

**THAI NGUYEN UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

NGUYEN THI THU TRANG

**AN INVESTIGATION OF INFORMATION AND
COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) TOOL TO
ENHANCE PRONUNCIATION ABILITY
FOR ADULT LEARNERS**

**(Nghiên cứu về công cụ công nghệ thông tin trong việc nâng cao
khả năng phát âm cho người học người lớn)**

M.A. THESIS

Field: English Linguistics

Code: 8220201

THAI NGUYEN – 2019

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(APPLICATION ORIENTATION)**

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Supervisor: Dr. Ngo Van Giang

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DECLARATION

I certify that the minor thesis entitled “**An investigation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tool to enhance pronunciation ability for adult learners**” is my own study in the fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Arts at School of Foreign Language, Thai Nguyen University.

Thai Nguyen, May 2019

Signature

Nguyễn Thị Thu Trang

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to investigate an ICT tool, MyET in this study, in relation with the improvement of pronunciation ability for non-major English students at Thai Nguyen University (TNU). An action research was conducted at New Edu English Centre with the participation of 20 students from TNU. Questionnaires were delivered before and after the experimental period to investigate the current situation of students' learning pronunciation, their difficulties and factors that influence the process of pronunciation learning, their perspectives on the use of the ICT tool in pronunciation learning. Next, participants were invited to put MyET tool on a weekly basis to practice their pronunciation in six consecutive weeks and report the results to the researcher. Pre-test and post-test were also delivered to compare and evaluate the impact of MyET on student pronunciation ability after the experimental period. The outcomes of the study show that ICT application had positive influence on students' pronunciation as well as helped enhance students' motivation for learning pronunciation. Yet, limitations of this research are associated with research scope, time constraints and the research subject.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of the study with content of rationale which is reasons for choosing this title, aims of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study and organization of the study.

1.1. Rationale

In the current trend of globalization, the demand on language skills for the workforce is becoming more urgent. Good English language proficiency has remained one of the crucial elements which not only contributes to the success of a job application, especially in developed areas in Vietnam but also better prepare language learners for the future of a global citizen that they may become. For these reasons, a great number of researchers, authors and teachers have kept trying researching and applying different teaching methods with a view to creating the most effective learning environment for learners. Obviously, the fast-paced development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in language teaching and learning is also to serve this purpose. Many studies have been conducted to investigate the impacts of ICT applications on enhancing language skills such as speaking, writing, listening, vocabulary and grammar. Learning is a continuous activity in whole life of learners to change their expectations by looking for knowledge from traditional approaches. From then on, they will have to be willing to find out knowledge from new sources (Jo, S.F. 2013). “Skills in using ICT will be an indispensable prerequisite for these learners” (Jo, S.F. 2013, p.112). Regarding the pronunciation issue in English language teaching, it is a fact that in recent decades, the changes in perspectives on second language learning and teaching have led to a shift in the focus of language programs. Specifically, communicative language teaching (CLT) has become the dominating approach instead of form-focused one in the past. Despite that fact, pronunciation has remained a focus of English language teaching as comprehensible pronunciation gives English language learners the communicative empowerment - effective

language use - that enables them to become communicative and confident users of spoken English.

So far, some researchers have recognized that adult learners have more difficulty comprehending foreign spoken language than young learners (Burda, Scherz, Hageman, and Edwards, 2003, cited in Edwards, J. & Zampini, M., 2008, p.350), which leads to a controversial question whether adult learners also have more challenge to learn pronunciation (Tracey, M. Derwing in Edwards, J. & Zampini, M., 2008, p.350). Though the question has not been fully answered, it is commonly accepted that there are a number of factors affecting adult learners' pronunciation which include accent, age, motivation and exposure. "Many adult learners of English have foreign accents that identify them as nonnative speakers" (Abbas, 2011, p.32). Some linguists support the idea, known as Critical Period Hypothesis that in order to pronounce a language as a native speaker, a learner needs to begin studying before age 7. "There is a biological and neurological period which ends around the age of 12; after this period it becomes extremely difficult to attain the complete mastery of a second language especially pronunciation" (Lennerberg, 1967, p.52). Though as previously mentioned, the question whether adults learners have more or fewer opportunities to succeed in pronunciation than younger learners is not widely answered, it seems that the difficulties for adult learners to learn pronunciation remain a big challenge.

To better facilitate language learners in pronunciation acquisition process, a great number of technical tools have been developed and introduced, which make language learners more independent in learning as they can conduct self-study instead of waiting for teachers to provide help. In this study, the author decides to investigate the use of an ICT tool called MyET in helping adult English language learners improve their pronunciation.

1.2. Aims of the study

The objectives of the research are to identify pronunciation strategies employed by adult learners and explore the impact of MyET that supports these strategies. This

study will also aim to identify challenges of using MyET in general effective pronunciation learning techniques.

1.3. Scope of the study

This research explores one major ICT tool called MyET to improve pronunciation for adult learners. The scope of the study is within adult learners who are students of Thai Nguyen University.

1.4. Significance of the study

The research aims to contribute to help English language learners improve their pronunciation. The research can provide learners better awareness of the advantages and drawbacks of using ICT tools in general and MyET in particular for pronunciation practice and give suggestions on effective learning pronunciation strategies. The research results are, therefore, can be beneficial to any language learner who plans to make use of ICT tool to learn English pronunciation and also provide a good background information for teachers who intend to apply ICT tool in the pronunciation teaching process.

1.5. Organization of the study

This study was written based on research orientation, supervisor's guidance and regulations of School of Foreign Language.

Chapter I, *Introduction* presents the background to the study, aims, scope, significant and structure of the study.

Chapter II, *Literature Review* discusses theoretical background which include related concepts and fields such as definition of pronunciation, the importance of pronunciation in language teaching, some common methods in teaching pronunciation such as Traditional Methods and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and influencing factors in language teaching and learning. The role of technology in language teaching and the review of previous studies are also described in this Chapter.

Chapter III, *Methodology* defines theoretical framework, research questions, information about participants, materials and data collection.

Chapter IV, *Results and Discussion* explain the results and analysis of the data collection.

Finally, Chapter V, *Conclusion and Recommendation* indicate major findings of the study, implications, the study's limitations and some suggestions for further studies.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses theoretical backgrounds which include related concepts and fields such as definition of pronunciation, the importance of pronunciation in language teaching, some common methods in teaching pronunciation such as Traditional Methods and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), influencing factors in language teaching and learning, the role of technology in language teaching and the review of previous studies.

2.1. Theoretical background

2.1.1. What is “pronunciation”?

The simplest definition of the term ‘pronunciation’ can be found in Oxford dictionary, which says that pronunciation is simply “the way in which a word is pronounced” (Oxford, 1948, p.1209).

Paulston & Burder (1976) defined pronunciation as the production of a sound system which does not interfere with communication either from viewpoint of the speakers or the listeners. Another definition of pronunciation from Otlowski (1998) is that it is the way of uttering a word in an accepted manner. According to Richard and Schmidt (2002), pronunciation is the method of producing certain sounds.

However, Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994) so far have made a more detailed definition of this term. They defined that pronunciation, in general, is the production of significant sound in two senses. Firstly, pronunciation can be considered the production and reception of sounds of speech because it is used as part of a code of a particular language. In another sense, pronunciation can be referred to as the acts of speaking as it is used to achieve meaning in contexts of used.

2.1.2. The importance of pronunciation in language teaching

The way we speak is said to reveal some of our identity features with the people around us. Learners with good pronunciation and roughly good command of English are more likely to be understood even though their speech may carry some grammatical mistakes. In some cases, good pronunciation of individual words is enough for the success of communication, whereas learners whose pronunciation is

difficult to understand risk higher possibility of communication failure. This fact can partly explain why the teaching of pronunciation has been one of the major focuses of the language teaching process.

Wong (1987) pointed out that non-native speakers are unable to communicate effectively even their vocabulary and grammar are excellent. Wong (1993) argued that the connection between pronunciation and listening comprehension is considered as distinction. Speakers need to employ patterns of rhythm and intonation to communicate effectively. If the rhythm and intonation are different, listeners simply can't get the meaning. Similarly, listeners need to know organization of speech and meaning of intonation patterns in order to understand speech accurately. Hence, learners' abilities will be developed to comprehend spoken English by learning about pronunciation.

Harmer (2001) emphasized that the most important purpose of language teaching and learning is to enable students to communicate in the target language. Many learners think that they can easily communicate in English because they can talk to their teachers and other students. But English communication with foreigners is really difficult because communication means to understand and be understood. Firstly, teachers can understand their students much more easily than a common person due to the fact they teach English for non-native speakers and often listen to incorrect pronunciation. Secondly, other students have the same pronunciation patterns and make the same errors as they are the speakers of the same language. Thirdly, the classroom is not a real environment and students do not have an opportunity to communicate with native speakers because it takes place in school. Many teachers pay enough attention to grammar and vocabulary in teaching and learning a foreign language and they help learners become skillful in listening and reading. In addition, the majority of teachers think that pronunciation learning is too difficult and monotonous for learners (Harmer, 2001).

The main reasons for causing teachers not to pay much attention to English pronunciation are the lack of time to practice, high quality, suitable teaching and learning materials. Teachers think that they can not wastes their time to concentrate

only pronunciation instruction because they have too much to teach (Harmer, 2001). Kenworthy (1987) stated that learners' phonetic abilities, integrative motivation and achievement motivation are factors for acceptable pronunciation learning without depending on their teachers. Besides, teachers need to convince students understand the value of good pronunciation, study pronunciation severely and guide them learn to pronounce English sounds correctly.

Harmer (2001) explained that grammar and vocabulary are important elements of language. However, native speakers can understand people, despite their grammatical mistakes. Hence, grammar and vocabulary can become useless if the speakers cannot use accurate pronunciation. Pronunciation is a necessary part of communication and people can not make a communicative efficiency without correct pronunciation.

Students can also improve their speaking skill through pronunciation instruction. Focusing on where words should be stressed help them get the purpose of comprehension and intelligibility (Harmer, 2001).

According to Kenworthy (1987), some teachers state that pronunciation instruction cannot be helpful as a result of only a few learners are going to be able to get native-like pronunciation. We should understand that native-like pronunciation could also be an ideal goal not for all learners. Intelligibility is a logical purpose for the large number of learners.

