ELF Annual Research Journal 18
(2016) 153-168

ELF
ANNUAL
RESEARCH
JOURNAL
http://elf.salu.edu.pk/

# Pronunciation of Monophthongs and Diphthongs among Punjabi Speaking EFL Learners

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**ABSTRACT:** *This study attempts to analyze the academic needs of the Punjabi speaking EFL (henceforth PSEFL) learners who face problems in the production of English monophthongs and diphthongs.Considering the nature of the study, the researchers adopted a problem-solution oriented research approach. This quasi-experimental study included 10 participants. The researchers analysed and interpreted data to understand pronunciation problem of monophthongs and diphthongs faced by Punjabi speaking EFL learners.The findings revealed that English monophthongs and diphthongs pose serious problems that affect both the competence and performance of the PSEFL learner: Making their speech phonologically poor and at times semantically ambiguous. The diphthongal perception of learners varies because of their academic and linguistic background. It transpired that PSEFL learners showed better sound patterns when teachers provided remedial measures to overcome the problematic sound of monophthongs and diphthongs. Based on the findings of the study, suggestions and recommendations have been forwarded to effectively deal with the problem areas of PSEFL learners which are spotted in this study.*

***Keywords:*** Monophthongs, diphthongs, Punjabi speaking learners, L1 interference, mispronunciation

## Introduction

English being the world language is used almost in every field of life and it is frequently used for international communication (Crystal, 1977). With the advent of information technology, the importance of this language has rather increased. The urge to acquire native like ability to speak is relatively significant, and it is growing day by day. When we learn to speak a foreign/second language, we may encounter problems in several areas including pronunciation. It has been reported that around 44% population of Pakistan consists of Punjabi speakers (Akram & Yasmeen, 2011). It has been reported that PSEFL learners learn English pronunciation by listening and imitating their teachers in schools and colleges. They face certain phonological problems while learning English. The vowel system of English

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seems to have a negative impact on the Punjabi speaking EFL learners as they find it very hard to master the English language alphabet and phoneme discrepancies especially the vowel sounds. The transition of the vowel sounds by Punjabi speaking learners to English language monophthongs and diphthongs system is continuously creating multidimensional learning problems with regard to pronunciation. These problems sometimes create a communication barrier and result in doubtful miscommunication among the interactants. There are certain reasons behind this problem such as poor schooling, untrained teachers and deficiencies found in the syllabus. Considering this, the researchers' focus is to identify problems of PSEFL learners by analyzing the sound systems of both English and Punjabi.

It is believed that PSEFL learners unconsciously apply the phonological rules of their mother tongue while using the target language. Although many sounds in both the languages are similar, there are monophthongs, diphthongal and consonantal differences which later on affect the production of speech of the learners (Talaat, 2002). For example, a diphthong is a glide from one vowel to the other (Roach, 1983). This movement or the glide can be a problem for PSEFL learners who develop their articulators for a particular language at a very early stage so it is difficult for them to train their articulators to the phonological requirements of a new language at a later stage. It can be said here that this study reflects the conventional articulation problems of monophthongal and diphthongal sounds of the Punjabi speaking learners to examine the points at which intelligibility breakdowns recur in the process of speech.

**Literature Review**

A lot of work has been done on the comparison between English and different languages of the world (Bansal, 1962; Heselwood & McChrystal, 2000; Khan, & Qadir, 2012; Rehman, 1990; Sheikh, 2012). As English is a linguafranca, a pretty fair amount of research is undergoing in different countries, especially in Pakistan, in order to help out EFL learners to learn English in a better way.

