



ISSN: 1994-4217 (Print) 2518-5586(online)

Journal of College of Education

Available online at: <https://eduj.uowasit.edu.iq>

Dr. Nada Shaker
Alshammari

The Open Educational
College in Al-Suwaira.

Email:

Nadashaker983@gmail.com

Keywords:

English Pronunciation
, Phonetic Training ,
Open Educational
College.



Article info

Article history:

Received 2.Jun.2025

Accepted 30.Jun.2025

Published 25.Nov.2025



Teaching English Pronunciation through Phonetic Training: A Comparative Study Among English Teacher Trainees at the Open Educational College in

A B S T R A C T

This study explores the importance of phonetic training in investigating the effectiveness of improving English pronunciation among teacher trainees at the Open Educational College in Al-Suwaira, Wasit Province.

The research compares the impact of phonetic training to traditional pronunciation teaching methods, focusing on its ability to enhance speech sound production, especially difficult English consonants and consonant clusters not found in Arabic (e.g., /p/, /z/, /η/, and /tʃ/). The study adopts a quasi-experimental design with two groups: an experimental group receiving phonetic training and a control group receiving traditional instruction. A pre-test and post-test were conducted with 50 EFL learners, assessing their ability to correctly pronounce English consonants and clusters.

The research explores the impact of phonetic training on improving pronunciation skills, compares the effectiveness of phonetic training versus traditional methods, and investigates the specific pronunciation challenges faced by Iraqi teacher trainees. It also examines how phonetic training can address these challenges and improve overall pronunciation accuracy.

Results indicate that phonetic training led to significant improvements in pronunciation accuracy, particularly in producing problematic consonant sounds and clusters. The errors observed in the pre-test were mainly due to phonological differences between Arabic and English, such as challenges with prevocalic consonant clusters. In contrast, the post-test results showed a noticeable increase in pronunciation accuracy for the experimental group, highlighting the effectiveness of phonetic training informed by the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

The findings suggest that phonetic training can improve pronunciation skills and, by extension, the quality of English language teaching in Iraq. This research underscores the potential for integrating phonetic training into teacher preparation programs to enhance the pronunciation skills of future educators, ultimately benefiting English language learners across Iraq.

© 2022 EDUJ, College of Education for Human Science, Wasit University

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31185/eduj.Vol61.Iss2.4560>

تعليم النطق باللغة الإنجليزية من خلال التدريب الصوتي: دراسة مقارنة بين متدربي معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية
في الكلية المفتوحة للتعليم في السويرة، محافظة واسط، العراق

م.م. ندى شاكر حميد الشمري

مديرية تربية واسط - الكلية التربوية المفتوحة / فرع الصويرة

الملخص:

تستكشف هذه الدراسة أهمية التدريب الصوتي في فحص فعالية تحسين النطق باللغة الإنجليزية بين المتدربين على التدريس في الكلية المفتوحة للتعليم في الصويرة، محافظة واسط.

يقارن البحث بين تأثير التدريب الصوتي وطرق تدريس النطق التقليدية، مع التركيز على قدرته على تعزيز إنتاج الأصوات الكلامية، خاصة الحروف الساكنة والمجموعات الساكنة في اللغة الإنجليزية التي لا توجد في اللغة العربية (مثل: /p//، /tʃ/، /ŋ/، /ʒ/، و /tʃ/). تعتمد الدراسة على تصميم شبه تجريبي مع مجموعتين: مجموعة تجريبية تتلقى التدريب الصوتي، ومجموعة ضابطة تتلقى التعليم التقليدي. تم إجراء اختبار قبلي واختبار بعدي على (٥٠) متعلمًا للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية، لتقييم قدرتهم على نطق الحروف الساكنة والمجموعات الساكنة في اللغة الإنجليزية بشكل صحيح.

