

Is the LFC Killing Buffaloes?

The Influence of the LFC in improving the Intelligibility and comprehensibility of Arab Learners

The status of English as an international language (EIL) has become an increasingly popular topic in Applied Linguistics and resulted in the lively discussion of which pronunciation model to aim at in classroom teaching.



A new pronunciation syllabus has been proposed by Professor Jennifer Jenkins which includes presumably the sounds which are more likely to cause breakdown in communication among non-native speakers (NNSs). This syllabus has become known as the Lingua Franca Core (LFC). The aim of this project is to investigate the intelligibility and comprehensibility of English learners when this pronunciation syllabus is implemented.

ANGELHELEN (2005)

Methodology and Research Design

Quasi-Experimental Approach
(2 groups of learners – experimental and control Groups)

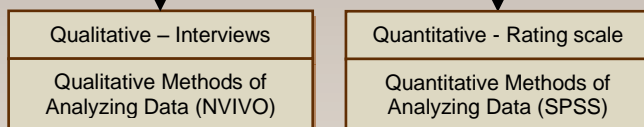
Pre-recording (for both groups)

Implementing the LFC and RP/GA syllabuses

LFC	MSA	CA (LFC/MSA)
All sounds except /θ/, /ð/ and /ʃ/	/p/, /v/, /dʒ/, /g/ and /ŋ/ do not exist in MSA [p], [ŋ] & [ʃ] are allophones of /b/, /p/ and /v/.	/p/, /v/, /dʒ/, /g/ & /ŋ/.
Rhotic /r/	Trilled /r/	Rhotic /r/
Intervocalic [t]	Dental /t/	Intervocalic [t]
Aspiration after /p/, /t/, and /k/	Aspirated [t], and [k] are allophones of /t/ and /k/	Aspiration after /p/, /t/, and /k/
Appropriate vowel length before fortis/lenis	-	Appropriate vowel length before fortis/lenis
Avoiding contracted/short forms	Arabs tend to avoid contracted/short forms	Avoiding contracted/short forms
Word initially and medially	No clusters of more than 2 consonants. No clusters word initially	Word initially and medially.
Long/short contrast + /ɜ:/	/i:/, /u:/, /æ:/, /ɔ:/, /ɛ:/, /a:/, /e:/, /ə:/	Long/short contrast + /ɜ:/
L2 (consistent) regional qualities.	-	Learners' regional quality is accepted.
Appropriate use of contrastive stress	-	Nuclear stress.

Post-recording (For both experimental and control groups)

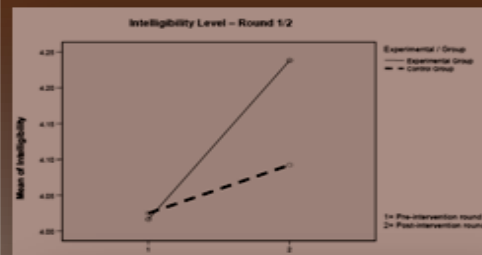
Evaluating Intelligibility and comprehensibility of both groups by 3 groups of English speakers: NS, ESL, and EFL



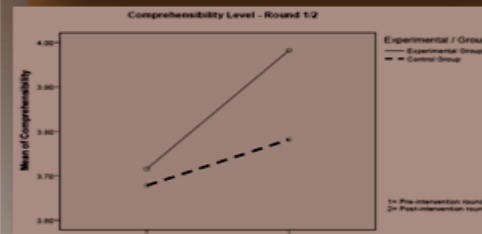
Answering the research question:

Is there any significant difference between the intelligibility and comprehensibility of learners following the syllabus based on the LFC and learners of a traditional pronunciation syllabus (based on RP/GA)?

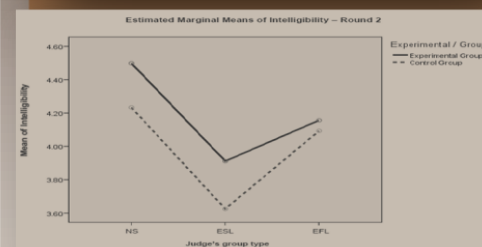
Findings



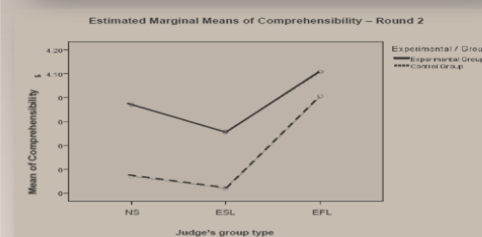
No significant difference between the LFC and RP/GA groups in terms of intelligibility



No significant difference between the LFC and RP/GA groups in terms of comprehensibility



LFC group was more intelligible to NS than to ESL and EFL groups



LFC group was more comprehensible to EFL than to NS and ESL groups

Factors

- Familiarity, background, and expectations of Listener.
- Speakers' attitude and self confidence - Listeners' attitude.
- Ethnolinguistic Identity Theory - Grammar and Vocabulary.