Harmer (2001) expressed that learners can scarcely attain 'perfect' pronunciation. Because some of learners want to keep their identity, they do not wish to achieve native-like pronunciation and they wish to retain their foreign accent. Learners may want to consider understandable pronunciation as their basic goal rather than pronouncing like native speakers. Abbas, P.G (2016) pointed out that "Pronunciation instruction has some realistic aims that need to be emphasized in order to develop communicative competence". (p.126)

Pronunciation instruction aims are functional intelligibility which makes listeners understand spoken English easily, functional communicability which meets the communication needs of learners, increasing self-confident and speech-monitoring

abilities and speech-modification strategies which creates comprehensibility, communicability and self confident for learners (Wrembel, 2002).

Pronunciation instruction plays an important role in improving learners' ability in communication. Learners are not able to communicate effectively if they cannot produce word correctly. Pronunciation instruction helps learners to have a better understanding about native-like pronunciation (Abbas, P.G. 2016). The main aims of teaching pronunciation are to make English easy to understand, not confusing to the listener and develop English that meets persons' desires and that results in communicative competence, help learners feel more comfortable in using English, develop a positive self-awareness as non-native speakers in oral communication, develop speech consciousness, personal speech monitoring skills and speech adjustment strategies that help learners develop in and out of the class (Butler-Pascoe and Wiburg, 2003).

Pronunciation in language teaching plays an important role in improving communication ability for learners. It is necessary for teachers to have pronunciation instruction that helps learners understand spoken English easily and makes them feel comfortable and confident in communication.

2.1.3. Methods in teaching pronunciation

2.1.3.1. Traditional Methods

Direct Method

Direct method was introduced as an attempt to make second language learning more like first language learning (Richards, J.C. 2001). This method was based on the way children learn their native language, which starts by listening to the target language in large quantities in order to understand it and then learners learn to speak by practicing speaking. 'Only everyday vocabulary and sentences were taught' (Richards, J.C. 2001, p.68). Demonstration, objects and pictures are used to teach concrete vocabulary and association ideas are used for abstract vocabulary. The emphasis of the method is accurate pronunciation.

- Advantages of Direct method

Direct method is an exciting and interesting way of learning a language through activity. Language learners have opportunities to improve their pronunciation and achieve fluency.

- Criticism of Direct method

The fact shows that students are more actively when teachers use this method. Instead of focusing on grammar rules, teachers can encourage direct and spontaneous use of the foreign language and then learners would be able to include rules of grammar (Richards, J.C. 2001). However, the Direct method ‘did not take well in public schools where the constrains of budget, classroom size, time, and teacher background (native speaker or native like fluency) made such a method difficult to use’ (R.Brown 1994:56).

Audio – lingual Method

Audiolingualism is based on the behaviorist notion that learning a language is a process of habit formation (Nunan, D. 2004). This method, therefore, stresses the mechanic aspects of language learning and language use. The focus of this method is accuracy, precise native-like pronunciation which learners can achieve through drilling and practicing the basic structures and sentence patterns of the target language (Richards, J.C. 2001). Listening and speaking are given priority and precede reading and writing in the teaching sequence.

- Advantages of Audio – lingual method

Audio-lingual method helps student more active in classroom. The speaking and listening skills are developed. ‘Dialogue and drills form the basis of audio-lingual classroom practices’ (Richards, J.C. 2001). Some classroom activities such as repetition, inflection, replacement, restatement, transposition...are thought to have its basis on this method.

- Criticism of Audio – lingual Method

Human language is created from the learners’ underlying competence rather than imitation. Hence, the language learning is not simply a habit formation (Chomsky, 1966, cited in Richards, J. C. 2001). Besides, it is not easy for language learners to transfer learnt patterns to real communication.

2.1.3.2. Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative language teaching is as a philosophical approach to language teaching covering a range of methodological approaches which share a focus on helping learners communicate meaningfully in the target language. (Nunan, D. 2004)

There are two versions of Communicative language teaching, which are ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ one. According to Howatt (1984), the weak version stresses the importance of providing learners with opportunities to use their English for communicative purposes and attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching. On the other hand, the strong version claims that ‘language is acquired through communication’ (Howatt 1984, cited in Richards, J.C. 2001). In other words, the weak version means ‘learning to use’ while the strong version can be described as ‘using to learn’.

The aim of Communicative language teaching is to develop the ability of learners to use language in real communication (Rod, E. 2003).

- **Advantages of Communicative language teaching**

Communicative language teaching creates more opportunities for language learners to use their target language. Language learners feel more confident as they are themselves in using the language.

Communicative language teaching also helps improve students’ autonomy and collaborative learning as they have chances to get involved in the learning process.

Communicative language teaching helps improve the relationships between teachers and learners.

- **Criticism of Communicative language teaching**

Communicative language teaching is not suitable for all language learners.

Communicative language teaching provides ‘textbooks that are really nothing more than a series of recipes for activities’ (Barker, D. 2011, p.123).

Communicative language teaching is an inappropriate methodology in those cultural contexts where the teacher is regarded as a fount of wisdom, and where accuracy is valued more highly than fluency (Thornbury, S. 2003).

Task-based Teaching

Task-based teaching can be regarded as a recent version of communicative language teaching as it is developed on the same principles. Task-based teaching refers to an approach based on the use of task as the core unit of planning and instruction in language teaching. Task-based teaching emphasizes the importance of specifically designed instructional tasks as the basis of learning (Richards, J.C. 2001). According to Nunan (2004), Task-based teaching is an approach to language teaching organized around tasks rather than language structures. Through these definitions, it can be seen that in Task-based teaching, the notion of ‘task’ is a central unit of planning and teaching. (Richards, J.C. 2001). Hence, various influential experts, including Prabhu (1987), Nunan (1989), and Willis (1996) have discussed the definitions of tasks.

According to Jack C.R. (2001), the first definition of task in language teaching was given by Prabhu (1987). According to this author, task is ‘an activity which requires learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allows teachers to control and regulate that process’.

Nunan D. (1989) defines “task” (communicative task) as a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language. In this process, the principal focus is put on meaning rather than form. Besides, the task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right.

Some years later, Skehan (1996) offers another definition of tasks, which are the activities which have meaning as their primary focus. Success in tasks is evaluated in terms of achievement of an outcome, and tasks generally bear some resemblance to real life language use.

Willis (1996) contributes to the use of tasks in language classroom. The linguist defines “tasks” as activities through which the target language is used by the learner for a communicative purpose in order to achieve an outcome. The aim of tasks is to create a real purpose for language use and to provide a natural context for language

study. Willis then suggested a framework for task-based learning with three basic conditions including Pre-task, Task Cycle and Language Focus.

Although the definitions of “task” vary in Task-based teaching, the authors of these definitions seem to share a common understanding about task, that is, “task” is an activity or goal that is carried out using language and language learning depends on immersing students not merely in comprehensible input but in tasks that require them to negotiate meaning and engage in naturalistic and meaningful communication.

- Advantages of Task-based teaching

Provide students with a free of language use from their own resources rather than practicing a pre-selected language item.

Develop a natural context from students’ experience.

Expose variously to language in a whole range of lexical phrases, collocations and patterns as well as language forms.

Needs-based consideration to dictate what will be covered in the lesson rather than decision made by teachers or the course book.

A strong communicative approach where students have to spend a lot of time communicating.

Enjoyable and motivating.

(Richard Frost, 2004)

Content-based Teaching

Content – based instruction is an approach to language teaching in which the syllabus is organized according to content from other subjects on the curriculum, such as history and geography (Nunan, D. 2004). Content – based teaching can be regarded as a logical development of some of the core principles of Communicative language teaching, particularly those that relate to the role of meaning in language learning (Richards, J.C. 2001).

By *content*, Jack, C. R (2001) states that it is the substance or subject matter that we learn or communicate through language rather than the language used to convey it.

The focus of content – based instruction is the input to the learning process. In this method, the language input should be authentic and even modes of learning should also be authentic to the study of the subject (Richards, J.C. 2001).

Content – based instruction is grounded on two central principles. Firstly, it is suggested that people learn a second language more successfully when they use the language as a means of acquiring information rather than as an end in itself. Secondly, Content – based instruction better reflect learners’ needs for learning in a second language.

Obviously, the implementation of task-based and content-based instruction provides students with more advantages over the traditional form-focused approaches. But, the same as any other approaches, besides the advantages, task-based and content – based language teaching also have disadvantages. For example, tasks restrict the number of language functions used. In pair and group work, tasks do not ensure outcomes that traditional pedagogy has as goals (Ellis, 2003). Dailey, A (2009) and Paul Dickinson (2010) claimed that task-based language teaching has little effectiveness on improving their students’ language competence because the success of an applied approach depends much on the teachers, the learners, the institution/school, the culture and people’s belief.

Recent research papers on these two alternative methods of language teaching have shown different results. In Ruso. N. research in Turkey, Ya-Ling Tsai (2010) in Taiwan, Natsuko Shintani (2011) in Japan, the application of TBT and CBT shows positive effect on students. However, according to a number of other research papers in such countries as South Korea (Li, 1998), Hong Kong (Evans, 1996; Carless, 1999), Japan (Browne and Wada, 1998; Gorsuch, 2001), China (Hui, 1997; Liao, 2000), Vietnam (Ellis, 1996; Kramersch and Sullivan, 1996) and Indonesia (Tomlinson, 1990), the implementation of these language teaching approaches appears to be problematic. There remain some problems related to teachers’ beliefs, teacher understandings, the syllabus time available, the textbook and the topic, preparation and the available resources, and the language proficiency of the students (Davis, R.C. 2003).

Hence, it can be reasonable for Hinkle (2006) to state that the application of task-based and content – based teaching is not superior to traditional instruction and that the effectiveness of these two approaches on language learners has not been proved. The traditional teaching and learning instructions such as Direct and Audio-lingual Method seem to be no longer of great use. This urges linguists to think about new teaching methodology, which focuses more on improving learner autonomy, cooperative learning, critical thinking skills and so on, with a view to helping learners be themselves in a new language and be able to continue studying without teachers' help.

