

FRAMING VOWEL PRONUNCIATION PRODUCED BY THE STUDENTS AT MA DDI KABALLANGANG, PINRANG

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Abstract

Vowel pronunciation accuracy plays a critical component of language acquisition, significantly influencing the efficacy of communication between teachers and students. This study investigated the impact of a communicative framework model on enhancing vowel pronunciation accuracy among Grade 12 students at MA DDI Kaballangang, Pinrang. A pre-experimental design, incorporating pre-test and post-test assessments, was employed for this research. The intervention encompassed all phases of the communicative approach: description and analysis, listening discrimination, controlled practice, guided practice, and communicative practice. Quantitative analysis revealed a substantial improvement in vowel pronunciation accuracy, with mean scores increasing from 34.8 to 68.3. Statistical significance was confirmed through a paired t-test ($t=8.43$, $df=11$, $p<0.05$), supporting the hypothesis that the communicative framework is an effective pedagogical approach for enhancing pronunciation accuracy in this educational context. These findings contribute to the growing body of literature on effective language teaching methodologies and have implications for curriculum development in similar educational settings.

Keywords: *Communicative Approach, Pronunciation Accuracy, Vowel Sound.*

Introduction

Language, as a dynamic system of communication, plays a pivotal role in facilitating the exchange of ideas, emotions, and information across diverse cultures and regions (Trenholm, 2020; Bonvillain, 2019). In the contemporary globalized landscape, proficiency in English has emerged as a critical competency, particularly for non-native speakers navigating academic, professional, and cultural spheres (Pajarwati et al., 2021; Elyas & Alghofaili, 2019). Within the domain of language acquisition, pronunciation stands as a fundamental pillar, significantly influencing the efficacy of communication (Levis, 2018; Pennington, 2021).

The accurate articulation of phonemes, especially vowels, is paramount in achieving clear and comprehensible speech (Simpuruh et al., 2020; syamsinar et al., 2023). Pronunciation errors can lead to substantial misunderstandings, potentially altering the intended semantic content of utterances (Almuslimi, 2020; Voeten, 2021). A salient example is the distinction

between minimal pairs such as "ship" and "sheep" in English, where the vowel sound serves as the sole differentiating factor, underscoring the critical nature of precise vowel articulation (Bui et al., 2021; Idris et al., 2023). Mastery of pronunciation not only enhances learners' intelligibility but also bolsters their confidence and facilitates more effective engagement in diverse communicative contexts (Dincer & Dariyemez, 2020; Almusharraf, 2022).

In the Indonesian context, English proficiency often serves as a key indicator of academic and professional competence (Poedjiastutie et al., 2018; Yassi et al., 2023). However, students at MA DDI Kaballangang, Pinrang face significant challenges in oral production, primarily stemming from uncertainties in vowel pronunciation. These difficulties not only impede their communicative abilities but also adversely affect their performance across various academic settings, including oral examinations and presentations (Dewi & Wilany, 2022; Sujarwo et al., 2024).

Recent empirical investigations have explored the multifaceted challenges associated with English vowel pronunciation among learners. Syafiq & Hafiz (2023) identified mother tongue interference as a significant factor impacting pronunciation among undergraduate students. Utin (2023) highlighted specific difficulties in the articulation of long vowels among university students, while Ilyas and Kaniadewi (2023) examined the potential of digital media in enhancing pronunciation skills. However, these studies predominantly focus on tertiary education populations, leaving a notable gap in research addressing secondary education contexts, particularly within Indonesia.

The present study aims to address this research lacuna by investigating the efficacy of a communicative framework in enhancing vowel pronunciation accuracy among 12th-grade students at MA DDI Kaballangang, Pinrang. This research distinguishes itself through its specific focus on improving vowel pronunciation via a tailored communicative approach for high school students, an area that remains underexplored within the context of secondary education in Indonesia.

The significance of this study lies in its potential to substantially improve students' oral production confidence and overall communicative competence. By addressing a critical aspect of language learning that directly impacts communication clarity and effectiveness, this research contributes valuable insights to the field of language education. The findings have the

potential to inform pedagogical practices not only within Indonesia but also in broader contexts where English is taught as a foreign language.

