Article

Teaching English Pronunciation Using Imitation Technique: A Collaboration *Praktisi Mengajar* Indonesia-Germany

Sukma Nur Ardini[1*], Pujiarti[2]

[1]English Education Department, Universitas PGRI Semarang, Semarang, Indonesia

[2]South East Asian Studies, Goethe University, Frankfurt, Germany

sukmanurardini@upgris.ac.id[1*], pujiarti.alim@gmail.com[2]

CITATION

ARTICLE HISTORY

COPYRIGHT

Abstract. The discrepancy between university graduates' competencies and workplace demands remains a major issue in Indonesian higher education. To address this problem, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology introduced the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) policy, including the Teaching Practitioner (Praktisi Mengajar) program, which promotes collaboration between higher education institutions and professionals from industry. One area that significantly benefits from practitioner involvement is English pronunciation instruction, a fundamental component of speaking skills and effective communication. This study aims to describe the implementation of teaching English pronunciation using the imitation technique through the www.mmmenglish.com website in collaboration with a teaching practitioner from Germany and to identify

students' awareness of self-reflection on their pronunciation skills. This study *employed a descriptive qualitative approach involving 25 undergraduate students from the English Education Department at Universitas PGRI Semarang. Data were collected through students' audio recordings from pre-tests and post-tests, classroom observations, and reflective evaluation of pronunciation performance. The findings indicate that the imitation technique supported by digital media and practitioner collaboration improves students' pronunciation accuracy, intelligibility, and self-awareness. Furthermore, the Teaching Practitioner program positively supports student-centered learning and aligns with MBKM objectives and Higher Education Key Performance Indicators (IKU). The study suggests that integrating digital pronunciation platforms with practitioner collaboration can enhance the quality and relevance of English pronunciation teaching in higher education.*

Introduction

Higher education plays a crucial role in preparing graduates who are competent, adaptable, and ready to meet the demands of the workplace. However, a recurring issue in Indonesia is the gap between the competencies of university graduates and
the expectations of industry and professional sectors. Employers frequently express dissatisfaction with graduates' readiness for work, particularly in terms of practical skills, communication abilities, and professional attitudes. Responding to this challenge, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia initiated various policies and programs aimed at strengthening the relevance of higher education to real-world needs.

One of the most significant initiatives is the Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka (MBKM) policy, which provides students with the right to study for up to three semesters outside their study program. This policy is designed to enhance both hard skills and soft skills, ensuring that graduates are better prepared to face dynamic professional environments and future leadership roles (Ardini et al., 2021). A core component of MBKM is the Teaching Practitioner

(Praktisi Mengajar) program, which invites professionals from industry, companies, or institutions to collaborate with lecturers in delivering university courses.

The Teaching Practitioner program aims to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and practical expertise by facilitating direct interaction between students and practitioners. Through this collaboration, course content becomes more contextual, applicable, and aligned with workplace realities. Conceptual knowledge provided by lecturers is complemented by practitioners' real-world experience, resulting in a more holistic learning process (Arisyanto & Budiman, 2023). This initiative also supports the achievement of Higher Education Key Performance Indicators (IKU), particularly IKU 4 (teaching practitioners on campus) and IKU 7 (collaborative and participatory classes) (La'biran & Dewi, 2023).

In the context of English language education, collaboration with practitioners is particularly valuable. English proficiency, especially speaking ability, is an essential skill in the globalized workforce. Among the components of speaking, pronunciation plays a central role in ensuring intelligibility, comprehensibility, and effective communication. Poor pronunciation can lead to misunderstandings, reduced confidence, and limited participation in professional communication (Gilakjani, 2016).

Pronunciation refers to the way sounds, words, and sentences are produced in a language. It involves segmental features such as consonants and vowels, as well as suprasegmental features including stress, intonation, and rhythm (Damanik, 2021; Rifqiyah et al., 2021). Effective pronunciation instruction does not aim to make learners sound like native speakers; rather, it focuses on achieving intelligible and comprehensible speech that allows successful communication (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016).

