STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARD LEARNING ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION IN PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY COURSE AT POHUWATO UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRAK

Pengucapan merupakan salah satu aspek penting dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris karena berpengaruh langsung terhadap kejelasan dan keberhasilan komunikasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui sikap mahasiswa terhadap pembelajaran pengucapan Bahasa Inggris pada Mata Kuliah Phonetics and Phonology di Universitas Pohuwato. Fokus penelitian ini adalah sikap mahasiswa yang meliputi aspek kognitif, afektif, dan perilaku dalam pembelajaran pengucapan bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian deskriptif kuantitatif. Sampel penelitian terdiri dari 30 mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris yang telah mengikuti mata kuliah Phonetics and Phonology. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner dengan skala Likert lima tingkat dan dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif berupa nilai mean. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa secara umum memiliki **s**ikap positif terhadap pembelajaran pengucapan bahasa Inggris. Aspek sikap kognitif memperoleh nilai mean tertinggi, yang menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa memiliki kesadaran dan keyakinan yang kuat akan pentingnya pengucapan yang benar dalam komunikasi Bahasa Inggris. Aspek sikap perilaku juga berada pada kategori positif, yang menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa memiliki kemauan untuk berlatih dan menerima umpan balik dalam pembelajaran pengucapan. Namun, aspek sikap afektif menunjukkan bahwa sebagian mahasiswa masih mengalami kecemasan dan kurang percaya diri ketika mempraktikkan pengucapan. Meskipun mahasiswa memiliki pemahaman dan perilaku belajar yang baik terhadap pengucapan bahasa Inggris, faktor emosional masih menjadi tantangan. Oleh karena itu, dosen disarankan untuk menciptakan suasana pembelajaran yang mendukung, meningkatkan aktivitas praktik pengucapan, serta memanfaatkan teknologi pembelajaran untuk membantu mengurangi kecemasan dan meningkatkan kemampuan pengucapan mahasiswa.
Kata Kunci: *Sikap Mahasiswa, Pengucapan Bahasa Inggris, Fonetik dan Fonologi*

ABSTRACT

Pronunciation plays a crucial role in effective English communication, particularly for students learning English as a foreign language. This study aims to investigate students' attitudes toward learning English pronunciation in the *Phonetics and Phonology* course at Pohuwato University. The focus of the study is on students' attitudes, which include cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects in learning English pronunciation. This research employed a descriptive quantitative research design. The sample consisted of 30 students from the English Education Study Program who had completed the *Phonetics and Phonology* course. Data were collected through a questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale and analyzed using descriptive statistics in the form of mean scores. The results indicate that students generally have a positive attitude toward learning English pronunciation. The cognitive attitude aspect obtained the highest mean score, indicating that students have strong

awareness and beliefs about the importance of correct pronunciation in English communication. The behavioral attitude aspect was also categorized as positive, showing that students are willing to practice and accept feedback in pronunciation learning. However, the affective attitude aspect revealed that some students still experience anxiety and lack confidence when practicing pronunciation. Although students demonstrate good understanding and learning behaviors toward English pronunciation, emotional factors remain a challenge. Therefore, it is recommended that lecturers create a supportive learning environment, increase pronunciation practice activities, and utilize learning technology to help reduce anxiety and improve students' pronunciation skills.

Keywords: *Students' Attitudes, English Pronunciation, Phonetics and Phonology*

INTRODUCTION

Ideally, English pronunciation learning should help students produce speech that is clear, intelligible, and communicatively effective, rather than aiming for native-like accent perfection. This foundational view is strongly supported by recent research arguing that intelligibility-based approaches to L2 English pronunciation move beyond ideologies of nativeness and more accurately reflect the communicative realities of global English use (Jeong & Lindemann, 2025). Nevertheless, in many EFL contexts, pronunciation instruction remains highly technical, with an emphasis on phonetic symbols and prescriptive articulation rules, an approach that has been shown to limit learner engagement and confidence rather than enhance communicative effectiveness (Saito & Plonsky, 2019).