2.1.4. Factors affecting the teaching and learning of pronunciation

2.1.4.1. The native language

The native language is a major affecting factor with lots of impacts on learners' process of learning another language (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994). Researches in different countries including Vietnam have shown that mother tongue has an important influence on language learners of a second or foreign language in all aspects, from the interpretation of meaning to the way they produce the new language's sounds. Kenworthy, J. (1987) pointed out that "It is inevitable that learners' native language has a great impact on their ability of pronouncing English" (p.198). The foreign accent is easy to identify based on speaker's way of pronouncing English. Besides, the native language may cause both difficulties and advantages for learners. For example, English and Vietnamese written language are Latin letters whereas Chinese is a hieroglyphic language. Therefore, it seems easy for Vietnamese people to learn English than Chinese. However, it is difficult for Vietnamese learners to produce correctly some English sound such as /ʒ/, /ʃ/, /θ/, /ð/ because these sound do not exist in Vietnamese (Kenworthy, J. 1987).

2.1.4.2. The amount of exposure

Large amount of time exposed to the target language can be really helpful for language learners in improving their pronunciation skills. The fact that people who live in English speaking country may have good English pronunciation than some who do not. Kenworthy, J. (1987) explained that "It is difficult to measure the exact

amount of exposure to English” (p.23). Because of working environment, some people may only use English at work, but use their own language outside. Some may live in English speaking countries, but work for companies from other countries. People may use English everyday, however, it is difficult to identify the length of time they use English. In addition, they can use different kinds of English such as business English or informal English due to the fact that each person has different living and working environment (Kenworthy, J. 1987).

2.1.4.3. Pronunciation ability

It cannot be denied that some people have a better ear for foreign language than some other people (Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994). Tests designed by Brown and Yule (1983) showed that some people were able to distinguish sounds better than others, resulting in their better ability to mimic sounds (Brown and Yule, 1983, cited in Dalton and Seidlhofer, 1994.)

2.1.4.4. Motivation to the study of pronunciation

Motivation has been referred to as a major influential factor affecting people’s behaviors. As defined by Brown (1997), motivation is ‘an inner drive, impulse, emotion or desire that moves one to a particular action’ (p.69). Therefore, when learners feel a need to study pronunciation and become more motivated, there is a possibility that they will spend more time practicing to make their pronunciation better.

2.1.4.5. Teaching and learning environment

Teaching and learning environment also plays an important role in the language teaching due to its impact on students’ learning motivation.

According to Sandberg (1994), there are seven components of teaching and learning environment including ‘teacher component, monitor component, fellow learner component, leaning material, external information sources, tools and school’. Different component has different function which contributes to characterizing a teaching and learning environment.

To sum up, there are many factors that affect the teaching and learning pronunciation. The influence of native language is consider as a major affecting

factor on learners' process of learning another language. In addition, the amount of exposure, pronunciation ability of each learner, motivation in learning and teaching and learning environment are also important affecting factors in improving pronunciation ability for learners.

2.2. The role of technology in language teaching

According to Shyamlee (2012), the application of technology in language teaching is exceptionally necessary to cultivate students' interest and motivation in study and their involvement in class activities, promote students' communication capacity, widen students' knowledge to gain an insightful understanding to western culture, improve teaching effect, improve interaction between teacher and student, create a context for language teaching and provide flexibility to course content.

'The advancement in technology has allowed the educators to be more creative and therefore more efficient and effective teaching online or offline. Technology has helped enhancing classroom activities, motivate students, and engage them in classroom activities. The more students are involved the more they should learn while enjoying their time. This is especially true with teaching foreign languages as more interaction is needed in the classroom' (Manouchehr Tabatabaei & Ying Gui, 2011, p.213).

Jo Shan Fu (2003) pointed out the benefits of using ICT in education such as assisting students in accessing digital information efficiently and effectively, supporting student-centered and self-directed learning, producing a creative learning environment, promoting collaborative learning in a distance-learning environment, offering more opportunities to develop critical (higher-order) thinking skills, improving teaching and learning quality and supporting teaching by facilitating access to course content.

The other study was done by Hennessy (2005) on emphasizing the use of ICT acts in language teaching and learning. The researcher stated that it is as a catalyst in motivating teachers and learners to work in new ways because learners become more autonomous. Teachers should promote and support their learners to act and think independently. Lee (2001) argued that the application of Computer Assisted

Language Learning (CALL) changes learning attitudes of learners and enhances their self-confidence. Costley (2014) and Tutkun (2011) performed researches towards some benefits of ICT for teaching and learning. Results from their studies proved that learners play an active role, which can help them retain more information and become more independent. Moreover, learners can process new learner-based educational materials and their language learning skills can increase.

Baytak, Tarman, and Ayas (2011) carried out a study on investigating the effect of technology on learning. The researchers emphasized that learners increased their learning through incorporating technology. The findings showed that technology created learning interesting of learner, made them more interactive and increased their motivation, social interactions, and engagement.

Mohammad Reza Ahmadi (2018) concluded that “technology provides interaction between teachers and learners, provides comprehensible input and output, helps learners to develop thinking skills, makes learning and teaching becomes more student-centered, promotes learners’ autonomy and helps them feel more confident, and increases learners’ motivation to effectively learn a foreign language”. (p.98)

The uses of ICT tools in language teaching and learning are effective on enhancing learners and teachers’ motivation. Learners become more interested, interactive, independent and confident in learning and communication.

2.3. Previous studies

According to Esteve Recatalà, Andrea (2005), teaching pronunciation through ICT tools is a way of “familiarising the students with the culture of the native speakers – including their gestures, distance maintained in speaking and formulas of expression” (Finocchiaro & Bonomo, 1973, p.106). The use of ICT tools in language teaching make students change on their motivation. They became more participative and responsive to any content imparted.

Kun-Ting Hsieh, Da-Hui Dong and Li-Yi Wang (2013) in their study suggested a new teaching method which called shadowing technique to improve English pronunciation for non-English major students at National Taiwan University (NTU). My English Tutor (MyET), an online program is used as ICT tool to

determine if the shadowing technique could be helpful in Taiwan's context. At NTU, MyET is widely adopted as a resource to help students learning spoken English by themselves. In order to maximize the effective functions of this program, English teachers at NTU require students do their assignments by MyET. NTU also equipped many computers with MyET for those who want to practice pronunciation (Kun-Ting Hsieh, Da-Hui Dong & Li-Yi Wang, 2013). After applying some research methods, they concluded that shadowing technique in particular and ICT tool in general "enabled the participants to get used to the flow of the sentences without wasting effort on short-term memory and text reading. Second, the shadowing technique contributed to better overall pronunciation performance than the repetition technique, which denotes that the use of the shadowing technique in pronunciation instruction is effective, but neglected" (Kun-Ting Hsieh, Da-Hui Dong & Li-Yi Wang 2013, p.55).

In addition, Sze-Chu Liu¹ and Po-Yi Hung (2016) also used a program to measure the effectiveness of using an ICT tool named MyET for undergraduate students of a university of technology located in central Taiwan. In their study, MyET was used to measure participants' pronunciation quality. It is an on-line software designed for English pronunciation of Audiolingualism method and communicative approach. The participants were trained and practiced after doing pretest in 8 weeks with computer assisted pronunciation instruction in laboratory. The results in their study showed that the participants' pronunciation was significantly improved after the training. The pitch variation of participants' pronunciation increased especially rising-falling intonation.

Another study of Fatemeh Alipanahi (2014) focused on using software for learning strong stress full vowel and weak unstressed in weak vowels. From the results of data analysis, Fatemeh Alipanahi (2014) stated that technology in learning pronunciation is very effective in "promoting learners' attitudes, perception, learning, and production of correct stress patterns" (p.36). However, in term of stress patterns, Fatemeh Alipanahi paid more attention on stress syllable than word and sentence stress.

Thakur (2012) – an assistant Professor of English in G.S. Science, Arts and Commerce College used different technologies like Digital Language Lab software and various components of interactive web like websites, wikis, blogs and social media in teaching pronunciation for undergraduate students of Commerce. The result showed that technology inspired approach could bring two major benefits such as promoting students' enthusiasm and enhancing their excitement in learning pronunciation. Another benefit the researcher reported was that students did feel under pressure as they could use individual computer with headphone. Basing on technology, teachers can create more creative ideas in language teaching and students participate and learn interactively (Thakur, 2012).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides theoretical framework in this study, research questions, participants, data collection instruments with questionnaires and tests, and data analysis.

3.1. Theoretical framework

This study will be conducted using an action research approach. Action research can be defined as “an approach in which the action researcher and a client collaborate in the diagnosis of the problem and in the development of a solution based on the diagnosis” (Bryman and Bell, 2011, p.414). McCutcheon and Jung (1990) stated action research as a "systemic inquiry that is collective, collaborative, self-reflective, critical and undertaken by participants in the inquiry" (p.223). Another definition of action research was argued by Kemmis and McTaggart (1990) as "a form of collective self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices, as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out". (p.158)

The four necessary steps for action research according to Grundy and Kemmis (1981) were planning, taking action, observing and reflecting. In this study, the four pertinent elements to revise the problem were determined as the general plan, the action implemented, the action observed and the reflective critical evaluation. In the general plan, the aim of the research is to identify ways to help Vietnamese adult learners improve their English pronunciation. One major ICT tool is used in the action implemented to achieve the goal followed by the analysis of data collection from recording and scores gained, learner journal and participant observation in observation phase. The reflective critical evaluation phase aims at identifying impacts which will base on the results and findings before re-planning the next cycle’s action. Hence, each cycle’s action will help the researcher find out the most effective way to improve English pronunciation ability for adult learners (Figure 3.1 & 3.2).

