

EFL Learners' Attitudes towards the Proper Pronunciation of English and Podcasts as a Facilitator of Proper Pronunciation

Riam K. Almaqrn

Department of Education, College of Education
Majmah University, Majmah, Saudi Arabia

Abdulrahman M. Alshabeb

Department of English, College of Languages and Translation
Al Imam Mohammed Ibn Saud Islamic University
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the attitudes of Saudi students of English towards proper pronunciation, and podcasts as a facilitator of proper pronunciation. It will discover the importance given to correct pronunciation, as well as gauging learners' attitudes towards the possibility of introducing podcasts as a new language input tool for facilitating improvements in pronunciation. To achieve this, the previous literature in this area is reviewed, followed by presenting the results and analysing the data from an attitudinal questionnaire distributed amongst 23 Level 3 Saudi EFL learners from the department of English at Imam University. The questionnaire is divided into two parts- one concerning proper pronunciation, and the other podcasts. The data analysis shows that the participants, in spite of the low rate of improvement in their pronunciation, have positive attitudes towards the proper pronunciation of English. This outcome is compatible with previous studies' results, which assert that having a positive attitude towards a particular language and its speakers can improve pronunciation. The students were presented with a total of five podcasts related to their speaking and listening textbook for use over an eight week period, and at the end of this time they were requested to complete the questionnaire. The findings support the usefulness of examining learners' attitudes towards new Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) applications before using them in a practical way. The results show a high rate of acceptance of podcasts and that, overall, the students have positive attitudes towards them.

Keywords: CALL, English, podcasts, pronunciation

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