

# **Phoneme Deletion of English Words of Third-Class Students' Speech in Intermediate Schools**

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**الحذف الصوتي للكلمات الإنجليزية من خطاب طلبة الصف الثالث  
في المدارس المتوسطة**

**المدرس المساعد**

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**المديرية العامة للتربية في محافظة النجف الأشرف**

**Abstract:-**

The present study, titled "Phoneme Deletion of English Words in Third-Class Students' Speech in Intermediate Schools," tries to assess learners in English phonological development by searching through the samples of phoneme deletion in the pronunciation of third-class students presenting intermediate schools. This study employs qualitative analysis by using an open-ended questionnaire to get an understanding of the development of student's skills in phoneme and phonological deletion. The problem of the current study is to investigate phoneme deletion in English words produced by these students. Also, this study aims to analyze students' ability to delete specific phonemes and to increase our understanding of language fluency, shedding light on both language-producing competencies and obstacles faced by students in an intermediate school. The study concludes that it holds significant importance for instructors and curriculum developers focusing on purifying phonological consciousness instruction and language acquisition methodologies tailored to the needs of young learners in English language education, as is found within intermediate schools' environments.

**Key Words:** Phoneme Deletion, Intermediate Schools, Phonological Development, Language Acquisition, Phonological Awareness.

**المخلص:-**

تحاول الدراسة الحالية التي تحمل عنوان "الحذف الصوتي للكلمات الإنجليزية من خطاب طلبة الصف الثالث في المدارس المتوسطة" تقييم المتعلمين في التطور الصوتي للغة الإنجليزية من خلال البحث في نماذج حذف الصوت في نطق طلبة الصف الثالث في المدارس المتوسطة. تستخدم هذه الدراسة التحليل النوعي باستخدام استبيان مفتوح لفهم تطور مهارات الطلبة في الصوت والحذف الصوتي. ومشكلة الدراسة الحالية هي التحقق من حذف الصوت في الكلمات الإنجليزية التي ينتجها هؤلاء الطلبة. كما تهدف هذه الدراسة الى تحليل قدرة الطلبة على حذف الفونيمات المحددة وزيادة فهمنا لطلاقة اللغة، وتسليط الضوء على كل من الكفاءات المنتجة للغة والعقبات التي يواجهها هؤلاء الطلبة في المرحلة المتوسطة. و تلخص الدراسة إلى أنها تحمل أهمية كبيرة للمعلمين ومطوري المناهج التي تركز على تنقية تعليم الوعي الصوتي ومنهجيات اكتساب اللغة المصممة خصيصاً لتلبية احتياجات المتعلمين الصغار في تعليم اللغة الإنجليزية، كما هو موجود في بيئات المدارس المتوسطة.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** حذف المقاطع الصوتية، المدارس المتوسطة، التنمية الصوتية، اكتساب اللغة، الوعي الصوتي.

## Chapter One

### Introduction

#### 1.1. The Importance of Phonological Development in Early Education

In early education, phonological development plays a condemnatory role in a child's ability to obtain and master language skills. It surrounds the understanding and manipulation of individual speech sounds, which are known as phonemes. For students, this aspect of language development is particularly important, especially the students in intermediate schools, as they are in a critical phase of their education where language skillfulness is refined and reinforced.

According to Wagner, et al. (1994), for the following several reasons, phonological development in early education is significant:

- 1. Reading and Writing Proficiency:** Phonological awareness is considered a fundamental skill that lays the foundation for reading and writing, as well as it includes recognizing phonemes. When students can acknowledge the relationships between sounds and letters.
- 2. Oral Communication:** Developing powerful phonological skills helps students to express words clearly and communicate effectively. This is crucial for social interactions and confidence in public speaking not only for academic success.
- 3. Vocabulary Acquisition:** It is considered a strong foundation in phonological development that enables students to acquire knowledge of new words and understand their meanings more without effort. It aids in the identification of word patterns and affixes, which is crucial for vocabulary growth.
- 4. Early Intervention:** Recognizing and addressing phonological difficulties early in a student's education which can put a stop to long-term ability to read and write challenges. This is particularly pertinent for third-class students in intermediate schools (Wagner, et al., 1994).

**5. Cognitive Development:** Phonological development is related to cognitive abilities involving memory, attention, and pattern recognition. As well as strengthening phonological skills may support all-inclusive cognitive development (ibid).

