

REVIEW

Voices Unveiled: Navigating NNESTs' Beliefs on Pronunciation Teaching — A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

Pronunciation instruction is crucial to English language teaching, significantly impacting communicative competence and language acquisition. In this context, in-service non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) play a pivotal role, although their beliefs regarding pronunciation teaching practices are diverse and complex. This systematic review, conducted in accordance with the PRISMA statement, examines 22 peer-reviewed papers published between 2014 and 2023 to thoroughly explore these beliefs. The reviewed studies predominantly utilized qualitative methods to explore teachers' perceptions and teaching approaches, and four key themes emerge. First, NNESTs emphasize the importance of pronunciation for communicative competence, shifting focus from native-like pronunciation to intelligibility. Second, pedagogical approaches vary, with many teachers still relying on traditional methods such as drills, despite a growing interest in integrating pronunciation into communicative tasks like role-plays and discussions. Third, significant challenges hinder effective pronunciation instruction, including inadequate teacher training, time constraints, and a lack of suitable teaching materials. Teachers often resort to traditional methods due to these limitations, despite recognizing the need for more interactive strategies. Finally, factors such as teachers' linguistic backgrounds, sociocultural expectations, and institutional contexts shape their instructional practices. The review emphasizes the need for targeted professional development and institutional policies that support pronunciation teaching. Addressing these issues is crucial for enhancing pronunciation instruction and supporting NNESTs in diverse educational settings.

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Keywords: Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers (NNESTs); Teacher Beliefs; Pronunciation Teaching; Professional Development; Institutional Support

1. Introduction

Pronunciation is a fundamental aspect of second language acquisition (SLA), not only influencing learners' speaking skills but also significantly impacting their listening comprehension and overall communicative competence^[1]. In the broader context of English language teaching (ELT), pronunciation has traditionally been marginalized^[2], yet its role in facilitating clear and intelligible communication remains critical. As English has become the global lingua franca, intelligible pronunciation has emerged as a key determinant of communicative success, influencing learners' academic and professional interactions^[3]. Learners' pronunciation skills not only affect their overall language proficiency but their confidence in using English for real-world purposes, making pronunciation instruction a crucial element of language pedagogy^[4].

In the context of globalization, the goals of pronunciation teaching have shifted from striving for native-like accuracy to prioritizing intelligibility, reflecting the growing acceptance of English as a lingua franca (ELF) in international communication^[5]. This shift is especially pertinent for non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs), who have learned English as a second or foreign language themselves. These teachers bring unique insights into the challenges learners face with pronunciation, as their personal experiences in acquiring English pronunciation allow them to empathize with their students' struggles and offer informed instructional strategies. Historically, pronunciation teaching focused on phonetic accuracy through repetitive drills^[6], but contemporary approaches emphasize communicative competence and contextualized learning^[7]. This shift underscores the importance of understanding NNESTs' beliefs and how these beliefs shape their teaching methods.

Despite their valuable perspectives, NNESTs face a range of challenges in pronunciation teaching. Linguistically, they must navigate the phonetic differences between

their first language (L1) and English, which can influence their confidence and teaching practices^[8]. Pedagogically, they need to accommodate diverse student needs, from varying levels of phonological awareness to different pronunciation norms. Moreover, NNESTs often navigate the cultural implications of accent and identity in their teaching. They must balance the demands of standardized English pronunciation while acknowledging the legitimacy of different English varieties that reflect students' diverse linguistic backgrounds^[9]. These intersecting linguistic, pedagogical, and cultural factors make pronunciation instruction particularly complex for NNESTs.

Several studies have explored NNESTs' beliefs and practices in pronunciation teaching, revealing diverse strategies and attitudes influenced by their linguistic and cultural backgrounds^[10-13]. While these studies offer valuable insights, they often focus on specific contexts, lacking a broader synthesis that identifies commonalities or divergences across different teaching environments. This gap in literature underscores the need for a systematic review that consolidates existing research and offers a comprehensive analysis of the challenges and strategies NNESTs employ in pronunciation instruction.

This review aims to address two key research questions: (1) How have NNESTs' beliefs about pronunciation teaching been explored in existing research? (2) What are the latest areas of discussion in the literature regarding NNESTs' beliefs about pronunciation teaching? By addressing these questions, this review seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of NNESTs' beliefs and their impact on pronunciation teaching, offering insights for both language educators and researchers.

