

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AUDIOBOOKS ON  
PRONUNCIATION SKILLS OF EFL LEARNERS AT  
DIFFERENT PROFICIENCY LEVELS

A MASTER'S THESIS

BY

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THE PROGRAM OF TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN  
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*To My Precious Parents*

*and*

*to the Memory of My Beloved Grandmother Güneş SAKA*

The Effectiveness of Audiobooks on Pronunciation Skills of EFL Learners  
at Different Proficiency Levels

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## ABSTRACT

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AUDIOBOOKS ON PRONUNCIATION SKILLS OF  
EFL LEARNERS AT DIFFERENT PROFICIENCY LEVELS

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M.A., Program of Teaching English as a Foreign Language

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This study mainly explored the effectiveness of audiobooks on pronunciation skills of university level EFL students at different proficiency levels. This study also aimed to find out whether a difference in students' pronunciation skills as a result of exposure to audiobooks occurs based on their proficiency levels. Lastly, students' perceptions about audiobooks and their effectiveness on pronunciation learning and teaching were also investigated in the study.

This study was conducted with the participation of 65 students from elementary, pre-intermediate, and intermediate levels at Uludağ University School of Foreign Languages. Among the most problematic phonemes for Turkish EFL learners to pronounce correctly, six phonemes were selected to be explored in the study. Three audiobooks from three different proficiency levels were chosen for the study and participants listened to each of the audiobooks.

In order to investigate the effectiveness of audiobooks on pronunciation skills both on sound recognition and production levels of university EFL students, sound recognition and production tests, which were prepared by including the selected

problematic phonemes, were administered to the students before and after audiobook listening period. Before and after the audiobook listening session, the students were administered a questionnaire with the intent to find out their perceptions about the effectiveness of audiobooks on their pronunciation. In order to address the second research question which is about the effects of audiobooks on pronunciation skills, the mean values and standard deviations were calculated and compared between the first and second test performances of the students. In order to answer the second research question which is about the effects of audiobooks on pronunciation skills of EFL learners at different level, the test results of the elementary, pre-intermediate and intermediate level students were compared to investigate any difference in the effectiveness of audiobooks on pronunciation skills according to proficiency levels.

Analysis of the data revealed that audiobook listening is effective on both recognition and production aspects of pronunciation skills of university EFL students, and it appeared to have a greater effect on pre-intermediate level students than it did on elementary and intermediate level students. The results from the questionnaire showed that students had positive perspectives about audiobooks and their effects on pronunciation. Finally, the study emphasizes the importance of audiobooks, suggesting that teachers can incorporate them as an alternative approach to traditional pronunciation teaching practices.

*Keywords:* Audiobook, pronunciation, segmental, recognition, production, proficiency level, effectiveness, perception

## ÖZET

SESLİ KİTAPLARIN FARKLI YETERLİK SEVİYESİNDEKİ İNGİLİZCEYİ  
YABANCI DİL OLARAK ÖĞRENEN ÖĞRENCİLERİN TELAFFUZ  
BECERİLERİ ÜZERİNE OLAN ETKİSİ

Zeynep Saka

Yüksek Lisans, Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizce Öğretimi Bölümü

Tez Yöneticisi: Prof. Dr. Kimberly Trimble

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Bu çalışma genel olarak sesli kitapların farklı yeterlik seviyesindeki, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen üniversite öğrencilerinin telaffuz becerileri üzerine olan etkisini araştırmıştır. Çalışma ayrıca, sesli kitapların öğrencilerin telaffuz becerileri üzerine olan etkisinin yeterlik seviyelerine göre farklılık gösterip göstermediğini ortaya çıkarmayı amaçlamıştır. Son olarak, öğrencilerin sesli kitaplara ve sesli kitapların telaffuz becerileri üzerine olan etkisine yönelik algıları bu çalışma kapsamında incelenmiştir.

Çalışma bir hafta boyunca, Uludağ Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu temel, orta düzey öncesi ve orta seviyelerdeki toplam 65 öğrencinin katılımıyla gerçekleştirilmiştir. İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen Türk öğrencilerin telaffuzunda en çok güçlük yaşadıkları sesler arasından altı ses çalışma kapsamında araştırılmak üzere seçilmiştir.

Her seviyede bir sınıf kontrol diğer sınıf deney grubu olarak belirlenmiştir. Kontrol grubundaki öğrencilerin her hafta bir kitap olmak üzere toplam üç adet basamaklı öykü kitaplarını okul dışında okumaları istenmiştir. Deney grubundaki



öğrencilerin ise aynı öykü kitaplarını beraberinde gelen ses kayıtlarını dinleyerek okul dışında okumaları istenmiştir. Üç farklı yeterlik seviyesinden birer tane olmak üzere toplam üç sesli kitap seçilmiş olup, farklı seviyelerdeki tüm katılımcı öğrenciler her bir sesli kitabı dinlemiştir.

Sesli kitapların İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen üniversite öğrencilerinin sesleri hem ayırt edebilme hem de üretme düzeyindeki telaffuz becerileri üzerine olan etkisini araştırmak amacıyla, araştırma için seçilen altı problemlili sesin test edildiği sesleri ayırt etme ve üretme testleri geliştirilmiştir. Bu testler sesli kitap dinleme aşamasının öncesi ve sonrasında katılımcı öğrencilere uygulanmıştır. Sesli kitap dinleme aşamasının öncesi ve sonrasında, öğrencilere sesli kitapların telaffuz becerileri üzerine olan etkilerine yönelik yaklaşımlarını belirlemek amacıyla bir anket uygulanmıştır. Sesli kitap dinlemenin öğrencilerin telaffuz becerileri üzerine olan etkisi hakkındaki birinci araştırma sorusunu yanıtlamak için, öğrencilerin ilk ve son testlerde gösterdikleri performansların ortalama değerleri alınmış, standart sapmalar hesaplanmış ve birbirleri ile karşılaştırılmıştır. Sesli kitapların farklı yeterlik seviyesindeki İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen öğrencilerin telaffuz becerileri üzerine olan etkisi hakkındaki ikinci araştırma sorusunu yanıtlamak amacı ile üç farklı seviyedeki öğrencilerin test performansları sesli kitapların telaffuz becerileri üzerine olan etkisinin yeterlik seviyesine göre farklılık gösterip göstermediğini tespit etmek amacı ile karşılaştırılmıştır.

Veriler üzerinde yapılan analizler, sesli kitapların İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen üniversite öğrencilerinin hem işittiğini ayırt etme hem de sesleri üretme düzeyindeki telaffuz becerileri üzerinde etkili olduğunu, diğer taraftan, sesli kitapların orta düzey öncesi seviyede, temel ve orta seviyede olduğundan daha etkili olduğunu ortaya çıkarmıştır. Anket sonuçları, öğrencilerin sesli kitaplara ve sesli kitapların telaffuz becerileri üzerine olan etkisine karşı olumlu tutumlara sahip

olduđunu göstermiřtir. Son olarak bu alıřma, ğretmenlere sesli kitapları geleneksel telaffuz ğretme uygulamalarıyla birleřtirme nerisi sunmakta ve sesli kitapların nemini vurgulamaktadır.

*Anahtar Kelimeler:* Sesli kitap, telaffuz, para sesbirim, ayırt etme, retim, yeterlik seviyesi, etkililik, algı

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

### **Introduction**

Human beings have numerous reasons to speak such as to socialize, to ask for something, to ask somebody do something, to do something for others, to reply to their interlocutors' questions, to state their thoughts or emotions about an issue. Despite the fact that speaking serves as a remedy for a great deal of different conversation needs of people and has a significant role in human beings life for centuries, it still is a complex process which includes a message formation that is understandable for other people and conveyance of this message by using the proper phonology, stress and intonation.

Communication has a paramount importance as a parameter in human beings' lives in order to regulate daily life and have successful relationships with the community that they belong to. Being one of the touchstones of communication, speaking affects the quality of how people communicate with each other to a great extent. At that point, pronunciation, one of the most important features of speaking, confronts us by affecting the way how verbal speech is produced or recognized by the participants of a conversation. As for the language learning and teaching processes, pronunciation has certain effects on learning a language. Not only pronunciation eases the listening comprehension and enables one to be intelligible during a speech but also it also helps learners to gain the skills they need for effective communication in English (Ahmadi & Gilakjani, 2011). Despite its importance, pronunciation attracted little attention of teachers and researchers up through the late of nineteenth century, as other language elements such as grammar and vocabulary were emphasized instead (Kelly, 1969). As new language learning and teaching

approaches occurred in the area, the perception of teaching and learning pronunciation has started to evolve from being ignored to being recognized as an important element in a language class. Moreover, recent studies on pronunciation have showed that integration of the technology into the classrooms is beneficial for the pronunciation instruction (Levis, 2007; Lord, 2008; Saran & Seferoğlu, 2010; Seferoğlu, 2005). Audiobooks, which have been being accepted one of the new technological arrivals to the classroom atmosphere, could be a good resource to teach and learn pronunciation. However, audiobooks have been mostly used to teach skills related to reading up to now rather than skills related to speaking.

Since the positive effects of listening on pronunciation are known, it can be assumed that learners' exposure to extensive listening is essential to have good pronunciation. However, English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' basic and most common sources of exposure to the spoken language are their teachers and course books. In that sense, learners' pronunciation skills are mainly based on their in-class activities. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effect of an alternative, out-of-class extensive listening activity on language learners' pronunciation skill.

### **Background of the Study**

Since speaking a language requires an interactive ability to understand and use language elements effectively, it is a challenging action, especially for foreign language learners (Richards & Renandya, 2002). In order to have communication that is not hampered by misunderstandings, language learners need to react in an appropriate way to what people say by using the correct features of the speaking. Among these features, pronunciation is critical in affecting the message transfer in a desired or undesired way.

However, as Kelly (1969) stated in his extensive study about the history of language teaching, pronunciation was the *Cinderella* area which had been surpassed by other skills and elements of the language and neglected in foreign language teaching context until the end of the nineteenth century. It started to attract attention with the reform movement in language teaching in the 1890s. The current situation of teaching pronunciation receives support from the communicative approach which plays a dominant role in language teaching today. Since this approach puts communication at the center of language learning/teaching processes and accepts pronunciation as one of the core elements affecting communication, teaching pronunciation has a position of significant importance in the field of language teaching (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 1996).

Even though pronunciation has become more central to language teaching, the need for more research on this notion remains inevitable. Noticing the lack of attention paid to pronunciation and the need for teaching it, Hismanoğlu (2009) states that because of the important role that sounds have in communication, teaching these sounds is also crucial in language teaching and language teachers should pay additional attention to teaching them.

Studies conducted on teaching pronunciation can be categorized in three groups. Some of them are only theoretical (Hismanoglu, 2006; Jones, 1997; Milovanov, Pietila, Tervaniemi, & Esquef, 2010; Munro & Derwing, 2006; Sicola, 2008; Tominaga, 2009; Yao, 2008). Other studies have tested a specific technique related to teaching pronunciation (Blanche, 2004; Kendrick, 1997; Morgan, 2003; Trofimovich & Gatbonton, 2006; Varasarin, 2007). Still others have focused on the use of technology in teaching pronunciation (Ducate & Lomicka, 2009; Levis, 2007; Lord, 2008; Pennington, 1999; Saran & Seferoglu, 2010; Seferoglu, 2005).

Despite the fact that pronunciation has gained wider acceptance as a component of language teaching, these studies also indicate that many foreign language teachers are unsure about how to teach it to different proficiency levels. While some teachers think that there is not enough time to teach pronunciation (Munro & Derwing, 2007), others believe that teaching pronunciation is not enjoyable, they do not know how to teach it, or their students are reluctant to learn it (Stevick, Morley, & Wallace Robinett, 1975).

One of the researchers' interests in the field of teaching pronunciation is the use of some specific techniques in pronunciation instruction. They focus on the relationship between teaching pronunciation, language learning strategies and speaking confidence (Varasarin, 2007). Kendrick (1997) emphasizes the importance of keeping students speaking in order to teach them pronunciation. Trofimovich and Gatbonton (2006) claims some implications for pronunciation instruction by addressing repetition and focus on form.

A third focus in the research has been the effectiveness of technology in improving learners' pronunciation skills. The studies focusing on the adaptation of technology for pronunciation instruction have centered on the use of mobile phones (Saran & Seferoğlu, 2010), accent reduction software (Seferoğlu, 2005), computer technologies (Levis, 2007) and podcasting (Lord, 2008). The introduction of new technologies mentioned above has brought other tools into the classroom. One such new technology is audiobooks.

Audiobooks, also called *spoken books*, *talking books* or *narrated books*, are recordings, on either a CD or digital file of a book being read aloud (Cambridge Online Dictionary, 2014). They have been used as a popular tool for many years in order to make books accessible for disabled people who are unable to read printed paper (Engelen, 2008). Besides being used as a scaffolding device in such

disadvantaged people's case, they are also used for some educational purposes and considered as a technical support for improving students' reading comprehension, listening comprehension, critical thinking and pronunciation in particular. Therefore the use of audiobooks and their benefits in language teaching have been the subject of a great deal of research (Blum, Koskinen, Tennant, Parker, Straub, & Curry, 1995; Koskinen, et al., 2000; Nalder & Elley, 2003; O'Day, 2002; Taguchi, Takayasu-Maass, & Gorsuch, 2004). The studies focusing on the use of audiobooks as a language tool have mostly examined reading skill, reading comprehension or reading strategies (Turker, 2010; Whittingham, Huffman, Christensen, & McAllister, 2012). While one recently conducted study has focused on the effects of listening to spoken reading exercises on pronunciation in English (Takan, 2014), very little other research has looked at the use of audiobooks to improve learners' pronunciation skills.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Among the new technological arrivals to teaching settings, audiobooks have been claimed to be a beneficial tool for language education purposes that is utilized both in L1 context (Littleton, Wood, & Chera, 2006) as well as in foreign language teaching context (Goldsmith, 2002; Montgomery, 2009). Audiobooks in language learning/teaching contexts have been used for listening skills, pronunciation, critical thinking skills (Marchionda, 2001) and reading skills (Beers, 1998; Grover & Hannegan, 2008; Montgomery, 2009). These studies on audiobooks have predominately focused on the effects of audiobooks upon reading comprehension skills and critical thinking skills of K-12 learners (Donnelly, Stephans, Redman, & Hemenstall, 2005; Lo & Chan, 2008). The studies stated above serve as support for the importance of teaching pronunciation and the use of audiobooks in language teaching. Even if there have been some research proving that talking books which

comprised different versions of exposure to hearing the text have a positive effect on improving phonological awareness of beginner level readers (Wood, Littleton, & Chera, 2005), it is clear that there is a need to study the effects of audio books on university level EFL learners' pronunciation and the perceptions of university level EFL learners at different proficiency levels about audio books.

At Uludağ University School of Foreign Languages pronunciation is among the most problematic issues. Though pronunciation is graded and there are separate speaking courses that include teaching pronunciation in the institution, teaching pronunciation continues to pose problems both for the teachers and the students. In the institution students are engaged with extensive reading which requires them to read four books per semester. The researcher of this study observed that these books with audiobook versions are not utilized effectively but read just once. By conducting this study the researcher aims to present an alternative, self-directed way of learning for the students to learn pronunciation with the help of audiobooks that give the students a great deal of freedom to use the materials when and how they wish.

### **Research Questions**

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of EFL students about using audiobooks to improve their pronunciation?
2. What are the effects of listening to audiobooks on EFL students'
  - a. recognition level of problematic phonemes in English?
  - b. pronunciation of problematic phonemes in English?
3. Does the effect of listening audiobooks on pronunciation differ in terms of the proficiency levels of students?



### **Significance of the Study**

Recent literature in the area of audiobook use with educational purposes has confirmed that audiobooks have positive effects in foreign language learning context (Goldsmith, 2002; Littleton, Wood, & Chera, 2006; Montgomery, 2009). Many studies attest to the positive effect audiobooks can have on reading skills, reading comprehension in particular (Beers, 1998; Montgomery, 2009), but little research has investigated the effects of audiobooks on improving university level EFL students' pronunciation skills. This study may contribute to the existing literature by demonstrating that the use of audiobooks can lead to an improvement in struggling EFL learners' speaking (pronunciation) skills and attitudes.

