



The Pronunciation Of English Language Lecturers And Their Knowledge Of Phonetics

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Abstract

The purpose of the current study was to ascertain the level of English lecturers' understanding of English pronunciation among APWREIS staff members. Ten English lecturers—five male and five female—participated in the study. The words are covered with consonant and vowel sounds in initial, medial, and final places. 57 words were chosen from the Intermediate second-year English text book. The segmental level of the chosen words is recorded and evaluated. Due to proper instruction, the majority of instructors lack expertise of pronunciation. The study is beneficial to teachers and students for enhancing pronunciation abilities and has pedagogical consequences.

Keywords: English language lecturers, pronunciation knowledge, divergences, phonemic inventory, segmental, and pedagogical.

1. Introduction

Learning proper pronunciation is one of the most vital components of acquiring English language skills. When the students are speaking or writing, they need to be able to produce sounds that are precise and clear. This research paper investigates the knowledge of phonetics held by English language teachers and their pronunciations. By doing so, we hope to bring attention to the significance of proper pronunciation in acquiring English and offer some insights into how it improved. Two distinct phases are devoted to the conduct of the research. The first step was to analyze a collection of English language lectures given by ten lecturers regarded as extremely knowledgeable in their respective fields. Students worldwide benefit tremendously from having access to English language instructors as part of their educational experience.¹ They teach in English, and the way they pronounce words in that language can greatly impact a student's ability to understand and use the language correctly. It is because having correct pronunciation can make understanding the language simple and enjoyable, whereas having incorrect pronunciation can lead to frustration and even a reduction in one's ability to comprehend the language. The researcher has compiled this guide with hints on how to perfect your accent to assist English language lecturers with their language pronunciation. It's common knowledge that students learning English as a second language (also known as ESLs) struggle with pronouncing words correctly. It is partly attributable to the limited phonetic resources that are made available to them. However, English language teachers (ELT) have an important part to play in helping students improve their pronunciation and sound more like native speakers. The researcher investigates the pronunciation of English language lecturers as well as their knowledge of phonetics in this paper. There is no question that those who teach English as a second language are extremely knowledgeable about phonetics; this is demonstrated by the fact that they can instruct it in a manner that is not only interesting but also highly productive. When it

comes to phonetics, however, there are a few common mistakes that English language lecturers make, which can frequently lead to students having difficulty understanding what they are being taught. To encourage greater development, governments continue to increase the percentage of their budgets allocated to education year after year. In addition, countries with multiple official languages, such as India, are shifting toward using English as their primary language of instruction and communication. Telangana is home to a wide variety of languages, such as Telugu and Urdu, in addition to the region's indigenous languages. English is used as the language through which instruction is delivered at this institution. Beginners in elementary school, students are exposed to the English language as one of the subjects completed before graduating. The current educational system in India is structured in the form of 10+2+3 years. For students to comprehend specific information presented in English, we require a significant number of lecturers who are well-versed in phonetics and pronunciation. Because they serve as models for the students, teachers are expected to have a strong command of the English language. The importance of primary skills is regarded as being lower than that of secondary skills. Thirty-five indigenous clans can be found primarily residing in the interior regions of Andhra Pradesh.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh established the first tribal residential school and college in 1975 at KSD Site in the Khammam district. It was done to provide tribal students with a higher quality of education. In 1999, two separate organizations, the A.P. Residential Educational Institutions Society (APREIS) and the Andhra Pradesh Tribal Welfare Residential Educational Institutions Society, came into existence. (APWREIS). Around 19,000 students in the Advanced Placement programme enrol in middle school each year. Both InterNET-1 and InterNET-2 are separate textbooks that were written for students studying at the intermediate level in the colleges of Andhra Pradesh. In English, each of the components is handled reasonably. The students were given an introduction to fundamental communication skills. Grammatically speaking, phonetics was a part of it as well. In general, the English curriculum is thoughtfully crafted and developed with the achievement of students in mind.

