

## Exploring the Relationship Between Pronunciation Awareness and Oral Communication Enhancement Among Urdu EFL Learner

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### Abstract

This study examined the oral communication skills of 40 Urdu EFL learners enrolled in a 16-week listening and speaking program, aiming to explore the correlation between students' improvement in pronunciation and their level of pronunciation awareness, as evaluated through their perceptions of the learning process. The course placed significant emphasis on both segmental and supra-segmental elements, incorporating key phonological features such as connected speech processes, intonation patterns, rhythm, stress, and overall fluency development. Throughout the course duration, students were required to compose weekly reflective articles to gauge their levels of pronunciation awareness. Additionally, they engaged in structured read-aloud exercises and picture description tasks at both the outset and conclusion of the program to assess their pronunciation progress. The comprehensive speech analysis involved seven distinct metrics, focusing on fluency, pronunciation accuracy, and mastery of both segmental and supra-segmental features. The results indicated significant improvements in the learners' ability to accurately produce segmental sounds, demonstrate an enhanced understanding of enchainment phenomena, and exhibit notable advancements in fluency, rhythm, and certain aspects of intonation. Furthermore, the study identified multiple factors that were found to be closely associated with learners' pronunciation awareness and progress in speech development. The findings of this research provide essential insights into second language (L2) pronunciation development and highlight the interrelationship between targeted instructional strategies and learners' awareness of their own phonological improvement. These findings underscore the importance of integrating structured pronunciation awareness activities into EFL programs to maximize students' oral proficiency and communication effectiveness.

**Keywords:** Pronunciation Awareness, Oral Communication, EFL Learners

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Education serves as a cornerstone for socioeconomic advancement, with language playing a pivotal role in determining the extent of development achieved. In Pakistan, the teaching of English as a foreign language has garnered significant attention, reflecting its perceived importance in the country's educational landscape. Globally, research on the teaching of pronunciation in second language (L2) settings has predominantly focused on two key areas: evaluating the efficacy of various instructional approaches and highlighting the significance of language awareness in pronunciation acquisition. An exemplary study in the former domain is the comparative method research conducted by Derwing, Munro, and Wiebe (1998). This study and others like it contribute valuable insights into the effectiveness of different pedagogical methods, thus informing the development of more informed and impactful language teaching practices worldwide. In their research, Derwing, Munro, and Wiebe (1998) delved into the effectiveness of instructional methods that targeted supra-segmental aspects and common speaking patterns for a cohort of English as a second language (L2) students. The instruction focused on phenomena related to fluency, intonation, rhythm, and word stress. This approach was compared to a more traditional form of training that concentrated on individual segments or sounds. Following a 12-week course duration, the results indicated that while both groups demonstrated improvement in constructing individual sentences, it was only the group exposed to supra-segmental instruction that exhibited notable advancement in extemporaneous speaking abilities. This underscores the importance

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of incorporating instruction on supra-segmental features in language teaching curricula to facilitate more natural and fluent oral communication skills among learners. An example of research centering on language awareness in pronunciation can be found in the work of Couper (2011), who demonstrated that pairing intensive listening practice with an approach that allows instructors and learners to collaboratively develop a mutually agreed-upon set of meta-linguistic descriptors for discussing pronunciation yielded superior results compared to other approaches, in both perception and production. These findings align with the study conducted by Derwing et al. (1998), which similarly highlighted the effectiveness of overt instruction in pronunciation. Specifically, both studies underscored the value of explicitly teaching learners about how second language (L2) pronunciation functions, such as through the use of metalanguage, as suggested by Couper (2011). This emphasis on explicit instruction and linguistic awareness has been shown to enhance learners' pronunciation skills and overall language proficiency.

Research on the impacts of second language (L2) pronunciation teaching has seen a notable surge in publications from 1990 to 2013. Despite strides made in acknowledging pronunciation as a crucial aspect of language learning, no longer confined to the shadows as described by Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (1996), numerous questions persist, particularly for learners of English as a foreign language (EFL). Among these inquiries are two significant ones: first, the extent to which learners' progress in L2 pronunciation is directly linked to specific pronunciation instruction methods, and secondly, how learners' awareness of pronunciation patterns in general influences their pronunciation proficiency. These questions underscore the ongoing importance of exploring the relationship between pronunciation instruction, learner awareness, and overall language acquisition, shedding light on avenues for more effective language teaching strategies. In the current study, the concept of L2 pronunciation extends beyond merely assessing students' proficiency in producing individual speech sounds, such as vowels and consonants. It also encompasses supra-segmental features, including linking, stress patterns, rhythm, and intonation. Therefore, the notion of pronunciation comprehension, elaborated upon below, delves into learners' own perceptions of their pronunciation learning process and how mastery of pronunciation patterns enables them to effectively convey intended meanings in the L2. This comprehensive understanding underscores the importance of not only mastering individual sounds but also grasping the broader aspects of pronunciation that contribute to overall communicative competence in the target language.