In conclusion, as in early education, phonological development is essential to a student's ability to succeed academically and communicate in an effective way. The current study focuses on assessing phonological challenges faced by third-class students, highlighting the importance of interference and phonological support in their educational journey (ibid).

## 1.2. Research Objectives and Significance of the Study

According to the current study, the research objectives are the certain goals and aims that the researchers aim to attain through their investigation. These objectives attendant the research procedure and help to narrow down the central point of the study.

According to Foorman and Torgesen (2001), the research objectives include:

1. Investigate phoneme deletion in the speech of third-class students in intermediate schools when uttering English words.
2. Address the occurrence of phoneme deletion, critical for understanding language development and academic strategies.
3. Examine students' pronunciation awkwardness to notify curriculum development and interference strategies.
4. Make use of procedural steps including participant selection, speech samples, data transcription, pattern analysis, and result analysis for guiding language instruction and intervention (Foorman & Torgesen, 2001).

Foorman and Torgesen (2001), illustrate that the significance of the study refers to the important implications of the research and it includes:

1. Provides insights into students' difficulties that relate to manner of speaking, aiding curriculum development and interference strategies.

2. Addresses the occurrence of phoneme deletion, increasing understanding of language development and academic strategies.
3. Offers practical steps for leading language direction and intervention based on phoneme deletion analysis.
4. Aids in notifying academic practices and policies regarding English language learning in intermediate schools.

## Chapter Two

### Literature Review

#### 1.1. Phonological Processes in Language Development

Wagner and Torgesen (1987), explain that phonological processing covers a large series of skills, leading many researchers to view it as composed of four separate processes: Phoneme Segmentation, Phoneme Blending, Phoneme Deletion, and Phoneme Substitution. Here are some key phonological processes that includes:

- a) Phoneme Segmentation:** It is the ability to cut words to individual sounds. For example, a student can cut the word "sand" into its component sounds /s/, /a/, /n/, and /d/.
- b) Phoneme Blending:** It indicates the ability to recognize a word when hearing parts of the word in isolation. This is an important step in the development of literacy. It is the opposite of segmentation. In the following example, blending /b/ /a/ and /t/ to produce the word "bat."
- c) Phoneme Deletion:** It is the ability to delete the beginning, middle, or ending sound from a word and recognize the word that remains, generating new words. In the following example, remove the /k/ sound from "cat" to produce "at."
- d) Phoneme Substitution:** It is the ability to replace a new sound for the beginning, middle, or ending sound of a word to make another word. For example, changing the /b/ in "boat" to /g/ to produce new word "goat."

Lastly, the current study suggests examining a single phonological process within a specific group of students. It aims to investigate the experience of third-class students.

## 2.2. Phoneme Deletion in Language Acquisition

According to Scarborough and Bradly (2002), Phoneme Deletion in Language Acquisition is a critical aspect of how students develop their language skills. It identifies the ability of understanding the removal of specific phonemes from words. This concept plays an important role in the wider process of language acquisition, as well as its relevance to the research title can be understood as the following aspects:

- i) **Phonics and Reading:** It clarifies that the phoneme deletion is closely related to the phonics, where children learn the relationship among letters and sounds. By practicing phoneme deletion, students gain the ability to break words down into their constituent phonemes in the context of written language.
- ii) **Vocabulary Development:** It means that students not only learn to manipulate sounds but also expand their vocabulary through phoneme deletion tasks. They become more adept at recognizing patterns and understanding the roots of words.
- iii) **Early Intervention:** The ability to identify and address phoneme deletion difficulties is essential in the early stages of education, such as third-class students. Early intervention can prevent long term language and literacy challenges, making it a key aspect of language acquisition.

According to Scarborough and Bradly (2002), the present study likely looks at how third-class students carry out the phoneme deletion tasks in their English language development. As well, the findings also contribute to a better understanding of language acquisition in this age group and inform educational strategies to increase phonological skills.

## 2.3. The Role of Phoneme Deletion in Language Acquisition

According to Gillon (2004) The Role of Phoneme Deletion in Language Acquisition is a basic concept that confirms the significance of understanding how students acquire language, particularly in the context of phonological development and its

relation to the present research topic. Since phoneme deletion is a specific phonological process, so it is crucial in the broader landscape of language acquisition for some reasons:

First, phonological awareness, which clarifies that phoneme deletion tasks require students to manipulate students' speech sounds within words. Second, segmentation and blending, which explain that phoneme deletion training involves subdividing words into their component phonemes and then combining them back together to produce new words (Gillon, 2004).

