

# Using *Praat* to teach English intonation to Korean elementary school students

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In many languages there seems to be some universal, but sometimes particular attributes in the way to carry linguistic information and characteristics, affecting the meaning of discourse information. This universal aspects to convey linguistic information can be found in that every language possesses intonation which has been used as a general term for the fundamental frequency pattern of a stretch of speech. In this regard, intonation, long thought to be a key to effectiveness in spoken language, is more and more commonly addressed in English language teaching in the pedagogical orientation and significantly tied to the language meaning in discourse to communicate effectively (Levis & Pickering, 2004). The useful tool, *Praat* (Boersma & Weenink, 2018), provides for English learners the practical opportunity to assist their own pronunciation or intonation by allowing them to analyze the visual patterns of their own speech ( Le & Brook, 2001). The research questions of this paper are: 1). To understand to what extent students could improve their intonation with *yes/no* and *wh* questions by comparing the native speaker's visual pitch contours after using *Praat*; 2). To explore the effectiveness of *Praat* in acquiring intonation with *yes/no* and *wh* questions ; and 3). To observe to what extent *Praat* could facilitate pedagogical application.

This study has explored the effectiveness of the speech analysis program in learning the English pronunciation and intonation associated with *yes/no* and *wh*-questions. Eighteen Korean primary school students participated in the program consisting of twelve sessions over 4 weeks. Participants were divided into a control group and an experimental group. The control group practiced English intonation with video produced by a native speaker and the experimental group performed additional actions using a visualized speech analysis program (*Praat*) along with the video with which the control group practiced. As a result, meaningful results for the intonation learning were confirmed in the experimental group learning with the speech analysis program. In addition, analysis of individual data of students in the experimental group identified that the visualized software, *Praat* was effective assisting the achievement of native speaker level of pronunciation and intonation through self-monitoring and self-correcting. The results observed in the control group did not show the significance of intonation learning; however, it was found that some participants in the control group improved in intonation learning through repeated exposure to the video produced by the native speaker. Considering uncomfortable circumstance and reality, *Praat* may be a useful tool for students to bridge the gap created by a non-face to face class and assists students to easily access a path to improve and acquire pronunciation like native speakers. In order to prove that *Praat* is an useful tool for learning intonation, further research based on maintenance effect of intonation with an activity such as role plays may be needed.

## References

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