

Phonetic Awareness and English Pronunciation Development: Perspectives of Graduate Pre-Service Teachers in Azad Jammu and Kashmir

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: The study looks into the learning of English pronunciation by pre-service teachers through the lens of phonetics. It also examines views on phonetics and English pronunciation and provides examples of both the positive and negative aspects of using phonetics to learn English pronunciation.

Methodology: This was qualitative research. It was conducted at the Mohi-ud-Din Islamic University, Nerian Sharif, Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan and involved 30 graduate pre-service teachers. The research was conducted from February to May 2026. The participants learned about the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) as well as English vowels and consonants. They also learned about other aspects of spoken English including stress, rhythm and intonation. They also learned about other aspects of spoken English. They also learned about other aspects of spoken English and did practice pronunciation. They also learned about other aspects of spoken English. They also learned about other aspects of spoken English.

Findings: The researchers identified four major findings: participants become aware of English sounds, first language pronunciation influences spontaneous speech, participants became aware of sound difference and pronunciation, and participants became aware of articulation. Participants learned to monitor their pronunciation.

Conclusion: The study demonstrated that using phonetics to learn English pronunciation is useful, but it does not ensure the learning of fluency in spoken English.

Keywords: Phonetic Awareness; English Pronunciation; Graduate Pre-Service Teachers; First-Language Influence; Reflexive Thematic Analysis.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Pronunciation plays a key role in the process of spoken-language communication because it affects listeners' ability to identify words and to interpret the speaker's intended meaning. Learners can have a good knowledge of grammar and a significant vocabulary, but still struggle to understand what others are saying when they miss out on some segmental or suprasegmental features. In the contemporary study of pronunciation, however, the distinction between accent and communicative success is made, and intelligibility and comprehensibility are better considered teaching objectives than the complete absence of foreign accent (Levis, 2020; Munro & Derwing, 2020).

There are a number of difficulties in pronunciation for second language learners of the English language. English has vowel and consonant contrasts that are not present in a learner's first language, and complex consonant clusters, variable word stress, reduced vowels and rhythm, intonation and connected speech processes. A learner's knowledge of the patterns of English that are not familiar may manifest as systematic substitutions, insertions, deletion, or a transfer of stress. The use of writing may also introduce additional difficulty, as in English, spelling doesn't always correspond to sound (Bassetti et al., 2020; Hayes-Harb & Barrios, 2021).

Phonetic awareness provides a systematic approach to the challenges. Phonetic awareness in this research was defined as learners' awareness and ability to produce phonetic aspects of speech, such as articulation, voicing, vowel quality, consonant formation, stress, rhythm, intonation and phonetic transcription. This awareness can make learners aware of differences, where errors are made, what errors mean in the dictionary and what they mean in their own speech. However, when it comes to spontaneous communication, the knowledge of these phonetic symbols or articulatory descriptions does not automatically turn into procedural control.

The overall impact of pronunciation instruction has been found to be positive, but the extent and type of improvement depends on the focus of pronunciation instruction, the length of time, the context of instruction, the pronunciation features to be targeted, and the pronunciation assessment task (Lee et al., 2015; Saito & Plonsky, 2019). Controlled exercises can show gains that are not as obvious in spontaneous speech. However, the effects of perception-based and production-based training are different, which implies that the teaching should be based on careful listening, guided articulation, repeated production, feedback and communication use (Lee et al., 2020; Zhang & Yuan, 2020).

Nevertheless, many studies on pronunciation have focused on the measurable results of performance, experimental interventions, or ratings of speech. While these approaches help explain what happens to learners when they are given phonetic instruction and what materials are effective, they do not fully account for what happens in learners' minds when they are given this type of instruction, what materials they find effective, why they find it difficult to apply what they learned to natural conversation, or how it affects their confidence in communication. Learner's accounts can shed light on the thought, word, feeling and context factors that contribute to the process of improvement or ongoing challenge.

