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**PUJILÍ CAMPUS**  
**UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM**  
**PEDAGOGY OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

**RESEARCH REPORT**

**THEME:**

**ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION ERRORS IN ENGLISH MAJOR  
STUDENTS**

Research report before obtaining the bachelor degree in National and  
Foreign Language Pedagogy, English Major

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**PUJILI - ECUADOR**  
**AUGUST 2024**

## DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

Caisaguano Tigasi Graciela Adriana, with citizenship card No. 1753782745, declare to be author of the present RESEARCH PROJECT: **“ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION ERRORS IN ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS”**, being Abata Checa Fanny Mercedes, Mg, Tutor of the present work; and, I expressly exempt the Technical University of Cotopaxi and its legal representatives from possible claims or legal actions.

Furthermore, I certify that the ideas, concepts, procedures and results expressed in this research work are my sole responsibility.

Pujilí, August 21, 2024

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'y-Graciela Tigasi', with a large circular flourish around the name.

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## ENDORSEMENT OF THE TUTOR OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

As Tutor of the Research Project on the title:

**“ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION ERRORS IN ENGLISH MAJOR STUDENTS”**,  
by Caisaguano Tigasi Graciela Adriana, from the career of Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages, I consider that said Research Report is worthy of the endorsement of approval by complying with the technical standards, translation and formats provided, as well as it has also incorporated the observations and recommendations proposed in the pre-defense.

Pujilí, August 21, 2024



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## **GRATEFULNESS**

*I am deeply grateful to God for staying by my side when everyone was gone, for loving me like no one else would.*

*I thank Pachamama, books and music for being my safe and happy place.*

*I thank my family for their support; I could not have made it on my own.*

*I thank all the professors at the Technical University of Cotopaxi who have been part of my professional training, for providing me with the essential knowledge to become a lifelong learner, so I can help others learn.*

*I am especially grateful to my tutor Abata Checa Fanny Mercedes, Mg. Her suggestions, guidance, and patience made this project possible. She provided me the fundamentals of teaching English in the past semesters as well.*

*Adriana*

## **DEDICATION**

*To God, my divine light in the darkness.*

*To my grandparents, Pedro and Aurora.*

*To my father, Manuel, my first teacher, who is the kindest, smartest, wisest, most honest, humble, and hardest-working man I know. The perfect man does exist, and he is my father. His pieces of advice guide me on the right path.*

*To my mother, Olga, a stoic woman who fills our home with joy. Also, to my siblings Sonia, Doris, and Jhonny; my two lovely little nieces, Sayu and Nico; and my cat, who brightens my days.*

*To my friends: Melanie, who never hesitated to lend me a helping hand whenever I needed it; Elizabeth, who believed in me more than I did; and Myrian, Carlos, and Joselin for the shared laughter. May God bless to all these people to whom I am grateful and dedicate this project.*

*Adriana*

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**ABSTRACT**

Pronunciation is an essential element in English language learning as it significantly impacts the communication process. This significance becomes more crucial when messages are conveyed by reading aloud, requiring clear and accurate production of sounds to ensure that spoken words are understandable. However, pronunciation errors might be inevitable among beginner students. The objective of this study was to analyze common pronunciation errors made by the first-semester class “A” students at the Technical University of Cotopaxi from April 2024 to August 2024. A mixed-method approach was employed in this research, and a non-probabilistic convenience sampling method was used to select the participants, 24 students participated in a reading-aloud test taken from Cambridge level A1, the text was called “Kim's Picture,” the students read aloud and recorded it, their recordings were analyzed using a pronunciation rubric and Error Analysis method. The results indicated that the most common errors involved short, long, and diphthong vowel sounds /e/, /ʌ/, /ɪ/, /ə/, /ɑ:/, /aʊ/, as well as consonant sounds characterized by their manner of articulation, such as fricative, plosive and approximant consonant sounds /s/, /t/, /l/. The causes of these errors were namely due to the mother tongue interference and overgeneralization, while ignorance of rule restriction and false concepts hypothesized played a minor role. These findings emphasize the need for targeted practice to address pronunciation errors. Thus, this study concludes that understanding and addressing these pronunciation issues early can significantly enhance students' pronunciation skills and overall language proficiency, preparing them to become effective English teachers.

**Keywords:** Consonant Sounds, Mother Tongue Interference, Pronunciation Errors, Vowel Sounds.

**UNIVERSIDAD TÉCNICA DE COTOPAXI**  
**CARRERA DE PEDAGOGÍA DE LOS IDIOMAS NACIONALES Y**  
**EXTRANJEROS**

**TEMA:** ERRORES DE PRONUNCIACIÓN EN ESTUDIANTES DE LA CARRERA DE INGLÉS

**Autor:**

Caisaguano Tigasi Graciela Adriana

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Abata Checa Fanny Mercedes, Mg.

**RESUMEN**

La pronunciación es un elemento crucial en el aprendizaje del idioma inglés, ya que impacta significativamente el proceso de comunicación. La lectura en voz alta requiere una producción de sonidos clara y precisa para garantizar que las palabras enunciadas sean comprensibles. Sin embargo, los errores de pronunciación pueden ser inevitables entre los estudiantes principiantes. Este estudio analiza los errores comunes de pronunciación cometidos por 24 estudiantes de primer semestre de la Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi. En esta investigación se empleó un enfoque de métodos mixtos y un método de muestreo no probabilístico por conveniencia para seleccionar a 24 estudiantes quienes participaron en una prueba de lectura en voz alta del nivel A1 de Cambridge, el texto se llamó “Kim's Picture”. Los estudiantes leyeron el texto en voz alta y lo grabaron, sus grabaciones fueron analizadas con una rúbrica de pronunciación y el método de Análisis de Errores. Los resultados indicaron que los errores más comunes involucraron sonidos vocálicos cortos, largos y diptongos /e/, /ʌ/, /ɪ/, /ə/, /ɑ:/, /aʊ/, así como sonidos consonánticos caracterizados por su forma de articulación, como sonidos fricativos, explosivos y consonantes aproximantes /s/, /t/, /l/. Las causas de estos errores se debieron principalmente a la interferencia de la lengua materna y a la sobre generalización, mientras que el desconocimiento de las restricciones de las reglas y los falsos conceptos hipotetizados jugaron un papel menor. Estos hallazgos enfatizan la necesidad de una práctica específica para abordar los errores de pronunciación. Por lo tanto, este estudio concluye que comprender y abordar estos problemas de pronunciación temprano puede mejorar significativamente las habilidades de pronunciación de los estudiantes y su dominio general del idioma, preparándolos para convertirse en profesores de inglés eficaces.

**Palabras claves:** Errores de Pronunciación, Interferencia de la Lengua Materna, Sonidos Consonánticos, Sonidos Vocálicos.

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## 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

**Theme:** English Pronunciation Errors in English Major Students

**Starting Date:** April 2024

**Ending Date:** August 2024

**Place of Research:** Technical University of Cotopaxi, Pujilí Campus

**Sponsoring Faculty:** Pujilí Campus

**Sponsoring career:** Pedagogy of National and Foreign Languages  
Undergraduate Program

**Macro Project of the career:**

Academic discourse: A transdisciplinary study of education and linguistics in linguistics-communicative contexts for English language teaching.

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**Knowledge Area:** Education

**Research Line:**

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**Extension Research line of the career:**

Education, linguistics, literature, interculturality and society.

## 2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Pronunciation is an important tool for sharing messages clearly in English, especially in the context of reading aloud. Kráľová et al. (2021) state that pronunciation is the production of segmental sounds. They are used to transmit meaning. Segmental sound features involve consonant and vowel sounds. So, an appropriate pronunciation of segmental sounds might directly affect the understanding of the meaning of any message intended to convey. However, many students struggle with pronunciation, particularly in reading-aloud contexts (Berry, 2021). Students not practicing reading aloud often lack confidence in their pronunciation and may be unfamiliar with the phonemic system of the English language (Mohamed et al., 2021). This lack of practice and familiarity can result in frequent pronunciation errors, impeding their academic and professional development. According to Arbi (n.d.), “The pronunciation error refers to the action when the speakers erroneously pronounce words or produce sound” (p.1). Addressing this issue is crucial for English as a Foreign Language EFL learners, especially for students striving to achieve proficiency in English. (Li & Qi, 2023). In Ecuador, the Ministry of Education requires a B1 or B2 level at universities, but the hardest part of English for students is to learn the correct pronunciation (Inca et al., 2018).

Despite the importance of this issue, there is little research on English pronunciation errors in English major students in first-semester class “A” at the Technical University of Cotopaxi from April 2024 to August 2024. According to Peña (2017), “The teacher's lack of linguistic competence is undoubtedly a factor that must be corrected since the student learns the language with pronunciation errors: Students tend to retain grammatical or pronunciation errors learned from the early years” (p.26). That might affect their pronunciation skills in higher-level education. In addition, Ikhsan (2017), adds that in some teaching-learning processes, pronunciation is neglected since it is perceived as a difficult area, similarly, Galakjani and Sabouri (2016) say that pronunciation is unfortunately considered an extra activity in certain university courses, thus it is impossible to teach pronunciation in a lesson that focuses entirely on practice. Consequently, future teachers might believe that correcting pronunciation errors is unimportant. Even though, they are still considered a big problem, especially for students with professions that involve the study of the English language (Hassan, 2014). Therefore, pronunciation errors can lead to misunderstandings. According to Elumalai et al. (2021),

without understanding the causes behind pronunciation errors, teachers and students might not know how to correct them.

This research analyzes common pronunciation errors made by first-semester class “A” English major students at the Technical University of Cotopaxi from April 2024 to August 2024. The current research offers valuable insights into understanding the causes of pronunciation errors, it can help students identify their common pronunciation errors, and this knowledge might allow students to focus their practice on these specific issues, leading to targeted and effective pronunciation training. By addressing the most frequent errors, students can improve their pronunciation, enhance their communication abilities, and achieve greater confidence in English language communication.

This study pretends to answer the following questions:

What are the most common pronunciation errors made by first-semester class “A” English major students at the Technical University of Cotopaxi?