Numerous textbooks exist for teaching English as a second language (L2) phonology and pronunciation. However, there is a notable dearth of resources addressing the specific development of English pronunciation among learners. Consequently, both teachers and students often rely on intuition, available course materials, and prior knowledge to guide their teaching and learning practices in this domain. Furthermore, previous research on English language acquisition has primarily focused on areas such as phonological awareness in young learners or the correlation between academic activities and learners' comprehension of grammatical and lexical structures, as evidenced by studies like Erlam (2003). This gap highlights the need for more comprehensive exploration and resources dedicated to the nuanced aspects of English pronunciation instruction, ensuring that both educators and learners have access to effective strategies and support for enhancing pronunciation proficiency. Consequently, the present study undertook an examination of the pronunciation development among young learners of English at the commencement and culmination of a listening and speaking course. The primary focus was to elucidate the learners' perceptions regarding English pronunciation. Overall, the principal objective was to contribute to the understanding of how the enhancement of pronunciation proficiency among Pakistani English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners is intertwined with both pronunciation instruction methodologies and the learners' own awareness of pronunciation nuances. By delving into these aspects, the study aimed to shed light on effective strategies for facilitating pronunciation improvement in EFL contexts, thereby enriching the pedagogical approaches employed in language education.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the realm of teaching pronunciation in second language (L2) English, there exists a notable gap in our understanding of L2 English learners' progression in pronunciation within instructional settings, particularly in the context of Pakistan. Recent studies on L2 English pronunciation have predominantly focused on evaluating learner proficiency through one-time assessments or examining pronunciation in diverse learning contexts. For instance, Birdsong's (2003) research involved assessing the speech of 22 post-adolescent learners, revealing that only two exhibited pronunciation similar to native French speakers' at both segmental and supra-segmental levels. While these findings offer valuable insights, they primarily provide a snapshot of learner proficiency at a single point in time and offer limited insights into the longitudinal development of pronunciation skills. This underscores the need for more longitudinal studies that track learners' pronunciation improvement over time, especially in diverse instructional contexts such as those found in Pakistan. Such research can offer invaluable insights into effective pedagogical approaches and contribute to enhancing pronunciation instruction in L2 English settings.

The limited longitudinal studies on the acquisition of French pronunciation have primarily been conducted within university settings. For instance, Harnois-Delpiano, Cavalla, and Chevrot (2012) conducted a study tracking the use of liaison (e.g., in *mes amis* [my friends], spoken as [me-za- mi]) over the course of one year among second-year learners enrolled in a weekly three-hour French language and literature course at a Korean university. The findings revealed significant increases in the learners' production of both obligatory and optional liaison in word pairs throughout the 12-month period. However, it's important to note that the specifics of the instructional methods employed in this foreign language context were not sufficiently described. Consequently, attributing the observed learning gains solely to the quality or quantity of instruction presents a challenge. This highlights the need for more detailed descriptions of instructional approaches in future research to better understand the factors influencing pronunciation acquisition in L2 settings.

Research conducted at a French-English bilingual university in Canada by Champagne- Muzar, Schneiderman, and Bourdages (1993) delved into the effects of training specifically aimed at improving the pronunciation skills of French learners. The participants, who were enrolled in a beginner-level French as a second language (L2) course, engaged in one hour of listening and pronunciation exercises weekly for a duration of 12 weeks, delivered via cassette tapes in a language lab setting. These exercises were meticulously designed to target various aspects of French pronunciation, including intonation, rhythm, and individual speech segments. Throughout the instructional period, learners were actively engaged in tasks such as discriminating between different sounds, identifying rhythmic groups, and recognizing intonation patterns. Additionally, they practiced repeating or modifying model utterances as part of the instructional regimen. This structured approach to pronunciation training aimed to enhance learners' proficiency in French pronunciation by providing targeted practice and feedback in a controlled learning environment. Both before and after the training period, the learners underwent testing using an elicited imitation task, which involved repeating sentences containing different intonation contours and rhythmic patterns. Subsequently, recordings of these utterances were evaluated by native French speakers using four 5-point scales, assessing segments, intonation, rhythm, and overall impression. Interestingly, the pretest ratings did not reveal any significant differences between the scores of the trained learners and those of the comparison group. This comparison group engaged in listening comprehension exercises but did not receive specific pronunciation practice. This suggests that, initially, there were no discernible discrepancies in pronunciation proficiency between the two groups prior to the training intervention. In contrast, the posttest ratings of the trained learners exhibited significant improvements, demonstrating a more native-like pronunciation across all four scales compared to their pretest ratings. Conversely, for the comparison group, only segment ratings showed