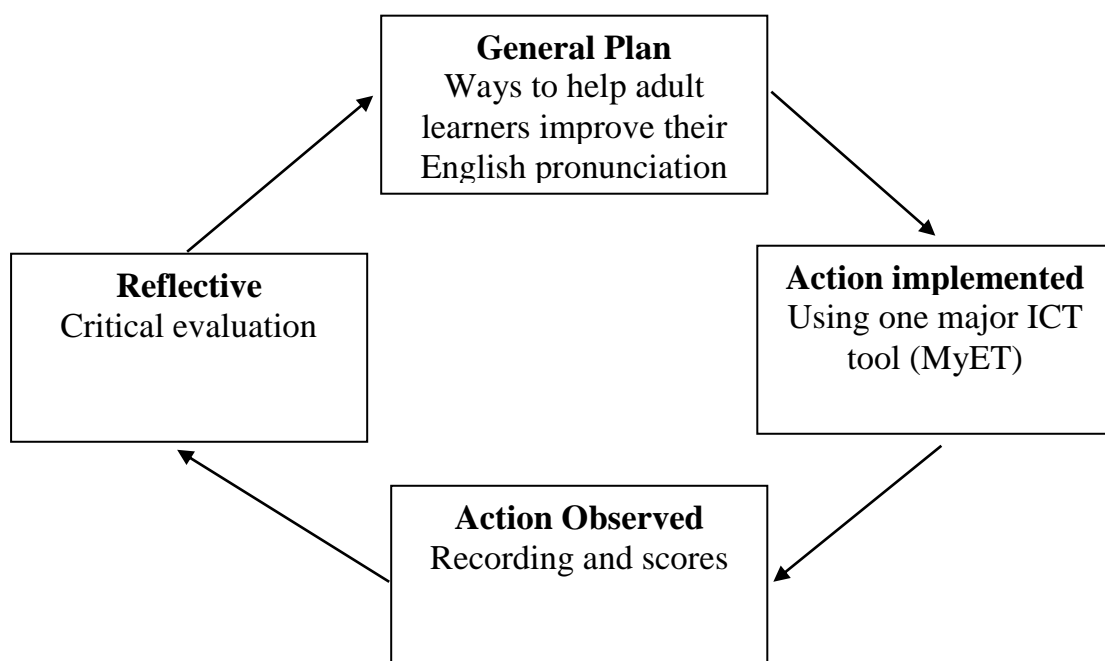


Figure 3.1. Action research model in this study (Grundy and Kemmis, 1981)

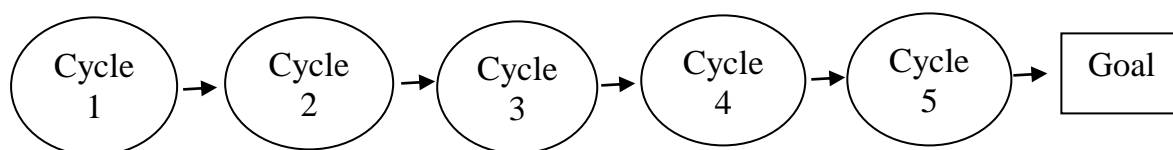


Figure 3.2. Action research cycles in this study (Grundy and Kemmis, 1981)

3.2. Research questions

The study is conducted to answer the following research questions:

- What are pronunciation problems faced by adult English learners who are students of TNU?
- What impacts do ICT tool have on improving adult learners' English pronunciation?
- What are the learners' perspectives on the use of ICT tool in promoting pronunciation learning?

3.3. Participants

The participants of the research were 20 learners of New Edu English Centre in Thai Nguyen city. They were also students of Thai Nguyen University. They took part in answering pre and post questionnaires, doing pretest and posttest. All of

them were non-major in English language and under elementary level of English at that point.

3.4. MyET

My English Tutor (MyET) is a pronunciation program which can be downloaded easily from the Internet to personal computer or students' smart phones. There are many short conversations for learners to practice about daily life, travel, hotel and restaurant in this software. MyET allows learners to listen to American accents and to repeat each sentence in the conversations. This software analyzes problems of learners' pronunciation and gives immediate feedback and scores. The mark of each sentence is calculated based on criteria of pronunciation (at word level), pitch, rhythm, stress and overall performance. After a period of practicing, learners can take part in Speaking Proficiency Test of the software to evaluate their improvement in pronunciation.

3.5. Data collection instruments

In this study, questionnaires, pre and posttests and analysis of scores gained by using myET (a web-based tool as well as mobile app) were employed as the main data collection instruments. The procedures of data collection is presented below.

3.5.1. Questionnaires

Two set of questionnaires were delivered to participants of the study at the beginning and the end of the experimental period, in which the first one was designed to investigate students' frequency of practicing pronunciation, students' difficulties in learning English pronunciation, and the second one is mainly to collect information about students' own evaluation of their improvement and other impacts made by the application of ICT tool on their pronunciation features their strategies in learning pronunciation through using ICT tools as well as its impacts on their learning habit.

3.5.2. Pretest and Posttest on my ELT

The second set of data was gathered from pre and posttest. The participants of the research were asked to do a pretest by using a tool for practicing and testing

pronunciation ability based on Audiolingualism method and communicative approach, named MyET (My English Tutor).

Before the experimental period began, students were trained on how to download and use the app. There are 60 sentences in Speaking Proficiency Test of the software. The mark of each sentence was calculated based on criteria of pronunciation (at word level), pitch, rhythm, stress and overall performance. Students were required to listen and repeat 20 first sentences. Students were asked to make notes of their results for the Speaking Proficiency Test on a piece of paper. From then on, they were asked to continue practicing on MyET in six continuous weeks, using their laptop, mobile phone or library computer. Their scores gained in each week had to be sent to the researcher. In the end, participants were requested to do a posttest. Data of the score results then were collected and analyzed.

3.6. Data analysis

Data from questionnaires and pretest and posttest were collected and proceeded by Microsoft Excel tool. These figures then were illustrated by tables, charts for clearer presentation and analysis of students' pronunciation features. After that, findings were interpreted accordingly.

3.7. Action plan

Timeline	Actions	Responsibilities	Aims
Week 1	Doing pre questionnaires	- Researcher; - 20 students;	Find out: - Difficulties of students in learning pronunciation. - Reasons for limited pronunciation ability. - Methods in teaching pronunciation. - Ways to improve pronunciation ability.
Week 2	Doing pretest by using MyET	- Researcher; - 20 students;	- Collect data before starting experimental period. - Evaluate students' pronunciation ability based on criteria of pronunciation (at word level), pitch, rhythm, stress and overall performance

Timeline	Actions	Responsibilities	Aims
			before weekly training with MyET.
Week 3 to week 8	Practicing on MyET	- Researcher; - 20 students;	- Collect data from six continuous weeks of students; - Evaluate changes of students' pronunciation ability based on criteria of pronunciation (at word level), pitch, rhythm, stress and overall performance.
Week 9	Doing posttest by using MyET	- Researcher; - 20 students;	- Collect data after weekly training with MyET. - Evaluate final results after weekly training with MyET. - Compare the average scores of pretest and posttest result.
Week 10	Doing post questionnaires	- Researcher; - 20 students;	Find out: - Students' evaluation of the usefulness and improvement of MyET. - Students' attitude towards the application of MyET.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents data and analysis of data collected from the survey responses and the pretest and posttest score reports on the MyET applied according to the five criteria automatically assessed.

4.1. Data collected from questionnaires

4.1.1 Data from pre-questionnaires

- **Difficulties due to subjective causes**

Limited pronunciation ability and passive learning

Results from the questionnaires show that more than half of the participants have negative opinion about their ability to pronounce or speak a foreign language. A large number of students (80%) believe that their limited pronunciation ability is due to their rare practice after class hours. Also, although all students surveyed are well aware that English and Vietnamese sounds are different, it seems that confusion of sounds still exists as over 60% of students found themselves producing similar sounds to that of Vietnamese sounds. The reasons for students' limited pronunciation ability in their own views are presented in the following table.

Table 4.1. Reasons for limited pronunciation ability

<i>No.</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>No. of answers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1	I do not know how to pronounce many English sounds.	7	35
2	I do not pay attention to pronunciation.	12	60
3	I confuse some English sounds with others.	13	65
4	I only practice pronouncing when I study English in class.	16	80
5	I think I cannot pronounce English sounds correctly. I always replace some sounds by producing a similar Vietnamese sounds.	12	60

<i>No.</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>No. of answers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
6	I think the English and Vietnamese sounds are the same.	0	0
7	I usually substitute one sound to another sound.	15	75

Strategies employed to improve pronunciation after class hours.

Table 4.2 below presents the strategies employed by students to improve their own pronunciation ability in their free time. Only less than 20% of students apply any strategies in learning pronunciation by themselves, even with the help from teachers. It can be concluded that most participants are quite passive in learning pronunciation, especially when they do not receive the help from their teachers.

Table 4.2. Ways to improve pronunciation in free time

<i>No.</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>No. of answers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1	Listen to the tape/news and imitate.	2	10
2	Practice pronunciation by yourself or with other students	4	20
3	Record and evaluate your own pronunciation with teachers' help	1	5
4	Practice pronunciation using a mobile app/ online tool.	0	0

Low motivation to learning English

Table 4.3. Reasons for learning English

<i>No.</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>No. of answers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1	Because I like English.	4	20
2	Because It is important for my future job.	13	65

<i>No.</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>No. of answers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
3	Because it is a compulsory subject.	20	100
4	I have to use English a lot inside and outside the classroom.	1	5
5	I want to prove my ability.	1	5
6	I want to be able to talk with foreigners.	5	25
7	I want to study abroad.	5	25

As shown in the table, the most frequent reason why all of the participants (100%) studied English is because it is a compulsory subject at school. Only some of them have intrinsic motivations such as to prove their own ability (5%), to be able to talk with foreign people (25%) or to study abroad (25%), although most (65%) acknowledged that good level of English proficiency helps them get better job opportunities.

None of the students thought they have opportunities to use English outside the classroom. This somehow explains why students often lack motivation to learn English in general, let along the pronunciation of the English sound system in particular.

- **Difficulties due to objective causes**

Mother tongue's influence

As mentioned in the answers of question in the questionnaires (table 5.1), 60% participants regularly substitute the English sounds with Vietnamese sounds although all of them understand that English and Vietnamese sounds are different. This is due to the fact that 35% participants do not know how to produce the English sounds and their belief that they cannot produce the sounds correctly.

Poor learning background

Also shown in the results of questionnaires, participants rarely or even never have any opportunities to practice the English sound systems when they are at school and university. This may be one of the primary reasons for participants' wrong belief and failure in pronunciation. 60% of participants are often practiced pronunciation exercises from the course book by their teacher.

Table 4.4. Materials in teaching pronunciation

<i>No.</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>No. of answers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1	The exercises from the course book.	12	60
2	Additional ready-made materials such as other books, special websites...	4	20
3	Materials prepared by teachers.	4	20

Learning environment

Questionnaire shows that the learning environment in school and university do not provide enough opportunities for the learning of English because the number of foreigners coming to the school and university is limited. As shown from survey result, only 5% of participants have some opportunities to meet and communicate with foreigners whereas 80% of participants have never met any foreigner. Figures on the opportunities for students to communicate in English are presented below.

