



**The Phonological Mindset: Analytic-Prescriptive Study**

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## ملخص الدراسة:

تسعى هذه الدراسة إلى إظهار أهمية المعتقدات السابقة (العقلية) فيما يتعلق باكتساب شكل نطق اللغة الإنجليزية وكذلك التدريس. يستخدم الباحث نهجًا مختلطًا يشمل تحليل الأدبيات والمقابلات شبه المنظمة للطلاب وكذلك المعلمين. تمهد مراجعة الأدبيات الطريق من خلال التركيز على قضايا مهمة مثل دمج علم الأصوات في تعليم اللغة، والفترة الحرجة لتعلم علم الأصوات في مرحلة الطفولة، والبيئة الإنجليزية العالمية. تكشف البيانات المستمدة من المقابلات أيضًا عن الصعوبات والتقنيات والعقليات التي تتجلى في الفصل الدراسي. تسلط الدراسة الضوء على كيفية قيادة التوجهات الصوتية المسبقة إلى تأثيرات التعلم وفعالية التدريس من خلال أسلوب تحليل موضوعي. تشير هذه الاستنتاجات إلى أن مثل هذه المواقف تؤثر بشكل كبير على كيفية تدريس النطق وتعلمه. يمكن أن تساعد هذه الدراسة في تعزيز اكتساب اللغة الثانية من خلال تقديم تدخلات مخصصة تستخدم مواقف المعلمين الحالية لتعزيز تدريس النطق في فصول اللغة الإنجليزية عبر الإنترنت. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، سيساهم هذا البحث في الحوار المحيط بتدريس اللغة، فضلاً عن خدمة غرض مفيد للمعلمين في تصميم مناهج تدريس النطق أكثر حساسية وفعالية.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** التدخلات المبكرة، التكامل، التربية، الفترة الحساسة، الاستراتيجيات المخصصة



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**Abstract:**

This study seeks to show the significance of prior beliefs (mindset) concerning English pronunciation shape acquisition as well as teaching. A mixed-method approach is employed by the researcher that includes literature analysis and semi-structured interviews of students as well as teachers. The literature review sets the stage by focusing on important issues like integrating phonology in language instruction, the critical period for phonology learning in childhood, and the worldwide English environment. Data from interviews also reveal the difficulties, techniques, and mindsets that both manifest in the classroom. The study highlights how preconceived phonological orientations lead to learning effects and instructional effectiveness through a thematic style of analysis. These conclusions indicate that such attitudes greatly affect how pronunciation is taught and learned. This study can help advance second language acquisition by offering tailored interventions that utilize learners' existing attitudes to enhance pronunciation teaching in online English classes. Additionally, this research will contribute to the dialogue surrounding language teaching, as well as serve a useful purpose for educators in designing more sensitive and effective pronunciation teaching approaches.

**keywords:** early interventions, integration, pedagogy, sensitive period, tailored strategies



## **Introduction:**

Phonological mindset refers to the attitudes, perceptions, and cognitive approaches an individual holds towards learning and using the phonological aspects of a language, particularly in pronunciation and speech patterns. It is helpful not only to language instructors but also to curriculum developers and scholars, providing current perspectives and profound knowledge on pronunciation teaching in second-language acquisition. The work analyzes a variety of teaching methods, simultaneously shedding light on emerging paradigms and potential areas for future research that would benefit from further academic exploration (Henderson et al., 2012; Cauldwell, 2013). The resultant synthesis offers useful instructions in order to assist educators in developing students' speaking competence. Moreover, these works acknowledge diverse learners' linguistic backgrounds and specific needs, highlighting the role of pedagogy in focusing on autonomous learning, self-regulated behavior, and motivated learning. Moreover, it includes external issues, including the cultural setting, technological equipment, and learner anxiety, highlighting the importance of whole, context-based instructional approaches.

This scholarly work provides a review of recent studies in connection with the broader area of second language acquisition, highlighting pronunciation pedagogy as a primary aim. This paper critically reviews extensive research conducted in a multitude of learners' languages, several categories of language users, and different teaching techniques. To that end, the work underscores the crucial nature of proficient speech pronunciation instruction during language education. Several successful teaching strategies are explored, and some new ideas that can lead to future research are looked at using a variety of studies. Therefore, the study aims to explore how pre-existing beliefs about English pronunciation among foreign learners and teachers influence learning and teaching effectiveness, particularly in settings. It employs a literature review and interviews to understand challenges and attitudes in pronunciation instruction, aiming to enhance teaching strategies in second language acquisition. This work represents a comprehensive and cohesive amalgamation of the most recent advancements and methodologies in the field of pronunciation teaching. Moreover, it

provides recommendations about appropriate methods of teaching and current barriers faced by both teachers and learners. This work can hopefully make a contribution to the ongoing debate about improving foreign language learners' pronunciation by placing emphasis on pronunciation training in second language acquisition. The study attempts to address these two questions:

1- What are the effects of various phonological approaches on the pronunciation mentality and skills among non-natives?

2- What is the contribution made by the mindset of non-native English speakers towards the acquisition as well as improvement of English pronunciation?

### **Literature Review**

The researcher decided to divide previous works into three distinct chronological periods to reflect the evolving focus on phonetics and pronunciation teaching. The pre-2000 studies laid foundational insights into language acquisition theory and pronunciation practice, emphasizing early concepts like sensitive and critical periods for language acquisition. From 2000 to 2010, the research shifted towards context-specific and communicative approaches, focusing on global communication, the impact of native language on learning, and prioritizing intelligibility. The period from 2011 to 2022 marked further advancement, with studies exploring the impact of multilingualism, innovative teaching methods like virtual reality, and the importance of individualized, technology-driven approaches. This division highlights the chronological evolution and deepening sophistication in the field.

