Investigating Pronunciation Learning Strategies of EFL College Students
A research paper submitted by
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Abstract
This study intended to investigate pronunciation learning strategies used by fourth-year EFL college students. To achieve the aim of this study, the researcher has applied a questionnaire on 40 students and analyzed the data obtained after modifying certain items and changing its scale as well as deleting some items. The five-point scale questionnaire consists of 20 items dealing with four categories: input/practice, noticing/feedback, hypotheses forming, hypotheses testing.

Using the Fisher's formula to manipulate the data statistically, it is found out that the participants use all types of pronunciation strategies but with different weights. No strategy was proved to be weak or unused by them. However, input/practice seemed to be used more than the other strategies as they ranked among the top ten strategies. After that, conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions for further studies are put forward.

Section One: Introduction
1.1 The Problem and Significance of the Study
Pronunciation is considered to be a fundamental element in a second language acquisition (Eckstein, 2007:13). It is, as Varasarin (2007:11) mentions, an area that helps to improve other language skills and aspects since the process of learning English is interrelated. So, students' speaking, listening and spelling skills are developed, if their pronunciation skills are improved because as Varasarin (Ibid) says, "each area of the language that is being taught helps improve other aspects of the language". In this respect, Wei (no date: 2) explains why pronunciation has acquired this
place by saying "as we know, pronunciation is an integrated and integral part of language learning. It consists of elements much wider than sounds of consonants and vowels. It includes the elements of rhythm and intonation, which support the communicative process. That is to say, anyone who wants to gain communicative competence has to study pronunciation".

Vitanova and Miller (2002:1) point out that "most of the literature on pronunciation deals with what and how to teach, while the learner remains an abstract, silent body in the classroom". Nevertheless, over the last few decades, especially in the field of language education, a huge emphasis has been put on learners and learning more than teachers and teaching (Tseng, 2005:321 and Varasarin, 2007: 32).

Phothongsunan (2006:32) states that the learners' use of English learning strategies and how they use such strategies to improve their English skills has gained its importance especially for those learners who want to have a degree in English at university level. Tseng (2005: 321) mentions that in order to make language learning more efficient and to produce a positive effect on learner's language use, extensive investigation is carried out in language learning strategies. Moreover, Tseng (Ibid.) says "how learners process new information and what kinds of strategies they employ to understand, learn or remember the information has been the primary concern of the researchers dealing with the area of language learning". Varasarin (2007:12) also points out that in the last few decades, research on language acquisition were focusing on how learners use actions which affect language acquisition rather than focusing on attention teacher-centered perspective. Hence, the focus was on how learners do so to elicit information on the process of language acquisition. Moreover, the identification and description of learning strategies used by language learners and the correlation of these strategies with other learner variables such as proficiency level, age, gender, motivation, and the like have become an area of basic research in second language acquisition (Chamot, 2004:14).

Oxford (1990 as cited in Varasarin, 2007:33) points out the language learning strategies are used by language learners in language lessons in order to complete a task or to solve a problem in all language activities like speaking, reading, listening, or writing by utilizing metacognitive,
cognitive or social affective strategies. They, as Tseng says (2005: 324), "are good indicators of how learners approach tasks or problems encountered during the process of language learning". Exploring language learning strategies have proved of a great value in teaching and learning all language skills since, on the one hand, as Tseng (Ibid.) says, they help teachers know how their students deal with new material presented in language classroom and, on the other hand, help to improve learners' language skills by using variable language strategies. Peterson (2000 as cited in Eckstein, 2007: 2) holds that learning strategies have had their greatest impact in language learning on the four major skill areas of second language learning: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Only a limited number of studies have requested students to reflect on their pronunciation learning techniques and report the strategies they use".

One of the aims of learning English as foreign language is to communicate with others. Communication can be either via speech or writing. Dan (2006 as cited in ibid, 2007:19) claims that good pronunciation may make the communication easier, more relaxed and more useful. He (Ibid.) states that phonetics, both in theory and practice, constitutes the basis of speaking above all other aspects of language and pronunciation the foundation of speaking.