This study filled this need, in which the graduate pre-service teachers' perspectives on the concepts of phonetic awareness and English pronunciation development were considered as the variables to be analyzed. It did not try to prove that phonetic instruction led to a measurable improvement. Rather it examined the processes through which the participants made sense of their experiences and their perceptions of the advantage/disadvantage of the use of phonetic knowledge in speech. The following research questions were used to guide the study.

1. How did the graduate pre-service teachers describe their learning experiences of learning English pronunciation from the perspective of phonetics?
2. What were the challenges and benefits graduate pre-service teachers faced in using phonetic knowledge in their spoken English?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Reading, Writing and Comprehending Strategies

Phonetics is the scientific study of the nature and representation of speech sounds. The study of articulatory phonetics is foundationally important to the teaching of pronunciation since it deals with the physical aspects of speech. In this regard, learners are made aware of the English consonants and vowels with regard to their places and manners of articulation. They become aware of movement of the tongue and lip, vocal fold, and the direction of airflow. This type of ‘knowing’ is helpful in bringing to the attention of learners the differences and similarities between English and their first language (L1), and can help them in English pronunciation (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010; Derwing & Munro, 2015).

While both phonetics and phonology are concerned with the sounds of speech, the former is concerned with the physical aspect of speech sounds, and the latter is concerned with the system of sound and the ways the sounds can be put together. Both forms of awareness are important in identifying speech sounds and various distinctions in different languages, and ultimately, making control over pronunciation in a new language (L2) more accurate (Flege, 1995; Best & Tyler, 2007). Furthermore, Deng et al. (2022) have shown that advancement in learners’ phonological awareness reduced reliance on orthography during speech production.

IPA focuses on sounds of spoken languages rather than the orthography of those languages. Using IPA helps students to look up word meanings, read dictionaries, determine the stress of words, and analyze word sounds to spellings (International Phonetic Association, 1999; Celce-Murcia, et al., 2010). The main drawback of IPA, however, is that in isolation it rarely leads to correct pronunciation. Listening to and repeating (articulating) the sounds leads to better pronunciation (Thomson & Derwing, 2015; Saito, 2012). Therefore, teaching pronunciation requires a focus on the production of the sounds rather than on their intellectual understanding.

2.2 Segmental and Suprasegmental Phonology

Teaching segmental phonology involves vowel and consonant sounds. Difficulty in producing sounds in a second language (L2) is often noticed in the forms of sound substitution, sound omission, or sound distortion based on the sound structures of the first language (L1) (Flege, 1995; Best & Tyler, 2007). For sounds to be produced correctly, speakers may need to address the differences in syllable structures of the language being learned (Major, 2001). Production of sounds may also be improved through use of minimal pair drills, modelling of articulation, use of visual aids, and/or feedback (Celce-Murcia, et al., 2010).

Suprasegmental features are components of spoken language such as word stress, sentence stress, intonation, and rhythm. These features allow speakers to highlight relevant information, and communicate various attitudes and intentions. Different stress patterns can affect the intelligibility of non-native speakers, even if they use sounds accurately (Derwing & Munro, 2015). Rhythm is the speed and duration of sounds in speech. Native speakers of some languages, such as Arabic and Korean, tend to speak with greater stress on sounds at the end of phrases, while English speakers place more emphasis on sounds at the beginning (Hakansson & Neden, 2007).

Teaching segmental features of speech focuses on the sounds of speech and may include the use of mnemonics to pronounce sounds accurately, practicing sounds, and monitoring progress (Sardegna, 2022).

2.3 The First-Language and Orthographic Influence

Orthography has an effect on L2 pronunciation and there are a number of studies which illustrate how learners use spellings to determine and produce sounds (Bassetti et al., 2020). When this occurs, it may limit learners’ ability to determine sounds using other methods. Teaching should allow learners to gain the ability to determine sounds independently, and use them in communication.

It's not always negative to have some influence of L1. Having a foreign accent doesn't always disrupt communication. In fact, trying to completely rid communication of L1 traces can alter learner's sense of identity and self, especially if they lose confidence in communicating in L2 (Levis, 2018; Munro & Derwing, 2020). Thus, the focus of pronunciation training should be towards the components that alters communicative effect and understanding as opposed to training towards the model of L2 pronunciation.