Kenworthy (1987) perceives "intelligibility as being understood by a listener at a given time in a given situation" (p. 13). This means that the process of intelligibility suggests that the more words a listener is able to identify accurately when said by a particular speaker, the more intelligible the speaker is. Smith(1992) states that in order to make sense of the term "intelligibility" one needs to draw a clear-cut distinction between intelligibility, comprehensibility and interpretability. Intelligibility means word/utterance recognition, while comprehensibility means word/utterance meaning. Interpretability in its turn means the meaning behind the word/utterance. He states that the three categories, intelligibility,

comprehensibility and interpretability, constitute three degrees of understanding in a continuum: from intelligibility to interpretability in order of importance. Several scholars raise the fear that the emergence of non-native varieties may lead to mutual unintelligibility among English-speakers around the world. Peterson and Barney (1952) studied the relation between the vowel phonemes intended by the speaker and those identified by the listener. The list consists of ten monosyllabic words beginning with /h/ and ending with /d/ differing only in the vowel phoneme, e.g., "heed", and "hid". All languages of the world are different from each other in many different ways; some are syllable timed as Spanish, French, Urdu, Japanese, etc., some are stress timed like English, Russian, etc., on the other hand a few are inner articulated such as French and Arabic and others are outer articulated as Punjabi and English (Talaat, 2012).Actually, languages are multi dimensional – the segmental and suprasegmental features are found altogether reversed between the two languages or and the sentence structure is inverse. The most problematic aspect of any language is its sound system. As Connor (2004) has posited language starts with ears. Secondly, every language has got its own music and rhythm. We give shape to our thoughts through sounds. No matter how intelligent one is in any language others would only appreciate or understand him/her if one is a fluent speaker and has got a complete control on his or her speech organs and matches the quality and quantity of the sound system of that target language. Human beings have the capacity to produce infinite sounds which means that gaining mastery of the sound system of any language is possible provided proper listening and speaking barriers are worked out through mini and major researches in the field of phonetics and phonology. Once the awareness is created among both the facilitators and learners it would be easy to overcome those weak areas in listening and speaking. It is a natural phenomenon that the mother tongue has certain influences which always affect the second language learning, but proper ear and voice training of the learners can really be helpful if all the three stakeholders take it as their shared responsibility in order to teach and learn a language in its true spirit.

In Pakistan English is taught from the 1st grade. The Punjabi EFL learners have a long way to go as far English language learning and teaching is concerned, especially in the field of pronunciation. The Punjabi language has got only a very limited inventory of vowel sounds, i.e. only three vowel sounds, whereas English has got 22 vowel sounds. As described by Odisho (2005) "English has a system that tolerates a wide variety of vowels ranging from very lax (short) to very tense (long)" (p. 50). He has further stated that "such a vowel system is best labeled as centripetal wherein the vowels have a strong tendency to move to the center of the vowel area where schwa is located" (p. 50).In simple words when we describe vowel sounds of English

or any other language we are not dealing with points of articulators, as for consonant sounds, e.g. /p/ and /b/ are bilabial and /k/ and /g/ are velar etc., but with areas of articulators e.g., the vowel sound /iː/ is a close front vowel sound, whereas /æ/is an open front vowel sound or /uː/ is a close back vowel sound. Odisho (2005) has explained that "when both spoken and its written forms are jointly handled, serious confusion emerge when handling different linguistic identities such as the grapheme, phoneme and nomeneme" (p. 18). He has further indicated that "technically, the grapheme represents the shape of the letter, the phoneme the sound of the letter and nomeneme represent the name of the letter" (p. 24). In general, language instructors are more familiar with English letters than the sounds represented by the letters; therefore, there seems more emphasis on the letters of a language than on the sound of letters. Therefore, a strong tendency is witnessed in non-native varieties to restructure the sounds of native English (Sheikh, 2012). The same is true both in the teaching of Punjabi and English that Punjabi EFL learners have numerous problems in reading and with the pronunciation. Odisho (2005) compares the discrepancies of letters and sounds both in English and Arabic as follows: "Identity deal with the phonetic value or, at times, the values of a given letter or combination of letters. When an alphabet letter fails to stand for just one sound many discrepancies arise" (p. 24).Unfortunately the alphabetical systems of English and many other languages do have those discrepancies. Actually, English has got a lot of alphabet and phoneme discrepancies both among consonant and vowel letters. There are only five vowel letters in English for twenty-two vowel phonemes which make Punjabi EFL learners mispronounce the majority of English words. And this mispronunciation problem rather intensifies as Punjabi language has only got very limited number of vowels.

