



STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF PHONETICS-BASED PRONUNCIATION INSTRUCTION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOMS

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Abstract

Pronunciation is an important aspect of English language learning because it enables learners to communicate clearly and confidently. However, in many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, pronunciation receives less attention than grammar, vocabulary, reading, and writing. As a result, many university students struggle to pronounce English sounds accurately despite having good knowledge of other language skills. Phonetics-based pronunciation instruction helps learners understand speech sounds, stress, rhythm, intonation, and the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), leading to improved pronunciation and oral communication. This study investigates the perceptions of BS English students regarding phonetics-based pronunciation instruction at Islamabad Model Postgraduate Colleges for Boys and Girls. The study employs a quantitative descriptive research design, and data are collected through a structured questionnaire administered to 150 BS English students from different semesters. The responses are analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages. The findings indicate that most students have positive perceptions of phonetics-based instruction because it improves pronunciation accuracy, speaking confidence, listening comprehension, and classroom participation. Students also appreciate practical pronunciation activities, such as IPA practice, stress and intonation exercises, minimal pairs, and guided speaking tasks. However, some participants report challenges, including limited classroom practice, insufficient technological resources, and difficulties in learning phonetic symbols. The study concludes that effective pronunciation instruction should combine phonetic knowledge with practical communicative activities. The findings provide useful implications for English language teachers, curriculum developers, and educational policymakers to strengthen pronunciation teaching and improve learners' communicative competence in higher education.

Keywords: *BS English Students, EFL, English Language Classrooms, Islamabad Model Postgraduate Colleges, Phonetics, Pronunciation Instruction, Students' Perceptions.*

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1. Introduction

English is an international language used in all parts of the world for education, business, science, technology and communication. It is an official language and a very prevalent medium of instruction in higher education in Pakistan. BS English students are required to have an excellent speaking ability in both academic and professional contexts. Effective communication is vital in any situation where one person needs to explain their idea to another, and clarity of pronunciation is crucial. In the classroom where English is being taught, however, pronunciation is not always as highlighted as grammar, reading, writing and vocabulary. Consequently, there are students who have difficulties in producing English sounds, stress patterns, rhythm and intonation correctly. A phonetics-driven approach to pronunciation teaching gives learners scientific knowledge of speech sounds using study of articulation, phonetic symbols and IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet). It also develops communicability through theory and practical speech training activities including: pronunciation drills, oral presentations, discussion activities, listening activities and teacher comments. Positive attitude towards pronunciation lessons can enhance the motivation, participation and learning result of students, hence the perception of the students about pronunciation lessons should be grasped. The present study explores the perceptions of BS English students from Islamabad Model Postgraduate Colleges for Boys and Girls towards the effectiveness of pronounceability teaching method and the suggestions to improve the pronunciation teaching in higher education.

Clear and intelligible spoken communication is essential to successful communication and pronunciation has become an integral part of the teaching of modern English language. Using phonetics to learn about the sounds, rhyme, intonation, stress and the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) in English will promote effective speaking and listening abilities. Explicit pronunciation instructions have been found to improve learners' confidence and communication skills in the past (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010). Although phonetics and phonology courses are taught in them, in Pakistan, the emphasis of the BS English program on spoken language is low as compared to written, in the classrooms. Therefore, pronunciation problems are still a challenge for many students as a result of

studying phonetics. There is very limited research that has examined the attitudes of the BS English students towards phonetics-based pronunciation teaching in Islamabad Model Postgraduate Colleges. Thus, this study aims at analyzing the students' attitude towards the pronunciation instruction, perceived benefits, and problems faced by them, and suggests some recommendations for the teachers, curriculum developers and educational policy makers.

1.1. Research Objectives

The study aims to:

1. To examine BS English students' perceptions of phonetics-based pronunciation instruction in English language classrooms.
2. To investigate the perceived influence of phonetics-based pronunciation instruction on students' pronunciation accuracy, speaking confidence, and communication skills.
3. To identify the challenges faced by BS English students during phonetics-based pronunciation instruction.