2.4 Pronunciation Training and the Viewpoint of Learners

There is ample research that supports the inclusion of pronunciation training in the ESL classroom (Lee et al., 2015; Saito & Plonsky, 2019). The extent of the positive impact is related to the methods and strategies used during the training. There are differences in controlled and intentional pronunciation tasks, and unstructured speech. Often times, training to correctly produce sounds in isolation does not facilitate improved communication in more informal settings (Saito, 2012). Additionally, Zhang and Yuan (2020), found that for L2 learners of English, training in pronunciation increased speakers' comprehensibility.

Learner agency is instrumental to the development of pronunciation. Derwing and Rossiter (2002) and Sardegna (2022) provide evidence of learners using a variety of strategies (e.g. imitation, self-recording, peer and teacher correction, use of dictionaries and Mobile Apps) to modify their pronunciation. Learners are active in their own pronunciation development, and are not passive receivers of correction.

Phonetic knowledge is one component of learners' pronunciation development. The integration of other elements such as grammar and lexis, and the control of communicative functions may contribute to learners' apprehension in transferring their knowledge of pronunciation to communicative speech. It may also explain why learners are sometimes reluctant to use their knowledge of phonetic symbols. Other factors like the learners' first language may also influence the confidence with which learners use their knowledge of pronunciation. To gain a deeper understanding of the above mentioned concepts, and others, the present study involves qualitative research.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Design Task and Research Problem

This study used a qualitative research design to understand graduate pre-service teachers' learning of phonetics and English pronunciation. With this research design, the focus is on the participant's perspective, and how they learn, the challenges they face and the ways in which they deal with these challenges. This design does not aim to assess or measure anything.

This study was undertaken at Mohi-ud-Din Islamic University Nerian Sharif Azad Jammu and Kashmir Pakistan from February to May 2026. Here, graduate teacher education programs were located where participants learn to use English as a medium of instruction and as an academic/ content/ subject matter language.

The participants of this study were provided course content covering different areas of phonetics and pronunciation including IPA, English vowels and consonants, voiced and voiceless sounds, places and manners of articulation, minimal pair distinction, syllable structure, phonemic transcription, stress, intonation, connected speech, rhythm, and cadence. Additionally, they learned about the structural components of speech and English pronunciation and conducted listening practices, and did pronunciation activities found in dictionaries and other instructional materials.

3.2 Participants and Recruitment

The 30 participants of this study were pursuing their graduate degree at Mohi-ud-Din Islamic University and taking Phonetics and Pronunciation classes to teach pronunciation. The researchers used purposive sampling to invite participants to the study to prepare them to teach phonetics and pronunciation.

Participants were graduate students of teacher education, 18 years and older, with phonetics and/or English pronunciation training.

For the purpose of the study, participants gave informed consent for the recording of individual and/or group interviews. Names of participants were not used to safeguard their anonymity. They were given identification codes, R1 to R30. Demographic information of the respondents is shown in Table 1 & 2.

