

THE EFFECTS OF SHADOWING PRACTICE IN IMPROVING PRONUNCIATION AND CONFIDENCE OF THAI FALSE BEGINNER UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

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Received: August 28, 2024 / Revised: November 11, 2024 / Accepted: November 15, 2024

Abstract

Pronunciation is considered an essential aspect of effective communication. Speakers are expected to pronounce words correctly and utilize appropriate intonation while conveying messages. Thai students, however, often struggle with English pronunciation due to the differences between Thai and English language sounds. This difficulty does not only hamper their ability to master the skill, but also diminishes their motivation to speak the language, particularly among false beginners. To address this issue, this research aims to explore the effectiveness of the shadowing technique in improving learners' pronunciation. In addition to improving pronunciation, the shadowing technique has been associated with enhanced listening skills, enhanced vocabulary acquisition, and increased word-stress awareness. This study adopts a quasi-experimental design, employing four research tools: pre-test and post-test, shadowing exercises, surveys, and targeted group interviews. Descriptive statistics are employed to measure the effectiveness of the technique and the E1/E2 value to evaluate the quality of the exercises. The participants are 100 undergraduate Thai students majoring in business and administration (2020, August 27). The objectives of the study are to examine whether or not the shadowing technique has contributed to improvements in students' pronunciation in three specific areas: the pronunciation of "-ed" sounds, connected speech, and intonation. Additionally, the study seeks to gather students' opinions on the effectiveness of this technique. The results indicate positive effects, as evidenced by higher post-test scores and increased confidence in English speaking. However, students' views on whether the technique is suitable for developing communication skills varied.

Keyword: Shadowing, Pronunciation, False Beginner, Confidence

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Introduction

Thai students encounter significant challenges in developing their speaking skills despite devoting considerable time to learning English. This can be attributed to the predominant focus on grammar and vocabulary instruction in Thai schools. The emphasis on language components is likely influenced by the washback effect, wherein national English language tests in Thailand primarily assess sentence structures and vocabulary, as highlighted by Prapphal (2008). Consequently, teachers tend to prioritize test preparation, often relying on outdated materials (Lunrasri, 2014).

Evidence from a study conducted by Phong-a-ran et al. (2019) at a private university in Khon Kaen Province supports these concerns. The study, which involved a randomly selected sample of 100 undergraduate students from different academic years, utilized the Oxford online placement test. The findings revealed a significantly low level of English proficiency among Thai students, with scores indicating proficiency at the A2 level, far below the national education goal of reaching an upper-intermediate level (B2). This discrepancy raises questions about students' ability to effectively communicate in English in their daily lives, academic endeavors, and future careers. The language skills of students entering the job market are of utmost importance, as they directly impact their ability to perform tasks effectively. However, studies have revealed that Thai students often fall short of the expected language proficiency levels, which

poses a significant challenge when it comes to communication in the workplace (Thanamaimas, 2019; Kijpoonphol & Linh, 2021). Most undergraduates from a private university in Thailand from Phong-a-ran et al. (2019) study revealed that A1 was the average ability among the participants, which means that the students can communicate by using basic English in daily life but not yet be able to perform in a business setting. Moreover, pronunciation was found to cause anxiety when speaking in English across tertiary education students (Phong-a-ran et al., 2019; Waluyo, 2019). As Foote and McDonough (2017) proposed two essential measures for assessing improvement in pronunciation: intelligibility and comprehensibility. Intelligibility focuses on the extent to which speakers are understood despite differences in accents between their first language (L1) and second language (L2) (Munro & Derwing, 1995). Comprehensibility, on the other hand, relates to how easily listeners perceive and understand spoken language. These measures are closely interconnected, influencing the overall effectiveness of oral communication. Incapable of doing the right pronunciation, undergraduates cannot communicate effectively or even lose their confidence to speak. This issue demands urgent attention and should be addressed and rectified in English courses, whether they are compulsory subjects or elective options. The inability of many graduates to communicate effectively in English within the workplace is a pressing concern as English has become a lingua franca in various professional fields.