What are the main causes of pronunciation errors made by first-semester class “A” English major students at the Technical University of Cotopaxi?

### **3. OBJECTIVES**

#### **3.1. General Objective**

- To analyze common pronunciation errors made by first-semester class “A” English major students at the Technical University of Cotopaxi from April 2024 to August 2024.

#### **3.2. Specific Objectives**

- To describe the theory about pronunciation errors in learning English.
- To identify the most common pronunciation errors made by first-semester class “A” English students at the Technical University of Cotopaxi from April 2024 to August 2024.

- To determine the main causes of pronunciation errors made by first-semester class “A” English major students at the Technical University of Cotopaxi from April 2024 to August 2024.

#### 4. ACTIVITIES AND TASK SYSTEM IN RELATION TO THE OBJECTIVES PROPOSED

**Table 1**

*Activities and task*

<b>Specific Objective</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Verification Means</b>
To identify the theory about pronunciation errors in learning English	-Drafting topics -Revise topics with the teacher -Writing a theoretical framework	Theoretical Framework
To identify the most common pronunciation errors made by first-semester class “A” English students at the Technical University of Cotopaxi from April 2024 to August 2024.	-Search for the instrument -Present an informed consent -Apply the reading test	Reading aloud test Pronunciation rubric Results and discussion
To determine the main causes of pronunciation errors made by first-semester class “A” English major students at the Technical University of Cotopaxi from April 2024 to August 2024.	-Analyze the information -Describe the results	Conclusions and recommendations

*Note:* The table details the activities related to each specific objective.

## 5. JUSTIFICATION

English is undoubtedly the most useful language around the world. It involves learning many aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, receptive skills (reading - listening), and productive skills (writing - speaking). Then pronunciation is an important subskill in speaking skills since “correct pronunciation ensures that one sounds clear and easy to understand. If one has knowledge of grammar, and vocabulary and uses good pronunciation, it helps others understand more clearly, easily, and quickly what one is trying to say” (Panduranga & Kalapala, n.d., p. 1286). This is particularly true for students majoring in English, who are expected to develop a strong foundation in all aspects of the language, including pronunciation. However, despite their focus on English, many English majors struggle with pronunciation errors when reading aloud text, instructions from books, slides presentations, etc. In addition, Backley (2013), says that listening to someone with poor pronunciation can be challenging since it requires more effort and concentration to understand the meaning of the messages. So, mispronouncing words incorrectly might result in misunderstandings.

Based on this problem, this research aims to analyze common pronunciation errors made by first-semester class “A” English major students at the Technical University of Cotopaxi from April 2024 to August 2024. Thus, this research can provide students and teachers of the Technical University of Cotopaxi useful insights about pronunciation errors, enabling them to recognize and overcome their specific challenges. By identifying these errors, students can devise methods to enhance their pronunciation, better equipping themselves for their future roles as English teachers.

Furthermore, the direct beneficiaries of this research are the English Major students at the Technical University of Cotopaxi since they will have a broader vision of pronunciation errors, in that way, they will focus on their self-awareness of the importance of pronunciation in their professional major as future English teachers. While, the indirect beneficiaries are the teachers of National and Foreign Language Pedagogy English Majors. It can help to learn the causes of their pronunciation errors and focus on specific sounds for improvement.

## 6. SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL FOUNDATION

### 6.1 Background

Shak et al. (2016) used qualitative research to design a study entitled “Pronunciation Problems: A Case Study on English Pronunciation Errors of Low Proficient Students” aiming at identifying the specific sounds that people frequently mispronounce. Twelve students with low oral proficiency were chosen to participate in the study by the teacher of the English course. The text ‘The North Wind and the Sun’ was used as a read-aloud test by the researchers. The students used error analysis and recorded the audio of the read-aloud test to detect pronunciation errors. The voiced TH /ð/ (as in ‘then’, ‘other’, ‘they’ and ‘it’) and the voiceless TH /θ/ (as in ‘north’) were the most common fricative sounds among the participants, according to the results.

Rafael (2019) researched “Analysis on Pronunciation Errors Made by First Semester Students of English Department STKIP CBN” to find the pronunciation errors made by the first-semester students, qualitative research was conducted. The study involved eleven first-semester students from the English Education Department at STKIP CBN during the 2018/2019 academic year. The research used recorded performances as the primary instrument, and the data was transcribed for analysis. The results indicated that the pronunciation errors were due to interference, intralingual, and developmental causes.

Elumalai et al. (2021) developed qualitative research called “English Language Pronunciation Barriers Encountered by the Expatriate Students at King Saud University” to identify mispronounced sounds and classify pronunciation errors among students. The study involved eight adult students, aged 22 to 30, who had completed secondary school and were pursuing bachelor’s degrees at King Saud University in Riyadh. Using Android mobile phones for voice recordings, the study revealed that students struggled to differentiate between long and short vowels, often substituting vowel sounds, influenced largely by their mother tongue.

Panduranga and Kalapala (n.d.) developed research entitled “English Pronunciation Difficulties Among EFL Students” to identify, assess, and analyze pronunciation errors in English among Saudi EFL students. A qualitative descriptive study was conducted with

50 female undergraduate students. The researchers used observation, recordings, and a structured questionnaire. The pre-test and post-test design was statistically analyzed using percentages, chi-square, and p-values. The findings revealed that students often confused certain vowel sounds, such as /i/ and /ɪ/, /ɒ/ and /əʊ/, and /æ/ and /eɪ/. Other frequent errors included mixing /u/ and /u:/ and /a:/ and /ɔ:/.

Hasibuan and Yusriati (2019) conducted a qualitative descriptive study titled "The Analysis of English Pronunciation Errors by Using English Education Students of FKIP UMSU." The research aimed to examine the pronunciation errors of fourth semester students of the English Education Studies Programme at FKIP UMSU. Students were recorded while reading English texts and further data were collected through interviews. Interdental consonants [θ] and [ð], labiodental consonant [v] and silent letters were among the various types of pronunciation errors found in the findings.

Min (2022) conducted a qualitative study entitled "An Analysis of Common Pronunciation Errors Made by Adult Burmese EFL Learners: A Study Taken at the Experts English Language Center in Yangon, Myanmar" To identify common pronunciation errors among adult Burmese EFL learners, the researcher selected thirty intermediate-level English students through purposive sampling. After obtaining ethical consent, students recorded the passage "Shopping List." The findings revealed that 28 out of 30 students mispronounced the /ʒ/ sound in "television" as /ʃ/. The second most common error was the mispronunciation of /g/ at the end of "egg." Additionally, issues were found with five vowel sounds and two diphthongs. The study concluded that these errors were primarily due to mother tongue interference.

Masroor, et al. (2022) conducted a study entitled "Investigating the Common Errors in Pronunciation Pertaining to Consonants among Yemeni EFL Undergraduates" to investigate the common pronunciation errors made by Yemeni EFL learners. Two different groups of participants took part in this study. The first group consisted of thirty-three students. The second group of participants consisted of twenty teachers. Data were obtained from the interview and recording of the word list task and passage reading task through recorded sessions. The results demonstrated how difficult it is to pronounce the twenty-four English consonants, especially the sounds /p/, /ʒ/, /dʒ/, and /v/, which are

absent from their native tongue. The study found no statistically significant variations in pronunciation errors between male and female students.

Tobing et al. (2023) investigated the “Phonological Problems and Errors of Students' Pronunciation in Reading English Text at English Department of University Hkbp Nommensen”. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, they sampled 15 students. Data were gathered using voice recordings of a short story and the Elsa Speak app. The study identified errors in vowel pronunciation, specifically with the sounds [ə, ʊ, ʌ, ɔ:]. There was a total of 40 vowel pronunciation errors, including 18 omissions, 6 additions, and 16 instances of misinformation. These errors were primarily due to interference from the first language and overgeneralization in the second language.

Tulaktondok (2016) conducted a qualitative study titled “English Pronunciation Errors Made by Torajan English Speakers” to explore pronunciation errors and their underlying causes among students. The study involved ten students from the Christian University of Indonesia Toraja. Data were gathered through interviews and recordings of students reading selected topics and analyzed using the error analysis method. The results identified consonant errors with sounds [f, v, ð, θ, z, ʃ, ʒ, tʃ], as well as omissions of medial [j] and final [t, d, k] sounds. Vowel errors were noted with sounds [i:, ɪ, e, æ, ə, ɜ:, ɔ:, ʊ:, əʊ, eɪ]. Interviews indicated that the mispronunciations were due to limited daily exposure to English, a lack of awareness about pronunciation's significance, and insufficient practice. The study concluded that these pronunciation errors were attributed to language transfer, overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, and false concepts hypothesized.

Budiman and Kania (2019) conducted a qualitative study titled “The Analysis of Students' Pronunciation Errors in Reading Aloud” to identify mispronounced words during reading aloud. The study involved seven senior high school students from SMAN 13 Garut, selected through purposive sampling. Observations and interviews were used to explore students' pronunciation challenges. After having the participants read a text aloud, the researchers identified 26 errors in nouns (26.8%), 49 errors in verbs (50.5%), 6 errors in adjectives (6.2%), 12 errors in adverbs (12.4%), 3 errors in prepositions (3.1%), and 1 error in conjunctions (1.03%). The study found that while students are

interested in English, their teacher rarely provides guidance on new vocabulary pronunciation, instead focusing on assigning texts and tests.

Syaputri (2014) conducted the study “Pronunciation Errors Made by Senior High School Students in Reading English Texts Aloud” to identify the types and causes of pronunciation errors. The study involved fifteen eleventh-grade students from Global Madani School Bandar Lampung and employed a descriptive qualitative approach. The students were given fifteen texts totaling 2,417 words to read aloud, and their pronunciation was then analyzed. The results revealed difficulties with sounds /ŋ/, /d/, /dʒ/, /f/, /z/, /ð/, /θ/, /ʃ/, and /g/. The study concluded that these errors were caused by mother tongue interference, intralingual factors, and developmental errors.

