

2021

## Phonology and fluency: How pronunciation is (and is not) taught in United States ESL classrooms

Nik Hucke  
*University of Northern Iowa*

*Let us know how access to this document benefits you*

Copyright ©2021 Nik Hucke

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/hpt>

---

### Recommended Citation

Hucke, Nik, "Phonology and fluency: How pronunciation is (and is not) taught in United States ESL classrooms" (2021). *Honors Program Theses*. 470.  
<https://scholarworks.uni.edu/hpt/470>

This Open Access Honors Program Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Work at UNI ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Program Theses by an authorized administrator of UNI ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [scholarworks@uni.edu](mailto:scholarworks@uni.edu).

PHONOLOGY AND FLUENCY:  
HOW PRONUNCIATION IS (AND IS NOT) TAUGHT  
IN UNITED STATES ESL CLASSROOMS

A Thesis Submitted  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Designation of  
University Honors

Nik Huckle  
University of Northern Iowa  
April 2021

This Study by: Nik Hucke

Entitled: Phonology and fluency: How pronunciation is (and is not) taught in United States ESL classrooms

has been approved as meeting the thesis or project requirement for the Designation University Honors

---

Date Aliza Fones, Honors Thesis Advisor, Languages & Literature

---

Date Dr. Jessica Moon, Director, University Honors Program

## **Purpose**

This thesis examines how explicit pronunciation instruction affects the ability to learn, understand, and produce English in non-native speakers, and how their teachers approach that instruction. The goal is to create a general overview of pronunciation teaching practices currently in use in K-12 English as a second language (ESL) classrooms in the United States and to gauge the general attitudes and approaches towards pronunciation instruction of ESL teachers. This will help create a picture of the current state of ESL pronunciation instruction in the United States, investigate the best ways to teach pronunciation as a part of a general ESL class, and add more data to the disproportionately small pool of research on pronunciation instruction in the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) field.

## **Literature Review**

The topic of pronunciation instruction in the TESOL field, as several authors have noted before, is surprisingly under-researched compared to other topics like grammar, writing, or general oral production (e.g., Arcaya, 2020; Baker & Murphy, 2011). What data does exist about the teaching of pronunciation in ESL classrooms is mostly limited to self-reported statistics, rather than actual classroom observation (Baker & Murphy, 2011). Given that pronunciation tends to be overlooked and undervalued as part of a general ESL curriculum, in the United States especially, there is little incentive for researchers to spend much time exploring it. However, what research there is tells us that pronunciation instruction is effective for raising students' levels of intelligibility and comprehensibility; what remains to be explored, then, is what techniques are most effective and how they should be implemented in the general-skills ESL classroom.

## **Pronunciation Instruction Through the Years**

Historically, pronunciation has been held to various levels of importance in the United States second-language classroom. The grammar-translation method of the early 20th century was focused mostly on reading, writing, and grammar, so very little attention was paid to pronunciation if it was addressed at all (Gilakjani, 2017). As national ideologies shifted towards the audiolingual method, pronunciation instruction became one of the most important aspects of language learning, with immense focus on listen-and-repeat drills and phonetic transcriptions (Gilakjani, 2017). The assumption that language learning was simply acquiring a set of rehearsed behaviors contributed to repetition of specific decontextualized words or phrases until they were being pronounced exactly correctly; in doing so, however, communicative meaning fell by the wayside.