Various techniques can be applied in teaching pronunciation, one of which is the imitation technique. Imitation involves learners listening to a model—often a native or proficient speaker—and reproducing sounds, stress patterns, and

intonation. This technique helps learners train their ears and speech organs simultaneously and has been shown to be effective in improving pronunciation accuracy (Lengkoan & Hampp, 2022; Berdimuradova, 2023).

With the advancement of digital technology, imitation-based pronunciation learning can be facilitated through online platforms. One such platform is www.mmmenglish.com, which provides video-based English lessons focusing on pronunciation, fluency, and spoken English. Previous research by Tugiyatun et al. (2021) demonstrated that the use of imitation techniques via mmmEnglish.com positively influenced students' pronunciation competence and learning motivation.

Despite the growing interest in digital learning and practitioner involvement, studies examining the integration of online pronunciation platforms with the Teaching Practitioner program remain limited. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by exploring the implementation of teaching English pronunciation using the imitation technique through mmmEnglish.com in collaboration with a practitioner from Germany. Additionally, this study investigates students' awareness of self-reflection regarding their pronunciation skills, which is essential for autonomous and lifelong learning.

Methodology

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is suitable for exploring and understanding complex educational phenomena by capturing participants' experiences, perceptions, and learning processes (Creswell, 2014). A qualitative descriptive design was chosen to provide a comprehensive and straightforward description of the implementation of pronunciation teaching using the imitation technique and the Teaching Practitioner program (Lambert & Lambert, 2012).

PARTICIPANTS

The participants of this study were 25 undergraduate students from class 1B of the English Education Department at Universitas Persatuan Guru Republik Indonesia Semarang. These students were enrolled in the English Pronunciation course during the implementation of the Teaching Practitioner program. The course was conducted collaboratively by the researcher and a practitioner, Pujiarti, MA, a graduate of South East Asian Studies from Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS AND MATERIALS

The primary instructional instrument used in this study was the imitation technique facilitated through the www.mmmenglish.com website. The website provides authentic English pronunciation models delivered through video lessons. Additional instruments included:

- Pre-test and post-test pronunciation texts

- Audio recording submissions from students

- Observation notes from classroom sessions

- Reflective evaluation of pronunciation performance

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

Step 1 — Students read aloud the text given by the practitioner

Step 2 — Practitioner made notes the error made by the students

Step 3 — Students treated using imitation technique for 3 times

Step 4 — Students re-read aloud the text

Step 5 — Practitioner re-analyzed notes

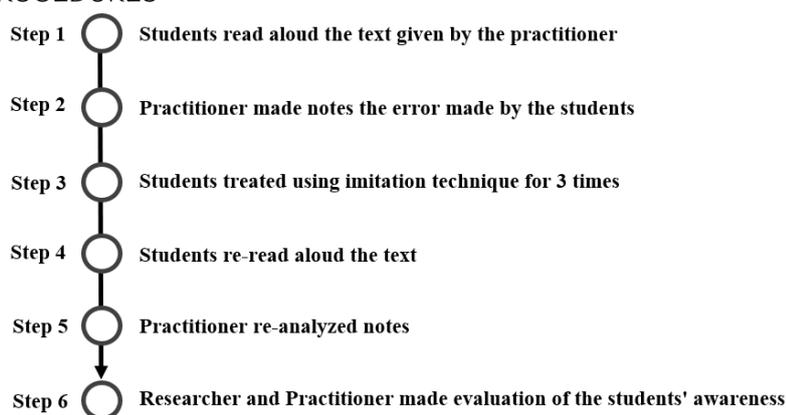Step 6 — Researcher and Practitioner made evaluation of the students' awareness

FIGURE 1: Research steps

The research was conducted through several stages:

1. Planning: Identifying objectives, designing learning activities, and coordinating collaboration between the lecturer and the practitioner.

58

2. Needs Analysis: Observing students' initial pronunciation abilities and identifying common pronunciation problems.

3. Pre-test: Students read and recorded a selected English text to assess their initial pronunciation ability.

4. Treatment: Six instructional sessions using the imitation technique via mmmEnglish.com, guided jointly by the lecturer and practitioner.