2. Literature Review

One of the most crucial parts of learning English is pronunciation, as it directly impacts on communication. From that point of view, understanding listeners are more likely to understand a clear pronunciation of English words, although the listeners may have a good control of grammar and vocabulary. From that perspective, it becomes clear that listeners are more likely to understand an English word correctly, when the listener hears a clear pronunciation, rather than a bad pronunciation even if he/she has good grasp of usage of the grammar, and good vocabulary. English pronunciation has been prioritized as an important field of English language teaching (ELT), for this reason. Over the last three decades, there has been a growing consensus among researchers that ensuring students acquire pronunciation should be considered a part of communicative rather than separately or less importantly, a language skill (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010). One area that may cause difficulties for ELLs when speaking English is pronunciation, since the language has a larger number of sounds than their first language. Learners will affect these pronunciation issues due to their language background, age, motivation, learning environment, and the amount of English contact they have (Derwing & Munro 2015, p. 67). In a multilingual country such as Pakistan, students typically transfer pronunciation features from their L1 to English L2. This means that many university students are having difficulties with vowels, consonants, connected speech, intonation and word stress. Pronunciation instruction is widely agreed that it is for output's purpose to get a message across than to achieve native-like pronunciation. Levis (2005) stated that teaching pronunciation aims at helping learners understand and be understood rather than to get rid

of the foreign accent. The students, who can be understood by different people, communicate better, no matter their accent.

2.1. Phonetics-Based Pronunciation Instruction

Phonetics is the study of speech and how sounds are produced, transmitted and understood, is the scientific name for this. Phonetics is used as a communication technique in teaching English to understand the articulatory system, speech organs, consonants, vowels, diphthongs, stress pattern, rhythm, intonation and connected speech. They become more conscious of spoken English if they learn these features, which also make it easier to pronounce words more accurately (Roach, 2009). Typical pronunciation work includes the discovery of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) used in phonetics for a standardised way of representing English sounds. In the IPA symbols, students learn words the correct way, regardless of whether they are spelt regularly or irregularly in English. Kelly (2000) claims that phonetic knowledge helps the learners to detect the mistakes made by their communicative partner and correct them on their own. It has been found that explicit phonetics teaching is very effective in enhancing pronunciation accuracy of learners. In this study, Saito (2012) found that SPT learners were found to be more successful than learners who were only asked to do communication exercises without receiving pronunciation explicit instruction. Likewise, Thomson & Derwing (2015) found that the successful effects on pronunciation are greater when phonetic knowledge is used in conjunction with meaningful communication activities rather than through repetition.

2.2. Students' Perceptions of Pronunciation Instruction

The perception of learners is very crucial in language learning since positive perception can positively influence on their motivation and classroom participation. When students think that phonics instruction is beneficial, it is easy to encourage them to speak and make their communications better. On the other hand, when these perceptions are negative, they may attract low involvement of learners in pronunciation activities. On the contrary, the involvement in pronunciation activity is likely to be low when the perception is negative.

The findings from Baker (2014) suggested that pronunciation teaching increased the confidence of the university students in their oral presentation and class discussion. The result of Baker (2014) indicated that pronunciation instruction had positive impression among the students of the university because it helped to enhance their confidence in oral presentation and class discussion. Students welcome corrective feedback from teachers; and like using practical pronunciation exercises, rather than theoretical. Likewise, Foote et al. (2016) found students wanted pronunciation to be part of the curriculum of English language classes. They concluded that the students' preference for classroom activities were listening practice, minimal pairs, stress exercise, role play and classroom teacher's feedback. These activities were useful to students in enhancing their pronunciation and

communicative confidence. The discipline of pronunciation is less emphasized in Pakistan compared to grammar and vocabulary. Even though a course of phonetics is given in a BS English, students often have difficulties with the symbols of the ISPA, because the course is taught from theoretical perspective rather than practical application. Thus, knowledge of students' perceptions is useful to enable teacher to enhance his/her teaching strategy for pronunciation.

2.3. Importance of Pronunciation in English Language Learning

Pronunciation is a key element of successful communication, as listeners find speakers easier to understand when they are able to hear their pronunciation clearly. A good pronunciation also leads to better listening comprehension as listeners get used to English sound patterns, stress and intonation (Celce-Murcia et al.2010). Additional studies show the impact of pronunciation on pupil self-confidence. Speakers of Standard English tend to be more likely to engage in conversations in class, in oral responses, presentations, debates and discussions. Derwing and Munro (2015) indicate that pronunciation lesson decreases communication anxiety and learners' willingness to communicate. There are also positive mechanisms for word learning. Pronunciation is also contributing to vocabulary learning. Students will remember the correct pronunciation of sounds and new words correctly, and will make correct distinctions between words like bat/bet, ship/sheep or live/leave. Thus oral training aids the learner in enabling him to speak, hear, understand and learn words and expressions as well as in achieving communicative competence.