However, most of the teachers stated that Iraqi EFL learners have poor pronunciation and this leads to unsuccessful communication. Thus, the researcher is trying to investigate what kind of pronunciation learning strategies used by students and what are the most and the less widely used strategies.

The researcher has used: input/practice; noticing/feedback; hypothesis forming and hypothesis testing categories in the questionnaire which depend on Kolb’s (1984 as cited in Eckstein 2007: 32ff) Learning Cycle Construct:

1. Concrete Experience: concrete experience was related to the pronunciation stages of input and practice. Pronunciation input can be considered any stimulus whereby learners encounter sounds, such as the radio, conversations, or visual diagrams of phonemes. Practice is the act of producing sounds either in isolation or in communicative contexts.
Both input and practice offer the learner some concrete experience with a target pronunciation of a sound.

2. Reflection on Observation: Reflection on observation was related to both pronunciation noticing and feedback of pronunciation. Noticing is the attention—both intentionally and unintentionally—to pronunciation rules and patterns. Pronunciation feedback is a function of an interlocutor’s ability to understand and cognitively process the pronunciation of a speaker. It is a gauge whereby a speaker determines the accuracy or acceptability of a particular utterance.

3. Abstract Conceptualization: abstract conceptualization was related to the hypothesis forming stage of pronunciation acquisition. Hypothesis formation is the mental process that attempts to bridge the gap between actual pronunciation and target pronunciation based on feedback from others or learner-noticed discrepancies.

4. Action Based on New Conceptualization: action based on new conceptualization was related to the hypothesis testing stage of pronunciation acquisition where hypothesis testing includes implementing changes in pronunciation according to new hypotheses. An example of hypothesis testing might be pronouncing a word with a slightly different vowel sound after communication breakdown in hopes of reestablishing communication.

1.2 Aims of the Study

The present study aims at:

1. investigating pronunciation learning strategies used by EFL college students,
2. investigating the most widely used pronunciation learning strategies by EFL college students and the least widely used.

1.3 Limits of the Study

This study is limited to investigating pronunciation learning strategies used by fourth college female students at the Department of English/College of Education for Women / Baghdad University for the academic year 2009-2010.
1.4 Definition of Key Terms

1.4.1 Learning strategies

- Wenden and Rubin (1987 as cited in Tseng, 2005: 321) define learning strategies as “any sets of operations, steps, plans, routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval, and use of information”.
- Learning strategies are “the conscious thoughts and actions that learners take in order to achieve a learning goal” (Chamot: 2004, 14).
- These strategies can facilitate the internalization, storage, retrieval, or use of new language. Strategies are tools for self directed involvement necessary for developing communicative ability (Oxford, 2002:124).

1.4.2 Pronunciation:

Pronunciation

- This term is defined as the “production of a sound system, which doesn't interfere with communication, either from the speakers’ or from the listeners’ point of view” (Paulston and Burder, 1976: 82).
- Also, it is defined as a way of speaking a word in an accepted manner (American Heritage Dictionary, 1992, cited in Otlowski, 1998).
- While, Richard and Schmidt (2002:429). Define as "the way certain sound or sounds are produced".

The operational definition of pronunciation learning strategies is behaviour, techniques, operations, steps used by learners to facilitate the process of learning pronunciation.

Section Two: Procedures

2.1 Population and Sample

The population of the study is the female fourth-year students from the Department of English/ College of Education for Women for the academic year 2009-2010, who have studied pronunciation for two academic years (first and second). The sample of the study is of two types: the pilot one compromising 20 students, and the main sample consisting of 40 students.
2.2 Main Instrument

To achieve the aims of the study, the researcher adopted a questionnaire developed by Eckstein (2007:100-101) after changing and modifying some items as well as the scoring scheme as recommended by the jury members and finally deleting some items after conducting the pilot study to suit the aims of the present study. The questionnaire is the most appropriate tool to achieve the aim of the study. According to Henderson (1978: 60 as cited in Al-Qarahlyoony, 2004) the use of the questionnaire is usually recommended by educators and psychologists especially in the area of research.