At the local level, this study may guide speaking teachers, in EFL contexts in general and at Uludag University School of Foreign Languages Preparatory School in particular, to design speaking courses more effectively. Depending on the findings of the study, speaking teachers may organize their classes by including audiobooks and possess another instructional technique to assist with their students' pronunciation problems. Additionally, the study may guide curriculum and materials development units of language programs to develop ways of integrating audiobooks into their practices if the use of them is found effective.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter of the study, the overview of the literature regarding pronunciation teaching practices in ELT, teachers' attitudes towards the importance of pronunciation and pronunciation teaching practices, and the variables that affect teachers' and students' perceptions about pronunciation teaching and learning. The statement of the problem, research questions, and the significance of the study have also been discussed. The next chapter reviews the relevant literature on the history of pronunciation in ELT, segmental and suprasegmental components of pronunciation,

how to teach pronunciation, teachers' and students' perceptions towards pronunciation, difficulties in pronunciation in English, technology and audiobooks in language learning. In the third chapter, the methodology of the study is presented. In the fourth chapter, the analysis of the results of the study is presented. In the last chapter the findings of the study in the light of the relevant literature, the pedagogical implications and limitations of the study are discussed, and suggestions for further research are also presented.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the review of the literature relevant to the present study that investigates the effects of listening to audiobooks on pronunciation skills. First, the place of pronunciation in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT) will be given by focusing on the history, definitions, features and importance of pronunciation, how to teach it, perceptions towards it and learners' problems with it. In the second section, the place of technology in the ELT field and in pronunciation instruction will be reviewed. The third section discusses the place of audiobooks in ELT and its potential for developing pronunciation skills.

### **Pronunciation in ELT**

The importance of teaching and learning pronunciation in the field of ELT has fluctuated over time. There were periods in which pronunciation was accepted as a privileged part of skill instruction and as a basis of language learning. During other periods of times, it was considered less important than other language skills, such as grammar, and broadly neglected by teachers and learners (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Richards & Rodgers, 2001; Celce-Murcia, Brinton & Goodwin, 1996; Brown, 1991). Though it is possible to see sections presenting pronunciation tips and practice activities in most of the current course books (e.g., Northstar, Speak Now, New English File), every teacher may not pay attention to these sections (Çekiç, 2007; Abercombie, 1991; Brown, 1991)

### **History of Pronunciation Teaching**

In looking at the evolution of English Language Teaching (ELT), it can be said that teaching pronunciation has been related to various techniques and practices

and its place and importance as an instructional component has changed in accordance with the methodological changes and trends. In the very early period of ELT, pronunciation was a ghost phenomenon that was not heard of or spoken about. In the period when Grammar Translation method dominated the language instruction, pronunciation was also not given a place in classes, since learning to read and write in the target language was the main purpose of language teaching (Lightbown & Spada, 2006; Celce-Murcia et al., 1996).

That was the case until the reform movement, when ideas and principles in the language classroom started to change. With the foundation of the International Phonetic Association (IPA) the rising movement of pronunciation started as well. In the late 1800s, pronunciation began to be taught through intuition and imitation and became a part of the language instruction which was being centered on the *Direct Method* (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996). Students imitated their teachers as the role model who presented input for them to imitate and repeat in the target language.

With the arrival of *Audiolingualism*, pronunciation gained a crucial importance. It was the center of the classroom instruction, since the main purpose of language learning and teaching moved towards listening and speaking skills (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Accuracy was at the center of language learning-teaching practices (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996; Morley, 1991). As a result of this, students spent most of their time in laboratories, listening to sounds in order to be able to differentiate minimal pairs (Larsen-Freeman, 1986).

In the 1960s, teaching pronunciation started to decline, as teaching grammar and vocabulary became the leading actors in the play again. Morley (1991) discussed the issues related to pronunciation, such as whether it should be named and emphasized as an instructional component in EFL/ ESL or whether it should be taught directly or indirectly. As a result to these concerns, pronunciation lost its value

in the eyes of many educators and it was disregarded in many programs (Seidlhofer, 2001). According to Morley (1991) the main reason for the exclusion of teaching pronunciation from many programs was the discontentedness caused by the pronunciation teaching principles and practices of the time. In other words, educators were not happy with the existing principles and practices used to teach pronunciation, so they were reluctant to include pronunciation teaching in their programs.

During the 1970s, two humanistic methods, the *Silent Way* and *Community Language Teaching*, emerged with a more sympathetic view of pronunciation. Pronunciation was a part of the instruction in these methods, although not a central role. For this reason, the 1970s is often referred to as a transition period, when the call for change in pronunciation teaching was voiced by several professionals in the field (Smith & Rafiqzad, 1979; Stevick et al, 1975; Bowen, 1972). With the arrival of the communicative approach in the 1980s, teaching pronunciation slowly began to take its place in language teaching settings once again (Setter & Jenkins, 2005; Levis, 2005; Celce-Murcia et al., 1996).

With the emergence of the communicative approach, intelligibility has re-emerged as a high priority in language learning and teaching. As a consequence of this new trend, teaching pronunciation has also gained importance and been reintroduced into language teaching (Fraser, 2006; García-Lecumberri & Gallardo 2003; Pennington, 1996). Today, the dominant view in this regard is that no matter how perfect the grammar and vocabulary of a speaker may be, good pronunciation is necessary to avoid communication problems (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996).

### **Definition and Importance of Pronunciation for Listening and Speaking**

Pronunciation is defined as “the supposedly correct manner of pronouncing sounds in a given language” (Collins Dictionary Online, 2015). Implied in this

definition is the understanding that pronunciation requires a person to speak in an intelligible manner which is ensured by conveying and understanding the desired meaning rather than using “correct” grammar.. In order to be intelligible, a person needs to understand what is heard and to be understood by using proper language tools to convey the message. Here emerge the two important processes of pronunciation: to be able to recognize and produce both segmental (single sounds) and suprasegmental (stress, intonation, etc.) features of the target language (Gilbert, 2012; Hismanoğlu, 2006; Seidlhofer, 2001; Pennington, 1999).

The role that pronunciation plays in language teaching-learning settings is non-negligible even if the necessity and importance to teach it has been debated and changed a lot in accordance with the on-again, off-again trends in the field. Whether or not there is a professional intention, learning a language usually includes the aim of being able to communicate and having good pronunciation is an effective factor for good communication (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996). What pronunciation is responsible for is intelligibility between the interlocutors, that is to say to ensure an unambiguous message between the speaker and the listener (Setter & Jenkins, 2005). According to Hariri (2012), “since sounds play an important role in communication, foreign language teachers must attribute proper importance to teaching pronunciation in their classes” (p. 461). By emphasizing the effect of pronunciation on communication and the need to teach it, Hariri is in the line with Gilbert (2012):

There are two fundamental reasons to teach pronunciation. First of all, students need to understand, and, secondly, they need to be understood. If they are not able to understand spoken English well, or if they cannot be understood easily, they are cut off from the language, except in its written form. (p. viii)

All these ideas lead to the conclusion that in order to perform well in sound recognition and the production processes of communication in the target language, one has to learn both segmental and suprasegmental features of the language (Gilbert, 2012; Mei, 2006; Wade - Wooley & Wood, 2006; Seidlhofer, 2001; Goswami & Bryant, 1990).

### **Components of Pronunciation**

Contrary to the common idea that pronunciation is just related to how separate words in a language are articulated, it is also related to the voicing of these words in a sentence. In other words, pronunciation has to do not only with individual sounds such as vowels and consonants (segmental components) but also with further characteristics of the language related to articulation such as stress, rhythm and intonation (suprasegmental components) (Celce-Murcia et al, 1996).

**Segmental and suprasegmental features of pronunciation.** Though some researchers present evidence that the analysis processes of the segmental and suprasegmental features of a language differ from one another (Blumstein & Cooper, 1974; Wood, Goff, & Day, 1971), there is very little evidence to show whether these two processes are totally independent from one another or they are somehow integrated by interacting each other (Acton, 1984).

Segmental features are the individual sound units such as vowels and consonants which also correspond to phonemes or allophones (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996). Learners of a language may have difficulties with learning these features due to the difference between their mother language and the one they are trying to learn. In some cases, specific segmental features may be completely absent in the mother tongue of the learners. In either situation, acquisition of these segmental features may be challenging for learners. There is a considerable amount of research conducted on this issue in reference to Turkish (Bekleyen, 2011; Demirezen, 2005). Much of this

research is based upon behaviorist language learning theory. For example, as a solution for such pronunciation learning-teaching problems, Demirezen (2003) suggests the *audioarticulation* method that he developed in parallel with the theories of *imitation* and *reinforcement* – two concepts deeply embedded in the behavioristic approach. A main maxim of the behavioristic approach is habit formation through imitation and reinforcement (Lightbown & Spada, 2006). Additionally, according to the rehearsal theory developed by Craik and Larkhard (1972), memorized-like repetitions are not exactly the same thing as memorization. Therefore, Demirezen (2003) claims that the learned sounds are not temporary since they are not memorized information but formed habits.

Another suggestion made by Scarcella and Oxford (1994) is to compare the sounds that are targeted to be learned with the ones which exist in the learners' mother tongue. They claim that such comparisons will help students to realize similarities and differences between the two languages' phonological features easily and utilize them better. Another way to teach learners how to differentiate similar segmental features is to teach minimal pairs that "bear great benefits in pronunciation teaching and learning which have long been of fruitful use" (Tuan, 2010, p. 240). Research conducted on this topic shows that minimal pairs have high positive effect on pedagogical administrations (Bowen, Madsen, & Hilferty, 1985; Celce-Murcia, 1996; Demirezen, 2003; Ahmadi & Gilakjani, 2011; Tuan, 2010). That is to say, a great deal of research focusing on the use of minimal pairs back up the idea that using minimal pairs can positively affect pronunciation skills.

Unlike segmental features, which only deal with individual sounds, suprasegmental features of pronunciation involve rhythm, intonation, stress and connected speech in a word or sentence. It is claimed by the researchers that suprasegmental features of pronunciation affect the quality of communication to a



great extent, so they should have a considerable place in teaching pronunciation (e.g., Celce-Murcia et al., 1996; Hahn, 2012; Kelly, 2000; Lehiste, 1976; Seidlehofer & Dalton-Puffer, 1995; Trofimovich & Baker, 2006).

As stated above, what current literature asserts as the pedagogical aim of teaching pronunciation is to assure intelligibility in learners' speech, namely smooth communication between interlocutors (Baker, 2014; Jenkins, 2004; Kachru, 1997; Mc Kay, 2002; Morley, 1991; Smemoe & Haslam, 2012; Tarone, 2005). As a reflection of this point of view, Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) state that "a learners' command of segmental features is less critical to communicative competence than a command of suprasegmental features, since the suprasegmentals carry more of the overall meaning load than do the segmentals" (p.131). Since suprasegmental features are inclusive of more than individual sounds, they are thought to be more effective in terms of being intelligible in communication. Nevertheless, this does not mean that segmental features are unimportant when they are compared with suprasegmental features (Celce-Murcia et al., 1996; Çekiç, 2007; Pennington & Richards, 1986). Taylor (1996) suggests that the pedagogical emphasis should be both on segmental and suprasegmental features of pronunciation equally, noting that:

"there is a close connection between word stress and the pronunciation of vowels, and the ability to predict and recognize word stress patterns can help learners to pronounce vowels correctly. Conversely, a knowledge of the correct pronunciation of the vowels in a word will give the learners a clear indication of its stress pattern." (p. 46)

### **How to Teach Pronunciation**

Despite the fact that pronunciation is recognized as one of the crucial elements of language learning and the issue of how to teach it has attracted many researchers since the arrival of the communicative approach, there is no consensus in

the literature on how to teach it. One important question is whether pronunciation instruction in a formal setting is effective at improving language learners' pronunciation skills. Studies that addressed this question have suggested that there is a strong positive correlation between instruction and pronunciation skill (Couper, 2011; Derwing & Munro 1997; Elliot 1995b; Fraser, 2000; Lord 2008; Ramírez-Verdugo 2006; Saito, 2007).

The other controversy related to teaching pronunciation stems from which features of pronunciation should be the focus of instruction. Some researchers emphasize the “bottom-up” method to teach pronunciation, which focuses on individual sounds or words (segmental features). Most proponents claim that the “top-down” method, which focuses on the stress, rhythm and intonation of sentences (suprasegmental-prosodic features) as a whole is more effective (Pennington & Richards, 1986; Pennington, 1989). In the “bottom up” method, students start learning fundamental pronunciation features and keep learning next features of pronunciation that require more knowledge of the language. Whereas, in the “top-down” method, general pronunciation features, which require more language knowledge and use of macro-skills, such as critical thinking and analyzing, are presented and students are expected to deduce language pronunciation rules and improve their pronunciation skills. The reason why teaching suprasegmental features of pronunciation is favored is not only its being more comprehensive than segmental features, in terms of the components it involves, but also its being more contributive to the main purpose of teaching pronunciation: intelligibility (Anderson-Hsieh & Koehler, 1988; Anderson-Hsieh, Johnson, & Koehler, 1992; Celce-Murcia et al., 1996; McNerney & Mendelsohn, 1992; Gilbert, 1993; Seidlehofer & Dalton-Puffer, 1995).

Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) list the traditional techniques and practice materials to teach pronunciation in their very comprehensive work on pronunciation.

These techniques involve:

- a. the use of a phonetic alphabet, transcription practice and diagnostic passages
- b. detailed description of the articulatory system
- c. recognition/discrimination tasks
- d. approximation drills
- e. focused production tasks (e.g., minimal pair drills, contextualized sentence practice, reading of short passages or dialogues)
- f. other techniques such as tongue twisters, games, and the like. (p. 290)

In addition to the above mentioned traditional techniques, Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) also provide more activities and resources to widen teachers' teaching pronunciation repertoire. These newer resources to be utilized for teaching pronunciation include:

- a. Fluency building activities (effective listening exercise; fluency workshop; discussion wheel; values topics and personal introduction collage)
- b. Use of multisensory modes (visual and auditory reinforcement; tactile reinforcement; kinesthetic reinforcement)
- c. Use of authentic materials
- d. Techniques from psychology, theater arts, and other disciplines
- e. Use of instructional technology. (pp. 290-315)

Celce-Murcia et al. (1996) propose the newer resources that they asserted for teaching pronunciation as the reinforcement of the argument that teaching pronunciation should be based on communication. They state that these newer practices are founded on these assumptions:

- “1. Pronunciation teaching must focus on issues of oral fluency at the same time it addresses students’ accuracy;
2. such teaching should extend beyond the isolated word or sentence level to encompass the discourse level as well;
3. it should be firmly grounded in communicative language teaching practice;
4. it must take into account variation in learning style by appealing to multiple learner modes;
5. it should include areas of sociopsychological concern previously not thought to belong to the realm of pronunciation teaching, such as ego boundaries and identity issues;
6. it should be open to influences from other disciplines, such as drama, speech pathology, and neurolinguistics;
7. the quality of pronunciation feedback and practice can benefit from the contributions of instructional technology;
8. pronunciation teaching should recognize the autonomy and authority of students, allowing for student-centered classrooms and self-paced or directed learning.” (p. 316)

Apart from Celce-Murcia et al. (1996), a remarkable number of researchers emphasize the need to focus on intelligibility in communication in teaching pronunciation (Hinkel, 2006; Mc Kay, 2002; Setter & Jenkins, 2005; Tarone, 2005).

## **Perceptions about Pronunciation**

**Teachers' perception about the importance of pronunciation.** Despite the fact that the communicative approach rose as the dominant factor in language teaching settings and more attention was paid to pronunciation instruction and its significance started to be accepted by the scholars, pronunciation instruction is still not considered crucial (Rajadurai, 2006). Additionally, within the communicative approach skills other than pronunciation were more central; there is limited research that has focused on pronunciation instruction and the perspectives of teachers about it (Gilbert 1993; Jenkins 2005; Macdonald, 2002).

Even in this limited literature, however, it is clear that language teachers are reluctant to teach pronunciation (Fraser, 2000). As an example, in the study whose subjects were eight Australian English teachers, Macdonald (2002), concluded that most of the teachers showed reluctance to teach pronunciation because of their sense of inadequacy or lack of motivation. According to Elliot (1995b), teachers' reluctance to teach pronunciation stems from their perception that pronunciation is a waste of time, since it is not as important as other skills. Elliot (1995b) claimed that the lack of appropriate tools or knowledge might lie under the language teachers' attitudes towards teaching pronunciation. In a similar vein, Al-Najjar's (2012) study concluded that Palestinian English teachers are not adequately equipped with pronunciation instruction skills to teach pronunciation effectively.

A study in Turkey found teachers' attitudes towards pronunciation instruction to be similar. Bekleyen (2011) noted that "it is thought that students should make individual efforts to improve their pronunciation, and so class hours are spent for subjects deemed more valuable by teachers" (p. 95).