When some teachers began to favor the naturalist approach around the 1970s, pronunciation instruction was once again brushed aside. The ideological pendulum had swung the other way, and repetitive drills to rehearse pronunciation epitomized what naturalists were unsatisfied with about audiolingualism. Instructors began wondering if teaching pronunciation was worth it, since the methods of instruction were very time-consuming with little return, and some linguists began to question if pronunciation was even a skill that could be taught traditionally (Morley, 1991). Teachers might allow their students time to "internalize the target sound system" before oral production was expected, but pronunciation was not explicitly addressed and in some cases removed altogether (Gilakjani, 2017, section III: Language Teaching Methods, para. 5). In the current moment of ESL instruction in the United States, pronunciation instruction is making a slow comeback. With communicative language teaching as the dominant ideology, pronunciation is often addressed only if it interferes with a student's ability to be understood; however, more and more teachers are starting to realize the benefits of a

little pronunciation instruction embedded in their regular teaching (Morley, 1991). While it may not be covered exhaustively, including a proactive focus on the most important aspects of pronunciation creates an awareness of what students should focus on to make themselves understood.

Most linguists today recognize pronunciation as being broken down into three main aspects: intelligibility, comprehensibility, and accent. Intelligibility refers to whether an interlocutor can understand what is being said; comprehensibility describes how much effort is required on the interlocutor's part to understand the speaker; and accent refers to how much distance there is between the phonologies used by the speaker and interlocutor (Derwing et al., 2012). Of these, intelligibility is the most important and accent the least important for communicative purposes; the goal of pronunciation instruction, therefore, should be to help students to produce intelligible speech that can be easily understood, not to eliminate accents altogether (Derwing et al., 2012; Gilakjani, 2017; Gorba, 2019). Total accent-free speech is an unrealistic and possibly even unattainable goal for many learners, depending on a range of factors including age, first language, amount of input received, and metalinguistic awareness. However, "comfortable intelligibility is a realistic goal for L2 learners" (Gorba, 2019, para. 13), and it is a goal that each individual should set for themselves. Rather than striving to sound identical to native English speakers, learners should focus their efforts on being clear and intelligible enough to facilitate understanding and smooth communication.

### **Attitudes Towards Pronunciation Instruction**

Current attitudes toward pronunciation instruction differ greatly between students and teachers. In English-speaking nations, many students, especially adult English language learners (ELLs) or those learning English for specific purposes such as jobs or academic programs, have

expressed a strong desire for more pronunciation instruction than what they currently receive (Derwing et al., 2012). Accents are often associated with stigmas such as lower intelligence, incompetence in a job, and a general "otherness" that is undesirable; many ELLs wish to lose their accents for reasons of social acceptance and prestige in the realms of work, education, and community (Derwing et al., 2012; Foote et al., 2011; Morley, 1991). This is a large part of the reason native English-speaking teachers are strongly valued and sought after in non-English-speaking nations, where English is taught as a foreign language; a native speaker is seen as "the most reliable English language source" and the most desirable instructor simply for their perceived lack of accent (Arcaya, 2020, NES and NNES Teachers and Evaluation section, para. 1). For many ELLs, whether or not they are living in an English-speaking nation, native-like pronunciation is a high priority that should be more focused on in classes.

Many ESL instructors, particularly in English-speaking nations, have a different outlook. Several studies, surveys, and reviews have come up with the same general attitude: teachers agree that pronunciation instruction should be included in their curricula, but they do not feel confident or prepared enough to teach it well (Arcaya, 2020; Derwing et al., 2012; Gorba, 2019). Surveys in Canada (Foote et al., 2011), the United Kingdom (Burgess & Spencer, 2000), and Australia (Burns, 2006; MacDonald, 2002) have all reported on ESL teachers, especially of pronunciation-specific or adult English classes, who feel they have not received enough training in teaching pronunciation--and end up not addressing it at all as a result. While the general attitude towards teaching pronunciation is positive, most instructors have in common that they need more training (Foote et al., 2011). With little prior education in teaching pronunciation, these teachers do not have the knowledge necessary to instruct their students in an effective and meaningful way.