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a significant improvement from the pretest to the posttest. This suggests that the focused pronunciation training received by the learners led to substantial enhancements in their overall pronunciation proficiency, including segments, intonation, rhythm, and global impression, highlighting the efficacy of targeted pronunciation instruction in facilitating more native-like pronunciation skills among L2 learners of French.

In another university study conducted by Knoerr (2000), French learners participated in a comprehensive semester-long pronunciation course. Throughout the course, learners utilized a computer program that presented intonation model utterances alongside recordings of their own speech for a minimum of 15 minutes per week, for a duration of up to six weeks. The study's findings unveiled significant improvements in performance across almost all of the ten types of intonation practice assessed. This underscores the effectiveness of incorporating technology-driven tools and regular practice sessions into pronunciation instruction, yielding tangible enhancements in learners' intonation skills over a relatively short timeframe. Such results highlight the potential of innovative instructional approaches to facilitate meaningful progress in pronunciation proficiency among L2 learners of French. One approach to interpret the beneficial effects of explicit instruction on pronunciation development, particularly in light of findings from Couper's (2011) research, is to speculate about a potential connection between explicit instruction and heightened learner awareness. While language awareness encompasses various dimensions, certain facets of this concept pertain to understanding "the mechanics of language in conveying meaning" (Hawkins, 1984) and acquiring insights into "the processes involved in language acquisition" (Tulasiewicz, 2000). Indeed, both facets of language awareness align closely with Couper's perspective on pronunciation training as a form of meaningful practice (Achard & Niemeier, 2004; Fraser, 2010). Research investigating the interplay between instruction and learner awareness of spoken language has predominantly underscored the efficacy of a meta-cognitive approach to second language (L2) listening (e.g., Vandergrift & Goh, 2012). This approach encourages learners to reflect on and monitor their comprehension processes, thereby fostering a deeper understanding of the linguistic features involved in spoken communication. By cultivating meta-cognitive awareness, learners can develop more effective strategies for processing and interpreting oral input, ultimately contributing to enhanced pronunciation skills and overall language proficiency. This approach involves cultivating learners' awareness of listening processes by directing their attention to the use of meta-cognitive strategies. These strategies encompass activities such as anticipating the content of listening passages, evaluating comprehension during listening tasks, and assessing success in understanding afterward. Research in this area consistently demonstrates the positive impacts of enhancing meta-cognitive awareness in L2 listening (Graham & Macaro, 2008; Vandergrift & Tafaghodtari, 2010).

By actively engaging learners in meta-cognitive practices, instructors can empower them to become more proactive and strategic listeners, leading to improved comprehension and ultimately, enhanced pronunciation skills in the target language.

Indeed, research exploring the connections between instruction and awareness in L2 pronunciation has been relatively sparse. Exceptions include studies such as those conducted by Ramírez Verdugo (2006), which examined Spanish learners' awareness of English intonation patterns following instruction; Moore (1997), who focused on Japanese learners' pronunciation awareness within a speaking course; and Kennedy and Trofimovich (2010), who investigated learners' awareness of English pronunciation in a university-level ESL speaking course. These studies offer valuable insights into the role of instruction in fostering learners' awareness of pronunciation features and highlight the need for further research in this area to better understand the instructional strategies that effectively promote pronunciation awareness and proficiency in L2 learners.

Ramirez Verdugo (2006) implemented a multidimensional approach incorporating meta-linguistic information, oral models, and phonetics software with visual display to enhance learners' awareness of

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English intonation. Students who received this treatment demonstrated superior post-test performance compared to the control group, exhibiting a broader range of intonation contours and receiving higher ratings for spontaneous speech. Additionally, in post-instruction questionnaires administered anonymously, the treatment group reported an increased awareness of English intonation. These findings suggest that explicit instruction in pronunciation not only correlates with measurable improvements in pronunciation skills but also leads to heightened awareness of pronunciation patterns in L2 learners. However, despite these advancements, the existing studies on pronunciation have offered limited evidence regarding the connections between instruction and improvements in learners' pronunciation. Given these research objectives, there is a clear need to conduct studies on Urdu English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners that provide detailed descriptions of the instruction methods employed and include significance testing for pretest and posttest measurements, as there is currently a gap in understanding Urdu EFL learners' awareness of pronunciation.