## **Students' perception about the importance of pronunciation learning.**

Because of the recent return of pronunciation to the ELT spotlight, the studies

investigating students' perceptions and beliefs about pronunciation are also scarce. There is a common understanding in the current literature that what learners of English need are skills to assure intelligibility. It is argued that they do not have to speak like a native speaker does, since English has become a lingua franca and no longer belongs to a specific group of people or countries, but to the whole world (Derwing & Munro, 2005; Jenkins, 2003; Kachru, 1992; Kirkpatrick, 2010). Despite that, there is a tendency among the learners of English to desire to have a native-like way of speaking (pronunciation) (He & Li, 2009). Kachru (1992) categorizes Englishes spoken in different areas in the world into three "circles". "the inner circle (IC) for countries where English is spoken as a native (first) language, the outer circle (OC) for countries where English is spoken as a second language (ESL), and the expanding circle (EC) for countries where English is spoken as a foreign language (EFL)" (p.356). It can be deduced from the categorization above that only one-third of English speakers are native speakers and the rest learn English later in their life either as a second or foreign language. That is to say, even if one is not a native speaker, he or she is able to communicate with people on condition that he or she uses language in a clear, desired way.

In his study, Kang (2015) looks at learners' perceptions among the three circles of Englishes spoken all around the world. The results revealed that "participants in all three circles of World Englishes somewhat agreed that studying pronunciation was confusing because of varieties of accents available to them" (p.68). Another study conducted by Couper (2003) on the perspectives of learners reveals that students believe that there should be formal instruction of pronunciation since it offers obvious benefits to the learners in terms of learning how to speak a language.

In their study, Scales, Wennerstrom, Richard & Wu (2006) analyze 37 English language learners' and 10 American undergraduate students' perceptions of accents. The study also shed light on the pronunciation goals of the learners. Most of the participants of the study indicated that they would prefer to have a native-like pronunciation. However, the study reveals an inconsistency between students' pronunciation preferences and their current states of pronunciation. According to Scales et al., (2006) "Although a majority wanted to have a native accent, few were able to identify the accent they claimed to want to internalize" (p. 735).

### **Difficulties in Pronunciation in English in General**

Even though the current literature claims that suprasegmental features of pronunciation are more effective in terms of assuring intelligibility in communication, studies reveal that certain segmental features of English pronunciation cause difficulties for many learners from all over the world. As an example the voiceless interdental fricative theta ( $\theta$ ) in English, which is known to be acquired late even by native speaker children, undergoes lots of changes when it is enunciated by learners whose native language is not English. As stated by Rau, Chang & Tarone (2009),

"Among English L2 speakers, the most commonly cited substitution variants for (th) are [t], [s], and [f]. Hungarian speakers are reported to replace [ $\theta$ ] with [t], Japanese, Korean, German, and Egyptian Arabic L1 speakers tend to substitute [s] for the target sound." (p. 582).

In another study, Saito (2011) identifies problematic segmental features of English for native Japanese learners and presents eight English segmentals ( $/\text{æ}/$ ,  $/\text{f}/$ ,  $/\text{v}/$ ,  $/\theta/$ ,  $/\delta/$ ,  $/\text{w}/$ ,  $/\text{l}/$ ,  $/\text{ɹ}/$ ) that account for important pronunciation problems that most native Japanese learners encounter with. According to Saito (2011), Japanese students tend to pronounce the above segmental features by replacing them with

segmental features or sounds in their native language. He asserts that the pronunciation difficulties experienced by the Japanese learners stem from the differences between the learners' native language (Japanese) and English, the target language.

**Turkish students' problems with pronunciation in English.** Similar to students throughout the world, Turkish EFL learners have difficulties with some specific segmental features of English pronunciation. These difficulties are mostly caused by the differences between the target and mother tongues' phonologies (Turker, 2010). Studies conducted in Turkey on this issue of pronunciation revealed that the problems that Turkish EFL learners encounter can be divided into two groups: those focusing on difficulties caused by segmental features (e.g., Bekleyen, 2011; Kaçmaz, 1996; Kaya, 1989) and studies focusing on difficulties caused by suprasegmental features (Gültekin, 2002)

As with learners from other nations, the voiceless interdental fricative theta (th) in English is counted among the most problematic phonemes for Turkish EFL learners. In addition to /θ/ (th), phonemes such as /ɒ/, /æ/, /ð/, /ŋ/, /w/, /eə/, /əʊ/, /ə/ are found to be problematic for Turkish learners (Bekleyen, 2011; Çelik, 2008 & Türker, 2010).

One study that investigates causes of pronunciation problems for Turkish EFL learners was carried out by Bekleyen (2011) with 43 participants from the ELT Department of Dicle University. The data were collected through the recordings of ten class sessions of Listening and Pronunciation course and interviews conducted with the students. The study reveals that the irregularities in English language spelling and Turkish learners' tendencies to make overgeneralizations were among the main causes of Turkish learners' failure to guess the pronunciation of words correctly. Though separate sounds were not the main focus of the study, the



phonemes that do not exist in Turkish such as /v/, /æ/, /θ/, /ð/, /ŋ/, and /w/ appeared to be among the most problematic sounds that cause Turkish learners to have pronunciation difficulties.

In another study, Çelik (2008) describes Turkish-English phonology with the aim of providing teachers and test developers a realistic and understandable pronunciation framework to be taught and assessed. The participants of the study were five Turkish-English bilinguals, two English-Turkish bilinguals, four teacher trainers and five advanced learners of English. The data were gathered through interviews, reading tasks, and informed judgments. One of the results exhibited by the study is that Turkish learners tend to replace the two consonant phonemes /θ/ and /ð/ that are nonexistent in the Turkish language with Turkish phonemes /t/ and /d/.

Türker (2010) conducted a study with 733 participants from Çanakkale Milli Piyango and İbrahim Bodur Anatolian High Schools with the aim of finding common mistakes of Turkish secondary students in pronunciation of English words. The analysis of phonemic mistakes was the main focus of the study. The results demonstrated that

“the most difficult phonemes for Turkish secondary students were /d/, /θ/, /ŋ/ consonants; /ɜ:/, /ə/ vowels and /əʊ/, /ʊə/ diphthongs with over 80% error rate. /w/, /v/, /a/, /ʌ/, /ɔ:/, /ɪə/, /eə/, /aʊ/ phonemes also had an error rate between 15% and 65% ”(p.77).

Another result that arose from the study was that the absence of some sounds both in English (/d/) and in Turkish (/ɣ/ and /θ/) caused some pronunciation mistakes as well. Thirdly, the study revealed that “some sounds which had similar or close articulation points inside the mouth or had similar mouth-shape caused other types of difficulties like /v/, /ɜ:/, /ə/ in English and /o/, /oe/, /w/ in Turkish” (p.77).

## **Technology**

### **Technology for Language Education**

While technology has had a very significant place in affecting how individuals communicate with others, it also serves as a useful technological tool in language learning settings. The interaction of technology and pedagogy has been studied by many researchers. Golonka, Bowles, Frank, Richardson & Freynik (2012) compiled a great amount of that research in their work and presented a comprehensive review of the studies. According to Golonka et al., (2012),

Well-established technologies, such as the personal computer and internet access, have become nearly ubiquitous for foreign language (FL) learning in many industrialized countries. In addition, relatively new technologies, such as smart-phones and other mobile internet-accessible devices, are increasingly available. Other technologies, such as natural language processing (NLP), are still maturing. As technologies mature, become readily available, and are adapted for FL pedagogy, instructors may alter their teaching strategies or adjust their teaching activities to most effectively utilize available resources. At their best, technological innovations can increase learner interest and motivation; provide students with increased access to target language (TL) input, interaction opportunities, and feedback; and provide instructors with an efficient means for organizing course content and interacting with multiple students (pp. 70-71).

That is to say, with the innovation and integration of technology into pedagogical settings, it is more likely that teachers can strengthen their courses, and language learners can have more opportunities to be exposed to the target language in various ways. As a result of this, language learning - teaching settings may become more interactive and responsive to learners' needs.

Additionally, there are some studies that have explored the effectiveness of different technological tools such as podcasts, chat rooms, social network sites, wikis, and blogs on teaching language (Warschauer & Healey, 1998). The focus of those studies was predominantly on how to teach vocabulary, as well as teaching reading and oral skills.

### **Technology in Teaching and Learning Pronunciation**

As one of the crucial components of language learning, technology has started to be utilized in teaching pronunciation to a significant extent. Especially, computers and computer based technologies contributed a lot to language learning-teaching. Golonka et al., (2012) states that “technology made a measurable impact in FL learning came from studies on computer-assisted pronunciation training, in particular, automatic speech recognition (ASR)” (p. 70). According to literature, a vast majority of language teachers and researchers have shown interest in exploring the potential of technology to teach pronunciation. Most of the studies, however, focus on suprasegmental features of pronunciation. Despite the attempts made by the researchers to document the effectiveness of technology in pronunciation teaching, there is little convincing in results from those studies about how to integrate technology successfully into the classroom. For example, Eskenazi (1999) investigated the effectiveness of a computer tool known as automatic speech recognition on teaching and correcting errors of suprasegmental features such as intonation. Eskenazi found that the tool had little effect on pronunciation learning. In another study by Stenson, Downing, Smith, and Smith (1992), the same suprasegmental feature (intonation) was taught through computers. Even though their results were not statistically significant, they revealed that the participants made progress in terms of their intonation. While limited, the studies conducted to see the

effectiveness of technological implementations in teaching pronunciation show that technology can be beneficial and should be explored for teaching pronunciation.

## **Audiobooks**

### **Audiobooks in Language Learning**

Audiobooks, the audio recorded versions of a printed book, are one of the technological tools used for pedagogical purposes and have been investigated by many researchers. In the literature there are some studies that found audiobooks useful for the language teaching-learning processes (Blum et al., 1995; Koskinen et al., 2000; Nalder & Elley, 2003; O'Day, 2002; Takayasu-Maass and Gorsuch, 2004). Among the studies which back up the usefulness of audiobooks for language learning-teaching purposes, O'Day (2002), noted several specific ways that audiobooks help learners, including improving reading comprehension level, serving students as a model of fluent text reading and increased vocabulary acquisition and word recognition among students.

In his study, Serafini (2004) discussed how audiobooks could be beneficial in a language classroom in a number of ways: by providing opportunities to read fluently, exposing students to new vocabulary, understanding the content rather without focusing on structures, engaging with literature and enjoying it. Based on these studies, it is possible to claim that audiobooks create additional opportunities for language learners to hear the pronunciation of the words both on segmental and prosodic levels.

While these studies suggest possible positive effects, the majority of the studies focused mainly on the relationship between audiobooks and reading skills (Blum et al., 1995; Golonka et al., 2012; Serafini, 2004; Taguchi et al., 2004; Whittingham et al., 2012). Most notably, researchers claim that audiobooks have positive effects on learners' capabilities of reading fluently, comprehending better

and feelings more enthusiastic about engaging in reading (Nalder & Elley, 2003; Carbo, 1996).

### **Audiobooks for Teaching and Learning Pronunciation**

Even though audiobooks have been accepted as a fruitful resource for much language learning, its effect on pronunciation has not drawn the attention of many researchers. Some research has recognized the close relationship between listening and pronunciation to examine the effects of listening to audio forms of the texts to boost pronunciation (Couper, 2003; Peterson, 2000) They postulate that listening to the audio version of a text when reading simultaneously may improve learners' awareness of the target language pronunciation features. Moreover, since the audio version of the text represents a good example of correct pronunciation, students should be able to improve their pronunciation skills, both in recognizing and producing correct pronunciation.

In Turkey there have not been any studies that directly investigate the relationship between audiobooks and pronunciation skills. However, in a recent study conducted in the southeast of Turkey, Takan (2014) examined the relationship between pronunciation skills and spoken reading exercises that are similar to audiobooks in terms of their structural features. The researcher selected thirty students in an Anatolian High School as participants and focused on the pronunciation mistakes made by them. Spoken versions (audio forms) of the reading exercises in students' coursebooks were used to support pronunciation learning. He found that after listening to spoken reading exercises, there was an increase in the correct pronunciation of the participants.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter the definition, history, components and importance of pronunciation in ELT were presented. Additionally, attitudes toward pronunciation

teaching and difficulties in pronunciation in English language both in general and for Turkish language learners were discussed. Then, the implementations of technology in language learning and in particular pronunciation teaching and learning were examined. Lastly, the role of audiobooks in language learning for improving pronunciation skills was explored and earlier studies related to audiobooks were presented.

In the following chapter, the research methodology of the study is presented with detailed information about the setting, participants, instruments, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

## **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this quantitative study was to investigate the effectiveness of audiobooks in improving the pronunciation skills of selected English segmental features for university level EFL students. This study also aimed to examine whether a difference appears in students' pronunciation skills -- on both recognition and production level -- as a result of exposure to audiobooks with students of different proficiency levels. Additionally, this study also examined information about the perceptions of students about using audiobooks as a tool for learning pronunciation. By analyzing the differences in students' performance and involvement with the audiobooks during the research, it was also hoped that the study would shed light on how to make the most of audiobooks in improving pronunciation skills.

The research questions addressed in the study were as follows:

1. What are the perceptions of EFL students about using audiobooks to improve their pronunciation?
2. What are the effects of listening to audiobooks on EFL students?
  - a. recognition level of problematic phonemes in English?
  - b. pronunciation of problematic phonemes in English?
3. Does the effect of listening audiobooks on pronunciation differ in terms of the proficiency levels of students?

In this chapter, the methodological procedures are outlined. Firstly, the participants and the setting of the study will be described. Then, the materials and the instruments used to collect data will be explained. Lastly, information on how the data were collected and analyzed will be presented in detail.

### Setting

The study was carried out at Uludağ University School of Foreign languages, in Bursa, Turkey in the second semester of the 2014 - 2015 Academic Year. The institution provides obligatory or optional foreign language education in English, French and German languages.

The students, who pass the university entrance exam and are admitted to the university, first take the proficiency exam prepared by the testing department of the School of Foreign Languages. In accordance with the scores of the students on this placement exam, students are put into different groups corresponding to their proficiency levels. The program has three proficiency levels (elementary, pre-intermediate and intermediate). Classes run for one year divided into two semesters. The program has been utilizing a skill-based system since 2011, with reading, writing, listening/speaking, vocabulary and grammar courses for each levels. Students are required to take an achievement test for each courses four times a semester. Using the administration of the end-of year proficiency exam, students are tested to establish whether they have completed the program requirements successfully. The end-of-year proficiency exam aligns with the units covered in the courses during the two semesters. Additionally, there are additional activities administrated separately in the institution such as video project and extensive reading. The main function of these additional activities is to give support to the scope of the main courses by raising the amount of exposure to the target language. These extra activities are graded as well and constitute 15% of students' end-of-year grade. Students must have a grade of at least 70 in order to be able to take the end-of-year proficiency exam.



## Participants

A total of 74 students from three proficiency groups volunteered to take part in the research in the beginning. Of all the participants, nine students from different levels were excluded from the study since they did not listen to the audiobooks. As a result, there were three groups for each level: 22 students in elementary level, 21 students in pre-intermediate level and 22 students in intermediate level, for a total of 65 students who participated in the study. The information about the students who participated in the study is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

### *Information about Participant Students*

	Elementary		Pre-intermediate		Intermediate	
	Group	N	Group	N	Group	N
Gender	Female	14	Female	17	Female	6
	Male	8	Male	4	Male	16
Age	18-20	18	18-20	19	18-20	21
	21-23	3	21-23	2	21-23	1
	24-26	1	24-26		24-26	
Total Number of Students in Groups		22		21		22

## Materials and Instruments

Materials and instruments that were utilized in this study to collect data were: audio books with accompanying CDs, pronunciation recognition test, pronunciation production test, treatment worksheet and pre- and post- questionnaires.

### **Audiobooks**

In order to explore the potential impact on improving students' pronunciation skills both on recognition and production level, audiobooks were selected from the

graded readers that students are assigned to read for their extensive reading activity. For each proficiency level, one graded reader was chosen from five books assigned to the students during the spring term. Table 2 illustrates the information about the audiobooks selected for each level.