Table 4.5. Opportunities to meet or communicate with foreigners

<i>No.</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>No. of answers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1	No, I don't. I have never met any foreigner in my university.	16	80
2	No, I don't. There are some foreigners in my university but I have no chance to communicate with them.	3	15
3	Yes. I have some opportunities to communicate with foreigners.	1	5

In addition, because they are non- English major students, most of their subjects do not relate to English. Another difficulty relates to time constraint. They have to learn 10-12 periods per day in the university, joining many extracurricular activities in their university and daily life. Hence, it is not possible for students to study English in general and pay attention to English pronunciation practice in particular.

Simple techniques to improve participants’ pronunciation

Questionnaire figures out another reason for participants’ difficulties in learning the pronunciation of sounds, which is the lack of opportunity to use English at university and various effective techniques in learning pronunciation.

Students took part in pronunciation classroom to learn English in the first two years at university. However, in class, teacher asked learners to listen to teachers’ pronunciation and repeated in chorus. Sometimes teachers asked participants to pronounce the words individually.

Table 4.6. Methods in teaching pronunciation

<i>No.</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>No. of answers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1	Repeat teacher’s pronunciation	16	80
2	Listen audio/video/tape recording of native speakers and repeat	3	15
3	Play games	1	5
4	Use software from the internet	0	0

Moreover, there are four skills in each lesson which teachers need concentrate on such as speaking, reading, writing and listening. Because of time constraint, teacher cannot only focus on helping students practice pronunciation in every lesson. As shown from survey result, 85% of participants only have 5-10 minutes to practice pronunciation in each lesson.

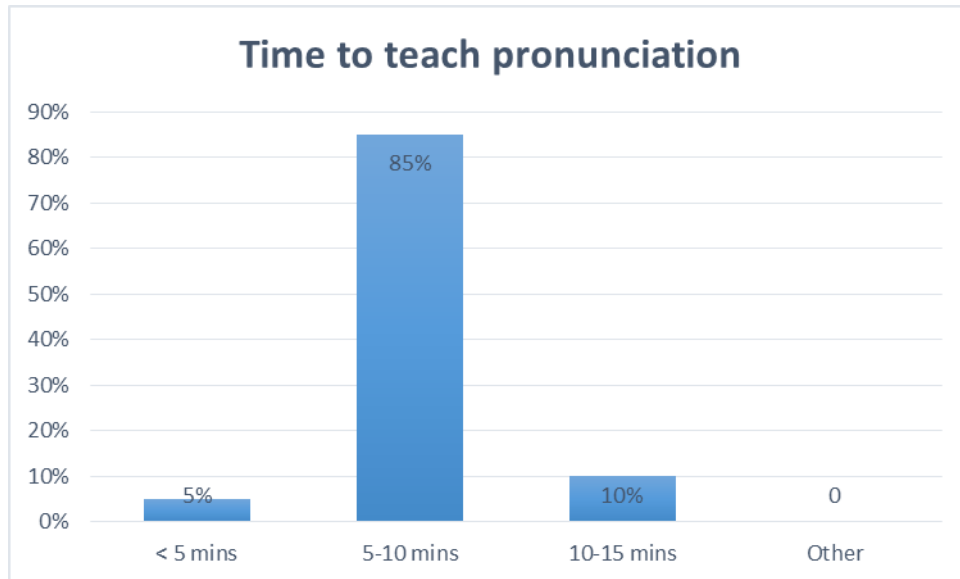


Figure 4.1. Time to teach pronunciation in each lesson

4.1.2. Data from post-questionnaires

- **The evaluation of MyET software**

Results from the questionnaires show that most participants highly evaluate the usefulness of MyET software in improving English pronunciation.

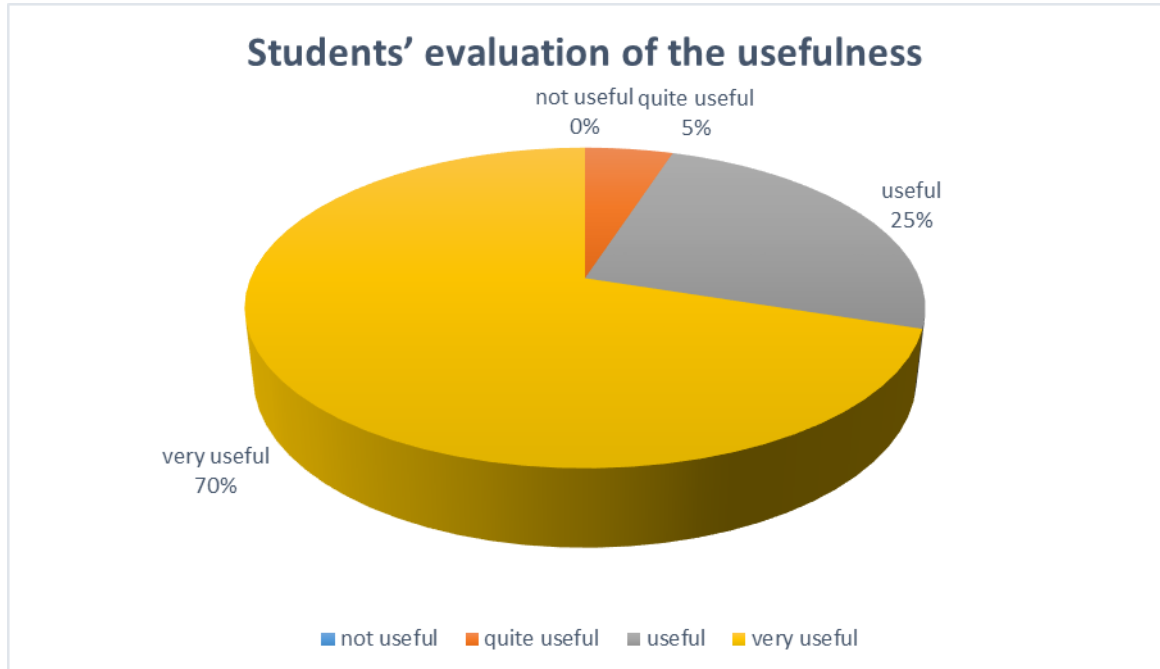


Figure 4.2. Students' evaluation of the usefulness of MyET

Table 4.7. Students' evaluation of the improvement of English pronunciation

<i>No.</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>No. of answers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1	not any improvement	0	0
2	some improvement	4	20
3	good improvement	12	60
4	excellent improvement	4	20

As shown in the table, 80% of the participants recognized the application of MyET can enhance their ability in English pronunciation.

- **Students' attitude towards the application of MyET**

The survey result shows that the majority of students have positive attitude towards using and applying MyET software in improving their English pronunciation. 95% of the participants prefer this software than to the traditional pronunciation learning and teaching with course book and CDs.

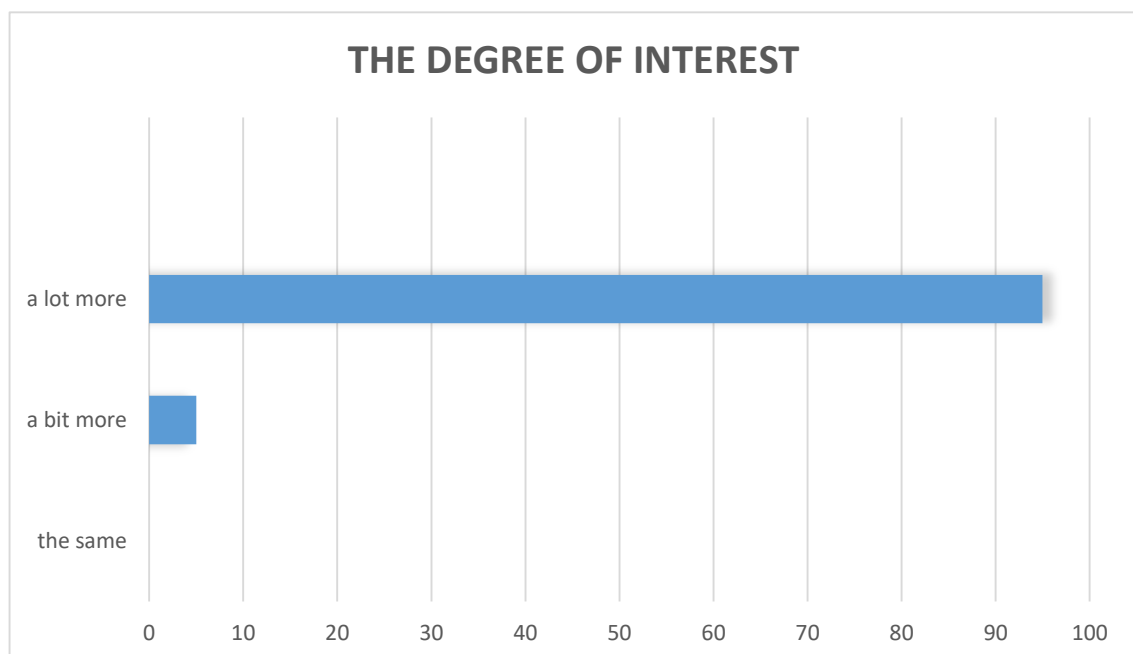


Figure 4.3. The degree of interest in using MyET

In addition, more than 80% of participants are also excited to continue using this software after the experiential period.

Table 4.8. Continuing to use MyET

<i>No.</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>No. of answers</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
1	No	3	15
2	Yes	17	85

4.2. Data collected from Pretest and Posttest

4.2.1. Pretest and posttest average scores results

Data collected from pretest and posttest are collected presented below. Figure 1 compares the average scores obtained by all the participants in terms of pronunciation, pitch, timing, emphasis and overall evaluation (total).

Table 4.9. Pretest and posttest average scores result

Criteria	Scores (%)		Percentage of Changes
	Pretest	Posttest	
Pronunciation	77.1	85.3	+8.2
Pitch	69.4	75.8	+6.4
Timing	57.3	77.5	+20.2
Emphasis	77.5	80.1	+2.6
Total	66.2	78.7	+12.5

As can be seen from Table 4.9 above, the pretest scores show that before the application of MyET, students are better at pronunciation of individual sounds and emphasis than pitch and timing. Timing seems to be the biggest problem with the success of resemblance was only 57.3% while that of pitch was a little higher at 69.4%. The scores gained by students for the other two criteria including pronunciation and emphasis are 77.1% and 77.5%, respectively.