5. Post-test: Students recorded the same text to evaluate changes in pronunciation performance.

6. Evaluation and Remedy: Comparing pre-test and post-test results, identifying remaining errors, and providing corrective feedback.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data were analyzed qualitatively by comparing students' pronunciation recordings before and after the treatment. Pronunciation errors were identified, categorized, and interpreted to describe improvement patterns and students' self-awareness. The findings were then described narratively and supported by relevant theoretical perspectives.

Results and Discussion

IMPLEMENTATION OF TEACHING ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION USING THE IMITATION TECHNIQUE

The implementation of the imitation technique in the pronunciation course was conducted over 14 face-to-face meetings, excluding mid-term and final examinations. Each meeting lasted 100 minutes and carried two academic credits. The collaboration between the lecturer and the practitioner enriched the learning process by combining theoretical explanations with authentic pronunciation models and practical insights.

The imitation technique was applied systematically. Students first listened to pronunciation models from mmmEnglish.com, focusing on sounds, stress, and

intonation. They then imitated the models individually and in groups, recorded their practice, and received feedback from both the lecturer and the practitioner. This process helped students become more aware of their pronunciation patterns and areas for improvement.

STUDENTS' AWARENESS OF SELF-REFLECTION ON PRONUNCIATION SKILLS

The evaluation and remedy stages revealed that students developed greater awareness of their pronunciation accuracy. By listening to their own recordings and comparing them with native-like models, students were able to identify specific pronunciation errors. This self-reflection process aligns with the concept of learner autonomy and self-awareness, which are essential for effective language learning.

The findings indicate that most students showed noticeable improvement in pronunciation clarity and confidence. Although some errors persisted, students demonstrated a willingness to revise and practice, suggesting positive attitudes toward pronunciation learning.

The results of this study support previous research indicating that the imitation technique is effective in improving pronunciation skills (Hasriani et al., 2018; Lengkoan & Hampp, 2022). Furthermore, the integration of a teaching practitioner enhanced the authenticity and relevance of learning, consistent with MBKM principles and IKU targets.

IMPROVEMENT IN PRONUNCIATION ACCURACY THROUGH IMITATION TECHNIQUE

Based on the analysis of students' audio recordings, there was a noticeable improvement in pronunciation accuracy after the implementation of the imitation technique. In the pre-test stage, many students demonstrated difficulties in pronouncing specific English sounds, word stress, and connected speech. These errors were identified through color-coded markings in the transcript, which highlighted mispronounced words, incorrect stress placement, and unclear articulation.

After six instructional sessions using the imitation technique, the post-test recordings showed a reduction in the number of pronunciation errors. Students were able to pronounce previously problematic words more accurately, particularly multisyllabic words and words containing unfamiliar consonant clusters. The imitation of native-like pronunciation models from mmmEnglish.com, supported by direct guidance from the practitioner, helped students internalize correct sound production.

The comparison between pre-test and post-test transcripts indicates that students demonstrated clearer articulation, improved rhythm, and better control of stress patterns. Although some errors remained, especially in complex vocabulary and fast-paced sentences, overall pronunciation intelligibility improved significantly.

INCREASED AWARENESS OF SELF-REFLECTION ON PRONUNCIATION SKILLS

Another important finding of this study is the increase in students' awareness of self-reflection regarding their pronunciation skills. During the evaluation and remedial stages, students were required to listen to their own recordings and compare them with the pronunciation models provided on the mmmEnglish.com website.

The use of color differentiation in the transcripts played a crucial role in raising students' awareness. Words marked in different colors helped students visually identify pronunciation mistakes and recognize patterns of recurring errors. This process enabled students to become more conscious of their weaknesses and motivated them to improve through repeated practice.

Students showed an increased ability to self-correct pronunciation errors in the post-test. They became more attentive to vowel length, consonant sounds, and word stress. This finding suggests that the imitation technique not only improves pronunciation accuracy but also encourages learners to engage in reflective learning, which is essential for developing autonomous language learners.