Much of the lack of pronunciation instruction can also be attributed to a lack of resources, for both teachers and students. Many surveys report a lack of classroom materials as well as opportunities for professional development in the area of pronunciation instruction (Baker & Murphy, 2011; Derwing & Munro, 2005). Teachers reported highly varying prior education for teaching pronunciation; college programs ranged from no pronunciation instruction at all, to general TESOL courses that addressed pronunciation, to general phonetics and phonology courses, to L2-specific phonology courses (Foote et al., 2011). In addition to more thorough teacher education, Morley (1991) described the need for pronunciation-teaching materials to use in the classroom; an agreed-upon objective method of assessing pronunciation, intelligibility, and comprehensibility; and more classroom-based, observation-centered research to determine what kinds of pronunciation teaching techniques are most effective.

### **The Current State of Pronunciation Instruction in English-Speaking Nations**

For the time being, what we do know about pronunciation instruction should inform current teaching practices. Derwing et al. (2012) outlined guidelines for effective pronunciation instruction, including:

- a roughly equal focus on both segmental and suprasegmental features,
- a focus on sounds and words with the highest functional load,
- varied activities for practicing pronunciation beyond listen-and-repeat,
- explicit instruction where it can help students understand the rules that determine specific pronunciations, and
- instruction in self-monitoring of one's own pronunciation.

Morley (1991) added that the main focus of pronunciation instruction should be in improving intelligibility, comprehensibility, and student's own self-confidence and ability to self-monitor

their pronunciation when speaking. In teaching pronunciation to ELLs, the most important factor is this self-monitoring, so students can notice the differences between their own pronunciation and the target pronunciation, and continue to improve on their own after leaving the classroom (Derwing & Munro, 2005). From there, the priority of instruction should go to suprasegmental features such as stress, tone, and rhythm, followed by segmental phonemes, with allophones requiring the least focus on the whole (Prator, 1971). Given that many instructors do not devote much time to teaching pronunciation, these smaller factors often fall by the wayside, with little instruction time or classwork devoted to them.

The major issue facing pronunciation instruction, as previously mentioned, is a lack of resources; more specifically, it is a lack of accurate and usable resources. For many teachers, there is simply no access to quality pronunciation textbooks and supplementary materials (Derwing et al., 2012). Those materials that do exist are not always accurate; Baker and Murphy noted that "how far these resources are in fact informed by classroom research is uncertain given that empirical, classroom-based research is nearly nonexistent in relation to pronunciation pedagogy" (2011, Knowledge Base of Pronunciation Teaching section, para. 1). Where pronunciation-focused materials are available, they often only include limited-production activities, and there is very little background or supplementary information in both the student and teacher versions of the book; Derwing et al. (2012) note "[a] lack of clear, explicit explanations" in practically every task they reviewed in a survey of ESL textbooks in use in Canada (Discussion section, para. 10). Some native English-speaking teachers can rely on their own intuition where materials fall short; others must rely solely on what resources are given to them, which often are not based in sound pedagogy and sometimes are even wholly incorrect (Morley, 1991). If teachers are not trained in pronunciation instruction and classroom materials

themselves are incorrect, it is little surprise that so many teachers report feeling unprepared to teach pronunciation.

It is clear that pronunciation instruction in United States ESL classrooms is an amalgamation of disparate strategies, resources, and requirements. Research has demonstrated that pronunciation instruction is useful in helping ELLs make themselves understood, but there is no evidence-backed theory discussing what methods or materials are most effective. We know what aspects of pronunciation are important to focus on, but general classroom practice and materials do not always match recommended pedagogy. The state of ESL pronunciation instruction can safely be identified as severely lacking in development, quality resources, and emphasis. However, to my knowledge, no general survey of pronunciation instruction techniques and attitudes in United States ESL classes has been carried out as of yet. This study aims to make a preliminary examination of such techniques and attitudes through two case studies. Because the field of pronunciation research is currently sparse as well as somewhat outdated, the purpose of the current study is to gather qualitative data about the current state of pronunciation instruction in K-12 ESL classrooms in the United States.

### **Methodology**

The research questions addressed in this thesis are:

1. How is pronunciation currently taught in United States ESL classrooms?
2. What factors affect how, when, and how much pronunciation is taught?
3. What attitudes do ESL teachers have about pronunciation instruction?