2.4. Pronunciation instruction – challenges in phonetics

In spite of its significance, there are some difficulties in teaching pronunciation. A primary constraint is time for instruction in classrooms. English teachers pay more attention to grammar, reading and writing due to an emphasis on these areas in English examinations (Gilakjani, 2016). For this reason, pronunciation practice is not given much attention in the classroom. The second problem is that students lack the knowledge of the use of the IPA symbols. The first challenges pupils encounter in learning phonetic transcription is that there are many differences in spelling and pronunciation in English. Students might learn symbols, but practice is needed to practice pronunciation. Another drawback of teachers is the lack of resources for teaching. There are less language laboratories, pronunciation software, audio materials and language laboratory software for facilitating pronunciation practice at many educational institutions. Teachers thus rely primarily on a textbook explanation of phonics rather than interactive pronunciation exercises.

2.5. Information about students' pronunciation proficiency level

English is an official language as well as a significant academic language of Pakistan. A speech course, such as phonetics and/or phonology, is also typically offered in BS English programs to enhance the students' ability to pronounce the alphabet properly.

The courses include the structure of the speech organs, articulatory phonetics, the English consonants, vowels, stress, rhythm and intonation. But there are some studies in Pakistan which suggest that pronunciation instruction tends to focus on theoretical knowledge rather than its communicative use. The use of phonetic symbols is often taught to students without any guided pronunciation practice. For this reason, researchers suggest using hands on activities in the classroom like presentation training, dialogues, role play, pronunciation training program, and peer interaction for enhancing skills in spoken English. This research is valuable to the literature of Pakistan because it seeks to investigate the perception of BS English students on the phonetics based pronunciation technique in Islamabad Model Post Graduate Colleges for boys and girls..

3. Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by Communicative Competence Theory suggested by Canale and Swain (1980) and then developed by Canale (1983).

According to Communicative Competence Theory, successful language learning is not merely the capacity of the learner to master morphology, syntax and semantics. However, learners need to learn sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence in order to communicate effectively. The ability to express words clearly is an essential part of the students' knowledge of these grammatical rules, as having these skills is fundamental to clear verbal expression. This theory is based on the belief that pronunciation teaching should be integrated into the context of communicative use of language, not as isolated drill. By interacting, communicating, receiving correction, and having to repeat what was heard, students' pronunciation skills are enhanced. Through interaction and communication, and repeated oral practice and corrective feedback, pronunciation is enhanced in interaction with students' improvisation and selecting. The theory is in line with the present study because the objective of phonetics-based pronunciation teaching is to help learners express themselves with good pronunciation, confidence of speech and furthermore, to improve their communicative competence in oral communication.

4. Research Methodology

Qualitative and quantitative descriptive research design was applied in this study to explore the English language Learner BS students' perceptions regarding phonetics based pronunciation training in English language classrooms. The quantitative approach was found to be appropriate because the researcher obtained quantitative data and could analyze the students' responses objectively by descriptive statistical techniques. This study was carried out in Islamabad Model Post Graduate Colleges for Boys & Girls Islamabad in which phonetics and phonology is given as a foundation course of BS English. The respondents were all the BS English students under the following BS Colleges. Of this population, a simple random sampling technique was used to select 150 students in total

with equal probability of a student being selected for the research from students in different semester. It would have ensured a representative sample because this sampling method reduced selection bias, and it also provided a representative sample of the students studying in the selected institutions. Structured questionnaire was used as an instrument for the research with two parts. The first section gathered demographic data such as gender, semester (fall/winter/summer) and if participants had previously studied phonetics, they selected one of the answers strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree which are assigned five points each on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 for strongly agree, to 5 for strongly disagree. These were questions from students' perception of how useful they found phonetics, their pronunciation improvement, their confidence in speaking, willingness to participate in class, pronunciation challenges, teacher support, pronunciation activities, and their overall satisfaction with phonetics-based pronunciation instruction.