### ***Studies Conducted Prior to 2000***

This review offers a variety of literature of importance in the area of language acquisition, combined with pronunciation teaching, thus illustrating the close interrelationship between theory and practice. The sensitive period for the acquisition of a non-native phonological system differs from the critical period, which suggests that an optimal developmental window for language acquisition exists, as proposed by Oyama (1976). Building on this, Neufeld (1980) studied the acquisition of non-native phonology by adults and identified potential difficulties in attaining native-like proficiency. In his study, Taylor (1981) provides an analysis of rhythmic issues in non-native

English speech that reveals the unusual obstacles for non-native English speakers in acquiring rhythmical aspects of the language. Major's (1987) study expands this view by studying the natural phonology of second-language speakers and pointing out similar behaviors in how they learn new phonological systems. Morley's (1991) study demonstrates the relevance of pronunciation training in English language education, calling on practitioners to adopt full language programs covering segmental and suprasegmental aspects of pronunciation. In Taylor's (1991) study on the teaching of English pronunciation in a global context, he focuses on language-in-use and communicative competence within heterogeneous lingual backgrounds. In his study, Kachru (1992) proposed models for non-native English that support its global spread and adaptation, encouraging inclusive practices recognizing linguistic diversity. Finally, Elliott's (1995) research explores the influence of individual differences on the outcomes of organized Spanish pronunciation teaching, focusing on field independence and language learning aptitude. In sum, these studies illustrate the difficult nature of language acquisition and the many sides of pronunciation instruction, clarifying our approach.

#### ***Studies Conducted from 2000 to 2010***

During this period, research concerning phonology and pronunciation in the field of language teaching continued with new perspectives, with each work adopting standpoints from various contexts. At the heart of this discourse, as argued by Burgess and Spencer (2000), is a fusion between phonology and pronunciation to improve learners' pronunciatory effect on their phonemic awareness based on intensive practice carried out with proper audio feedback. Based on this, Jenkins's point of view goes deeper into discussing how phonetics works in international communications and suggests that there must be a common pronunciation model that is not strictly based on natural speech patterns but rather those understandable for everyone. Levis (2005) highlights a contrasting trend in Greece, with state school teachers favoring the Native Speakers Model, which differs from practices of English as an International Language Teaching. Atoye (2005) goes further and discusses the global-local dichotomy by noting that Nigerian learners encounter some difficulties in understanding intonation

changes, making it crucial to teach the social significance of English. In turn, Levis (2005) adds to the discussion by tracing developments in pronunciation teaching with regard to an increasing demand for concentration on intelligibility and communicative meaning. Similarly, Edwards (2006) looks at the development of phonological aspects in second language learners, taking into consideration socioeconomic and phonetic factors. In the end, Kuo (2006) focuses on broader issues in English Language Teaching but insists very much on intelligibility and intercultural competence.

In the experimental field, Rajadurai's (2006) study focuses on the particular phonological problems experienced by Malaysian learners of English. However, these issues are significantly shaped by the learners' native language and culture. The effect of a learner's first language on the non-native intonation patterns of a second language is discussed by Mennen (2007). Celik (2008) on Turkish–English Phonology and instruction of the English language in Turkey. By contrast, Derwing and Munro (2009) state that concentration on the eradication of the accent is not beneficial and rather should emphasize intelligibility and communication. Investigating mental representations of phonology in multilingual settings, focusing on phonology interactions during third-language acquisition, is an issue pursued by Amaro and Rothman (2010). Deterding (2010) reviews ELF-based pronunciation teaching in China and espouses methods geared toward mutual intelligibility. Llama, Cardoso, and Collins (2010) investigate the role of language distance and status in third-language phonology acquisition.

Taken together, they highlight that pronunciation and phonology teaching should be tailored to individuals' needs, incorporate diverse language communities in society, and promote effective communication among speakers of different languages. These studies show the changes and differences in teaching how to pronounce words. The main ideas illustrate the importance of being sensitive to sounds and practice, needing a clear way of talking that everyone can understand from around the world, and also other things like what language or culture learners come from affect their difficulties in sounding something out, a topic further investigated by Rajadurai (2006) and Mennen (2007). The study shows that instead of getting rid of accents, we need to focus on making

communication clear and effective. Also important is changing teaching methods based on what each learner needs while considering the differences in languages and culture (Kuo, 2006; Deterding, 2010; Llama et al., 2019).

### ***Studies conducted from 2011 to 2022***

This set includes a variety of studies in phonetics and pronunciation within teaching English as a second language or foreign languages. Wunder (2011) explains whether the knowledge of various languages can affect the phonology of a newly acquired language. Almihadi (2012) builds upon this, stating the need for a constructivist approach in teaching non-native English speakers phonemic pronunciation with heightened awareness that adds to improved mastery of language. The theme is further developed by Cauldwell (2013) in 'Phonology for Listening', which shows how phonological comprehension improves English listening. In these views, Collins and Mees (2013) contribute to such insights in the same sphere. In addition to these studies, Murphy (2014) compares the success of non-native ways used in ESL/EFL pronunciation teaching, drawing attention focusing on aspects of intelligibility and student comfort. Collectively, such studies form a holistic picture of the changing practices and pedagogical issues in phonetics training. In the article entitled 'EFL Pronunciation Instruction Strategies Focused on Individual Learners' Needs and Practice', Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) focus on individualized teaching methods or customized pedagogy. They focus on the necessity of accommodating pronunciation teaching to each learner's unique needs. This approach emphasizes the variety of learning styles and individual issues each student has when trying to master English pronunciation. Their research adds to the overall debate surrounding language teaching, suggesting approaches that are more personal and learner-centered. In the area of technology, Alemi and Khatoony (2020) investigate the potential of virtual reality-mediated training to improve English pronunciation for young EFL learners. Reinforcing the value of specific techniques, Priya and Kumar (2020) showcase phonetic teaching in ESL settings. Low (2011) then turns to EIL pronunciation research, positioning for mutual intelligibility in multilingual settings. To follow up on these ideas, in their 2022 research, Jupri and Haerazi compare the

effectiveness of the Two Stay Two Stray approach along with techniques for managing Foreign Language Anxiety in English-speaking skills improvement. Finally, Nguyen and Burri (2022) perform an in-depth investigation into the domain of teacher education. They discuss how effective pronunciation training should be integrated at every stage of EFL teacher education in Vietnam, thus summarizing a developing perspective on teaching pronunciation.