Rasaki et al. (2018) conducted a qualitative study titled “Students’ Inconsistency Problems in Pronouncing Diphthong Sounds in Reading Aloud Activity at the English Department of STKIP PGRI Sumatera Barat” to evaluate students' pronunciation issues with diphthongs. Participants in the study were second-year English department students at STKIP PGRI Sumatera Barat. Research instruments included read-aloud exams and video recordings. The findings revealed inconsistencies in the pronunciation of five diphthong sounds: [ɪə], [eɪ], [aɪ], and [ɔʊ]. The study concluded that students' focus on sounding native, their tendency to repeat and hesitate while pronouncing these sounds, and occasional stammering were key factors contributing to the inconsistent pronunciation of diphthong sounds.

The background research exclusively focuses on the international level and is based on research and findings from several countries. This approach highlights pronunciation errors in English as a second language by drawing on insights from many linguistic contexts. By providing a global understanding of the factors influencing pronunciation errors worldwide, this global perspective enriches the study.

## **6.2 Theoretical Framework**

### **6.2.1 English Language**

The English language is the most studied language for non-native speakers all over the world since it is a global language. Its importance lies in the fact that “English is the

official language of 53 countries and spoken by around 400 million people across the globe. It is the most common second language in the world” (Shrishthy, 2023, p. 116). Since there are thousands of languages spread around the world with speakers that don't share the same mother tongue, the English language became in the communicative vehicle to interact with the rest of the world, resulting from being considered as a bridge system also called lingua franca. A “lingua franca is defined and understood as a common language or medium of communication between people of different mother tongues, for whom it is a second language” (Marlina & Xu, 2018, p. 4). As a result of globalization, the English language has become the most important, relevant, and most used language in the world, and therefore it is the most studied for language learners.

Learning this language, on the other hand, requires mastering several abilities that allow learners to use the language effectively. According to Bihari (2022) “there are major language skills, which must be acquired by all language users. They are: Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing (LSRW)” (p. 1). Language skills are typically categorized based on how they are used in communication. To begin with, Hossain (2015) says that speaking and writing are classified as productive skills because they involve the active creation of language. Unlike receptive skills, which focus on understanding language, productive skills require learners to generate their own spoken or written output. While, receptive skills, which include listening and reading, focus on understanding and interpreting language since these abilities are in charge of receiving or gather the information from the surroundings (Frydrychova, 2014). To sum up, learning a language encompasses the ability to speak and write clearly but also to understand and interpret spoken and written messages with nuance, thereby enhancing learners' capacity to communicate by developing these skills is mandatory.

#### ***6.2.1.1 Productive skills***

To continue, focusing on productive skills: speaking and writing. These are crucial for language learners as they involve both language system mastery and effective communication. That's why, in the opinion of Bihari. (2022) speaking is a productive aural/ oral skill and it the creation of systematic verbal utterances in order to convey meaning. Speaking is the way of communicating or exchanging emotions and thoughts through language. Likewise, in the point of view of Al-Ataby (2020), writing is the process of human communication that involves the representation of language using

symbols, letters of the alphabet, punctuation marks and spaces to communicate thoughts and ideas in a legible form. To summarize, developing strong productive skills not only enhances learners' ability to express themselves with confidence but also facilitates meaningful exchanges and contributes to successful interactions.

#### ***6.2.1.2 Receptive skills***

Receptive skills, including listening and reading, are equally vital as productive skills. They are essential for comprehending spoken and written language, forming the foundation of effective communication. According to Purdy (1997) “listening is the active and dynamic process of attending, perceiving, interpreting, remembering, and responding to the expressed (verbal and nonverbal) needs, concerns, and information offered by other human beings.” (p. 5). On the other hand, reading is a fundamental skill acquired by English language learners during language acquisition. It involves the complex process of constructing meaning from written texts. This entails decoding written symbols, understanding vocabulary and grammar, and interpreting the author's intended message.

#### ***6.2.1.3 Reading***

Reading is one of the skills that English as a Foreign Language [EFL] learners acquire in a language learning process. It is defined as the process of constructing meaning from written texts. It is a complex skill requiring the coordination of several interrelated sources of information (Anderson et al., 1985). They can gain vocabulary knowledge, grammar rules, and even pronunciation when reading aloud. Another definition provided by Brown (2004) says that reading is the process of a series of visual symbols entering a brain region from a page of a book. This perspective underscores the cognitive nature of reading, highlighting the complex mental processes involved in comprehending written text.

#### ***6.2.1.4 Modes of Reading***

Jafari (2013) identifies two primary modes of reading: silent reading and reading aloud. These modes have distinct functions and can be employed based on the objectives of the reader and the circumstances surrounding the reading task.

### ***6.2.1.5 Silent Reading***

According to Jannah (2022), “Silent reading is a reading activity that should be done silently to get the needed information. This reading will enhance students’ reading ability.” (p.4). In other words, by focusing solely on the text, readers can effectively extract necessary information and improve their overall reading proficiency. Mol and Bus (2011) state that silent reading is a mode that prepares students for lifelong reading, its function is to communicate the message to the reader to help them to become a skilled reader. According to Adams (2009), in silent reading, students can be more active and deal with semantic, orthographic, and syntactic patterns. Therefore, silent reading is a valuable strategy for EFL learners to enhance their language proficiency. By engaging in this mode of reading practice, student can significantly expand their vocabulary, grasp complex grammatical structures, and develop a deeper understanding of the target language's nuances.

### ***6.2.1.6 Reading Aloud***

In contrast to silent reading, reading aloud offers a different set of benefits. According to Jacobs (2016), reading aloud is a form of communication between a well-equipped reader and a set of audience. It is the act of reading out loud any written text which mostly happens in situations such as: reading a report, reporting the minutes of a meeting, reading instructions, and reading something from a newspaper (Ninsuwan, 2015). More importantly, phonological awareness is a reliable predictor of reading-aloud skills, and is widely recognized as a key indicator of proficiency. This awareness encompasses the ability to recognize and manipulate phonemes in spoken words, as well as understand the phonological structure of language (Van Den Boer et al., 2014). Therefore, it is necessary to cultivate strong phonological awareness in order to develop proficient reading-aloud skills because it is the foundation for effectively decoding and articulating written language. Moreover, phonological awareness is crucial for accurate pronunciation.

In this context, Gabrielatos (2002) claims that pronunciation is one area that can be enhanced by reading aloud in class. Pronunciation can be thoroughly practiced through reading aloud. The text that has specific conditions and content is the material that should be read aloud. Not only should we accurately pronounce each word, but we also need to divide the meaning groups and order the pauses according to the content. In the interim, we must use the proper rhythm, intonation, and stress. As a result, reading aloud helps

improve pronunciation significantly (Huang, 2010). In conclusion, by meticulously attending to pronunciation while reading aloud, learners can significantly enhance their overall oral proficiency.

### 6.2.2 Pronunciation

Pronunciation is considered the backbone of the English language when conveying any messages orally to others. Yates (2002) states that pronunciation allows people to communicate meaning by creating sounds that convey concepts and messages. However, for non-native speakers, both students and teachers, it can be difficult to create sounds in English. Pronunciation is a notoriously complex yet crucial aspect of learning and teaching a second language, leading to frustration among many learners and instructors (Zhang 2009). So, pronunciation improvement requires constant practice and drilling before, we can produce a specific sound (Vilaplana, 2009). Therefore, consistent and deliberate practice is essential for mastering pronunciation in a foreign language. Regular exposure to native speech through movies, TV shows, podcasts, songs, and audiobooks, combined with focused drills on specific sounds and intonation patterns, will significantly enhance pronunciation accuracy and fluency.

Garita et al. (2019) asserts that when using English as a foreign language, pronouncing words correctly is essential to conveying your meaning clearly and preventing misunderstandings. Then, it is essential to take into account the elements or features of English pronunciation to gain a comprehensive understanding of how it actually works.

#### 6.2.2.1 Pronunciation Features

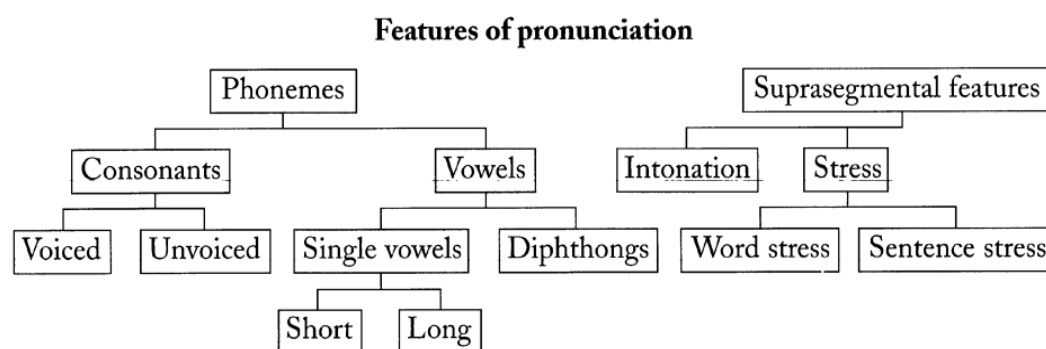


Fig 1. *Features of English Pronunciation*, adapted from *How to Teach Pronunciation* by Kelly (2001). Pearson Education.

### ***6.2.2.2 Segmental Features***

According to Pennington and Richards cited in Djurayeva (2021), the smallest components of sound are known as segmental features in phonetics. Essential elements of pronunciation are phonemes. “A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a language that ‘native’ speakers distinguish as significant as well as different from all the other phonemes of that language” (Hall & Hastings, 2017, p.79-80). Thus, understanding phonemes and their categorization is essential for developing accurate pronunciation. By mastering the production of individual phonemes, learners can significantly improve their intelligibility and fluency in English. The phonemes consist of two categories: vowel sounds and consonant sounds.

### ***6.2.2.3 Vowels Sounds***

Vowel sounds are produced when the vocal tract is free of obstructions allowing air to flow through them. They are all voiced and may be single or a combination involving a movement from one vowel sound to another. Such combinations are known as diphthongs, and triphthongs, the combination of three vowel sounds. Vowels play a significant role in the phonetic and phonological systems. It is important to learn and understand the vowel sounds to pronounce them correctly (Qonita et al., 2023, p.169). Mastery of vowel pronunciation is crucial for effective communication in English, as it forms the foundation for clear and accurate speech.