This study posits the hypothesis that the implementation of a communicative framework specifically designed to target vowel pronunciation will result in a measurable improvement in the pronunciation accuracy of the participants. This hypothesis will be empirically tested through a comparative analysis of students' pronunciation accuracy before and after the intervention.

The primary objectives of this research are twofold: to enhance vowel pronunciation accuracy and to boost students' confidence in English oral production, ultimately improving their overall communicative effectiveness. By providing empirical evidence on the efficacy of a communicative framework in improving pronunciation, this study aims to contribute substantive insights to the field of language education and inform future teaching methodologies.

Last, this research addresses a critical gap in the literature by focusing on the application of communicative approaches to vowel pronunciation in secondary education settings. The findings of this study have the potential to significantly impact language teaching practices and contribute to the broader understanding of effective strategies for enhancing pronunciation skills among non-native English speakers.

Method

This research employed a pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design to investigate the efficacy of a communicative framework model in enhancing vowel pronunciation accuracy among grade 12 students at MA DDI Kaballangang, Pinrang. A purposive sample of 12 grade 11 science students was selected for this study (Idris et al., 2020; Yulianti et al., 2023). The research spanned one month, commencing with a pre-test to assess the students' initial ability to produce vowel sounds accurately. The research instrument used was worksheet based on Celce-Murcia framework as the model to design the worksheet (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010). Subsequently, a five-session intervention was implemented, focusing on segmental features, particularly vowel sounds. To measure the impact of the treatment, a post-test was administered. Independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare the mean scores

of the pre-test and post-test, enabling a statistical determination of whether there was a significant difference in the students' vowel pronunciation accuracy following the intervention.

Results

Students' score of the pre-test and post-test were classified into five classifications. The classification and percentage of the students' score of pre-test and post-test are follows:

1. Pre-test

Table below present the classification, frequency, and percentage of the students' score of pre-test.

Table 1. The students' score in pre-test

No	Student	Score	Classification
1	Student 01	33	Very Poor
2	Student 02	53	Poor
3	Student 03	33	Very Poor
4	Student 04	53	Poor
5	Student 05	33	Very Poor
6	Student 06	33	Very Poor
7	Student 07	27	Very Poor
8	Student 08	27	Very Poor
9	Student 09	40	Very Poor
10	Student 10	33	Very Poor
11	Student 11	13	Very Poor
12	Student 12	40	Very Poor

The students' score in pre-test was calculated to know the frequency and percentage of the result pre-test

Table 2. The frequency and percentage of the result pre-test

No	Score	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
1	80-100	Excellent	-	0%
2	66-79	Good	-	0%

3	56-65	Fair	-	0%
4	40-55	Poor	2	16,7%
5	0-20	Very Poor	10	83,3%
TOTAL			12	100%

The table showed that, the students only got the score “poor” by 2 students (16,7%), 10 students (83,3%) got the score “very poor” and there were not get excellent, good, and fair classification.

2. Post-test

Table below present the classification, frequency, and percentage of the students’ score of post-test.

Table 3. The students’ score in post-test

No	Student	Score	Classification
1	Student 01	86	Excellent
2	Student 02	93	Excellent
3	Student 03	73	Good
4	Student 04	86	Excellent
5	Student 05	60	Fair
6	Student 06	40	Very Poor
7	Student 07	60	Fair
8	Student 08	40	Very Poor
9	Student 09	86	Excellent
10	Student 10	60	Fair
11	Student 11	60	Fair
12	Student 12	73	Good

The students’ score in post-test was calculated to know the frequency and percentage of the result post-test.

Table 4. The frequency and percentage of the result pre-test

No	Score	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
1	80-100	Excellent	4	33,3%
2	66-79	Good	2	16,7%
3	56-65	Fair	4	33,3%
4	40-55	Poor	-	0%
5	0-20	Very Poor	2	16,7%
TOTAL			12	100%

The table showed that, there were 4 students (33,3%) got the excellent classification, 2 students (16,7%) got the good classification, 4 students (33,3%) got the fair classification, and 2 students (16,7%) got very poor classification. Based on the table above, it showed that the rate percentage of the students' score of the students' pronunciation accuracy in post-test was better than pre-test.