### **Data Collection and Analysis**

This study was done using qualitative interviews with two participants, followed by a series of memos and coding for thematic analysis, as outlined by Glesne (2016). In order to

arrange and perform these interviews, the author contacted several ESL teachers, with the help of a local education association, and interviewed two who indicated willingness to participate in a case study of attitudes and practices regarding teaching pronunciation in the ESL classroom. One interview was conducted asynchronously via email, with the participant simply writing their responses to the interview questions. The other interview took the form of a 30-minute conversation via a Zoom video conference. The general questions asked can be found in Appendix A.

After completing the interviews, transcripts of the questions and answers were reviewed for thematic patterns. Analytic memos were used to identify main ideas, and information gathered was categorized using a coding process for further comparison and analysis.

### **Setting**

The Midwest region of the United States has experienced a significant increase in immigrant population in the recent past. While schools in coastal areas, urban centers, and locales along the United States-Mexican border still tend to see the highest concentrations of ELLs, the Midwest has become a notable destination for many migrants and refugees, likely due to the availability of factory and farm work. In the general area in which both study participants teach, students come from a wide range of countries and regions, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, the Marshall Islands, Vietnam, Cambodia, Bosnia, Myanmar, and several countries in Central and South America such as Mexico, Guatemala, and Brazil.

It must be acknowledged that because many schools in the Midwest are relatively new to the area of ESL, this case study does not serve to represent any area greater than the Midwest itself. Many schools in this area have never had any ESL students until quite recently, especially those in more rural communities, and therefore they are rather unfamiliar with designing and

implementing ESL programs. It is possible, and in fact quite likely, that pronunciation instruction and methods vary widely across the United States.

### **Limitations**

Due to COVID-19, in-person observations and interviews were not an option for this study; a series of extraneous circumstances removed the possibility of a large-scale survey as well. Rather than the more general overview of pronunciation instruction originally planned, the author instead focused on two case studies to highlight their unique situations and as a "first look" into the attitudes and methods of ESL pronunciation instruction as it exists in the United States. While the author's original intent was a survey of much larger scale supported by qualitative data from interviews and observations, the study presented here still provides valuable insights into the views and practices of ESL teachers in the United States.

It should also be noted that both teachers interviewed in this study taught at the secondary level, one in a middle school and the other in a high school. In United States ESL programs, it is common to include a greater focus on pronunciation instruction along with phonics and literacy instruction present in elementary-level classrooms. However, this places those students who arrive in the United States later at a significant disadvantage, as oftentimes secondary-level teachers are not trained in literacy or phonetic development, and therefore do not pay it the proper attention for older ELLs.

While two participants make for far too small a sample size to draw any meaningful conclusions about pronunciation instruction in ESL as a whole, this case study provided an interesting look into two differing perspectives on the importance of pronunciation instruction in ESL and how it should be implemented in the classroom. It also allowed for greater depth of analysis and comparison between the contrasting opinions and practices.

## **Population**

For the sake of anonymity, study participants will not be identified by name or place of work. They will instead be referred to as "Mark" and "Farrah". Mark is a native English speaker who learned Spanish as a young adult. He graduated with a degree in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and has taught ESL and related topics in several settings, including college-level phonetics courses. He currently teaches a dual-immersion bilingual content class for middle school students.

Farrah is originally from the Middle East and speaks Arabic natively, though she also learned English and Farsi before coming to the United States as an adult. She also graduated with a degree in TESOL, as well as taking master's level courses in TESOL, phonetics, and literacy. She taught English as a foreign language for several grade levels while in her home country, and has taught ESL in the United States for several years. She currently teaches intermediate and advanced high school ESL students.