It is important to distinguish between short and long vowel sounds. According to Roach (2009), there is a distinction in duration between the seven short vowel sounds and five long vowel sounds. Long vowels are longer than short vowels when it is produced. They are accompanied by two dots that show the length. According to Pratiwi and Indrayani (2021), diphthongs represent the combination of two vowel sounds in the same syllable. Diphthongs are also called “gliding vowels” because they can be precisely articulated when one vowel glides fast to another (See Table 2).

**Table 2***Vowels Sounds*

Short vowel sounds		Long vowel sounds		Diphthongs	
Æ	H <u>a</u> t	ɑ:	f <u>a</u> r	eɪ	C <u>a</u> ke
E	L <u>e</u> ft	i:	b <u>e</u> ad	ɔɪ	T <u>o</u> y
ɪ	H <u>i</u> t	ɜ:	sh <u>i</u> rt	aɪ	H <u>i</u> gh
ɒ	D <u>o</u> g	ɔ:	c <u>a</u> ll	ɪə	B <u>e</u> er
ʌ	R <u>u</u> n	u:	f <u>o</u> od	ʊə	F <u>e</u> wer
ʊ	B <u>o</u> ok			eə	Wh <u>e</u> re
ə	<u>A</u> bout			əʊ	G <u>o</u>
				aʊ	H <u>o</u> use

*Note:* Adapted from How to teach pronunciation by Kelly (2001).

**6.2.2.4 Consonant Sounds**

Consonants are sounds in which the air stream meets some obstacles in the mouth (lips, teeth, tongue, or palate) on its way up from the lungs. Three factors must be taken into account while describing a consonant, which include: voicing, place of articulation and manner of articulation (Carley & Mess, 2018).

**Voicing** refers to the actions of the vocal folds during the articulation of a consonant. Different actions of the vocal folds produce voiced and voiceless sounds. (See Table 2) A vibration can be felt on the throat when the consonant sound is voiced.

**Table 3***The consonants of American English*

Voicing of English Consonants			
Voiced Consonants		Voiceless Consonants	
/b/	Big	/p/	Pen

/d/	Dog	/t/	Top
/g/	Give	/k/	Cat
/v/	Vote	/f/	Food
/ð/	This	/θ/	Thick
/z/	Zoo	/s/	Song
/ʒ/	Beige	/ʃ/	Ship
/dʒ/	Juice	/tʃ/	Chip
/m/	Man	/h/	House
/n/	Now		
/ŋ/	Sing		
/l/	Love		
/r/	Run		
/w/	Wet		
/j/	Yes		

*Note:* Adapted from The Consonants of American English by Yoshida (n.d.).

Another factor to describe consonant sounds is the place in the vocal tract where the obstruction occurs. That is called the *place of articulation*. According to Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), when we produce sounds in English, the air can pass through the oral cavity or the nasal passageway, it depends on whether the nasal is blocked off or not (See Table 4).

**Table 4**

*Place of articulation*

<b>Place of articulation</b>	<b>Consonant sounds</b>	<b>Example</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Bilabial</b>	/p/ /b/ /m/ /w/	pet, <u>bee</u> , <u>meat</u> , <u>wet</u> .	Produced by combining the upper and lower lip.

<b>Labiodental</b>	/f/ /v/	<u>f</u> ish, <u>v</u> ote.	It happens when the lower lip touches against the higher front teeth.
<b>Dental</b>	/ð/ /θ/	<u>th</u> en, <u>th</u> ick	Produced with the tip of the tongue on or near the inner surface of the upper teeth
<b>Alveolar</b>	/t/ /d/ /z/ /s/ /n/ /l/	<u>t</u> o, <u>d</u> o, <u>s</u> o, <u>z</u> oo, <u>n</u> ew, and <u>l</u> ight.	Produced with the tip of the tongue on or near the ridge of the tooth.
<b>Palatal</b>	/ʃ/ /ʒ/ /tʃ/ /dʒ/ /r/ /y/	<u>sh</u> ow, <u>beige</u> , <u>ch</u> ow, <u>J</u> im, <u>r</u> ake, and <u>y</u> ou	Produced with the tongue blade or body near the hard palatal.
<b>Velar</b>	/k/ /g/ /ŋ/	go, kite, and bring	Produced with the tongue body on or near the soft palate.
<b>Glottal</b>	/h/	hi	The vocal cords produce the air that passes through the trachea.

*Note:* Adapted from Teaching Pronunciation: A Course Book and Reference Guide by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010).

The last factor to describe consonants is the manner of articulation. This term refers to the way in which airflow is obstructed during the production of a consonant sound. Carley and Mees (2018) emphasize its significance in understanding how different sounds are formed. There are five primary manners of articulation: stops, fricatives, affricates, nasals, and approximants. Understanding these categories is essential for grasping how various consonant sounds are produced and distinguishing between them effectively in spoken language. This knowledge is fundamental for accurate pronunciation. (See Table 5).

**Table 5***Manner of articulation*

<b>Manner of articulation</b>	<b>Consonant sounds</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Stop/plosive</b>	/p/ /b/ /t/ /d/ /k/ /g/	A full closure entirely stops the vocal tract's airflow, which is then released.
<b>Fricative</b>	/f/ /v/ /θ/ /ð/ /s/ /z/ /ʃ/ /ʒ/ /h/	There is a tiny passage that creates turbulence in the vocal tract due to partial obstruction of airflow.
<b>Affricate</b>	/tʃ/ /dʒ/	The vocal tract forms a full closure, which is followed by a progressive release.
<b>Nasal</b>	/m/ /n/ /ŋ/	The soft palate is lowered, the oral cavity closes completely, and air is admitted through the nose.
<b>Lateral/ Approximant</b>	/l/ /r/ /w/ /y/	The vocal tract narrows, yet not to the extent that a fricative would, causing turbulence and noise.

*Note:* Adapted from English Phonetics and Pronunciation Practice by Carley and Mess (2018).

#### **6.2.2.5 Suprasegmental Features**

According to Noble (2014), “Suprasegmental features are those vocal effects that extend over more than one sound segment in an utterance, such as stress, rhythm, and intonation, in contrast with segmental features, which are individual consonant and vowel sounds.” (p.2). Furthermore, Florey (1998) highlights that suprasegmentals are sounds that go beyond what an individual can produce, native speakers typically produce them subconsciously throughout segments. Suprasegmental aspects offer vital context and support. Thus, the main features that belong to suprasegmentals are:

**Intonation:** Pitch is used in language at the sentence level through intonation. Speaking a phrase or sentence with a rise or fall in pitch is called intonation (...) The meaning of a statement might vary greatly depending on how it is tuned (Tolibovna, 2023). So,

understanding and mastering intonation is essential for effective communication, as it can alter the listener's interpretation of a message.

**Stress:** It refers to the syllable that sounds longer, louder, and higher in pitch than the other syllables. Similarly, Grant and Brinton (2014) say that “the most salient aspects of stress are length and clarity. Stressed syllables are relatively longer in duration and have full, clear vowel sounds.” (p.30). Understanding stress is vital for proper pronunciation and effective communication, as it significantly influences the rhythm and meaning of spoken language.

**Rhythm:** It involves the strong (stressed) and the weak (unstressed) beats. Stressed words, known as content words, hold most of the meaning. Additionally, the focus word receives the strongest stress in a thought group, the weak unstressed words can be difficult to hear properly (Miller 2006). By recognizing the patterns of stressed and unstressed words, listeners can better understand and retain information.

### **6.2.3 Pronunciation Errors**

Pronunciation Errors have been a barrier when mastering English as a second language since they generate many difficulties and it takes a lot of work to fix them. Munro and Derwing (1995) define pronunciation errors as “consistently implicated loss of intelligibility, whether in communication between native speakers, as happens when speakers of unfamiliar dialects come into contact, or between native speakers and non-native speakers” (p.76). This makes a compelling case for practicing pronunciation because if not, learners could have problems and it could negatively affect communication. Similarly, Levis (2018) highlights that pronunciation errors can cause listeners to interpret words differently, and the accumulated impact of numerous tiny variations can make it more difficult for listeners to comprehend what the speaker is trying to say (p. 62). This phenomenon can have many reasons, for instance, “Some students fail to pronounce some words correctly from the beginning. As they become accustomed to their version of pronunciation, they would be more likely to miscomprehend when these words are not correctly pronounced” (Nyarks & Ngozi, 2022, p.55). Addressing these challenges is crucial to enhancing effective communication in

English. Thus, continuous practice and awareness of pronunciation are essential for language learners.

Nevertheless, different pronunciation errors impact a speaker's comprehensibility and intelligibility. Whilst many errors are significant, only a few matters in communication. An evidence-based approach to understanding and addressing errors requires considering individual differences and variable error gravity (Munro & Derwing, 2015). To sum up, “it is vital that students learning English for international communication learn to speak it as intelligibly and comprehensively as possible – not necessarily like natives, but well enough to be understood” (Jesry, 2014, p. 2).

The teacher needs to look for different strategies to teach correct pronunciation. Then, according to Celce-Murcia et al. (2014), teacher training programs should focus on pronunciation, either as a stand-alone phonetics/phonology course or as part of teaching oral skills. The second area that requires further investigation is pronunciation learning and teaching, specifically in the areas of (1) intelligibility; (2) effective classroom techniques; and (3) meeting the needs of learners in various circumstances. This is crucial for English major students. They need to pay close attention to certain aspects that the students need to improve. On the other hand, it is necessary to identify the causes of pronunciation errors and the impacts that they could have, for example, Wong (1993) points out that the sounds, norms, stress, and intonation of their first language are reflected in the mispronunciations of words made by non-native speakers. Grant and Brinton (2014) state that “what appears to be pronunciation errors sometimes originate from universal processing constraints. An example of a universal constraint is overgeneralization.” (p. 143).

Pronunciation errors require understanding and attention by teachers and learners to improve.

