



A Study of English Final Consonant Sound Spoken by First Year Students at Faculty of Education in Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

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Abstract

The objectives of this research are 1) to study the English final consonant sounds spoken by first year students, and 2) to propose solutions to the problems of English final consonant sounds spoken by first year students at Faculty of Education, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. It is a quantitative and qualitative research. The sample group consisted of the first-year students with number of 60 persons, including having an additional in-depth interview with 5 lecturers and scholars at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. For data collection, questionnaire and in-depth interview had been used. The statistic used for analyzing data from questionnaire was frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. For the data from an in-depth interview, a content analysis was used. The result of research was found that most of the students are female; it is equal to 66.7 percent; age between 21-23; equal to 63.3 percent; Myanmar students; equal to 81.7 percent; intermediate English level; equal to 93.3 percent; My own decision; equal to 86.7 percent.

Keywords: English Final Consonant Sound, Spoken by first Year students, Faculty of Education, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

Introduction

English learners often encounter various challenges when acquiring final consonant sounds especially in spoken English. These challenges can derive from differences between the learner's mother language and English, as well as specific characteristics of final consonant sounds in English. For instance, Word stress, syllable structure, pronunciation, intonation, linking words, connected speech and so on. Among then, according to word endings and inflections, English uses final consonant sounds to indicate word endings and grammatical inflections, such as pluralization or verb tense.

According to Collins and Mees, the organs of speech are divided into three groups, which are shown here from top to bottom: head (articulatory system), throat (phonatory system), and chest (respiratory system). Learners may face difficulties in consistently applying these rules, leading to grammatical inaccuracies. It will make lack of exposure to the learners who have limited exposure to native English speakers or authentic English environments may struggle to acquire natural pronunciation patterns, including final consonant sounds.



English has emerged as the absolute international language, serving as a fundamental instrument for global communication among people worldwide. Its significance continues to grow steadily, there were globally known as four skilled in English. Among them, the importance of speaking proficiency is intricately interconnected with listening skills. Effective communication in spoken English depends upon mastering the nuances of final consonant sounds. For first-year students at the Faculty of Education in MCU, acquiring proficiency in this aspect is central for both language skills, academic capability and professional endeavors.

In spoken English Pronunciation is the most important and difficult issue that non-native English speakers have to face when studying English. Pronunciation errors may result in a bad impression, misunderstanding, and ineffective communication. Although many students begin their English skills in education journey at schools, they cannot pronounce English properly because of some certain reasons. When people have indefinite pronunciation, it is easy for the listeners to misunderstand or comprehend conversely. For this reason, it is not easy for those who want to be good at pronunciation in spoken English because the sound systems of the mother tongue and foreign language are different in many aspects.

Investigating final consonant sounds in spoken English among first-year students at the Faculty of Education in MCU offers numerous benefits. Firstly, understanding the specific challenges faced by these students provides valuable awareness for students to develop targeted instructional strategies. By addressing these challenges early in their academic journey, first-year students at the faculty of education in MCU can build a strong foundation in pronunciation skills, which is essential for effective communication in various professional contexts. Furthermore, the findings of this study can contribute to the improvement of English language learning and teaching methodologies, particularly in the area of pronunciation instruction in spoken English. By incorporating evidence-based practices will convert to the needs of first-year students, educators can enhance the overall quality of English language education at MCU.

This research will contribute to the academic field of linguistics and English major by providing insights into the phonological aspects of spoken English pronunciation, language acquisition, particularly focusing on final consonant sounds. Moreover, this research can utilize to upgrade curriculum designs and teaching strategies, thus improving English language skills within the Faculty of Education at MCU and beyond the academic understanding. “Phonology, according to Skandera and Burleigh, deals with the speaker’s understanding of the sound systems present in a language. It is a description of a language’s phonological structure and patterning.”

Accordance with this research findings can directly relate to the teaching practices, enabling students within the Faculty of Education, MCU to develop more effective strategies for studying final consonant sounds in spoken English. Through targeted interventions based on this research, students can improve their English pronunciation skills, leading to improved overall language proficiency and communication abilities. The practical insights gained from thesis research can contribute to the



professional development of language educators, equipping them with tools and techniques to address specific pronunciation challenges faced by students.

Inevitably, the students who are studying at faculty of education will become the teachers in the future have played an important role in English teaching. Therefore, their English proficiency is important. However, minimal research regarding English pronunciation problems have been done with this group of students. In order to fill this gap, this research aims to investigate the way how to solve the English final consonant sounds of the first-year students at Faculty of Education, MCU.