Employers increasingly expect their employees to possess competent English language skills to engage in effective communication with clients, colleagues, and stakeholders from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Objectives

1. To explore the extent of which the shadowing technique has improved students' pronunciation in three specific features: -ed ending sounds, linked sounds, and intonation patterns.

2. To discover the extent of which it has contributed to enhancing their confidence in English pronunciation.

Literature Review

Characteristics of False Beginners

The concept of “false beginners” can be interpreted in different ways. According to The Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics (Richards & Schmidt, 2002), false beginners are learners who have had limited previous instruction in a language but are classified as beginners due to their extremely limited language proficiency. However, Beare (2020) presents a different perspective, stating that false beginners are learners who have studied English to some extent in the past but still feel they have little command of the language and want to start from the beginning.

In the context of this research, the participants can be classified according to the latter definition. They all have studied English for 12 years before entering university but still

consider themselves to have low proficiency. A preliminary study conducted with the 100 research participants, using a self-introduction task, revealed several problems they faced in English speaking. They got confused with basic word pronunciation and sentence intonation, often relying on scripts and Googling for vocabulary assistance. Furthermore, they encountered difficulties in pronouncing the words they found, resulting in mispronunciations during their spoken recordings. These findings indicate that despite years of English instruction, the participants perceive themselves as having limited command of the language and face challenges in pronunciation and vocabulary usage.

Importance of Pronunciation

According to Levis and Pickering (2004) and Wennerstrom (2017), the appropriate use of intonation at the discourse level significantly influences how listeners perceive the speaker's intelligibility. This highlights the importance of teaching and practicing intonation as part of pronunciation instruction, despite the false belief by many that students can analyze correct pronunciation automatically (Leonisa & Kirana, 2022), as it can contribute to enhancing the overall intelligibility and effectiveness of learners' spoken communication. Furthermore, practicing pronunciation at discourse level can help learners improve their persistent errors and fix their speech that have become fossilized (Derwing et al., 1997). False beginners can improve their overall pronunciation skills and limiting fossilized by focusing on intonation. Considering all these

findings, it is therefore, clear instruction and practice intonation and pronunciation can be undoubtedly advantageous for false beginners. Several activities and excises emphasizing intonation patterns, stress, rhythm and other aspects of spoken language should be introduced in class. These targeted areas can help develop accuracy and natural sounding in their spoken English, eventually enhancing their overall language skills and intelligibility.

Problematic Sounds of English for Thai Students

English and Thai pronunciations are not similar in at least three aspects: intonation, -ed ending sounds in verbs, and linked sounds. Wei and Zhou (2002) observed that Thai students experienced difficulty in pronouncing positive statement and question statement. Many of them did not rise the tone up at the end of the question statements. Therefore, there were times when people did not understand if the students spoke question sentences.

Gilbert (2014) mentioned that intonation functions as a guide for the listeners and helps them follow the speaker's message. In English, yes-no questions require rising intonation while Wh-questions often go with falling one. Nevertheless, the absence of these elements in Thai natives, Thai students may ignore or not be aware of this function. Consequently, they use the same intonation for the two distinct types of question the same.

For example:

- Are you happy? (expected rising intonation for a question)

- You are happy. (expected falling intonation for a statement)

- Do you like English? (expected rising intonation for a question)

- You like English. (expected falling intonation for a statement)

- Where do you live? (expected falling intonation for a wh-question)

- What's your name?..... (expected falling intonation for a wh-question)

In addition to the intonation, other problematic sounds for Thai students are consonant clusters with /ei/, /l/ and /r/, /θ/ and /s/, /z/, and /dʒ/ (Wei & Zhou 2002). This problem occurs because there are non of these sounds in Thai language. Omission of final sound and the lack of linking sounds are also other challenges for Thai learners as these features are not in our first language.