Among several studies which have been conducted in the similar context of the study in hand, Khan (2012) has investigated pronunciation variation among Pakistani speakers and has reported that /ɾ/, /w/, /v/ and /ə/ are the problematic sounds. Nadeem and Rehman (2013) have concluded, based on their investigation that

> The speech of non-native English speakers may exhibit pronunciation characteristics that result from such speakers imperfectly learning the pronunciation of English, either by transferring the phonological rules from their mother tongue into their English speech ("interference") or by implementing strategies similar to those used in primary language acquisition (p. 578).

Riaz (2015) has investigated deviant pronunciation of 195 English words by uneducated Punjabi speakers and concluded that "native Punjabi speakers pronounce these words in a significantly different manner due to

the first language influence" (p. 23). The study of Hussain and Mahmood (2012) has reported that Punjabi speakers usually do not aspirate stops in the beginning of a word, reverse several sounds and confuse /w/ and /v/ sounds. Heselwood and McChrystal (2007) have reported that Punjabi speaking boys speak English with a Punjabi accent more frequently as compared to Punjabi speaking girls. Several other studies have also reported that interference of Punjabi language is a major cause of deviant pronunciation of several English sounds among native Punjabi speakers (Raza, 2008; Riaz & Qadir, 2012).

As the purpose of this investigation is to find out the reasons behind the mispronunciation of monophthongs and diphthongal sounds among the Punjabi EFL learners, the causes which have been discussed so far are not the only ones. There is a lot more to explore e.g., articulation and tongue stricture contrasts between English and Punjabi monophthongal and diphthongal sounds' production, quality and quantity of monophthongal and diphthongal sounds produced by Punjabi EFL learners and the nature of both the English and Punjabi languages.

**Research Methodology**

A quantitative approach was considered as a necessary design for the present study to provide precise measurement of the participants' development, opinions and views to reach systematic conclusion. In this kind of research, results are more readily analyzed, interpreted, and the data is analyzed in the terms of numbers with an objective to achieve precision. The quasi-experimental design was selected for the investigation of the phenomenon under study. One experimental group, comprised of 10 students was selected from the PSEFL learners of Majhi dialect studying at the college level on the basis of random sampling. Explaining random sampling, Bell (1999) opines that "a random sample will give each of the individuals concerned an equal chance of being selected" (p. 126). The researchers gave the name codes to the participants who were the part of the qusai-experimental design. The researchers took the classes of experimental teaching for four weeks and five hours a week. This means that the researchers taught the PSEFL learners to Majhi dialect students 20 hours in four weeks. For the purpose of investigating the impact of remedial teaching, the researchers developed two lesson plans each for both placement and achievement tests. Then, the results of the performance and achievement tests of the sample group were analysed to present the results. Finally, the researchers drew the conclusions from the findings and also triangulated the results gathered from the placement and achievement tests.

The study aimed to answer the following research questions:

RQ1: Does the pronunciation of English monphthongs and diphthongs by PSEFL learners have any recongnisable patterns?

RQ2: What are the reasons behind the mispronunciation of monophthongal and diphthongal sounds among PSEFL learners?

RQ3: Do the appropriate teaching practices make PSEFL learners pronounce English monophthongs and diphthongs correctly?

### *Statistical Parameters*

The researchers used a quasi-experimental design to investigate the possible cause-and-effect relationship by manipulating an independent variable (teaching) to influence the dependent variable (learning) in the selected group. The tables have been used to present the performance of students (in both placement and achievement tests) in percentage. The researchers also determined the significance value of all the variables to determine the effects of remedial teaching.