Table 2

*Audio Books Used in the Study*

Book Title	Publisher	Level	Number of Pages	Number of Words	Length of the Audio
King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table	Pearson Longman	Elementary	46	10369	1:24:00
Pirates of the Caribbean At World's End	Pearson Longman	Pre-intermediate	57	13144	1:50:00
The Time Machine	Pearson Longman	Intermediate	77	21527	2:43:00

The participants listened to each of the three audiobooks listed above after the first administration of the recognition test, production test and perception questionnaire. Since audiobooks were uploaded to an online survey platform (LimeSurvey), participants were able to listen to them via their smart phones or personal computers. The pdf versions of the graded readers used in the study were also embedded into the online platform, so the participants were also able to read the books at the same time that they were listening to them by clicking on a link (See Appendix A for a copy of one of the graded readers – audiobooks.). Since participants read graded readers as a part of extensive reading activity, they were expected to listen to the audiobook versions of the graded readers out of the school. When participants completed the first tests (recognition-production) and questionnaire, they were given three days' time to complete the listening session of the audiobooks.

## **Training**

The study investigates the impact of audiobooks on pronunciation skills focusing on the specific segmental features of pronunciation (/θ/, /ð/, /ŋ/, /n/, / ε / and /ə/). Since the sound symbols developed by the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) Association were used in the pronunciation recognition test, students were taught IPA by the researcher using the interactive phonemic chart of British Council official website (See Appendix B for the screenshot of the IPA chart). The training lasted forty – five minutes (one class time) and the participants were tested again by using the chart to explore whether they learned the symbols. The aim of the IPA training was to enable students to differentiate the symbols of the sounds that they would hear during the pronunciation recognition test.

## **Pronunciation Tests**

Pronunciation tests that were repeated before and after the treatment were developed for two purposes: to investigate the recognition capability of the students and to explore the production skills of the students. After reviewing the related literature (Bekleyen, 2011; Çelik, 2008 & Türker, 2010), the researcher decided on the inclusion of the sounds /θ/, /ð/, /ŋ/, /n/, / ε / and /ə/ that are identified among the most common problematic sounds (for Turkish speakers) by the literature. Afterwards, the three selected audiobooks were examined for the words which include these problematic sounds. The words extracted from the audiobooks formed the basis for both the pronunciation recognition and pronunciation production tests. Equal numbers of words for each sound were selected to give students the opportunity to hear each sound equally by the researcher with the aim of giving students the chance to hear every sound on a roughly equal basis. In total, 57 words that include the sounds to be explored in the study were selected from the three audiobooks. Table 3 exhibits the list of the selected words.

Table 3

*Problematic Sounds and Words from Audiobooks*

ð	ə	θ	ε	ŋ	n
breathe	feature	threat	meant	sing	name
without	measure	youth	heaven	finger	new
then	industry	think	wear	thanks	ban
that	consider	both	deaf	anger	joint
this	centre	author	bed	crying	flown
mother	cinema	thing	egg	evening	earn
other	away	thigh	protect	wing	main
together	about	thin	weather	long	woman
either	ago	truth	get	tongue	stone
although				strong	twin

**Pronunciation recognition test.** After the examination of the three audiobooks and the selection of 57 words, the electronic pronunciation records of those words were downloaded from the Oxford University's Online Learners' Dictionary. These recordings were then used as the basis of a test to assess the recognition capability of the students for these words. In the test, the participants were asked to listen to the 57 words and choose the IPA symbol which represented the sounds they heard (See Appendix C for a copy of the examination.).

**Pronunciation production test.** To examine students' pronunciation production level, a one-page paragraph, which included the words tested in the recognition test, was presented to the participants and they were asked to read the text out loud while the researcher was recording. (See Appendix D for a copy of the examination.).

### **Raters**

The pre- and post- treatment production tests were scored by the researcher. In order to raise the reliability of scoring, some of the recordings were chosen randomly and scored by three native and three nonnative teachers. As the accent of both the course books used in the institution and the audiobooks used in this study was British English, raters were asked to rate the production tests considering the

British English accent. By doing so, it was aimed to assure that the researcher does not have any bias as a rater and rates in a similar way that the other six colleagues do.

### **Questionnaires**

As one of the research questions of this study addresses the perceptions of students about audiobooks, a questionnaire was developed by the researcher by adapting three questionnaires in order to seek the information about students' perceptions (See Appendix E, F and G).

**Pre - treatment questionnaire.** In the first section of the pre-treatment questionnaire, demographic information was collected to learn the participants' gender, age, high school they graduated from, participants' foreign language (English) background, and grades of the participants on speaking examinations conducted at Uludağ University School of Foreign Languages. Additionally, the last section of the questionnaire consisted of 23 questions about the perceptions of the participants towards the importance of audiobooks and their effects on pronunciation were directed. The items were based upon the themes that arose from the literature. Additionally, some of the items were adapted from relevant studies in the literature (Chongning, 2009; Coskun, 2011; Foote, Holtby, & Derwing, 2012).

**Post - treatment questionnaire.** As the research question of this thesis suggests, the aim here is to evaluate the perceptions of the participants about audiobooks and their effects on pronunciation. In order to see whether there was a change in students' perception of audiobooks after the treatment and listening process, the same items in the last section of the pre-treatment questionnaire were used for the post-treatment questionnaire. The order of the items was shuffled in order to reduce the effect of previous exposure to the form.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

Following the preparation process of the tools (first and second tests, pre and post-questionnaires) to be used in the study, a system of monitoring student activity was chosen. Rather than using a third party application which might put the confidentiality of the participant data in risk as well as being time consuming, a free, online open source survey management application, LimeSurvey, was used to collect data (See Appendix H for the screenshot of the online survey platform).

To collect the data, a MySQL data base was created for the functioning of this .php (programming language) based system. A domain and a hosting service were registered in order to set up the system. For each of the data collection stages, nine different survey environments were created on the domain, zeynepsaka.com.

Permission to conduct the study was granted from the Head of the Uludağ University School Foreign Languages on February 6, 2015, and the data collection process started.

In order to test the system and the tools to be used in the data collection process, piloting of the tests and questionnaires were conducted at the institution on February 20, 2015. Following that, some items in the post-questionnaire were modified in order to make them easier to be understood. The piloting was conducted with ten students that correspond to more than 5% of the number of students in the main study. First, the researcher trained the participants about the IPA. Second, the participants took the first three steps (pre-treatment questionnaire, first recognition test and first production test). Next, the students are given two days to listen to the audiobooks. Last, the students took the last three steps (post-treatment questionnaire, second recognition test and second production test). Following the piloting, the actual data collection lasted for one week, starting on February 23, 2015 and ending on February 27, 2015.

After being informed about the study by the researcher, 74 students volunteered to participate in the study by signing a consent form. While the computer laboratory of the school, which had originally been scheduled to be used for the study was closed, five computers in the self-access center of the school were used instead. As a result of the limited numbers of computers, students were invited to the self-access center of Uludağ University School of Foreign Languages in groups of five.

As the first step, on February 23, 2015, students were taught the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) by the researcher in the seminar room of the institution. In order to teach IPA, an online phonemic chart provided by British Council was utilized. Though every phoneme on the chart was taught by the researcher, the six phonemes that the study explores (/ð/, /ə/, /θ/, /ε/, /η/, /n/) were the main focus of the instruction session. Following that, students completed the pre-treatment questionnaire, pronunciation recognition test and pronunciation production test, respectively. Then, students were given three days to listen to the audiobooks by entering the LimeSurvey system using their student numbers as ID. Data were collected about students' interaction with the system, including when they entered the system and how long they listened to each audiobook. After the exclusion of nine students who did not listen to the assigned audiobooks, the post-treatment questionnaire, pronunciation recognition test and pronunciation production tests were administered to the 65 students on February 27, 2015.

### **Data analysis**

In the study, quantitative data analysis was done on data from both the pronunciation skill tests and the perception questionnaires. The researcher utilized the Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 to do the quantitative data analysis.

With regard to the first research question, which aims to investigate the effectiveness of audiobooks on university EFL students' pronunciation recognition and production capabilities, the data obtained from the pronunciation recognition and production tests were analyzed using SPSS. First, the students' scores from the tests were downloaded from the online data collection application and converted into an Excel table. Next, standard deviations and mean values for the pronunciation recognition and production tests were calculated for students at each level. A normality test was conducted to see whether the data were normally distributed. As the results of the Shapiro-Wilk normality test revealed that the data were normally distributed, parametric tests were conducted to analyze the data. A t-test was used to explore the differences between the first and second recognition and production test scores and analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was run in order to see whether there was a difference among the three proficiency levels in terms of their performances of both recognizing and producing each of the addressed problematic phonemes, before and after the audiobook listening session.

To analyze the second research question, analysis of variance (ANOVA) test was conducted to explore the differences among the overall performances of each proficiency levels.

In order to address the third research question, the questionnaire data obtained from three proficiency groups were analyzed. In order to find out the students' perceptions about using audiobooks, quantitative data analysis procedures were followed. A t-test was run to investigate any differences that occurred between the pre-treatment and post-treatment questionnaires.

### **Conclusion**

In this chapter, general information about the aim of the study, the setting, the participants, data collection materials and instruments were presented. A brief description of the data analysis process was presented, as well. The next chapter will include detailed findings of the study and the discussion of the findings.



## **CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS**

### **Introduction**

This study, which was conducted at Uludağ University, School of Foreign Languages, examined to the extent to which listening to audiobook affects students' pronunciation skills on both recognition and production levels and how students perceive the use of audiobooks with the aim of teaching and learning pronunciation in English.

The research questions addressed in the study were as follows:

1. What are the perceptions of EFL students about using audiobooks to improve their pronunciation?
2. What are the effects of listening to audiobooks on EFL students'
  - a. recognition level of problematic phonemes in English?
  - b. pronunciation of problematic phonemes in English?
3. Does the effect of listening audiobooks on pronunciation differ in terms of the proficiency levels of students?

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

After the data collection process was completed with pre- and post-treatment recognition tests, pre- and post-treatment production tests and pre- and post-treatment questionnaires, the first step in the data analysis was to score the participants' pre and post-treatment production tests' scores. Once all the scores of 65 participants were obtained, the data of pre and post-treatment production tests' scores were entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Since most of the data was automatically transferred into SPSS from Limesurvey.com, the main data collection tool for the study, manual data entering process was not implemented for the two

other datasets (pre- and post-treatment recognition tests and pre- and post-treatment questionnaires). The participants from three different proficiency levels were put together in the aforementioned three datasets, but labeled differently in accordance with the level (1= Elementary, 2= Pre-intermediate, 3= Intermediate). After these adjustments were made, a Paired samples *t*-test analysis was conducted to compare the pre- and post-treatment questionnaires. Later, a Paired samples *t*-test analysis was run to see the difference between the pre- and post-test results for the three different proficiency groups in recognition and production tests. Lastly, One-way Analysis of Variance (One-way ANOVA) was run to see if the participants' level of scores on both recognition and production levels changed depending upon their language proficiency level.

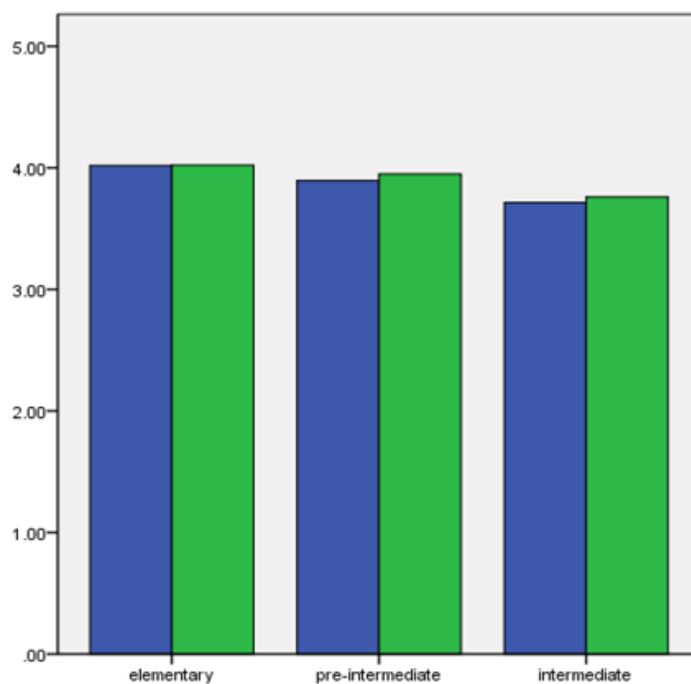
## **Results**

The results will be presented in accordance with the research questions of the study. First, the answer to the research question 1, "What are the perceptions of EFL students about using audiobooks?" will be revealed, then the answer to the research question 2a, "What are the effects of listening to audiobooks on EFL students' recognition level of problematic phonemes in English?" will be introduced, next, the answer to the research question 2b, "What are the effects of listening to audiobooks on EFL students' pronunciation of problematic phonemes in English?" will be presented, lastly, the answer to the research question 3, "Does the effect of listening audiobooks on pronunciation differ in terms of the proficiency levels of students?" will be discussed.

### **What are The Perceptions of EFL Students about Using Audiobooks to Improve Their Pronunciation?**

In order to examine the difference between the participants' pre and post-treatment perceptions of the effects of listening to audiobooks on their pronunciation,

first, the descriptive statistics of the pre and post-questionnaire scores were calculated. Since two outliers were detected and the inspection of their values revealed them to be extreme, they were excluded in line with the recommendation by Bakker and Wicherts (2014). A Shapiro-Wilk's test ( $p > .05$ ) and a visual inspection of their histograms, normal Q-Q plots and box plots showed that the test scores were approximately normally distributed for each level of proficiency, with a skewness of -0.64 (SE= 0.49) and a kurtosis of -0.39 (SE= 0.95) for elementary level; a skewness of 0.24 (SE= 0.50) and a kurtosis of -1.31 (SE= 0.97) for pre-intermediate level, and a skewness of -0.61 (SE= 0.51) and kurtosis of 0.13 (SE= 0.99) for intermediate level. The responses to the twenty- three items of the questionnaire about the attitudes towards audiobooks and their effects on pronunciation were scored as 1= Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Undecided, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly agree. That is to say a higher mean represents a more positive attitude of the participants. Figure 1 shows the means of participants' pre and post-treatment scores for the perception questionnaire.



*Figure 1.* Pre and post- treatment questionnaire means of the proficiency levels

Looking at this figure and the descriptive statistics, none of the proficiency levels has a completely positive attitude towards the effects of audiobooks on pronunciation. In a similar way, none of the proficiency levels has a negative attitude towards the effects of audiobooks on pronunciation. However, the post-treatment questionnaire mean of pre-intermediate and intermediate levels were slightly higher than their pre-treatment questionnaire means, whereas the pre and post-treatment questionnaire means of the elementary level remain the same ( $\bar{x} = 4.02$ ). While the mean of the pre-treatment questionnaire was 3.89 and the mean of the second production test was 3.95 for pre-intermediate level, the mean of the first production test was 3.71 and the mean of the second production test was 3.76 for intermediate level. The descriptive statistics also revealed that the highest positive attitude level towards the effects of audiobooks on pronunciation was at elementary level, whereas the least positive attitude level towards the effects of audiobooks on pronunciation was at intermediate level. As a result of this, a parametric paired-sample *t*-test was conducted to evaluate whether the differences existed between the means of the pre and post-treatment questionnaire scores were statistically significant (see Table 4).

Table 4

*Difference between the Pre and Post-treatment Attitude Questionnaire Items for All Levels*

Scores	$\bar{x}$	<i>SD</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Pre	3.92	0.32	62	0.55	0.587
Post	3.95	0.35			

$p > .05$  level.

The results of the paired sample *t* test revealed that the mean difference between the pre and post-treatment means for these items on the questionnaire were not statistically significant. Participants' pre and post-treatment perspectives towards the effects of audiobooks on pronunciation differed very little from one another with

a mean of 0.02,  $t(62) = 0.55$ ,  $p > .05$ ,  $d = 0.06$ , indicating that there is not a statistically significant difference in attitudes prior to and after the treatment. ( $\bar{x} = 3.92$ ,  $SD = 0.32$ ) and ( $\bar{x} = 3.95$ ,  $SD = 0.35$ ). The effect size ( $d = 0.06$ ) was small based on Cohen's conventions (1988).

### **What are the Effects of Listening to Audiobooks on EFL Students' Recognition Level of Problematic Phonemes in English?**

In order to examine the difference between the participants' first and second recognition test scores, first, the descriptive statistics were calculated. A Shapiro-Wilk's test ( $p > 0.05$ ) and a visual inspection of their histograms, normal Q-Q plots and box plots revealed that the normality assumption was not violated, with a skewness of 0.34 (SE= 0.50) and a kurtosis of -0.34 (SE= 1.00) for elementary level; a skewness of -0.18 (SE= 0.50) and a kurtosis of 0.18 (SE= 1.00) for pre-intermediate level, and a skewness of 0.50 (SE= 0.50) and kurtosis of -0.70 (SE= 1.00) for intermediate level. Figure 2 shows the means of participants' first and second test scores of the recognition test.

