

**Teaching Pronunciation of English Using Computer
Assisted Learning Software: An Action Research Study in
an Institute of Technology in Taiwan**

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Statement of Sources

This thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma.

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Abstract

This research investigated how the characteristics of two Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) programs assisted Taiwanese students learning English pronunciation, how the different types of feedback in the program helped them to learn English pronunciation effectively, and how teachers may effectively integrate such computer software into their teaching. The purpose of the study was to define directions for pedagogy and research in CALL in Taiwan, drawing on the perceptions of Taiwanese college students and their teacher, in regard to the effectiveness of the selected programs and their feedback functions. This research sought to explore ways to develop and improve English pronunciation learning in Taiwan by using another tool in addition to teacher-directed learning. It is anticipated that the research will provide Taiwanese language teachers with information about how to supplement their teacher directed language teaching, and about what learning tools are effective for this.

In all, one teacher/researcher and 153 college students across four classes took part in this research project, and the setting was in an Institute of Technology in Taiwan. The students all used the two computer software programs separately in a computer laboratory for several weeks, and their perspectives about the effectiveness of the programs and the feedback they gave were gathered. The research methodology was action research, and it used an open-ended questionnaire and participant observation for collecting data, as well as content analysis for the interpretation of the data. In addition, the students wrote learning sheets which aimed to focus their learning.

The results showed that the students preferred the program with explicit correction feedback, and with repetition and other specific functions, as well as the facility for self-paced and self-directed learning. The key finding of the study was that in Taiwan, when used

alongside the traditional classroom teaching, CALL is a tool which has the potential to address some of the issues English pronunciation teachers face, such as low student motivation and low English pronunciation proficiency.

A number of recommendations are made for the effective use of CALL. Students gave several detailed suggestions in regard to the computer software functions which could help them to learn more effectively, and the teacher also addressed some issues which need to be considered when using CALL computer software to assist students' learning.