Formal permission was taken from the principals and heads of the English departments of the selected colleges before taking the data. A formal permission was taken from the principals and heads of the English departments of the selected colleges prior to collecting the data. The participants were informed of the aim of the study and their responses would be kept confidential and used for research purpose only. The questionnaires were handed out through normal class hours and retrieved at the end of each class to maximize return and avoid missing and incomplete questionnaires. Questionnaires were then thoroughly checked upon collection for completeness and accuracy before being entered into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26 for scrutiny. Data were analysed by descriptive statistical techniques such as frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations which helped to display the findings in tables for ease of interpretation. Ethical principles were consistently adhered to all throughout the research process. The study was totally volunteer and informed consent was obtained from all the respondents and students informed that they could come out from the study without giving any consequences. To ensure credibility and integrity of the research, the researcher preserved the anonymity, confidentiality, honesty and objectivity during the process of data collection, data analysis and reporting.

5. Data Analysis

The analysis and interpretation of data collected from BS English students studying in the model post graduate colleges for boys and girls Islamabad are discussed in this chapter. The aim of this research was to examine learners' attitudes towards Korean English language pronunciation teaching using phonetic approach in the language classroom. Accordingly, this study was conducted to explore learners' attitudes toward teaching and learning Korean English pronunciation in English language classrooms based on the phonetic approach. The questioning was done on a structured form and a total of

150 students were involved. Descriptive Statistics, such as frequency and percentage was used to analyze the responses. Results shown in the tables are accompanied by a few interpretations. The findings are presented in terms of the objectives of the research in the discussion.

5.1. Demographic Information

Table 4.1 Gender of Participants

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	72	48%
Female	78	52%
Total	150	100%

5.1.1. Interpretation

It is evident from the table that in the total population of 150, 78 (52%) were female and 72 (48%) were male. The results suggest that there was a good spread of boys and girls and that the number was balanced with 4% of the gap in both groups. This even distribution contributed towards the even distribution of opinion gathered, highlighting the student's knowledge of either gender. The findings were reliable as pronunciation learning and classroom experience can vary between students, including male and female students from colleges. Participation rate was almost equal, which minimized the chances of gender bias in the data collection and made it easier to get a full picture of students' perceptions of pronunciation instruction using phonetics. Thus the answer may be regarded representative of the students of BS English in Islamabad Model Postgraduate Colleges (girls) and Islamabad Model Postgraduate Colleges for Boys.

Table 4.2 Semester of Participants

Semester	Frequency	Percentage
1st	32	21.3%
3rd	40	26.7%
5th	42	28.0%
7th	36	24.0%
Total	150	100%

5.1.2. Interpretation

This study involved the students of different semesters (1st, 3rd, 5th & 7th) of BS English program. This type of distribution enabled the researcher to gather learners' answers with variable academic experience and awareness of phonetics and pronunciation teaching. Students in the lower semesters started studying pronunciation a few months ago, and students in the higher semesters had finished more courses in grammar and linguistics, and had had more experience with pronunciation practice. The perspectives provided by the senior students were especially helpful as they had been in more situations practicing their phonetic knowledge in classroom discussions, presentations, and other speaking tasks. The participants of different semester also had been giving which has increased the

understanding of different stage student's perception of the BS English going through the course. It diversified the findings and made the findings more reliable and accurate, also it presented the views of the newly enrolled learners and the more experienced learners of the effectiveness of pronunciation instruction based on phonetics.

5.2. Students' Perceptions of Phonetics-Based Pronunciation Instruction

Table 4.3 Phonetics Improves My English Pronunciation

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	60	40%
Agree	58	38.7%
Neutral	18	12%
Disagree	10	6.7%
Strongly Disagree	4	2.6%

5.2.1. Interpretation

The results show that 78.7% of students understand that English pronunciation is better if they are taught through the phonetic approach and the rest disagree. The result is obviously the respondents' perception of the positive Indonesian students' perception of learning phonetics and believes that it is important in developing good pronunciation are declared by the majority of students of the BS English category at Bangor University, 2019. The students responded that course on phonetics has enabled them to learn the appropriate way to produce the English speech sounds, vowels, consonants, stress pattern, and intonation. They also had increased confidence in the pronunciation of unknown words with phonetic transcription and International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Pronunciation development helped students communicate and discuss ideas clearly in the classroom, present their views orally, and express themselves orally in other skills activities. A few students were found to be not satisfied with the learning of the phonetic symbols process, and may be less exposed to the students' pronunciation practice. What comes through overall from these findings are that phonetics is effective in learning English and that it is a valuable part of English language learning because phonetics contributes to the accuracy of pronunciation, confidence in speaking and enables oral communication of students. The results also indicated the implementation of phonetic instruction in English learning program in the BS English program should be continued to play a significant role in English learning courses and applications should be focused on both practical intervention and application in the classroom to achieve the highest learning outcomes.