Recent pronunciation research further highlights that intelligibility and comprehensibility are more critical than accent accuracy, particularly in multilingual communication settings (Levis, 2018). Within English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) frameworks, effective communication is achieved through mutual understanding rather than conformity to native speaker norms, as shown in Indonesian university contexts where learners recognize the value of communicative openness over strict native speaker models (Santoso et al., 2023). From this perspective, pronunciation instruction is increasingly encouraged to prioritize features that directly support communication, such as key segmental contrasts, stress, and rhythm, rather than exhaustive mastery of phonetic detail. Such an orientation is considered more pedagogically realistic and supportive of learners' communicative needs in diverse and global English-speaking contexts.

Learners' attitudes are widely acknowledged as a key factor influencing success in language learning. Contemporary studies conceptualize attitude as a multidimensional construct encompassing cognitive beliefs, affective responses, and behavioral tendencies toward language learning tasks (Al-Hoorie, 2017). Recent research further confirms that students' attitudes toward pronunciation significantly affect their willingness to participate in oral activities, their confidence in speaking, and their overall pronunciation development (Saito et al., 2018; Zur et al., 2024). Learners who hold positive beliefs and emotions toward pronunciation are more likely to engage actively in speaking practice and persist despite difficulties.

Moreover, technological advancements have opened new possibilities for pronunciation learning, particularly through technology-enhanced instruction such as mobile-assisted pronunciation learning and AI-based pronunciation feedback, which positively influence students' attitudes by providing immediate feedback, personalization, and greater learner autonomy (Garcia & Rodriguez, 2023; Assalamah et al., 2024). In particular, mobile-assisted peer feedback has been shown to enhance learners' awareness of intelligibility-

oriented pronunciation features and promote communicative effectiveness through collaborative interaction and reflective practice (Dai & Wu, 2022). These technological benefits are especially relevant in the Indonesian EFL context, where pronunciation learning is often perceived as difficult, particularly in Phonetics and Phonology courses. Recent studies indicate that many students experience challenges in understanding phonetic concepts and applying pronunciation rules accurately in communicative contexts, which contributes to learning difficulties (Palupi, 2024). Consequently, students tend to develop mixed attitudes toward pronunciation learning, acknowledging its importance for effective communication while simultaneously experiencing anxiety or low motivation to engage in speaking practice.

Learners' attitudes play a significant role in language learning success. Gardner (1985) defines attitude as a combination of cognitive, affective, and behavioral components that influence learners' motivation and learning behavior, a theoretical framework that is empirically supported by recent research showing that learners' beliefs, emotions, and learning behaviors toward pronunciation significantly shape their willingness to participate in oral communication activities (Zur et al., 2024). In line with Gardner's model, students who hold positive attitudes toward pronunciation tend to demonstrate higher motivation and more active engagement in speaking practice. Despite these developments, pronunciation learning remains a challenging area for many university students, as factors such as speaking anxiety, lack of confidence, and limited opportunities for meaningful pronunciation practice continue to negatively influence students' attitudes and performance (Novika, 2025). Therefore, investigating students' attitudes toward learning English pronunciation remains a relevant and important area of research.

This study contributes to existing literature by providing a comprehensive analysis of students' attitudes toward pronunciation learning, examining cognitive, affective, and behavioral components simultaneously within the context of a *Phonetics and Phonology* course. Furthermore, this research focuses on Pohuwato University, a context that has received limited attention in previous pronunciation attitude studies, thus offering localized and contextual insights. By addressing these aspects, this study enhances understanding of students' attitudes toward English pronunciation learning and provides practical implications for improving pronunciation instruction in higher education. Therefore, this study aims to describe and analyze students' cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes toward learning English pronunciation in the *Phonetics and Phonology* course at Pohuwato University using a descriptive quantitative approach.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive quantitative research design to examine students' attitudes toward learning English pronunciation in the Phonetics and Phonology course at Pohuwato University. The research was conducted in the English Education Study Program, with participants consisting of 30 undergraduate students who had completed the Phonetics and Phonology course. The participants were selected using purposive sampling, as they met the criterion of having formal academic experience in pronunciation learning. This design was chosen to describe students' attitudes as they naturally occur without manipulating variables and to identify general trends based on numerical data.