### 3. METHOD PARTICIPANTS

The study involved 40 participants, all of whom were female Urdu English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. These participants were enrolled in a graduate-level listening and speaking course at the University of Lahore Pakpattan campus in Pakistan. Notably, none of the learners had received elementary or secondary schooling in English. The participants, aged between 20 and 34 years, spoke Urdu as their native language. This demographic profile reflects a homogeneous group of learners, providing a focused context for investigating the relationship between instruction, awareness, and improvement in pronunciation among Urdu EFL learners.

#### 3.1. INSTRUCTION

The 16-week listening and speaking course consisted of 10 hours of instruction per week, with approximately 30 minutes dedicated to practice sessions in a multimedia lab. The primary objective of the course was to enhance learners' proficiency in producing and comprehending the English language as a second language (L2). The instructors, possessing M.Phil degrees in applied linguistics and boasting 10 years of experience in teaching L2 English, were non-native speakers of English. The course curriculum adopted an integrated form-focused instruction approach, addressing both segmental and supra-segmental aspects of spoken English. While attention was given to various components, the primary emphasis was placed on connected speech processes, with a secondary focus on enhancing speech fluency. This instructional approach aimed to provide learners with a comprehensive understanding of English pronunciation while fostering the development of fluid and natural oral communication skills. During the instruction of connected speech processes, the primary emphasis was on enhancing learners' comprehension of spoken language. However, students were also actively engaged in producing enchainment and obligatory relationships through practice tasks. In terms of fluency, the focus was on fostering fluent delivery of speech. This objective was achieved by working on phrasal stress and intonation patterns. Practice activities encompassed both controlled output recorded in the lab and guided practice sessions, such as expressive readings and rehearsals for scenes from plays. By integrating these approaches, learners were provided with opportunities to not only understand but also effectively produce connected speech, while simultaneously honing their fluency in spoken English. Students were actively engaged in collaborative activities, working in small groups to annotate their texts, engage in vocal practice, and provide assistance to one another. Regular oral feedback on both comprehension and production exercises was provided by the researchers, both in the classroom and during lab sessions. Additionally, individualized written feedback in the form of annotated error analysis was provided for recorded productions. Following a classic academic sequence, each topic, such as schwa deletion, was covered within a single class meeting and then revisited and reinforced during the subsequent session. This approach facilitated a structured and systematic approach to instruction, allowing for comprehensive coverage of pronunciation concepts while providing ample

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opportunities for practice, feedback, and reinforcement. Each meeting typically commenced with an exploratory activity aimed at engaging learners and stimulating interest in the topic at hand. This was followed by the researchers' detailed explanation of the specific pronunciation process being covered, which was reinforced through listening exercises such as dictation of a cloze dialogue. Subsequently, learners practiced the targeted aspect or process through communicative activities such as role-plays and fluency tasks. In the multimedia lab, students utilized provided materials, which included short sentences focusing on the targeted speech aspects, to undertake dictation or production tasks as instructed by the researchers. This structured approach ensured that learners received both theoretical explanations and practical opportunities to apply their understanding of pronunciation concepts in various communicative contexts, thereby facilitating comprehensive learning and skill development.

## **3.2.TASKS**

Speech data from the students were gathered through read-aloud activities and picture description tasks. Each learner participated in these activities three times: twice as a pre-test in Week 2 and 3, and once as a post-test in Week 16. The data collection process remained consistent across all sessions, with learners using the same equipment, receiving identical instructions, and following the same procedures. Speech recordings were conducted in a multimedia lab environment using the CAN-8 Virtual Lab interactive software, ensuring standardized conditions for data collection and analysis. This methodological consistency enabled researchers to accurately track learners' progress in pronunciation proficiency over the duration of the course. During testing sessions, the read-aloud activity was consistently administered before the picture description task, following a sequence of perception tests. In addition to assessing pronunciation proficiency through these activities, pronunciation awareness data were collected using a dialogue journal task. Learners were instructed to maintain journal entries from Weeks 4 to 16 of the course, providing insights into their reflections on pronunciation and language learning experiences. Furthermore, learners' exposure to English outside of the classroom was monitored through language logs maintained throughout the term. These comprehensive data collection methods allowed researchers to gather insights into learners' pronunciation awareness, as well as their engagement with English language learning beyond the confines of the classroom environment.