Table 4.4 Phonetics Helps Me Speak English More Confidently

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	54	36%
Agree	62	41.3%
Neutral	20	13.3%

Disagree	10	6.7%
Strongly Disagree	4	2.7%

5.2.2. Interpretation

The results have revealed that 77.3% of the students found that they gained in confidence of their English pronunciation through the instruction of phonetics. It means that most participants considered pronunciation teaching as a significant one of the factors to help them improve their oral communication skills. Following phonetics students mentioned that they felt comfortable in speaking English during the presentations, discussions in the students groups, seminars, as well as questions and answers in class. They felt learning the correct sounds, stress, rhythm and intonation of English made it more easy to say it and take the pressure off saying the wrong word. Because of this, they were more comfortable sharing their ideas and communicating with the rest of the class in English and with teachers. The results also indicated that greater confidence had a positive effect on students' involvement in class and their overall learning process. Students had less reluctance to read out loud and were less intimidated to join in discussions and debates when they had a higher level of confidence in their pronunciation. This confidence also motivated them to speak English more often in school and out of the classroom, and thus further promoted their speaking ability. Despite the limited number of learners who did not demonstrate a preference for this pronunciation method or disagreed, which may stem from limited use of phonetics in the classroom or learners' difficulties with pronunciation, the results of this study confirmed that phonetics-based pronunciation training works to significantly boost learner's confidence. As such, pronunciation work and error correction should continue to be a constant feature in the classroom and teachers should be giving consistent feedback and guidance to improve their students' pronunciation and make them more successful and confident in speaking English.

Table 4.5 Learning IPA Symbols Helps Correct Pronunciation

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	50	33.3%
Agree	65	43.3%
Neutral	20	13.3%
Disagree	10	6.7%
Strongly Disagree	5	3.4%

5.2.3. Interpretation

Results showed that 76.6% of the respondents found out that using International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) assisted them to pronounce English words better. This result indicates that most of the BS English students were found that IPA was effective tool to improve the pronunciation skill of English learners. Learning phonetic symbols enabled students to know how to properly pronounce words independent of their spelling, the latter

being mostly irregular in English. A large proportion of those that took part have indicated that IPA helped them identify phonetical similarities and dissimilarities between similar sounds and to achieve a more accurate articulation of their pronunciation. They too reported that the use of a dictionary with phonetic transcription of the spellings was easier to use for them for self-study of pronunciation of new words.

Additionally, it can be seen that the result of the study indicates students' knowledge of IPA has raised the awareness of the students' English speech in terms of vowels, consonants, diphthong, stress pattern and intonation. This awareness helped them to avoid some of the typical English pronunciation errors derived from their L1 and to gain insight into their general English pronunciation. It was also found that students felt that using phonetic transcription, classroom pronunciation training was more useful since they tie theory to practice (speaking tasks). However, even if few agreed or remained negative, some may have been confused by learning the phonetic symbols or limited practice in the classroom, the majority of the responds were positive and thus confirm the significance of the use of the IPA in pronunciation teaching based on phonetics. Teachers should, therefore, keep using phonetic transcription in pronunciation classes and apply adequate practical speaking, listening and speaking support to make sure students can confidently apply their learnt phonetic knowledge when they talk in real life.

Table 4.6 Teachers Use Effective Pronunciation Activities

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	38	25.3%
Agree	54	36.0%
Neutral	28	18.7%
Disagree	22	14.7%
Strongly Disagree	8	5.3%

5.2.4. Interpretation

The results reveal that about 61.3% of the students agreed teachers conducted the effective pronunciation exercises during English language classes. The result implies that most of the subject matter accepted as regards pronunciation teaching methods. Moreover, the teachers used various methods in teaching pronunciation, which were mentioned by the students including reading aloud, word stress training, pronunciation drills, repetition training, classroom discussion training, oral presentation training, and corrective feedback. Students were given opportunities to get to know common English sounds and practise their pronunciation in a way that helped them to become more accurate. Many participants thought that these classroom activities helped them to communicate better in general and that their pronunciation was better.