Taken together, these studies together show improvements in teaching phonetics and pronunciation. They talk a lot about the impact of knowing more than one language on learning sounds. They support teaching methods that are built around what each person needs and focused in their own way. They also emphasize how important awareness of letter-sound combinations is for good English as a second or foreign language education, along with using real-life examples from people who did not grow up speaking it perfectly well. The studies also show new ways, such as virtual reality, for kids to learn. It talks about methods to reduce nervousness, focusing on how teaching pronunciation changes all the time and its important place in training teachers.

### **Methodology**

Adopting an analytic-prescriptive research framework, this study investigated delicate relations in virtual English classrooms. An extensive literature review supplemented with qualitative data was employed with respect to motivation as well as pedagogy associated with teaching pronunciation.

### **Study Design**

The study adopted an analytic-prescriptive approach to thoroughly investigate pedagogical strategies in virtual English classrooms. The study design incorporated a thorough review of relevant literature and the collection of qualitative data through in-depth semi-structured interviews. Experiential data on instructional dynamics were gathered through semi-structured interviews with educators and learners in online EFL classrooms (Creswell & Poth, 2018). As suggested by Denzin and Lincoln (2011), this work aimed at more than simply synthesizing and analyzing pre-existing knowledge but at gaining new insights from the field.

### **Sample Selection**

There were 22 reviewed studies with various types of papers coming from academic libraries. Each of these pieces of literature was relevant to the study issues of how English is taught, instruction methods used, and what goes on in the classroom. The choice was made according to the systemic review guidelines of Grant and Booth (2009), giving a wide but specific international scope. In particular, the research was based on some important contributions that have been previously made in the area of English phonology and pronunciation (e.g., Knight, 2015; Sagart & Baxter, 2017). These decisions were crucial in gaining a solid understanding of teaching pronunciation in an online setting.

### ***Empirical Data Collection***

Apart from a thorough literature review, primary data was also obtained to give a more in-depth understanding of the dynamics of online classes. Qualitative data were collected using face-to-face semi-structured interviews with participants who are directly involved in online English language instruction. Therefore, two key tools are used for the literature review part. The first is a Database Access and Management Tool, which helped in navigating different academic databases like Google Scholar, ERIC, JSTOR, and so on. These sources can be used not only for searching for suitable referrals but also for organizing collected materials as well. This method facilitates a clearer classification and integration of literature, improving understanding of the research context.

### ***Participants***

This study involved 5 English language teachers and 10 students. The participants were chosen deliberately from different classroom settings in order to have a variety of views. However, the teachers were selected among those who had some pedagogical experience in online instruction, and the students represented the various levels of EFL proficiency. These interviews were constructed according to the principles of Rubin and Rubin's (2011) qualitative inquiry. Open-ended questions were used at each interview to enable participants to talk about different aspects of instructional approaches, motivation, and difficulties in conducting virtual English classes.

This approach clarifies literature organization and enhances research context understanding. O'Connor, Madge, Shaw, and Wellens

(2008) noted the efficiency of the electronic interview using internet-based applications for qualitative studies. Interviews were recorded with participants' consent and transcribed afterward for accurate data interpretation. Thematic analysis, as explained by Clarke and Braun (2017), was used to identify and analyze the trends and themes in the data. The method allowed for a thorough examination of the experiences and insights of the participants, thereby feeding directly into the findings of the study.

### ***Data Analysis***

Both the literature review and empirical data from the interviews were analyzed rigorously using the thematic analysis method to gain more insight into the topic. The thematic analysis, as described by Clarke and Braun (2017), was based on the selected literature. Specifically, this study constituted an investigation into the process through which the materials were examined while looking for similar trends associated with pronunciation learning activities occurring in virtual English classes. It was through this process that an understanding of extant studies and the appropriate theoretical base was achieved.

The transcribed interviews were carefully checked, coded, and classified to recognize the main themes and ideas expressed by the interviewees. This approach was selected because it is adaptable for a qualitative study that reveals all the subtle differences involved (Nowell et al., 2017).

An integrative approach to the synthesis was facilitated by a thematic analysis of both the literature and interview data. The research also had related themes identified in the literature with those arising from empirical evidence. The integrative analysis was crucial in establishing a holistic knowledge base on pronunciation instruction and educational methods in online English classes.

### ***Integration of Methodology and Study Conclusions***

This study adopts a carefully designed methodological approach that combines an extensive literature review with qualitative interviews. The dual approach was, therefore, crucial in responding to the research queries that sought to expose the mindsets and intricacies of virtual English classroom environments. Moreover, the utilization of the primary data collection via qualitative interviews increased the scope of the research. This approach moved beyond

the mere conceptualizations resulting from literature reviews and presented experiential and observational accounts straight from practitioners. These are crucial for revealing in practice the difficulties, new approaches, and personal aspects that may not entirely appear in the literature. This study was systematically based on an extensive literary review that provided a sound understanding of the present state of knowledge and theories regarding pronunciation. The purpose of this comprehensive assessment was to provide a foundation for the study's empirically based questions. Furthermore, it ensured that the primary data collected was firmly rooted in research and relevant theories. Combining the findings from the literature review as well as the empirically obtained results lead to an in-depth and holistic view of virtual English teaching methods. This comprehensive approach revealed subtle aspects of pronunciation and effective online teaching techniques. The findings from this integrated approach were directive of the study's conclusions and recommendations, offering significant contributions to English language education and virtual learning environments.