Table 1: *Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 30)*

Participant Code	Age	Gender	Department	Degree Programme	Semester	Previous English Learning Experience
R1	21	Female	English	M.Phil	1st Semester	Formal English education and pronunciation training
R2	22	Female	Education	M.Phil	1st Semester	English language courses and speaking practice
R3	23	Male	English	M.Phil	2nd Semester	Phonetics and pronunciation coursework
R4	20	Female	Education	M.Phil	1st Semester	Academic English learning experience
R5	24	Female	English	M.Phil	3rd Semester	English communication and pronunciation practice
R6	21	Male	Education	M.Phil	2nd Semester	Formal English learning and phonetics instruction
R7	25	Female	English	M.Phil	3rd Semester	English speaking and pronunciation training
R8	22	Female	Education	M.Phil	1st Semester	English language learning experience
R9	19	Female	English	M.Phil	1st Semester	Academic English and pronunciation activities
R10	23	Male	Education	M.Phil	2nd Semester	English courses and phonetic practice
R11	24	Female	English	M.Phil	3rd Semester	English language learning and speaking practice
R12	21	Female	Education	M.Phil	2nd Semester	Phonetics, listening and pronunciation activities
R13	22	Male	English	M.Phil	1st Semester	English communication skills training
R14	20	Female	Education	M.Phil	2nd Semester	Formal English education
R15	25	Female	English	M.Phil	3rd Semester	Pronunciation and phonetics coursework
R16	23	Male	Education	M.Phil	2nd Semester	English language and speaking practice
R17	21	Female	English	M.Phil	1st Semester	English pronunciation learning experience
R18	24	Female	Education	M.Phil	3rd Semester	Academic English and phonetic training
R19	22	Male	English	M.Phil	2nd Semester	English language courses
R20	20	Female	Education	M.Phil	1st Semester	English speaking and communication practice
R21	23	Female	English	M.Phil	3rd Semester	Phonetics and pronunciation learning
R22	25	Male	Education	M.Phil	3rd Semester	Formal English education and pronunciation practice

R23	21	Female	English	M.Phil	2nd Semester	English language and communication skills
R24	22	Female	Education	M.Phil	1st Semester	Phonetics and speaking activities
R25	24	Male	English	M.Phil	3rd Semester	English learning and pronunciation training
R26	19	Female	Education	M.Phil	1st Semester	Academic English experience
R27	23	Female	English	M.Phil	2nd Semester	English pronunciation and phonetics practice
R28	20	Male	Education	M.Phil	2nd Semester	English communication learning
R29	24	Female	English	M.Phil	3rd Semester	Phonetics and pronunciation coursework
R30	21	Female	Education	M.Phil	1st Semester	English language learning experience

The sample size was considered appropriate based on the principle of information power (Malterud et al., 2016), which suggests that a smaller sample can provide sufficient depth when participants have relevant experiences, the research question is focused, and the quality of data is rich.

Table 2: *Participant Summary*

Characteristic	Category	Frequency
Gender	Female	18 (60%)
	Male	12 (40%)
Age	19–21 years	11
	22–23 years	11
	24–25 years	8
Department	English	15
	Education	15
Degree Level	M.Phil	30 (100%)
Semester	1st Semester	12
	2nd Semester	10
	3rd Semester	8

3.3 Data Collection

The main means of data collection was through individual, more or less, structured interviews. The interviews were conducted in English. Each interview was based on previously developed interview guide. The interview guide was developed based on the identified research questions and available literature on the acquisition of pronunciation and phonetic awareness. The interview guide was evaluated by the research supervisor to check its readiness to capture the required data.

Two pre-service teachers participating in the graduate program, who were not part of the studied population, volunteered to participate in a pilot study. The researchers incorporated the recommendations of participants to improve the clarity of the questions and the order of their sequence in the interview guide.

Interviews lasted between 30 to 45 minutes. The researchers participated in all interviews and were not part of the process through which the participants' academic performance was evaluated.

The researchers sought participants' oral informed consent prior to each interview to audio-record the conversation. The conversations were later transcribed verbatim. Researchers used English for the interviews. Urdu was used for clarification of a particular incident or occurrence. The researchers transliterated responses in Urdu to English. Field notes were written by the researchers to capture occurrences that were relevant to the research study.

3.4 Data Analysis

The interview data were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis as described by (Braun & Clarke, 2021). The researchers read transcripts and identified corresponding codes and themes. The researchers defined themes and developed an overall analysis report.

The researchers carried out the manual coding of the transcripts. The analysis was mostly qualitative, with an emphasis on understanding participants' experiences of learning English pronunciation. The researchers kept a reflexive journal to document the analysis and to report on the decisions he made and the assumptions he has made during the analysis. He discussed his analysis with his research supervisor to determine the adequacy of the interpretations he made, and not to gauge the level of agreement/disagreement among researchers.