Other study by Ruengkul (2020) also found that -ed ending sounds in past verbs are challenging for Thai students. The /t/ ending sound was the most problematic one. This shows that Thai students may have limit understanding of voiced and unvoiced sounds or struggle with applying this knowledge to pronounce the -ed ending correctly. Inevitably, as the -ed ending sounds play a vital role in saying past or present tenses, this problem so affects their overall English proficiency.

Similar vein also applied to Sahatsathasana's (2017) work. In the study, the scholar suggested that final sounds ending with 'd' and 'ed', intonation, and linking words are difficult for Thai students. Therefore, he applied shadowing technique

to resolve the problems. The technique includes mimicking and repeating a model speaker's speech immediately after hearing it. This technique allowed the students to focus on producing the targeted sound sounds and patterns. In so doing, the students could develop their speech to be more accurate and fluent.

Shadowing Technique and Its Benefits

Shadowing, as defined by Lambert (1992), is an active and cognitive activity in which learners imitate and vocalize heard speech simultaneously (Tamai, 1997; Luo et al., 2008) or with a small delay (Goldinger, 1998; Hiramatsu, 2000; Schweda-Nicholson, 1990). It is a paced, parrot-style auditory tracking task conducted with headphones.

The primary focus of shadowing is on recognizing sounds rather than the meaning,

as mentioned by Kadota (2007, 2012), and Hamada (2014, 2015). This suggests that learners' cognitive resources are mainly used in recognizing the sounds not in understanding the meaning. Furthermore, it is important to distinguish shadowing from listening and repeating. Whereas the former emphasizes the recognition of sounds, the latter focuses on lexical and semantic aspects (Hamada, 2021). Shadowing included several related processes which are quick repeating words, mumbling, synchronized reading, prosody shadowing, and content shadowing (Kadota and Tamai, 2005). In addition to the variety of how the technique could involve, the shadowing exercises could also be tailored according to different levels of students. Kadota and Tamai (2004) proposed six steps for beginners to practise shadowing as follows:

Table 1 Six Steps of Shadowing Training for Beginner

Steps	Topic	Activities
1	Listening	Listening to the audio without the script, and trying to roughly grasp the content and the speech style.
2	Mumbling	Shadowing without the script focusing on the heard sound rather than reproducing pronunciation.
3	Synchronized Reading (content understanding)	Shadowing with the script focusing on the meaning of the script.
4	Prosody Shadowing	Shadowing focusing on prosodies features, such as stress, rhythm, intonation, speed, pause, etc.

Table 1 Six Steps of Shadowing Training for Beginner (Con.)

Steps	Topic	Activities
5	Synchronized Reading (difficult points)	Shadowing with the script focusing on the parts listeners find difficult.
6	Content Shadowing	Shadowing focusing on the content without reading the script.

The table illustrates six steps of shadowing practice for beginners. It provides a structured approach to improving pronunciation skills through six activities starting from focused listening to content shadowing. To start, students have to listen to the recording when they are being introduced to a monologue without any written text. This allows them to familiarize with the sounds of English. Mumbling is the second step where they are asked to mumble the words that they hear without reducing or altering them.

This step helps the students to practise the articulation and production of the sounds. Following that, the scripts are given to them to read along while they simultaneously shadowing the speaker. This enables the students to connect the written text with the spoken words, so that they can understand the meaning. Next, the students are directed to pay attention to stress, rhythm, intonation, speed, and pauses namely prosodic features. By focusing on these elements students may have an awareness of pronunciation patterns. In the fifth step, students highlight the problematic areas that they find challenging. This step allows them to specifically revise

their errors. Finally, students are asked to do the shadowing without using the scripts. By doing so, they can produce clear pronunciation and understand the meaning of the text.

There are three main positive impacts of practicing shadowing techniques found in several studies, for example, enhancing listening skills, expanding vocabulary memory, and raising word stress awareness. Firstly, bottom-up listening has been greater facilitated by the technique as it helped students to perceive and recognize words (Hamada, 2016a).

