The Effect of Shadowing on Pre-intermediate Iraqi EFL Learners' Pronunciation and Intonation Accuracy

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Article Info	Abstract
	This study examined the effect of the shadowing technique on the pronunciation and intonation ability of pre-intermediate Iraqi EFL learners. the study utilized a pre-test, treatment, and immediate post- test design. A total number of 120 Iraqi EFL learners were initially screened through the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) to establish a homogeneous participant pool, ultimately resulting in a final sample of 90 pre-intermediate learners (n=90) from a private institute in Diwaniyah city. Participants were divided into control and experimental groups, with the experimental group receiving instruction focused on the shadowing technique through a series of pre-recorded English dialogues. The shadowing intervention comprised six progressive steps: initial listening, mumbling, synchronized reading, prosodic shadowing, targeted practice on difficult points, and content shadowing. In contrast, the control group engaged in traditional instructor-led pronunciation practice. To assess the effectiveness of the shadowing technique on pronunciation and intonation, a reading aloud test and a short spontaneous conversation including three to four questions were administered. A nine-point pronunciation scale, with detailed descriptors, facilitated consistent scoring. Two independent raters evaluated pronunciation and intonation in a double-blind manner, and the scores were subjected to statistical analyses. The results revealed the beneficial effects of shadowing technique on both pronunciation and intonation accuracy of Iraqi pre-intermediate EFL learners. the findings underscore the potential of the shadowing technique as an groundbreaking approach in EFL instruction, encouraging educators to integrate transformative methodologies that enhance learners' communicative skills.

Introduction

Although the goal of pronunciation teaching has shifted since 1990s from attaining native-like pronunciation to that of intelligibility (Wang & Wen, 2023), there are still debates among teachers and/or learners on what constitutes good pronunciation: native-like or intelligible pronunciation? Irrespective of the approach one adopts towards the end result and taking into account the ongoing nature of language learning, pronunciation and intonation have always been among the issues language teachers found challenging components of spoken language. In English, mispronunciations and inappropriate intonation can distort meaning, resulting in misunderstandings. Despite the importance of these elements, research on effective strategies to enhance pronunciation and intonation accuracy has received little attention (Couper, 2016, Derwing & Munro, 2005, Pawlak & Szyszka, 2018). Research suggests this may be due to the fact that English teachers strive to teach it systematically or direct their attention to specific selective aspects of pronunciation for various motives (Darcy et al., 2012; Levis et al., 2016).

Notwithstanding the debates that prevail, achieving intelligibility in pronunciation, particularly for foreign language learners, is not without its challenges. English pronunciation involves complex features including segmental aspects (such as vowel and consonant sounds) and suprasegmental features (such as stress, rhythm, and intonation). Imperative for effective communication, these aspects, pose significant difficulties for EFL learners, particularly those from non-English speaking backgrounds, who often struggle with the subtleties of native-like pronunciation.

English teachers need to be equipped with an array of effective teaching strategies and resources to address these challenges. However, not all English teachers are adequately trained in phonology and often lack theoretical and foundational knowledge on how to effectively teach pronunciation. Studies have shown that many EFL teachers are unprepared to address the specific pronunciation needs of their students, especially when it comes to teaching segmental sounds and suprasegmental features such as intonation (Breitkreutz, et al., 2001; Couper, 2017). It has to be acknowledged, nonetheless, that a considerable part of pronunciation skills development is extracurricular and often falls outside the classroom, giving the students the opportunity to take the responsibility of their learning and improve their pronunciation during

their own time. It follows that they need to set realistic pronunciation goals, opt for appropriate learning techniques, consistently monitor progress, and engage in genuine self-assessments (Pawlak and Szyszka, 2018).

One technique that has gained attention in recent years for its potential to enhance pronunciation and intonation is shadowing. The shadowing technique, which involves learners listening to and immediately repeating spoken language in real-time, has been shown to improve learners' pronunciation, prosody, and rhythm (Murphey, 2001; Nguyen & Thuong, 2024; Tamai, 2005; Ulfa & Fatima, 2019). By mimicking native speech patterns, learners can internalize the correct production of sounds, stress patterns, and intonation contours. This method not only aids in the development of individual sounds but also promotes fluency and automaticity in speech production (Hamada & Suzuki, 2024). Although shadowing has been widely studied for its impact on listening and speaking skills, there is limited research on its specific effects on pronunciation and intonation accuracy, particularly among Iraqi EFL learners.