### **Results and Discussion**

The thorough analysis of the literature and teachers' and students' interviews produced different themes on teaching pronunciation for English to non-native speakers. These themes include phonology in language teaching, awareness of the critical period for learning for the foreign phonological system, and recognizing problems faced by non-native speakers of English and language teachers. Through analysis of literature and interview protocols, this qualitative study attempts to evaluate the current status of teaching and learning pronunciation. This provides an overall view of the best teaching methods to support non-native English learners in fully developing the desired pronunciations.

### ***Integration and Pedagogical Intricacies***

As shown in the above literature review concerning complexities of first/additional language acquisition as well as the pedagogy of pronunciation, it is obvious that phonics should always form an element in language teaching. It is imperative to have scholarly studies and also provide learners with rich learning experiences through modern technology with informed formative feedback and

appropriate corrections. The scholars tell striking stories that may not be doubted. They know their way around the web that intertwines pronunciation lessons and master this skill. This is reflected in these complexities that encompass various aspects of this fascinating domain. These sensible ideas contribute significantly to creating an engaging and relevant educational environment, serving as foundations for developing clear pronunciation and language skills. Central to this concept is the vital role of phonology in language education, providing strong evidence of its importance. Understanding pronunciation challenges is essential in the learner development process.

One teacher indicated that at this stage, students should be taught using the communicative language approach. Another teacher said that pronunciation involves more than sounds. It should be taken seriously since it has stress, rhythm, and intonational features. A third teacher supported this saying that all aspects of speech should be incorporated into our tertiary courses and assignments.

From a student's perspective, the role of technology is pivotal, as articulated by one individual: *'Language pronunciation applications are simple, and they are modernized. I feel like learning something new with technology.'* Another student explained the interesting thing of acquisition of pronunciation skills, saying, *'Pronunciation is equivalent to uncovering the mystery of the unfamiliar language. Teachers also motivate us, and we long to speak clearly.'*

Essentially, these learned persons are as the teacher puts it *'craft the coherent stories'*. Their profound thoughts develop practical steps that resemble perfect lessons by the teachers according to a learner. The basis for spotless spoken language germinates in these surroundings, growing into the realm of speech command. However, this overarching theme cannot be separated from the very nature of teaching language; hence, there is a need to include phonological aspects. This way, it shows that phonological complications are entwined with speech development holistically. One of the students described it very briefly: *'Good pronunciation is essential if you want to be understood as if you were native. I am impressed with the way our teachers are helping us to overcome difficulties until, at last, we become master speakers.'*

The views of teachers and students corroborate the findings in a rich body of literature concerning the difficulties involved in language learning and instructional approaches to pronunciation. Tertiary-level courses and assignments should also focus on stress, rhythm, and intonation; teachers emphasize that there is no communicative English without these elements. On the other hand, students emphasize the importance of technology in learning pronunciation, claiming that it is modernized and creates motivation. Combined in its completeness, this is the result of the collective wisdom of these learned people and educators, which makes it an informative practice. The aspect of phonology in language learning is broad and, thus, comprehensive to the domain as a whole. Ultimately, the goal is clear: the aim of both students and teachers is to ensure that learners are equipped with skills that will see them speaking just like natives.

### ***Sensitive Period and Non-native Phonological Systems***

For a long time, researchers have been curious about the area around a child's ability to learn non-native phonetic systems, and this has led some authors like Oyama (2011) to write on a sensitive period for non-native phonology acquisition. Those researchers were interested in investigations on a temporal window where people exhibit an amazing ability to learn a different speech easily and accurately, as Oyama put it (2011). Their findings were very impressive, and they reaffirmed this sensitive period, but we could not let it discourage learners. Rather than being explanatory in itself, it becomes a prism for looking into nuances of the language learning process.

The phrase 'non-native' refers to phonological systems, including those prevalent in Saudi tertiary education. Teacher 4 puts it well when he states that rather than seeing them as obstacles, educators should view the different systems in such a way as to shape their way of teaching accordingly. In Saudi Arabia's tertiary classrooms, students are taught to break down phonetic patterns and accept the varying means of speaking used in non-native phonological systems. The adoption of this strategy encourages acceptance of pronunciation.

The idea of a sensitive period is interesting and stimulates student's thinking. The teacher remains a critical part of the learning process for these students; however, both Students 1 and 3 express

commitment to continued practice. Students 4 and 8 understand that the idea of a sensitive period is credible, but it also depends on student's motivation and the quality of teaching. In essence, such students consider studying in tertiary institutions as a chance to sharpen their phonology skills. The sensitive period is either limited in existence or widespread in scope. However, these students (6, 9, and 10) state that whatever the limitation, they will enjoy this time of formal education using energy to acquire proper pronunciation. Therefore, the Sensitive Period and Non-native Phonology Acquisition, as argued by Oyama (2011), demonstrates an important point about the foreign language acquisition process. Saudi tertiary education considers non-native phonological systems in terms of learning adjustment. In this phase, students are encouraged by their motivation and, with the guidance of teachers, develop their pronunciation skills. It underpins their dedication to mastering pronunciation while they undertake their learning process.