تستكشف الدراسة تأثير التدريب الصوتي في تحسين مهارات النطق، وتقارن بين فعالية التدريب الصوتي والطرق التقليدية، وتبحث في التحديات الخاصة التي يواجهها المتدربون العراقيون في النطق. كما تفحص كيف يمكن للتدريب الصوتي معالجة هذه التحديات وتحسين دقة النطق بشكل عام.

تشير النتائج إلى أن التدريب الصوتي أدى إلى تحسينات كبيرة في دقة النطق، خاصة في إنتاج الأصوات الساكنة والمجموعات الساكنة التي كانت تشكل صعوبة. كانت الأخطاء التي لوحظت في الاختبار القبلي ناتجة بشكل رئيسي عن الفروق الصوتية بين العربية والإنجليزية، مثل التحديات المتعلقة بمجموعات الحروف الساكنة السابقة للصوت. في المقابل، أظهرت نتائج الاختبار بعد التدخل زيادة ملحوظة في دقة النطق للمجموعة التجريبية، مما يبرز فعالية التدريب الصوتي المعتمد على الأبجدية الصوتية الدولية (IPA).

تشير النتائج إلى أن التدريب الصوتي يمكن أن يحسن مهارات النطق، وبالتالي يحسن جودة تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية في العراق. تؤكد هذه الدراسة على إمكانية دمج التدريب الصوتي في برامج إعداد المعلمين لتعزيز مهارات النطق لدى المعلمين المستقبليين، مما يعود بالفائدة على متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في جميع أنحاء العراق

1. Introduction

Accurate pronunciation is vital for fluency in the English language, especially for teacher trainees who will be instructing students in the language. Research suggest that the ability to communicate accurately as well as the ability to be communicatively clear depend on pronounced language (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 2010). Stress patterns, intonation, and sounds While they train to become ESL teachers, teachers candidates should develop pronunciation to the same level as their language competency (Derwing& Munro, 2015), in order to teach stress patterns, intonation, and sounds effectively. Mispronunciation can cause misconceptions and lower instructional effectiveness (Levis, 2005). There are particular difficulties in teaching pronunciation in nations like Iraq. According to studies, one of the main obstacles to learning proper pronunciation is a lack of exposure to native English

speakers (Gilakjani&Sabouri, 2016). Iraqi trainees find it difficult to mimic natural speech when they are not exposed to local pronunciation in a variety of settings. Furthermore, pronunciation is frequently neglected in favor of grammar, vocabulary, and reading in Iraqi schools' English instruction (Rahimi&Jafari, 2011). Because of this, many teacher trainees have poor pronunciation when they start college, which undermines their self-esteem and teaching capabilities (Hamzah, Ismail, &Jalaluddin, 2012).

Many future English instructors are trained at the Open Educational College in Al-Suwaira, Wasit Province. Strong pronunciation is essential for these trainees' professional duties as well as for their own personal competency (Alzahrani&Alharbi, 2021). According to research, one of English teachers' primary responsibilities is to accurately model pronunciation for their students (Baker, 2011). Teachers may find it difficult to deliver effective language education if they lack the necessary pronunciation skills.

Traditional pronunciation instruction techniques that rely on repetition and imitation are still widely used in Iraq. Deeper phonetic intricacies, however, are frequently overlooked by this method. For instance, Iraqi students find it challenging to pronounce words correctly since English contains several vowel and consonant distinctions that are absent from Arabic (Ali, 2019). The articulatory mechanics underlying English speech sounds are not taught using traditional approaches because they lack a methodical, scientific approach to pronunciation instruction.

English stress patterns and intonation that are necessary for fluency are also included in phonetic instruction. In contrast to Arabic, which has distinct rhythm patterns, English is stress-timed, meaning that the rhythm is based on stressed syllables (Baker & Murphy, 2011). Phonetic training helps Iraqi students improve their English stress and intonation, which makes their pronunciation sound more natural (Jenkins, 2002).