In many cases, pronunciation instruction is deemed as non-essential or is overlooked due to a lack of specialized training among EFL teachers (Pawlak & Szyszka, 2018). Additionally, pronunciation teaching materials, particularly those that focus on intonation and stress patterns, are often inadequate or unavailable. This gap in instructional resources, combined with the limited expertise of many instructors, leads to insufficient pronunciation practice for learners within the Iraqi context.

Moreover, while research on the effectiveness of various pronunciation teaching methods is ongoing, few studies have explored the impact of shadowing techniques on the pronunciation and intonation accuracy of pre-intermediate EFL learners, especially in non-native English-speaking contexts such as Iraq. Existing studies on shadowing have primarily focused on advanced learners or have examined its effects on listening skills rather than its direct impact on pronunciation and intonation. Therefore, there is a need for further research to examine how shadowing can be used to improve the pronunciation and intonation of pre-intermediate learners in a classroom setting.

Iraqi EFL learners often face persistent challenges in achieving it accurate pronunciation and intonation, which impede their oral communication skills and overall language proficiency. These difficulties can be attributed to factors such as inadequate exposure to authentic English speech, limited opportunities to engage in interactive listening and speaking activities, and the influence of native language interference on than a phonological patterns. Additionally, traditional teaching methods tend to focus on rote learning of grammar and vocabulary, neglecting the critical aspects of pronunciation and intonation. As a result, learners struggle to produce natural and intelligible speech, impacting their ability to convey meaning effectively and their confidence in real-life communication scenarios.

Addressing these issues requires the integration of innovative techniques, such as shadowing, that emphasize active listening and mimicry to develop learners auditory and articulatory skills in a more immersive and dynamic manner. This study addresses this gap by investigating the role of shadowing in improving pronunciation and intonation accuracy. By focusing on this specific learner population, the research seeks to contribute valuable insights into the practical application of shadowing as a tool for enhancing spoken English proficiency. The findings from this study will provide a deeper understanding of the potential of shadowing in improving both segmental and suprasegmental aspects of pronunciation. To this end, the following research questions were put forward:

Research Questions

1. Does the shadowing technique have any significant effect on the pronunciation accuracy of pre-intermediate Iraqi EFL learners?

2. Does the shadowing technique have any significant effect on the intonation accuracy of pre-intermediate Iraqi EFL learners?

Review of the literature

Shadowing

As a training technique originally used in simultaneous interpreting (Lambert, 1992), shadowing has found its way into mainstream second language (L2) learning which has been supported by empirical research (Hamada, 2016, 2017; Kadota, 2019). Research highlights its positive effects on pronunciation, listening comprehension, and fluency (Foote & McDonough, 2017; Hamada, 2019; Kawasaki, 2019). Dissimilar to conventional listening tasks, shadowing underscores bottom-up processing, enhancing learners' ability to recognize words and comprehend speech (Hamada, 2017; Kadota, 2019). It is a cognitively demanding activity requiring simultaneous listening and vocalization (Tamai, 1997), distinguishing it from repetition exercises (Shiki et al., 2010).

Tamai (2005) identifies shadowing as an active listening task fostering rapid listening proficiency gains. Kadota (2007) emphasizes its role in speech automatization and linguistic internalization, while Arguelles (2011) highlights its broad applicability in language learning. Cognitive frameworks suggest shadowing operates within controlled and automatic processing modes, enhancing memory retention and sound recognition (Thi Huyen et al., 2020). The gradual automatization of speech reflects subvocalization, a key cognitive process in language acquisition.

Shadowing entails listening to audio and reproducing it in real time, akin to karaoke (Hamada, 2016). Unlike mere repetition, shadowing is an active cognitive process (Hamada, 2012), engaging memory and mental resources (Seo & Takeuchi, 2013). Definitions vary, with some emphasizing word-for-word imitation (Lambert, 1992) and others recognizing its cognitive demands (Jaramillo & Isaza, 2016). Despite its effects on listening and speaking gains, shadowing is increasingly recognized for its impact on pronunciation, particularly through prosodic imitation (Foote & McDonough, 2017; Kadota & Tamai, 2004). Research suggests that integrating shadowing with activities like oral reading or gestures enhances pronunciation gains (Mori, 2011; Hamada, 2020). However, learners require foundational listening skills to avoid cognitive overload (Hamada, 2019). Studies show that sustained shadowing practice improves fluency, imitation accuracy, and comprehensibility (Foote & McDonough, 2017; Ulfa & Fatimah, 2019).

The literature on shadowing points to a number of types that vary in complexity to match learners' proficiency levels (Kadota, 2007; Tamai, 1997). In full shadowing the students repeat the audio input immediately while slash shadowing stresses better recognition by inserting pauses in the input. Silent shadowing, as the name speaks, involves internalized, non-vocalized repetition. Part shadowing adopts a selective approach where the focus turns to the repetition of specific words . Learners integrate their personal reflections in shadowing + comment type. Finally, in part shadowing + question, shadowing is combined with question formulation.