An analysis needs to uncover not only linguistic but also extralinguistic links focusing specifically on the events endangering the success of communication. Pronunciation errors are of various magnitudes and degrees of deviation between the outgoing and incoming information. An inventory of recorded errors,

regardless of their relevance to the understandability and acceptability of the discourse, thus cannot be taken as a reliable indicator of foreign language performance quality (Kráľová et al., 2021, p. 12).

So, regardless of how relevant the pronunciation is, it is fundamental to make a deep analysis of its errors, in that way, communication can be much more effective and efficient. Effective communication, after all, hinges on the clarity of the message, making it imperative to focus on refining pronunciation as a core aspect of language learning.

### ***6.2.3.1 Error Analysis***

According to Ellis (1999) “Error Analysis [EA] was one of the first methods used to investigate learner language. It achieved considerable popularity in the 1970s, replacing contrastive analysis (...) Corder distinguished errors from mistakes and argued that EA should investigate only errors.” (p.68). Intan, et al. (2020) make a well explained definition about EA, saying the following:

“Error analysis is a crucial aspect of applied linguistics that focuses on identifying, classifying, and interpreting errors made by second language learners. It aims to investigate the frequency, types, and causes of errors committed by learners, shedding light on the difficulties they face in language acquisition” (p. 10).

Specifically, in educational settings, this might involve examining students' written or spoken work to uncover patterns of misunderstanding or recurring issues with grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation when it comes to oral language samples. In essence, error analysis serves as a vital tool to underline the causes behind errors, thereby facilitating more effective learning and improvement in educational fields.

### ***6.2.3.2 Types of Pronunciation Errors***

The table below provides a classification of common pronunciation errors. It outlines three primary error types: insertion, deletion, and substitution. Each error type is defined and illustrated with examples, offering a clear picture of the difficulties that learners may encounter when producing English sounds accurately.

**Table 6***Types of Errors*

<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Insertion</b>	including a segment not present in the target form.	/lɪvəd/ for 'lived' (/lɪvd/)
<b>Deletion</b>	not including a segment that is present in the target form.	/sɪk/ for 'six' (/sɪks/)
<b>Substitution</b>	replacing a segment in the target form with a segment from a different phonemic category.	/kʌt/ for 'cat' (/kæt/)

*Note:* Adapted from Pronunciation Fundamentals by Derwing and Munro (2015).

**6.2.3.3 Errors vs Mistakes**

Undeniably, there is a difference between “Mistake” and “Error” in language learning. Corder (1967) argues that a mistake represents a brief lapse in language use, “a slip of the tongue”. It can typically be corrected quickly because learners know the correct rule. Botley (n.d.) adds that “mistakes are usually seen as unintentional, accidental slips resulting from simple laziness or forgetting, or insufficiently internalized rules” (p.83). Thus, mistakes are typically superficial slips that do not hinder overall language development. They are often corrected spontaneously by the learner or through minimal feedback. On the other hand, Lennon (1991) defines an error as “a linguistic form or combination of forms which, in the same context and under similar conditions of production, would, in all likelihood, not be produced by the speakers’ native speaker counterparts.” In contrast to mistakes, errors represent systematic deviations from the target language and often indicate underlying misunderstandings of grammatical rules or linguistic patterns.

**6.2.4 Causes of Pronunciation Errors**

Students’ errors can be attributed to various causes, including interference from the first language and processing challenges in the target language itself. According to Touchie (1986), errors in learning a second language primarily come from two basic causes.

Interference from the native tongue, called interlingual error and intralingual errors. On the flip side, James (1998) mentions three factors that cause errors: interlingual, intralingual, and induced errors. Understanding the root causes of these errors is crucial for effective language learning and instruction.

#### ***6.2.4.1 Mother Tongue Interference***

A mother tongue is a language that develops from a group of people's interaction habits; it becomes their primary language on the surface. The interference occurs when mother tongue elements are incorporated into the learned language, leading to errors (Noviyenty & Putri, 2020). This is a common phenomenon in the language-learning process, in the case of pronunciation, Babkina, explains that:

The interference of the mother tongue on the level of sounds and aspects of the speech is called phonological interference. Each EFL learner reflexively pronounces the English sounds the way they usually pronounce the sounds of their own language. They unconsciously tend to apply their first language knowledge to the pronunciation of the sounds and speech aspects of the foreign language. (2018, p.20)

In short, the components that the speaker takes from their mother tongue to their second language cause interference, at the phonological level, it makes it difficult to pronounce words correctly in the target language. For instance, learners tend to pronounce the words 'school' as 'eschool' or 'student' as 'estudent' because Spanish words do not start with "s" followed by a consonant but with vowels only.

#### ***6.2.4.2 Intralingual Cause***

Understanding the nature of pronunciation errors requires an exploration of intralingual errors, essential in the process of rule learning. According to Richards (1974), intralingual errors reflect common challenges associated with learning and applying rules, such as faulty generalization, incomplete application of rules, and failure to grasp the conditions under which rules apply. Similarly, Amiruddin (2019) supports this view and states that "Intralingual errors... refer to errors that reflect the general characteristics of rule learning. This type of error can further be broken down into three types namely,

overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restrictions, and incomplete application of rules” (p. 92). These insights highlight the various ways learners may struggle with pronunciation rules, ultimately impacting their accuracy. Addressing these errors is crucial for improving pronunciation skills and ensuring more effective language learning.

#### ***6.2.4.3 Interlingual Cause***

The term interlingual refers to the phenomenon where a learner's language combines systematic features from both the language they're learning (the target language) and their native language, resulting in a unique blend of characteristics from both linguistic systems. Essentially, their linguistic system is a blend or transitional state. This highlights how learners' language can change as they learn a new language (Corder, 1981).

#### ***6.2.4.4 Overgeneralization***

Another cause of pronunciation error is the so-called overgeneralization, Brown (1994) argues that it describes a process wherein a learner of a second language acts in the target language, generalizing a specific rule or item. It describes a situation when a language's form or norm is overgeneralized compared to its other forms (Jabeen et al., 2015). Thus, overgeneralization is the extended use of particular forms that can lead to errors in language learning.

This phenomenon is a natural part of the learning process, since learners are trying to understand new linguistic structures. However, proper language use can be difficult if it is not addressed. To master a second language effectively, it is essential to recognise and correct these overgeneralizations.

#### ***6.2.4.5 Ignorance of rule restrictions***

This cause of pronunciation error is due to the habitual recall of rules that may lead to some restrictions on the rules. Although they focus on spelling, students produce words based on phonological norms. Understanding this term is essential for students learning English pronunciation. This concept refers to the tendency of students to misapply language rules due to a lack of awareness of specific exceptions or restrictions. For instance, students might incorrectly pronounce all past tense verbs with the "-ed" ending

as /t/ because they generalize the rule, ignoring exceptions like "wanted," which should be pronounced /'wɒntɪd/.

#### ***6.2.4.6 Incomplete application of rules***

It occurs when students understand the rule but choose not to follow it because they believe it is unimportant. For example, the pronunciation of the schwa sound (/ə/). Learners frequently pronounce words according to their strong form rather than the unstressed vowel in English. Therefore, it is essential for students to recognize the importance of such nuances to improve their overall pronunciation accuracy.

#### ***6.2.4.7 Fossilization***

Some errors persist for long periods despite the focused training and practice, that is the case of fossilization. Bambino (2020) points out that fossilization occurs when progress in learning a second language halts despite favorable conditions such as plenty of exposure to, practice with the language, and adequate motivation to improve, as well as. Additionally, Chandavong (2018) claims that even after mastering a language to the level of a native speaker, habit relapses may occur. Therefore, students go back to their earlier learning phases. As a result, opportunities for learners to achieve comprehensibility are limited.

#### ***6.2.4.8 False Concepts Hypothesized***

This term describes errors that result from an incorrect understanding of the differences in the target language. Sometimes it is the result of poor grading of the teaching items. Learners are unable to distinguish sound distinctions and they cannot produce them. For instance, students do not notice the difference between two distinct phonemes between words like /lɪv/ and /li:v/. As well as, they are unable to distinguish between /e/ and /æ/, so, students are unable to create them and believe that the distinction is insignificant (Tulaktondok, 2016).

This highlights the need for learners to actively engage in focused practice and self-awareness in pronunciation, as recognizing and mastering these distinctions is crucial for effective language learning and accurate communication in English.

#### **6.2.4.9 False Cognates**

Yaylaci and Argynbayev (2014) define false cognates as word pairs that appear or sound alike but have distinct meanings in the speakers' native tongues, highlighting the potential for confusion and misunderstanding between language learners. When it comes to pronunciation Pinazo (1997) as cited in Pastor (2021), include a category of false cognate called “phonetic false friend”, the words that sound alike but have completely different meanings. For instance: **peace**, meaning ‘paz’ in Spanish, sound similar to **pis**, meaning ‘pee’ in English. Moreover, Trishina (2021) provides an illustrative example of chance false friends: The English word ‘embarrassed’ (meaning ashamed) and its Spanish counterpart ‘embarazada’ (meaning pregnant). While sharing graphic and phonetic similarities, these words lack an etymological connection, highlighting the potential for false cognates to arise unexpectedly.

## **7. METHODOLOGY**

### **7.1 Research Approach**

In this study, a mixed-method approach was employed to provide a comprehensive analysis of pronunciation errors among first-semester students in class “A.” The quantitative component involved measuring the frequency of specific pronunciation errors identified through a reading-aloud test, allowing for a statistical understanding of common issues. Simultaneously, the qualitative aspect focused on observing, identifying, and describing the underlying causes of these errors, offering a deeper insight into the factors contributing to them. In mixed-methods research, both quantitative and qualitative data are collected and integrated to yield more nuanced conclusions, enhancing the reliability and validity of the findings (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). By combining these approaches, this study ensures a more holistic understanding of the pronunciation challenges faced by students.

## **7.2 Research Method or level**

Error Analysis (EA) was the method utilized in this research, specifically designed to identify and analyze the errors made by learners in both speaking and writing. EA, as defined by Corder (1981), involves a systematic examination of the errors produced by learners of second and foreign languages. This method was particularly suitable for the current study as it enabled the identification, quantification, and classification of pronunciation errors made by English major students during a reading-aloud test. Moreover, it facilitated the interpretation of the underlying causes of these errors, offering valuable insights into the students' linguistic challenges. By employing EA, the research effectively highlighted specific areas in pronunciation that require focused attention, supporting the overall goal of improving language proficiency among learners.