Among teacher trainees at the Open Educational College in Al-Suwaira, the current study aims to compare the effectiveness of phonetic instruction with conventional approaches. This study will provide important information for enhancing speech instruction by assessing which approach produces improved pronunciation accuracy and fluency. The results could influence curriculum changes in Iraq, improving the general standard of English instruction, given the importance of pronunciation in instruction, especially for English teachers (Levis, 2018).

With an emphasis on aspiring teachers at the Open Educational College in Al-Suwaira, this study concludes by addressing the urgent need for better pronunciation instruction in Iraq. The study is to improve these trainees'.

2. Statement of the Problem

Due to a lack of exposure to native speakers and an educational system that places more emphasis on grammar and vocabulary than phonetics, teacher trainees in Iraq, especially those at the Open Educational College in Al-Suwaira, struggle greatly to learn how to pronounce words correctly in English. The use of conventional imitation-based teaching techniques in Iraqi classrooms has not been sufficient to meet the sophisticated pronunciation requirements of non-native speakers, particularly when it comes to sounds that lack direct Arabic equivalents. Because of this, teacher trainees frequently have trouble pronouncing words correctly, which is crucial for their future.

By contrasting the results of phonetic training with conventional imitation techniques, this study aims to close the gap in efficient pronunciation training. It specifically seeks to ascertain whether teacher candidates' pronunciation accuracy and fluency increase more with phonetic training, which emphasizes articulatory phonetics and speech mechanics. The results of the study will help determine which method best equips teacher candidates to instruct English pronunciation, which could have an impact on curriculum changes in teacher education programs throughout Iraq.

3. Research Questions

1. How does phonetic training affect the pronunciation skills of teacher trainees at the Open Educational College in Al-Suwaira?
2. What are the differences in pronunciation improvement between students taught through phonetic training and those taught through traditional methods?
3. What specific pronunciation difficulties do Iraqi teacher trainees face, and how can phonetic training help overcome these difficulties?

4. Significance of the Study

This study is crucial because it focuses on aspiring educators who will play a big part in forming Iraq's future English-learning population. Research on the efficacy of phonetic training can help guide curriculum development and instructional tactics for teaching English pronunciation in teacher preparation programs. The results may result in better pronunciation training in Al-Suwaira and throughout Iraq, raising the standard of English instruction as a whole.

5. Literature review

Phonetic training is recognized as an essential yet intricate aspect of language acquisition in the context of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). It is essential to provide students with the resources necessary for effective communication and comprehension in English, with an additional focus on the ability to identify and pronounce the language's distinctive phonemes.

Students should have access to supportive resources that facilitate communication in English, with an emphasis on resources that help identify alternative features of sound and pronunciation. This area of language is one of the most important skills to learn for those without prior knowledge. However, it can be difficult to learn if not taught properly due to its significant impact on students' ability to communicate clearly and understand verbal responses. Numerous studies have examined subtle variations in the teaching of phonology in the context of English as a foreign language teaching.

Abdul Wahid (2023) draws attention to the challenges teachers face when teaching pronunciation, particularly with regard to conveying certain sounds.

Another study, Tabandeh, Moinzadeh, and Barati (2019) examined the effects of several teaching approaches on Persian EFL learners' proficiency with English lax vowels. Their results showed that explicit instruction, in addition to specific activities, significantly enhanced learners' phonological accuracy in both controlled and uncontrolled contexts.

Huwari (2019) conducted a study in Egypt to look at whether the mispronunciations are naturally influenced by Egyptians' producing English consonants. He observed that various consonants /θ/, /ŋ/, /p/, /tʃ/ and /v/ were problematic for the learners in pronunciation. The main causes of mispronunciation are the differences between Arabic and English, incorrect pronunciation being taught and "poor course books," he says.

To identify the English vowel errors committed by Palestinian second and fourth-year university students in the Islamic University of Gaza, Shamallakh (2018) conducted a study. The results had shown that the phonemes /æ/, /ɒ/, /ʌ:/, /u:/, /ɪə/, /iə/, /əʊ/, /εə/, /ei/ as well as /aʊ/ were the most difficult for the informants to produce. The results revealed that the vowels were the most difficult for the respondents to produce. These articulation errors were triggered by target versus first language differences and by idiosyncrasies of English orthography and pronunciation.