The results do, however, show that nearly one-fifth of the students did not agree that the pronunciation activities were totally effective and a smaller group disagreed that

the pronunciation activities were totally effective. These indicated that although, in general, pronunciation teaching was liked, some room for improvement still could be recommended. Some students might think that the activities were not done regularly and/or that they were more theoretical than practical as far as speaking is concerned. Others might have expected greater utilization of modern teaching materials like language laboratories, audio-visual materials, pronunciation computer software, online learning applications and speaking activities that would be interactive. The neutral responses suggest that students' learning experiences may not have been equal across the board, which could be due to a range of factors including differences in teaching practices, classroom settings and personal learning preferences. In general, these results indicate that teachers need to expand the opportunities for practical pronunciation exercises, the participation of students, and continuous feedback to support learners to achieve their pronunciation, speaking confidence and communicative competence more effectively.

Table 4.7 Pronunciation Practice Improves Listening Skills

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	48	32%
Agree	61	40.7%
Neutral	23	15.3%
Disagree	13	8.7%
Strongly Disagree	5	3.3%

5.2.5. Interpretation

The results also show that 72.7% of the respondents noted that having their pronunciation taught on phonetic basis also helps them to improve their listening ability. This finding indicates that most of the BS-English students had perceived that there was a connection between the roles played by pronunciation and listening skills. The teaching of English speech sounds, stress pattern, rhythm and intonation enabled students to identify these from native and natural English speakers. In most of the responses, those participants stated that the phonetics helped them to distinguish between similar sounds and find out how to pronounce words that they had previously found difficult to do. Consequently, they had less trouble with classroom information, audio recordings of classroom lectures, listening activities and conversations.

The results also indicated that a good listening comprehension had a positive effect in students' language learning. Pupils felt that they would find their knowledge of spoken English easier as they already knew the sound system of the language. This helped them in identifying and understanding the varying accents better and confidently communicate in the classroom during discussions and oral work. It also helped with vocabulary-building, students were able to recognize and remember words they heard more accurately, heard more often. The overall results show that the pronunciation instruction has a beneficial

effect not only on the accuracy of the spoken language, but also in the comprehension of the spoken language, although a small number of participants were neutral or disagreed because they may have had less opportunity to practice listening, or have different learning ability. Also, pronunciation exercises should be combined with listening exercises, audio recordings, podcasts and communicative activities/situations so that language learners' language skills in both listening and speaking are trained together.

Table 4.8 Pronunciation Instruction Encourages Classroom Participation

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	46	30.7%
Agree	64	42.6%
Neutral	22	14.7%
Disagree	13	8.7%
Strongly Disagree	5	3.3%

5.2.6. Interpretation

The results revealed that almost 73.3% of the students felt that phonetics teacher training allowed them to take part in oral activities and conversations in the class more actively. This means that most of the participants were of the opinion that their increased confidence and willingness to communicate in English was related to improved pronunciation. Once they are taught the phonetics, many students said that they were not scared of making errors in pronunciation and could speak their ideas with more confidence to the teacher and fellow students. They felt that this enhanced their knowledge of English sounds, English stress pattern and English intonation, which permitted them to speak more clearly and effectively during class interaction. Consequently, they involved in participation to a greater extent in pair work, group discussion, debate, seminar, and oral presentation.

The results also indicated classroom participation had a positive effect on students' language learning as a whole. Those student who spoke more regularly benefited from more opportunities to practice their speech, for constructive feedback from their teachers and for practicing pronunciation more often as a result of their regular communication. They were also able to improve their fluency, vocabulary and listening ability as they engaged in meaningful learning situations with their class mates and teachers. Slightly more than half expressed positive responses and almost a third had a neutral opinion, perhaps because they felt at ease or lacked confidence and knowledge in the subject matter, but the percentage of those who disagreed was relatively low (10.9%), and there were enough speaking opportunities for these students to feel confident enough to participate in class. Thus, teachers of English should persist in building a good and relevant learning environment for their students to be confident in oral learning. Removing limitations,

repetition, constant feedback, and communication-focused pronunciation practice can build students' confidence, engagement, and communication skills.

Table 4.9 Students Face Difficulties in Learning Phonetics

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	28	18.7%
Agree	49	32.7%
Neutral	26	17.3%
Disagree	34	22.7%
Strongly Disagree	13	8.6%

5.2.7. Interpretation

The results show greater than half of the respondents (51.4%) admitted that they found it difficult to learn phonetics. This suggests that whilst students in principle understood the importance of phonetics in their pronunciation accuracy, the majority of students experienced difficulties while studying the theoretical and practical aspects of the phonetics. The more frequent problems were difficulty with understanding the phonetic symbols of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), understanding the correct word stress, applying intonation patterns, and forgetting English pronunciation rules. Many students gave the answer that English can be hard to pronounce some of the words if they don't practice enough and the spelling sometimes don't match with the pronunciation of the word. Because many phonetic symbols were unfamiliar to them, it was difficult for them to recognise and accurately employ these symbols during their pronunciation exercises.