### *Pre- and Post-intervention Testing*

The researchers used pre-intervention/post-interventiontests to identify the difference in the pronunciation of English monothongs and diphthongs. A 40-point pre-intervetion proficiency test was administered to the participants of the study. This test was designed to know the phonological background of the students, and to determine their ability to correctly produce certain English monophthongs and diphthongs. They were supposed to answer different questions related to the production of various English monopthongs and diphthongs within the assigned time of forty-five minutes to complete the test. The whole process was audio-taped and the test was marked with the help of the recordings. The pronunciation of the participants of this study was assessed against 'Received Pronunciation' (RP). This assessment criterion was finalised because of the fact that all public sector institutes follow this model for teaching and assessment purposes. They were assessed out of total 40 points. In this assessment, 30 points were assigned for choosing correct monophthongs and diphthongs whereas 10 points were assigned to their oral presentation of these sounds.

After collecting the data related to these problematic sounds, lesson plans were developed to teach the participants of this study to overcome these shortcomings. After two-weeks teaching of problematic English monophthongs and diphthongs, the participants were given a 40-point post-intervention proficiency test. The questions were almost the same as in the pre-intervention test, but the contents were different that were meant to be solved in the equal duration of time. The whole assessment process was

audio-taped and the result was compiled with the help of these recordings. The main focus was the problematic English monophthongs and diphthongs for Punjabi speakers. These post-intervention test answer sheets were carefully marked and the participants were awarded points on the basis of how well they understood/produced the problematic English vowel sounds. The performance of the participants in the pre- and post-intervention tests was analyzed through Independent-samples *t*-test to identify any statistically significant difference in the performance of the cohort of this quasi-experimental study.

## Data Analysis

The results of the pre- and post-intervention tests were analyzed through Independent-samples *t*-test to identify any statistically significant difference in the performance of the cohort of this quasi-experimental study. It was found out that during the analysis of the data as shown in the Table 1 a great number of participants performed unsatisfactorily in pronouncing the words in the test. Comparatively, a few students performed better to comprehend the pronunciation of monophthongal & diphthongal sounds. On the other hand, a large number of the participants mispronounced the words in the given reading task.

### *Pre-intervention Testing*

Table 1 contains the data generated through the pre-intervention test.

**Table 1**
Pre-intervention Test Results

| Sr. No | Participants' Codes | Total points | Points obtained |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | A-101 | 40 | 08 |
| 2 | A-102 | 40 | 18 |
| 3 | A-103 | 40 | 06 |
| 4 | A-104 | 40 | 12 |
| 5 | A-105 | 40 | 09 |
| 6 | A-106 | 40 | 07 |
| 7 | A-107 | 40 | 16 |
| 8 | A-108 | 40 | 18 |
| 9 | A-109 | 40 | 14 |
| 10 | A-110 | 40 | 10 |

The data presented in table 1 indicate that PSEFL learners commit mistakes in articulating English vowels and consonants and they often replace certain English sounds with Punjabi sounds. Though several English sounds are present in the Punjabi language, some sounds are missing, so the PSEFL learners use the alternative sounds present in their mother tongue;

Punjabi. The findings of the study related to these monophthongal and diphthongal sounds along with a brief description are given herewith. The /ɔ:/is a long vowel in English and is articulated when the tongue moves to the mid back position and lips are rounded. This sound is not present in Punjabi language and the PSEFL learners replaced it with another long vowel /a:/. For example PSEFL learners as represented by the participants of this study pronounced "Talk (RP:/tɔ:k/) as /ta:k/, "Call" (RP:/kɔ:l/) as /ka:l/ and "Chalk" (RP:/tʃɔ:k /) as /tʃa:k/. The second is English short vowel /ɒ/ which has been replaced by a long vowel /a:/. While pronouncing this sound word "Not" (RP:/nɒt/) was pronounced as /na:t/, "Top" (RP:/tɒp/) as /ta:p/ and "Shop" (RP:/ʃɒp/) as /ʃa:p/ by PSEFL learners. It has also been found out that /ɜ:/is not present in Punjabi language. It has been noticed that PSEFL learners replaced this sound with /ə/ and /r/.For example PSEFL learners pronounced "Bird" (RP:/bɜ:d/) as /bərd/, "Shirt" (RP:/ʃɜ:t/) as /ʃərt/ and "Hurt" (RP:/hɜ:t/) as /hərt/. Short English vowel /ʌ/ has also been mispronounced by the participants and they replaced it with /ə/ in most of the cases.For example PSEFL learners pronounced "Hut" (RP: /hʌt/) as /hət/, "Tough" (RP: /tʌf/) as /təf/and "Shut" (RP: /ʃʌt/) as /ʃət/.