Pronunciation and Intonation

Pronunciation encompasses sound production and perception, integrating both segmental (phonemes, clusters) and suprasegmental features (stress, intonation) (Noviyenty, 2017; Oladipupo & Akinola, 2022). It involves phonological awareness, rhythm, and articulation, all crucial for communication (Cruttenden, 2014; Yeldham & Choy, 2021). Studies emphasize the role of shadowing in pronunciation development by promoting imitation of native speaker prosody and phonetic accuracy (Foote & McDonough, 2017). Intonation in English has been studied from various perspectives, emphasizing its role in pragmatic meaning, pitch variation, and suprasegmental features. Scholars define intonation differently: Liu & Reed (2021) focus on pragmatic meaning, while Wells (2006) and Trask & Stockwell (2007) highlight pitch patterns. Ladd (2008) and Levis et al. (2016) emphasize its function beyond individual words, whereas Pickering (2018) describes it as a grammatical system incorporating pitch, pause, and prominence.

Early definitions like Allen (1954) and Jones (1979) characterize intonation as pitch variations shaping speech melody. The American and British linguistic traditions differ in interpretation—American scholars separate "tone" (word-level pitch) from "intonation" (sentence-level pitch), whereas British scholars see tone as part of intonation (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019). Hodgetts (2020) outlines a three-part model of British intonation: tonality (intonational phrases), tone (pitch movement), and tonicity (nucleus placement).

Low (2015) stresses that intonation aids comprehension but lacks a direct one-to-one relationship with meaning. In English as an International Language (EIL), understanding

intonation in different English varieties enhances cross-cultural competence. The British model attributes both grammatical (speech segmentation) and semantic (meaning differentiation) functions to intonation.

Previous Research Findings

The shadowing technique—where learners repeat speech immediately—has been widely studied. Research (Azimi Amoli & Ghanbari, 2013; Foote & McDonough, 2017; Hamada, 2017; Kadota, 2019; Sugiarto et al., 2020) highlights its effectiveness in listening and pronunciation improvement. Studies indicate that shadowing enhances listening comprehension (Suzuki, 2007; Chung, 2010; Hamada, 2018) and pronunciation instruction (Nguyen & Nguyen, 2019; Ha, 2020). Nguyen et al. (2020) advocate its use in interpreter training. Hamada (2018) found that traditional shadowing improves word recognition and stress detection but not phonemic discrimination, leading to an enhanced model incorporating explicit instruction, corrective feedback, and production focus.

Other studies show shadowing aids grammatical accuracy (Azimi Amoli & Ghanbari, 2012), oral fluency (Zakeri, 2014), and pronunciation tracking in computer-assisted exercises (Willardson, 2014). Lu (2021) found shadowing improved tonal accuracy in Mandarin learners, while Foote & McDonough (2017) observed gains in fluency and comprehensibility but not accentedness. Hsieh et al. (2013) found shadowing outperformed software-based pronunciation training.

Text-based shadowing studies show mixed results. While Tzu-Yu & Yihsiang (2014) found improvements in phoneme production, stress, and intonation, Luo et al. (2010) suggest text presentation may not enhance prosodic fluency. Martinsen et al. (2017) observed gains in read-aloud pronunciation but not spontaneous speech, necessitating further research.

Shadowing also improves learner confidence and motivation (Lin, 2009; Salim et al., 2020). Sumiyoshi & Svetanant (2017) highlighted student preference variations in shadowing speed. Other studies link intonation training to perceptual awareness (Mirzaei et al., 2012), music (Ansari et al., 2016), and role-playing (Chootharat et al., 2016). Research also explores authentic video use (Namaziandost et al., 2018) and self-assessment techniques (Seenak, 2017) in

shadowing. These findings affirm shadowing's efficacy in improving pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension, though factors like text presence, feedback, and learner preferences influence outcomes. Further studies are needed to refine shadowing techniques for varied learning contexts.

Method

Design

This study adopted an intact groups pretest posttest research design to explore the potential benefits of incorporating shadowing as an instructional technique on pre-intermediate Iraqi EFL learner's pronunciation and intonation accuracy.

