

Explicit Pronunciation Instruction to Improve Thai Vocational College Students Intelligibility

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Abstract: *The importance of intelligible pronunciation cannot be overemphasized now with the ASEAN integration being the norm. Thus, Thai learners have to be taught pronunciation explicitly to improve their overall communication skills. This study determined whether explicit pronunciation instruction is more effective in improving learners' intelligibility as compared to non-explicit pronunciation instruction. Second, it assessed the extent to which explicit instruction improves intelligibility. Third, it identified the learners' attitudes towards the instruction. A sequential mixed methods research design was used. The quantitative phase employed pre-and post-tests to answer the first research question of the study. For the qualitative phase, the researcher's personal journal and the students' weekly reflective reports were kept, and semi-structured interviews were undertaken to answer the second and third queries. The population consisting 36 vocational college students were purposively put into two groups: the experimental group (explicit pronunciation instruction) with 18 subjects and the control group (non-explicit pronunciation instruction) also with 18 subjects. Among the findings, the post-test results of the experimental group were significantly higher than that of the control group after five weeks of intervention, indicating that explicit instruction is more effective than the non-explicit instruction. In addition, there are three ways by which the explicit instruction improves intelligibility. It greatly increases students' self-confidence; it greatly helps students possess positive attitudes while increases students' motivation; and it greatly increases students' awareness regarding the correct production of English sounds. With the help of explicit pronunciation instruction, there is a great chance that Thai students' pronunciation will noticeably improve.*

Keywords: Explicit pronunciation instruction, Intelligibility, Vocational College

Introduction

Recent approaches to second/foreign language teaching have recognized that pronunciation has a key role in the achievement of successful communication. Researchers and teachers alike also agree that pronunciation instruction is important and indeed effective in improving learners' intelligibility and comprehensibility. In addition, pronunciation instruction promotes communicative competence among the learners (e.g., Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 2010; Hismanoglu, 2006; Marks, 2006; Pennington, 1994). However, teaching pronunciation has been greatly neglected and/or ignored in language classrooms, materials and curriculums all over the world. In some other English as a Second Language (ESL) or English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings in Asia, including Thailand, English

pronunciation is arbitrarily overlooked. According to Wei and Zhou (2002), Thailand is one of the countries where English pronunciation and its importance are not taken into account.

There are conventional beliefs that contribute to teachers' tendency to avoid teaching pronunciation. For instance, the notion that pronunciation can eventually be "picked up" by the learners without explicit instruction of it (Morley, 1994). Most teachers find difficulty in teaching it for the main reason that there is no well-established systematic way of deciding what to teach, and when and how to do it (Derwing & Foote, 2011) – for example, a common problem is deciding whether to focus on segmentals or on suprasegmentals, and to what extent (Derwing, Munro, & Wiebe, 1998; Jenner, 1989; Prator, 1971; Zielinski, 2008). This is where the possible role of explicit instruction (towards communicative methodology) in teaching pronunciation comes into play. According to various studies, explicit pronunciation instruction is facilitative in second language pronunciation development as compared to implicit or non-explicit pronunciation instruction (e.g., Derwing & Rossiter, 2003; Gordon, Darcy, & Ewert, 2013; Lord, 2005; Parlak, 2010; Saito, 2011).

In the fields of Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition, learners who are learning a second language after puberty will unlikely to acquire native-like accents (e.g., Krashen 1973; Scott, 1989; Scovel, 1969, 1988 as cited in Celce-Murcia, Briton & Goodwind, 2010, pp. 16-18). This led then to the argument of discouraging the pursuit of native-like accents and promoting the implementation of more realistic goals. The suggestive pedagogical goal(s) to implement for pronunciation and speaking instruction particularly in the ESL/EFL contexts would be on intelligibility and comprehensibility rather than focusing on accents. Also, the attainment of perfect pronunciation should no longer be the objective. Good pronunciation should be the target instead. As Garrigues (1999) pointed out, the foundation of effective communication is good pronunciation. With regard to realistic goals, Morley (1991) suggested that they should be reasonable, applicable and suitable for the communication needs of the learner. According to her, the learner needs to develop functional intelligibility (ability to make oneself relatively easily understood), functional communicability (ability to meet the communication needs one faces), increased self-confidence, and the speech monitoring abilities and speech modification strategies. Thus, it is vital that students learning English for international communication learn to speak it as intelligibly and comprehensibly as possible – not necessarily like natives, but well enough to be understood (Morley, 1991).