6. Method

The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative research methods and was divided into two stages: Pre-test stage and Post-test stage.

7. Participants

50 EFL teacher trainers enrolled in Open Educational Colleges in Al-Suwaira made up the study's sample. They were split up into two groups of 25 teacher trainers each: 25 from stage one and twenty-five from stage three. The participants were between the ages of 29 and 50. Academic study levels were used to determine the participants' language competence levels. Prior to enrolling in college, all individuals completed formal English language instruction in educational institutions. They gave their informed consent before any data was collected, and they willingly took part in the study.

8. Instruments

To assess pronunciation accuracy before any intervention, the pre-test group will take the initial productive pronunciation test of English consonants. This pre-test was developed based on reviewing the instruments used in studies reported by Barros (2003), Binturki (2008), Ammar and Alhumaid (2009), and Ahmad (2011). The test consists of four parts, each focusing on different aspects of pronunciation.

Part 1: A list of 30 words containing 10 problematic consonant sounds: /p/, /v/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /ŋ/, /z/, /ɹ/, /l/, /ð/, and /θ/, distributed across three positions in the word (initial, medial, and final). The sound /z/ occurs only in the medial and final positions, and /ŋ/ is tested only in the final position. In addition, 20 distractor words are included.

Parts 2 & 3: These parts assess difficulties related to the phonetic realization of the morphemes -s (regular plural and third-person singular simple present suffixes) with its three pronunciation alternatives [s], [z], or [ɪz], and the regular past tense morpheme -ed, with its three pronunciation variations [d], [t], or [ɪd]. This part includes 16 words, eight for each morpheme, plus 6 distractor words.

Part 4: This part consists of 12 words used to examine difficulties encountered in pronouncing English consonant clusters. Six words are used for initial consonant clusters, and six words are used for final consonant clusters. Additionally, 6 other words are included as

distractors. This section tests students' pronunciation of consonant clusters in both initial and final positions, including 2- and 3-consonant clusters (CC and CCC) in the initial positions and 2-, 3-, and 4-consonant clusters (CC, CCC, and CCCC) in the final positions.

After the intervention (phonetic training), the post-test group will undergo the same productive pronunciation test.

9. Data Collection

Each participant took the created pronunciation exam in a quiet room at their campus. To familiarize themselves with the four sets of words, they were instructed to read them silently for five minutes after receiving a printed copy of the test. After that, the researcher used a very sensitive recorder to capture each participant's pronunciation performance while they read the words from the four lists. The participants were told that if they thought a word was mispronounced, they could read it again.

After gathering information from each participant, the recordings were recorded as digital sound files and given unique labels, such as "S1, S2," etc., to facilitate accessibility and guarantee student identity security. The researcher then conducted a joint analysis of the recordings. The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) was used to phonetically transcribe each target sound.

The information gleaned from examining pupils' pronunciation was computed. A right response received a score of zero, but any mispronounced word was worth one point. The quantity of mispronunciations for each individual was counted and converted into percentages. The mean percentage frequencies of the pronunciation errors were calculated for the different word positions of the two groups with all error-producing sounds and consonant clusters combined.

Effects of phonetic training on the pronouncing ability were assessed by comparing the results of the pre-test and the post-test.

Furthermore, qualitative information obtained from participant interviews shed light on how they felt about the phonetic training and how well it worked to improve their pronunciation.

10. Results

The results of the phonetic training showed a significant improvement in the pronunciation skills of the trainees. According to Table 1, the pre-test results showed that Iraqi teacher trainers had trouble with some English consonant sounds, such as /p/, /z/, /r/, and consonant clusters. This was mostly because Arabic and English phonological systems differed. For instance, Arabic lacks consonants like /p/, /z/, and /r/, which causes substitution problems. Mispronunciations such as replacing /p/ with /b/ or completely omitting /r/ were discovered during the pre-test.