Data were collected using a questionnaire comprising 30 items measuring three components of attitude: cognitive, affective, and behavioral. The questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), and its reliability was tested using Cronbach's Alpha, with a coefficient of 0.70 or higher considered

acceptable. Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the faculty and course lecturer, after which the questionnaire was administered during regular class sessions. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, assured of confidentiality, and informed that participation was voluntary. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, particularly mean scores, to determine the general tendency of students' attitudes across each attitude component, with higher mean scores indicating more positive attitudes.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Based on the results of the study, the findings related to students' attitudes toward learning English pronunciation in the Phonetics and Phonology course are presented. These findings are organized according to the multidimensional concept of attitude, which encompasses cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. Descriptive statistical analysis was employed to identify students' general tendencies toward pronunciation learning based on their responses to the questionnaire. A summary of the findings is presented in Table 1, which illustrates students' attitude levels across each component.

Table 1. Students' Attitudes toward Learning English Pronunciation in the Phonetics and Phonology Course

Attitude Component	Focus of Measurement	Mean Score	Category
Cognitive Attitude	Students' beliefs and understanding of the importance of English pronunciation	4.27	Very Positive
Affective Attitude	Students' feelings toward pronunciation learning	3.48	Positive
Behavioral Attitude	Students' actions and learning behaviors related to pronunciation	3.73	Positive
Overall Attitude	Overall attitude toward learning English pronunciation	**3.83**	**Positive**

Table 1 shows that students' attitudes toward learning English pronunciation vary across different attitude components, with the cognitive aspect emerging as the most prominent. This pattern suggests that students demonstrate a strong awareness of the importance of pronunciation in English learning, while their emotional responses and learning behaviors appear slightly less pronounced. Although students generally show positive engagement with pronunciation learning, differences among attitude components indicate varying levels of confidence, enjoyment, and practice intensity. These comparative trends among the attitude components are further illustrated visually in Figure 1, which highlights the relative distribution of mean scores in a more accessible format.
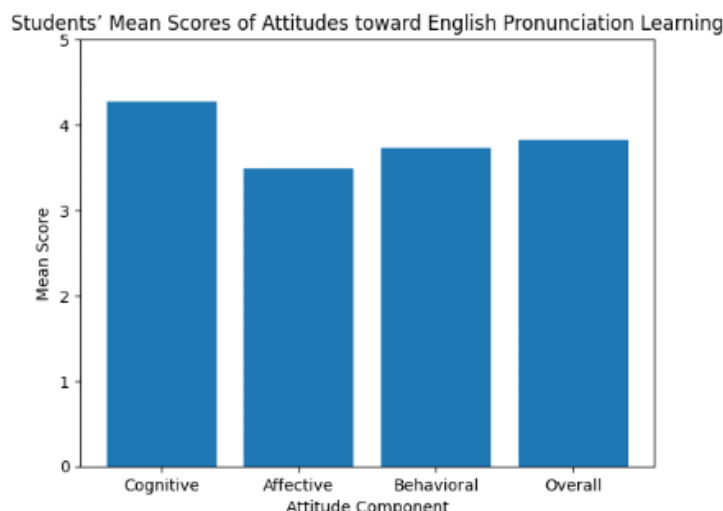
Figure 1. Students' Mean Scores of Attitudes toward Learning English Pronunciation

Figure 1 presents a visual comparison of students' mean scores across the cognitive, affective, behavioral, and overall attitude components toward learning English pronunciation. The figure shows that the cognitive component achieves the highest mean score, followed by the overall and behavioral components, while the affective component records the lowest relative value. This visual pattern reinforces the idea that students' understanding and beliefs about pronunciation are stronger than their emotional comfort or consistency in practice. These findings indicate an imbalance among attitude components that should be considered in the development of English pronunciation instruction.