Many learners of English language have major difficulties with English pronunciation even after years of learning the language (Fraser, 2000). This is evident with Thai learners. Even though English is being taught in all grades and schools in Thailand as a fundamental subject (Wongsonthorn, 2000), most Thai learners still have low ability in speaking English. In fact, Thai students have failed to enhance their English proficiency despite the fact that English is a compulsory subject from primary school to university level (Srivarakan & Tananuraksakul, 2002). In Wei and Zhou's (2002, pp. 5-6) study, they found that many Thai learners could not produce intelligible pronunciation in segmental features such as words with transcriptions ending with a consonant; consonant clusters; words with /r/, usually pronounced as /l/; words with /θ/ or /ð/, usually pronounced as /s/ or /z/; words with /v/, pronounced as /f/; words with /z/, pronounced as /s/ or voiceless); and words with /ʒ/ pronounced as /s/; and in suprasegmental features like intonation (yes-no questions and wh-questions); and stress.

Moreover, based on the researcher's experience, most learners are not confident to speak out due to limited knowledge of pronunciation (unsure how to pronounce the sounds of the

target language). In addition, there is lack of confidence on the part of the students because they are afraid to make mistakes and mispronunciations. This minimizes opportunities to put into practice the newly learned language and could result to lack of competence. It is, therefore, of interest for the researcher to investigate whether explicit pronunciation instruction can account for the improvement of Thai vocational college students' spoken intelligibility and whether such instruction can increase the competence of Thai learners and help them to communicate intelligibly in English with other English interlocutors.

The specific research questions that guided this study are as follows:

1. Is explicit pronunciation instruction more effective in improving learners' intelligibility as compared to non-explicit pronunciation instruction?
2. To what extent does explicit pronunciation instruction contribute to the improvement of students' intelligibility?
3. What are the learners' attitudes towards the explicit pronunciation instruction?

In this study, explicit pronunciation instruction pertains to teaching pronunciation to Thai vocational college students in a detailed manner; explicit presentation of contents, guided analysis and practice, and corrective feedback while non-explicit pronunciation instruction pertains to teaching pronunciation to vocational college students which mainly focuses on repetition drills.

This study is significant in contributing to the underdeveloped area of research related to the effectiveness of explicit pronunciation instruction to vocational college students, particularly in Thailand, and in posing numerous pertinent questions to guide future research. Moreover, the results of the study could provide empirical support in teaching pronunciation to improve students' intelligibility and develop communicative competence among students in private or public vocational college classrooms.

Research Methods

Quantitative Phase

Population and Subjects

The population consisted of 36 first year high vocational certificate college students in a private vocational college in Chonburi, Thailand. Administratively, they were purposively put into two groups according to schedule, one as the experimental group with 18 subjects, and another as the control group also with 18 subjects.

Research Instruments

1) Lesson Plans

The researcher has designed materials to be used in the intervention. The target problematic sounds of Thais were adapted from Jotikasthira (2006), which focused on sounds that do not occur in Thai (e.g., /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, and /g/ sounds) including sounds that are different from Thai equivalents as to their distribution (e.g., /v/, /f/, /s/, /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, and /k/) and sounds that are phonetically different from Thai equivalents (e.g., /r/ sound). These sounds were paired according to their point of articulation to comprise eight lessons: (1) /p/ and /b/; /t/ and /d/ with emphasis on word -finals; (2) /k/ and /g/ also with emphasis on word -finals; (3) /v/ and /r/; (4) /f/ and /v/; (5) /s/ and /z/; (6) /ʃ/ and /ʒ/; (7) /θ/ and /ð/; and lastly (8) /tʃ/ and /dʒ/. An additional two sessions for the introductory and wrap up lessons were planned; thus resulting in ten sessions altogether for the entire duration of the intervention.

The researcher was the teacher to both experimental and control groups but using different interventions. The experimental group received an explicit pronunciation instruction while the control group received a non-explicit pronunciation instruction. As for the direction of instruction, both groups have the same objectives; however, the lesson plan of the control group lacked the presentation stage of explicit pronunciation while the other two stages, practice and production activities, were kept the same.