2. Methodology

2.1. The Review Protocol – PRISMA

This review adhered to the PRISMA (Preferred Re-

porting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework developed by Page et al. ^[14]. The primary objective of employing PRISMA was to ensure comprehensive and transparent reporting, thereby enabling readers to assess the appropriateness of the methods used and, consequently, the reliability of the findings. Additionally, by presenting and summarizing the characteristics of the studies that contributed to the synthesis, this approach facilitated the evaluation of the relevance of the findings within various educational contexts, proving valuable to policymakers. As emphasized by Sierra-Correa and Cantera Kintz ^[15], PRISMA offers three key advantages: (1) the formulation of well-defined research questions conducive to systematic investigation; (2) the explicit identification of inclusion and exclusion criteria; and (3) the systematic examination of a substantial body of scientific literature within a specified timeframe. The PRISMA statement guided a meticulous search of terms related to innovative teaching. This guideline encompasses four fundamental phases: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion.

2.2. Information Sources

The Oxford English Dictionary was consulted to identify synonyms for the term “belief” in the context of a firmly held opinion. Following peer discussions, the terms “belief,” “cognition,” “perspective,” “attitude,” “knowledge,” and “perception” were selected. After an initial review of the literature, the terms “understanding,” “view,” and “opinion” were also included to ensure the inclusion of all relevant results. Given the specific focus of synthesizing studies concerning the influence of teachers’ pronunciation teaching beliefs on their instructional practices in English as a foreign language (EFL) and English as a second language (ESL) contexts, this systematic review exclusively sourced studies related to this topic. Consequently, studies exploring learners’ perspectives and attitudes towards English pronunciation, such as motivation, exposure, and learner autonomy, were deliberately excluded. The review retrieved relevant studies from five distinct databases: Web of Science, Scopus, Dimensions, Sage, and the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC). Web of Science is regarded as a cornerstone in

academic research, recognized as one of the most popular and influential scholarly resources. Scopus was chosen for its prominence as a leading global database for research publications and its reputation as a reliable source of bibliographic data. Dimensions, distinguished as the world’s most extensive interlinked research information dataset, provides researchers with unparalleled access to the entire research ecosystem. Sage was selected for its critical role in disseminating cutting-edge research across disciplines and its status as a key resource for scholars worldwide. Lastly, ERIC serves as an invaluable repository of knowledge, offering a wealth of peer-reviewed articles, reports, and educational resources essential for evidence-based practice in education. The combination of these databases ensures a diverse and comprehensive pool of research studies relevant to the beliefs and practices of non-native English-speaking teachers in pronunciation instruction.

2.3. Search Strategies

The process of article selection, in accordance with the PRISMA model criteria as illustrated in Figure 1, involved four distinct phases: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. The initial identification phase involved locating relevant records based on the primary keywords, synonyms, and various expressions derived from the research question. The author employed a combination of Boolean operators, phrase searching, and truncation when conducting searches across the Web of Science, Scopus, Dimensions, Sage, and ERIC databases. The search focused on studies published between 2014 and 2023, specifically targeting the relevant topic. A systematic set of keywords was employed for comprehensive searches. These keywords included: (belief OR cognition OR perspective OR attitude OR knowledge OR perception OR understanding OR view OR opinion) AND (pronunciation OR phonetic OR phonolog*) AND (teaching OR practice OR behavior* OR instruction). These terms were strategically combined to perform searches within databases and academic journals. The “AND” operator was used to link specified keywords, while “OR” was employed to avoid potential search duplication. Additionally, a backward search was conducted, thoroughly examining references

in the retrieved articles, aiming to identify any potentially relevant studies that might have been missed in the initial searches.

As a result, the initial pool of articles from the five databases totaled 1,110, consisting of 175 articles from Web of Science, 262 from Scopus, 494 from Dimensions, 70 from Sage, and 109 from ERIC. To avoid redundancy, 202 articles were removed during the deduplication pro-

cess. Subsequently, the titles and abstracts of the remaining 908 articles were meticulously assessed, leading to the exclusion of 886 articles that did not meet the specific criteria of this study (see **Table 1**). Following the elimination of duplicates and the exclusion of titles and abstracts that deviated from the study’s core subject, 22 English-language studies remained.