Participants

The participants of the study comprised 90 pre-intermediate EFL learners, studying English at a private institute in Diwaniyah city. There were 38 males and 52 females. Their age ranged from 11 to 16. It should be noted that the participants were chosen based on availability. To this end, the students (N= 120) from eight intact institute classes were asked to take the Oxford Placement Test (OPT) for homogenizing purposes. The participants' performances were calculated out of 60 and those who were classified as pre-intermediate (their scores range between 28 and 36) level were selected as the intended participants of this study. The test ranking is as follows: (1-17: Beginner, 18-27; Elementary: 28-36; Lower-intermediate, 37-47: Upper-intermediate, 48-55: Advanced, 56-60: Very advanced). The students (N= 30) whose scores were lower than 28 and/or higher than 36 were excluded from the study. Three intact classes (N= 45, experimental group hereafter) received instruction and three other classes (N= 45, control group hereafter) were taught based on the institute's curricular specifications making sure that they would not receive shadowing training of any kind.

The research adhered to a stern set of ethical guidelines throughout its conduct. All participants were thoroughly apprised of the research objectives and provided written informed consent prior to their involvement.

Instruments

Oxford Placement Test (OPT)

The oxford Placement Test (Allen, 2004) comprises 60 items with different question formats including grammar, vocabulary, and reading. It has been calibrated against the proficiency levels based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the Cambridge ESOL Examinations (Allen, 2004). Birjandi and Sayyari (2010) employed the OPT to specify the proficiency level of participants and established the concurrent validity of the OPT with TOEFL scores. The finding showed a high correlation between the OPT and TOEFL scores.

Pronunciation and Intonation Tests

To assess participants' baseline pronunciation and intonation prior to the intervention, a reading aloud test and a short spontaneous conversation—including three to four questions—were administered. Passages were selected from the *Touchstone* series, specifically targeting proficiency at the B1 level as delineated by the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). These pre-selected texts ensured a controlled environment for pronunciation analysis by providing consistent vocabulary and grammatical structures. Participant readings were audio-recorded for subsequent evaluation of pronunciation and intonation.

A nine-point pronunciation scale, adapted from the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) speaking band descriptors, anchored by detailed descriptors at each level, facilitated consistent scoring between raters.

To assess intonation, specific attention was given to pitch variation and stress patterns during both the reading aloud and spontaneous speech tasks. Raters evaluated participants' intonation by considering factors such as:

- Pitch Variation: The ability to use a range of pitches effectively to convey meaning.
- Stress Patterns: The clarity and appropriateness of stress on key words and phrases.
- Naturalness of Speech: The overall fluidity and rhythm of speech, including the use of rising and falling intonation in questions and statements.

Both pronunciation and intonation were rated on the same nine-point scale, ensuring a comprehensive assessment of participants' oral skills.

To enhance the reliability of the assessment, two independent raters evaluated participants' pronunciation and intonation based on the audio recordings. These evaluations were conducted in a double-blind manner, ensuring that raters were unaware of participant identities or their pre/post-intervention status. After scoring, the resulting scores were subjected to appropriate statistical analyses to determine the effectiveness of the intervention.

For the spontaneous speech portion, participants engaged in a brief conversation designed to elicit natural speech patterns. The conversations were analyzed for:

- Fluency: The smoothness and ease of speech without unnecessary pauses or hesitations.
- Coherence: The logical flow of ideas and the ability to maintain topic relevance.
- Responsiveness: The ability to answer questions appropriately and engage in dialogue.

The spontaneous speech data were transcribed and assessed using the same nine-point scale, focusing on both pronunciation and intonation aspects. This dual approach provided a more rounded evaluation of oral proficiency.

The study design incorporated both reading aloud and spontaneous speech analyses to address the limitations inherent in each method. While spontaneous speech allows for a more naturalistic evaluation, it can be susceptible to word avoidance strategies employed by learners to circumvent pronunciation difficulties. Conversely, the reading aloud task offers greater control over the specific sounds and words produced but may not fully capture the complexities of pronunciation within the context of real-time communication. By combining these two assessment methods, the study aimed to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of participants' pronunciation development.

Table 3.1

A Nine-Point Pronunciation Assessment Scale

Score	Descriptor
9	A full range of pronunciation features with precision and subtlety; sustains flexible use of features throughout; effortless to understand.
8	Very good control of pronunciation features; only occasional lapses; generally easy to understand.
7	Good control of pronunciation features; some lapses may occur but do not impede overall understanding.