CONTRIBUTION OF THE TECHING PRACTICIONER TO PRONUNCIATION LEARNING

The involvement of a teaching practitioner from Germany contributed positively to the learning process. The practitioner provided authentic pronunciation input and real-life communication insights that complemented the lecturer's theoretical explanations. Students benefited from exposure to different pronunciation models and real-world language use, which increased their confidence in speaking English.

The collaboration between the lecturer and the practitioner also allowed for immediate and contextual feedback. This collaborative teaching approach helped students understand the practical importance of accurate pronunciation in academic and professional communication contexts.

ALIGNMENT WITH STUDENT-CENTERED LEARNING PRINCIPLES

The findings also indicate that the implementation of the imitation technique aligns with student-centered learning principles promoted by the MBKM policy. Students actively participated in listening, imitating, recording, and reflecting on their pronunciation performance. Rather than passively receiving information, students were involved in experiential learning activities that required active engagement and self-evaluation

Conclusion and Recommendation

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that teaching English pronunciation using the imitation technique through www.mmmenglish.com in collaboration with the Teaching Practitioner program is effective in improving students' pronunciation skills and self-awareness. The collaboration between lecturers and practitioners provides meaningful learning experiences that bridge theory and practice, supporting the goals of MBKM and higher education quality improvement.

RECOMMENDATION

Future research may involve larger samples, quantitative analysis, or comparisons with other pronunciation teaching techniques. Educators are encouraged to integrate digital platforms and practitioner collaboration to enhance student-centered and practice-oriented learning

References

Ardini, S. N., Jayanti, I. D., Ulfah, M., & Saputro, B. A. (2021). Implementasi Program Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka di Universitas PGRI Semarang Tahun 2020-2021: Permasalahan Dan Solusi. JP3 *(Jurnal Pendidikan dan Profesi Pendidik), 7*(2).

Arisyanto, P. & Budiman, M. A. (2023). Pelaksanaan Program Praktisi Mengajar Pada Mata Kuliah Seni Tari dan Drama di Prodi PGSD UPGRIS. Prosiding Semnas PGSD 2023, *4*(1) , 73- 82

Berdimuradova, M. D. (2023). THE ROLE OF IMITATION TECHNIQUE IN THE PROCESS OF IMPROVING LANGUAGE LEARNERS'SPEAKING SKILL. *American Journal Of Philological Sciences*, *3*(06), 172-175.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Damanik, H. (2021). The Effect Of Drill and Imitation Techniques in Students' Ability in Using English Intonation Of Grade VIII Students of SMP Negeri 8 Pematangsiantar. *The Explora, 7*(2), 10-25.

Gilakjani, A. P. (2016). English pronunciation instruction: A literature review. *International Journal of Research in English Education, 1*(1), 1-6.

Gilakjani, A. P., & Sabouri, N. B. (2016). How can EFL teachers help EFL learners improve their English pronunciation?. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 7*(5), 967.

Hasriani, Anwar, & Mujahidah. (2018). Implementing Listen and Imitate Technique to Improve Pronunciation Skill. Inspiring: *English Education Journal, 1*(1), 1-12. https://doi.org/10.35905/inspiring.v1i1.828

La'biran, R., & Dewi, R. (2023). Teaching Speaking Model in Student Exchange MBKM Program in Indonesian Universities. AL-ISHLAH: *Jurnal Pendidikan, 15*(1), 575-586.

Lambert, V. A., & Lambert, C. E. (2012). Qualitative descriptive research: An acceptable design. *Pacific Rim international journal of nursing research, 16*(4), 255-256.

Lengkoan, F., & Hampp, P. L. (2022). Imitation technique in learning English at English education department Universitas Negeri Manado. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Indonesia, 10*(1), 48-53.

Rifqiyah, A., Ardini, S. N., & Kusumo, A. B. P. (2021). "English pronunciation application" as a media to improve students' pronunciation: the effectiveness. *Linguistics and Education Journal, 1*(1).

Tugiyatun, M., Ardini, S., & Hawa, F. (2021). Improving English Pronunciation Competence Using Imitation Technique in mmmenglish. com Website. *English Focus: Journal of English Language Education, 5*(01), 62-76.