## **3.3.READ-ALOUD ACTIVITY**

The activity involved a 200-word narrative depicting an interaction between two women at a ticket line, with one attempting to cut into the line to purchase a ticket. The narrative comprised nine turns of dialogue spanning eleven sentences, with each dialogue exchange preceded and followed by a three-sentence description. The sentences within the narrative ranged from 15 to 20 words in length, with an average sentence length of 11 words. Notably, 90% of the vocabulary used in the narrative belonged to the first 1,000 most frequently used words in English, as outlined by Cobb (2000). This suggests that the text presented minimal lexical challenges for the learners and was well-suited for illustrating the speech phenomena under investigation in the study. During the read-aloud activity, learners were provided with a copy of the text and given a 4-minute period to review the text and prepare for the reading. Subsequently, the recording process was initiated on each learner's personal computer from the instructor's workstation, allowing for convenient supervision. Each learner had 180 seconds to record their reading of the text. This structured approach ensured that learners had sufficient time to familiarize themselves with the material and prepare for the recording, facilitating a more accurate assessment of their pronunciation proficiency.

## **3.4.ORAL PICTURE DESCRIPTION ACTIVITY**

The picture description activity comprised an eight-panel image sequence depicting a crowded street corner where two individuals inadvertently exchange identical suitcases while maneuvering through the crowd. However, it is only later that they realize the mix-up. This activity, as described by Derwing, Munro, and Thomson (2008), provided learners with a visual prompt to generate spoken descriptions and narratives, offering a dynamic and engaging way to practice and assess their language skills. In the

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picture description activity titled "Suitcase Mix-Up," learners were given a copy of the picture story and allotted 4 minutes to review the images and prepare for oral description. Note-taking during this period was prohibited to encourage spontaneous speech production. Subsequently, the recording screen was initiated on each learner's computer, allowing them five minutes to verbally describe the events depicted in the picture story. This structured approach provided learners with an opportunity to practice their speaking skills while also assessing their ability to generate coherent and descriptive narratives based on visual stimuli.

## **3.5.JOURNAL ENTRY ACTIVITY**

For this activity, each learner was paired with a partner during Week 3 of the instruction period. Following the pairing, both partners began exchanging written journal entries. Learners were instructed to reflect on their learning experiences by drawing connections between their classroom learning and their use of English outside the classroom. Through these written exchanges, learners had the opportunity to articulate their thoughts, observations, and insights regarding their language learning journey and the application of English in real-life contexts. This collaborative reflection process fostered a deeper understanding of language acquisition and encouraged learners to actively engage with English both inside and outside the classroom setting. The learners, writing in English, engaged in weekly exchanges of journal entries and provided responses to their partners' entries. On average, each learner completed approximately nine entries per term, with the number of entries ranging from 3 to 12. The average length of each entry was 200 words. Notably, half of the 40 learners produced more than 10 journal entries throughout the term. It's important to highlight that journal entries were not reviewed or assessed by researchers or instructors until after the course grades were finalized. This approach allowed learners the freedom to express themselves openly and reflectively without the pressure of external evaluation, fostering a more authentic and self-directed learning experience.

## **3.6.LANGUAGE LOG ACTIVITY**

Throughout the course, learners maintained weekly language logs to self-report their use of English. These logs included estimates of the time spent using English in various domains both inside and outside of the classroom. Learners recorded their English usage during social interactions, leisure activities, and work-related tasks, among other contexts. By documenting their English usage patterns on a weekly basis, learners gained insight into their language usage habits and were able to track their progress in using English across different domains. This self-monitoring process facilitated greater awareness of their language learning journey and provided valuable feedback for refining their language learning strategies. To assess the extent of English usage outside of class, the total number of hours spent using the language across all reported domains was collected for each student. This total was then divided by the number of language use logs completed by each student during the term, which ranged from 4 to 12 logs, with an average of 10 logs over the 12-week period. Learners' reports indicated that their weekly out-of-class use of English averaged at 18.2 hours, with individual usage ranging from 3.8 to 80.6 hours throughout the term. This data provides valuable insights into the extent and variability of learners' engagement with the English language beyond the confines of the classroom.