6	Generally intelligible; some pronunciation features may be inconsistent, affecting clarity at times.
5	Understandable but frequent lapses in pronunciation; may require listener effort to comprehend.
4	Limited control of pronunciation features; frequent errors that may impede understanding.
3	Often unintelligible; significant pronunciation issues that hinder communication.
2	Very limited control of pronunciation; frequent errors severely impede understanding.
1	Almost entirely unintelligible; pronunciation features are not comprehensible.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

This study employed a pre-test, treatment, and immediate post-test design to explore the impact of shadowing on the pronunciation and intonation of Iraqi EFL learners. The investigation commenced with the administration of the OPT, a standardized assessment instrument. This standardized test served a twofold purpose: (1) to ensure a relatively homogeneous participant pool and (2) to select learners demonstrating proficiency at the pre-intermediate level (28-36 on the OPT scale). The OPT was administered to a pool of 120 EFL learners, with a final sample size of 90 participants meeting the pre-intermediate proficiency criteria (n=90). Following the OPT, these participants were subsequently assigned to either a control or experimental group. To establish a baseline for pronunciation and intonation skills, a pre-test was conducted after participant selection.

The experimental group received instruction focused on the shadowing technique. Participants were exposed to a series of pre-recorded English dialogues carefully chosen to align with their proficiency level and encompass a variety of grammatical structures and vocabulary. The development of these shadowing materials specifically targeted the mastery of prosodic shadowing, emphasizing precision in speech production. The cited work by Kadota and Tamai (2004) provided a framework for implementing shadowing practice within the EFL context.

Step 1: Listening (Initial Exposure)

Participants began by listening attentively to pre-recorded English dialogues <u>without</u> the aid of a script. During this initial exposure, the focus was on grasping the overall content and familiarizing themselves with the speaker's style and delivery.

Step 2: Mumbling (Focus on Sounds)

Following the initial listening phase, participants engaged in "mumbling" shadowing. Here, they shadowed the audio recording <u>again without a script</u>, prioritizing the sounds they heard over achieving perfect pronunciation. This step aimed to develop auditory discrimination skills and initial attempts at replicating the sounds.

Step 3: Synchronized Reading (Content Understanding)

The next stage introduced the written script in conjunction with the audio recording. Participants practiced shadowing while reading the script, placing emphasis on comprehending the written text and ensuring their pronunciation aligned with the written words. This step aimed to solidify the connection between pronunciation and written language.

Step 4: Prosodic Shadowing (Intonation and Rhythm)

With a foundation in basic pronunciation and script comprehension established, participants progressed to "prosodic shadowing." In this stage, the focus shifted to mastering the prosodic features of spoken language, including stress, rhythm, intonation, speaking rate, and pausing. Participants continued to shadow the audio recording while consciously attending to these prosodic elements.

Step 5: Synchronized Reading (Difficult Points)

The next step involved revisiting the script with a focus on sections identified as challenging. Participants shadowed the recording while reading the script, concentrating specifically on overcoming pronunciation difficulties encountered in earlier stages. This targeted approach aimed to address persistent pronunciation issues and enhance accuracy in specific areas.

Step 6: Content Shadowing (Independent Production)

The final stage of the shadowing intervention involved "content shadowing." Here, participants practiced shadowing the content of the dialogues <u>without relying on the script</u>. This step aimed to assess their ability to independently reproduce the targeted pronunciation and intonation features after receiving guided practice.

The control group, in contrast, participated in pronunciation practice led directly by an instructor. Following the 10-week instructional period, post-tests were administered to assess the impact of shadowing on pronunciation and intonation. These post-tests were audio-recorded to capture participant speech with fidelity. The researcher then analyzed the recordings, employing a pre-determined scoring rubric to evaluate performance. For enhanced reliability, a second coder, an English language instructor, independently evaluated the recordings. Inter-coder reliability was then calculated to assess the consistency between the two raters.

Data Analysis

The data were subjected to rigorous statistical analysis using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were employed in the initial phase to provide a comprehensive summary of participant performance in terms of pronunciation accuracy and intonation patterns. To address the first and second research questions investigating the effectiveness of shadowing on the pronunciation and intonation accuracy of pre-intermediate EFL learners, the analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was run.

Results

Results of the OPT

The practical phase of this study began with selecting the participants employing convenience sampling and random assignment, as stated in chapter three. To do so, OPT was administered to a group of 120 EFL learners, which enabled the researcher to draw a sample of 90 homogenous learners and randomly assign them into one of the two groups in the study, experimental group which received Shadowing technique and the control group who were exposed to traditional instruction. The results of descriptive statistics for OPT administered to target participants are displayed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Descriptive Statistics of Initial and Selected Participants' Score on PET

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Initial group score on OPT	120	21.00	40.00	31.8417	4.20683

	90	28.00	36.00	32.2889	2.15805
Selected participants' score on OPT					
Valid N (listwise)	90				

As reported in Table 4.1, the initial group of 120 participants had the mean of 31.84 and standard deviation of 4.20 in their OPT. Accordingly, those whose scores fell within the range of 28 to 36 were selected as pre-intermediate learners. The results of descriptive statistics for selected participants showed that their minimum score was 28.00 and their maximum score was 36.00 with the mean of 32.28 and the standard deviation of 2.15.