Rost (2013) emphasized the importance of sound recognition as it influences listening comprehension. While lower proficiency students tend to rely on top-down processing, using their background knowledge and context to understand what they heard, failure to recognize the individual word will severely limit their comprehension.

Aforementioned regarding the problems and urgent needs identified, it is apparent that false beginners struggle with English pronunciation may face challenges in listening comprehension and speaking skills. To tackle this problem, this research aims to seek

answer two main questions: to what extent has the shadowing technique improved students' pronunciation in three specific features: -ed ending sounds, linked sounds, and intonation patterns, and to what extent has it contributed to enhancing their confidence in English pronunciation?

Methodology

The methodology of the research involves a combination of quantitative and qualitative data to measure the effect of using shadowing practice on students' pronunciation. The participants were 100 first-year students from faculty of business administration from King Mongkut's University of Technology North Bangkok, Rayong Campus who registered for English 1 subject. The scores were collected from 50 students only as they were completely submitting their recording 5 times (pre-test) and posttest, 3 shadowing exercises). There are four research tools applied in the study. First, a pretest and a posttest were designed to assess the pronunciation development of the participants. The same script was used for both the pretest and posttest, where students had to perform how to pronounce -ed ending, linked sound, and intonation. The scores of the tests were given by two raters. A paired-samples t-test was applied to measure if the pronunciation was improved. Secondly, three types of shadowing exercises were generated to target the three main problematic areas: -ed endings, linked sound, and intonations. These exercises were aimed at improving students' pronunciation in these specific areas. The

effectiveness of the exercises was measured using the E1/E2 model (Brahmawong, 2013). Then semi-structured interview was arranged with nine students representing three proficiency levels (high, mid, and low) who participated in interviews to gather qualitative data. The interviews aimed to gather students' reflections on their shadowing experience and provide additional insights into the effectiveness of the technique. Lastly, a 9-item shadowing questionnaire was administered to gather students' opinions on the effectiveness and background of the shadowing technique. The questionnaire used a four-point Likert scale and was translated into Thai.

The combination of quantitative and qualitative data allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the effects of shadowing practice on students' pronunciation. The quantitative data provided statistical information, while the qualitative data offered deeper insights and students' perspectives.

Hypotheses

1. H_1 : There is a significant improvement in overall pronunciation scores from pretest to posttest.

2. H_2 : There is a significant improvement in the specific areas of pronunciation (-ed endings, linked sound, and intonation) from pretest to posttest.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the research was divided into quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data, the pre-test and post-test scores, and three shadowing tasks scores: -ed ending, linked sound, and intonation, were

collected and analyzed by SPSS to find the means and standard deviation, relationship, and reliability. Secondly, the effectiveness of the three exercises was evaluated by using E1/E2, and in this study the criterion that was set for the effectiveness was E1/E2: 80/80. Lastly, the shadowing questionnaire was

collected and analyzed to see learners' opinions towards shadowing practice. The qualitative data, interview, was transcribed, coded, and categorized by the researcher. The table below shows the research questions and data analysis methods.

Table 2 Research Questions and Analysis Methods

Research Questions	Types of Data	Research Tools
1. To what extent has the shadowing technique improved students' pronunciation in three features: -ed ending sound, linked sound, and intonation?	Quantitative	pre-test and posttests Shadowing exercises
2. To what extent has the shadowing technique helped improve students' confidence in English pronunciation?	Qualitative	Survey Semi-structured interview

Results

Pre-test and Posttest Paired-samples t-test Scores

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics and paired-sample t-test results for the shadowing pre-test and post-test scores.

It indicates that the participants' average post-performance score ($M = 12.36$, $S.D. = 1.054$) is higher than the pre-test performance score ($M = 10.28$, $S.D. = 1.591$). A paired-sample t-test was done to determine if the increase of 2.08 in the scores is statistically significant.