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Timeline	between 2014 and 2023	before 2014
Language	English	Non-English
Scope	EFL/ESL teachers’ beliefs and practices about pronunciation instruction	not related to pronunciation teaching beliefs from EFL/ESL teachers’ perspectives
Teachers’ Status	currently teaching	pre-service teachers, Prospective teachers, student teachers
Type	empirical studies in the form of journal (research articles) • peer reviewed and full text • quantitative, qualitative, and mixed method research methodologies	books, book chapters, book series, journals (systematic literature review articles), conference proceedings, theses • not peer reviewed or no access to full text • library research/ action research

This review focused on studies published between 2014 and 2023 to capture recent developments in language education. The selected studies had to explore in-service NNESTs’ beliefs about pronunciation teaching in EFL/ESL contexts, ensuring relevance and contemporary insights. Only empirical research presenting original data was included, guaranteeing firsthand insights into teaching practices. To maintain academic rigor, only peer-reviewed journal articles were considered, enhancing the reliability of the findings. Studies older than ten years or those not directly focused on pronunciation instruction in EFL/ESL

settings were excluded. Non-empirical works, such as theoretical papers, reviews, or opinion pieces, were also omitted to ensure the review included only original research data. Additionally, research from non-peer-reviewed sources was excluded to maintain quality. These stringent criteria led to the selection of 22 studies for systematic review, ensuring the research was focused, up-to-date, and aligned with the objectives of exploring NNESTs’ beliefs about pronunciation teaching. **Figure 1** illustrates the complete search process.

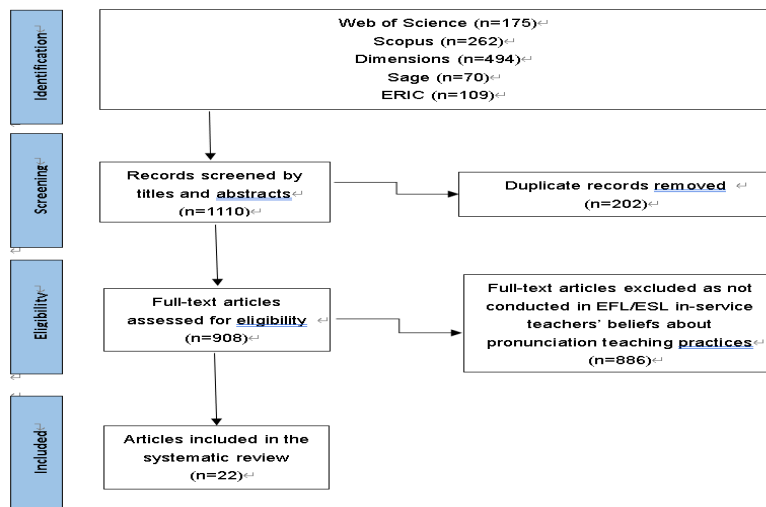


Figure 1. Flow diagram of inclusion and exclusion of articles [in line with PRISMA guidelines (i.e., PRISMA’s four phase flow diagram)]^[14].

2.4. Data Analysis

In alignment with Braun and Clarke's ^[16] six-step procedures for thematic analysis, this study systematically analyzed data sets derived from 22 reviewed studies on pronunciation teaching to address research questions concerning teachers' beliefs and practices. The analysis began with familiarization with the data, which involved an in-depth examination of the findings from each study. This step was crucial to gain insights into the perceptions, pedagogical approaches, and challenges related to pronunciation instruction among various educators and contexts.

The second step focused on generating initial codes from the data. These codes were derived from the major research findings of the studies, highlighting key themes such as "positive attitudes toward pronunciation," "importance of feedback," and "traditional teaching practices." This coding process enabled a structured approach to understanding the complexities of pronunciation teaching as reflected in the data sets, allowing for a focused analysis relevant to the research questions.

In the third step, the analysis involved searching for themes by grouping the initial codes into sub-themes. The codes were categorized based on their relevance and similarities. For example, codes related to attitudes toward pronunciation and belief in importance of correction feedback were clustered under the sub-theme "Importance of Pronunciation". This categorization effectively encapsulated the overarching beliefs held by teachers regarding the role of pronunciation in language acquisition.

