce words with the way they do?

a. always ☐

b. sometimes ☐

c. rarely ☐

d. never ☐

7. From your point of view, which of the following elements may affect the student while mimicking native speakers?

a. The interference of the mother tongue ⬜

b. The amount of exposure to the target language ⬜

c. The non-native teacher ⬜

d. Motivation ⬜

Others, specify please

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

……………………………………………………………………………………………

We are genuinely appreciative

Appendix B Learners' interview

1. Are you interested in developing a native-like accent or an intelligible pronunciation is what really matters to you?

2. Since you are majoring in English language, how often do you tend to listen to native speakers and mimic the way they speak?

3. Do you think that the secret to successful accent and pronunciation acquisition lies on mimicking native speakers, or there are other ways more effective than mimicry?

Résumé

Cette thèse souligne le rôle du mimétisme comme une technique pédagogique efficace et qui contribue à l'étude de mimer des locuteurs natifs américains parmi les apprenants d'anglais comme une langue étrangère en tant qu'un moyen favorable d'élever le niveau de leur accent et prononciation étrangère. Etayer par un cadre théorique pour faire un écho profond sur le système pédagogique, la théorie pour aboutir a ce but et confirmer l'hypothèse de recherche, fois un questionnaire et une interview administrée aux étudiants de troisième année anglais LMD. Sous-tendu par une partie théorique de cette étude qui englobe a la fois l'accent et la prononciation en tant que caractéristiques principales que les apprenants généralement essayent de l'atteindre lors de l'acquisition d'une nouvelle langue. Il fournit également des informations supplémentaires sur le mimétisme et son rôle important et percutant dans l'acquisition d'un accent et d'une prononciation comme un natif. Par ailleurs, il présente un sondage des théories d'enseignements et d'apprentissage ainsi étant donné que les méthodes modernes qui favorisent et soutiennent le mimétisme comme Approche du mimétisme linguistique. Les réponses des participants sont analysées et présentées dans des tableaux. Après la discussion des résultats, le bilan obtenu montre que le mimétisme est digne d'être utilisé par la majorité des étudiants d'anglais comme une langue étrangère et qu'ils cherchent à acquérir un accent natif. Pour cette raison, l'hypothèse de recherche est positivement confirmée. En conséquence, certaines recommandations pédagogiques sont suggérées. Ainsi, le mimétisme peut être l'un des moyens les plus efficaces qui aident les apprenants à améliorer leur accent et prononciation étrangères.

ملخص الدراسة

تشير هذه الأطروحة إلى دور محاكاة المتحدثين الاصلين للغة الإنجليزية ومساهمتها بشكل كبير في رفع مستوى لهجة متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية و نطقهم الصحيح لهذه اللغة، حيث تعدّ كتقنيّة بيداغوجية فعّالة و هامّة. و لإثبات هذه الأطروحة وُضعَت في إطار نظري من أجل دراستها بشكل معمّق في المنظومة التّربوية، و ذلك لتحقيق الهدف المرجو من هذه الدراسة والمتمثّل في تسليط الضوء علي فعالية تقنيه محاكاة متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة اجنبية للمتحدثين الاصلين لهاته اللغة. تأكيد فرضية البحث تم بواسطة استخدام استبيان أسئلة وايضا عن طريق تنظيم مقابلات مؤطّرة مع طلاب السنة الثالثة ل.م.د لغة إنجليزية مدعومًا بجزء نظري من هذه الدراسة يعطي مفهوما يشمل كلا من اللهجة والنطق كسمات أساسية يحاول المتعلمون عادةً تحقيقها عند اكتساب لغة جديدة. كما أن هذا الجزء النظري يوفر معلومات إضافية عن المحاكاة و التقليد اللغوي والدور الهام والقوي في الحصول على اللهجة والنطق كمتحدث أصلي، بالإضافة إلى ذلك، فإن المحاكاة تقدم دراسة استقصائية لنظريات التعليم والتعلم، فضلا عن الأساليب الحديثة التي تعزز و تدعم التقليد كنهج التقليد اللغوي؛ هذا ما استخلصه من قاموا بتلك الدراسة على طلاب اللغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في بلدهم و أكّدوا أطروحة مساهمة المحاكاة و التقليد اللغوي في تحسين مستوى التّعلم عامة و النّطق و التكلم بصفة خاصة.