The data generated by this study have revealed that PSEFL learners change several English diphthongs with diphthongs present in the Punjabi language which cause mispronunciation problems. The English diphthong /əʊ/does not occur in the Punjabi language and was mispronounced by the participants of this study. They replaced it with a rounded /o:/.They either changed it an allophone or, in most cases, into a monophthong. For example PSEFL learners pronounced "Home" (RP: /həʊm/) as /ho:m/, "Post" (RP: /pəʊst/) as /po:st/ and "Foam" (RP: /fəʊm/) as /fo:m/. Another English diphthong that created problems for PSEFL speakers was diphthong /eɪ/. PSEFL learners missed the glide of the diphthong that caused this diphthong /eɪ/ to be pronounced as /e:/. While pronouncing this sound, the word "Day" (RP: /deɪ/) was pronounced as /de:/, "Say" (RP: /seɪ/) as /se:/and "Table" (RP: /teɪbl/) as /te:bəl/ by PSEFL learners. Another diphthong which was mispronounced was/aɪ/. PSEFL learners werefoundmissing the glide of this English diphthong and replacing it with another sound /ai/.For example PSEFL learners pronounced "Eye" (RP: /aɪ/) as /ai/, "Try" (RP: /traɪ/) as /trai/ and "Fry" (RP: /fraɪ/) as /frai/. Another major finding of this study was the inability of PSEFL learners to identify and pronounce triphthongs: glides that involve three tongue positions. The participants of the study used a long vowel or a diphthong in pronouncing an English word containing a triphthong. Due to their inability

to recognize and produce triphthongs, words like "Layer" (RP: /leɪə(r)/) was pronounced as /leər/, "Fire" (RP: /faɪə(r)/) as /fair/, "Loyal" (RP: /lɔɪəl/) was pronounced as /la:əl/, "Lower" (RP: /ləʊə(r)/) as /lo:ər/ and "Power" (RP: /paʊə(r)/) as /pa:vər/ by PSEFL learners.

### *Teaching Phase*

The researchers carefully analysed the data and extensively deliberated relevant teaching strategies to address to the pronunciation problems of the participants of this study. The devised strategies were implemented in 90-minute duration teaching sessions conducted 3 days a week. Different activities (e.g., drills, repetitions, loud reading, etc.) were designed to give them maximum practice of the English monophthongs and diphthongs confused and mispronounced by PSEFL learners. There were three model lesson plans with different activities, which were used for 12days.The articulation of /ɔ:/ and / ɒ / involves rounding of the lips and PSEFL learners found it difficult to round their lips because they did not have any such sound in their language. On the other hand, they had a more rounded sound which was replaced for the English rounded sounds at different places. They were also taught the correct articulation of English monophthongs, diphthongs and with the help of different exercises they were given practice of diphthongal glide. They were made to listen to the native speakers and special emphasis was given on correct production of English monophthongs and diphthongs. Some of the participants who were comparatively young, for example, participants 'A-102' and 'A-108', learnt the sounds very quickly whereas others took comparatively more time to learn them. The researchers exploited recoded material to provide them with maximum practice of the problematic English monophthongs and diphthongs. After the completion of the teaching phase, the Post-test was administered to the participants of the study. The purpose of this test was to assess the effectiveness of the treatment given to the students and record whether any significant improvement happened after conscious teaching/learning of the problematic English monophthongs and diphthongs.