Moreover, the internal consistency of the scores was calculated using Cronbach's alpha formula.

Table 4.2

Reliability Statistics of OPT

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.76	.73	60

The results shows high index of consistency (α = .76); thus the reliability of the instrument was ensured.

4.2 Addressing the First Research Question

To answer the first research question investigating the effectiveness of shadowing technique on pre-intermediate EFL Learner's accuracy of pronunciation, ANCOVA was run. ANCOVA allows researchers to control for potential confounding variables that could influence the outcome, such as prior pronunciation skills. This helps isolate the effect of the shadowing technique on pronunciation accuracy. It enabled the comparison of means between the experimental group (using the shadowing technique) and the control group while adjusting for the covariates (pre-test), providing a clearer understanding of the effectiveness of shadowing

technique. Firstly, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was run to check the normality of data. The results of which are presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		post-test of pronunciation for experimental	post-test of pronunciation for control
N		45	45
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	6.4000	4.9111
	Std. Deviation	1.09545	1.23991
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.176	.173
	Positive	.176	.160
	Negative	-.175	-.173
Test Statistic		.176	.173
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.071[c]	.082[c]

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

Table 4.3 suggests that experimental and control group scores on post-test of pronunciation were normally distributed (p= .07, .08, p> .05).

Table 4.4

Descriptive Statistics of Experimental and Control Group Scores on Post-Test of Pronunciation

Treatment	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Experimental	6.4000	1.09545	45
Control	4.9111	1.23991	45

Total	5.6556	1.38338	90

Table 4.4 illustrates the post-test pronunciation scores for both groups. The participants who engaged in shadowing techniques achieved a mean score of 6.40, with a standard deviation of 1.09. In comparison, the participants who received traditional instruction obtained a mean score of 4.91, with a standard deviation of 1.23.

Table 4.5

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	119.048[a]	2	59.524	100.99	.000	.699
Intercept	44.207	1	44.207	75.008	.000	.463
Pre-test of pronunciation	69.170	1	69.170	117.36	.000	.574
Treatment	59.002	1	59.002	100.11	.000	.535
Error	51.275	87	.589			
Total	3049.000	90				
Corrected Total	170.322	89				

a. R Squared = .699 (Adjusted R Squared = .692)

To assess the differential effectiveness of shadowing technique compared to conventional instruction on learner pronunciation accuracy, a one-way between-groups analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was employed. The independent variable was instructional type (shadowing technique vs. conventional instruction). The dependent variable was learners' post-test pronunciation scores. To control for initial pronunciation proficiency, participants' pre-test pronunciation scores were included as a covariate in the analysis. The results revealed a statistically significant difference between the control and experimental groups on post-test scores, $F(1, 89) = 100.11$, $p = .00$, partial eta squared = .53. This indicates a large effect size for the instructional method.

Addressing the Second Research Question

To address the second research question exploring the efficacy of Shadowing technique in improving pre-intermediate EFL Learner's intonation, another ANCOVA was run. Similar to the first research question, ANCOVA allowed for the control of covariates that may influence intonation, such as previous exposure to intonation patterns. It facilitated the comparison of the mean intonation scores between the experimental group (using the shadowing technique) and the control group, helping to determine if the shadowing technique is effective. Firstly, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was run to check the normality of data. The results of which are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Post-test of intonation for experimental	Post-test of intonation for control
N		45	45
Normal Parameters[a,b]	Mean	6.8222	4.6667
	Std. Deviation	1.26651	1.10782
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.164	.174
	Positive	.164	.171
	Negative	-.157	-.174
Test Statistic		.164	.174
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.094[c]	.062[c]

a. Test distribution is Normal.

b. Calculated from data.

c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

Table 4.3 suggests that experimental and control group scores on post-test of intonation were normally distributed (p= .09, .06, p> .05).

Table 4.7

Descriptive Statistics of Experimental and Control Group Scores on Post-Test of Intonation

treatment	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Experimental	6.8222	1.26651	45
Control	4.6667	1.10782	45
Total	5.7444	1.60450	90

As illustrated in Table 4.7, the mean of post-test of intonation of participants who were exposed to shadowing technique was 6.82 with the standard deviation of 1.26, while, the mean of post-test of pronunciation of participants who were exposed to traditional instruction was 4.66 with the standard deviation 1.10.