Table 1: Presentation-Practice-Production Sequence for the Experimental Group

Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - oral introduction of the topic - demonstration on how to properly pronounce the target sounds with visual aids - listening discrimination exercise of the target sounds - contrasts - drilling
Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - individual reading of target words - pair reading of sample sentences - analysis, recognition and discrimination exercises (worksheets)
Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fluency activities or communicative tasks

Table 2: Conventional Instruction Sequence for the Control Group

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - listening discrimination of the target sounds - drilling
Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - individual reading of target words - pair reading of sample sentences - analysis, recognition and discrimination exercises (worksheets)
Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fluency activities or communicative tasks

The content of the lesson plans has been validated by two experts in the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL).

2) Pre-test and Post-test

The pre-test and post-test was constructed to test the intelligibility of the students, focusing on /θ/, /ð/, /ʃ/, /tʃ/, /ʒ/, /dʒ/, /f/, /v/, /s/, /z/, /k/, /g/, /l/, /r/, /p/, /b/, /t/, and /d/ consonant sounds. Both pre-test and post-test have the same content and was structured into two parts. The first part focuses on assessing word-initial and word-final sounds with monosyllable words while the second part focuses on word-medial position sounds with disyllable words. It was content validated by three experts. The purpose of the content validation was to determine whether the items adequately capture or match the objective of the study. The result of the Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) in each item is +1. An index of +1 can be interpreted as a complete agreement by all experts that the item is appropriately measuring the objective. To determine its reliability, a pilot study was conducted. Cronbach's Alpha was used to determine the instrument's internal consistency or reliability and the result is .840, suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency.

The assessment of the language samples of the participants were measured in a two-point scale: "intelligible" (corresponding number is 1), and "unintelligible" (corresponding number is 0). The students' intelligibility scores were rated by one qualified native English speaker (British), and two qualified non-native (Thai and Filipino) English speakers. The inter-rater

reliability Pearson coefficient (r) for the three raters is .72, which means that, the degree of agreement among the three raters is high.

Data Collection Procedure

The pre-test was administered to the subjects in both control and experimental groups prior to the intervention. The testing was done at the meeting room of the school to avoid extraneous variables such as background noise. The test takers were given five minutes to review the test items and later asked to read them out loud while being recorded. Their audio samples were kept for later assessments.

To avoid practice effect, the post-test was delayed and given to the subjects in both groups after three weeks following the completion of the intervention. The data collection procedure in conducting the pre-test was repeated.

All 72 sets of the pre-and post-test recordings (36 audio samples from the experimental group and another 36 samples from the control group) were copied continuously and randomly mixed together without indicating to the raters which recordings were from the pre- or post-tests to lessen the possibility of the halo effect.

Due to the raters conflicting schedules, all three of them appraised the audio samples separately and at different times. The assessments were accomplished inside the meeting room of the school which lasted 8 hours at most including break times.

Qualitative Phase

Participants and Informants

The informants were all participants in the experimental group during the quantitative phase, with a total of 18 informants.

Research Instruments

1) Students' weekly reflection reports along with their comments and feedback

The researcher has constructed a guideline for the students' reflection report. Generally, the guide questions touched on the student's attitude towards learning pronunciation, perceptions about the instruction and their level of motivation. The student's verbal comments and feedback about the intervention was also included here.

2) Journal

A personal journal was kept by the researcher to document her own reflection on the students' behavior and reactions during the classroom instruction as well as her own learning experience. Essentially, the journal was divided into two parts: (1) reflection on students' behavior, and (2) reflection on the researcher's own learning.

3) Semi-structured interview question guide

A semi-structured interview question guide was constructed to explore the informants' attitudes towards the explicit pronunciation instruction. It was used as a guide in conducting semi-structured interviews with the informants after the intervention.

Data Collection Procedures

Participants in both groups received two hours of instruction twice a week for five weeks, with a total of 20 hours of instruction altogether. At the end of each weekly session, the students submitted their reflection reports. They were asked to respond to specific questions regarding their feelings towards learning pronunciation during that time, including their perceptions about the instruction and how motivated they were in that week. Their papers were collected, compiled and kept by the researcher. In addition to collecting

students' reflection reports, the researcher documented her observations from each week's session. At the end of the period, she jotted down in her personal journal about her reflections on her own learning as well as her reflections on the students' behavior.