The level of the present study was descriptive because as Plonsky and Gurzynski (2014) mentioned “Studies that are descriptive seek to describe a linguistic phenomenon or set of phenomena without attempts at incurring change. These studies do not test the effects or outcomes of a treatment or intervention” (p. 33). So, this method suited this research as it simply described the pronunciation errors and interpreted the main causes of why English major students at Technical University made those errors.

## **7.3 Research Context**

The research was carried out at the Technical University of Cotopaxi - Pujilí Extension, located in an urban area and was a public university. Regarding the participants, 24 first semester class “A” English major students were chosen, among 7 males and 17 female students. All students were adults with an average age range of 18 - 30. The researcher followed a non-probability method using a convenience sampling strategy to select the participants.

In the non-probability sample, selectivity results from the researcher focusing on a certain group with the knowledge that this group just represents itself and does not reflect the larger population. In convenience sampling, only the closer participants are selected and keep going until the necessary sample size is reached (Cohen et al. 2007, p.113). Therefore, the researcher used convenience sampling, looking for the most accessible

ones among the students. However, before the selection, informed consent was elaborated on and handed to the participants so they could sign it (See Annex 1).

#### **7.4 Data Collection Procedure**

The researcher incorporated both manual methods and specific computer programs. Initially, the researcher took into account the level of the students (A1) and selected a short text from the A1, part 4 reading section called “Kim’s Picture” from the Cambridge English Tests (See Annex 2), it contained 138 words and 38 phonemes; seven short vowel sounds (/æ, e, i, ʌ, ɪ, ə, ʊ/), five long vowel sounds (/ u:, ɑ:, i:, ɜ:, ɔ:/), five diphthong sounds (/aʊ, oʊ, aɪ, eɪ, ɔɪ /), and twenty-two consonant sounds (/p, b, k, g, d, t, f, v, s, z, ð, ʃ, tʃ, dʒ, m, n, ŋ, h, l, r, w, j/). Then, the researcher asked the participants to read the selected text aloud using the recording application on their phones and send the audio to the researcher via WhatsApp.

Additionally, a detailed pronunciation rubric was utilized, it was elaborated by the researcher to systematically assess and categorize pronunciation errors during the reading-aloud test. According to Yulia (2018), rubrics serve as a detailed rating guide designed to evaluate and clearly outline the specific components and expectations associated with an assignment. Therefore, this rubric evaluated students' pronunciation across eight sound categories: short vowels, long vowels, diphthongs, plosives, fricatives, affricates, nasals, and approximants. Each sound within these categories was assessed on a four-level scale, ranging from 'Excellent' (accurate pronunciation with no errors) to 'Poor' (frequent mispronunciations significantly affecting communication). The rubric was designed to identify specific pronunciation errors and their severity, thereby allowing for a comprehensive analysis of common pronunciation errors among the students. By employing this rubric, the study ensured a consistent and objective evaluation of pronunciation, facilitating the identification of patterns (See Annex 3).

Then, words mispronounced and evaluated as 'Fair' 'Poor' were transcribed. The researcher manually transcribed those words into Excel spreadsheets using the online Cambridge Dictionary, and selected the American pronunciation to compare the pronunciation of the students, the researcher selected that option since the students were using American books, and they had a native American teacher helping them in their

English lessons, taking into account those aspects, the researcher considered that they were familiarized with American pronunciation. Thus, twenty-four tables were created, each containing the number of words, the words themselves, the International Phonetic Alphabet [IPA] transcription of correct pronunciation taken from the online Cambridge Dictionary, and the students' pronunciation transcriptions.

Each participant was given a distinct identifier (S1, S2, S3, etc.) for easy reference (See Annex 4). Following this, the researcher thoroughly identified and quantified pronunciation errors, linking them to the respective student codes to ascertain error frequencies. This organized methodology enabled an in-depth examination of pronunciation patterns among the participants. For instance, the error in the word "bus" S1, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7= 6. Coding the data in Excel enabled efficient data management, organization, and quantitative analysis of pronunciation errors.

Coding involves assigning labels or categories to data. These labels can be predetermined or chosen based on the specific data collected. The goal is to understand and organize data. This is done by breaking it down into smaller pieces, assigning codes to those pieces, and then looking for similarities and redundancies in the codes. Finally, these codes are grouped into broader themes to reveal the underlying patterns in the data (Cresswell & Gutterman, 2018).

## **7.5 Data Analysis Process**

The procedure for data analysis followed Corder's (1974) model of EA. Soe (2021) states that "Corder's (1974) steps of analysis are a widely applied method in the study of error analysis. The steps that Corder addressed can be organized into five steps: collecting data, identifying errors, classifying errors, explaining errors, and evaluating errors." (p.113).

- *Data collection:* The researcher collected 24 recordings of a reading aloud test. The whole process is described above.
- *Identification of errors:* The researcher carefully listened to each audio recording several times to ensure precision in identifying pronunciation errors. At this stage, the pronunciation errors of each student were

identified, with incorrectly pronounced words highlighted (See Annex 4). To properly differentiate errors from mistakes, the researcher observed cases in which students mispronounced things at first but then corrected themselves. For instance, some students pronounced the word 'bus' (/bʌs/) as [bus] or 'lesson' (/lesən/) as [li:son], but they quickly corrected themselves, so those words were not taken as errors but as mistakes. In addition, for a better recognition of errors the pronunciation rubric was a helpful tool.

- *Classification of errors:* The researcher classified the identified pronunciation errors into consonant and vowel sound errors. These were further classified into six categories: short vowel sounds, long vowel sounds, diphthong sounds, fricative consonant sounds, plosive consonant sounds, and approximant sounds, resulting in six tables.

Then, the researcher calculated the percentages of frequencies using the formula:

$$\text{Percentage} = \left( \frac{\text{Total Number of Errors}}{\text{Total Number of Students (24)}} \right) \times 100$$

Thus, each table contained six columns with the number of words, the words, the IPA transcription of correct pronunciation from Cambridge Dictionary, the students' pronunciation transcription, the frequencies, and the percentages.

- *Explanation of errors:* In this step, the researcher interpreted and explained the causes of the pronunciation errors found in the reading-aloud test. The analysis was based on established theories and supported by other authors. For a better understanding, it is explained through the classification of the causes and the corresponding types of errors.

## 8. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The students' pronunciation errors were analyzed in six tables, each corresponding to different sound categories, such as short vowel, long vowel, diphthong, and consonant

sounds. The tables highlight the frequency of errors made by students during the reading-aloud test, providing a detailed breakdown of the errors and their respective percentages. Additionally, six other tables classified the causes behind these errors, offering insights into the main causes like mother tongue interference and overgeneralization. Together, these tables present a comprehensive view of the pronunciation challenges faced by the students, forming the basis for further analysis and discussion.

**Table 7**

*Students' Pronunciation Errors of Short Vowel Sounds /ɪ, e, ə, ʌ/*

N°	Words	Cambridge Dictionary transcription	Students' pronunciation transcription	f	%
1	Carries	/'kerɪz/	['kariɪz]	21	87,50
2	Rubber	/'rʌbər/	[ru:bər]	19	79,17
3	With	/wɪð/	[wi:ð]	18	75,00
4	This	/ðɪs/	[ði:s]	18	75,00
5	Sits	/sɪts/	[si:ts]	16	66,67
6	Pencils	/'pensəlz/	[pensɪ:lz]	16	66,67
7	Carefully	/'kerfəli/	['karefəli]	15	62,50
8	But	/bʌt/	[but]	13	54,17
9	Bus	/bʌs/	[bus]	12	50,00
10	There	/ðer/	[ðere]	12	50,00
11	Said	/sed/	[said]	10	41,67
12	Said	/sed/	[seɪd]	10	41,67
13	Sits	/sɪts/	[sarts]	7	29,16
Total				187	

*Note:* The table presents students' pronunciation errors of short vowel sounds /ɪ, e, ə, ʌ/.

The table presents the pronunciation errors of four short vowel sounds: /ɪ/, /e/, /ə/, and /ʌ/. The word 'carries' exhibited the highest frequency of errors, with 21 students (87.50%) incorrectly pronouncing it. The word 'rubber' was mispronounced by 19 students (79.17%), followed by the words 'with' and 'this,' both mispronounced by 18 students (75.00%) each, indicating high frequencies of errors in the sound /ɪ/. The word 'sits' had two types of mispronunciations: the most frequent error was made by 16 students (66.67%), while the least frequent error was made by 6 students (25%). The word 'pencil' was also mispronounced by 16 students (66.67%). Additionally, the words 'carefully' had a frequency of 15 students incorrectly pronouncing the short vowel sound /ɪ/. The word 'but' was mispronounced by 13 students (54.17%). Furthermore, 12 students (50.00%) incorrectly pronounced the words 'but' and 'there'. Lastly, the word 'said' had two types of mispronunciation, both involving 10 students (41.67%).

These results are similar to the study conducted by Tulaktondok (2016), he found pronunciation errors in four short vowel sounds /ɪ/, /e/, /æ/, and /ə/. He indicated that the main words incorrectly pronounced were: 'pack,' 'adult,' 'about,' 'said,' 'women,' etc. Students often substituted the vowel sounds with others, such as replacing the vowel sound /e/ in 'said' with the diphthong sound /eɪ/, similar to findings in the current study. Tobing (2023), on the other hand, presented 40 errors made by students in three short vowel sounds /ə/, /ʊ/, and /ʌ/. They changed vowel sounds in the substitution of /ə/ to /e/, the substitution of /ʊ/ to /u:/, and the substitution of the sounds /ʌ/ to /a / and /u/. Moreover, in another study by Shak et al. (2016), the researchers found errors in six vowel sounds: /ɪ/, /e/, /æ/, /ɒ/, /ʊ/ and /ə/ in words such as 'wind,' 'confess,' 'was,' 'took,' with a total error frequency of 22, resulting in a percentage of 15.38%. These studies highlight the prevalence of vowel substitution errors in English pronunciation among students.