The findings also indicate that one of the reasons for these difficulties was limited classroom experience, and that differences between English and the students' first language also had some effect on these difficulties. Some of the participants reported that prior to coming to the BS in English course, they lacked previous knowledge in note-taking in phonetics, which, at the start, seems complicated. Some felt that the situation where the language laboratory was not used to its full potential or that the language materials used were not audio-visual or that the pronunciation activities were not interactive was making learning more difficult. However, a number of students recognised that their learning progressed step by step with practice, guidance and feedback from their teachers. From the responses, there is a consensus that the best way to get the best results when learning phonetics is through both theory and practice. As a result, teachers should simplify the explanation of the IPA symbols, conduct an explanation and practice of the pronunciation step by step, as well as using more listening exercises, pronunciation drills, pair work, and technology-assisted activities in teaching. These strategies can help decrease the learning difficulties faced by students, boost their confidence, and help them both speak and pronounce better.

Table 4.10 More Practical Activities Should Be Included

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	66	44%
Agree	58	38.7%
Neutral	12	8%
Disagree	9	6%
Strongly Disagree	5	3.3%

5.2.8. Interpretation

The conclusions indicate that the answers stood that a very high percentage of all respondents (82.7%) thought that the pronunciation class should have more of the practical activities than theoretical instruction. The findings clearly reveal that the majority of the BS English students appreciate the interactive, hands-on learning approach that will enable them to implement the knowledge they have developed in the field of phonetics in real communication. Students indicated that practical activities, through which they could practice pronunciation phenomena, stressors, rhythm and intonation in a meaningful context, helped them learn the concepts of pronunciation. They thought practicing communication regularly helps them to master the pronunciation of given words rather than learning phonetic rules and symbol. They felt that regular communication practice was a better way to achieve pronouncing accuracy, fluency and confidence than studying phonetic rules and symbols from writers alone.

Participants very much appreciated oral presentation, classroom discussion, small group discussion, discussion role plays, debate, language laboratory session, pronunciation drills, listening tasks, pronunciation software, and discussion. Many students said these activities helped them to get prompt feedback from teachers and peers as well, which meant that they were able to recognize and fix their pronunciation errors. They were also expected to be strongly convinced that with the use of modern technological devices like applications for learning foreign languages, CDs and tape recorders, foreign language dictionaries with modern pronunciation services and interactive pronunciation trainers, learning is interesting and beneficial. These tools enabled students to hear the real English pronunciation and practice themselves at home outside of the classroom.

6. Discussion

The results showed that the attitudes of the students of BS English towards phonetics method for pronunciation are positive. A large majority of participants agreed that phonetics study helped them to improve their pronunciation accuracy, confidence and communication skills. The present results agree with Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) who suggested that explicit pronunciation teaching is effective for enhancing communicative competence of the learner by making his/her speech more intelligible.

The results of the study corroborate Derwing and Munro (2015) who proposed that pronunciation teaching boosts the ability of learners to speak. In the current study, majority of students recorded that they felt more comfortable and could speak English successfully after learning phonetics courses. By fostering greater confidence, active participation is promoted in the classroom and anxiety is lessened during classroom presentations and discussions.

The outcomes also shed light on students' view that the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is an appropriate technique to help them with pronunciation. This is also similar to the finding reported by Kelly (2000) who argued that the use of phonetic transcription helps pupils identify phonetic patterns that you cannot see from English spelling. Students familiar with the IPA symbols will be more independent of how they learn about pronunciation of unfamiliar words.

Another major discovery is related to the classroom method. While students are aware that pronunciation is taught by their teachers, most of them valued teachers' efforts in teaching pronunciation but wanted more of such practical activities. The outcome confirms the finding of the previous studies carried out by Baker (2014) and Foote et al. (2016) which suggested the incorporation of communicative pronunciation exercise in classrooms for an English language course. Practical activities let students use the phonetic knowledge to engage in authentic communication instead of learning and memorizing phonetic theory.