After the entire intervention was completed, the participants from the experimental group were interviewed regarding their attitudes towards the explicit pronunciation instruction. The interviews took about 10 minutes for each interviewee and were scheduled during their break time.

Data Analysis

In view of the fact that there were only 18 participants in each group which affected the normality distribution of the data, two non-parametric tests were used to assess the results of the pre-test and post-test, specifically: 1) Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test which was used to compare the pre-test and post-test results of each group, and 2) Mann Whitney U-Test to compare the post-test results of the two groups. In addition, 'effect size' was also calculated to quantify the size of the difference between the experimental and control group. Conversely, in order to explore the second and third research questions, the researcher conducted a qualitative content analysis on the students' weekly reflective reports, researcher's journal and interviews.

Results

Quantitative Results

Answer to Question 1

Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test showed that the median post-test ranks of the control group ($Mdn = 31.67$), were statistically significantly higher than their pre-test ($Mdn = 19.00$), $Z = -3.725$, $p < .001$, $r = .88$ with large effect. In light of this result, it can be implied that the non-explicit pronunciation instruction was effective in improving the control group's intelligibility.

Similarly, Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was used to compare the pre-test and post-test of the experimental group. This test indicated that the post-test of the experimental group ($Mdn = 37.67$), were statistically significantly higher than their pre-test ($Mdn = 18.00$), $Z = -3.725$, $p < .001$, with a large effect size, $r = .88$.

Note that the calculated Z-value in the experimental group is exactly the same as the control group ($Z = -3.725$, $p < .001$) and both pronunciation instruction have equal value of effect size ($r = .88$).

Table 1 Summary of Statistical Results within Groups

Within Groups	Pre-test				Post-test				Z	Sig.	r
	N	M	Mdn	SD	M	Mdn	SD				
Explicit Pronunciation Group	18	18.91	18	3.22	37.96	37.67	4.26	-3.725	$p < .001$	0.88	
Non-Explicit Pronunciation Group	18	19.58	19	3.63	30.87	31.67	4.54	-3.725	$p < .001$	0.88	

Accordingly, so as to understand if the difference between the two groups is statistically significant; that is, if the explicit pronunciation instruction was more effective than the non-explicit pronunciation instruction, a further analysis was done.

The Mann-Whitney U test was then conducted to test the effectiveness of the explicit pronunciation instruction in improving spoken intelligibility.

The Mann-Whitney U test indicated that individuals in the explicit pronunciation instruction group ($Mdn = 37.67$) exhibited greater improvements in their intelligibility than those individuals in the non-explicit pronunciation instruction ($Mdn = 31.67$), $U = 33.5$, $p < .001$, $r = 0.68$. The effect size for this analysis ($r = 0.68$) was found to have a large effect. These results reveal that explicit pronunciation instruction is more effective in improving students' spoken intelligibility as compared to the non-explicit pronunciation is accurate.

Table 2 Summary of Statistical Results between Groups

Between Groups	Post-test						
	N	M	Mdn	SD	U	Sig.	r
Explicit Pronunciation Group	18	37.96	37.76	4.26	33.5	p < .001	0.68
Non-Explicit Pronunciation Group	18	30.87	31.67	4.54			

Qualitative Findings

Answer to Question 2

The extent to which the explicit pronunciation instruction contributes to the improvement of students' intelligibility can be grouped into the following themes:

1. Explicit pronunciation instruction greatly increases students' self-confidence while drastically decreases self-conscious mannerisms.

During the first session of the intervention, almost all students displayed self-conscious mannerisms while participating in the activities (e.g., laughing at themselves, telling others to participate first before they do so, deliberately speaking inaudibly, intentionally not making eye-contact, turning to their peers or the teacher for prompting and assurance in Thai before taking part, etc.). Throughout the weeks of the intervention, the researcher notably observed that those self-conscious mannerisms decreased for the majority of the students. They became more confident, began speaking out more in English and kept practicing even outside the class. These changes in students' behavior were drastic. Positive feedback was also noted by their regular English instructor. She shared that the students' self-confidence started to increase due to the pronunciation instruction and that they started using the learned language in her class. This information is similar to what the students had written in their weekly reflective reports regarding their increased self-confidence.