Discussion
Cognitive Attitude
The findings indicate that the cognitive attitude component achieved the highest mean score, with an average of 4.27, and was categorized as very positive, suggesting that students possess strong beliefs and understanding regarding the importance of English pronunciation. This result shows that students recognize pronunciation as a core element of English learning rather than a supplementary skill. Their beliefs reflect an awareness that accurate pronunciation supports clarity in spoken communication and helps prevent misunderstanding. Such cognitive orientation indicates that students have internalized the role of pronunciation as a key contributor to effective oral interaction. This is consistent with recent Indonesian research demonstrating that explicit phonetic instruction significantly improves EFL learners' pronunciation intelligibility and production accuracy, as shown in a study by Palupi (2024), where targeted instruction enhanced learners' ability to produce English diphthongs more accurately and increased overall intelligibility in controlled speaking tasks.

This strong cognitive awareness can be closely linked to the nature of the Phonetics and Phonology course, which provides systematic and explicit instruction on English sound systems. Through exposure to phonetic transcription, articulation processes, and sound pattern analysis, students gain structured knowledge about how English pronunciation works. This instructional approach helps learners move beyond intuitive imitation toward conscious understanding of pronunciation principles. As a result, students are better able to conceptualize how pronunciation contributes to intelligible and comprehensible speech in real

communicative contexts. Supporting this, a recent intervention study with Indonesian EFL learners found that multimedia-assisted pronunciation instruction (e.g., video-based modeling of vowel and consonant production) led to significant improvements in learners' pronunciation outcomes, indicating that multimodal phonetic input can reinforce cognitive understanding and support learners' autonomous practice (Mukarrama et al., 2025).

These findings are consistent with previous research emphasizing the importance of pronunciation awareness in successful oral communication. Irawan (2024) argues that learners who possess an understanding of pronunciation principles are more likely to emphasize intelligibility and clarity in communication, rather than striving to achieve native-like accent accuracy. Similarly, Saito and Plonsky (2019) report that explicit pronunciation instruction enhances learners' phonological awareness and positively influences overall speaking performance. These studies support the idea that cognitive engagement with pronunciation knowledge facilitates more purposeful and effective spoken language use.

Furthermore, recent research highlights that pronunciation awareness developed through explicit instruction plays a crucial role in achieving intelligible communication in multilingual contexts. Galante and Piccardo (2021) emphasize that learners who develop awareness of key pronunciation features are better equipped to adjust their speech for communicative effectiveness. This perspective aligns with the present findings, which show that students' strong cognitive attitudes are rooted in their understanding of pronunciation concepts. Therefore, the very positive cognitive attitude identified in this study suggests that students have developed a solid conceptual foundation that supports communicative pronunciation goals and sustained language learning.

Affective Attitude

The affective attitude component reflects students' emotional responses toward pronunciation learning and obtained a positive mean score of 3.48, although it was lower than the cognitive and behavioral components. This finding indicates that students generally enjoy learning English pronunciation and feel motivated during pronunciation-related activities. A positive affective orientation is essential because it can facilitate learners' engagement and persistence in practicing pronunciation, which is a skill that requires continuous exposure and repetition. Nevertheless, the relatively lower mean score compared to the other attitude components suggests that affective factors remain a potential barrier in pronunciation learning. This aligns with recent empirical evidence from a study on Indonesian EFL learners' pronunciation anxiety, which found that students often experience moderate to high levels of pronunciation anxiety that negatively affect their confidence and willingness to participate in pronunciation tasks (Wati et al., 2025).

Despite the overall positive tendency, some students still experience anxiety, nervousness, and lack of confidence when practicing pronunciation, particularly in front of their peers. This anxiety may stem from learners' heightened sensitivity to errors in spoken performance, as pronunciation mistakes are immediately noticeable and often perceived as indicators of low language proficiency. Such emotional reactions can inhibit students' willingness to participate actively in oral practice and may lead to avoidance behaviors, which in turn limit opportunities for improvement. This finding is consistent with a recent correlational study by Mamang et al. (2025), which reported that speaking anxiety is a common psychological factor influencing learners' pronunciation performance and their engagement in speaking activities. These results reinforce the importance of addressing

affective barriers in pronunciation instruction to enhance learners' confidence and participation.