## **Findings**

### **A Lack of Pronunciation Instruction**

Both participants indicated that pronunciation is rarely addressed in ESL classrooms in their experience. Mark said that he mostly addresses pronunciation reactively, rather than planning for it within a lesson; that is, he pauses to briefly teach pronunciation if a student makes a mistake that either affects their ability to be understood or could be interpreted as inappropriate for the context of the utterance. For example, he may give a short explanation about saying "gonna" versus "going to" in various settings, and where each is appropriate. However, Mark stated that he prefers "not to over-teach" and usually does not explain the rules and phonology

relating to pronunciation if it suffices to have students repeat the proper pronunciation a few times before moving on.

Contrastingly, Farrah felt teaching pronunciation is an important part of learning new vocabulary. She noted that newcomers and beginners especially need focus on pronunciation as they learn the sounds of a new language, but also said that she teaches pronunciation of new words even with her advanced students. She mentioned several techniques she uses for teaching pronunciation, including modeling the sound, drawing diagrams of the vocal apparatus, holding a paper in front of the mouth to visualize aspiration, placing a hand on the throat to notice voicing, and breaking the word down into syllables with claps to represent stressed and unstressed syllables. Farrah also brought up that pronunciation instruction can be very repetitive, so she tries to "make it very fun" for students with activities to keep them interested and motivated.

### **Teaching Pronunciation According to Student Need**

In the interviews, Mark and Farrah both placed student performance as the main factor in determining how much and what kind of pronunciation instruction is required. If students mispronounce something in a way that could impede their ability to be understood, it becomes necessary to address, whether as a quick recast or a longer explanation of the pronunciation. Mark, in particular, mentioned time constraints as another big factor. He noted that because the focus in his classroom is on content knowledge, not language knowledge, there is "little instructional time given [to ESL teachers] for the support they need to give." Even when there is time for addressing pronunciation, he said, it is still usually overlooked in favor of literacy skills. What little pronunciation instruction does occur is often focused on decoding or "sounding out" words encountered while reading, rather than producing a standard pronunciation in spoken language.

Farrah, on the other hand, focused much more on addressing pronunciation preemptively. When introducing new vocabulary, she goes over its pronunciation with her students, focusing on aspects that might be difficult for her students, such as consonant clusters and certain vowel sounds. Because her entire class shares the same native language, she is able to anticipate what problems may arise due to language transfer and address them ahead of time. Farrah also places a higher value on pronunciation, so she spends more time on practice and repetition to ensure her students are able to produce the sounds clearly and be understood.

### **Pronunciation Instruction Takes a Back Seat**

The general consensus that arose from both interviews was that pronunciation instruction is largely overlooked and de-emphasized in today's ESL classroom, and that teachers often do not address it due to lack of time or preparation. Both participants, especially Farrah, brought up that pronunciation instruction rarely goes below the surface level of listen, repeat, and move on. Farrah suspected, as prior surveys have shown, that many teachers feel unqualified or unprepared to teach pronunciation as there are many complex factors involved, including voicing, aspiration, place and manner of articulation, etc. She also had observed that many of her colleagues consider accents permissible, or think students will "pick up" correct pronunciation on their own, and as a result they forgo pronunciation instruction entirely.

Mark fell more into this latter camp; he mentioned that pronunciation variations are common across many contexts in English, and that asking students to model one specific variety deemed "standard" is both unreasonable and unnecessary. Pronunciation instruction, he said, should help students to decode the input they hear from other speakers or sound out what they read, rather than produce native-like pronunciation in students' own speech. If the students are having difficulty being understood, teachers should help them with meaning negotiation

strategies; Mark noted that "only a jerk or a racist would not permit and be tolerant of a real-time negotiation of meaning" if a mispronunciation led to a misunderstanding, and therefore aiming for perfect, standard pronunciation was less important than learning other ways to make oneself understood.