2.3 Description of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire includes 20 items which are classified by depending on identified learning strategies and are divided according to four categories related to Kolb's learning cycle as cited in (Eckstein, 2007:32ff) they are: input/ practice, noticing/feedback, hypothesis forming, and hypothesis testing. A five–point scale is used for rating the students' responses to the questionnaire items, ranging from never to always. The frequencies for each item are calculated by assigning 1 point to the fifth (lowest) level 'never', 2 points for the fourth level 'rarely', 3 points for the third level 'sometimes', 4 points for the second level 'often', and finally 5 points for the first (highest) level 'always'. Participants who failed to indicate their level of usage of a particular pronunciation strategy were assumed to have had no experience with that strategy, and thus their non-answer was scored in the 'never' category.

2.4 Pilot Administration of the Questionnaire

The pilot study was conducted on 20 students on (February 2010). It revealed that the time needed to complete the questionnaire items is 45 minutes. As for the clarity of the items, it was noticed that most of the items were clear and the students found no difficulty in answering the questionnaire items. However, some participants still expressed some confusion concerning specific words and phrases, especially the items concerning the motivation category, so the researcher decided to eliminate them from the questionnaire.
2.5 Questionnaire Validity

In order to ensure the face validity, the questionnaire was exposed to a jury of experts in language teaching and linguistics who agreed upon its validity and suitability. However, certain modifications concerning the scoring scheme and linguistic formation of some items were suggested.

2.5 Questionnaire Reliability

In order to find out the questionnaire reliability its items were divided into two halves (odd and even). Using the Pearson correlation formula it is found out that the questionnaire reliability is 0.795. After applying the Spearman Brown formula, it is found out the questionnaire reliability is 0.843. This shows that the questionnaire is quite reliable and accepted.

2.6 Statistical Manipulation

The average weighted mean score of the questionnaire items, i.e the theoretical one, is 3. Using the Fisher's formula to establish the mean score for each item, the item which obtains a weighted mean score of more than 3 is considered a strong item and the item which scores less than 3 is considered a weak one. The items of the questionnaire were arranged descendantly according to their rank order in an attempt to discriminate between highly rated items and those which obtained low weighting.

2.7 Statistical Tools

The main statistical tool of the present study is the Fisher's Formula which is used to find out the weighted mean score of a questionnaire item. The formula is as the following:

1 the jury members are:

2. Assistant Prof. Dr. Duha Attallah Hassan (College of Basic Education, Al-Mustansiriyah University).
3. Instructor Maysa` Rashid (College of Education for Women, Baghdad University.)
4. professor Najat Al jubory (College of Education for Women, Baghdad University.)
5. Assistant Prof. Shatha Al-Saadi (College of Education for Women, Baghdad University.)


1. **Fisher's Formula**

   \[
   \text{Weighted mean score of an item} = \frac{F_1 \times 5 + F_2 \times 4 + F_3 \times 3 + F_4 \times 2 + F_5 \times 1}{\text{Total Frequency}}
   \]

   Where \( F_1 \) = frequency of the first level (always)

   \( F_2 \) = frequency of the second level (often)

   Etc…

2. **Pearson's Formula**

   \[
   R_{xy} = \frac{n(\varepsilon xy) - (\varepsilon x)(\varepsilon y)}{\sqrt{(n(\varepsilon x^2) - (\varepsilon x)^2)(n(\varepsilon y^2) - (\varepsilon y)^2)}}
   \]

   Where: \( \varepsilon xy = \text{sum of the xy} \),

   \( \varepsilon x = \text{the sum of the students answers on the odd items} \),

   \( \varepsilon y = \text{the sum of the students answers on the even items} \)

   N= number of students,

   X= students answers at the odd items, Y= students answers at the even items

3. **Spearman Brown's Formula**

   \[
   R = \frac{2 \times R_{xy}}{1 + R_{xy}}
   \]