## **3.7.SPEECH MEASURES**

All pretest and posttest recordings underwent transcription, and trained research assistants verified the accuracy of the transcripts. Both the audio recordings and transcripts of the tasks were then analyzed. The audio recordings were subjected to analysis for seven measures, which covered segmental and supra-segmental phonology domains, as well as fluency. This comprehensive analysis allowed for a thorough examination of learners' pronunciation proficiency and fluency levels before and after the instructional intervention. By assessing various aspects of pronunciation, researchers gained insights into the effectiveness of the instructional approach and the learners' progress over time. This comprehensive analysis allowed for a thorough examination of learners' pronunciation proficiency and fluency levels before and after the course, providing valuable insights into the effectiveness of the

instructional approach employed and the learners' progress over time.

### **3.8.SEGMENTAL ERRORS**

The analysis of segmental accuracy involved identifying individual segmental additions, deletions, or substitutions in the learners' speech. For example, if the word "go" (/gəʊ/) was pronounced as "gɒ", it would be considered a substitution error. Additionally, spelling-based mistakes were also noted, such as pronouncing "bail" (the temporary release of an accused person) as "bale" (a large wrapped or bound bundle of paper, hay, or cotton). Only one segmental error per word was checked and confirmed, even if multiple errors were present, to provide better control over instances of variability in learners' error counts. This approach allowed for a more standardized accuracy measure, facilitating the assessment of learners' progress in segmental pronunciation proficiency over time. In the final calculation, conducted separately for each learner in each task, the proportion of total segmental errors over the total number of words produced was determined. This ratio provided a measure of segmental accuracy, allowing for the assessment of pronunciation proficiency relative to the overall speech output. Additionally, among other strategies observed, less preferred methods included singing a song, memorization, and connecting words together rather than pronouncing them individually. These alternative strategies, while potentially useful in certain contexts, were less conducive to accurate pronunciation practice and may have resulted in increased error rates in learners' speech production. Therefore, the emphasis was placed on individual word pronunciation to ensure greater precision and clarity in spoken English. Indeed, learners often employ diverse learning strategies, with some potentially benefiting more from methods such as singing songs or memorization compared to others. However, it's crucial for teachers to emphasize the importance of teaching connected speech to learners. In natural speech, native speakers typically do not pronounce words individually; instead, they connect words and pronounce phrases. By highlighting this aspect of spoken language, instructors can help learners develop a more authentic and fluent speaking style that aligns with native speaker norms. Through targeted instruction and practice activities focused on connected speech, learners can enhance their ability to comprehend and produce English in real-world communication settings effectively. This approach ensures that learners not only acquire accurate pronunciation but also develop the ability to communicate naturally and fluently in English.

## **4. CONCLUSIONS**

In Urdu English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, teaching pronunciation is often overlooked, and teachers may rely on their own intuitions to determine which aspects of pronunciation to emphasize. However, the findings of this study provide valuable insights into the specific pronunciation needs and strategies of Urdu EFL learners. Armed with this knowledge, teachers can make more informed decisions about how to effectively teach pronunciation to their students. By understanding the challenges and areas of improvement identified in this study, teachers can tailor their instruction to address the specific needs of Urdu EFL learners. This may involve incorporating targeted exercises and activities focused on segmental and supra-segmental aspects of pronunciation, as well as fluency enhancement techniques. Additionally, teachers can provide guidance on effective pronunciation learning strategies, such as the importance of practicing connected speech and the use of authentic materials for language practice. The results of this study serve as a valuable resource for teachers in Urdu EFL contexts, empowering them to deliver more effective and targeted pronunciation instruction that meets the needs of their learners. By leveraging these insights, teachers can help their students develop greater confidence and proficiency in spoken English. It is crucial for teachers to prioritize the teaching of supra-segmental features of pronunciation, as many learners perceive these aspects to be more important than segmentals. Supra-segmental features such as intonation, stress, and rhythm play a significant role in conveying meaning and understanding in spoken English. By focusing on these aspects, teachers can help learners develop greater fluency and naturalness in their speech. Furthermore,

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teachers should design pronunciation tasks and activities that not only target specific pronunciation features but also help students improve their pronunciation learning strategies. By providing opportunities for practice, feedback, and reflection, teachers can empower students to take ownership of their pronunciation development and become more autonomous learners. Additionally, incorporating authentic materials and real-life communication scenarios into pronunciation activities can help students apply their pronunciation skills in meaningful contexts. Ultimately, the goal of pronunciation instruction should be to equip students with the necessary skills and strategies to communicate successfully in English. By giving attention to supra-segmental features and fostering learner autonomy through targeted tasks and activities, teachers can support students in achieving greater proficiency and confidence in spoken English.

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