As an aside, it is worth noting that both Mark and Farrah felt their multilingualism affected their attitudes toward pronunciation instruction. Mark, who spoke English natively and learned Spanish later in life, found "both an ironic amusement and transgressive delight" in using alternate pronunciations in English, having internalized them while learning and speaking Spanish. This experience led him to be less concerned with "standard" pronunciation, focusing more on if certain variations were appropriate for a given situation. Farrah, who did not begin learning English until she was thirteen, felt that learning English as a second language herself gave her more compassion for her students and what they go through when they study English. Having learned English from a non-native perspective, as well as from an ESL teacher's perspective, caused her to focus more on the mechanics of the language.

### **Discussion**

The results of this case study, for the most part, fall in line with other quantitative and qualitative studies regarding pronunciation instruction in ESL settings. Teachers often feel unprepared or overwhelmed and wish to avoid teaching pronunciation. Additionally, many schools, programs, and curricula place the heaviest focus on content knowledge, followed by literacy, with oracy coming in last place, meaning pronunciation is often considered the least important skill in the ESL classroom.

In terms of current practice, findings indicate that pronunciation is rarely taught in United States ESL classrooms. Methods used to address pronunciation rarely go deeper than surface

level techniques, such as listen-and-repeat drills or syllable breakdowns. Explicit linguistic rules for the accepted "standard" pronunciation of North American English are not addressed at the secondary level, even with beginners.

Many factors affect how, when, and how much ESL teachers are able to address pronunciation. Perspectives presented by both participants in this study align with prior research in terms of common teaching methods, attitudes, and practices in their experience as ESL teachers in the United States. Much instruction remains at the surface level because teachers feel undereducated and unprepared to teach it, and would not feel comfortable or confident if they attempted to explain pronunciation at a deeper linguistic level. There usually is not any kind of preemptive discussion or attention given to pronunciation in any given lesson--most commonly, pronunciation instruction appears only after a student has made an error, and in those cases the instruction is usually little more than a recast before quickly moving on. Due to time constraints during the school day, difficult-to-use and inaccessible curriculum materials, and pressure from higher levels within the education system such as administrators and state departments of education, pronunciation has been placed at the bottom of the list of important topics to cover in ESL; as such, most teachers end up not addressing it at all.

Speaking for both themselves and colleagues they have observed or spoken with, Mark and Farrah both discussed the indifference many ESL teachers have towards pronunciation instruction. When not viewed with fear or a dismissive ignorance, pronunciation is seen as something that can be skimmed over with little consequence. These attitudes likely stem from a combination of not knowing how to teach pronunciation and the ever-increasing emphasis on content instruction in ESL classrooms. Farrah in particular found this concerning; Mark did not seem to think pronunciation specifically was a problem, but agreed that ESL teachers are not

given enough time to teach language skills. As this pattern is present in many school districts across the country, it is likely these attitudes are also common throughout United States public schools.

Interestingly, the different perspectives on pronunciation reflect which areas of pronunciation each participant deemed most important. Mark, a native speaker of English, values pronunciation instruction for the sake of understanding input--decoding words found in text, understanding varied pronunciations in different contexts, and being able to tell what is being said to them. Farrah, a non-native English speaker, believes that producing clear and understandable output should be the main goal of pronunciation instruction. Practicing with different consonant sounds, using visuals and other helpful aids, and repeating words until they can be said clearly and naturally are facets of an output-based approach to pronunciation instruction.

Although neither participant placed much emphasis on it, both mentioned the effect of accents on student motivation; some, as indicated by Mark's "transgressive" alternate pronunciations, maintain an accent as a marker, signaling themselves as members of a certain group (i.e. members of their home culture). Others, especially older learners and even adult learners, want to lose their accents so that they can be seen as more intelligent or capable, or for the sake of getting a job or a scholarship, as Farrah mentioned. Both noted that our society at large is more permissible of accented speech than it used to be, and that attaining nativelike speech is an unrealistic goal for students to have. However, Mark viewed accents as something of a non-issue, while Farrah felt that being too forgiving of accents could lead students' language use to fossilize with incorrect or unintelligible pronunciations.