There were also a number of problems discovered in the study. Students reported having problems with phonetics due to the use of unfamiliar IPA symbols, and no adequate amount of practice in the classroom. This has also been found by Gilakjani (2016) who found that pronunciation instruction sometimes is neglected in the class time dedicated to grammar and vocabulary. Therefore the learners may have a phonetic theory but not good pronunciation.

The overall results of the study indicate that the use of the phonetics-based pronunciation instruction is valuable to enhance learners' speaking skill, comprehension of their listening, classroom confidence and communicative competence. Teachers should however give more emphasis to the practical pronunciation activities and give their students continuous feedback to overcome learning difficulties.

6.1. Major Findings

The overall results of the study suggest that most of the subjects (B. S. English students) have positive attitudes towards phonetics based pronunciation instruction. Most of the respondents stated that they observed that study of phonetics enhanced their oral skills in terms of pronunciation, speaking confidence, participation in class, comprehension of listening and general skill in communication.

The first purpose of the study was to look at students' perceptions from phonetics-derived pronunciation teaching. The data showed that almost four times out of five respondents felt that phonetics helped them to pronounce the English word(s) more accurately. Pronunciation instruction was regarded as one of the most important subjects to study in order to acquire the English language as students believed it helps them recognize and produce the appropriate sounds of English. The majority of the participants also agreed that teaching phonetics should be a compulsory subject in BS English program.

The second goal was to see how much phonetics teaching affected the accuracy of pronunciation and communicative competence. Results revealed that the majority of students felt that phonetics-based method promoted their confidence as speakers of English. After teaching phonetics, pupils stated that they gained confidence to present their classwork and talk about it in class and at their oral examinations. In addition, they reported that they found their listening skills enhanced as they became familiar with English sounds, stress pattern, rhythm, and intonation through pronunciation practice.

The findings also revealed that the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) was important in the pronunciation learning. A large majority of the students felt that phonetic transcription enabled them to have a better insight into the pronunciation of unfamiliar words. Use of IPA symbols also facilitated students to learn the words independently since they can use dictionary more effectively.

Another key finding is related to classroom practices. While the majority of the students valued their teachers' pronunciation instruction, they strongly advocated enhancement in the aspects of practical pronunciation activities. Classes classing mainly on theory, lectures, classroom presentations, pronunciation drills, pair work, role plays, group discussion, listening exercises, language laboratory, and digital pronunciation software for improvement, were preferred by students to classroom lectures.

The study also revealed that there were some problems encountered by the learners in learning phonetics supporting in the learning process. Many participants were having trouble at the start of the course with the IPA symbols. Others mentioned lack of classroom practice and a lack of language laboratories, as well as a lack of technological resources. Some students felt that pronunciation was less emphasized in school because teachers' learning priorities were more based on grammatical, literary and writing abilities.

As a whole finding revealed that Phonetics based pronunciation training has beneficial effect on students' pronunciation skills, pupil's confidence, motivation and communicative competence. Learning pronunciation, however, should be more practical in nature than theoretical.

7. Conclusion

Conclusively, phonetics-based pronunciation instruction in the process of teaching learning has the great influence on the enhancement of pronunciation competence and

whole communicative competence of the BS degree English students of Islamabad, Model Postgraduate Colleges of Boys and Girls. The results show that generally speaking, students have positive attitudes towards phonetics as it is beneficial for them to attain a better pronunciation accuracy, increased self-confidence on speaking and better listening ability, participation in the class and orality. The students also learned that studying phonetics helped them to grasp the salient aspects of spoken English such as speech sounds, stress, intonation and the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). However, due to limited hands on activities within the classrooms, some students were facing learning challenges with regard to phonetic symbols and pronunciation rules was also identified. Based on these findings, it is recommended that the pronunciation instruction be given through theoretical explanation and continual language practice like presentation, role playing, discussion, listening, language lab and use of technology. Hence, those who are teaching English should adopt more interactive and corrective feedback teaching method so that students' pronunciation skills will be improved. Teachers use phonetics in the classroom in a more diverse and communicative way; and educational institutions should have modern pronunciation resources, such as language laboratories, and digital learning tools for each learning unit and should use these resources to ensure effective pronunciation teaching and learning. Students need to have a good command of pronunciation. This should be achieved through regular practice and authentic spoken English. Last, but not least, the researchers are encouraged to do qualitative and mixed method research with classroom observations, interviews and pronunciation assessment as research methods, and comparative studies of different educational institutions and settings, to gain deeper insights into pronunciation instruction and its effects on language learning in Pakistan.

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