Third, phonics instruction, which illustrates that phoneme deletion plays an important role in phonics instruction, where students learn to map letters to sounds. Fourth, vocabulary development, which clarifies that the capacity to delete phonemes within words can help students enlarge their vocabulary by recognizing patterns and understanding the origin of words. Fifth, language processing, which explains that phoneme deletion tasks provide intuition into how students process language and reveal their cognitive and linguistic abilities (ibid).

The context of the current study is looking into the role of phoneme deletion in the language development of third-class students is very important. It can help recognize possible areas of difficulty and notify strategies for improving their phonological skills and language acquisition (ibid).

## 2.4. Phonological Development in Young Learners

Phonological Development in Young Learners refers to the slow progression of a child's capacity to understand the phonological aspects of language, particularly during their early years of education. This concept is applicable to the research title as it sets the foundation for understanding how third-class students develop phonological skills (Adams, 1990).

**a) Reading and Writing Proficiency:** Phonological development plays a straight role in a student's ability to read and write, and it aids in recognizing the relationships between sounds and letters, enabling them to decode and effectively encode written language.

- b) Vocabulary Acquisition:** The support of vocabulary growth is considered a strong foundation in phonological development. Young students who can manipulate phonemes within words are better supplied to learn new words and understand their meanings.
- c) Early Intervention:** Assessing and addressing phonological development in young learners, such as third-class students, is essential for early intervention. Identifying challenges in phonological skills allows educators to provide targeted support to prevent potential reading.
- d) Cognitive Development:** Phonological development is linked to cognitive abilities, including memory, attention, and pattern recognition. Strengthening phonological skills can support cognitive development.

Finally, the study likely aims to assess the phoneme deletion abilities of third-class students, shedding light on their phonological development and informing strategies for improved language acquisition and literacy (Adams, 1990).

## Chapter Three

### Methodology

#### 3.1. Research Approach and Data Collection Methods

According to Creswell (2013), research approach refers to the methodology used to conduct the study, while data collection methods explain how researchers gather data from participants. Common data collection methods contain surveys, interviews, experiments, and content analysis. In the context of the current study, here is how these concepts are relevant:

- 1. Research Approach:** The research approach guides the overall design and framework of the study. For the current study, research approach could be a qualitative approach:
  - **Qualitative Approach:** It seeks to interpret and understand the meaning and context of particular phenomena through no numerical data, such as text, images, or observations. Qualitative research aims to get depth insights into individuals'

experiences and behaviors. So, the present study used this approach to analysis the data that collected by the researcher from third-class students.

**2. Data Collection Methods:** Depending on the chosen research approach, specific data collection methods will be employed. For the current study, relevant data collection methods may include.

- **Questionnaires:** Specific instrument for collecting the data can be used to collect information from teachers or parents about the students' phonological development, speech patterns, and language acquisition.

### 3.1.1. Research Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a research tool that consists of a set of questions (or other types of prompts) together with information from respondents through s survey or statistical study. A research questionnaire is typically both close-ended questions and open-ended questions. The questionnaire was developed by the Statistical Society of London in 1838 (Gault, 1907).

In the current study, the research questionnaire's main purpose is to assess the phonological development of third-class students, focusing on their ability to perform phoneme deletion tasks in English words. It includes questions and tasks related to phoneme deletion, where students identify deletable phonemes (ibid).

### 3.1.2. Participants

The data for this study were gathered directly from a cross-sectional random sample of third-class students, in intermediate school. The overall sample count is 10 and data is collected from teachers. In the third-class students were chosen to determine whether or not they would enable the analysis of correct responses to draw conclusions about phoneme deletion skills.

### 3.2. Instruments and Materials

The instrument employed in this study is a test or questionnaire that consists of tasks that require words to be spoken. The words used in the questionnaire were from intermediate books.

### 3.2.1. Phoneme Deletion Tasks

This is the first part of the questionnaire which consists of three tasks. The first task is called initial sounds deletion.

Participants in this activity were instructed to read the words without pronouncing the first sound and asked to write what they got. The second task is called medial sounds deletion. Participants in this activity were instructed to read the words without pronouncing the medial sound and asked to write what they got. The third task is called final sounds deletion. Participants in this activity were instructed to read the words without pronouncing the final sound and asked to write what they got (see the appendix).