### **Implications for Further Research**

Pronunciation instruction remains an overlooked and underserved area of teaching in United States ESL classrooms. Between a lack of teacher preparation, insufficient resources, and an overwhelming attitude of indifference toward the subject, pronunciation for ELLs is hardly present at all in the United States, and only at a very surface level on the rare occasions when it is addressed. The findings of this study show that pronunciation is addressed retroactively in most cases, and usually as a quick correction without much emphasis; the reasons for this range from teachers being unprepared and not confident in their ability to instruct their students in pronunciation, to time constraints in lesson planning and instruction time, to a penetrating view that pronunciation instruction is either unnecessary or ineffective.

As noted by other authors in this field (e.g., Gilakjani, 2017), more research is needed in the area of ESL pronunciation instruction as a whole, as well as on the specific topic of attitudes toward pronunciation instruction and the effectiveness of different instruction methods in the classroom. As a specific case study, no general conclusions can be applied to the entire field of ESL pronunciation studies, but the insight gained from these interviews implies that teacher perspectives in the United States toward pronunciation instruction are likely to align closely with those of teachers in other English-speaking nations. Additional research utilizing surveys and classroom observation could provide a larger data pool to analyze, as well as authentic and concrete information regarding current classroom practice and its effectiveness.

The differences in perspective between Mark and Farrah, when compared to previous research, is likely to stem from their identities as either native or non-native English speakers, as well as their personal experiences with learning and teaching English. Although this study was not extensive enough to support these hypotheses, the author would like to see further research

into how native and non-native speakers tend to view pronunciation instruction, as well as mono-versus multi-lingual teachers.

Finally, further research into how to better prepare ESL teachers to teach pronunciation and understand its role in second language learning must be completed, for the sake of helping teachers be confident and effective instructors for their students. Large-scale surveys of ESL teachers and preservice teachers can help researchers to identify the specific areas instructors feel they need more training in. Additionally, comparative studies between different methods of pronunciation instruction, such as proactive teaching versus intervention only upon errors, may reveal what techniques work best for students in various settings and can inform how teacher education programs should prepare instructors for their own future ESL classrooms.

Pronunciation as a skill is often deemed unimportant in ESL classrooms, just as pronunciation as an area of research is largely untapped in the TESOL field. Continuing to research pronunciation instruction and its effects on ELLs will help expand our understanding of second language acquisition in different settings, via different methods, and with different approaches, attitudes, and emphasis. As we learn more about how best to address pronunciation in an ESL context, we can change how instructors and scholars teach and view pronunciation, raising it to the same status as speaking, reading, writing, and listening as a valuable and necessary aspect of second language acquisition.

## References

- Arcaya, M. (2020). Differences between native English-speaking teachers and their non-native counterparts when evaluating pronunciation/Diferencias entre profesores hablantes nativos de ingles y sus pares no nativos al evaluar pronunciacion. *Revista PROFILE: Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, 22(1), 29+. Retrieved from [https://link-gale-com.proxy.lib.uni.edu/apps/doc/A614028878/AONE?u=uni\\_rodit&sid=AONE&xid=10b2327b](https://link-gale-com.proxy.lib.uni.edu/apps/doc/A614028878/AONE?u=uni_rodit&sid=AONE&xid=10b2327b)
- Baker, A., & Murphy, J. (2011). Knowledge base of pronunciation teaching: Staking out the territory. *TESL Canada Journal*, 28(2), 29+. Retrieved from [https://link-gale-com.proxy.lib.uni.edu/apps/doc/A260944119/AONE?u=uni\\_rodit&sid=AONE&xid=ca71374b](https://link-gale-com.proxy.lib.uni.edu/apps/doc/A260944119/AONE?u=uni_rodit&sid=AONE&xid=ca71374b)
- Burgess, J., & Spencer, S. (2000). Phonology and pronunciation in integrated language teaching and teacher education. *System*, 28, 191-215.
- Burns, A. (2006). Integrating research and professional development on pronunciation teaching in a national adult ESL program. *TESL Reporter*, 39, 34-41.
- Derwing, T. M., Diepenbroek, L. G., & Foote, J. A. (2012). How well do general-skills ESL textbooks address pronunciation? *TESL Canada Journal*, 30(1), 22+. Retrieved from [https://link-gale-com.proxy.lib.uni.edu/apps/doc/A325174231/AONE?u=uni\\_rodit&sid=AONE&xid=d9ed435c](https://link-gale-com.proxy.lib.uni.edu/apps/doc/A325174231/AONE?u=uni_rodit&sid=AONE&xid=d9ed435c)
- Derwing, T., & Munro, M. (2005). Second language accent and pronunciation teaching: A research-based approach. *TESOL Quarterly*, 39(3), 379-397. [doi:10.2307/3588486](https://doi.org/10.2307/3588486)