Section Three: Results

3.1 Results related to the first aim

   Table 1 reveals that all the questionnaire items are strong since their weighted mean scores are larger than the theoretical one (3).
## Table 1
The Ranking Order and the Weighted Mean Scores of the Items of Pronunciation Learning Strategies Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item rank</th>
<th>Item no.</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Weighted mean score</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>When I don’t know how to pronounce a word in English, I ask for help.</td>
<td>4.075</td>
<td>Noticing/feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>When working on my English pronunciation, I practice new words.</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>Input/practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>When working on my English pronunciation, I memorize words that are difficult for me to pronounce.</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>Input/practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>When I am listening to someone speaking English, I notice when they make mistakes.</td>
<td>3.875</td>
<td>Input/practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>When I am listening to someone speaking English, I repeat their words silently.</td>
<td>3.875</td>
<td>Input/practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>When I find a word I don’t know how to pronounce in English, I am willing to guess the pronunciation.</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>Hypothesis forming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>When I am listening to someone speaking English, I identify sounds that are difficult for me to produce.</td>
<td>3.825</td>
<td>Input/practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>If people don’t understand my English pronunciation, I immediately correct myself.</td>
<td>3.825</td>
<td>Hypothesis testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>When I am trying to learn new English sounds, I use English media such as television, movies, and the radio.</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>Input/practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>When I am listening to someone speaking English, I listen for new sounds.</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Input/practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>If people don’t understand my English pronunciation, I change my speed of speech.</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>Hypothesis testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>When I am conversing with someone speaking English, I try to sound like an English speaker.</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Hypothesis forming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>To improve my English pronunciation, I concentrate on word stress.</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>Noticing/feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item rank</td>
<td>Item no.</td>
<td>Items</td>
<td>Weighted mean score</td>
<td>Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>When I find a word I don’t know how to pronounce in English, I compare it to similar words that I do know.</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>Hypothesis forming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>If people don’t understand my English pronunciation, I find ways to avoid the sound that caused problems.</td>
<td>3.475</td>
<td>Hypothesis testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>When working on my English pronunciation, I adjust the muscles in my face for new sounds, like opening my mouth wide.</td>
<td>3.425</td>
<td>Input/practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>When I find a word I don’t know how to pronounce in English, I sound it out.</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>Hypothesis forming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>If people don’t understand my English pronunciation, I change my volume of speech</td>
<td>3.225</td>
<td>Hypothesis testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>To improve my English pronunciation, I use a system of symbols that help me more than English spelling.</td>
<td>3.125</td>
<td>Noticing/feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>When I encounter a new word in English, I pronounce it using my native sound system.</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Hypothesis forming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This means that learners appeared to make use of pronunciation learning strategies from all four categories of pronunciation acquisition. However, input/practice category seems to dominate more than the others as it is among the first top ten as it gained the second, third, fourth, fifth, seventh, ninth and tenth ranks. This means that students are strategic but they focus on the practice and input strategies rather than noticing feedback; hypothesis forming and hypothesis testing ones as they mostly ranked in the bottom ten strategies. Eckstein (2007, 75) says the monitoring factor included strategies that represented the first two categories (input/practice and noticing/feedback) of the Learning Cycle and general language acquisition constructs. Kolb (1984 as cited in Eckstein, 2007) indicated that concrete experience (input/practice) and reflection on observation (noticing/feedback) are essential elements to learning, however it was noticed that students partially monitor the pronunciation learning process because they try to focus on strategies of input practice without having
chance to the correlate it to the noticing feedback category, which also means that students try to have concrete experience with pronunciation with no try to reflect on observations.

3.1.1 Item no.13 "When I don’t know how to pronounce a word in English, I ask for help”.

This strategy has gained 4.075. Learners’ highly use of this strategy reveals that they do not seek to strategies which increase their independency. However, this strategy, as indicated by Eckstein (2007: 73), is considered the most reasonable strategy for improving pronunciation, because as ibid (2007) says "direct feedback from an English speaker as s/he intervene is very helpful for pronunciation learners, and arguably, helps a learner quickly progress because the act of getting help suggests that a leaner is prepared to notice pronunciation differences and willing to receive feedback”.