Table 4.8

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	178.802[a]	2	89.401	154.57	.000	.780
Intercept	61.866	1	61.866	106.96	.000	.551
Pre-test of intonation	74.258	1	74.258	128.38	.000	.596
Treatment	90.334	1	90.334	156.18	.000	.642
Error	50.320	87	.578			
Total	3199.000	90				
Corrected Total	229.122	89				

a. R Squared = .780 (Adjusted R Squared = .775)

To investigate the effectiveness of implementing shadowing technique versus conventional instruction on learners' intonation One-way between-groups Analysis of Covariance was run. The independent variable was the type of instruction (shadowing technique versus conventional instruction), the dependent variable was learners' scores on the post-test of intonation, and the participants' score on the pre-test of intonation were used as the covariate in this analysis. The results revealed that there was statistically significant difference between the control and experimental groups on post-test scores, $F(1, 89)= 156.18$, $p=.00$, partial eta squared= .64.

This research investigated the impact of shadowing on the pronunciation of pre-intermediate EFL learners by exploring its effectiveness in two key areas: pronunciation accuracy and intonation. The study aimed to determine whether or not shadowing helped learners pronounce English words more precisely, and was shadowing effective in improving learners' intonation when they speak English. The study's findings were positive. The results for the first question showed that shadowing was indeed an effective method for learners to improve their pronunciation accuracy. In other words, learners who practiced shadowing were able to pronounce English words more correctly. The findings for the second question also yielded encouraging results. The research confirmed that shadowing can help learners develop their intonation. This means that learners who practiced shadowing were able to use pitch and rhythm more naturally when speaking English.

Discussion

This study delved into the effectiveness of shadowing as a technique for enhancing pronunciation accuracy and intonation in pre-intermediate EFL learners. The research expands upon the established role of shadowing in pronunciation development. Studies by Suzuki (2007), Chung (2010), Hamada (2018), and Sumarsih (2017) suggest a positive influence on students' listening comprehension abilities. Shadowing necessitates a high degree of focused attention on the spoken input, demanding real-time processing and attempted immediate replication. This intense focus on the aural aspects of language likely leads to a heightened ability to understand spoken English, particularly when paired with clear and concise audio materials.

The pedagogical implications of shadowing are also noteworthy. Studies by Nguyen and Nguyen (2019), Ha (2020), Phuong et al. (2023), *Sang (2022),* and Le (2021) highlight its potential as a valuable strategy for optimizing classroom pronunciation instruction. Shadowing

activities can be seamlessly integrated into lessons, offering learners controlled practice opportunities outside of traditional drilling exercises. The self-paced nature of shadowing allows for personalized learning experiences, catering to individual needs and learning styles.

Furthermore, the proposal by Nguyen et al. (2020) to utilize shadowing in interpreting lessons to enhance fluency suggests a broader application for this technique. This innovative approach posits that shadowing can extend beyond pronunciation practice, potentially fostering smoother and more natural speech production in learners. By allowing students to mimic the phrasing and rhythm used by interpreters, shadowing could equip them with the skills necessary to navigate real-world communication scenarios that involve interpreting spoken language.

Intriguingly, Hamada's (2018) exploration of the specific bottom-up skills (basic listening skills) fostered by shadowing has led to the development of a new shadowing procedure designed to address limitations in current methods. This novel approach opens exciting avenues for future research. Investigating the effectiveness of Hamada's procedure could potentially lead to even more robust shadowing techniques, further maximizing the benefits for EFL learners.

Huong and Hoa (2023) revealed that speaking plus shadowing has a favorable influence on speaking ability. Tannen's (2007) work suggests shadowing taps into our inherent drive to imitate and repeat language. This aligns with Murphey's (2001) notion of shadowing as a "tool of recursion" (p. 132), emphasizing the power of repeated exposure to language structures. Murphey argues that shadowing allows learners to progress from simple repetition to reformulation and ultimately, independent production and novel language use. Furthermore, he proposes that shadowing guides learners towards adjusting their communication styles, facilitating L2 acquisition.

Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) adds another layer of understanding. Shadowing may empower less proficient learners to subtly influence their partners' communication, drawing them closer to the learner's ZPD and promoting comprehensibility and language acquisition. This aligns with Galperin's (1969) theory of internalization, where external verbalization through activities like interactive shadowing serves as a crucial step in internalizing language skills and cultural tools.

Examining the practical application of shadowing in the classroom, we find activities like mumbling English words and imitating pronunciation from videos. These activities, as supported by Hamada (2016), Mori (2011), Okada (2002), and Tamai (2005), contribute to improved

pronunciation by encouraging learners to mimic native speaker models and practice individual sound production. Synchronized reading activities further enrich the learning experience. By focusing on stressed syllables and the physical experience of word stress, these activities target vocabulary acquisition and awareness, as suggested by Burri et al. (2016).