The summary of the score results confirms that the use of the MyET significantly helped students improve their pronunciation ability. All of the criteria scored show their advancement after the experiential period, in which the most remarkable change was seen in “timing” with a rise of 20.2% in the posttest compared to the pretest. Other criteria including pronunciation, pitch and emphasis all witnessed a change of 8.2%, 6.4% and 2.6%, respectively. Students are still better at pronunciation and emphasis than timing and pitch, however, the difference is not as significant as revealed by the pretest scores.

For the overall evaluation, the summary of the posttest scores show that students’ overall pronunciation ability has improved with a rise of 12.5% compared to the pretest scores. Therefore, it can be concluded that the application of the app has positive impact on students’ pronunciation ability.

4.2.2. Pretest and posttest average scores results of individual participants

In this part, the average scores gained by individual students for 20 sentences of the pretest and posttest are illustrated by bar charts.

4.2.2.1 Pronunciation

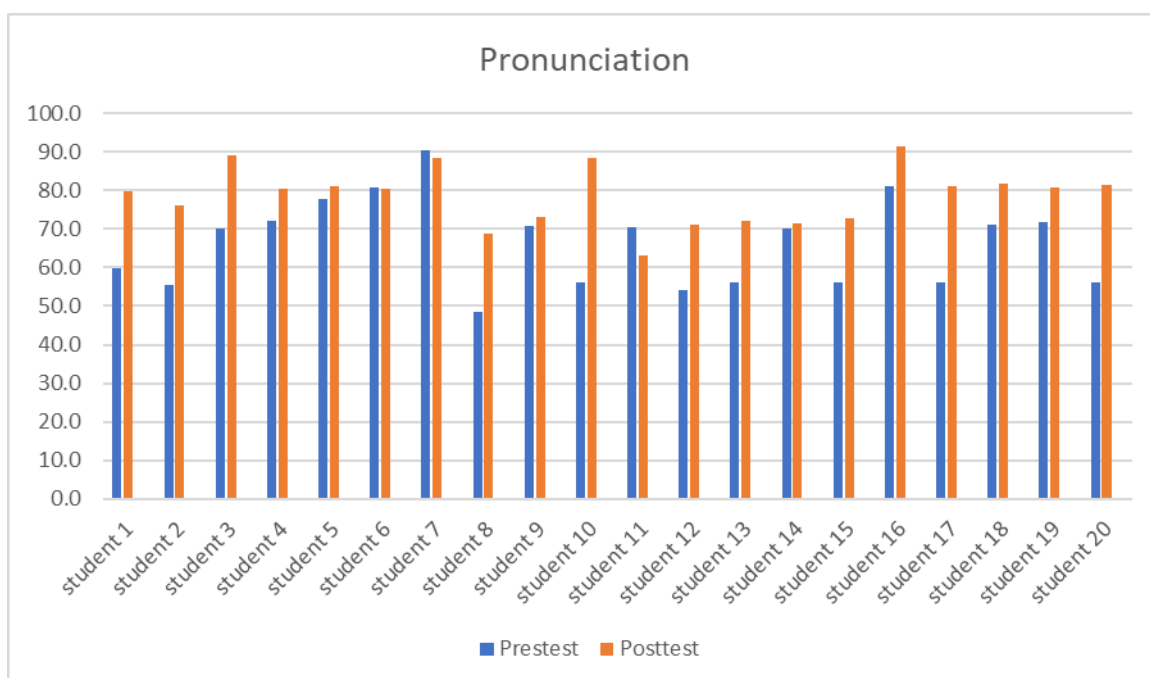


Figure 4.4. Average score results for Pronunciation (in percentage)

Figure 4.4 compares the average scores gained by students for the first criteria “Pronunciation” in the pretest and posttest. As can be seen, students’ ability to pronounce individual words has been enhanced after the experiential period. Surprisingly, students with lower scores in the pretest seem to make faster improvement while those with better scores in the pretest got less impressive enhancement though their scores remain higher. Most significant change in pronunciation ability were made by student 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 12, 13, 15, 17 20 with an increase of from 10% to approximately 30%.

4.2.2.2. Pitch

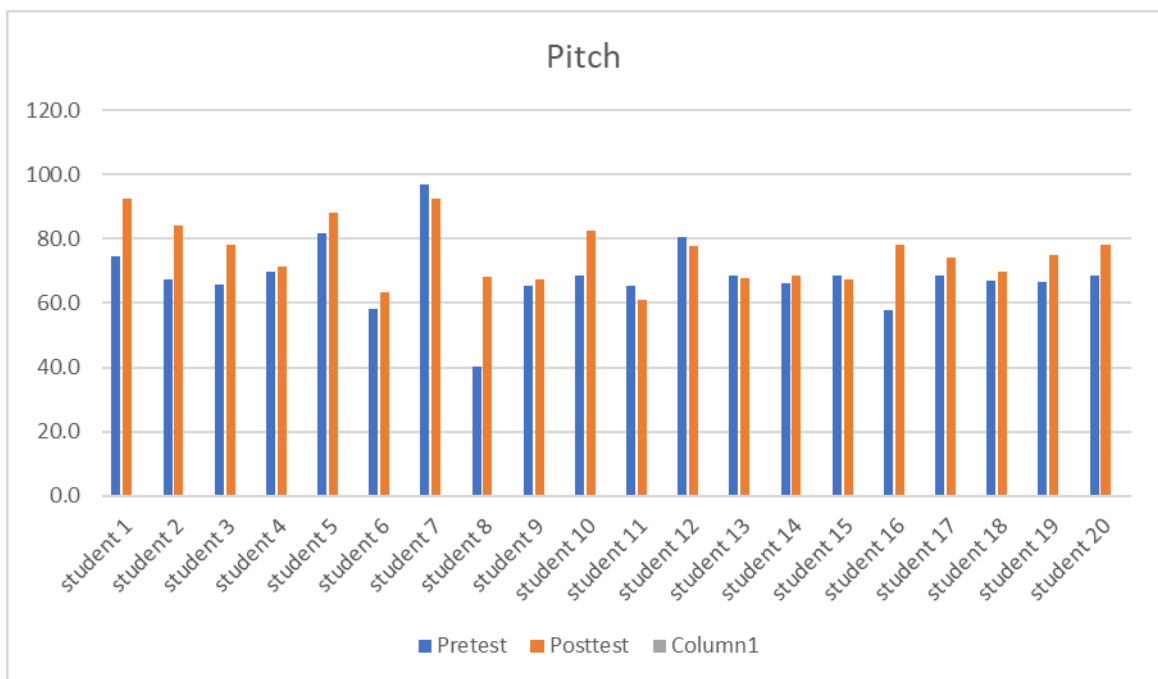


Figure 4.5. Average score results for Pitch (in percentage)

In this figure, the average score results for Pitch is presented. Similar to pronunciation criterion, most students made progress. However, it seems that the improvement was not as significant as for pronunciation. Only a few students improved by approximately 10% including student 1, 2, 8, 18. Others’ improvement was not obvious and some even got slightly lower scores than in the pretest though not recognizable.

4.2.2.3 Timing

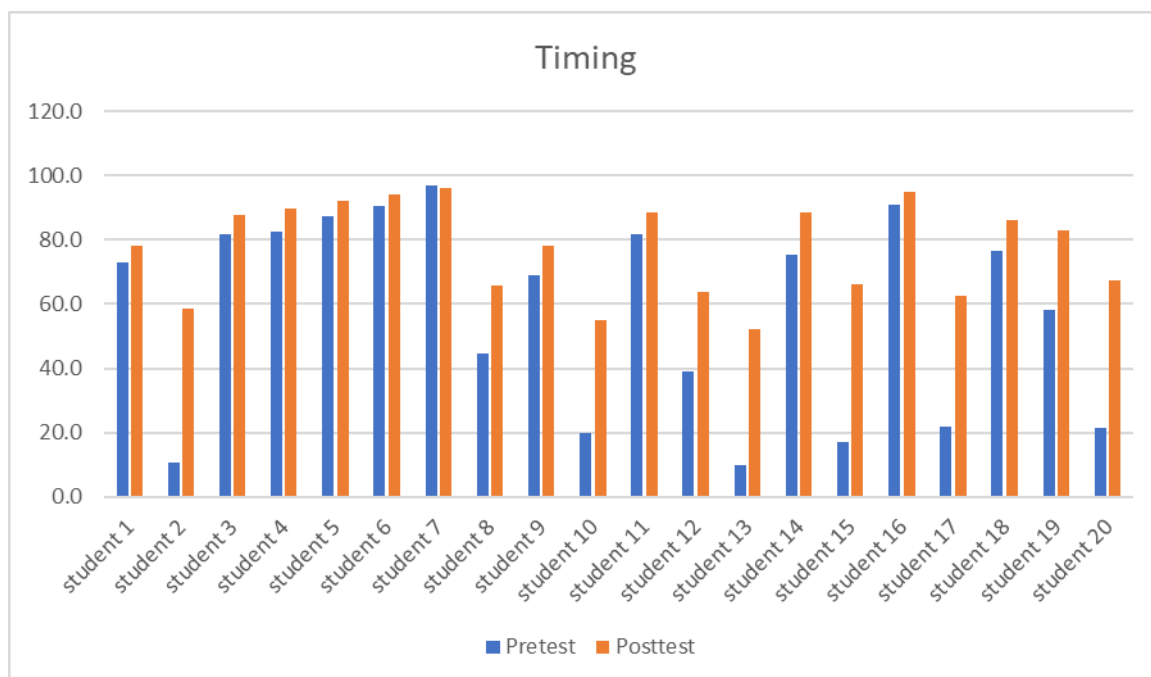


Figure 4.6. Average score results for Timing (in percentage)

The fastest progress seems to be made on timing. As shown in the chart, nearly all students improved the ability to control the time used to produce an utterance. Students with the lowest scores improve most significantly, normally more than 20% and up to 45%. Those with most impressive figures are student 2, 10, 15, 20 who got a rise of 30% to 40%. Some others like student 8, 12, 19 scored approximately 20% higher than previously. For the group of students with better scores result in the pretest, some improvement was made but not really clear.