3.1.2 Item no.6 “when working on my English pronunciation, I practice new words”.

This strategy has ranked 2 and gained 4.05. It seems that students attempt to pronounce and practice the pronunciation of the new words by depending on the words that they are familiar with, neglecting that that these new words contain sounds that do not match the sounds in the words they know even if they are spelt the same, i. e. these words have differ pronunciation from those they know for example the letters “qu” in the word question are pronounced as /kw-/ but in a word like queue they are pronounced in different way. The students know that every “qu” is pronounced as /kw-/ but the example mentioned above in addition to other examples are exceptions.

3.1.3 Items no.7 “When working on my English pronunciation, I memorize words that are difficult for me to pronounce”.

This strategy has ranked 3 and gained 3.95. According to teachers and learners’ experience and observation, memorization seems to be a valid learning strategy and if it is used appropriately, it can help students internalize what they have learned to apply in actual communication (Hoang Oanh and Thu Hien, 2006: 6). Memorization according to
ibid(2006) say “is considered part of students’ learning habits, teachers and students have to face the fact that memorization will not be eliminated and should not be denied either. However, students should look for the best ways to use memorization as a strategy to help improve the effectiveness of their learning EFL”.

3.1.4 Item no. 3 which states "When I am listening to someone speaking English, I notice when they make mistakes".

This item has ranked 4 and gained 3.875. In general, language learning settings, learners usually perceive the information first before they produce it. However, using this strategy in learning pronunciation may not be the best strategy because “a learner might be capable of perceiving or noticing pronunciation mistakes, but might still be developing the skills to avoid those pronunciation pitfalls” (Berko & Brown, 1960; Clark, 2003 as cited in Eckstein 2007). That is to say noticing others mistakes may not lead to improved production of sounds.

3.1.5 Item no. 5 which states "When I am listening to someone speaking English, I repeat their words silently"

It has ranked 5 and gained 3.875, too. Carter and Nunan (2001:62) have highlighted the importance of imitating chunks of language provided by teacher or recorder. This strategy would facilitate feedback—an integral part of the pronunciation learning process. Oxford (1990 as cited in Eckstein, 2007: 25) advised learners to simply repeat new sounds which is a function close to drill practice in that both require repetition, but according to Oxford (ibid) “repetition suggests that it can be done in context, perhaps even while in conversation”. She (Ibid. 71) endorse to the idea that pronunciation repetition can interfere with the memory or reception skills necessary to perceive and then produce accurate spontaneous English pronunciation.

3.1.6 Item no. 16 ranked 6 "When I find a word I don’t know how to pronounce in English, I am willing to guess the pronunciation".

This might not be the best strategy that the learners use; however, it gained 3.85. Guessing the pronunciation of words may lead learners to
mistakenly pronounce words because they do not rely on a right basis in pronouncing these words.

3.1.7 Item no. 2 which states "When I am listening to someone speaking English, I identify sounds that are difficult for me to produce".

This item has ranked 7 in this scale and gained 3.825. Identifying the problematic sounds is a good sign that learners are aware of their weakness in pronouncing them and this, of course, could lead to better pronunciation since: first they have diagnosed the problem and as a second they try to remedy this problem. However, it is not enough to identify the problematic sounds without being able to produce them accurately in real communication.

3.1.8 Item no.19 which states "If people don’t understand my English pronunciation, I immediately correct myself".

This item has ranked 8 and gained 3.825, too. Eckstein (2007: 59) points out “Immediate self-correction can help the pronunciation learner save face in a conversation and thus maintain a position of credibility in the eyes of the interlocutor”.

3.1.9 Item no.1 "When I am trying to learn new English sounds, I use English media such as television, movies, and the radio".

Learners use this strategy but they use it only with 3.8. Weschler (as cited in phohongsunam, 2006) Indicates that “movies are difficult to understand because they are real world" but at least, from linguistic perspective, movie watching can become a tool to gain a good pronunciation, thus through doing this, they get a chance to improve their pronunciation perception because such media is the only way to gain which simulate the actual world of native speakers”.