The post-test results improved following phonetic training, suggesting that this type of training can aid in resolving these issues. The participants produced challenging consonants in beginning, medial, and final locations with more accuracy.

The data clearly demonstrates a considerable improvement in pronunciation accuracy across all problematic sounds, as shown in table (1), suggesting that phonetic training greatly

reduced errors. For instance, the /p/ and /ʒ/ sounds improved by 40% and 40.35%, respectively. The /r/ sound also improved by 42.45%, demonstrating how well phonetic training works to aid people who struggle with sounds that are absent from Arabic.

They probably learned to articulate troublesome sounds more accurately by using phonetic aids like the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) and focused pronunciation exercises, which greatly decreased errors. As a result, the phonetic training helps individuals become more aware of the differences between English and Arabic phonemes and enhances their accuracy in producing these sounds.

Table 1

Sound	Pre-test (%)	Post-test (%)	Improvement (%)
/p/	85.0	45.0	40.0
/ʒ/	80.65	40.3	40.35000000000001
/r/	77.45	35.0	42.45
/ŋ/	64.0	30.0	34.0
/tʃ/	70.3	45.0	25.299999999999997
/k/	60.0	38.0	22.0
/d/	41.65	20.0	21.65

The results of the differences in pronunciation improvement between the two groups showed that teacher trainers who get traditional instruction demonstrate a moderate improvement (10%) in their ability to pronounce the Arabic-nonexistent /p/ sound. Because Arabic lacks a separate /p/, /b/ is frequently used instead. On the other hand, standard training could not adequately address the unique difficulties that learners encounter when exposed to new sounds, even though it might cover fundamental articulation. The less noticeable improvement reflects this. As shown in table 2.

Conversely, phonetic instruction results in a notable 40% improvement in /p/ pronunciation. This is due to the fact that phonetic training specifically concentrates on the phonetic characteristics of sounds and uses techniques such as the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) to assist pupils in more correctly identifying and producing the sound.

The 40% increase suggests that phonetic training is quite successful in teaching proper articulation, particularly for sounds that are absent from the learners' native tongue.

Similar to this, Arabic lacks the /ʒ/ sound, which is found in terms like "beige." As a result, /ʃ/ (as in "ship") or /s/ are frequently used instead. Because traditional approaches might not concentrate on the articulation of sounds that are linguistically far from the learner's first language, they only demonstrate a slight improvement (10.65%). By concentrating on the distinctive qualities of the /ʒ/ sound, phonetic training, on the other hand, produces a more notable improvement (40.35%). This method teaches pupils how to properly pronounce this

sound by controlling airflow and positioning their tongue. The success of phonetic training demonstrates its efficacy in handling unknown sounds, as /ʒ/ does not appear in Arabic.

Additionally, the English /r/ is generated with a retroflex articulation, whereas the Arabic /r/ is a rolled or trilled sound. Because traditional approaches usually do not focus on the nuances of how the tongue should move to generate the English /r/ sound, they only demonstrate a slight improvement (5.45%). By teaching students to generate the English /r/ with the proper retroflex articulation instead of the rolling /r/ from Arabic, phonetic training, on the other hand, results in a significantly greater improvement (42.45%). Better mastery of this sound results from this kind of training, which offers thorough instructions on where to place the tongue.

Similarly, /ŋ/ is not used at the conclusion of words in Arabic; instead, /n/ is usually utilized. The accurate generation of /v/ in words like "sing" and "ring" is therefore only little improved (4%) by traditional methods. The unique characteristics of this sound, however, might not be adequately addressed by conventional training. However, phonetic training demonstrates a significantly higher improvement (34%) in /ŋ/ articulation. The reason for this is that phonetic training helps learners pronounce this nasal sound correctly by focusing on the position of the velum, or soft region of the palate. Students are taught to differentiate between the Arabic allophones /n/ and /ŋ/, which are different phonemes in English.