Recent empirical studies further confirm that pronunciation learning is closely associated with foreign language anxiety. Alimorad & Adib (2022) found that pronunciation anxiety negatively affects learners' willingness to communicate in English classes, indicating that higher anxiety is associated with lower confidence and reduced readiness to speak, even when learners understand pronunciation principles. Similarly, O'Brien et al. (2018) report that fear of negative evaluation commonly emerges during oral and pronunciation-focused activities, particularly in classroom contexts where peer observation is unavoidable. These studies suggest that learners' emotional responses can undermine the effectiveness of pronunciation instruction if not properly addressed.

Taken together, these findings indicate that cognitive understanding and behavioral engagement alone are insufficient to reduce anxiety in pronunciation learning. The affective dimension plays a crucial role in shaping students' overall learning experience and performance. Therefore, lecturers are encouraged to create a supportive and low-anxiety classroom environment by emphasizing formative feedback, normalizing pronunciation errors as part of the learning process, and providing ample opportunities for guided and collaborative practice. Such pedagogical strategies may help students develop greater confidence and more positive emotional experiences, ultimately enhancing their pronunciation learning outcomes. This aligns with recent research by Attia and Algazo (2025), who found that supportive classroom practices, including positive teacher feedback, structured communicative activities, and emotionally supportive teacher-student interactions, significantly mitigate foreign language anxiety and contribute to higher levels of student engagement and willingness to participate in oral tasks in EFL settings.

Behavioral Attitude

The behavioral attitude component examined students' actions related to pronunciation learning and obtained a positive mean score of 3.73, indicating that students generally demonstrate constructive learning behaviors toward pronunciation. This positive orientation is reflected in students' reported efforts to improve their pronunciation during spoken English activities and their attentiveness to feedback provided by lecturers. Such behaviors suggest a willingness to engage actively in the learning process and an openness to corrective input, which are crucial for the development of accurate and intelligible pronunciation. This aligns with recent Indonesian research showing that EFL learners who actively engage in autonomous pronunciation practice using digital media (such as vlogs) can strengthen their pronunciation skills and sustain engagement beyond classroom instruction (Siti Fatimah et al., 2024).

Nevertheless, the findings also reveal that students' pronunciation practice outside the classroom remains relatively limited, indicating that their behavioral engagement is still largely restricted to formal instructional contexts. This gap between in-class effort and out-of-class practice may be influenced by several factors, including limited exposure to English in daily life, a lack of authentic speaking environments, and reduced opportunities for meaningful oral interaction. As a result, students may rely heavily on classroom instruction as their primary source of pronunciation input and feedback. These obstacles to autonomous practice are echoed in research on self-regulated pronunciation learning, which identifies challenges such as planning practice routines, accessing suitable learning resources, and maintaining motivation when practicing independently (Hidayah, 2024).

This pattern aligns with Gardner's (1985) socio-educational model, which posits that positive attitudes enhance learners' willingness to participate in learning activities, particularly when learners perceive the learning task as valuable. This theoretical perspective is further supported by recent empirical evidence from Zur et al. (2024), who found that learners' positive attitudes toward pronunciation learning are significantly associated with their willingness to engage in oral communication and pronunciation-related activities. In this study, students' strong cognitive awareness of the importance of pronunciation appears to encourage them to accept feedback and engage in improvement during class. Supporting this interpretation, Saito et al. (2020) found that learners with positive beliefs about pronunciation tend to be more proactive in practice and more effective in utilizing feedback. However, the present findings suggest that positive beliefs alone may not be sufficient to sustain consistent pronunciation practice beyond the classroom.