Finally, shadowing activities in the phase of prosody and content focus on phoneme perception through various speaking tasks. This aligns with Kadota (2007) and Hamada (2012, 2017) who posit that the cognitive demands of shadowing may initially prioritize sound perception over semantic meaning, ultimately enhancing both aspects of language acquisition and improving listening and speaking skills.

The current research design sheds light on the cognitive processes underlying the effectiveness of shadowing. During the simulated practice, participants aimed for the most accurate replication of the target model, leading to a heightened focus on phonological features. This aligns with the concept of directed attention, where learners concentrate intently on specific aspects of the input, in this case, the segmental and suprasegmental elements (individual sounds and prosodic features) of spoken language. This heightened awareness fosters a deeper understanding of the intricacies of pronunciation in the target language.

Furthermore, shadowing promotes the development of automaticity in pronunciation skills. Unlike traditional methods that may involve deliberate analysis and practice of individual sounds, shadowing necessitates immediate production. Learners are presented with spoken input and must attempt to reproduce it with minimal delay. This real-time production environment closely mirrors the demands of spoken language communication, fostering the development of automaticity in pronunciation skills. Finally, shadowing offers a controlled practice environment that minimizes the potential for learners to introduce their own pronunciation errors during practice. By focusing solely on replicating the target model, learners are less likely to fall back on established pronunciation habits that may deviate from the desired outcome. This targeted practice allows learners to internalize the correct pronunciation patterns and minimizes the risk of fossilization.

Conclusion

The current investigation explored the efficacy of shadowing as a pedagogical tool to enhance the spoken English proficiency of pre-intermediate EFL learners. The study specifically targeted two crucial aspects of spoken language: pronunciation accuracy and intonation. The

empirical data revealed positive outcomes in both domains. The research demonstrably confirmed that shadowing serves as a successful method for augmenting learners' pronunciation accuracy. By engaging in shadowing practice, learners exhibited a marked improvement in their ability to produce English words with greater precision.

This finding suggests that shadowing can be a valuable instrument for educators seeking to refine the pronunciation skills of their students. The study also confirmed encouraging results pertaining to the impact of shadowing on intonation. Learners who actively participated in shadowing exercises demonstrated significant improvement in their use of pitch and rhythm when speaking English. This indicates that shadowing can contribute to the development of a more natural-sounding speaking style. In light of the findings, this study lends credence to the utilization of shadowing as a beneficial technique for enhancing the spoken English proficiency of pre-intermediate Iraqi EFL learners. By simultaneously addressing both pronunciation accuracy and intonation, shadowing offers a comprehensive approach to fostering overall speaking fluency. The implementation of shadowing techniques in the classroom can foster active participation in spoken English practice. This approach may indirectly enhance learners' pronunciation of unfamiliar vocabulary by exposing them to correct pronunciation models.

While this study provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of the shadowing technique for improving pronunciation and intonation in pre-intermediate EFL learners, it is important to acknowledge its limitations. Firstly, the sample size may have been limited, which could affect the generalizability of the findings. A larger and more diverse participant pool would provide a more comprehensive understanding of shadowing's effectiveness across different demographics.

Moreover, the research did not account for individual differences in learning styles, motivation, and prior language exposure, which could influence the outcomes. These factors may play a critical role in how effectively learners engage with the shadowing technique. Finally, the study primarily assessed short-term improvements in pronunciation and intonation, leaving the long-term retention of these skills unexamined. Understanding how well learners maintain their pronunciation gains over time is crucial for evaluating the technique's overall effectiveness.

To fully understand shadowing's potential, we should investigate its impact across the learning spectrum. Does its effectiveness vary depending on a learner's proficiency level (beginner, intermediate, advanced)? Can it be adapted for learners with specific pronunciation

challenges at each stage? Additionally, how shadowing caters to various learning styles (visual, auditory, kinesthetic) is an important question. Can shadowing be combined with other techniques to address different learning preferences, or are there specific modifications that enhance its effectiveness for particular styles?

Beyond pronunciation, future research can delve into shadowing's potential impact on other language skills like listening comprehension, fluency, and vocabulary acquisition. Can shadowing be adapted to specifically target these skills alongside pronunciation practice?

Technology also holds promise for enhancing shadowing practices. The study by Hamada (2018) explored a novel shadowing procedure targeting bottom-up listening skills. Further research could investigate its effectiveness compared to traditional techniques and explore the potential of other innovative shadowing approaches. Speech recognition software providing real-time feedback on pronunciation accuracy and mobile apps or online platforms facilitating shadowing activities are just some possibilities.

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