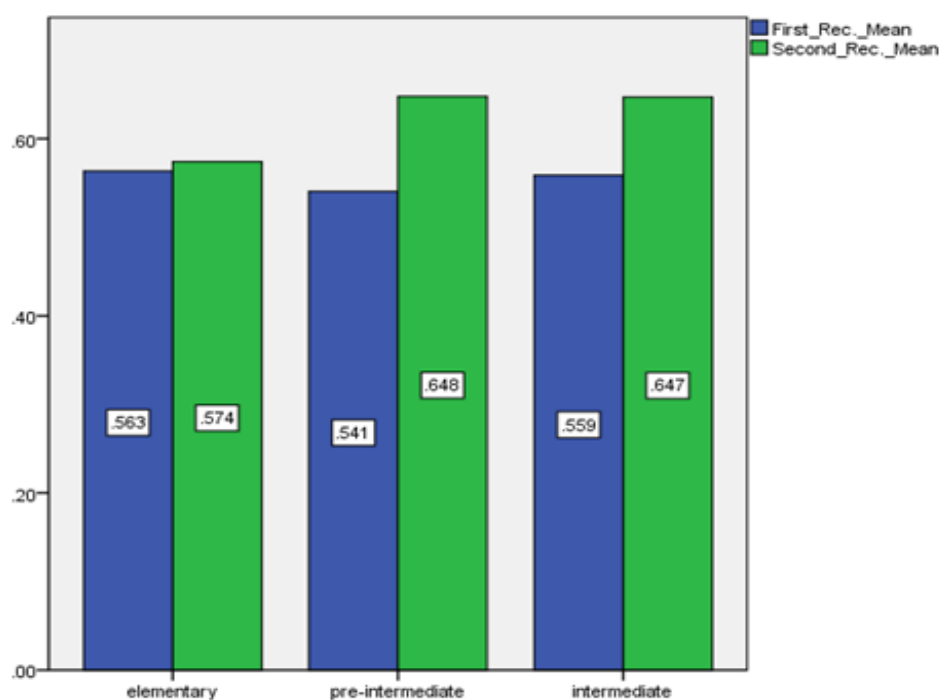


Figure 2. First and second recognition test means of the proficiency levels

According to the descriptive statistics, the second recognition test score means of all the proficiency levels were higher than their first recognition test score means. While the mean of the first recognition test scores was 0.56 and the mean of the second recognition test scores was 0.57 for elementary level, the mean of the first recognition test scores was 0.54 and the mean of the second recognition test scores was 0.65 for pre-intermediate level, and the mean of the first recognition test scores was 0.56 and the mean of the second recognition test scores was 0.65 for intermediate level. As a result of this, a parametric paired- sample  $t$  test was conducted to evaluate whether this increase between the means of the recognition test scores before and after listening to audiobooks was statistically significant (see Table 5).

Table 5

*The Mean Difference between the First and Second Recognition Test of All Levels*

Scores	$\bar{x}$	$SD$	$df$	$T$	$p$
1 <sup>st</sup> Test	.55	.08	64	6.82	.000
2 <sup>nd</sup> Test	.62	.10			

$p < .001$  level.

The results of the paired sample  $t$  test elicited a statistically significant mean increase of 0.07,  $t(64) = 6.82$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = 0.84$ , indicating that there was a statistically significant increase in the recognition test scores from the first to the second ( $\bar{x} = 0.55$  to  $\bar{x} = 0.62$ ). The effect size ( $d = 0.84$ ) was small based on Cohen's conventions (1988). This means that the participants' performance of recognizing problematic phonemes improved overall after listening to the audiobook.

A second set of tests was run in order to investigate the differences that occurred between the first and second recognition tests for each problematic phoneme. First, words were grouped in accordance with the phoneme they represent

(ð, ə, n, ŋ, ε, θ). Second, the means of the phonemes tested before and after audiobook listening session were calculated. Then a parametric test, *t*-test was used to determine the differences in the first and second performances. The results of the paired sample *t*-test that was run to see the overall differences that occurred between the first and second recognition test scores for each phoneme is presented in Table 6. Figure 3 presents the first recognition test means of each phoneme for each proficiency level, and Figure 4 presents the second recognition test means of each phoneme for each proficiency level.

Table 6

*The Mean Difference of All Levels between the First and Second Recognition of The Phonemes*

Phonemes	$\bar{x}$	SD	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
ð	-.02	.21	-0.82	64	.410
ə	-.02	.22	-0.92	64	.359
θ	-.05	.26	-1.55	64	.126
ε	-.10	.26	-3.00	64	.004*
ŋ	-.06	.22	-2.31	64	.024**
n	-.14	.24	-4.89	64	.000*

$p < .001^*$

$p > .05^{**}$

The results of the paired sample *t* test indicated that there was a mean increase in the differentiation of all phonemes after the audiobook listening session. However, the results indicated that this increase was statistically significant for only three phonemes /ε/ ( $\bar{x} = -0.10$ , SD= 0.26), /ŋ/ ( $\bar{x} = -0.06$ , SD= 0.22), and /n/ ( $\bar{x} = -0.14$ , SD= 0.24). The results of the *t* test suggest that the participants' performance of recognizing problematic phonemes of /ε/, /ŋ/ and /n/ has improved to the statistically significant level after the audiobook treatment.

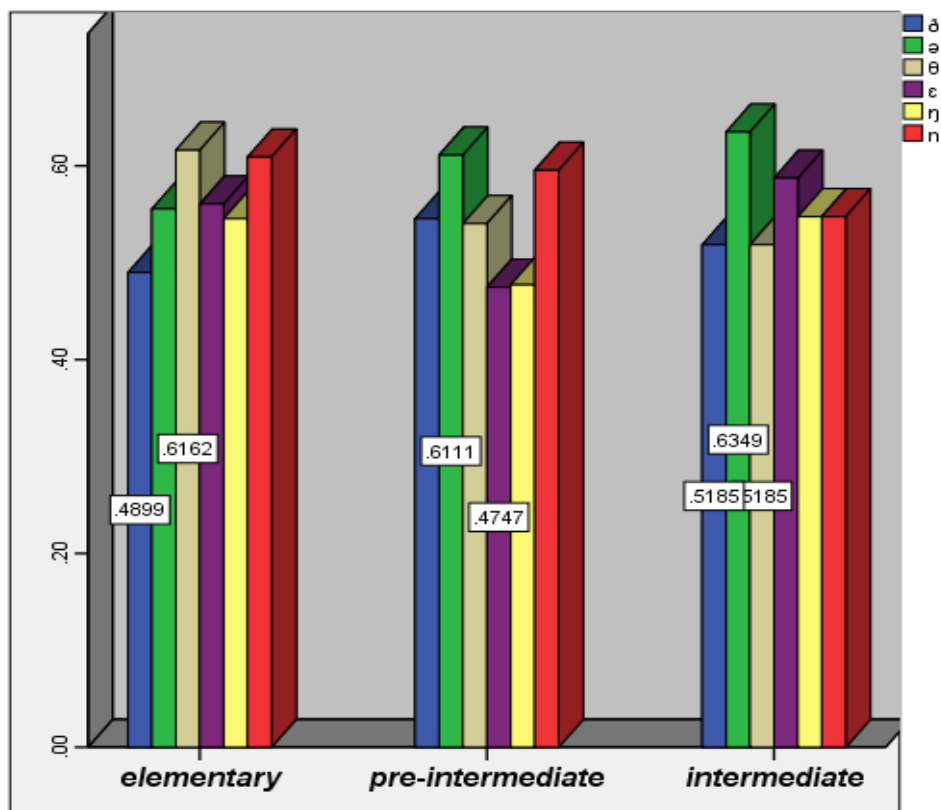


Figure 3. Mean range of the phonemes in first recognition test.

Examination of the first recognition test histograms revealed that for elementary level, the lowest performance was for the recognition of the phoneme /ð/ ( $\bar{x} = 0.48$ ), while the highest performance was at for recognition of the phoneme /θ/ ( $\bar{x} = 0.61$ ). At pre-intermediate level, the lowest performance was observed for the recognition of the phoneme /ε/ ( $\bar{x} = 0.47$ ), whereas the participants showed the highest performance for the recognition of the phoneme /a/ ( $\bar{x} = 0.61$ ). Intermediate level participants' performance was lowest in the recognition of the phonemes /ð/ and /θ/ ( $\bar{x} = 0.51$ ), while they were able to identify the phoneme of /a/ at the highest level ( $\bar{x} = 0.63$ ).



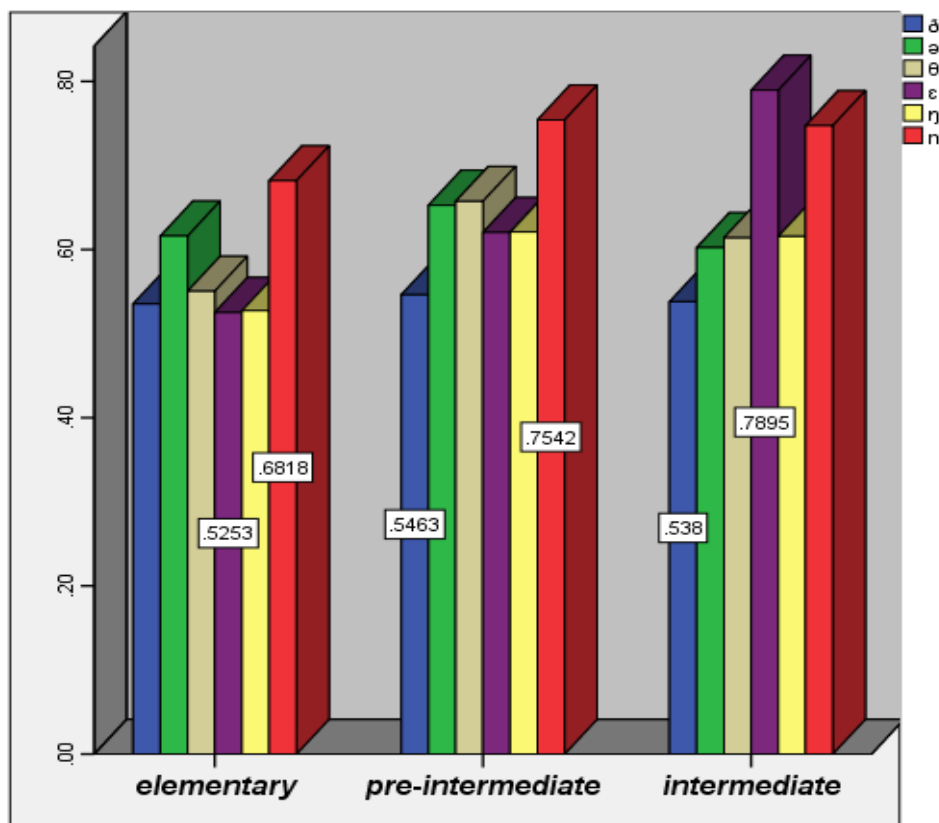


Figure 4. Mean range of the phonemes in second recognition test.

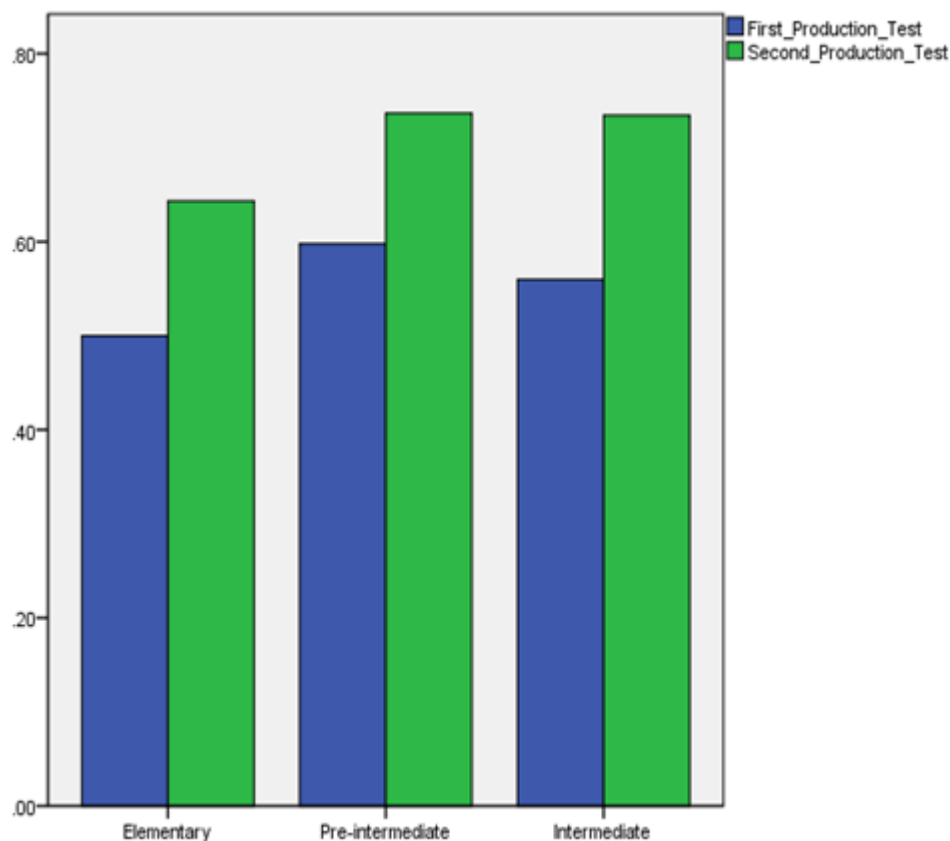
The investigation of the second recognition test histograms revealed that for the elementary level, the lowest performance was the recognition of the phoneme /ε/ ( $\bar{x} = 0.52$ ), while the highest performance was for the phoneme /n/ ( $\bar{x} = 0.68$ ). At pre-intermediate level, the lowest performance was for the recognition of the phoneme /ð/ ( $\bar{x} = 0.54$ ), whereas the participants scored highest for the recognition of the phoneme /n/ ( $\bar{x} = 0.75$ ). Intermediate level participants' performance was lowest for the phonemes /ð/ ( $\bar{x} = 0.53$ ), while they were able to identify the phoneme of /ε/ at the highest level ( $\bar{x} = 0.78$ ).

### What are The Effects of Listening to Audiobooks on EFL Students'

#### Pronunciation of Problematic Phonemes in English?

In order to examine the difference between the participants' first and second production test scores, first, the descriptive statistics were calculated. A Shapiro-Wilk's test ( $p > 0.05$ ) and a visual inspection of their histograms, normal Q-Q plots

and box plots showed that the test scores were approximately normally distributed for each level of proficiency, with a skewness of -0.20 (SE= 0.50) and a kurtosis of -0.54 (SE= 1.00) for elementary level; a skewness of 0.13 (SE= 0.49) and a kurtosis of -0.84 (SE= 1.00) for pre-intermediate level, and a skewness of -0.17 (SE= 0.51) and kurtosis of -0.61 (SE= 1.00) for intermediate level. Figure 5 shows the means of participants' first and second test scores of the production test.



*Figure 5.* First and second production test means of the proficiency levels

According to the descriptive statistics, the second production test means of all the proficiency levels were higher than their first production test means. For the elementary level, the mean of the first production test was 0.50 and the mean of the second production test was 0.64. The mean of the first production test was 0.60 and the mean of the second production test was 0.74 for pre-intermediate level. For the intermediate level, there was the greatest difference, with the mean of the first production test was 0.56 and the mean of the second production test was 0.73 for

intermediate level. As a result of this, a parametric paired- sample  $t$ -test was conducted to evaluate whether this increase was statistically significant (see Table 7).

Table 7

*The Mean Difference between the First and Second Production Test of All Levels*

Scores	$\bar{x}$	$SD$	$df$	$T$	$p$
1 <sup>st</sup> Test	.55	.09	64	15.31	.000
2 <sup>nd</sup> Test	.70	.11			

$p < .001$

The results of the paired sample  $t$ -test elicited a statistically significant mean increase of 0.15,  $t(64) = 15.31$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $d = 1.90$ , indicating that there is a statistically significant mean increase in production test scores from the first production test ( $\bar{x} = 0.55$ ,  $SD = 0.09$ ) to the second production test ( $\bar{x} = 0.70$ ,  $SD = 0.11$ ). The effect size ( $d = 1.90$ ) was small based on Cohen's conventions (1988). Put another way, the results suggest that the participants' performance of producing problematic phonemes has improved significantly.