The analysis showed the following:

1. Recognition of English sound patterns
 2. Use of phonetics and speech production
 3. First language pronunciation
 4. Use and understanding of English in communication
- 3.5 Trustworthiness and Ethics

The researchers interacted with the data over an extended period and used systematic and methodological techniques for analysis. He used a reflexive journal to capture the themes. Thorough documentation of the research process, including the methods used for recruitment, and an audit trail, were used to enhance the research process.

Participants were university staff who volunteered to participate in the study. The researchers explained the study and procedures to them and they signed an informed consent form to participate in the research. They had the right to withdraw from the research at any time and for any reason.

In order to preserve confidentiality, names of participants were replaced with codes (R1-R30). The researchers changed the names of the participants in all research documents and stored them on a secure, password protected device.

4. FINDINGS

The analysis of semi-structured interviews of 30 graduate pre-service teachers, identified four interrelated areas. The first was participants' increasing understanding of the phonology of English, and how speech sounds are made. The second was participants' inability to use their knowledge of phonetics to control their speech. Third, although participants incorporated English pronunciation in their spoken English, they still displayed reliance on their first language. Fourth, participants' perception of their ability to use spoken English was positive.

4.1 Greater Understanding of English Sounds

Before formal training in phonetics, participants mainly relied on imitation and repetition to learn English sounds. One participant explained that understanding English sounds and how to produce them took a significant shift, requiring the training in Articulatory Phonetics. Another explained that the training gave

her understanding of the position of lips and tongue as well as vocal fold vibration and air flow and helped her to perceive the quality of English vowels and stress.

Phonetics helped participants understand English sounds they had had difficulty pronouncing. For instance, one participant explained how the training helped her understand how to produce English sounds and gave her a means to distinguish between English sounds that are similar.

In general, participants agreed that understanding English sounds enabled them to learn English pronunciation independently. A couple of participants explained that a combination of studying IPA, listening to spoken English and finally speaking it out helped them learn pronunciation.

Participants agreed that memorizing phonetic symbols was of limited help, and understanding English pronunciation was of more help if used in the context of learning English.

4.2 Challenges with Integrating Phonetic Knowledge in Informal Communication

Participants acknowledged the role of phonetics in speech, and noted some barriers in utilizing this knowledge in different communicative situations. A general remark was that learners were able to pronounce sounds correctly in planned, teacher-centered activities, but were unable to do so in unstructured, open-ended interactions, and in fast speech.

Many participants emphasized that, in addition to sound, spontaneous speech involves attention to other components of speech communication such as lexical and structural elements of speech, the message, interaction with others, and other communicative functions. Simplifying, R3 stated that there is a limit to the level of control one can exercise in speech communication; excessive control can lead to awkward, unnatural speech.

It was generally agreed that to speak a new language, one has to use the sounds of the language. R14 further stated that a speaker can bring real, meaningful communication into focus by using phonetics.

In the final analysis, the research showed that in the absence of practice, the integration of previously learned sounds into various communication situations, the learner will not acquire the fluency of the sounds of the language.

4.3 Continued Effects of First Language Speech Patterns

Every participant documented the effects of their first language on the pronunciation of English. Participants documented numerous challenges related to English sound pronunciation, consonant sound combinations, vowel pronunciations, stress, and intonation.

The challenge of producing certain sounds of English was documented by R7. R16 stated that, despite the fact that he was aware of the English sound pronunciations, he spoke certain sounds of English using the pronunciations of his first language.

There were several participants that documented their challenge of understanding sound combinations. Some participants indicated that they came to understand some of the reasons for sound and pronunciation challenges with the aid of first language phonetics.

The participants stated that the goal of modifying their pronunciation was to remove obstacles that frustrated their communication, rather than removing their accents. R3 explained that lowering the pitch of his voice made certain sounds more audible, but that made his speech sound too unnatural.