4.2.2.4. Emphasis

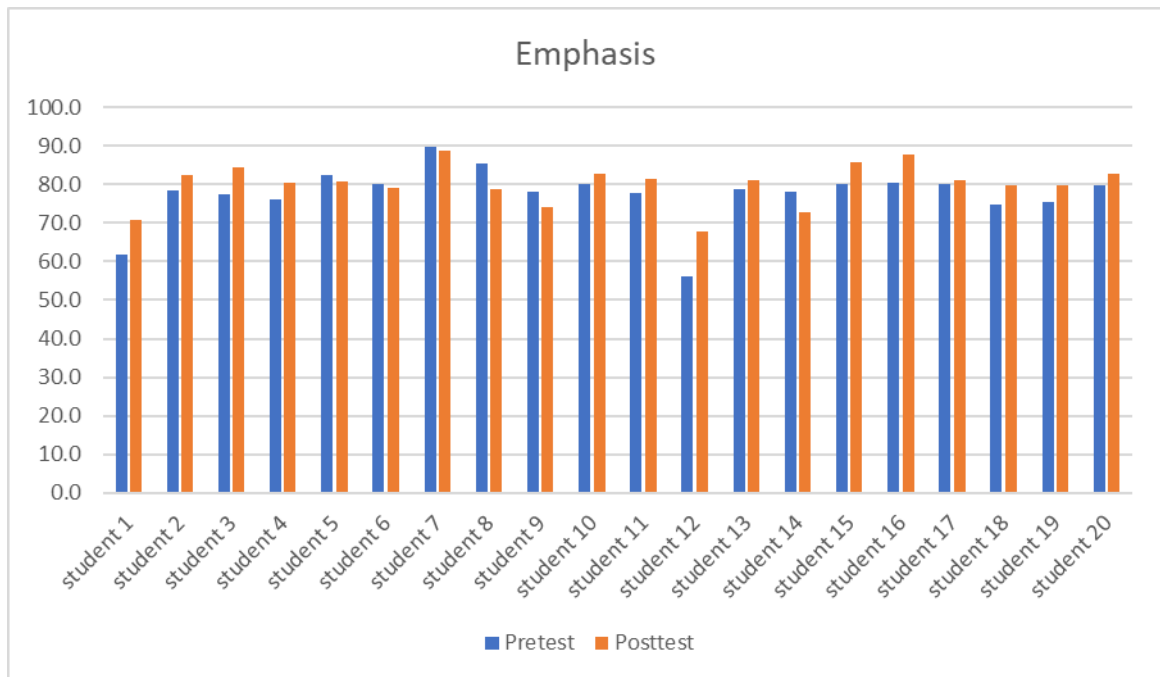


Figure 4.7. Average score results for Emphasis (in percentage)

In terms of emphasis, the improvement made by students is not significant. However, as can be seen in figure 4.7, most of students made some progress. Students who improve fastest were student 1 and 12 who got the lowest scores of this criterion in the pretest with the percentage of changes were 9.2% and 11.7% respectively. Most other made slight improvement at 4.2% on average.

4.2.2.5. Total

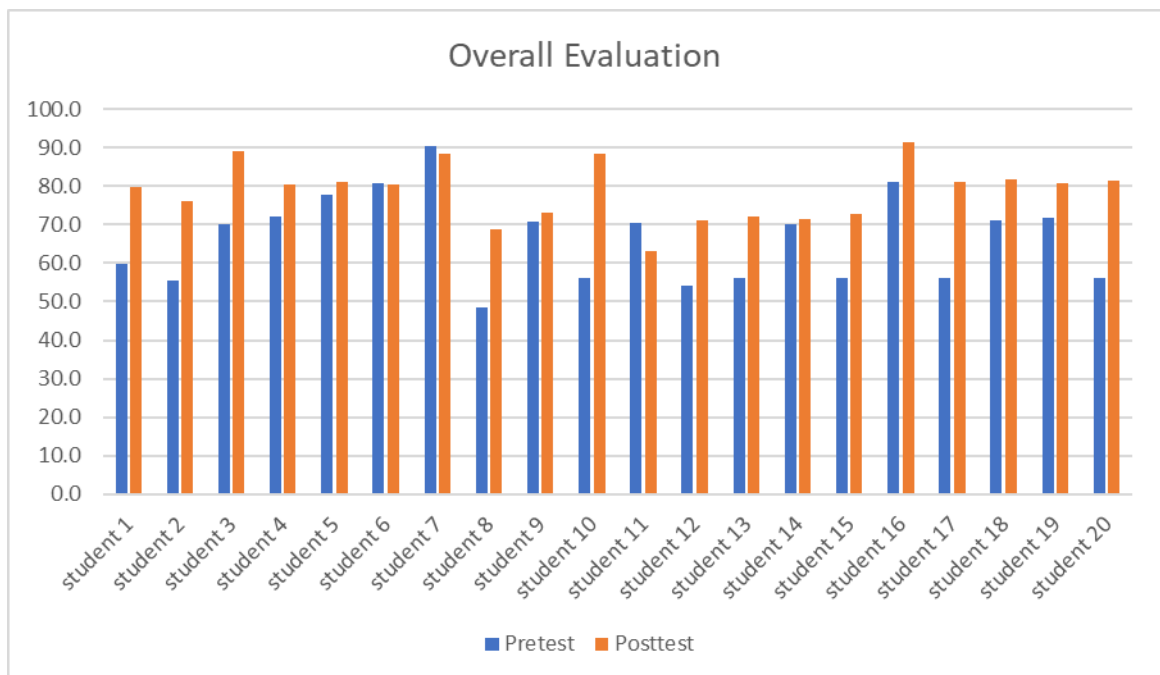


Figure 4.8. Average score results for Overall Evaluation (Total) (in percentage)

For overall evaluation as shown in figure 4.8 above, quite a lot of students made good progress when it comes to this criterion. The majority of students got the higher scores for the posttest compared to that of the pretest. A number of them experienced an improvement of over 20% in the posttest scores. Some others improved by 10 to 20%. The faster progress was also made by students with lower scores for the first test. Overall, the improvement made by students was not similar, some were very high, some were lower. However, from the figures, it is recognizable that students' pronunciation in general has made some positive changes.

Investigating the scores gained by students for the pretest and the posttest, it can be concluded that students' pronunciation ability has been improved with the integration of ICT, in this case, with the application of MyET. The most significant changes were made on the control of time, then is for the pronunciation of individual words and overall ability. Emphasis and pitch do not have clear improvement compared to the other three criteria, however, students still made some improvement. Interestingly, students with lower scores for the pretest normally made better progress in most of the criteria evaluated.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The last chapter of this study will discuss summary of major findings, implications from the analysis results, then acknowledge the research limitations and propose some suggestions for further studies.

5.1. Major findings

The purpose of this study is to find out pronunciation strategies and one major ICT tool named MyET to support pronunciation ability of adult learners. Therefore, after reading references and using some methods to find out results, the study answered the three research questions:

- What are pronunciation problems faced by adult English learners who are students of TNU?
- What impacts do ICT tool have on improving adult learners' English pronunciation?
- What are the learners' perspectives on the use of ICT tool in promoting pronunciation learning?

Regarding the first question, researcher determined factors, difficulties, mistakes which adult learners of TNU have to face in English pronunciation. Students had some difficulties in pronunciation such as intonation, stress, rhythm and fluency. As seen from pre questionnaires, some factors affecting the English pronunciation include the influence of mother tongue, students' ability of pronunciation, teaching and learning environment, and students' motivation in learning pronunciation.

Concerning the second research question, it can be concluded that students' pronunciation ability has been improved with the integration of ICT tool, in this case, with the application of MyET. The most significant changes were made on the control of time, then is for the pronunciation of individual words and overall ability. Emphasis and pitch do not have clear improvement compared to the other two criteria, however, students still made some improvement. Interestingly, students with lower scores for the pretest normally made better progress in most of the criteria evaluated. Using ICT tool brings effectiveness for learning pronunciation.

Relating to the third research question, researcher received a great deal of ideas, desires or aspirations such as teaching methods, learning methods, students' difficulties, strategies in learning pronunciation through using ICT tool ... from students. The majority of students have positive attitude and excitement in using MyET – an ICT tool in developing their English pronunciation.

5.2. Implications

The results suggest that applying ICT tool is effective in improving English pronunciation for adult learners in terms of pronunciation (at word level), pitch, rhythm, stress, overall performance, and in their attitudes and motivation in learning. Therefore, the teaching method should not rely only on the traditional method to teach adult learners to pronounce. English teachers should use ICT tools in teaching pronunciation to enhance the students' interest and motivation in learning English. Besides, they could provide other ICT tools and encourage students to learn by themselves outside the classroom. Furthermore, it is necessary for teachers to find out helpful ICT tools that are appropriate the students' age, needs, interests and language levels.

5.3. Research limitations and suggestions

The research limitations lie in the number of participants, time constraints, narrow scope, the research subject and materials. The data collection was carried out six weeks and only 20 participants were invited to take part in this study. Because of time constraint, it is difficult to find out all of problems in pronunciation learning and student's desires in improving their pronunciation ability. Further studies may involve more participants with different ages and learning backgrounds so as to develop an understanding and assess more accurately the effectiveness of application ICT tools. As this action research was conducted with a small group of adult learners of English in Thai Nguyen University, a larger sample such as school or educational institution in Thai Nguyen or other provinces, of various age and groups such as primary school pupils, secondary school students, university undergraduates or postgraduates would be interesting subjects to test the effectiveness of using ICT tool in teaching and learning English.

In addition, the mark of each sentence in MyET was calculated based on criteria of pronunciation (at word level), pitch, rhythm, stress and overall performance so that not all of pronunciation fields are presented in this study. As for materials, all the texts in MyET were retrieved from short communication sentences in daily life. Later studies can find other ICT tools in which materials are more varied. Finally, the ICT tool is proven to be effective and helpful in pronunciation instruction. In further studies, researchers should be devoted to other relevant topics in which translating or interpreting skills are applied to English language teaching.

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APPENDIX 1
PRE-QUESTIONNAIRES

Dear student, thank you very much for participating in this research. Completing the survey is supposed to take you less than 20 minutes. The questionnaire is in English; however, if for any reasons you felt more comfortable completing some of the questions in Vietnamese, please, do not hesitate to do so. It is very grateful if you can complete the whole questionnaire. The survey is anonymous.

Question 1. How long have you been learning English?

.....

Question 2. Why do you learn English? You can choose more than one option.