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics and Paired-samples t-test of pre-and post-test ($n = 50$)

Test	N	\bar{X}	S.D.	t	df	P
Pre-test	50	10.28	1.591	10.11	49	0.00
Post-test	50	12.36	1.054			

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics for the shadowing linked sounds, -ed ending sounds, and intonation tasks. The participants' average performance scores for these tasks are 11.96 (S.D. = 1.377), 12.59 (S.D. = 1.487), and

12.51 (S.D. = 1.080), respectively. Overall, the -ed ending sounds gained the highest score among the three tasks, and the linked sounds received the lowest at 11.96.

Table 4 Descriptive Statistics of the Three Shadowing Tasks' Mean Scores

Shadowing Tasks	Descriptive Statistics	
	Mean	S.D.
Linked sound	11.96	1.377
-ed ending sound	12.59	1.487
Intonation	12.51	1.080

The research conducted by Sahatsathasana (2017) also reported similar findings, showing the effectiveness of shadowing in improving pronunciation skills. The study identified linked sounds, intonation, and -ed ending sounds as the most problematic features, with average scores of 4.00, 4.10, and 4.30 out of 5.00, respectively.

Regarding the effectiveness of the three shadowing exercises: linked sound, ed-ending sound, and intonation, E1/E2 calculation was applied to discover if the exercises were constructive. The formula is presented in Figure 1.

$E1 = \frac{\sum x}{A} \times 100$	$E2 = \frac{\sum F}{B} \times 100$
When E1 = Efficiency of process	When E2 = Efficiency of results
$\sum x$ = Total scores of exercises or tasks assigned in class, outside the class, or online	$\sum F$ = Total of posttest scores
A = Total of full scores of all exercises	B = Total of given final scores of all tasks assigned in class, outside the class, or online
N = Number of students	N = Number of students

Figure 1 Formula of E1/E2

The findings of the research pointed out that the efficiency of the shadowing exercises, as measured by the E1/E2 calculation, was 82.36/82.40, which exceeded the established criteria of 80/80. This suggests that the exercises were effective in achieving their intended purpose.

Questionnaire Result

The questionnaire was created and conducted via Google Form to survey 100 students who studied English 1. There are 9 questions, and the results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5 Results of Level of Confidence before and after Trying the Shadowing Technique

Questions	1	2	3	4	\bar{x}	*Interpretation
1. You are confident when speaking in English.	4	23	61	12	2.19	Quite disagree
2. After trying shadowing, you feel more confident in your English pronunciation.	9	48	42	1	2.65	Quite agree
3. After trying shadowing, you feel more confident in pronouncing -ed sounds.	17	55	27	1	2.88	Quite agree
4. After trying shadowing, you feel more confident in pronouncing linked sounds.	18	55	26	1	2.90	Quite agree
5. After trying shadowing, you feel more confident in your intonation.	16	47	36	1	2.78	Quite agree

1 = agree, 2 = quite agree, 3 = quite disagree, 4 = disagree

*criteria for interpreting the four-point likert scales for individual items

Ranges	Statements
1.00-1.49	Disagree
1.50-2.49	Quite Disagree
2.50-3.49	Quite Agree
3.50-4.00	Agree

Table 6 Results of Background, How to Apply and Feeling of Using the Shadowing Technique

Questions	Answers			
1. Have you ever tried the shadowing technique?	Yes 31%		No 69%	
2. How many times have you practiced before recording yourself?	0 time 1%	1-3 times 24%	4-6 times 36%	More than 6 times 39%
3. Which preparation enables you to feel more confident when speaking in English, written script, or shadowing?	Script 45%		Shadowing 55%	
4. Do you think that shadowing practice time is sufficient for this course?	Sufficient 65%		Insufficient 35%	

Before shadowing practice, 73 students (73%) mentioned a lack of confidence in their English-speaking skills, while 27 students (27%) said that they were confident. After practicing the three shadowing exercises, most of the students (57%) said that they felt more confident in their speaking skills. As a result, it can be said that the shadowing technique had a positive impact on increasing students' confidence in speaking English.

In terms of confidence level of each tackled pronunciation feature, 55% of students found that they were more confident in pronouncing -ed ending sounds, and linked sounds, whereas 47% of them reported the development of intonation.