### ***Challenges of Non-native English Speakers***

Amongst complex and constantly changing debates about how non-native speakers learn English, a multitude of empirically sound research papers revealed shining light upon struggles faced by these people in their attempts to master the new tongue. The researchers traversed the broad field in which native speakers' experiences were discussed. This traversal took place through various scholarly studies in the areas of phonetics and phonology in general, for example, Taylor (2020). In addition, the priceless perspectives derived from previous research undertakings spark transformative ramifications that actuate forward-thinking approaches and refined interventions for accurate boosting of pronunciation proficiency among an adored circle of non-native speakers (Fong, Taylor, & King, 2020; Sifakis & Sougari, 2005; Rajadurai, 2006). Moreover, the priceless information gained from such academic pursuits shed light on revolutionary tactics and customized interventions geared towards perfecting enunciations amongst treasured individuals who do not speak English well (Sifakis & Sougari, 2005). Educators can thus integrate or imbue carefully analyzed and collected research results with existing pedagogical practice, thus helping non-native students find ways through language hurdles.

Along the way, teachers serve as key guides to non-native English speakers on this path. Teacher 1 explains that 'p' and 'v' are some of the special phonemes taught to Saudi tertiary students, and they use specialized exercises and individual feedback to address these problems. Also, like Teacher 1, Teacher 2 underscores the need to enhance vowel articulations by providing many chances in the higher education program that will be very helpful for non-native Saudis. In addition, Teacher 3 highlights the need to know how words are stressed and which syllable is emphasized, creating study schedules where students find stress patterns. Teacher 4 admits that it is difficult to pronounce the 'schwa'; therefore, some graph-like charts are offered to help understand it. And by Teacher 5, special attention is paid to such aspects as 'stress and intonation' so that they would become clearer. These practices depict the phonological mindset and how educators prepare for their lessons and how they handle pronunciation.

As a result, students acknowledge their difficulties and attempt to overcome them through different pronunciation improvement techniques. One student indicates there is a pronunciation of vowels practice to improve it, also with variable vowel sounds. Pronunciation of consonant clusters is achieved by one more student who learns to pronounce words individually. Another student describes using speech recognition apps and mouth practice to address issues of word stress and orientation patterns. The first language's influence on pronunciation is recognized, and students are eager to obtain support from a teacher or even peers in order to deal with and overcome difficult sounds. For instance, students create English-speaking circles with fellow students as a way of realizing the immersive environments. They also get involved in reading aloud and self-assessment using recording tools to have accurate, fluent pronunciation. Their ongoing improvement comes from overcoming the fear of making mistakes, getting exposed to different English accents, and practicing public speaking. One of the challenges they have is balancing improving pronunciation and their academic obligations, which, in turn, causes them to apply responsible time management (Students 1-10). Such student perspectives indicate that they are determined to improve their

pronunciation at every opportunity despite the challenges of sound practices, feedback, and a 'practice' mindset of learning.

We can see that previous studies shed light on the difficulty non-native English speakers encounter in learning pronunciation and inform appropriate intervention. The educators have an important task in this direction, which includes the resolution of some phonetic problems, emphasis on stress patterns, and instruction of intonations. In response, students actively use different approaches like vowel practice, speech recognition tools, and simmered language settings. They understand how their first language influences their pronunciation and strive for constant betterment. They sound to be willing to beat the challenge of using time responsibly together with a resolute habit-oriented attitude among students 1-10.

### ***Second Language Acquisition and Natural Phonology***

As Major (2008) implies, one of the fast-growing areas of academic exploration within second language acquisition is the learners' natural phonology. This is not just a theoretical exploration but one that echoes through educational practices as expressed by the educators and learners themselves.

In the field of tertiary learning, tutors underscore the significance of natural phonology in EFL courses. According to teacher 1, *'We are focused on the natural phonology, with authentic materials such as news bulletins and podcasts for exposure of students to real-life speech.'* Teacher 2 also comments on this pedagogical approach: *'Our courses contain immersion programs.'* Moreover, by including the cultural aspect, it is observed that understanding a phonology culture *'adds a deeper dimension to pronunciation, connects phonological studies with a more developed sense of cultural awareness.'*

Researchers dig deep into the subtle developmental processes and complex acquisition patterns that form the underlying foundations for the development of phonological acquisition in target-language learning. These philosophical investigations correlate with the recollections of the students. When a specific student notes, *'natural phonology tells us how languages develop and evolve,'* he underlines the overall significance of these details. More so still, many people are talking about the usefulness of understanding several distinct

accents, anticipating the articulation, and mimicking the mother-tongue language. Here, one student observes, '*Natural phonology teaches us theory and practice simultaneously.*'

As Major (2008) put it, these scholarly pursuits produce a plethora of priceless discoveries, shedding light on the mysterious intricacies and functioning of this enigma known as language acquisition. This is also evident in the experiences mirrored by other learners. This shows us that language can change as a student reflects.

These groundbreaking studies clear the path by carefully untangling what is behind the enigmatic mysteries in natural phonology in the SLA domain. Through this pathway, a more profound and complete understanding of the inherent mechanism underlying language acquisition may be achieved. Therefore, it enlightens educators and learners, prompting awareness and appreciation of an amazing subsistence intertwine between the learner's self and ultimate phonological systems that they are tirelessly struggling to fulfill mastery. This is vividly demonstrated in the student's voices. This boost to the learning of language shows how essential these constructs are in helping students advance their abilities.

### ***Role of Pronunciation Instruction***

There are lots of studies that show how significant pronunciation instruction is relevant in teaching language. For instance, Morley (1991), Levis (2011), and Derwing and Munro (2015), among others, reveal the essential role of instruction in learning. These scholastic searches plunge into the complex fabric of teaching pronunciation, scrutinizing various subtle aspects ranging from segmentals to suprasegmentals, all with the aim of revealing the best ways to help learn to speak correctly (Morley, 1991). This has been demonstrated through the detailed exploration of nuances of pronunciation pedagogy as showcased in the previous studies by Morley (1991), Levis (2011), and Derwing & Munro (2015). In-depth investigations done by scholars have helped reveal all facets contributing to pronunciation training. These studies shed light on how one can obtain mastery of pronunciation, which would enable learners to articulate themselves well in native languages and achieve higher communication competencies.