2. English Pronunciation and Today's Communication

Over time, improvements in English pronunciation have been made. Words are formerly spoken exactly as they were spelt back then. But things have evolved, and spelling is now less important in English pronunciation than sound. It is why speakers must comprehend how the English language is pronounced, especially if they intend to use it for communication. When pronouncing words, English speakers must be conscious of a few factors. The first division of English phonemes is between vowels and consonants. Second, how a word is spoken is significantly influenced by its letters. Third, depending on the letter that follows, there is typically a precise way to pronounce various sounds. Finally, accents frequently have a substantial impact on how words are pronounced. Today's communication requires excellent English pronunciation more than ever. People may now communicate and learn from one another more easily than ever, thanks to the growth of international digital platforms. Because of this, there is a greater need for effective communication, which is why English pronunciation is crucial. People can increase their capacity to communicate in several circumstances by learning how English is pronounced. Consonants and vowels are the two categories of phonemes in English.²

The pronunciation of a word is significantly influenced by each letter. For instance, the letter "a" is pronounced similarly to how English speakers pronounce "father." The same is true of all other English letters. To enunciate each letter, a certain sound is needed. Spelling is less important in English pronunciation than sound. Although English words are accurately spelt, there is still a wide range in how they are pronounced. It is because differing accents frequently alter how some sounds are spoken. For instance, a British individual could pronounce "carbon" as "Kuh-nuhng," whereas an

American would pronounce it as "kar-boo-un." This variance results from the distinctive accents of various nations' residents. Depending on which letter comes next, different sounds are typically said in a particular way. Consonants and vowels are both covered by this rule. For instance, English people frequently vocalize the 'a before making the t sound while saying the word "cat." Similar to this, when kids pronounce "bat," they frequently vocalize the "a" sound before making the "d" sound. How these sounds are often pronounced depends on what letter comes next. When pronouncing English words, a few guidelines are followed. For instance, words that finish in a vowel always have an "s" sound added to the end, and consonants are always placed before vowels. People can learn to speak English correctly by following these fundamental rules without memorizing unique sounds for each word. Spelling is less important for English pronunciation than sound. Although English words are accurately spelt, there is still a wide range in how they are pronounced. It is because differing accents frequently alter how some sounds are spoken.

3. Aim and Objectives

The study looks at the phonetics knowledge and English pronunciation of the English lecturers working at APWREIS in the Khammam area.

The following objectives are created to accomplish the study's goal.

- To create test materials that include all 44 phonemes that occur in the starting, medial, and final positions,
- To identify the study subjects among the lecturers employed by the APTWREIS colleges in Andhra Pradesh's Khammam district,
- Record the subjects' speech samples while speaking at their jobs, phonetically analyze each sample, compare the results with Received Pronunciation (R.P.), and establish the study's findings and recommendations.

4. Significance of the Study

This study was chosen because previous research can be explained in three ways, making it significant. Paying attention to the phonetic characteristics of the lecturers' speech first describes the teachers' understanding of phonetics. It also looks at their capacity to accurately transpose phonemes, word stress, and intonation patterns. The final section discusses some instructional consequences and suggests appropriate recommendations. The following are the study's main ramifications.

- The study's findings can be used to improve the knowledge of teaching English pronunciation. The results can be used to create a thorough teaching tool that will improve lecturers' effective pronunciation.
- The study's findings may help lecturers by allowing them to participate in specially created training sessions and learn how to pronounce words correctly.
- Providing suitable guidance and reinforcement to indigenous kids can be available to teachers operating in remote locations.
- A specific policy for creating a suitable learning environment may result from this study. The lecturers at APWREIS could significantly improve their spoken English with the right in-service training programmes.

5. The scope of the study

Due to time and resource constraints, the current study is limited to English lecturers employed at APWREIS colleges in the Khammam district. As the study has instructional consequences, the analysis was conducted using a phonemic framework. Only the test material's pronunciation and transcription are included in the data.

6. Review of Literature

Knowles, G. (2014) has studied 'patterns of spoken English'. In this book, he expressed that the language's standard form has tremendous prestige, while non-standard variations receive a lower status. It makes sense that people would go from "prestige" to "correctness," assuming that only the standard form is correct and all others are false. This book is about how people use patterns in their speech. He found out that the standard form of English has a lot of prestige, and people usually use this form when they want to sound smart or formal. However, he also found out that different variations of the language do not have as much prestige. These variations are often used by lower-class individuals or speakers from certain regions who may not be as educated. He argues that the standard form of English should have more prestige because it is the most educated and formal version.