- Footo, J. A., Holtby, A. K., & Derwing, T. M. (2011). Survey of the teaching of pronunciation in adult ESL programs in Canada, 2010. *TESL Canada Journal*, 29(1), 1+. Retrieved from [https://link-gale-com.proxy.lib.uni.edu/apps/doc/A283262350/AONE?u=uni\\_rodit&sid=AONE&xid=356ddbb1](https://link-gale-com.proxy.lib.uni.edu/apps/doc/A283262350/AONE?u=uni_rodit&sid=AONE&xid=356ddbb1)
- Gilakjani, A. P. (2017). English pronunciation instruction: Views and recommendations. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 8(6), 1249+. Retrieved from [https://link-gale-com.proxy.lib.uni.edu/apps/doc/A519075262/AONE?u=uni\\_rodit&sid=AONE&xid=42862b40](https://link-gale-com.proxy.lib.uni.edu/apps/doc/A519075262/AONE?u=uni_rodit&sid=AONE&xid=42862b40)
- Glesne, C. (2016). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction* (5th ed.). Pearson.
- Gorba, C. (2019). Teaching L2 English pronunciation: Research and course design. A critical review of. *Atlantis, revista de la Asociación Española de Estudios Anglo-Norteamericanos*, 41(2), 215+. Retrieved from [https://link-gale-com.proxy.lib.uni.edu/apps/doc/A612578942/AONE?u=uni\\_rodit&sid=AONE&xid=aff60a4f](https://link-gale-com.proxy.lib.uni.edu/apps/doc/A612578942/AONE?u=uni_rodit&sid=AONE&xid=aff60a4f)
- MacDonald, S. (2002). Pronunciation--views and practices of reluctant teachers. *Prospect*, 17, 3-18.
- Morley, J. (1991). The pronunciation component in teaching English to speakers of other languages. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25(3), 481-520. [doi:10.2307/3586981](https://doi.org/10.2307/3586981)
- Prator, C. (1971). Phonetics vs. phonemics in the ESL classroom: When is allophonic accuracy important? *TESOL Quarterly*, 5(1), 61-72. [doi:10.2307/3586112](https://doi.org/10.2307/3586112)

## APPENDIX A: GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS

These are the guiding questions which were used for each interview. Over the course of each interview, focus strayed to other topics and ideas as they were relevant or brought up, as anticipated.

- How/why did you become an ESL teacher?
- Tell me about what pronunciation instruction looks like in your classroom.
  - What materials or curriculum do you use to teach pronunciation?
  - How much class time do you spend teaching pronunciation?
- Have you ever taken a phonetics or pronunciation-focused course or training?
- How, if at all, do you feel your education prepared you to teach pronunciation?
- What do you wish you/your program could do differently in regard to teaching pronunciation?
- How important is pronunciation instruction when teaching English as a second language?  
What do you feel is most vital for students to understand about pronunciation, if anything?