Building on these findings, the following table illustrates the classification of causes and types of pronunciation errors identified in the study. It categorizes the errors under three main causes: mother tongue interference, false concepts hypothesized, and overgeneralization. Each cause is associated with specific words that students mispronounced, and the types of errors include substitutions and insertions of various vowel sounds. The table provides a clear overview of how these errors manifest in students' pronunciation, offering insight into the specific challenges faced by English major students in mastering English sounds.

**Table 8***Causes and Types of Error of Short Vowel Sounds*

Causes	Word	Error types
Mother tongue interference	1. Carries	1. Substitution (/e/ → [a]) and Insertion [e]
	2. Rubber	2. Substitution (/ʌ/ → [u:])
	3. Pencils	3. Substitution (/ə/ → [i:])
	4. Carefully	4. Substitution (/e/ → [a]) and Insertion [e]
	5. But	5. Substitution (/ʌ/ → [u:])
	6. Bus	6. Substitution (/ʌ/ → [u:])
	7. There	7. Insertion [e]
	8. Said	8. Substitution (/e/ → [aɪ])
False concept hypothesized	1. With	1. Substitution (/ɪ/ → [i:])
	2. This	2. Substitution (/ɪ/ → [i:])
	3. Sits	3. Substitution (/ɪ/ → [i:])
Overgeneralization	1. Said	1. Substitution (/e/ → [eɪ])
	2. Sits	2. Substitution (/ɪ/ → [aɪ])

*Note:* This tables depicts the causes and types of errors.

These errors are possibly due to interference from the student's native language phonetic system or insufficient practice with these specific vowel sounds. It occurs because the students substitute the sounds that they do not have in their native language, with other sounds that can associate to them in the place of articulation /ɑ:/, /æ/ (Faturrachman & Ulva, 2021, p. 71). While, the errors in words containing the short vowel sound /ɪ/, might be due to false concept hypothesized, that kind of error occurs because as Tulaktondok (2016), manifested students do not notice the difference between two distinct phonemes /ɪ/ and /i:/, so, students cannot create them and believe that the distinction is insignificant. The errors for 'said' and 'sits' were also significant, but slightly different since the cause might not be the interference of the mother tongue but the overgeneralization of the vowel sounds, they read the vowels as they are commonly pronounced. For instance, /a/ as /eɪ/ in the word 'said,' and /ɪ/ as /aɪ/ in 'sits.' Overgeneralization occurs when language users

use rules they have learned and understand but ignore some exceptions and apply them in a similar context (Liu & Tian, 2021).

**Table 9**

*Students' Pronunciation Errors of Long Vowel Sound /ɑ:/'*

N°	Words	Cambridge Dictionary transcription	Students' pronunciation transcription	f	%
1	Saw	/sɑ:/'	[sɑʊ]	18	75,00
2	Naughty	/'nɑ:ti/'	[nɑʊti]	17	70,83
3	Called	/kɑ:ld/'	[kalled]	14	58,33
4	All	/ɑ:l/'	[al]	12	50,00
Total				61	

*Note:* This table presents the results of pronunciation errors of the long vowel sound /ɑ:/'.

Regarding the long vowels, the table displays that the students only made errors in one long vowel sound /ɑ:/' . The word 'saw' had the highest frequency of errors, with 75.00% of participants mispronouncing it. The word 'naughty' also showed a high frequency of errors, with 17 students (70.83%) mispronouncing it. This was followed by 'called,' incorrectly pronounced by 14 students (58.33%). Lastly, many students (50,00%) still incorrectly pronounced the word 'all.'

In a study by Elumalai et al. (2019), the results were similar since the researcher found that half of the students (50,00%) could not distinguish between long and short vowels. The vowel /ɑ:/' was substituted by /ʊ/, /aʊ/, /a/, /uə/. Min (2022), also found errors in the long vowel sound /ɑ:/' , however, the result of frequency was different, in his study all 30 students (100%) made pronunciation errors. These findings underscore the prevalence and complexity of long vowel pronunciation issues in English language learners.

Further exploring, the table presented below draws into the causes of pronunciation errors made by students, particularly focusing on the long vowel sound /ɑ:/ and its substitution with other vowel sounds. The errors are categorized by their main cause and types.

**Table 10**

*Cause and Types of Errors of Long Vowel Sound*

Cause	Words	Error Type
Mother tongue interference	1. Saw	1. Substitution (/ɑ:/ → [aʊ])
	2. Naughty	2. Substitution (/ɑ:/ → [aʊ])
	3. Called	3. Substitution (/ɑ:/ → [a]) and insertion [e]
	4. All	4. Substitution (/ɑ:/ → [a])

*Note:* This table shows the main cause and types of errors.

There is a noticeable tendency among students to substitute the long vowel /ɑ:/ with the vowels sounds /aʊ/ and /a/. This pattern suggests that students are reading words as they are written without recognizing the correct pronunciation, evidently caused by mother tongue interference.

Students frequently produce errors when encountering new words and attempt to pronounce them without prior knowledge of correct pronunciation. It is common among beginner students, as they tend to rely on the phonetic sounds of their mother tongue when producing English sounds, especially when certain sounds do not exist in their native language. Additionally, students' pronunciation of words might be affected by the written form of some English sounds (Chaira, 2015).

**Table 11**

*Students' Pronunciation Errors of Diphthongs Sounds /ai, ei, aʊ/*

N°	Word	Cambridge Dictionary transcription	Students' pronunciation transcription	f	%
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1	Loudly	/'laʊdli/	[loudli]	17	70,83
2	Tried	/traɪd/	[trɪed]	14	58,33
3	sometimes	/'sʌmtaɪmz/	['sʌmti:mz]	10	41,67
4	Great	/greɪt/	[gri:t]	10	41,67
5	Day	/deɪ/	[daɪ]	9	33,33
Total				60	

*Note:* This table presents the pronunciation errors of diphthong sounds /aɪ/, /eɪ/, /aʊ/.

The table presents students' pronunciation errors in three diphthong sounds: /aɪ/, /eɪ/, and /aʊ/. The most frequent error occurred with the word 'loudly,' where 17 students (70.83%) incorrectly pronounced the diphthong /aʊ/. The word 'painting' was mispronounced by 15 students (62.50%), they made an error in the diphthong sound /eɪ/. Similarly, the word 'tried' was incorrectly pronounced by 15 students (62.50%). The words 'sometimes' and 'great' had the same frequency of pronunciation error, with 10 students (41.67%) each. Finally, the word 'day,' was incorrectly pronounced by 8 students (33.33%). Similarly, Shak et al. (2016), found pronunciation errors in three diphthong sounds /eɪ/, /aɪ/, /əʊ/, yet the frequency in their study was higher with a frequency of 31, representing a percentage of 21,68%. This highlights the persistent challenge students face with diphthongs, suggesting the need for consistent practice, pronunciation drills, targeted exercises to improve pronunciation.

Continuing from these findings, the following table highlights overgeneralization and the mother tongue interference as the two main causes why students mispronounce the diphthong sounds. Words that specifically match to each cause are listed with the corresponding error type, namely involves substituting the target diphthong sounds with other vowel sounds. Thus, this table gives an overview of the difficulties pupils encounter while pronouncing words with diphthong sounds correctly.

**Table 12**

*Causes and Type of Errors of Diphthong Sounds*

Causes	Words	Error Type
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Mother tongue interference	1. Loudly	1. Substitution (/aʊ/→ [oʊ])
	2. Tried	2. Substitution (/aɪ/→ [iɛ])
	3. Sometimes	3. Substitution (/aɪ/→ [i:])
	4. Day	4. Substitution (/eɪ/→ [aɪ])
Overgeneralization	1. Great	1. Substitution (/eɪ/→ [i:])

*Note:* This table presents the causes and types of errors.

In the present study, students substituted the diphthong /aʊ/ with /ou/ in the word ‘loudly’. ‘Painting’ was substituted /eɪ/ with /aɪ/. Some students also substituted /aɪ/ with /ie/ and /i/ in ‘tried’ and ‘sometimes’ respectively. Additionally, in the word ‘day,’ the diphthong /eɪ/ was substituted with /aɪ/. Avellón (2021) points out that Spanish speakers make errors while pronouncing the English /əʊ/ and /aʊ/ because they tend to pronounce them similarly to the Spanish /ou/ and /au/, respectively. Thus, mother tongue interference might be the main cause of students' pronunciation errors. Students tend to pronounce the diphthongs the same as it is written (Deiniatur, 2016).

On the contrary, in the case of the word ‘great’ correctly pronounced as /greɪt/, the cause of the error might be due to overgeneralization because before reading that word, students read the word ‘eat’ correctly as /i:t/, those words have the same vowels in the written form. Jam et al. (2014) say that there is a tendency in students to overgeneralize the pronunciation of words containing ‘ea’ as /i:/. Fauzi (2014) agrees that overgeneralization occurs when the students attempt to generalize a sound.

**Table 13**

*Students' Pronunciation Errors of Plosive Consonant Sounds /k, t/*

Nº	Words	Cambridge Dictionary transcription	Students' pronunciation transcription	f	%
1	Jumped	/dʒʌmpɪt/	[dʒʌmped]	16	66,67
2	Looked	/lʊkt/	[lʊked]	16	66,67
3	Asked	/æskt/	[æsked]	13	54,17

4	Know	/nou/	[knou]	9	37,50
Total				54	

*Note:* Pronunciation errors of plosive consonant sounds /k/ and /t/.

The table presents students' pronunciation errors in the two consonant sounds: velar plosive /k/ and alveolar plosive /t/. For the word 'jumped' and 'looked', both with 16 students (66.67%) mispronounced the consonant /t/, while for 'asked', 13 students (54.17%) made the same error. In contrast, the word 'know' had a lower frequency of errors, with 9 students (37.50%) incorrectly pronouncing it.

