

Abstract

This research aimed to seek a model for teaching pronunciation through the training in problematic segmental features of English to Thai students. The model was based on the concept of teaching pronunciation so that the students' pronunciation was intelligible and comprehensible to speakers of English regardless of their preference for native or non-native pronunciation models. This means the students should be free to choose any model that they feel comfortable with the most when speaking. With the pronunciation skills learned by the students through this research, it was hoped that the students' listening ability would improve as well.

The research methodology was based on the schema theory. The participants activated their existing schematic knowledge, and they also created new schematic knowledge in this research. The research used the pre-test and the post-test method. It was divided into three teaching rounds including the pilot study, the main study, and the validity test study. There were seven participants in the pilot study, 45 participants in the main study, and 11 participants in the validity test study. The instruments used in this research were SDU-TEC tests, the intelligibility test, and the comprehensibility test. Ten raters were used to evaluate the participants' pronunciation during the pre-test and post-test. Interviews were conducted across the three teaching rounds after the training. In the final teaching round, classroom recording and observation were conducted.

The findings of this research indicated that after the training in problematic segmental features of English, the participants improved their performance in the SDU-TEC, and the intelligibility test to the statistically significant level set for the research (0.001). The rating results derived from the 10 raters also indicated that most of the participants became more intelligible after the training. One obvious exception was the results produced by the Chinese rater who did not find that the participants improved to the significance level. For the comprehensibility test, the results varied. Some participants

believed that the comprehensibility of English was easier and others believed that it remained difficult after the training. The interview results indicated that the majority of the participants had positive attitudes towards the training in which this was another factor contributing to their improved performance. This was the case in all three teaching rounds. In the final teaching round, the classroom observation indicated that the lesson plan of this research worked effectively. It exposed the participants to various pronunciation models and allowed the participants to interactively participate in classroom activities. However, the selection of appropriate videos for teaching pronunciation may be a difficult task and that video presentation can be time consuming.