Research Objectives

1. To study the problems of English final consonant sounds of first year students at Faculty of Education, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University
2. To propose solutions to the problems of English final consonant sounds of first year students at Faculty of Education, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University

Research Methodology

This study was designed by both qualitative and quantitative method. It was conducted on 80 target first year students at Faculty of Education, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. The sampling participants of the study were 60 first-year students at Faculty of Education, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University and 5 lecturers and scholars who are living in Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. Totally, 65 persons were the sampling of participants in this study. The tools of this research were questionnaires and in-depth interviews: to investigate how and how many problems were faced with English final consonant sounds by first-year students at Faculty of Education, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University for quantitative method and to solve the ways of the problems of English final consonant sound of first year students at Faculty of Education, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University for qualitative method. In the data collection procedure, the research questionnaires were dealt to 60 respondents who are first-year students at Faculty of Education, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, and the answers to questionnaires were collected from them. In in-depth interview procedure, the researcher had face to face interviewed to five lecturers and scholars who were expert in English. The answers were recorded by voice recorder. After collecting the data from the respondents, all the answers of questionnaires were analyzed by the SPSS Statistics software, and the in-depth interview answers were described as five lecturers and scholars' responses.

Results of Research

The finding results of the research were as follows:



1. After analyzing the result of questionnaires, the first highest score of the results among the tables is table number (4.8). It states that one student strongly disagrees, accounting for 1.7%; one respondent disagrees, accounting for 1.7%, twelve students are neutral, accounting for 20.0%, eighteen students agree, accounting for 30.0% and twenty-eight respondents strongly agree, accounting for 46.7%. The statistical figures Mean is equal to 4.18 and standard deviation is equal to 92. The level of student's opinion is high in this item. Second, the high score of first-year students is the table number (4.12). The result finding reveals that one respondent strongly disagrees, accounting for 1.7%; one respondent disagrees, accounting for 1.7%, seven respondents are neutral, accounting for 11.7%, thirty students agree, accounting for 50.0% and twenty-one respondents strongly agree, accounting for 35.0. The statistical figures Mean is equal to 4.15. and standard deviation is equal to 81. The level of student's opinion is high in this item. Furthermore, third highest score is the table number (4.18). The result show that only a student strongly disagrees, accounting for 1.7%; four respondents disagree, accounting for 6.7%, eleven students are neutral, accounting for 18.3%, twenty-six agree, accounting for 43.3% and eighteen strongly agree, accounting for 30.0%. The statistical figures Mean is equal to 3.93 and standard deviation is equal to 95. The level of student's opinion is high in this item. According to this question, most of the respondents agree in this statement.

2. After analyzing the result of interviews about the methods of the solutions to the problems of English final consonant sounds for spoken by first-year students from key informants, they gave some suggestions. To improve English speaking, the students needed to listen to foreign news, foreign songs, Dhamma talk in English, participating in foreign ceremony or conference such as international research and International Day of Vesak, etc. Using audio visual aids that can be helped for improving listening skills and many other ways as required by learners. Moreover, physical practices should be emphasized. Speaking and listening should come together. They also need to try to practices in speaking very often. Furthermore, listening to the English songs should be done first. It means students should practice very often in order to improve their listening skill more and more. To learn English grammar as well as English vocabulary is also important. In addition, students have to speak it every day, read it and write it when they have opportunity to get conversation with foreigners. Students should remember words, phrases, idioms from them also. It will be good way to improve English speaking skill.

Conclusion and Discussion

After analyzing the collected data, the finding results show that "the overall mean was a high level, with a total mean of 3.77 and standard deviation of 0.91. The highest mean (4.18) showed that learners strongly recognized the difficulty of pronouncing final consonants. The lowest mean (3.56) indicated agreement, but showed slightly less awareness about alveolar lateral approximant production. The results also highlight the importance of pronunciation instruction in English language learning. Many students showed improvement in their pronunciation after targeted phonetic training,



suggesting that explicit teaching methods, such as minimal pair drills, auditory discrimination exercises, and phonetic transcription practice, can be effective in reducing errors. Overall, the findings of this study emphasize the need for enhanced pronunciation instruction in the English curriculum for learners. Educators should consider incorporating phonetic awareness activities and corrective feedback to help students develop more accurate pronunciation skills. Furthermore, listening to the English songs should be done first. It means students should practice very often in order to improve their listening skill more and more. To learn English grammar as well as English vocabulary is also important. In addition, students have to speak it every day, read it and write it when they have opportunity to get conversation with foreigners. Students should remember words, phrases, idioms from them also. It will be good way to improve English speaking skill.

Suggestions for Research

This research is not complete research. The study of this research highlights common difficulties first-year students face in pronouncing English final consonant sounds. It emphasizes the role of teaching methods and phonetic training in improving pronunciation skills. Further research is necessary to investigate the situation of English language learning and motivation of the students for first-year students. Future research could explore effective intervention techniques to enhance students' pronunciation. Therefore, the following titles should be studied. So, it is necessary to conduct more research about English speaking and listening difficulty of the students. That is why, to solve these difficulties, the following topic should be conducted.

1. English Final Consonant Sounds: A Study of First-Year Education Students at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University.
2. An Analysis of English Final Consonant Sound Errors in First-Year Education Students at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University.
3. An Analysis of English Final Consonant Pronunciation Among First-Year Education Students at Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University.

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