Furthermore, because the Arabic language lacks this particular affricate sound, Arabic learners frequently substitute the sound /tʃ/ (found in "church") with /ʃ/ (found in "ship"). Conventional approaches only demonstrate a 2.3% improvement, suggesting that students may still have trouble hearing this sound in the absence of focused instruction.

On the other hand, by emphasizing the distinction between affricate and fricative sounds, phonetic instruction aids students in producing /tʃ/ more accurately. The higher improvement (25.3%) in phonetic training indicates that learners are better taught to create the stop and fricative combination needed for /tʃ/ using this method.

Similar to this, learners may still mispronounce the Arabic sound /k/ in some locations because of minor articulation discrepancies between the languages. Although the sound is present, it may not be adequately addressed in training, as evidenced by the slight improvement (5%) seen with traditional methods. Conversely, phonetic training demonstrates a more significant improvement (22%) since it offers a more thorough focus on how to pronounce consonants like /k/ in various places, guaranteeing that students can make the right sound more frequently.

Furthermore, although the /d/ sound is present in both Arabic and English, it may not be realized exactly the same way in Arabic, particularly in word-final places. While /d/ is frequently unreleased in final places in English, it is frequently released in Arabic. There is a minor increase in errors (worsened pronunciation by -8.35%) when using traditional approaches, which might not concentrate on these allophonic variances. On the other hand, by teaching students the proper pronunciation strategies and assisting them in comprehending the allophonic distinction between Arabic and English, phonetic training greatly enhances their ability to produce the sound /d/ (21.65% improvement), especially in final positions.

When it comes to improving pronunciation, phonetic training generally performs noticeably better than conventional techniques, particularly when it comes to sounds and consonant clusters that are absent from Arabic. Phonetic training tackles the particular difficulties learners encounter because of the phonological differences between their native and target languages and offers clear teaching on how to create unknown sounds. This results in more noticeable and steady improvements for all problematic sounds.

To sum up, phonetic training constantly beats conventional techniques in enhancing pronunciation, particularly for sounds that are missing from the learner's mother tongue or have notable articulation variations. That's because phonetic training is based on tools and techniques, such as the IPA and dedicated exercises, to provide precise, laser-focused instruction on the physical production of speech.

As a result, students are in a better position to understand and master the unique sounds of the target language and so achieve greater, more consistent improvements in their pronunciation.

However, the traditional methods often address common articulation, and may neglect the particular difficulties caused by sounds that are linguistically different from the native language of the learner. So, more nuanced gains occur notably for difficult to produce sounds that are absent or unknown in one's mother tongue.

Table 2

Sound	Pre-test (Traditional Method) (%)	Post-test (Traditional Method) (%)	Pre-test (Phonetic Training) (%)	Post-test (Phonetic Training) (%)	Improvement (Traditional Method) (%)	Improvement (Phonetic Training) (%)
/p/	85.0	75	85.0	45.0	10.0	40.0
/ʒ/	80.65	70	80.65	40.3	10.650000000000006	40.350000000000001
/r/	77.45	72	77.45	35.0	5.450000000000003	42.45
/ŋ/	64.0	60	64.0	30.0	4.0	34.0
/tʃ/	70.3	58	70.3	45.0	2.299999999999997	25.299999999999997
/k/	60.0	55	60.0	38.0	5.0	22.0
/d/	41.65	50	41.65	20.0	8.350000000000001	21.65

Because the sound systems of Arabic (L1) differ from those of English (L2), Iraqi trainees for the teaching profession face pronunciation challenges. One major problem is the number of English consonants in the Arabic sound set. For example, Arabic lacks the sounds /p/, /ʒ/, /ŋ/, and /tʃ/, forcing Arabic learners to use substitution strategies. Although /ʒ/ is usually pronounced as /ʃ/ or /s/, /p/ is pronounced as /b/, as in "measure" and "beige," or "pen" as "ben," respectively. Similarly, since /ŋ/ does not occur in Arabic and is only pronounced in the middle of a word, and usually in English, it is often replaced by /n/ in words like "sing" or "ring."