### *Post – intervention Testing*

The post-test results generated the following data:

**Table 2**
Post-intervention Test Result

| Sr. No | Participants' | Total points | Points obtained |
|---|---|---|---|

| | Codes | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | A-101 | 40 | 21 |
| 2 | A-102 | 40 | 29 |
| 3 | A-103 | 40 | 18 |
| 4 | A-104 | 40 | 26 |
| 5 | A-105 | 40 | 24 |
| 6 | A-106 | 40 | 15 |
| 7 | A-107 | 40 | 29 |
| 8 | A-108 | 40 | 31 |
| 9 | A-109 | 40 | 26 |
| 10 | A-110 | 40 | 20 |

The results of the post-test have shown a significant improvement in the pronunciation of English monophthongs and diphthongs as indicated by their higher scores out of the total 40 points.

### *Comparison of Pre- and Post-intervention Testing*

The comparison between pre-test and post-test has been given in the table below. To indicate the overall progress, percentages have been calculated and Independent-samples T-test has been applied to know whether significant gain is achieved or not.

The analysis revealed the effectiveness of using remedial measures for developing pronunciation among PSEFL learners. All the participants showed significant improvement in the post test results as compared to the pre test.

The statistical analyses generated the following data:

**Table 3**
Comparative Analyses of Pre- and Post-intervention Tests Results

| Participants | | Pre/post | N | M | SD | T | Difference/ %gain | p value | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Collective | Pre-test | 10 | 11.80 | 4.4919 | -5.532 | 12.10 | .000 | $p < 0.05$ |
| | | Post test | 10 | 23.90 | 5.2588 | -5.532 | 102% | .000 | |
| 2 | A-101 | Pre-test | 1 | 8 | - | - | 13 | .000 | $p < 0.05$ |
| | | Post test | 1 | 21 | - | - | 162% | .000 | |
| 3 | A-102 | Pre-test | 1 | 18 | - | - | 11 | .000 | $p < 0.05$ |
| | | Post test | 1 | 29 | - | - | 61% | .000 | |
| 4 | A-103 | Pre-test | 1 | 6 | - | - | 12 | .000 | $p < 0.05$ |
| | | Post test | 1 | 18 | - | - | 200% | .000 | |
| 5 | A-104 | Pre-test | 1 | 12 | - | - | 14 | .000 | $p < 0.05$ |
| | | Post test | 1 | 26 | - | - | 116% | .000 | |
| 6 | A-105 | Pre-test | 1 | 9 | - | - | 15 | .000 | $p < 0.05$ |
| | | Post test | 1 | 24 | - | - | 166% | .000 | |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7 | A-106 | Pre-test | 1 | 7 | - | - | 8 | .000 | $p < 0.05$ |
| | | Post test | 1 | 15 | - | - | 114% | .000 | |
| 8 | A-107 | Pre-test | 1 | 16 | - | - | 13 | .000 | $p < 0.05$ |
| | | Post test | 1 | 29 | - | - | 81% | .000 | |
| 9 | A-108 | Pre-test | 1 | 18 | - | - | 13 | .000 | $p < 0.05$ |
| | | Post test | 1 | 31 | - | - | 72% | .000 | |
| 10 | A-109 | Pre-test | 1 | 14 | - | - | 12 | .000 | $p < 0.05$ |
| | | Post test | 1 | 26 | - | - | 85% | .000 | |
| 11 | A-110 | Pre-test | 1 | 10 | - | - | 10 | .000 | $p < 0.05$ |
| | | Post test | 1 | 20 | - | - | 100% | .000 | |

The comparison of the pretest and posttest marks clearly shows a significant difference and strongly indicate that the treatment given to the experimental group has resulted in statistically significant improvement. The focus on the problematic English monophthongs and diphthongs and the target-oriented teaching produced very positive results and the students started producing the sounds and pronouncing the words correctly. The results of independent-samples t-test have exhibited highly significant gain in the post-test results for all 10 participants after the intervention. Statistical analyses of the results support the effectiveness of the remedial teaching. There was a significant improvement in the performance of all the participants in the group. The results of the post-test showed that learners overcame most of their errors of pronunciation after the remedial teaching. In the results of post-test, it has also been found out that several participants could not overcome those errors which were due to the interference of their mother tongue. Generally speaking, the participants were able to understand and pronounce the problematic English monophthongs and diphthongs in a short time treatment. The main reason behind this was that they were given proper attention and were adequately motivated. Besides this, their needs and interests were also taken care of so that the teaching and the learning went on smoothly.