On the other hand, the less prestigious variations should have equal respect and not be marginalized. This book provides an interesting perspective on how people use patterns in their speech. It is valuable information for students interested in linguistics and language learners who want to improve their speaking skills.³

Brown, A. (2014). He expressed in this book that the interesting, condensed literature serves as an introduction to phonetics and phonology in the context of pronunciation instruction for English language learners. The essential concepts of phonetics and phonology are covered selectively, without delving into more than is necessary or appropriate for the average English language teacher or English language teacher candidate. It focuses on problems relevant to learners and how they learn languages, and what constitutes best practice for pronunciation-related classroom activities, including elements like goals, motivation, and priorities. Activities are provided after each chapter to aid in reader comprehension.⁴

Jose A. Mompean (2015).⁵ The primary focus of this essay is the use of phonetic notation in the teaching and learning of foreign languages. The two goals of this paper are to first examine some of the alleged advantages of using phonetic symbols for pronunciation practice in language teaching and learning, and second to present learner feedback gathered from EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students in higher education who took an English course in Finland, France, and Spain that made extensive use of phonetic symbols. According to the results, kids may have had some prior exposure to phonetic notation. There were regional variances, though. The majority of students had positive opinions of phonetic notation, particularly in light of how it can aid their learning of word pronunciation in the target language and how it might visually depict sounds. The majority of the learners' replies were supportive of phonetic notation's potential for autonomous learning as well as its perceived usefulness and simplicity.

7. Research Questions

The study is attempting to provide answers to the following questions.

- How could English language lecturers be expected to be familiar with phonetics?
- Is there a great need to ensure that APTWREIS lecturers have a strong command of English pronunciation?
- Is there a need for English lecturers to perform as role models for tribal learners'?

8. Methodology

Millions of people worldwide speak English as a native tongue. Nevertheless, learning how to

pronounce the proper English sounds can be challenging for many natural English speakers. The methods for learning how to pronounce English correctly as described in this study.

8.1. Speech samples

The test materials include two-word lists: one for evaluating all 44 English phonemes and another for testing word-stress patterns. It also includes a short dialogue that is used to examine intonation patterns, a list of 10 words for the subjects to phonetically transcribe, and a list of five words for the subjects to stress-mark, and a short dialogue to be intonation marked are all included in another section. The subjects were given the test materials, organized in the parts below.

Exciting, ecosystem, apparently, alternative, uncouth, arbitrary, idealistic, outfit, over, earning, earplug, paradoxical, birthday, diamond, classify, gaping, machine, nobility, slouching, hemisphere, Zanzibar, vigorous, shadow, raging, wolfish, utilitarian, threshold, forgo, lounge, spurious, change, argue, clause, early, mother, honest, poisonous, church, scythe, belief, illusion, tab, floor, connoisseur, absentee, employee, jackpot, ape, oil pocket, air condition, poor, rare, ooze, that, garage, twice and anchorage.

8.2. Participants

Ten speakers who serve as English professors at Andhra Pradesh tribal welfare residential schools in the Khammam area of Andhra Pradesh were chosen for this study. The instructors have taught students in the first and second years of intermediate-level English. The majority of the postgraduate students are English majors. Men and women are among the speakers. Most professors are Telugu speakers, with a few Tribal speakers thrown in for good measure. They range in age from 28 to 58 years old.

9. Data Collection

The entirety of the speech sample was captured by using a device known as a "Sony voice recorder." The researcher was attempting to keep the outside disruption to a minimum. The responders were given a rundown on the subjects before the recording of the research words took place.

10. Analyze the speech samples

The researcher must examine the subject's speech samples to comprehend their speech fully. It would make it possible to better comprehend their behaviours, feelings, and even accents.

10.1. Analysis of the Data

The speaker's pronunciation is analyzed at segmental levels. At the segmental level, phonemic inventory is paid great attention. There are twenty-four consonants in English - /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /θ/, /ð/, /m/, /n/, /ŋ/, /l/, /f/, /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /h/, /j/, /r/, /v/ and /w/. Out of them, speakers 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 10 four are divergent /θ/, /ð/, /v/ and /w/. Speakers 5 and 6 are divergent /θ/, /ð/, and /v/. Speaker 7 could not demonstrate /j/, /ʒ/, /θ/, /ð/, /v/ and /w/. Speakers 7, 8, 9 and 10 could not demonstrate /ʒ/. Speaker 9 could not demonstrate /j/, /θ/, and /ð/. There are twenty vowels in English /i:/, /ɪ/, /æ/, /u/, /ʊ:/, /e/, /ɛ:/, /ə/, /ɔ:/, /ɒ/, /ɜ:/, /eɪ/, /ɔɪ/, /a:/, /ɑ:/, /ɔ:/, /au/, /əʊ/, /eə/, /uə/ and /ʌ/. Out of them, all speakers could not demonstrate /ɒ/. Speaker 9 could not demonstrate /i:/, /u/, /ɔ:/, /eə/, /uə/ and /əʊ/. speaker 1, 6, 7 and 9 could not demonstrate /u/. Speakers 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8 could not demonstrate /ɜ:/. Speaker 6 could not demonstrate /ɪə/, /eə/, /uə/ and /əʊ/. Speakers 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 could not demonstrate /eə/. Speakers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 could not demonstrate /uə/. Speakers 6 and 7 could not demonstrate /au/. Speakers 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 could not demonstrate /əʊ/. Speakers 1, 7 and 9 could not demonstrate /ɔ:/.