Regarding the prior experience with shadowing (Table 6), most students (69%) stated that they had never tried this exercise before. In terms of preparation before recording the final recording of the shadowing video,

many students (39%) said that they needed to practice more than six times. Additionally, 36% of students reported practicing between four to six times. However, it is worth noting that one student did not practice and submitted the recording immediately, indicating a potential lack of engagement or preparation on their part.

When comparing the effectiveness of the shadowing technique to written script, more than half of the students (55%) expressed that shadowing made them feel more confident in speaking English, while 45% favored written script. This suggests that shadowing was perceived as a more effective method for boosting confidence compared to relying solely on written materials.

Finally, in terms of the time allocated for shadowing practice in the course, 65% of the students agreed that the provided time was sufficient.

Interview Results

After the completion of the shadowing practice sessions and post-test, a follow-up interview was conducted to gather qualitative data. A total of nine students were selected for the interview. The labels used for participants will consist of a letter indicating their proficiency level (H for high, M for mid, L for low) followed by a number. The comprehensive exploration of student responses to interview questions not only enhances the understanding of the shadowing technique's state-of-the-art application but also highlights its relevance to addressing a wide range of language learning challenges.

In response to the first question, "What are your concerns/weaknesses in speaking skills?", most students from all proficiency levels expressed a lack of confidence in their speaking abilities, particularly due to difficulties in pronunciation. Among these students, the mid- and high-level participants also mentioned concerns about sentence structures, while the lower-level students focused more on word pronunciation.

Regarding the second question, "How did you solve the problem?", the use of Google Translate was mentioned by students across all three proficiency levels. However, there were differences in how the high-level students approached the problem compared to the mid- and low-level students. The high-level students mentioned that they would double-check the sentences provided by Google, whereas the other two groups did not mention any revision process. Additionally,

some students mentioned engaging in speaking practice through online communities, such as online games. High-level and low-level students mentioned that they would interact with foreigners while playing games. Other sources of practice mentioned by the students included entertainment media like movies and music.

When asked about the impact of the shadowing technique on their pronunciation in question 3, most students from all three proficiency levels reported that it helped improve their pronunciation and increased their confidence. Interestingly, a high-level student mentioned that the technique helped them improve minor aspects of their pronunciation, while lower-level students emphasized that the technique enabled them to speak more naturally. They specifically mentioned improvements in pronouncing ed-endings, contractions, and weak forms, which enhanced their overall speaking ability. In response to question 4, "Did you practice many times before submitting the recording?", the answers varied among the groups. It appeared that the frequency of practice was influenced by individual confidence levels and specific pronunciation weaknesses. Students with lower confidence in certain sounds tended to repeat the tasks more frequently. However, it was noted that memorization abilities differed between high-level and low-level students. While a high-level student reported being able to memorize the sentences needed for recording, a low-level student struggled with reading and reciting them. For the final question, "How

do you feel after doing this practice?”, high-level and mid-level students acknowledged that shadowing had helped improve their pronunciation, but they still believed that other methods, such as watching movies or conversing with foreign friends, might be more effective. One high-level student mentioned that the technique primarily addressed additional features that they may not have been aware of before learning the shadowing, such as linked sounds and weak forms. On the other hand, lower-level students agreed that the technique was useful and increased their confidence in English speaking. They found it beneficial to learn that the same spellings can have different pronunciations and to develop an understanding of other pronunciation features such as pauses and accents.

Discussion

The findings of this study underlie the critical role of confidence in language learning, particularly for false beginners. Consistent with previous research (Klein & Keller, 1990; Lawrence, 1996; Rubio, 2007), we found that a lack of self-confidence can significantly hinder the language learning process. Low confidence manifests as anxiety, fear, and insecurity, leading to hesitation in speaking and a reluctance to make mistakes, which are crucial for learning.