Another series of test was conducted to investigate the differences that occurred in the production of each problematic phoneme before and after the treatment. The means for both the pre-treatment and post-treatment production tests for each phoneme ( $\delta$ ,  $\vartheta$ ,  $n$ ,  $\eta$ ,  $\epsilon$ ,  $\theta$ ) were calculated. Then  $t$  test was used to determine the differences in the first and second performances. The results of the paired sample  $t$  test that was run to see the overall differences occurred between the first and second production test scores for each phoneme is presented in Table 8. Figure 6 presents the first production test means of each phoneme for each proficiency level, and Figure 7 presents the second production test means of each phoneme for each proficiency level.

Table 8

*The Mean Difference of All Levels between the First and Second Recognition of the Phonemes*

Phonemes	$\bar{x}$	SD	T	df	p
ð	-.22	.20	-9.00	64	.000*
ə	-.81	.22	-29.00	64	.000*
θ	-.07	.17	-3.33	64	.001**
ε	.06	.29	1.63	64	.108
η	.25	.22	9.09	64	.000*
n	-.20	.30	-6.00	64	.000*

$p < .001^*$

$p < .01^{**}$

The results of the paired sample *t*-test show that there is a mean decrease in the differentiation of the phonemes /ε/ and /η/, while there is a mean increase for the phonemes of /ð/, /ə/, /n/ and /θ/ after the audiobook listening session. The results indicated that these differences are statistically significant for five of the phonemes /ð/ ( $\bar{x} = -.22$ , SD= .20), /ə/ ( $\bar{x} = -.81$ , SD= .22), /n/ ( $\bar{x} = -.07$ , SD= .17), /η/ ( $\bar{x} = .25$ , SD= .22) and /θ/ ( $\bar{x} = -.20$ , SD= .29). That is to say, the results of the *t* test suggest participants' performance in producing four of the problematic phonemes /ð/, /ə/, /n/ and /θ/ improved for the phonemes and decreased for the phoneme /η/ at a statistically significant level.

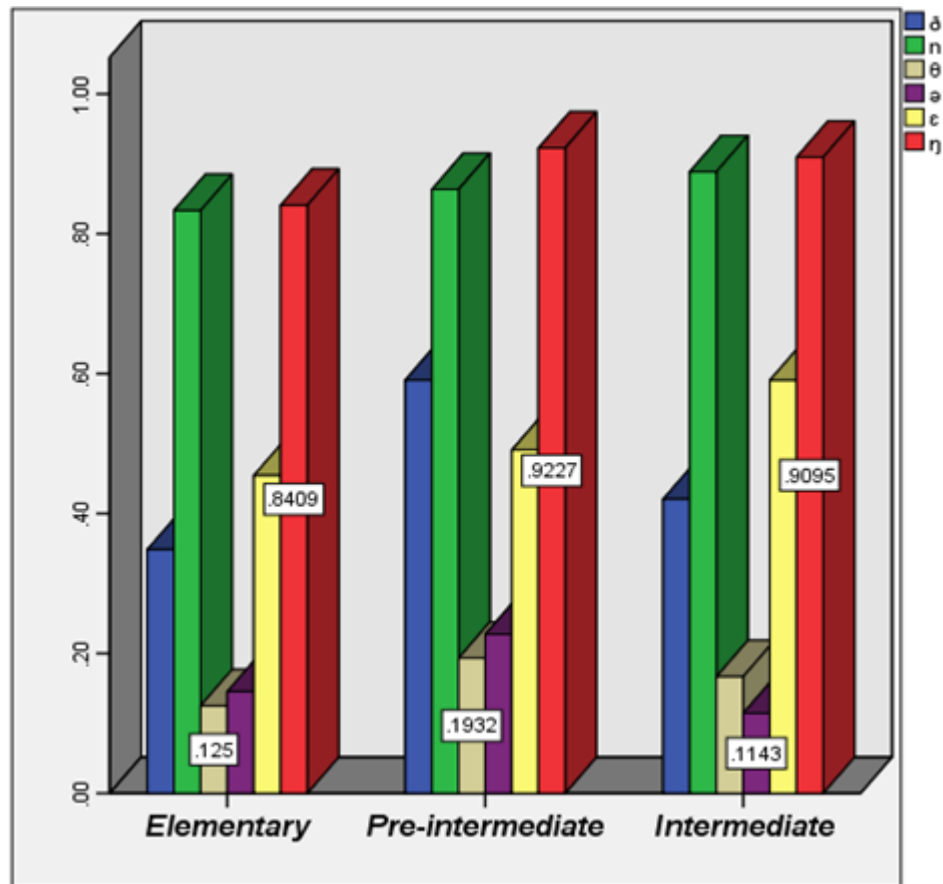


Figure 6. Mean range of the phonemes in first production test

The investigation of the first production test histograms revealed that for elementary level, the lowest performance was for the production of the phoneme /θ/ ( $\bar{x} = 0.12$ ), while the highest performance was for the phoneme /η/ ( $\bar{x} = 0.84$ ). At pre-intermediate level, the lowest performance was observed for the recognition of the phoneme /θ/ ( $\bar{x} = 0.19$ ), whereas the participants scored highest performance on the phoneme /η/ ( $\bar{x} = 0.92$ ). Intermediate level participants' performance was lowest in the recognition of the phoneme /ə/ ( $\bar{x} = 0.11$ ), and highest for the phoneme of /η/ ( $\bar{x} = 0.90$ ).

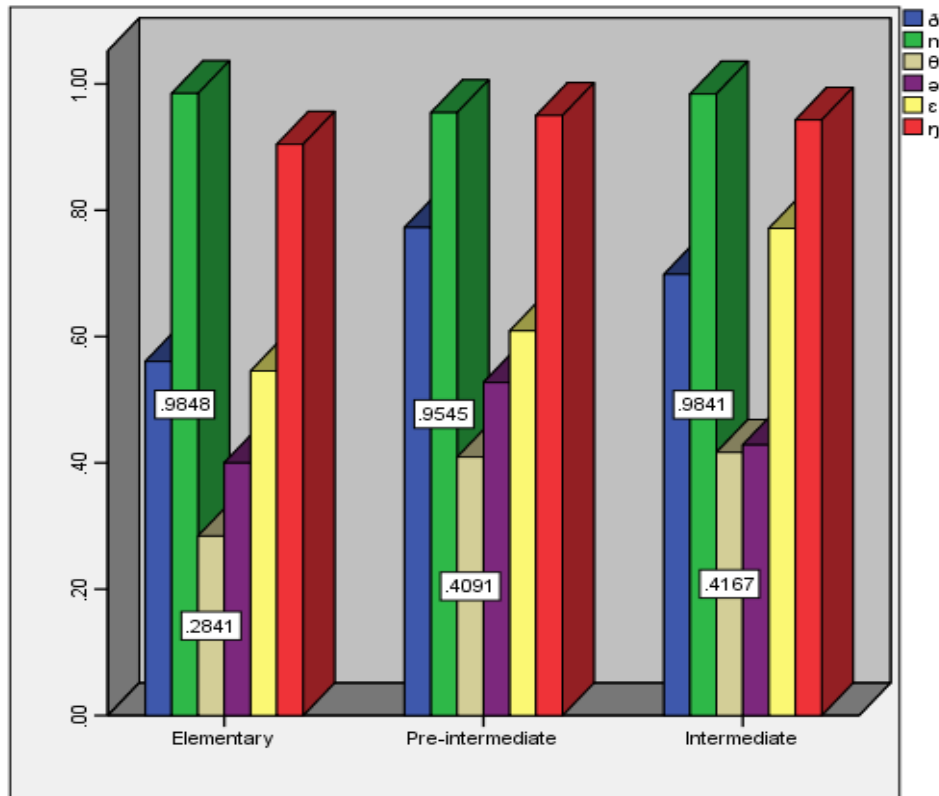


Figure 7. Mean range of the phonemes in second production test.

An examination of the second production test histograms revealed that for all three levels (elementary, pre-intermediate, and intermediate) level, the lowest performance was for the phoneme /θ/ ( $\bar{x} = 0.28$ ,  $\bar{x} = 0.40$ ,  $\bar{x} = 0.41$ , respectively).

For all three levels, the sound produced at the highest level was also the same, /n/, with means of 0.98, 0.40, and 0.95 for the elementary level, pre-intermediate, and intermediate levels respectively.

### **Does The Effect of Listening Audiobooks on Pronunciation Differ in Terms of The Proficiency Levels of Students?**

In order to examine whether there is a difference among the proficiency levels in terms of their performance in pronunciation recognition test, first, the gain score was calculated by subtracting the mean of the first recognition test score from the mean of the second recognition test score. Then, the descriptive statistics for the pronunciation recognition gain score were calculated. After one outlier from the

elementary level was excluded in line with the recommendation by Bakker and Wicherts (2014), tests revealed that pronunciation recognition test scores were normally distributed, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk's test ( $p > .05$ ). Since the normality assumption could be met, a One-Way Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA) was used to determine the relationships of each of three variables with participants' pronunciation recognition scores. The results of the descriptive statistics and the mean differences are given in Table 9 and Figure 8.

Table 9

*Results of the Descriptive Statistics on Pronunciation Recognition Test Scores*

Group	N	$\bar{x}$	SD
Elementary	21	.02	.03
Pre-intermediate	22	.11	.09
Intermediate	21	.09	.06

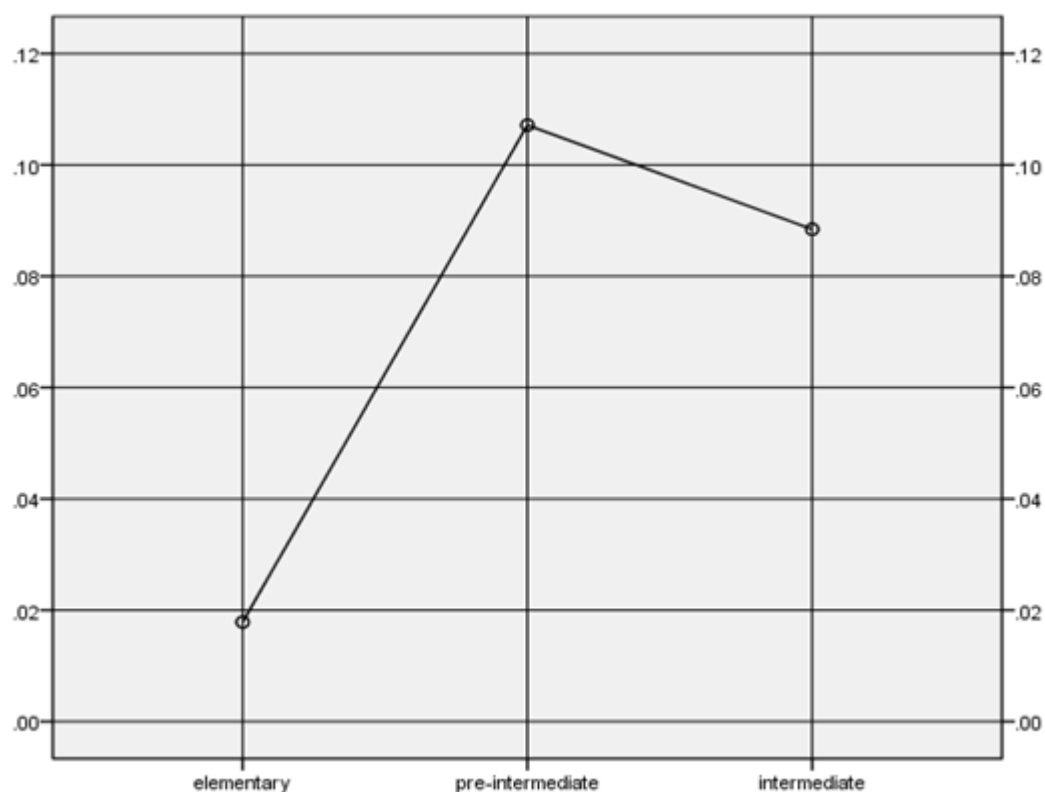


Figure 8. Recognition test gain score mean differences of the proficiency levels

The assumption of homogeneity of variances was violated, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ( $p = .0005$ ). As a result of this, Welch ANOVA, which adjusts for the lack of homogeneity, was used to explore the differences and it is revealed that the ability to recognize problematic phonemes (differences between the pronunciation recognition pre- and post-test scores) was statistically significant for the proficiency levels, Welch's  $F(2, 37.10) = 16.09$ ,  $p < .0005$ . Post-hoc tests were also conducted to investigate where any difference occurred (See Table 10).

Table 10

*Comparison between Levels for Differences of Score Means on Pre- and Post-Recognition Test*

Proficiency Levels	$\bar{x}$	SE	$p$
Elementary - Pre –intermediate	-.09	.02	.001*
Elementary – Intermediate	-.07	.01	.000**
Pre-intermediate – Intermediate	.01	.02	.709

$p < .01^*$

$p < .001^{**}$

The results in Table 9 compare the differences on the pre- and post-treatment recognition tests between groups. That is, for the first line,  $\bar{x}$  indicates the difference between the mean gains between the elementary level (.02 as reported in Table 8) and the pre-intermediate level (.11 in Table 8). The results ( $\bar{x} = -0.09$ ,  $SE = 0.02$ ), indicate that the difference in mean gains is negative (i.e., the pre-intermediate level had a larger gain) and that this difference is statistically significant ( $p < .01$ ). Similar results were found in comparing the mean gains for the intermediate level to the elementary level ( $\bar{x} = -0.07$ ,  $SE = 0.01$ ). Again, the sign indicates that the gain was greater for the intermediate level, while the difference between the groups' gains was also found to be significant ( $p < .001$ ). A smaller difference was calculated for the



differences in means between the pre-intermediate level to intermediate level ( $\bar{x} = 0.01$ ,  $SE = 0.02$ ) and this difference was not significant ( $p > .05$ ).

In order to examine whether there is a difference among the proficiency levels in terms of their performance in pronunciation production test, first, the gain score was calculated by subtracting the mean of the first production test score from the mean of the second production test score. Then, the descriptive statistics of the pronunciation production gain score were calculated, and it was revealed that pronunciation production test scores were normally distributed, as assessed by Shapiro-Wilk's test ( $p > .05$ ). Since the normality assumption was met, a One-Way Analysis of Variance (One-Way ANOVA) was used to determine the relationships of each of three variables with participants' pronunciation production scores. The results of the descriptive statistics and the mean differences are given in Table 11 and Figure 9.

Table 11

*Results of the Descriptive Statistics on Pronunciation Production Test Scores*

Group	N	$\bar{x}$	SD
Elementary	22	.14	.07
Pre-intermediate	22	.14	.06
Intermediate	21	.17	.10

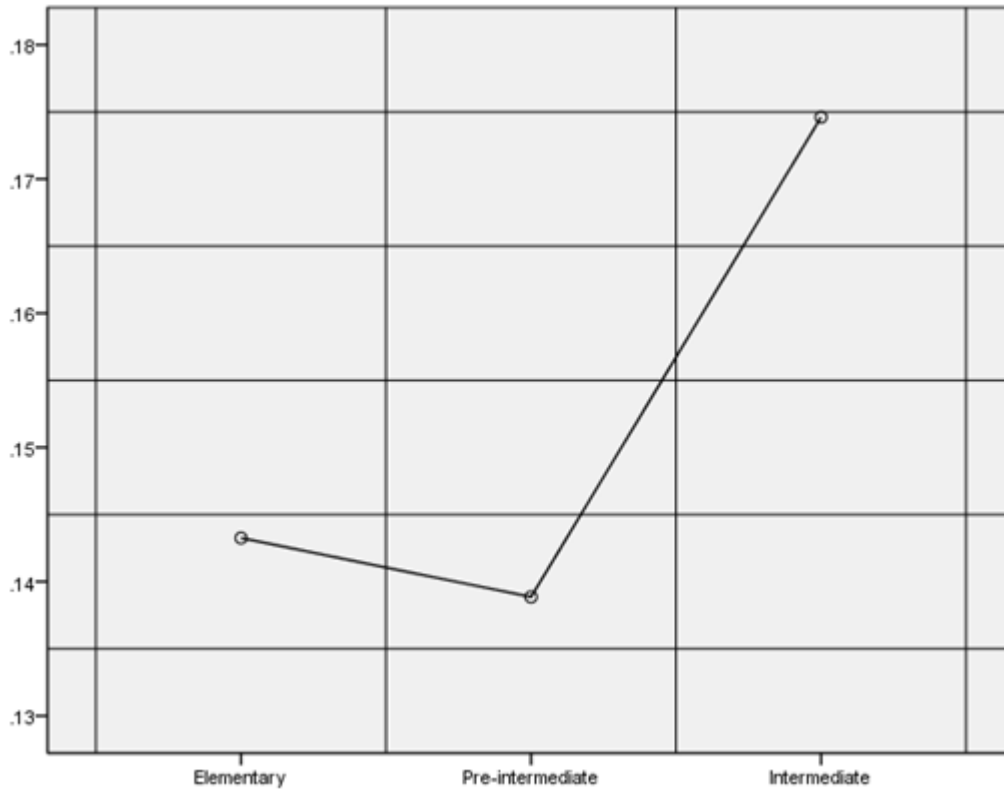


Figure 9. Production test gain score mean differences of the proficiency levels

The assumption of homogeneity of variances was violated, as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ( $p = .0005$ ). As a result of this, Welch ANOVA was again used to examine the differences. The results of this test revealed that the ability to produce problematic phonemes (pronunciation recognition test score) was not statistically significantly different for different proficiency levels, Welch's  $F(2, 39.410) = .973$ ,  $p = .387$ . Post-hoc tests were also conducted to investigate where any difference occurred. The Table 12 shows the results of post-hoc tests.