In a study by Shak et al. (2016), the researchers found that plosive consonants such as /t/, /d/, and /g/ had a frequency percentage of 11.89%. The results differ from the present study since the overall frequency was lower. Conversely, the results were similar to Yusriati and Hasibuan (2019) who found pronunciation errors in two plosive consonant sounds /t/ and /k/. For example, 'applied' was pronounced as /applaiyed/ instead of /ə'plaid/, and 'denied' as /dinid/ instead of /di'naid/. They also made errors with silent letters, pronouncing 'knowledge' as /knauledz/ and "answer" as /ansuwer/. Additionally, the researchers explained that students often incorrectly pronounced the past tense of verbs due to a lack of understanding of pronunciation rules.

Building on these results, the following tables classifies common pronunciation errors based on their cause. It identifies two main error types: the insertion of sounds and the substitution of one sound to another.

**Table 14**

*Causes and Type of Errors of Plosive Consonant Sounds*

Causes	Words	Error type
Ignorance of rule restriction	1. Jumped	1. Insertion /ed/
	2. Looked	2. Insertion /ed/
	3. Asked	3. Insertion /ed/

Mother tongue interference	1. Know	1. Insertion /k/
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*Note:* This table depicts the main causes and types of pronunciation errors.

In the case of the word ‘know’, the mispronunciation might be caused by mother tongue interference. Khoirunnisa (2022), classifies the pronunciation of silent letters as an error influenced by mother tongue interference since the sound insertion of silent letters occurs because students pronounce the word as it appears in the written form.

**Table 15**

*Students' Pronunciation Errors of Fricative Consonant Sounds /s, f/*

N <sup>o</sup>	Word	Cambridge Dictionary transcription	Students' pronunciation transcription	f	%
1	Small	/sma:l/	[esma:l]	16	66,67
2	School	/sku:l/	[esku:l]	14	58,33
3	Laughed	/læft/	[læged]	14	58,33
Total				44	

*Note:* Pronunciation errors of fricative consonant sounds /s/ and /f/.

The data in the table indicate students' pronunciation errors in the two consonant sounds: alveolar fricative /s/ and labiodental fricative /f/. The highest frequency of errors occurred with the word ‘small,’ with 16 students (66.67%) mispronouncing it. This was followed by the word ‘school’ incorrectly pronounced by 14 students (58.33%). An equal number of students (14) also incorrectly pronounced the word ‘laughed.’

In a study by Elumalai et al. (2021), the results were similar since the researcher found that 50% of students incorrectly pronounced the word ‘small’ by inserting the short vowel sounds /e/ and /ɪ/ before the /s/ sound, just as the students of the current research made. Meanwhile, Masroor et al. (2022), found that students made errors in pronouncing the

consonant sounds /s/ and /f/ with frequencies of 80 (27%) and 59 (20%) respectively. The frequencies were much higher than in the present study.

The table below outlines pronunciation errors linked to mother tongue interference, focusing on vowel and consonant substitutions. Examples include inserting /e/ in ‘small’ and ‘school,’ and substituting /g/ for /f/ in ‘laughed.’

**Table 16**

*Causes and Types of Errors of Fricative Consonant Sounds*

Cause	Words	Error types
Mother tongue interference	1. Small	1. Insertion /e/
	2. School	2. Insertion /e/
	3. Laughed	3. Substitution (/f/ → [g])

*Note:* This table depicts the main cause and types of pronunciation errors.

The influence of the mother tongue on English pronunciation of fricative sounds is evident in the types of errors made by students. For instance, Spanish speakers often insert an /e/ sound before words that begin with an /s/ followed by another consonant, such as ‘sp,’ ‘st,’ or ‘sm.’ This phenomenon occurs because, in Spanish, words rarely begin with consonant clusters without a preceding vowel (Oxfordhouse, 2020).

In the case of the word ‘laughed,’ /f/ sound was substituted with /g/ sound by students. The cause for this error might also be due to L1 interference since students produced ‘g’ as in Spanish. Learners often use their L1 rules to say their utterances in L2. If the rules of both languages are different, L1 produces errors in L2 (Suadiyatno, 2015). These examples highlight how the structural differences between languages can lead to pronunciation errors.

**Table 17***Students' Pronunciation Errors of Approximant Consonants /l, j/*

N°	Words	Cambridge Dictionary transcription	Students' pronunciation transcription	f	%
1	World	/wɜːrld/	[wɜːrd]	20	83,33
2	yesterday	/'jestərdeɪ/	['dʒesterdeɪ]	11	45,83
Total				31	

*Note:* Pronunciation errors of approximant consonant sounds /l/ and /j/.

The last table presents the students' pronunciation errors in two consonant sounds: alveolar approximant /l/ and palatal approximant /j/. The word 'world' had the highest frequency, 20 students out of 24 incorrectly pronounced it, resulting in 83,33%, meanwhile almost half of the students (45,833%) incorrectly pronouncing the word 'yesterday'. The results differ from Masroor et al. (2022) who found the frequency was much higher. The researchers identified pronunciation errors in all consonant sounds. They reported a frequency of 114 errors (49%) for the consonant sound /l/ and 50 errors (38%) for the sound /j/. So, the results differ from the present study.

Expanding upon these findings, classification of pronunciation problems based on interference from the mother tongue is shown in Table 18. It concentrates on two words, 'world' and 'yesterday,' to highlight two types of errors: substitution and deletion. The effect of the first language on English word pronunciation is seen in the table.

**Table 18***Cause and Types of Errors of Approximant Consonant Sounds*

Cause	Words	Error type
Mother tongue interference	1. World	1. Deletion $\emptyset$ (/l/)
	2. Yesterday	2. Substitution (/j/ $\rightarrow$ [dʒ])

*Note:* This table shows the main cause and type of pronunciation errors.

The majority of the students deleted the consonant /l/ when they pronounced the word ‘world’ as /wɜrd/. In Spanish, consonant clusters (the sequence of two or more consonants) are less common than in English (Uribe et al., 2019). In the word ‘yesterday,’ the /j/ sound was substituted with the consonant/dʒ/. It happens since the sound /j/ in a word sometimes becomes stronger and changes into the sound /dʒ/ in certain Latin American countries. (...) Thus, years may change into gears, yellow can change into jello, use can change into juice, and so on (Babkina, 2018). These patterns emphasize the significance of understanding language-specific phonological rules in second-language acquisition. Therefore, students should pay careful attention to these differences and practice them consistently to overcome such errors.

## **9. EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH IMPACT**

The present research has a significant educational impact as it highlights the specific mispronounced sounds that students struggle with, enabling them to focus on these areas to improve their pronunciation. Students can gain a better knowledge of how to appropriately pronounce sounds when reading aloud by comprehending the reasons behind these errors. This study offers valuable insights that can empower students to enhance their pronunciation skills independently, contributing to more effective and clear communication in English. By addressing these errors, future English teachers can be better prepared to model accurate pronunciation and reading aloud as a technique that allows the articulation of sound improvement and therefore pronunciation. This research has important implications for educational practices, as the curriculum can be adjusted to include targeted phonetic exercises and relevant instructional materials to address pronunciation errors. In addition, improving pronunciation improves learners' confidence, as well as their communication skills and academic achievement. By encouraging accurate and clear pronunciation in communication, this makes an important contribution to the educational community.

## 10. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 10.1 Conclusions

- Pronunciation is considered the basis of the English language to convey oral messages clearly to others. However, pronunciation errors might lead to misunderstandings in different situations since mispronounced words can disrupt communication and even change the meaning of the words, it is important to correct pronunciation, it is necessary first to understand their causes through deep analysis to be aware of it and to have a better pronunciation. The goal of correct pronunciation is not to achieve native-like pronunciation but to produce sounds that are clear to listeners. To correct the errors, it is necessary first to understand their causes through deep analysis.
- The most common pronunciation errors identified in the reading-aloud test are four short vowel sounds /e/, /ʌ/, /ɪ/ and /ə/, one long vowel sound /ɑ:/, one diphthong sound /aʊ/, one fricative sound /s/, one plosive sound /t/, and the approximant sound /l/, accounting a total of nine sounds with the highest percentage. On the other hand, five sounds had the lowest percentage of errors, they are the diphthong sound /ei/, the approximant /j/, and the plosive /k/.
- The causes of these pronunciation errors may include mother tongue interference, overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restriction, and false concepts hypothesized. Mother tongue interference occurs when students encounter unfamiliar sounds in English and substitute them with the closest equivalents from their mother tongue, often reading English letters as they would in Spanish. Overgeneralization happens when students apply learned patterns to all words with similar letters, leading to pronunciation errors. Ignorance of rule restriction arises when students do not grasp certain pronunciation rules, resulting in incorrect word pronunciations. Lastly, false concepts hypothesized involve students producing incorrect sounds for words with similar, but distinct sounds. Although the two last causes are less common, they still play a crucial role in pronunciation errors.

## 10.2 Recommendations

- Students should prioritize clear and understandable pronunciation. Consistent practice is crucial for identifying and rectifying pronunciation mistakes. Immersing oneself in authentic language through listening to native speakers, songs, and podcasts is highly beneficial. Additionally, using language learning apps or self-recording and analysis can significantly improve pronunciation accuracy. By cultivating a heightened awareness of pronunciation errors and striving to replicate correct sounds, learners can make substantial progress in achieving correct pronunciation.
- Students should focus on practicing challenging sounds, such as the short vowels (/e/, /ʌ/, /ɪ/, /ə/), long vowel (/ɑ:/), and diphthong (/aʊ/). Additionally, mastering consonants like /s/, /t/, and /l/ is crucial. Utilizing pronunciation guides, online resources, and seeking feedback from teachers or peers can significantly enhance articulation of these sounds. By dedicating consistent practice to these specific sound patterns, learners can noticeably improve their overall pronunciation accuracy and fluency.
- Students should identify the specific reasons behind their pronunciation mistakes. If they notice language interference, they should compare the sounds of English with those of their native language. For overgeneralization, students should learn the rules and exceptions of English pronunciation more thoroughly. To avoid mispronunciations due to ignorance of rules, they should invest time in studying pronunciation guides and practicing consistently. Finally, to correct false concepts hypothesized, it is important for students to seek clarification from teachers or reliable sources whenever they encounter confusing or similar-sounding words.

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