## Findings

The results of the statistical analyses of pre-test and post-test results strongly suggest that young PSEFL learners, if properly exposed to the problem areas of English monophthongs and diphthongs, can acquire near-native competence in the target language. During the post-test assessment, most of the diphthongal lexemes have been pronounced with reasonably noticeable diphthongal glide by the population of this study. On the contrary, adult PSEFL learners who are taught through traditional methods and are not exposed to special exercises related to English monophthongs and diphthongs, convert the diphthongal glides into the monothongal simplicity of their native language.

All the languages of the world have their unique features. Some languages have similarities with each other and some are poles apart. The differences in languages create problems in learning a foreign language. The learners have to focus their attention on all the aspects of the target language. Phonology is one of the most important factors which demand close attention of ESL/EFL learners and neglecting this very aspect may create pronunciation problems resulting in communication barriers. The role of a teacher, particularly a language teacher, is very important in imparting knowledge and transferring language skills as well as the phonological pattern of the target language to his students. If he is competent in his respective subject, and is well aware of the problems students normally face, he will prove himself a successful teacher. So, in the first place an EFL teacher has to be trained properly so that he can facilitate his students in learning the new language effectively. Whenever correction or improvement is done, careful consideration must be given to the context in which the corrected or improved expression occurs.

## Conclusion

This quasi-experimental study attempted to investigate the possible causes of substandard performance among PSEFL learners. The English monophthongs and diphthongs pose serious problems that affect both the competence and performance of the PSEFL learner: making their speech phonologically poor and at times semantically ambiguous. The diphthongal perception of learners varies because of their academic and linguistic background. Usually little attention is paid to oral production. Furthermore, teaching materials do not provide the required information, drills and application activities in this respect and only the academic setting of classrooms is probably the only available place for the practice of oral communication skills. However, even in the classroom they are not usually provided with sufficient opportunities to speak English because spoken English is not tested in the joint entrance examination, and many teachers devote almost all of the class time to the instruction of grammar, vocabulary, reading, and writing skills. Thus phonological aspects of the English language are usually neglected. Insufficient use of teaching aids is also another feature which might be the result of lack of teacher training. Education from an Urdu medium institution, less educated parents, and unplanned hobbies are also some of the minor problems indirectly affecting the students' performance. Last but not the least is the vagueness of the aims and objectives, which are either not mentioned or are poorly defined in the English curriculum. In Pakistani academic culture the teachers are required to provide academic guidance to the students. Therefore, it is recommended to the concerned authorities to bring into vogue the culture of academic guidance and to opt for some of the effective, applicable and modern

teaching methodologies as a regular feature especially in teaching English. It is also suggested that the concerned teachers should try to use more teaching aids. Motivation plays a very important role in teaching/learning process. Teachers' role in motivating the students is well recognised, so the teachers should create awareness of English phonetics and motivate their students by telling about the advantages of learning the correct pronunciation. Moreover, the teacher must be very much clear about the aims and objectives of the syllabus to be taught to the students because clear aims and objectives are the driving force and they work like a compass for teachers. Intensive and extensive academic guidance should also be extended to the students to consult libraries and to avail the internet facility to gain more knowledge. Interesting and useful activities, modern teaching methodologies and sufficient practice of individual sounds are also highly recommended.

Phonology is relatively a new field in public sector educational institutes in Pakistan. So we cannot find a lot of research work in this field on various regional languages. There is a lack of material available in Punjabi language in general and Punjabi phonology in particular. The basic concepts of Punjabi monophthongs and diphthongs are presented in this research work; the findings may be helpful for the further research on various dialects of Punjabi language. It is also recommended that future research should involve wider population who are taught for longer periods to collect rather reliable data related to this important aspect of phonology.

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