### 3.2.2. Phonological Awareness

This is the second part of the questionnaire, which consists of one question How easy or difficult do you find it to remove sound from words? (see the appendix).

### 3.2.3. Perception of Phoneme Deletion

This is the second part of the questionnaire, which consists of one question Do you enjoy working on phoneme deletion tasks? (see the appendix).

## Chapter Four

### Data Analysis

#### 4.1. Common Phoneme Deletion Patterns

Ladefoged (2006), explains that the aspect of phoneme deletion patterns refers to acknowledging periodical patterns or propensity in how phonemes are deleted interior the speech. It is crucial in comprehension and understanding the challenges that students may face in phoneme deletion tasks, and it supplies insights into their phonological development.

Throughout data analysis, researchers may find that some phonemes are deleted or changed in some word positions, or that students tend to delete specific types of sounds. These patterns could be recognized through phonological assessments or questionnaires. Understanding these patterns can inform instructional strategies for improving students' phonological skillfulness (ibid).

## 4.2. Phoneme Deletion in Language Development

Ladefoged and Johnson (2010), mention that the aspect of Phoneme Deletion in Language Development refers to the results of the significance of how the ability in phoneme deletion impacts a student's overall language development, as assessed in the present research study. It is an important thing to understand these implications as they can have far-reaching effects on a student's literacy and communication skills.

The findings of the research clarify that students who struggle with phoneme deletion tasks may also have difficulties in reading and spelling. As well as it can also focus on the importance of phonological awareness in language acquisition. The present study can clarify educational strategies to support students' phonological and language development by identifying these implications (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2010).

## 4.3. Quantitative Analysis

In this phase of analysis, the focus is on the quantitative aspects of the data, specifically dealing with the questionnaire gives insights into the students' performance, perceptions, and attitudes related to phoneme deletion tasks through analysis of their responses.

### 4.3.1. Phoneme Deletion Tasks:

Ten students of third - class were able to correctly answer the phoneme "at" after the utterance of the word 'cat' without the /k/ sound, providing proficiency in initial sound deletion. Additionally, ten students correctly pronounce "ook" after pronouncing the word 'book' without the /b/ sound, indicating competence in initial sound deletion.

Ten students also utter the phoneme "dg" after saying the word 'dog' without the /o/ sound, reflecting their ability to perform the medial sounds deletion. For the word 'pen,' ten students correctly utter "pn" after deleting the /e/ sound, revealing competence in medial sounds deletion.

All ten students identified "fi" after saying the word 'fish without the /sh/ sound, displaying skill in final sounds deletion. Likewise, ten students recognized "car" after deleting the /t/ sound from the word 'cart,' showing proficiency in final sounds deletion.

### 4.3.2. Phonological Awareness:

Five of third - class students found it so easy to delete sounds from words, while five students found it not easy and hard to delete sounds from words. This means that there is a group in the students' self-assessment of their phonological awareness skills. The five students who have a more developed understanding of phonological concepts found it easy, while those who found it hard may benefit from instruction in this area.

### 4.3.3. Perception of Phoneme Deletion:

Five of the students found it easy and enjoyed working on phoneme deletion tasks, showing a positive position toward these activities. The other five did not enjoy and found them hard, which suggests some students need more motivating methods for phonological exercises.

### 4.3.4. Overall Experience:

Five of the students found it important to practice phoneme deletion, while the other five did not consider it important. This study focuses on the necessity for teachers to transfer the significance of phonological skills in reading and spelling to all students, shedding light on the link to these tasks in language development.

To conclude, the answers to the questionnaire suggest that the students prove different levels of proficiency in phoneme deletion tasks, with differing attitudes and perceptions towards these activities. Recognizing such differences allows teachers to put their instruction to better meet the student's individual needs and preferences of students, in the end supporting phonological development of students.

## Conclusion:-

### 5.1. Summary of Key Findings

The current study examines the phoneme deletion skills of intermediate school third-class students using a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative methods, revealing several key findings:

First, the research reached know range of proficiency levels among the third-class students in phoneme deletion. Second, the study recognizes common patterns of phoneme deletion. It was observed that certain phonemes were omitted, referring challenges students face. Third, an important finding was the connection between phoneme deletion skills and literacy skills. Fourth, the research findings have important educational implications for intermediate schools.