4.4 More Comfort in Talking English

Many participants related having phonetic understanding to feeling more confident when speaking English. Saying that previously, they had a lot of uncertainty when speaking English. However, after doing the pronunciation practice, they felt a lot of that uncertainty was no longer there.

R20 said having phonetic knowledge of different sounds helped her a lot while doing group discussions and presentation. R28 said doing the pronunciation practice helped her in using English words which she was not aware of.

Awareness of pronunciation of English words sometimes made participants feel more nervous, according to R15. R21 added that a lot of self-monitoring made the participants feel discouraged and disinterested in speaking English.

Using the knowledge of pronunciation of English words, participants were able to do self-corrections and communicate in English with confidence. Participants discussed that doing pronunciation practice helped them to talk fluently in English.

5. DISCUSSION

This study explored graduate pre-service teachers' experiences of learning English pronunciation through phonetic instruction and examined the benefits and challenges they experienced when applying phonetic knowledge to spoken English. The discussion is organized according to the two research questions that guided the study.

Research Question 1: *How did the graduate pre-service teachers describe their learning experiences of learning English pronunciation from the perspective of phonetics?*

Research Question 2: *What were the challenges and benefits graduate pre-service teachers faced in using phonetic knowledge in their spoken English?*

5.1 Discussion of Research Question 1: Learning Experiences of English Pronunciation from the Perspective of Phonetics

The first research question asked pre-service teachers about learning English pronunciation with phonetics. Participants attributed phonetics for moving them beyond imitating English sounds to recognizing speech sounds and the rules that govern them.

When learning phonetics, participants described such concepts as the mechanics of articulation of speech sounds, vowel quality and quantity, and stress. Participants mentioned that prior to learning phonetics, they depended on imitation of teacher's models for pronunciation. Phonetics served the same function, however, it deepened participants' understanding of various speech sounds, provided insights on difficulties in speech production, and suggested ways to correct such shortcomings.

Results of the study are in line with other researchers' work that described the role of explicit pronunciation instruction for learning pronunciation and developing learners' understanding of the sounds of English (Saito, 2012; Celce-Murcia et al., 2010). Developing phonetic awareness of learners allows them to distinguish between their own pronunciation and that of the model, and to start thinking about the differences (Schmidt, 1990; Flege, 1995).

Learning IPA and phonetic transcription was also a means of enabling independent learning. The use of dictionaries, pronunciation models, and other resources was also noted. Participants used these to build a monitoring system to help with pronunciation.

The results highlight the role of learner autonomy and self-monitoring in learning pronunciation. In particular, learners report the need to practice using their phonetic knowledge to engage in pronunciation activities. Some participants mentioned that knowledge of phonetics was rather theoretical and that this theory was of little help without a corresponding practice.

Although participants mentioned a greater reliance on self-learning of phonetics, and a need to integrate phonetics with other activities in pronunciation learning, the overall view was that of a positive value of phonetics in their pronunciation learning.

5.2 Discussion of Research Question 2: Challenges and Benefits of Using Phonetic Knowledge in Spoken English

The second research question was on the advantages and disadvantages that participants identified with using phonetic knowledge to spell English sounds.

The participants stated that the awareness of English sounds helped them differentiate sounds, and as a result, they became conscious of sound combinations and English sound pronunciations. The participants noted that the use of IPA, phonetic alphabet, and pronunciation dictionaries and models, aids in the independent practice of pronunciation. As a result, participants' English pronunciation improved, and they developed confidence in identifying sound combinations.

While using phonetic knowledge to practice sounds improved the participants' pronunciation of sounds in English, the participants stated that they were unable to transfer the knowledge to spontaneous speech. They stated that while they were able to produce English sounds correctly in class, they had difficulties producing sounds correctly during conversation and presentation. This, the participants stated, was due to the difficulties in focusing on sound pronunciation and combinations, word meanings, sentence structure, and grammar, as well as interacting with other persons and understanding what they say.

These results corroborated other studies which revealed that while pronunciation of sounds may be easy during a controlled exercise, it may not be the case during spontaneous speech.