3.2 Results related to the second aim

In addition, five pronunciation strategies seem to be the most widely used by EFL learners with mean score ranged from 4.075- 3.875, which is much more than the theoretical one (3). These strategies tended to be used by noticeable percentage of the sample of the study. The following is a brief description of the first five and the bottom five strategies:
Table 2 most widely used strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>4.075</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>When working on my English pronunciation, I practice new words.</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>Input/practice</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>When working on my English pronunciation, I memorize words that are difficult for me to pronounce.</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>Input/practice</td>
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<td>When I am listening to someone speaking English, I notice when they make mistakes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
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<td>When I am listening to someone speaking English, I repeat their words silently.</td>
<td>3.875</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 The least widely used strategies

<table>
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<th></th>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>When I find a word I don’t know how to pronounce in English, I sound it out.</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>Hypothesis forming</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>If people don’t understand my English pronunciation, I change my volume of speech</td>
<td>3.225</td>
<td>Hypothesis testing</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>To improve my English pronunciation, I use a system of symbols that help me more than English spelling.</td>
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<td>3.1</td>
<td>Hypothesis forming</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Here are the bottom four strategies:
3.2.1 Item 17: “When I find a word I don’t know how to pronounce in English, I sound it out”.

It is one of the strategies that the students practice as they explore the unknown words without fear of mispronouncing them. But most of their pronunciation of the words is wrong. When they practice them in front of the teacher, and s/he corrects them, this correction prohibits from attempting practice of the words. It forms like a punishment that prohibits them.

3.2.2 Item 20: “If people don’t understand my English pronunciation, I change my volume of speech”.

This items has gained 3.225 and ranked among the bottom four strategies Green (2013:Int.) highlight that “being understood is as important during casual conversation... but correct articulation and pronunciation is equally crucial” Eckstein (2007:64) emphasizes that that the influences the spontaneous pronunciation is influenced by increase in the volume of speech because as Eckstein ibid says “the speaker may lose attention to the articulatory gestures and difficult sounds in favor of louder speech. An increase in volume of spoken English carries with it a host of articulatory and affective modifications that can influence spontaneous pronunciation”.

2.3.3 Item 11 “To improve my English pronunciation, I use a system of symbols that help me more than English spelling”.

This means that students do not visualize the sound they hear, which is an important strategy in learning pronunciation. The reason behind this as Eckstein (2007:52) says using such system of symbols is “time consuming to learn and interpret”. At advanced level as cook (2008, 81) says “students are sometimes helped by looking at the phonetic transcription of spoken language using IPA or by making transcripts of speech themselves. This is disputable whether such conscious awareness of pronunciation ever converse into unconscious ability to speak, useful as it may be as an academic activity for future teachers at the more practical level, a familiarity with phonetic script enable students to look at the pronunciation of individual words”. Some teachers complain that using phonetic transcription places heavy burden on the learner at the production level but if the learners are asked to recognize such transcription on the recognition level the burden may be less.
2.3.4 Item 18 “When I encounter a new word in English, I pronounce it using my native sound system”.

Using the sound system of the mother tongue to help learners to guess the new word pronunciation is proved to be one of the least used strategies this may indicate learners are aware of the foreign and native sound systems differences.

Section Four: Conclusions, Suggestions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

To sum up, the EFL college students in fourth year seem to use all pronunciation learning strategies but in different degrees. Input/practice strategy seemed to be very much used because it ranked among the first ten strategies according to the students’ choice. However, other strategies also appeared to be used but they ranked in the bottom ten levels.

EFL college students need to be strategic and independent learners since they are at the advanced level. This cannot be achieved if they focused on strategies which do not require high levels of thinking and language manipulation. It is reasonable that pronunciation learning strategies should be aligned with language acquisition theory to help pronunciation learners develop implicit and automatic pronunciation skill. Learners and teachers can select strategies that lead to better acquisition of pronunciation rather than chaotically picking strategies that may or may not benefit specific acquisition needs.