"There are many Thais,, including myself, who do not like to study English because they do not have the courage to speak and are scared that they might make mistakes when they talk. However, this course gave me the courage and confidence to speak English, no matter if it is right or wrong. It taught me to speak and read English words (and sentences) correctly" (Belle, weekly reflective report 5).

2. It greatly helps students to have positive attitudes while immediately increases students' motivation.

After every session of the intervention, it was observed that the students were more motivated compared to the first session. Initially, there were students who seemed to be drifting (e.g., act of day-dreaming) while others were hesitant to learn particularly during the introductory part of the intervention. There were some students who had negative outlook in learning pronunciation. Two students (Catherine and Tina) even commented during group discussion in session one that improving one's pronunciation was important but it was

already too late for them since they were too old to learn it. Others thought that it was way too difficult and impossible to improve one's pronunciation. Although there were others (Rachelle, Sam, Perry Ursula, and Wilma) who were highly motivated since the beginning particularly that ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) will take effect soon and that they wanted to grab the opportunity to improve their pronunciation since they never had this type of class ever before. At the same time, they also wanted to land good jobs in the future. For example, *"I have the desire to learn because I know it will benefit me in the future"* Wilma said. Ursula exclaimed the same idea, *"I want to improve my pronunciation to communicate well with foreigners especially that AEC is near. At the same time, I never had any classes related to improving pronunciation before"*.

As the session advances, it was clearly seen that their negative (and some neutral) outlook has changed into positive ones and their motivation has increased. For instance, Neil wrote in his reflective report in week 3, stating *"At first, I did not see the importance of learning pronunciation. I thought it will be just another English class that I have attended to but this class is different. It is new, fun and exciting so might as well enjoy and make the best out of it"*.

These changes were also evident in their weekly reflective reports where they were asked to rate their motivation on a scale of one to ten. For those students who initially had low and average levels of motivation, their motivation greatly increased as the intervention progressed. Similarly, those who were already highly motivated students, continued to be motivated throughout the intervention.

3. It greatly increases students' awareness regarding the correct production of the sounds in the English language.

By contrasting the English target sounds with their closest Thai counterparts, the participants evidently became aware that English sounds have their own unique and distinct sounds. They were able to discriminate the target sounds easily after learning contrasts of the English and Thai sounds (e.g., /w/ vs. /v/) and contrasts with similar English sounds (e.g., /p/ vs. /b/). For instance, Belle wrote, *"I never knew that /w/ and /v/ are two different sounds. All my life I have been pronouncing /v/ as /w/ or /b/ (e.g., dove with dob [โดฟ])"*.

In addition, the journal entries regarding the 'presentation' part where the students used hand mirrors to monitor their own mouth movements revealed a significant increase in correctly producing the target sounds. As the pronunciation instruction progressed, it was noted that the students were intently watching the mouth movements of the researcher closely when target sounds were introduced and instinctively checked themselves while projecting their mouths after learning the correct way of producing those target sounds, even without being told to do so before attempting to produce it audibly. Sandy claimed during the interview, *"Aside from the teacher's immediate feedback, the hand mirror technique helped me to monitor myself while practicing the target sounds"*. Wilma also shared, *"I think the most helpful part of the instruction in improving my pronunciation is when the teacher teaches the correct production of sounds with the help of videos and diagrams, and then lets us practice with hand mirrors to check our own production"*.

Answer to Question 3

The following are positive attitudes expressed by the participants towards the explicit pronunciation instruction.

1. Motivation

In the beginning, not everyone was highly motivated as these five participants (Rachelle, Sam, Perry Ursula, and Wilma). They were intrinsically motivated to improve their pronunciation for the sole reason that they wanted to land good jobs in the future as AEC is fast approaching. However, as the intervention advanced, other participants became motivated and engaged in improving their pronunciation. Reiterating what Neil had mentioned in his weekly reflective report, *“At first, I did not see the importance of learning pronunciation. I thought it will be just another English class that I have attended to but this class is different. It is new, fun and exciting so I might as well enjoy and make the best out of it”*.

2. Persistence/Determination

The less capable participants also demonstrated positive attitudes towards the instruction regardless of how they viewed their abilities as compared to others.