Difficulty with sounds and stress and rhythm of language was mentioned by several participants. Speech sounds and stress and rhythm of language are part of the foundation of any speech sound system and help to regulate the speech flow of a language. Foreign language learners, when exposed to a second language speech sound system, have to interconnect the sounds they learn to the rules of their first language. The sound system of a language cannot exist independently; rather, it is part of the overall system of the language (Flege, 1995; Best & Tyler, 2007).

Influence of the first language was seen by the participants to be a normal occurrence and of less importance in comparison to communicating in a way to be understood. Participants were confident in communicating when they had the means to check their pronunciation and modify it to some degree. Some participants alluded to the fact that in some instances, effort to modify and control pronunciation may lead to communications apprehension and a lack of fluency. Of primary concern in teaching pronunciation is to help the language learner to communicate effectively in the second language while maintaining the balance between excessive control, and over concern of pronunciation, communication apprehension, and fluency.

5.3 Overall Discussion and Implications

The data suggest that having phonetic awareness helps students learn to produce the sounds of English. It does not however, help learners to develop the ability to produce fluent speech. It is evident that the ability to pronounce words in English correctly is the result of complex processes that include the combination of knowledge, perception, experience, repetition, and adjustment.

This study focuses on a previously unreported aspect of pronunciation research, which describes how learners experience the relationship between their level of phonetic awareness and spoken English.

Given the above, the author proposes that teachers integrate explicit teaching of English sounds and use communicative activities where feedback is given, and where the learners evaluate their own speech as well as the speech of others. The goal of such integration would be to teach pronunciation in a communicative context.

6. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

It is necessary to combine the explicit phonetic explanation with extended communicative training in pronunciation teaching. Target feature can be introduced by perception and articulation, then words and

sentences are controlled and finally, in dialogues, presentations, problem-solving, and spontaneous conversation, the teacher expects the use of the target feature. This sequence provides students with multiple chances to take conscious knowledge and move it to less monitored speech.

Feedback should address specificity, selection of content and orientation to the intelligibility of ideas. Incorporating corrections for all accent features is not a priority for teachers, but rather focusing on patterns that cause them to be unclear in terms of word identity, stress or prominence, or repeated misperception. It will be important for learners to be given examples of how and why a production is different and to be given a chance to produce again right away in context.

The IPA is not a language in itself, but should be used as a practical tool. Learning independence can be supported through use of dictionary, audio comparison, self-recording, shadowing and reflective pronunciation logs. Both segmental and suprasegmental features should be covered and the use of pronunciation in real sentences should be evaluated rather than definitions or transcriptions.

7. LIMITATION AND FURTHER STUDY DIRECTIONS

The study was based on self-reported experiences from a small purposively selected sample in one educational setting. The results are thus contextually informative and not statistically generalizable. The accounts of the participants may also have been influenced by memory, confidence or social desirability.

The study analyzed the perceived development but did not independently assess the pronunciation using recordings, listener judgments, or acoustic analysis. Therefore, it is not possible to conclude that there was an objective improvement as a result of phonetic awareness. Future studies may include the use of an interview and classroom observation, learner recording, stimulated recall, or pre and post-instruction speech measures. Multi-site and longitudinal research may also investigate the trajectories of the development of awareness over time and the differential trajectory, depending on L1 background and teaching methodology.

8. CONCLUSION

This study explored graduate pre-service teachers' experiences of phonetic awareness and English pronunciation development. Themes were: better sound awareness, problems of knowledge in spontaneous speech, powerful first language influence, and higher speaking self-confidence. They found that phonetic knowledge helped them to understand and control their pronunciation, but they did not automatically improve their pronunciation and the improvement was not consistent.

The results indicate that phonetic awareness is not the end-all and be-all. It is most effective when learners are repeatedly engaging in the process of explanation and listening, output, feedback, self-monitoring and meaningful communication. So, pronunciation teaching should aim at intelligible and confident speech, yet be mindful of one's language identity and avoid unrealistic accent reduction goals.

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Conflict of Interest

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