Table 12

*Comparison between Levels for Differences of Score Means on Pre- and Post-Production Test*

Proficiency Levels	$\bar{x}$	SE	$p$
Elementary- Pre –intermediate	.00	.02	0.974
Elementary – Intermediate	-.03	.03	0.484
Pre-intermediate – Intermediate	-.04	.03	0.360

$p > .05$

The results in Table 11 compare the differences on the pre- and post-treatment production tests between groups. That is, for the first line,  $\bar{x}$  indicates the difference between the mean gains between the elementary level (.14 as reported in Table 10) and the pre-intermediate level (.14 in Table 10). The results ( $\bar{x} = 0.00$ , SE = 0.02), indicate that there is a slight difference in mean gains (i.e., both the elementary and pre-intermediate levels had almost equal gain) and that this difference is not statistically significant ( $p > .05$ ). The comparison between the mean gains for the elementary level to intermediate level revealed a similar result ( $\bar{x} = -0.03$ , SE = 0.03). Again, the sign indicates that the gain was almost equal for the two levels, while the difference between the groups' gains was also found not to be statistically significant ( $p > .05$ ). A smaller difference was also calculated for the differences in means between the pre-intermediate level to intermediate level ( $\bar{x} = -0.04$ , SE = 0.03) and this difference was also not statistically significant ( $p > .05$ ).

### Conclusion

This chapter has presented information regarding the data analysis and the results. According to the statistical tests conducted by the researcher, there is a statistically significant increase in participants' pronunciation skills on recognition problematic phonemes after audiobook listening session. In a similar way, participants' ability to produce these sounds was also improved after audiobook

listening session. According to the findings, the effect on pre-intermediate students for recognition skills was significantly higher than on elementary and intermediate levels. For producing sounds, the effect was significantly greater for intermediate level students than elementary and pre-intermediate levels. Thus, the results suggest that listening to audiobook has a nuanced and complex effect on the pronunciation skills of EFL students.

The next chapter will discuss the results, limitations, pedagogical implications, and suggestions for further research.

## **CHAPTER V: CONCLUSION**

### **Introduction**

The focus of this study which was conducted with the participation of 65 EFL students in the School of Foreign Languages of Uludağ University was to investigate the effects of audiobook listening on pronunciation. Students' performances on pronunciation tests before and after audiobook listening were explored as well as their perceptions towards audiobook and its effects on their pronunciation. As part of the collection of data, sound recognition and production tests were given along with questionnaires for perceptions.

The research questions presented in Chapter I will be answered by discussing and evaluating the main research findings in the light of the relevant literature. First of all, overall results of the analysis will be reviewed for each of the research questions. The results of the study will be compared with the relevant literature in order to see to what extent the findings are parallel with or differ from previous studies. Additionally, pedagogical implications and limitations of the study will be presented as well as suggestions for further research.

### **Results and Discussion**

This section will discuss the findings in light of the relevant literature. Each of the research questions will be addressed in four subsections.

#### **The Perceptions of EFL Students about Using Audiobooks to Improve Their Pronunciation**

Students' perceptions about the effects of audiobooks on pronunciation were gathered through the questionnaires distributed before and after audiobook listening session. The questionnaire responses revealed that the students of all the proficiency

levels had a moderately positive attitude (pre-treatment questionnaire:  $\bar{x} = 3.92$  ; post-treatment questionnaire:  $\bar{x} = 3.95$ ) towards the effects of audiobooks on their pronunciation. The great majority of the students declared that they desired to have a native-like accent with the help of pronunciation instruction. This finding confirms earlier research in the literature (e.g., Li, 2009; Scales et al., 2006 & Couper, 2003).

Additionally, the participant students of the current study found audiobooks beneficial in terms of helping them to learn correct English pronunciation. This is also in line with the findings of the relevant literature (e.g., Takan, 2014; Couper, 2003 & Peterson, 2000) which also found that students have a positive perception about audiobooks and their effects on language learning, especially on reading comprehension skills. Their attitudes towards audiobooks did not seem to change much from the beginning of the study. However, it was relatively high to begin with.

In conclusion, the results from the pre and post-questionnaires indicate that students who were listened to audiobooks had positive perspectives about audiobooks and their effects on pronunciation. This is significant, as it provides teachers and administrators with a rationale for expanding the use of audiobooks to teach pronunciation, as they are viewed positively by students as an effective tool.

### **The Effects of Listening to Audiobooks on EFL Students' Recognition Level of Problematic Phonemes in English**

The first research question, which aimed to find out the effectiveness of audiobooks on EFL learners' capability of differentiating problematic phonemes, was answered by analyzing the participant students' scores from the first and second recognition tests which were administered before and after audiobook listening session. The results of the analysis revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the first recognition test performances at the beginning of the study and the second recognition test performances after the treatment. The increase

in scores from the first test scores to the second test was statistically significant. It can be deduced from these findings that audiobook listening may have a positive effect on the participants' ability to recognize the problematic phonemes.

This result confirms what the relevant literature presents by supporting the theory of Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996) who suggest that presenting words in a context rather than in isolation extends learners' knowledge of pronunciation. The findings are also supported by Couper (2003) who claimed that listening to audio versions of the texts expanded learners' capability to pronounce correctly. This result contributes to the current literature by providing important evidence that audiobooks have a positive effect on the recognition level of problematic phonemes by university level EFL learners when they are implemented as an out of class activity.

The results also revealed that among the problematic target phonemes ( $\delta$ ,  $\text{ə}$ ,  $\text{n}$ ,  $\eta$ ,  $\text{ɛ}$ ,  $\theta$ ), the participants had the greatest difficulty differentiating the phonemes  $/\delta/$ ,  $/\text{ɛ}/$  and  $/\theta/$  even after they were exposed to these phonemes during the audiobook listening session. Even though performance was improved on the second recognition test, this result confirms what has been found in previous studies. In her study, Bekleyen (2011) found that  $/\delta/$  and  $/\theta/$  are among the most problematic sounds that Turkish learners have difficulty with. She claimed that the reason why students are not good at pronouncing the phonemes is the irregularities in the target language as well as Turkish learners' tendency to overgeneralize the rules. The findings are also supported by Çelik (2008) and Türker (2010), whose studies also revealed that Turkish learners have difficulty with the abovementioned phonemes. Interestingly, the results showed that the participants had the least difficulty in differentiating the phonemes  $/\text{ə}/$  and  $/\text{n}/$ . This finding seems to be contrary to the current literature, as both Bekleyen (2011) and Türker (2010) counted the phoneme  $/\text{ə}/$  among the

phonemes that Turkish learners have mostly difficulty with. According to the results, listening audiobooks was able to change students' ability to differentiate the problematic phoneme /ə/; whereas it does have little effect on the phonemes /ð/ and /ŋ/. That is to say, though sounds that seemed to be respond to the treatment the results of the study corresponding the previous studies revealed that the phonemes /ð/, /ε/ and /θ/ might be more resistant to change from the this type of treatment. The resistance of the phonemes might be caused by the differences between students' mother tongue and the target language or students' fossilized pronunciation mistakes. This result suggests the need for further investigation.

### **The Effects of Listening to Audiobooks on EFL Students' Pronunciation of Problematic Phonemes in English**

The second part of the first research question, which aimed to find out the effectiveness of audiobooks on EFL learners' capability of producing problematic phonemes, was answered by utilizing the first and second production test scores administrated before and after listening audiobooks. The analysis found that there was a statistically significant difference between the first and second production test scores, indicating that the participants' production of these problematic phonemes improved from the first to the second production test. It can be postulated from these findings that listening to audiobooks may have a positive effect on learners' ability to produce the problematic phonemes. As with the ability to produce different phonemes, this result supports Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (1996) who suggest that using multisensory modes (visual and auditory reinforcement) boost both pronunciation recognition and production skills. The literature (e.g., Blum et al., 1995; Koskinen et al., 2000; Nalder & Elley, 2003; O'Day, 2002; Taguchi et al., 2004) suggests that learners' pronunciation errors stem from guessing and overgeneralizing the pronunciation rules or from the differences between the



learners' mother tongue and English. This study holds out the possibility that audiobooks provide a model of good pronunciation which assists learners in learning how the words are pronounced.

The analysis of the quantitative data also revealed that though there was a significant improvement in the correct pronunciation level of each phoneme after audiobook listening session, the phoneme /θ/ among the target problematic phonemes (ð, ə, n, ŋ, ε, θ) was the one that the participants had most of the difficulty with. This result is in line with the findings of the studies which claim that the phoneme /θ/ is one of the problematic phonemes of English that causes pronunciation issues for EFL learners and for Turkish EFL learners in particular (e.g., Bekleyen, 2011; Saito, 2011; Türker, 2010; Rau, Chang & Tarone, 2009 & Çelik, 2008). That is to say, though as a group the targeted phonemes that seemed to be responsive to the treatment, the results of this study along with previous studies suggest that the phoneme /θ/ might be more resistant to change from the this type of treatment. Such resistance of the phonemes might be caused by the differences between students' mother tongue and the target language or students' tendency to overgeneralize pronunciation rules. The results also showed that the participants had the least difficulty with the production of the phonemes /ŋ/ and /n/ as opposed to the current literature. In their studies both Bekleyen (2011) and Türker (2010) counted the phoneme /ŋ/ among the phonemes that Turkish learners mostly have difficulty with.

### **The Effects of Listening Audiobooks on Pronunciation Differ in Terms of the Proficiency Levels of Students**

To answer the second research question, whether the effectiveness of audiobook listening on pronunciation skills differs depending on the students' proficiency levels, the study looked at the degree of difference among the three

proficiency groups varied. The results showed that audiobooks appeared to have a greater effect on the pronunciation recognition skills at pre-intermediate and intermediate levels than they did at elementary level. Interestingly, the results showed no such significant difference for production skills among the levels. While all three groups improved their pronunciation production skills at significant levels, audiobooks appeared to have roughly equal effects on the pronunciation production skill at all three proficiency levels.

Despite the fact that there have been studies focused on the effects of audiobooks on language learning at lower levels (e.g., Blum et al., 1995; Golonka et al., 2012; Serafini, 2004; Takayasu-Maass and Gorsuch, 2004; Whittingham et al., 2012) and on teaching-learning pronunciation in particular at higher levels (e.g., Takan, 2014; Couper, 2003 & Peterson, 2000), none of these studies compared the effectiveness of audiobooks on pronunciation skills in terms of different proficiency levels. Thus, it is not possible to compare the findings of this study with the results of previous research.

### **Pedagogical Implications**

The analysis of the data and the findings of the study suggest several pedagogical implications for the instructors and curriculum developers of the institutions. Since intelligibility is the main concern in speaking (Hariri, 2012; Setter & Jenkins, 2005), many researchers have investigated various ways to boost pronunciation as one of the most important speaking components to ensure intelligibility. One of the major findings of the study is that listening to audiobooks may foster the pronunciation skills of the learners, and therefore their intelligibility. Moreover, the results of this study may be of importance as it provides a nuanced understanding of the effectiveness of audiobooks on pronunciation according to different proficiency levels of EFL students. The findings of the study revealed that

pre-intermediate level students were more receptive to pronunciation instruction at sound recognition level, while intermediate level students are more receptive to pronunciation instruction at sound production level. When we look at the comparison of students' performances through tests and their perceptions through questionnaires, it could be deduced that there is a correlation between their receptiveness level and success level. These tentative findings call out for additional research to investigate these relationships.

In addition to the impact of audiobooks on recognition and production skills of segmental features (single sounds), they may also assist the acquisition of suprasegmental features of pronunciation (e.g., stress and intonation) by providing learners with long target language exposure time. As a great majority of the participants stated that they want to have a native-like speaking ability, audiobook listening might constitute a good model of speaking for them. Yet, deciding on the right audiobook is not a simple process; it requires that various factors be considered instead. Since listening to an audiobook takes longer time than most of language learning oriented activities, they should be selected in accordance with the interests of the students. In this way it is more likely to prevent students' loss of motivation. Additionally, teachers should pay attention to the scope (e.g., topic, content, accent, etc.) and sound recording quality of the audiobooks that they select for their students.

An interesting implication that might emerge from the study is the decision process of the audiobooks. Since each graded reader has target words that are used frequently, students are exposed to these words repeatedly by listening the audio versions of the graders. So, teachers who want to ensure that their students are exposed to the words which are appropriate to their language level, should pay attention to the selection phase of the audiobooks. The appropriateness of the audiobooks to the language level of the students must be considered above anything else.

Instructors may also find that audiobooks may have additional pedagogical uses that build on positive student attitudes towards audiobooks. Audiobooks may be used to expand students' language practice into other skill others. For example, students might be encouraged to share their knowledge about the assigned audiobooks in five-minute individual presentations or group discussions. In this way, students might have the opportunity to compare one another's point of view, use their presentation skills in the target language and cooperate with one another. As presentation skills are taught and tested in most institutions, teachers can search for other alternative ways to integrate audiobooks into speaking classes. Thus, by transferring the knowledge of the language they achieved from audiobooks, students might improve presentations and group skills.

Another implication of this study may relate to the audiobook publishers. As the findings of the study revealed that students found audiobook listening enjoyable and appealing, publishers may consider the creating of more interactive audiobook formats. These might include adding question-answer sessions between chapters to boost understanding and critical thinking of the students, including activities which ask students to present alternative endings to stories, or other strategies that engage students with the audiobook.

Yet another implication of the study might be providing students with access to listening laboratories in schools, where they can decide on the audiobooks to be listened in accordance with their personal interests and pace. In order to make it possible for the students to be able to access to audiobooks in their computers, CD players, mp3 players, smart phones and similar devices, teachers or school administrators should also provide different audiobook formats. It may even be possible to create an online platform, as in the case of this study, to make it possible for students to access and listen wherever they have internet and for teachers to track the participation of the students easily.

To sum up, the findings of the present study suggest that educators may wish to integrate audiobooks into the classrooms as an extensive listening activity. This study reinforces many benefits stated in the literature regarding audiobooks and reading comprehension skills, vocabulary acquisition and speaking skills. Moreover, for book publishers this study suggests that they should consider developing more attractive and interactive audiobooks with clear pedagogical purposes.

### **Limitations**

Although the study provides convincing evidence that audiobook listening has positive effects on pronunciation skills both at recognition and production level, there are a number of limitations to it suggesting cautious interpretation of the findings. First of all, the duration of the audiobook listening session was limited to three days. While the study found a significant increase in the performances after listening to audiobooks, three days' time is not enough for a language skill to develop or to be observed implicitly. The reason why students were asked to listen to the assigned audiobooks in three days' time was to prevent the effects of other possible factors on students' pronunciation skills such as in-class instruction.

Moreover, the scope of the study was limited to segmental features pronunciation. Since suprasegmentals have been studied extensively, they were not examined in this study. Suprasegmental features play a significant role in pronunciation; however, the results of this study cannot speak to any effects audiobooks may have on this important aspect of pronunciation.

Additionally, the physical atmosphere that the participants took the tests of the study could be counted as one of the limitations. The data collection tools of the study were organized with the aim of administering each of the tests on an online platform by considering the computer laboratory of the institution. Whereas, the laboratory was closed just before the administration of the tests, self-access center's

limited amount of computers were utilized for the study. If the study were conducted in the laboratory with twenty five computers, the administration time of the tests would be reduced and the number of the participants could have been higher.