11. Results and Implications of the Study

In general, this research offers insightful information about the typical behaviour of adolescents. Teachers can utilize it to fully comprehend their students and assist them in resolving any issues that may occur. Additionally, students might find the information supplied helpfully for identifying

broad trends in their peer group. The notion that all learners behave in the same manner is one issue that can result from this research.

11.1 Results of the Study

Based on the data analysis, the following results have come up with the data. However, the results are restricted to the subjects under the study. They are also restricted to the subjects' renderings. Broadly, they concern the phonemic inventory of consonants and vowels. 100% of the speakers could demonstrate the consonants /p/, /b/, /t/, /k/, /g/, /dʒ/, /s/, /m/, /n/, /ŋ/ and /r/ in conformity with RP in their renderings. 100% of the speakers could not demonstrate the consonants /v/, /θ/, and /ð/ in conformity with R.P. in their renderings. /z/ is inconsistent conformity with R.P. In the renderings of all the speakers under the study, /d/ and /tʃ/ are in inconsistent conformity with R.P. in the renderings of 20% of the speakers under the study /h/ and /j/ are in inconsistent conformity with R.P. in the renderings of 90% of the speakers under the study. /ʒ/ is inconsistent with R.P. in the renderings of 50% and divergent from R.P. in the renderings of 60% of the speakers under the study. /w/ is inconsistent with R.P. in the renderings of 40% of the speakers. /f/, /l/ and /ʃ/ conform with R.P. in the renderings of 90% of the speakers and are inconsistent with R.P. in the renderings of 100%. 100% of the speakers could demonstrate the vowels /ɪ/, /e/, /ʌ/ and /ɑ:/ conformity with R.P. No speaker could demonstrate the vowels /ʊ/ and /eɪ/ in conformity with R.P. /ə/, /ʌ/, and /ɪə/ are in inconsistent conformity with R.P. in the renderings of the 90% of the speakers and just 10% of the speakers could demonstrate the vowels /ə/, /ʌ/, and /ɪə/ in conformity with R.P. /u:/, /əʊ/, /ʊə/ and /eə/ are in inconsistent conformity with R.P. in the renderings of 80% of the speakers. /æ/ and /ɔ:/ are in inconsistent conformity with R.P. in the renderings of 70% of the speakers. /ʊ/ and /əʊ/ are inconsistent with R.P. in the renderings of 20% of the speakers. /ɪ:/ It is inconsistent with R.P. in the renderings of 50% of the speakers and conformity with R.P. in the renderings of 40% of the speakers. It is divergent from R.P.'s renderings of 10% of the speakers. /ɜ:/ is inconsistent with R.P. in the renderings of 30% of the speakers and divergent from the R.P. in the renderings of 70% of the speakers. /a:/ conforms with R.P. in the renderings of 90% of the speakers and is divergent from the R.P. in their renderings of 10% of the speakers.

11.2. Implications

- The research findings can be used to supplement the existing body of knowledge regarding the teaching of English pronunciation. With the aid of the findings, comprehensive material for lecturers' effective pronunciation was created.
- The research findings may benefit lecturers by allowing them to participate in specially tailored training programs and become aware of their pronunciation errors.
- Teachers working in rural regions are equipped to provide indigenous kids with appropriate instruction and reinforcement.
- This study may result in developing a specific policy for providing a suitable learning environment. Appropriate in-service training programs were created to effect considerable changes in the spoken English of Lecturers employed by APTWREIS.

12. Conclusion

The study results imply that APTWREIS should spend more money training its lecturers to successfully enhance their capacity to instruct phonetics. The college should also give them more resources to support their teaching efforts effectively. Therefore, the government needs to organize seminars and workshops to train instructors. Based on the study's findings and conclusions, the lecturers who serve as Lecturers at APTWREIS lack appropriate expertise in phonetics.

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