From a pedagogical perspective, these results underscore the importance of fostering sustained behavioral engagement through structured opportunities for independent practice. Recent research by Assalamah et al. (2024) found that Indonesian EFL learners hold positive attitudes toward using educational technology tools such as pronunciation applications and digital platforms to practice pronunciation independently, and that these tools help increase students' frequency of practice, motivation, and perceived self-efficacy outside the classroom. Therefore, lecturers are encouraged to integrate guided out of class activities, such as the use of digital media, mobile applications, and online pronunciation tools, to support autonomous learning. By bridging the gap between classroom instruction and independent practice, students' behavioral attitudes toward pronunciation learning may be strengthened, leading to more consistent engagement and improved pronunciation outcomes.

Relationship among Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral Attitudes

The overall mean score of 3.83, categorized as positive, indicates that students at Pohuwato University generally hold favorable attitudes toward learning English pronunciation in the Phonetics and Phonology course. Among the attitude components, the cognitive component achieved the highest mean score, followed by the behavioral and affective components. This pattern suggests that students possess strong beliefs and awareness regarding the importance of pronunciation, which plays a central role in shaping their learning engagement.

The findings further reveal a clear interrelationship among the cognitive, affective, and behavioral components of attitude. Strong cognitive awareness appears to facilitate students' behavioral engagement, as reflected in their willingness to practice pronunciation and respond to corrective feedback. However, affective factors, particularly anxiety and lack of confidence, remain constraints that limit students' active participation, especially in oral and performance-based activities. This result supports contemporary views of attitude as a multidimensional construct encompassing beliefs, emotions, and actions, in which each component interacts dynamically. As emphasized by Teimouri et al. (2019), emotional variables can mediate the relationship between knowledge and performance in second language learning, indicating that positive beliefs and behaviors may not automatically lead to optimal outcomes when negative emotions persist.

Based on these findings, several pedagogical implications can be drawn for pronunciation instruction in the Phonetics and Phonology course. Lecturers should continue to emphasize pronunciation theory and awareness-raising activities, as these effectively strengthen students' cognitive foundations. At the same time, instructional practices should be

designed to address affective barriers by creating a supportive and low-anxiety learning environment. Interactive and collaborative activities, peer feedback, and repeated exposure to pronunciation practice have been shown to reduce learners' anxiety and increase confidence (O'Brien et al., 2018). In addition, encouraging consistent pronunciation practice beyond the classroom through the use of digital tools—such as pronunciation applications, online dictionaries, and audio-based learning platforms—can help sustain behavioral engagement. By integrating cognitive understanding, affective support, and continuous practice, pronunciation instruction can become more effective and lead to more sustainable learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the findings indicate that students hold generally positive attitudes toward learning English pronunciation. The cognitive component emerged as the strongest, showing that students understand and believe in the importance of correct pronunciation for clear and effective communication. This cognitive awareness is reflected in the behavioral component, as students demonstrate willingness to practice pronunciation, accept feedback, and improve their speaking performance. However, the affective component reveals that some students still experience anxiety and lack confidence when practicing pronunciation, particularly in public speaking contexts. These results suggest that students' attitudes toward pronunciation are interconnected, with strong cognitive understanding and positive learning behaviors accompanied by persisting emotional challenges. Therefore, pronunciation instruction should address not only knowledge and practice but also learners' affective needs by fostering confidence and reducing anxiety.

This study also offers directions for future research. Longitudinal studies may explore how sustained pronunciation instruction can transform cognitive awareness into stronger affective engagement and reduced anxiety over time. Future research may further examine variables such as proficiency level, learning experience, and exposure to English outside the classroom to better understand individual differences in attitudes. In addition, experimental studies could investigate the effectiveness of technology-enhanced pronunciation instruction, including mobile applications and AI-assisted tools, in improving learners' confidence and speaking performance. Finally, the cognitive–affective–behavioral attitude framework used in this study may serve as a basis for future classroom-based and action research, enabling educators to adapt instructional practices and enhance pronunciation learning outcomes.

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