Another limitation was that the lack of a long term retention. In the selection process of the participants, the researcher visited every classroom in the institution, distributed the consent forms and gave detailed explanation of the study. The very first questions that students posed were about the duration of the study. Although it was explained that the study would last no longer than one week, only 65 participants volunteered. The tracking of the participants would be more difficult if long term retention would have been administered as the researcher and the participants were in different cities.

The other important limitation of the study could be the lack of a control group. In this study, there is a single randomly selected group under observation with a careful measurement being done before applying the experimental treatment and then measuring after. The students voluntarily participated in the study from 45 different classes which are taught by different teachers. The institution where the study was conducted runs a skill – based system and every class has five different teachers to teach them different skills. Thus, it would be impossible to have similar conditions for the control and experimental groups as different teachers might have different effects on students during the treatment.

Yet, the way that audiobooks are used out of class may also be important as a limitation. In this study audiobook usage was tracked and students were held responsible for listening to the recordings. More casual, autonomous use of audiobooks might not show the same results. This may be an important consideration for the effective use of audiobooks.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

In the light of the findings and limitations, this study suggests the need for further research. To begin with, it could be replicated at different institutions with a larger number of participants. Students from higher or lower levels could also be included with the aim of having more insight about the effectiveness of audiobooks on pronunciation in terms of different levels and institutions. Additionally, a future study could also concern exploring the effects of audiobooks by expanding the time of administration and number of the audiobooks.

This research study explored the effects of audiobook listening on pronunciation skills at recognition and production levels by solely focusing on segmental features. For future research, students' capabilities of both recognizing and producing could be investigated by comparing segmentals and suprasegmentals to see how audiobooks might affect both important elements of pronunciation.

In terms of perceptions about utilizing from audiobooks in pronunciation learning and teaching, studies also concerning teachers' perceptions could be conducted. Moreover, some qualitative research methods could be employed (e.g., open-ended questionnaire items, interviews) in order to gain insight of what teachers and students think about.

### **Conclusion**

The primary aim of this study was to explore the effectiveness of audiobooks on university level EFL students' pronunciation skills. The result of this study reported that students from all levels who listened to audiobooks did significantly better on both recognition and production tests than they did before they listened to them. That is to say that it was revealed that audiobooks have a positive effect on the ability of students to differentiate and produce the target segmental features.

The effectiveness of audiobook listening on pronunciation skills according to different proficiency levels was also explored by the study. The findings of the study revealed that though all the three proficiency level students who listened to audiobooks made significant improvements in terms of recognition and production skills, the effect of audiobooks was observed to be higher on pre-intermediate level students.

Students' perceptions about the effects of audiobooks on their pronunciation were also investigated in the study. The findings revealed that a great number of students from each level agreed that they found audiobook listening beneficial for their pronunciation and appealing as well. Teachers and curriculum designers at Uludağ University School of Foreign Languages in particular and foreign language teachers in general could benefit from these findings which may give them new insights into the implementation and integration of audiobooks in speaking and listening courses.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Embedded Link of one of the Audiobooks

- Şimdi *King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table* adlı kitabı sesli dinlemeye ve derseniz aşağıda yer alan adrese tıklayarak okumaya başlayacaksınız.
- Kitabı dinlerken okumak istiyorsanız lütfen [burayı](#) tıklayın. *Students were able to click on the link and read the graded reader as well.*



- Kitabı dinlemeyi tamamladınız mı?

⚠ Bu soru yanıtlanmak zorunda.

Evet

Hayır

## Appendix B: BBC International Phonetic Alphabet Chart

Adobe Flash Player 10

BRITISH COUNCIL | PHONEMIC CHART | TeachingEnglish

**vowels**

i:	ɪ	ʊ	u:	<b>diphthongs</b>	ɪə	eə
e	ə	ɜ:	ɔ:	əʊ	aʊ	
æ	ʌ	a:	ɒ	eɪ	aɪ	ɔɪ

**consonants**

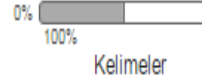
p	f	t	θ	tʃ	s	ʃ	k
b	v	d	ð	dʒ	z	ʒ	g
h	m	n	ŋ	r	l	w	j

© British Council <http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk>

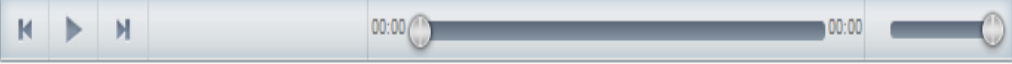


## Appendix C: Pronunciation Recognition Test

AŞAMA 2: Uygulama Öncesi Fonetik Sesleri Ayırt Etme Testi



\*  
Bu kelimeye aşağıdaki seslerden hangisini duyuyorsunuz?


 00:00 00:00

**⚠ Bu soru yanıtlanmak zorunda.**  
Aşağıdaki yanıtlardan bini seçin

ð

θ

\*  
Bu kelimeye aşağıdaki seslerden hangisini duyuyorsunuz?

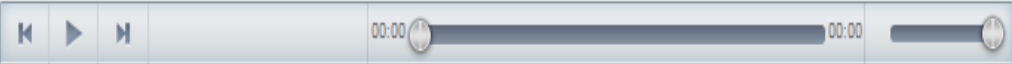
 00:00 00:00

**⚠ Bu soru yanıtlanmak zorunda.**  
Aşağıdaki yanıtlardan bini seçin

ð

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\*  
Bu kelimeye aşağıdaki seslerden hangisini duyuyorsunuz?

 00:00 00:00

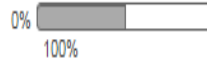
**⚠ Bu soru yanıtlanmak zorunda.**  
Aşağıdaki yanıtlardan bini seçin

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## Appendix D: Pronunciation Production Test

### AŞAMA 3: Uygulama Öncesi Telaffuz Testi



Telaffuz Kayıtları

\*

Lütfen aşağıda yer alan paragrafı sesli bir şekilde okuyunuz. Bu esnada kimliğiniz gizli kalacak şekilde sesiniz kayıt edilecektir.

*The woman got a message without a name three hours ago, when she got out of her bed. That was an invitation to the cinema at the city centre. She wanted to go a lot. But the thing she was thinking about was her deaf mother and twin sisters. Since she was responsible for protecting both her mother and twin sisters, she had hesitated to go for a long time. Although it was risky for a young lady to go out in the evenings in her town and the weather was so bad that day, she had a strong feeling to go out and to go there with the person. Thanks to God, she came back not crying but smiling and singing as if she were in heaven. It was crystal clear that everything went well.*

⚠ Bu soru yanıtlanmak zorunda.

Aşağıdaki yanıtlardan birini seçin

Seçmek için tıklayın...

## Appendix E: Pre- and Post-treatment Questionnaires

### THE QUESTIONNAIRE OF PREP CLASS STUDENTS TO GET THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF PRONUNCIATION AND AUDIOBOOKS

This questionnaire, which constitutes a part of a study aims to survey the effects of listening to audiobooks on pronunciation in English both on sound recognition and production levels of Uludağ University School of Foreign Languages prep class students. There is no one correct answer for the statements below, thus it is very important to understand the statements and choose the box which reflects your idea best. All the data obtained from your responses throughout the study will be kept completely confidential, and your identity will not be revealed in any report or presentation derived from this study.

The statements below are equal to the letters in the boxes. Mark the letters from A-E which are next to the statements. Mark the best statement which reflects your idea.

**A- Strongly disagree**

**B- Disagree**

**C- Undecided**

**D- Agree**

**E- Strongly agree**

No		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
1	I think pronunciation is important for communication.	A	B	C	D	E
2	I am concerned about my pronunciation.	A	B	C	D	E
3	I want to improve my pronunciation.	A	B	C	D	E
4	I would be more confident in English, if I had good pronunciation.	A	B	C	D	E
5	I believe that I can have a pronunciation like a native English speaker if I study enough.	A	B	C	D	E

6	I feel happy when I hear myself speaking English with good pronunciation.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
7	I feel happy if people say that I have good pronunciation.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
8	I feel bad when I have remarkable pronunciation mistakes.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
9	I feel glad when I hear others speak English with good pronunciation.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
10	I feel glad when the teacher corrects my pronunciation mistakes.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
11	I think I spend enough time each week to improve my pronunciation.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
12	I think it is very difficult to study pronunciation.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
13	I think it is possible to learn pronunciation individually.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
14	I think the only place I can learn pronunciation is school.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
15	I want to sound like a native speaker.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
16	I think pronunciation is something just teachable.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
17	I check the pronunciation of unknown words in a dictionary.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
18	Knowledge of the phonetic alphabet helps me become an independent learner.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
19	Audiobooks are useful for language learning.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
20	I can learn how to pronounce a word by listening to an audiobook.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
21	Audiobook is a language learning resource that I can make use of individually.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
22	Audiobooks are just the spoken forms of books, nothing more.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
23	I can improve my sound recognition level by listening to an audiobook.	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>

You can write your questions and points of view here.

.....

## Appendix F: Uygulama Öncesi ve Sonrası Anketi

### HAZIRLIK ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN TELAFFUZ VE SESLİ KİTAP ALGILARINI ÖLÇME ANKETİ

Bu anket İngilizce telaffuzu öğretmek için kullanılan yeni yöntemlerin etkisini ölçmek amacıyla yapılan araştırmanın bir parçasını oluşturmaktadır. Uludağ Üniversitesi Yabancı Diller Yüksekokulu hazırlık sınıfı öğrencilerine uygulanmaktadır. Anket, İngilizce ve özellikle telaffuz öğrenimi hakkında genel görüşlerinizi almayı amaçlamaktadır. İfadelerin tek bir doğru yanıtı yoktur, bu yüzden maddeleri anlamanız ve fikrinizi en iyi yansıtan kutuyu işaretlemeniz anketin geçerliliği ve güvenilirliği açısından oldukça önemlidir. Ankete verdiğiniz yanıtlardan elde edilecek veriler tamamen gizli tutulacak ve kimliğiniz herhangi bir rapor ya da sunumda kesinlikle açıklanmayacaktır.

Aşağıdaki her bir ifade için düşüncenizi en iyi şekilde yansıtan seçeneği işaretleyiniz.

**A- Kesinlikle katılmıyorum**

**B- Katılmıyorum**

**C- Kararsızım**

**D- Katılıyorum**

**E- Kesinlikle Katılıyorum**

No		Kesinlikle katılmıyorum	Katılmıyorum	Kararsızım	Katılıyorum	Kesinlikle Katılıyorum
1	Bence telaffuz iletişimde önemli bir yere sahiptir.	A	B	C	D	E
2	Telaffuzum benim için önemlidir.	A	B	C	D	E
3	Telaffuzumu geliştirmek istiyorum.	A	B	C	D	E
4	Telaffuzum iyi olursa, İngilizce konuşurken daha özgüvenli olurum.	A	B	C	D	E
5	Yeterince çalışırsam anadili İngilizce olan biri	A	B	C	D	E

	kadar iyi bir telaffuza sahip olacağıma inanıyorum.					
6	İyi bir telaffuz ile İngilizce konuştuğum zamanlarda mutlu olurum.	A	B	C	D	E
7	İnsanlar iyi bir telaffuzum olduğunu söylediğinde mutlu olurum.	A	B	C	D	E
8	Fark edilebilir telaffuz hataları yaptığımda kendimi kötü hissederim.	A	B	C	D	E
9	Başkalarının iyi bir İngilizce telaffuzu ile konuşması beni memnun eder.	A	B	C	D	E
10	Öğretmenimin yaptığım telaffuz hatalarını düzeltmesi beni memnun eder.	A	B	C	D	E
11	Telaffuzumu geliştirmek için her hafta yeterince zaman ayırdığımı düşünüyorum.	A	B	C	D	E
12	Telaffuz öğrenmenin çok zor olduğunu düşünüyorum.	A	B	C	D	E
13	Telaffuz öğrenmenin kendi kendine yapılabilecek bir şey olduğunu düşünüyorum.	A	B	C	D	E
14	Bence telaffuzu öğrenebileceğim tek fiziki ortam okuldur.	A	B	C	D	E
15	Anadili İngilizce olan biri gibi konuşmak isterim.	A	B	C	D	E
16	Bence telaffuz öğretilebilir bir şeydir.	A	B	C	D	E
17	Bilmediğim kelimelerin nasıl telaffuz edildiğine sözlükten bakarım.	A	B	C	D	E
18	Fonetik alfabeyi bilmek bana kendi kendime telaffuz öğrenmemde yardımcı olur.	A	B	C	D	E
19	Sesli kitap dil öğrenmede faydalı bir araçtır.	A	B	C	D	E
20	Belirli bir kelimenin nasıl telaffuz edildiğini sesli kitap dinleyerek öğrenebilirim.	A	B	C	D	E
21	Sesli kitap bireysel olarak faydalanabileceğim bir dil öğrenme aracıdır.	A	B	C	D	E
22	Sesli kitabın sadece bir kitabın seslendirilmiş hali olduğunu düşünüyorum.	A	B	C	D	E
23	Fonetik sesleri ayırt etme seviyemin sesli kitap dinleyerek geliştirebileceğini düşünüyorum.	A	B	C	D	E

Lütfen soru ve görüşlerinizi aşağıda ayrılmış olan boş alana yazınız.

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## Appendix G: Online Version of the Questionnaire

AŞAMA 1: Hazırlık Öğrencilerinin Telaffuz ve Sesli Kitap Algılarını Ölçmek için Uygulama Öncesi Anketi

0%  100%

Sesli Kitap ve Telaffuz Öğrenimi Üzerine Algılar

\*

Aşağıdaki her bir ifade için düşüncenizi en iyi şekilde yansıtan seçeneği işaretleyiniz

1= Kesinlikle katılmıyorum.

2= Katılmıyorum.

3= Kararsızım.

4= Katılıyorum.

5= Kesinlikle katılıyorum.

	1	2	3	4	5
Bence telaffuz iletişimde önemli bir yere sahiptir.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Telaffuzum benim için önemlidir.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Telaffuzumu geliştirmek istiyorum.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Telaffuzum iyi olursa, İngilizce konuşurken daha özgüvenli olurum.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yeterince çalışırsam aradılı İngilizce olan biri kadar iyi bir telaffuza sahip olacağıma inanıyorum.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
İyi bir telaffuz ile İngilizce konuştuğum zamanlarda mutlu olurum.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Appendix H: Online Survey Platform (LimeSurvey)

### Zeynep Saka - Tez Araştırması

Yönetim -- Oturum açmış kullanıcı: admin



Anketler: Seçmek için tıklayın...



#### Anketler

« « Sayfa 1 / 1 » » 25												Görünüm 1 - 10 / 10	
Durum	Anket kodu	Anket	Oluşturulma tarihi	Sahibi	Erişim	Anonim yanıtlar	Tam	Yarım	Toplam	Kullanılabilir pin kodları	Yanıt oranı		
Herhang					Herhang								
	223638	AŞAMA 4: Sesli Kitap I - King Arthur and the	19.02.2015	admin (Düzenleyin)	Açık	Hayır	101	61	162				
	287928	AŞAMA 1: Hazırlık Öğrencilerinin Telaffuz ve S	19.02.2015	saka (Düzenleyin)	Açık	Hayır	78	8	86				
	372118	AŞAMA 5: Sesli Kitap II - Pirates of the Caribt	19.02.2015	saka (Düzenleyin)	Açık	Hayır	86	40	126				
	516411	AŞAMA 7: Hazırlık Öğrencilerinin Telaffuz ve S	19.02.2015	saka (Düzenleyin)	Açık	Hayır	72	16	88				
	739822	Çekiliş için İletişim Bilgileri	20.02.2015	saka (Düzenleyin)	Açık	Hayır	67	5	72				
	787888	AŞAMA 8: Uygulama Sonrası Fonetik Sesleri A	19.02.2015	saka (Düzenleyin)	Açık	Hayır	71	26	97				
	843388	AŞAMA 9: Uygulama Sonrası Telaffuz Testi	19.02.2015	saka (Düzenleyin)	Açık	Hayır	72	22	94				
	849858	AŞAMA 6: Sesli Kitap III - The Time Machine	19.02.2015	saka (Düzenleyin)	Açık	Hayır	80	43	123				
	862288	AŞAMA 3: Uygulama Öncesi Telaffuz Testi	19.02.2015	saka (Düzenleyin)	Açık	Hayır	78	14	92				
	994998	AŞAMA 2: Uygulama Öncesi Fonetik Sesleri A	19.02.2015	saka (Düzenleyin)	Açık	Hayır	78	20	98				



LimeSurvey

Sürüm 2.05+ Build 150211

