Reduction of EFL Learners’ Foreign Accentedness Through Podcasts and Ben Franklin Technique

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This study explores the effect of a cooperative instructional technique, named Ben Franklin, on the perception of Iranian EFL learners’ foreign accent. The technique requires learners to take detailed notes on what they are listening to (authentic podcasts in this study) and then go back and try to record themselves based on the notes. Thirty-four (34) learners at three proficiency levels from two intact classes participated in the study which lasted four months. Pre- and post-test measures were obtained to ascertain differences in performance of the learners. Two native speakers of English and two experienced Persian-speaking EFL teachers rated the learners’ performance on a 9-point foreign accentedness scale. A semi-structured interview also elicited eight learners’ attitudes towards the technique. Results showed a statistically significant improvement in the learners’ foreign accent ratings on the post-test. It was also found out that the learners’ accentedness ratings are highly related to their language proficiency.

Keywords: Pronunciation, Accent, English, Ben Franklin Technique, Native Teachers, Non-Native Teachers.

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