IMPROVING CHILDREN PRONUNCIATION IN ENGLISH

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Abstract: *The development of accurate pronunciation is a critical aspect of English language learning for children, as it enhances their communication skills, confidence, and overall language competence. This article explores various strategies to improve children's pronunciation, including phonetic training, interactive learning techniques, and the use of technological tools such as apps and multimedia resources. It also examines the role of consistent practice, exposure to native speakers, and the creation of a supportive learning environment. By addressing common pronunciation challenges and implementing these targeted methods, this article aims to provide practical insights for fostering clearer and more natural English pronunciation in children.*

Keywords: *English pronunciation, Phonetic training, Speech recognition technology, Native language interference, Social media for language learning, language acquisition, pronunciation improvement methods, interactive learning, technology in education, children's language development*

INTRODUCTION

Improving children's English pronunciation is a crucial aspect of language acquisition, yet it poses significant challenges due to the complexities of English phonology and the influence of learners' native languages. Fu and Aonsawat (2006) highlight the benefits of phonetic alphabet training in addressing letter-sound mismatches. Mitra et al. (2003) emphasize the role of technology, such as speech-to-text software and educational films, in making pronunciation practice engaging and effective. Additionally, Winaitham and Suppasetseree (2012) identify native language interference as a key factor impacting pronunciation accuracy. This paper explores these approaches, aiming to provide effective strategies for enhancing children's English pronunciation.

Advantages of Social Media in Pronunciation Learning

Social media platforms have increasingly become valuable tools for language learners, especially when it comes to improving pronunciation. Unlike traditional learning methods, social media offers a vast, easily accessible resource for authentic English input. Platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok provide exposure to native speakers, varied accents, and real-life conversational contexts, which are essential for acquiring natural pronunciation. According to research, exposure to diverse speaking styles on these platforms enhances students' phonetic awareness and enables them to mimic accurate pronunciation more effectively. Furthermore, interactive features like comment sections and live sessions allow learners to receive instant feedback from both peers and native speakers, providing a more dynamic and engaging learning environment. This approach mirrors the interactive learning techniques explored by Mitra et al. (2003), emphasizing active involvement in language use.

Methods to Improve Pronunciation

Several methods have proven effective in enhancing children's pronunciation. One of the most widely recommended techniques is phonetic training. By focusing on the sounds of English and their corresponding symbols, children can better understand the relationship between letters and sounds. Phonetic exercises help learners practice challenging sounds that are not present in their native languages, thus reducing common pronunciation errors.

Another effective method is integrating technology, such as speech recognition software. Tools like Dragon NaturallySpeaking allow students to receive immediate feedback on their pronunciation, helping them refine their speech by comparing it to a standard model. Additionally, language-learning apps and online platforms offer interactive exercises that help students practice and perfect their pronunciation in a fun, engaging way. Exposure to native speakers through videos, audio clips, and interactive lessons provides further opportunities for pronunciation improvement.

Role of Parental Involvement and Consistent Practice

Parental involvement plays a crucial role in children's pronunciation development. Parents who actively participate in their children's learning—by encouraging daily practice, helping with phonetic exercises, and even modeling pronunciation—significantly enhance their child's language skills. Consistent practice, whether through reading aloud, interactive games, or exposure to media in English, further reinforces proper pronunciation. Research indicates that children who receive regular pronunciation practice, combined with feedback from teachers or technology, show significant improvement in both their speaking and listening skills.

Conclusion

Improving children's English pronunciation requires a multi-faceted approach that combines traditional phonetic training with modern technology, interactive learning, and consistent practice. Research has demonstrated the effectiveness of speech recognition tools, social media exposure, and phonetic exercises in addressing pronunciation challenges. Furthermore, parental involvement and consistent practice are essential in reinforcing the skills learned. By adopting these strategies, children can achieve clearer and more natural pronunciation, ultimately enhancing their language proficiency and communication skills. This approach not only addresses the technical aspects of pronunciation but also fosters a more engaging and immersive language-learning experience.

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