“I am not as good as my classmates, but it is not a reason for me to get tired and give up learning pronunciation. I am actually more persistent to learn and improve my pronunciation because I see the positive effects of the pronunciation instruction to my classmates. I just need to practice more with the help of the teacher and peers. Also, I am more enthused to learn due to the teacher’s efforts and unending encouragement since day 1 of the course” (Prince, weekly reflective report 5).

3. Enthusiasm

The instruction itself also sparked the curiosity of the students and jumpstarted their enthusiasm to learn. It was noted that the participants were enthusiastically participating in all of the activities with facial expressions expressing amusement and clearly enjoying themselves all throughout the intervention.

“I feel that learning in this course is so much fun and interesting. I always look forward to learning pronunciation with the teacher” (Kathy, weekly reflection report 5).

4. Interest

A majority of the participants displayed great interest in learning pronunciation. They happened to be more engaged as the intervention progressed. They became actively involved and participative in each stage of the instruction. It was observed that they were quite interested in learning due to the instruction’s new, fun and interactive way of teaching/ learning pronunciation. In fact, they practically enjoyed themselves all throughout the intervention. For example,

“Pronunciation instruction helps me to learn many things, such as techniques on how to pronounce each sound and how the sounds are different, many new vocabulary words, and learning while playing games and activities. Each game and activity develops not only speaking but also listening and reading skills. With that I am able to develop true interest in learning pronunciation” (Sandy, interview).

5. Satisfaction

The participants were perceived to be pleased and satisfied with the effects of pronunciation instruction to them. They considered the explicit instruction to be helpful, not only in improving their pronunciation but also their self-confidence.

“Going back to our first day in class until now (last day), my pronunciation greatly improved. I can now pronounce English words clearly and correctly. Due to the pronunciation instruction, I was able to learn techniques on how to correctly pronounce English sounds and with that it helped me improved my pronunciation” (Wilma, weekly reflection report 5).

The overall results showed that a majority of the students held strongly positive attitudes toward the explicit pronunciation instruction. Their positive responses also indicated that they felt the pronunciation instruction to be fun, interesting, helpful and motivational. Thus, the explicit pronunciation instruction is not only effective but also greatly favored by the participants.

Discussion and Conclusion

Comparing the post-test statistical results between the two groups, the explicit instruction had a much larger effect in comparison to the non-explicit instruction. The techniques used in the explicit instruction consisted of contrasts, phonetic descriptions, repetition drills, etc. provided opportunities to notice and practice the problematic target sounds. It can be assumed that those techniques helped the students improve their intelligibility.

Therefore, it can be concluded that explicit pronunciation instruction is more effective in improving students' intelligibility as compared to the non-explicit pronunciation instruction. This is congruent to various studies (e.g., Derwing & Rossiter, 2003; Lord, 2005; Saito, 2011; Parlak, 2010; and Gordon, et al., 2013) that explicit pronunciation instruction is facilitative in second language pronunciation development as compared to implicit or non-explicit pronunciation instruction.

This research also brought satisfying results in terms of the improvement of the students' spoken intelligibility with the help of explicit pronunciation instruction. Some positive findings included notable increase in participants' self-confidence, motivation and awareness regarding the correct production of the English sounds. Moreover, positive responses were elicited indicating that the participants had positive attitudes towards the explicit pronunciation instruction and that they found it important. With the help of explicit pronunciation instruction, there is a great chance that Thai students' pronunciation of segmentals will noticeably improve. As Richards & Renandya (2002) argued, teaching can play an important role in helping learners develop ways of improving their pronunciation and shaping their attitude toward the importance of pronunciation.

Implications

Due to the fact that the effect size of both groups (when being compared within groups) are the same, this would be interpreted that either instruction was effective, equally effective, to be exact. However, with further analysis on the progress made by each participant, it is clear that the outcome of explicit pronunciation instruction is much higher ($r = .68$). Thus, it is very likely that many teachers who teach with non-explicit pronunciation would be satisfied with the results showing that their teaching is as effective.

Recommendations for Further Research

While this study answered the research questions satisfactorily, it also opened prospects to many additional questions that could be explored through further research. A similar designed study with a much longer time frame and focusing on both segmentals and suprasegmentals would provide more answers with regards to the extent to which the explicit pronunciation instruction improves intelligibility. Also, the creation of a similar study which employs a more sophisticated data collection (e.g., sentence-level tests, and requiring raters to transcribe what they hear) could yield more conclusive results.

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