- a. Because I like English.
- b. Because It is important for my future job.
- c. Because it is a compulsory subject.
- d. I have to use English a lot inside and outside the classroom.
- e. I want to prove my ability.
- f. I want to be able to talk with foreigners.
- g. I want to study abroad

Other:.....

Question 3. Is learning English pronunciation important? Choose one option.

- a. not important at all
- b. quite important
- c. important
- d. very important

Question 4. On scale of 1-5 how would you rate your English pronunciation?

(1 = not good 2 = quite good 3 = good 4 = quite good 5 = very good;)

.....

Question 5. What are your difficulties in learning pronunciation? You can choose more than one option.

- a. I do not know how to pronounce many English sounds.

- b. I do not pay attention to pronunciation.
- c. I confuse some English sounds with others.
- d. I only practice pronouncing when I study English in class.
- e. I think I cannot pronounce English sounds correctly. I always replace some sounds by producing a similar Vietnamese sounds.
- f. I think the English and Vietnamese sounds are the same.
- g. I usually substitute one sound to another sound.

Question 6. Do you have many opportunities to meet or communicate with foreigners in your school or university? Choose one option.

- a. No, I don't. I have never meet any foreigner in my university.
- b. No, I don't. There are some foreigners in my university but I have no chance to communicate with them.
- c. Yes. I do have some opportunities to communicate with foreigners.
- d.

Other:.....

Question 7. What do you do to improve your pronunciation in free time? You can choose more than one option.

- a. Listen to the tape/news and imitate.
- b. Practice pronunciation by yourself or with other students.
- c. Record and evaluate your own pronunciation with teachers' help.
- d. Practice pronunciation using a mobile app/ online tool.

Question 8. How often does your teacher teach English pronunciation? Choose one option.

- a. Every lesson
- b. Once a week
- c. Once a month
- d. Other:.....

Question 9. How much time of the lesson does your teacher use to teach pronunciation on average? Choose one option.

- a. less than 5 minutes

- b. 5-10 minutes
- c. 10-15 minutes
- d. Other:.....

Question 10. What materials does your teacher most often use when teaching pronunciation? You can choose more than one option.

- a. The exercises from the course book.
- b. Additional ready-made materials such as other books, special websites...
- c. Materials prepared by teachers.
- d.

Other:.....

Question 11. Do you think there are enough pronunciation exercises available in the course book? Choose one option.

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I don't know

Question 12. How would you rate the usefulness of the pronunciation exercises in the course book?

- a. not useful at all
- b. quite useful
- c. useful
- d. very useful
- e. I don't know

Question 13. Do you think there are enough time in class to improve English pronunciation ability?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I don't know

Question 14. What methods does your teacher often use when teaching pronunciation? You can choose more than one option.

- a. Repeat teacher's pronunciation

- b. Listen audio/video/tape recording of native speakers and repeat
- c. Play games
- d. Use software from the internet
- e. Other:.....

Question 15. In your opinion what factors effect your English pronunciation?

You can choose more than one option.

- a. Mother tongue's influence
- b. Learning environment
- c. Teaching methods
- d. Your own ideas:.....

Thank you very much for your time and answers!

APPENDIX 2
PRETEST RESULTS

(Average scores of each students on each criterion)

	Total	Pronun	Pitch	Time	Emphasis
student 1	59.9	49.0	74.6	72.9	61.7
student 2	55.6	61.9	67.2	10.7	78.4
student 3	70.3	95.3	65.8	81.6	77.3
student 4	72.1	91.0	69.6	82.5	76.2
student 5	77.8	92.2	81.9	87.3	82.3
student 6	80.9	98.9	58.3	90.4	80.2
student 7	90.5	83.9	96.9	97.1	89.7
student 8	48.6	47.7	40.4	44.5	85.4
student 9	70.7	98.2	65.3	79.1	78.0
student 10	56.0	62.0	68.5	10.0	80.0
student 11	70.5	96.2	65.5	81.7	77.9
student 12	54.0	45.0	80.4	38.9	56.2
student 13	56.0	62.0	68.5	10.0	78.8
student 14	70.1	98.3	66.1	81.4	78.1
student 15	56.0	62.0	68.5	10.0	80.0
student 16	81.0	99.4	57.7	90.8	80.5
student 17	56.0	62.0	68.5	10.0	80.0
student 18	71.2	88.5	67.1	76.5	74.8
student 19	71.8	87.8	66.7	80.0	75.3
student 20	56.0	62.0	68.5	10.0	79.7
Average	66.2	77.2	69.4	57.3	77.5

APPENDIX 3
POSTTEST RESULTS

(Average scores (/20 sentences) of each students on each criterion)

	Total	Pronun	Pitch	Time	Emphasis
student 1	79.8	82.2	92.4	54.7	89.9
student 2	76.0	70.0	92.0	62.4	82.3
student 3	89.2	84.8	95.4	87.9	88.3
student 4	80.6	88.3	66.6	89.8	80.5
student 5	81.2	90.5	68.8	85.3	80.7
student 6	80.5	97.7	63.2	86.3	79.2
student 7	88.6	84.8	92.5	89.1	88.8
student 8	68.8	64.2	79.5	65.8	78.9
student 9	73.0	92.2	67.3	72.2	74.1
student 10	88.3	86.9	88.5	90.2	86.7
student 11	63.0	74.0	60.8	39.9	69.5
student 12	71.2	87.5	65.2	73.1	71.9
student 13	72.2	87.3	67.6	70.9	71.3
student 14	71.3	81.9	68.6	73.2	72.8
student 15	72.9	85.4	67.4	73.3	71.5
student 16	91.3	88.0	93.5	91.9	89.9
student 17	81.2	89.2	64.9	90.7	81.2
student 18	81.9	92.0	69.7	86.0	82.2
student 19	80.7	86.4	75.0	82.9	79.8
student 20	81.3	92.2	66.7	84.5	82.7
Average	78.6	85.3	75.3	77.5	80.1

APPENDIX 4
PRETEST AND POSTTEST COMPARED

Student	Total			Pronunciation		Pitch		Time		Emphasis	
	Pretest	Posttest	Disparity	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
student 1	59.9	79.8	+19.9	49.0	75.2	74.6	92.4	72.9	78.2	61.7	70.9
student 2	55.6	76.0	+20.4	61.9	70.0	67.2	84.0	10.7	58.4	78.4	82.3
student 3	70.3	89.2	+18.9	91.3	92.2	65.8	78.2	81.6	87.9	77.3	84.3
student 4	72.1	80.6	+8.5	91.0	88.3	69.6	71.4	82.5	89.8	76.2	80.5
student 5	77.8	81.2	+3.4	92.2	90.5	81.9	88.3	87.3	92.3	82.3	80.7
student 6	80.9	80.5	-0.4	97.3	97.7	58.3	63.2	90.4	94.3	80.2	79.2
student 7	90.5	88.6	-1.9	83.9	84.8	96.9	92.5	97.1	96.1	89.7	88.7
student 8	48.6	68.8	+20.2	47.7	62.4	40.4	68.1	44.5	65.8	85.4	78.9
student 9	70.7	73.0	+2.3	96.2	96.4	65.3	67.3	69.1	78.2	78.0	74.1
student 10	56.0	88.3	+32.3	62.0	80.1	68.5	82.4	20.0	55.2	80.0	82.7
student 11	70.5	63.0	-7.5	96.2	74.0	65.5	60.8	81.7	88.7	77.9	81.6
student 12	54.0	71.2	+17.2	45.0	87.5	80.4	77.8	38.9	63.8	56.2	67.9
student 13	56.0	72.2	+16.2	62.0	87.3	68.5	67.6	10.0	52.4	78.8	81.0
student 14	70.1	71.3	+1.2	98.3	81.9	66.1	68.6	75.4	88.6	78.1	72.8
student 15	56.0	72.9	+16.9	62.0	85.4	68.5	67.4	17.0	66.2	80.0	85.7
student 16	81.0	91.3	+10.3	99.1	99.2	57.7	78.2	90.8	94.9	80.5	87.9
student 17	56.0	81.2	+25.2	62.0	89.2	68.5	74.0	22.0	62.4	80.0	81.2
student 18	71.2	81.9	+10.7	88.5	92.0	67.1	69.7	76.5	86.0	74.8	79.8
student 19	71.8	80.7	+8.9	87.8	86.4	66.7	75.0	58.0	82.9	75.3	79.8
student 20	56.0	81.3	+25.3	62.0	84.8	68.5	78.2	21.3	67.5	79.7	82.7
Average	66.2	78.7		77.1	85.3	69.4	75.3	57.3	77.5	77.5	80.1

APPENDIX 5
POST-QUESTIONNAIRES

Dear student, thank you very much for participating in this research. This questionnaire is to investigate your perspectives on the application of MyET in learning pronunciation. Completing the survey is supposed to take you less than 20 minutes. The questionnaire is in English; however, if for any reasons you felt more comfortable completing some of the questions in Vietnamese, please, do not hesitate to do so. It is very grateful if you can complete the whole questionnaire. The survey is anonymous.

Question 1. How you like MyET?

- a. totally not b. a little c. quite d. very

Question 2. How often do you use MyET during the experimental period?

- a. every day
b. two or three times a week
d. more than 5 times a week
e. only before the weekly due date for report
f. other:

Question 3. Do you think your English pronunciation has been improved thanks to the application of MyET?

- a. yes
b. not really
c. no
d. other

Question 4. How do you evaluate the usefulness of MyET in helping you to improve your English pronunciation ability?

- a. not useful
b. quite useful
c. useful
d. very useful

Question 5. How do you evaluate the improvement of your English pronunciation after the application of MyET?

- a. not any improvement
- b. some improvement
- c. good improvement
- d. excellent improvement

Question 6. How do you like MyET compared to the traditional pronunciation learning with course book and CDs?

- a. the same
- b. a bit more
- c. a lot more

Question 7. Do you feel like using MyET more often than course books and CDs?

- a. No
- b. Yes

Question 8. Will you continue to use MyET to learn pronunciation after the experiential period?

- a. No
- b. Yes

Question 9. Will you recommend MyET to other English learners?

- a. No
- b. Yes

Question 10. What are your difficulties in using MyET?

- 1. It is too complicated
- 2. It is time-consuming
- 3. It is costly
- 4. Other:.....

Thank you for your cooperation!

Thai Nguyen, May 2019

Supervisor's signature

Dr. Ngo Van Giang