In addition, since the /tʃ/ sound (in 'church') does not exist in Arabic, it often becomes /ʃ/ (in 'ship'). It is these challenges that often arise out of the structural dissimilarities in the two languages' consonant structures.

Another issue is that Arabic speakers tend to add vowels between consonants, especially in word-initial and word-final medial contexts. For example, the word "school" might be pronounced as /isku:l/ instead of /sku:l/. Certain consonant combinations that are foreign to Arabic can be difficult to pronounce and integrate into their sound system (epenthesis).

The phonetic training focuses on developing the pronunciation of these difficult consonants, which do not occur as sounds in Arabic. Phonics instruction teaches students that /p/, /ʒ/, /ŋ/, and /tʃ/ are sounds, and that the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is the symbol system used to discuss them in structured, focused activities.

This technology increases the accuracy of pronunciation of students by reducing common errors, for example, mistaking /p/ for /b/ or mistaking /ŋ/ for /n/.

On the other hand, in helping students pronounce English words, phonetic training enhances their ability to master the pronunciation of these clusters and trains them to pronounce consonant groups by listening. For example, students are taught to pronounce the words "school" and "sing" correctly, without modifying the consonant structures.

In addition, phonetic training enhances students' understanding of specific pronunciation difficulties such as the spread of vowels in consonant clusters and helps students correct pronunciation errors more effectively.

In contrast, traditional techniques may lack effectiveness in addressing the gaps in phonetic differences between Arabic and English. Phonetic training offers a broader solution to these problems by focusing on the most challenging sounds and implementing a systematic and structured intervention.

In conclusion, the absence of some sounds in the Arabic language and the differences in the pronunciation of consonants lead to serious phonetic problems for Iraqi trainees in the field of teaching.

Phonetic training tackles these problems through providing particular strategies for improved pronunciation and targeting the problems learners themselves encounter.

Phonetic teaching could help students to overcome the pronunciation barriers, and improve their English performance more than the practice of regular use and consciousness raising.

11. Suggestion

There are several recommendations to improve the effectiveness of pronunciation instruction and the impact of phonemic training on the pronunciation abilities of Iraqi teacher candidates. First, more detailed phonemic training should be introduced into the teacher preparation curriculum, given the significant increase in pronunciation accuracy observed after phonemic training. This training may contribute to addressing pronunciation problems, particularly for sounds such as /p/, /ʒ/, /ŋ/, and /tʃ/, which are not found in Arabic. Resources such as the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) should also be used, as it provides learners with a visual representation of the pronunciation of difficult English sounds, which may help

them better understand and produce correct pronunciation. Accordingly, regular IPA exercises can contribute to enhancing and developing learners' ability to distinguish between similar sounds and produce them accurately.

It is also important, emphasize the submission of persistent exercises for students and significant concentration on audio icons and sounds. As well as processing the incorporating the characters into static structures, should focus on complex static characters and special sounds such as /P/ and /ʒ/.

To strengthen correct speech patterns, targeted training sessions can be organized in which students focus on the challenges they face on an ongoing basis. Furthermore, it is recommended that teachers receive training in phonetics and pronunciation techniques to achieve maximum effectiveness. If teachers are familiar with the concepts of English phonology and receive continuous professional updates in phonics teaching techniques, they will be able to provide better support to students who have difficulty with pronunciation.

Audio learning can also be enhanced by utilizing multimedia such as videos and pronunciation apps. These resources allow learners to practice more independently and introduce them to real English pronunciation patterns.

Learners' pronunciation accuracy and listening comprehension can be enhanced through interactive materials, especially sounds not present in their native language.