This study explored one of potential techniques to boost learners' confidence, focusing on the shadowing technique. Interestingly, it is found that the effectiveness of shadowing varies based on the learner's

proficiency level. Lower-proficiency students, including false beginners, reported finding shadowing significantly more effective than their higher-proficiency counterparts. This difference can be attributed to several factors:

1. Lower-proficiency learners often have more fundamental needs in language learning, which shadowing directly addresses.
2. These learners have more room for noticeable improvement, leading to a greater sense of progress and increased confidence.
3. Higher-proficiency learners tend to view shadowing as a supplementary exercise, preferring real communication with native speakers.

However, it is important to note that the findings diverge from some previous research on the benefits of shadowing. Several studies have identified three main positive impacts of practicing shadowing techniques: enhancing listening skills, expanding vocabulary memory, and raising word stress awareness. Hamada (2016a) found that shadowing particularly facilitated bottom-up listening, helping students to perceive and recognize words more effectively. This contrasts with this observation that lower-proficiency learners primarily used shadowing for pronunciation and reading skills improvement.

Rost (2013) emphasized the importance of sound recognition in influencing listening comprehension, noting that while lower proficiency students tend to rely on top-down processing, failure to recognize individual words can severely limit their comprehension. This perspective suggests that the benefits

of shadowing might extend beyond what our participants reported, particularly in terms of listening comprehension.

This study also highlighted the importance of explicit pronunciation instruction, including teaching the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). This approach empowers learners by providing them with tools to independently improve their pronunciation, reducing reliance on potentially inaccurate sources. Integrating pronunciation instruction into various classroom activities can help students make significant progress in their spoken English and enhance their ability to communicate effectively.

An interesting secondary finding was that lower-level students also used shadowing to improve their reading skills, learning new words and practicing comprehension through simple sentences. This multi-modal approach aligns with current trends in language pedagogy that emphasize integrated skill development. Higher-level students, on the other hand, found complex sentence structures more intriguing, using them to challenge themselves while improving their pronunciation.

The discrepancies between this study's findings and those of previous studies highlight the complexity of language learning and the need for further research. While this study supports the effectiveness of the shadowing technique, particularly for false beginners and lower-proficiency learners, it is clear that the full range of benefits may be broader than what our participants reported.

In conclusion, this study found a positive

impact of shadowing on students' confidence in English speaking across all proficiency levels, although the perceived benefits vary. Lower-level learners found it beneficial for both pronunciation and reading, while higher-level students viewed it as a supplement to real communication with native speakers. These findings, along with the contrasting results from other studies, suggest that a differentiated approach to language instruction, taking into account learners' proficiency levels and specific needs, may be most effective in building confidence and improving language skills.

Conclusions

In summary, the shadowing technique is found to be useful for false beginners and has a positive impact on students' confidence in English speaking across all proficiency levels. While lower-level learners perceive the technique as beneficial for both pronunciation and reading, higher-level students view it as a supplement to real communication with foreigners. Therefore, incorporating shadowing into English classes is recommended. Furthermore, the study also revealed that students with higher competency tend to cross-check their work by verifying translations from multiple sources, rather than relying solely on one tool such as Google translation. Moreover, this stands out due to its comprehensive examination of the shadowing technique's multifaceted impact on students' pronunciation and confidence. It sheds light on the significance of shadowing as

a pedagogical tool, potentially transforming language education for learners grappling with pronunciation challenges. The alignment with prior research and the specificity of improvements further underpins the contributions of this work to the field of language education.

Recommendations

Investigations into adapting shadowing for higher-proficiency learners and integrating it with real communicative tasks could bridge the gap between different learner levels. Moreover, expanding the research to diverse linguistic backgrounds and exploring technology

integration could enhance the technique's applicability. Studies on the cognitive processes involved in shadowing and its impact on other language skills e.g. writing and reading would provide deeper insights. Additionally, research on teacher training methods and the technique's effect on affective factors like motivation and anxiety would contribute to its practical implementation. These directions would build upon the current findings, potentially leading to more effective applications of shadowing in various educational contexts.

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