At the tertiary level, it should also be integrated with other language skills, such as reading, writing, and speaking, for comprehensive

language development (Teacher 1). Tertiary-level courses in Saudi Arabia consider pronunciation as a bridging tool toward successful interaction. This means accurate and well-articulated pronunciation facilitates the expression of students' thoughts and views (Teacher 10).

Student 1 considers pronunciation instruction as *'the missing piece in the puzzle.'* This student explains that pronunciation *'completes our language skills and builds up the confidence of communication.'* Student 2 adds, *'Yeah, this pronunciation guideline is definitely useful for us to articulate exactly what we want to express. We need to learn a new dialect like native speakers, a new dialect that gives us the courage to speak English without fear in uni.'* Student 3 emphasizes that articulate pronunciation is imperative when carrying out presentations or discussions at university. Student 4 looks at pronunciation classes as a means that makes them ready for actual world language usage'. As student 7 puts it, *'Pronunciation is what makes us unique; thus, we need to practice it as we learn our language.'* As seen by student 8, pronunciation training is somewhat like having a secret weapon that gives our English a competitive edge in job interviews and academic conversations. Student 9 stresses that this pronunciation training boosts our confidence and makes life easier when surrounding people are native speakers of English'.

Thus, extensive research, including the works of Morley (1991), Levis & Moyer (2014), and Derwing & Munro (2015), supports the fact that pronunciation instruction is vital in language teaching. In these studies, the complexities of pronunciation pedagogy are analyzed, and recommendations on the effective attainment of correct pronunciation are presented. Tertiary-level language education includes pronunciation instruction, and it enhances communication and builds students' confidence (Teacher 1, Teacher 10). They, too, appreciate the significance of pronunciation as another component that should supplement their command over the languages and foster their fluency in English.

### ***English as a Global Language***

Jenkins (2000) and Deterding (2010), among other scholars, have demonstrated a lot of interest in examining the intriguing appeal of the English language within global communication. The studies

included detailed examinations of the relationships between the patterns in which languages are used, preferences by learners for pronunciation training as well as its implications to pedagogy. Through this critical analysis, we have gained immense insights into how crucial good pronunciation is. The said skills play a crucial role in ensuring the correctness and meaning of communication across individuals belonging to different language groups.

The importance placed on the English language as a global phenomenon in Saudi tertiary education is commendable as it informs the status of pronunciation. Teachers state that their students pay special attention to acquiring correct pronunciation because fluency in English as a world language increases chances of international careers and interchange with people from other cultures. One educator said that *'our tertiary students learn hard in order to get into foreign affairs such as international events as these people are aware that the world's English language means that they are eligible worldwide.'*

These institutions are steeped in this understanding at their core. The teachers highlight the importance of English as a lingua franchise and its widespread in many nations around the world. Thus, strategies are being developed in order to encourage students' acceptance of the international nature of English, inclusive of varied accents and pronunciation. Another learner noted, *'Saudi Arabian tertiary education acknowledges that English is a common language.'* Thus, we encourage students' tolerance for such a global concept in regard to their accented speech. This approach does not only teach the language but rather instills a sense of global language awareness among the learners. Teachers in Saudi Arabia promote among their students the appreciation and integration of the diverse dialects and aspects of English speech that enable successful cross-cultural engagements.

At the same time, the points of view of English-learning students mirror these academic achievements. Student 1 mentions inspiration arising from the international popularity of English and explains why correct oral skills are a golden key to wide perspectives, *'good pronunciation makes English more and more attractive for me because English is spoken everywhere in the world, and that forces*

*me to pronounce better. For me, it's like some kind of key for many opportunities worldwide.'* Another student notes the benefits of using English as their lingua franca in establishing inter-connectivity, '*English gives me an opportunity to communicate with people anywhere I go.*' Another learner shares this sentiment, saying that fluency in English and clear pronunciation are fundamental to global fluency, '*Becoming fluent in English is like getting a passport to anywhere.*' Additionally, students see that English is a mark of technological innovation, and thus, it is imperative to perfect the English pronunciation so as to remain relevant to current trends. '*Nowadays, knowledge of English is like Superman with perfect power to use.*' These students must succeed in this area for the sake of English, which is vital in an international society, thus leading them towards enhanced academic performance and prosperous careers.

Hence, research on the impact of English on global communication, along with the motivations and incentives of language learners, intertwine to create a cohesive narrative encompassing pronunciation in today's globalized world, both in theoretical analysis and practical applications for learners.

### ***Non-native English Varieties and Linguistic Diversity***

Indeed, in the domain of foreign language education, dedicated researchers have been called upon to explore the enchanting realms of personal characteristics and beliefs surrounding the effect of the independent field and beliefs toward pronunciation training regarding the robustness of formal pronunciation teachings. The results of these works make sense to the reader and illuminate the powerful forces that drive pronunciation instruction. Following such enlightened insights, there is a road paved by innovative teaching methods that enable teachers to address variation in terms of individual learners and provide a base where positive attitudes towards pronunciation learning are generated. However, such dedication can be a spark of transformation that will turn into brilliant fruits in the shape of improved language learning results and higher learner competence in languages (Elliott, 1995; Edwards, 2006). The deep questions in which they explore the entanglements of individuals' differences and attitudes are like guiding lights for teachers, showing them how to design effective educational

strategies (Elliott, 1995; Edwards, 2006). Thus, equipped with this multidimensional understanding of linguistic diversification, they generate an atmosphere that supports efficient pronunciation instruction.