Discussion

This study's primary findings demonstrate a significant enhancement in students' pronunciation accuracy following the implementation of a communicative framework. The pre-test results revealed substantial initial difficulties, with 83.3% of participants categorized as "very poor" and 17.7% as "poor" in pronunciation accuracy. Notably, no students achieved "fair," "good," or "excellent" classifications prior to the intervention. It can be seen the post-intervention results indicate marked improvement:

Table 1: Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test Performance Classifications

Classification	Pre-test (%)	Post-test (%)
Excellent	0	33.3
Good	0	16.7
Fair	0	33.3
Poor	16.7	0
Very Poor	83.3	16.7

The shift in performance classifications suggests the efficacy of the communicative framework in enhancing pronunciation accuracy. This improvement aligns with findings from Syafiq & Hafiz (2023), who emphasized the importance of targeted pronunciation instruction to mitigate challenges arising from mother tongue interference.

The observed improvements can be attributed to several factors inherent in the communicative approach:

1. Contextual learning: The framework likely facilitated better retention and application of correct vowel sounds by presenting them in meaningful contexts.
2. Reduced anxiety: Interactive activities may have lowered students' apprehension about making pronunciation errors, a factor identified by Almusharraf (2022) as crucial for pronunciation improvement.
3. Active engagement: The communicative approach encouraged active participation, potentially increasing students' motivation and attention to pronunciation details.

However, several limitations warrant consideration:

1. Sample size: The small cohort (n=12) limits the generalizability of the findings.
2. Duration: The short-term nature of the study may not capture long-term retention of improved pronunciation skills.
3. External factors: The study did not account for variables such as individual motivation, language background, or exposure to English outside the classroom.

These limitations provide direction for future research:

1. Expand the sample size and include multiple institutions to enhance generalizability.
2. Conduct longitudinal studies to assess long-term retention of pronunciation improvements.
3. Investigate the impact of specific components of the communicative framework (e.g., interactive tasks, feedback mechanisms) on pronunciation accuracy.
4. Explore the influence of external factors on pronunciation improvement within a communicative framework.

In conclusion, while the results are promising, they should be interpreted cautiously due to the aforementioned limitations. Nevertheless, this study provides a strong foundation for further research into effective methods for enhancing vowel pronunciation accuracy in EFL

contexts. The findings suggest that incorporating communicative activities focused on pronunciation can yield significant improvements, even in a relatively short timeframe. This approach could be particularly beneficial in contexts where students have limited exposure to native English speakers.

Conclusion

This study investigated the efficacy of a communicative framework in enhancing pronunciation accuracy among Grade 12 students at MA Kaballangan Pinrang. The results demonstrate a significant improvement in students' pronunciation skills following the intervention. Pre-intervention, 83.3% of participants were classified in the "very poor" category, with no students achieving "good" or "excellent" ratings. Post-intervention, 33.3% of students attained "excellent" scores, while the proportion of "very poor" performances decreased to 16.7%.

These findings suggest that the implemented communicative framework effectively improved students' pronunciation accuracy. The approach, which emphasized interactive activities in realistic communicative contexts, appeared to facilitate enhanced confidence and precision in spoken English among participants.

However, several limitations must be acknowledged:

1. The small sample size ($n=12$) constrains the generalizability of the findings.
2. External factors such as individual motivation and exposure to English outside the classroom were not controlled for, potentially influencing the results.
3. The study's short-term nature precludes assessment of long-term retention of improved pronunciation skills.

Based on these findings and limitations, the following recommendations are proposed for future research:

1. Conduct larger-scale studies with diverse student populations to enhance generalizability.
2. Implement longitudinal designs to evaluate the long-term impact of the communicative framework on pronunciation accuracy.

3. Investigate the influence of external factors (e.g., motivation, language exposure) on pronunciation improvement within this framework.
4. Explore the integration of technology-enhanced learning tools to supplement the communicative approach in pronunciation instruction.

In conclusion, while this study demonstrates the potential of a communicative framework to significantly enhance pronunciation accuracy in EFL contexts, further research is necessary to fully elucidate its long-term effects and optimize its implementation across diverse educational settings.

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