4.2 Recommendations

It is recommended to:

1. use strategies that help learners to improve their implicit knowledge of pronunciation in addition to the explicit knowledge;
2. encourage using strategies which are based on noticing feedback, hypothesis forming, and hypothesis testing;
3. motivate students to use certain strategies not only inside the classroom but also outside the classroom;
4. raise students’ awareness about the importance of applying these strategies to improve their learning; and finally
5. motivate students to learn techniques or resources to help them practice pronunciation.
4.3 Suggestions for Further Research

Several studies are suggested to achieve the following aims:

1. Investigating the most useful pronunciation learning strategies by EFL Iraqi learners.
2. Examining the factors which affect the choice and skillful use of pronunciation learning strategies.
3. Investigating the strategies used by EFL college students in other areas and language skills.
4. Investigating the effect of applying any of these strategies on students’ performance and achievement focusing on segmental features or supra segmental features.
References


  


• Wei, Michael (no date) "A Literature Review on Strategies for Teaching Pronunciation". Retrieved January 5, 2010, from: www.slideshare.net/englishonecfl/a-literature-review-on.
Appendix

A Questionnaire on Pronunciation Learning Strategies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. When I am trying to learn new English sounds, I use English media such as television, movies, and the radio.</td>
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<td>2. When I am listening to someone speaking English, I identify sounds that are difficult for me to produce.</td>
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<td>3. When I am listening to someone speaking English, I notice when they make mistakes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. When I am listening to someone speaking English, I listen for new sounds.</td>
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<td>5. When I am listening to someone speaking English, I repeat their words silently.</td>
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<td>6. When working on my English pronunciation, I practice new words.</td>
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<td>7. When working on my English pronunciation, I memorize words that are difficult for me to pronounce.</td>
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<td>8. When working on my English pronunciation, I adjust the muscles in my face for new sounds, like opening my mouth wide.</td>
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<td>9. If people don’t understand my English pronunciation, I find ways to avoid the sound that caused problems.</td>
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<td>10. To improve my English pronunciation, I concentrate on word stress.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>11.</strong> To improve my English pronunciation, I use system of symbols that help me more than English spelling.</td>
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<td><strong>12.</strong> If people don’t understand my English pronunciation, I change my speed of speech.</td>
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<td><strong>13.</strong> When I don’t know how to pronounce a word in English, I ask for help.</td>
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<td><strong>14.</strong> When I am conversing with someone speaking English, I try to sound like an English speaker.</td>
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<td><strong>15.</strong> When I find a word I don’t know how to pronounce in English, I compare it to similar words that I do know.</td>
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<td><strong>16.</strong> When I find a word that I don’t know how to pronounce in English, I am willing to guess the pronunciation.</td>
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<td><strong>17.</strong> When I find a word I don’t know how to pronounce in English, I sound it out.</td>
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<td><strong>18.</strong> When I encounter a new word in English, I pronounce it using my native sound system.</td>
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<td><strong>19.</strong> If people don’t understand my English pronunciation, I immediately correct myself.</td>
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<td><strong>20.</strong> If people don’t understand my English pronunciation, I change my volume of speech.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
استقصاء استخدام استراتيجيات تعلم التلفظ من قبل طلبة الكلية المتعلمين للغة الإنجليزية بوصفها لغة أجنبية

م. نرمين محمود محمد
جامعة بغداد / كلية التربية للبنات / قسم اللغة الإنجليزية

المتخص:
تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التحقق من استراتيجيات تعلم التلفظ من قبل طالبات اللغة الإنجليزية / المرحلة الرابعة. للتحقق من هدف هذه الدراسة قامت الباحثة بتطبيق استبيان على (40) طالبة بعد أن قامت بتعديل مقياسه وبعض من فئاته وحذف بعضها الآخر وبعد ذلك قامت بتحليل البيانات التي حصلت عليها من ذلك الاستبيان. يتالف الاستبيان الخمسي المقياس من (20) فقرة ويتضمن أربع فئات وهي الادخال / الممارسة ، الملاحظة / التعزيز ، تكوين الفرضيات ، اختبار الفرضيات. باستخدام معادلة فيشر لمعالجة البيانات احصائيا، وجد أن المشتركين يستخدمون كل أنواع ال استراتيجيات ولكن باوزان مختلفة ولم توجد استراتيجية ضعيفة الاستخدام. بعد ذلك تم كتابة النتائج والتوصيات والمقترحات لدراسات أخرى.