This emphasis on language diversity is evident in Saudi Arabian tertiary education as expressed in the thoughts shared both by the teachers and students. Teachers stress the need for this diversity, as one says, *'It's time to rejoice in lingual diversity at the level of our tertiary courses in Saudi Arabia.'* Another teacher says, *'Students have a different cultural background where they speak Arabic as their mother tongue.'* This suggests that teachers are fully aware of whatever difficulties and abnormalities are present in speech production.

This approach is welcomed by students who understand the importance of language diversity in their environment. One student calls it *'a rich tapestry of English'*, in which listening to various accents is viewed as an adventure to enrich language learning even more. Some other students have observed, *'English varieties show that it is a worldly language.'* For instance, as one student says, *'I learn that each English accent talks of their individual culture. This widens my knowledge and cross-cultural understanding.'* A student compares the diversity in English with various delicious foods, which makes learning fun and turns one into a better speaker. Another student says, *'Different accents make me train my listening senses.'* The importance of such diversity for a future job does not go unnoticed by students; an undergraduate understands that language diversity helps to prepare him to be a professionally effective communicator in the in the modern, globalized workforce. In short, the tertiary education learners and teachers in Saudi Arabia acknowledge, accept, and call for the adaptation to different English dialects and variations. A common attitude is supported by previous studies such as Elliott's (1995) and Edwards' (2006).

### ***Individual Differences and Attitudes***

Researchers have investigated how individual differences and attitudes towards pronunciation learning influence language acquisition in the domain of second language acquisition. These passionate scientists have labored to uncover some vital revelations regarding the effect of these elements in phonetic teaching. As a

result of these efforts, new teaching methodologies that acknowledge such differences and promote favorable attitudes towards pronunciation learning came about. Such dedication has helped improve the rate of student attainment in learning a new language. Such detailed research into how individual characteristics and dispositions interrelate provides important guidelines for teachers, who try to have an understanding of factors influencing learners' phonological aspects. This helps to establish a suitable environment for success in pronunciation learning (Elliott, 1995; Edwards, 2006).

The role of individual differences and attitudes in learning pronunciation in the field of language instruction are discussed by the teachers and their students. These are the differences that teachers emphasize in recognizing and addressing these issues. A teacher summarizes it as follows: *'Variances in language learning styles and students' attitude towards pronunciation may affect learners' performance.'* Hence, understanding learners' unique characteristics enables the facilitator to adapt instruction accordingly, thus creating an environment that encourages effective learning. As another teacher expressed, *'The role of our teachers is not merely to teach the language but to cultivate a mentality that appreciates and seeks effective communication.'* Teachers realize different perceptions of pronunciation among the students. They view these differences as opportunities for the continuous perfection of teaching skills. As put by some teachers, *'Teachers need to understand the importance of individual differences as these spice up teaching and always make teachers go beyond themselves and come up with ways to help every student improve in terms of his/her accent.'*

In other ways, students share their observations on attitude as they relate to the process of acquiring pronunciation. They emphasize how attitude has affected their learning journey. One student observes, *'Attitude is everything when it comes to pronunciation learning.'* Another emphasizes that *'Attitudes help shape our learning experiences.'* Therefore, students believe that as long as they approach it excitedly and with a growth mindset, they can achieve much. According to them, *'positive attitudes enable us to accept multilingualism.'* A supportive learning environment helps in

overcoming self-consciousness related to proper pronunciation. It is also important as it shows that we appreciate the beauty of different accents and dialects, thus making us more confident communicators. They also admit that *'some people may be more self-conscious than others, but a stimulating learning environment leads us to be less concerned about how our peers perceive our expressions.'*

The summary of both perspectives on individual variations and attitudes toward pronunciation learning reiterates that each factor plays a vital role in the pronunciation acquisition process. They underscore the importance of personalized teaching methods that recognize multiculturalism and cultivate favorable attitudes in the language learning process.

### **Findings**

The article appropriately deals with the effect of several phonological training methods in creating a pronunciation mental state (mindset) and ability among students of non-English origin. One significant conclusion that emerges is the positive effect of technologically integrated language teaching. Speech recognition and pronunciation software can ensure maximum participation while giving timely, informal assessments necessary for the effective acquisition of pronunciation skills. In addition to that, a communicative language teaching approach whose focus is on real-life communication serves the learners to apply the sounds in meaningful contexts. This approach makes it possible to think and understand how important it is to evaluate pronunciation for the purpose of its practical application within daily communicative activities. In addition, the research shows that teachers should use tailored teaching strategies, as it is through recognizing and adapting to learner's needs that one forms a positive and confident attitude toward pronunciation learning. Together, these approaches create an environment where an ideal mentality (mindset) for proper pronunciation development may be developed.

Lastly, it explores the part that learners' mindsets play in learning to acquire and improve English pronunciation against the backdrop of their attitudinal and biological variations. It shows that learners' attitude towards the acquisition of those skills depends on their willingness to learn as well as their motivation. Successful learning

outcomes are brought about by a positive attitude and intrinsic motivation. Individual differences such as the native language, age, or learning preference also have a major impact. The study highlights the crucial role of nurturing a growth mindset towards challenges and mistake forgiveness among learners. Furthermore, the importance of practicing regularly and receiving constructive comments is emphasized; this shows that a mindset concerning continuous work and feedback improves one's pronunciation skills. Additionally, learning that not every person speaks the same language nor uses the same kind of English broadens the mind and makes us more accommodating towards others. There has been a focus on this cultural and linguistic awareness in order for non-natives to master and improve their English pronunciations within this global linguistics context.