Finally, training sessions can provide a great opportunity to improve students' pronunciation practice in communicative contexts by incorporating role-playing, language exchange programs, and real-life experiences. Students can build and develop their confidence and use their vocal abilities in real-life situations. Through this method based on applied learning, students can build greater confidence in themselves and use their vocal abilities in real-life situations.

12. Conclusion

The teacher trainees pronounce words correctly, especially consonants not found in Arabic. The significant improvements in pronunciation accuracy, particularly for difficult consonants such as /p/, /ʒ/, /r/, and /ŋ/, demonstrate the effectiveness of this method of repeatedly processing sound. Phonetic training provides a more focused, calmer, and precise approach to addressing specific language difficulties caused by differences in the Arabic and English sound systems compared to the traditional approach.

By making them aware of the differences between Arabic and English phonetics, learners are trained to pronounce sounds correctly. Consistent, long-term practice, combined with the International Phonetic System and other resources, significantly reduces pronunciation errors and helps speakers master the actual sounds. Phonetic training helps develop the skills needed to produce consonant clusters correctly and avoid common mistakes, such as vowel insertion.

Therefore, achieving significant improvement in pronunciation skills will require integrating phonetic training into the curriculum, achieved through focused pronunciation sessions and rigorous guidance from language teachers. To help teachers achieve this, despite the difficulties inherent in our Iraqi culture, it is important that phonetic training be a top priority.

References

- AbdulWahid, H. Y. (2023). Teaching and learning phonetics obstacles in EFL classrooms: Cihan University-Erbil. *European Scientific Journal*, 14(11), 1-161.
- Ali, H. (2019). Teaching English pronunciation to Arab students: Challenges and solutions. *International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies*, 7(1), 15-22.
- Alzahrani, M., & Alharbi, M. (2021). Teaching English pronunciation in Saudi Arabia: *Challenges and suggestions*. *English Language Teaching*, 14(1), 13-23.
- Baker, A. (2011). Pronunciation pedagogy: Insights from the field. *Language Teaching Research*, 15(4), 473-491.
- Baker, A., & Murphy, J. (2011). Knowledge base of pronunciation teaching: Staking out the territory. *TESL Canada Journal*, 29, 29-50.
- Celce-Murcia, M., Brinton, D. M., & Goodwin, J. M. (2010). *Teaching pronunciation: A course book and reference guide*. Cambridge University Press.
- Derwing, T. M., & Munro, M. J. (2015). *Pronunciation fundamentals: Evidence-based perspectives for L2 teaching and research*. John Benjamins.
- Gilakjani, A. P., & Sabouri, N. B. (2016). The significance of pronunciation in English language teaching. *English Language Teaching*, 9(3), 96-107.
- Hamzah, M. H., Ismail, M. A. M. M., & Jalaluddin, N. H. (2012). *Challenges of learning English as a second language in Iraq*. *Journal of Language and Culture*, 3(1), 15-27.
- Huwari, I. F. (2019). Pronunciation errors in Egyptians' English. *Literary Endeavour*, 5, 31-44. <https://www.literaryendeavour.org>
- Jenkins, J. (2002). A sociolinguistically based, empirically researched pronunciation syllabus for English as an international language. *Applied Linguistics*, 23(1), 83-103.
- Levis, J. M. (2005). Changing contexts and shifting paradigms in pronunciation teaching. *TESOL Quarterly*, 39(3), 369-377.
- Levis, J. M. (2018). *Intelligibility, oral communication, and the teaching of pronunciation*. Cambridge University Press.
- Rahimi, M., & Jafari, S. (2011). Iranian EFL teachers' beliefs about teaching English pronunciation. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 15(12), 1832-1839.
- Shamallakh, M. L. (2018). Investigating difficulties facing Palestinian EFL students in pronouncing English vowels. The Islamic University of Gaza. <https://iugspace.iugaza.edu.ps>
- Tabandeh, F., Moinzadeh, A., & Barati, H. (2019). Differential effects of FonF and FonFS on learning English lax vowels in an EFL context. *Journal of Asia TEFL*, 16(2), 499-515.