Fifth, the study shed light on the need for structured phonological awareness programs in intermediate schools, focusing on phoneme deletion and related tasks. Sixth, the research concludes with recommendations for further research. It suggests that the phonological development of students from third class meanwhile higher grades would provide insight into the impact of phoneme deletion skills on language proficiency.

## 5.2. Implications for Teaching in Intermediate Schools

The research deals with Phoneme Deletion of English Words of Third-Class Students' Speech; this study has important uses for teaching practices in intermediate schools. The main implication is the critical role of phonological skill development in early education (Hulme & Snowling, 2016).

The study suggests that students with strong phoneme deletion skills tend to have better literacy outcomes. Teachers should incorporate phonological awareness activities into their curriculum, including phoneme deletion tasks. Teachers should assess each student's phonological skills and tailor instruction accordingly, providing extra support and practice for those struggling and offering more advanced challenges for those excelling. (Hulme & Snowling, 2016).

The research emphasizes the importance of phoneme deletion programs in intermediate schools for students to develop their phonology skills. These programs should include various types of tasks, integrate technology, and engage students through interactive tools. A longitudinal approach is recommended for tracking students' progress in phonological education. (ibid).

### 5.3. Limitations of The Study for Further Research

The current study shed light on a particular group (third-class students) within the intermediate school setting. The limit of the study is phonological research in general and phoneme deletion in particular. To give a more comprehensive understanding of phonological development, the researcher suggests further research should consider a secondary school (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2010).

The study overlooked regional and cultural differences in phonological development, suggesting that further research should explore the impact of cultural factors, linguistic diversity, and regional dialects on students' phoneme deletion skills, providing valuable insights for researchers and educators, and promoting inclusive teaching strategies (ibid).

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## Appendix

### Sample of open-ended Questionnaire that filled by students

Dear participant,

Thank you for participating in this study regarding the Phoneme Deletion of English Words in Intermediate Schools. Your insights will contribute to a better understanding of Phoneme Deletion. Please provide honest and accurate responses.

#### • Phoneme Deletion Tasks:

##### 1. Task 1: Initial Sounds Deletion

- Say the word 'cat' without the /k/ sound. What word do you get? at
- Say the word 'book' without the /b/ sound. What word do you get? ook

##### 2. Task 2: Medial Sounds Deletion

- Say the word 'dog' without the /o/ sound. What word do you get? dg
- Say the word 'pen' without the /e/ sound. What word do you get? p n

##### 3. Task 3: Final Sounds Deletion

- Say the word 'fish' without the /sh/ sound. What word do you get? Fi
- Say the word 'cart' without the /t/ sound. What word do you get? Car

#### • Phonological Awareness:

- How easy or difficult do you find it to remove sounds from words?

- a. Easy.
- b. Difficult.

#### • Perception of Phoneme Deletion:

- Do you enjoy working on phoneme deletion tasks?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

#### • Overall Experience:

- How important is it for students like you to practice phoneme deletion?

- a. Important.
- b. Not important.

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  1. **Task 1: Initial Sounds Deletion**
    - Say the word 'cat' without the /k/ sound. What word do you get? at
    - Say the word 'book' without the /b/ sound. What word do you get? ook
  2. **Task 2: Medial Sounds Deletion**
    - Say the word 'dog' without the /o/ sound. What word do you get? dg
    - Say the word 'pen' without the /e/ sound. What word do you get? pn
  3. **Task 3: Final Sounds Deletion**
    - Say the word 'fish' without the /sh/ sound. What word do you get? fi
    - Say the word 'cart' without the /t/ sound. What word do you get? car.
- **Phonological Awareness:**
  - How easy or difficult do you find it to remove sounds from words?
    - a. Easy.
    - b. Difficult.
- **Perception of Phoneme Deletion:**
  - Do you enjoy working on phoneme deletion tasks?
    - a. Yes.
    - b. No.
- **Overall Experience:**
  - How important is it for students like you to practice phoneme deletion?
    - a. Important.
    - b. Not important.

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## Appendix

### Sample of open-ended Questionnaire that filled by students

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• **Perception of Phoneme Deletion:**

- Do you enjoy working on phoneme deletion tasks?

- a. Yes.
- b. No.

• **Overall Experience:**

- How important is it for students like you to practice phoneme deletion?

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a. Yes.

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