These findings show that the study's questions have been answered. The findings answer the first question (How do different ways of teaching sounds affect how non-native speakers think and learn pronunciation?). It is evident that a range of phonological training techniques can enhance cognitive and speech abilities in non-native speakers of a language. Using technology with language lessons like speech recognition and pronunciation software is very helpful. It makes students more involved and gives important feedback. The way of teaching language that puts a big focus on real-life talking helps students use sounds in important situations. The focus on teaching styles made just for learners also shows how effective it is to change sound learning methods based on what each person needs. The next question is about how non-native English speakers' mindset helps them learn and become better at speaking English properly. The findings emphasize the crucial role played by individuals in enhancing their pronunciation skills, particularly in their efforts to speak more clearly. The study reveals that students' mindset, emotional states, desire to learn, and willingness can significantly influence their success in mastering pronunciation. The value of thinking about growth, practicing often, and getting good advice are highlighted as important parts of making pronunciation better. Also, knowing about culture and language is part of learners' ways of thinking. It plays a big role in learning to speak English well everywhere around the world.

The study results are insightful as they help determine how well different phonetic teaching methods improve the speech proficiency of non-native English speakers. It points out that not all teaching methods are equally effective, and different approaches may result in varying degrees of enhancement in pronunciation. In addition to this, learners' attitudes play a significant role in the process. It implies that a learner's mental approach, motivation, and sensitiveness towards learning actually determine one's potential to enhance English pronunciation. Essentially, the study establishes a direct link between the teaching methods used and students' psychological characteristics that play significant roles in successful pronunciation learning for non-native speakers.

### **Conclusion**

A thorough analysis conducted with different ideas involved in teaching pronunciation to non-native English speakers leads to the conclusion that a holistic mindset plays a vital role in successful learning. The inclusion of phonology into language teaching, a critical window for learning foreign phonological systems, and the issues that confront non-native speakers are important. The administration must use up-to-date technology as well as give pupils formative feedback and alterations in order to enhance learning and teaching strategies.

The so-called crucial or sensitive period theory for non-native phonology implies that an optimum time to learn something exists while not deterring those learners who fail to take advantage of it. This knowledge should, however, not be used for teaching purposes but in designing flexible and adaptable teaching strategies that take into account learners' different stages and foster a growth mindset. Since it helps to address this problem for non-native English speakers, they must concentrate on individual phonemes and stress patterns using modern technologies and other education tools. Pronunciation instruction has to do with more than just correct speech; it should also give confidence and enable communication across borders. Similarly, knowledge of phonology of nature and use in EFL is essential. This gives the learner the opportunity to understand how languages evolved over time and apply the skill of pronunciation. While acknowledging that English is a global

language, teaching should foster tolerance and respect for the multiplicity of languages. This will entail comprehending and appreciating several different English accents and dialects, thus bolstering intercultural communication competency. Eventually, personal attributes, including the mindset and attitudes of individuals, are also important in the development of foreign language speech skills. The enhancement of effectiveness in pronunciation instruction lies in tailoring teaching techniques that consider these differences, thereby fostering a growth mindset conducive to language learning. Individual differences and learners' attitudes are very effective regarding the efficiency with which pronunciation instruction works better on non-native English speakers. Customizing teaching strategies for different types of learners, languages, and thinking will improve learning (Elliott, 1995; Edwards, 2006). In addition, creating a climate conducive to learning that promotes motivation, self-confidence, and willingness to learn is important in attaining fluency. Addressing such individual variations requires adaptive teaching strategies, personalized feedback, and a supportive community in order to have more successful and engaging pronunciation instruction (Derwing & Munro, 2015).

Therefore, pronunciation teaching and learning can be improved by resetting both teachers' and students' mindsets. By adopting a flexible as well as learner-centered mindset, teachers will be able to shape their teaching methods according to the various needs and learning styles of students. This adaptive approach encourages better and more involved teaching. For students, moving from a fixed mindset towards one that embraces challenges and appreciates the value of efforts can greatly help them increase their engagement in learning pronunciation. The combined effect of these mindset shifts allows for an increasingly flexible, adaptive, and ultimately effective environment to master pronunciation within a foreign language.

### **Implications for Teaching**

Teaching non-native English speakers requires a unified approach that begins with incorporating phonological rhythm, stress, and intonation – which are crucial to comprehending speech acts. Using technologies like language pronunciation software and speech recognition tools not only advances pedagogical approaches but also

demonstrates the manner in which languages are used in real-life situations. A central approach is rooted in communicative language teaching, which prioritizes practical language usage to foster accurate pronunciation for effective communication and cultivates a growth mindset conducive to language learning. In this way, the challenges encountered during learning should be helpful and fitting to the learner's sensitive period in language acquisition. Specifically, the program should address some of the challenges that are unique to non-native speakers, such as mastering difficult phonemes through custom exercises and personalized feedback. In addition, this teaching approach is augmented by incorporating pronunciation practice into reading and writing activities, thus increasing overall language proficiency. The essence of this approach is the establishment of supportive and inclusive learning environment. This not only encourages the discovery of new sounds but also acknowledges cultural and linguistic diversity, leading to a functional multilingual phonological orientation in learners.

### **Limitations**

The methodology of this study was an analytic-prescriptive research framework that attempted to investigate subtle features of virtual English classrooms, combining a thorough historical review with qualitative data gathering in the form deep semi-structured interviews. Although 5 English language teachers and 10 students may affect the generalizability of results, conscious actions were taken when selecting participants who represent different classrooms. Nevertheless, sampling bias could occur as the researcher deliberately chose teachers with online pedagogy experience and students showed different levels of EFL skills. Additionally, usage of internet-based applications and websites for interviews could have resulted in the exclusion of those individuals with poor or no access to technology.

Nevertheless, possible improvement recommendations include increasing the number of respondents; adopting quality sampling methods such as randomizing sample and using various data collecting techniques. Peer review and verification procedures might reduce the effect of bias in research. In general, considering these limitations and implementing recommendations regarding the improvements may strengthen this study's methodology that could



contribute to a more solid background for pedagogical strategies in virtual English classes.

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