The fourth step entailed reviewing the identified themes to ensure they accurately represented the data sets. This involved assessing the coherence and consistency of the sub-themes, leading to the formation of broader themes. For instance, the sub-themes "Traditional Methods" and "Communicative and Integrated Practices" were synthesized into the theme "Pedagogical Approaches to Pronunciation Teaching", which reflects the diverse strategies employed by educators in various contexts.

Defining and naming the themes constituted the fifth step. Each theme was articulated clearly to capture its essence and relevance to the research questions. For example, the theme "Challenges in Pronunciation Teaching"

encompassed obstacles such as insufficient training, time constraints, and lack of resources, all of which were identified across the data sets and linked back to the educators' experiences.

Finally, the sixth step involved producing the report, integrating the themes into a cohesive narrative that directly addresses the research questions. The thematic analysis provided a structured framework to interpret the data obtained from the major research findings, offering insights into how teachers' beliefs and practices in pronunciation instruction are influenced by various factors. This comprehensive approach not only clarifies the relationships between the identified themes and the research questions, but also enhances our understanding of the dynamics involved in pronunciation pedagogy.

By adhering to the PRISMA guidelines and employing rigorous data analysis techniques, this review offers a comprehensive synthesis of NNESTs' beliefs towards pronunciation teaching, providing valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers aiming to enhance pronunciation teaching in EFL/ESL contexts.

3. Results

The initial search across five databases yielded 1,110 results. Following a rigorous quality assessment and the exclusion of studies that did not meet the established criteria, 22 studies remained for in-depth analysis. This systematic review aimed to address two research questions: (1) How have NNESTs' beliefs about pronunciation teaching been explored in existing research? (2) What are the latest areas of discussion in the literature regarding NNESTs' beliefs about pronunciation teaching? The examination of research instruments and contexts in Section 3.1 illustrates how NNESTs' beliefs about pronunciation teaching have been investigated, while Section 3.2 reveals four major themes regarding NNESTs' beliefs about pronunciation teaching.

3.1. Research Instruments and Contexts for Investigating Pronunciation Teaching Beliefs

As shown in **Table 2**, the 22 selected studies were

published between 2014 and 2023, with a noticeable increase in interest from 2020 onward. The highest number of publications occurred in 2020 (n=5), followed by 2021 (n=4), suggesting growing attention to NNESTs' beliefs about pronunciation teaching, particularly in Asian

contexts such as Vietnam. This upward trend suggests increased attention to pronunciation pedagogy, influenced by educational reforms and shifts toward communicative competence.

Table 2. Research instruments and contexts in the selected studies.

Study	Context	Research Design	Instruments
Aksakalli (2022)	Turkey	QL	Interview
Phuong (2022)	Vietnam	QL	Interview, Observation
Escobar (2022)	Chile	QL	Interview
Jafari et al. (2021)	Iran	MM	Questionnaire, Interview
Nguyen et al. (2021)	Vietnam	QL	Document Analysis, Observation, Interview
Abdul-Abbas et al. (2021)	Iraq	QN	Questionnaire
Quoc et al. (2021)	Vietnam	QL	Interview, Observation
Phuong (2020)	Vietnam	QL	Interview, Observation, Document Analysis
Tran and Nguyen (2020)	Vietnam	MM	Questionnaire, Interview, Observation
Gordon (2020)	Costa Rica	QL	Interview, Observation
Nguyen and Newton (2020)	Vietnam	QL	Observation, Interview
Altoeriqi (2020)	Saudi Arabia	QN	Questionnaire
Bai and Yuan (2019)	Hong Kong	QL	Written Reflection, Follow-up Interview
Štěpáník and Vlčková-Mejvaldová (2019)	Czech Republic	QN	Questionnaire
Gordon (2019)	Costa Rica	QL	Interview, Observation
Yağiz (2018)	Turkey	MM	Questionnaire, Interview, Observation
Georgiou (2018)	Cyprus	QN	Questionnaire
Bodorík (2017)	Slovak	QN	Questionnaire
Shah et al. (2017)	Malaysia	QL	Observation, Interview
Buss (2016)	Brazil	QN	Questionnaire
Yunus et al. (2016)	Iran	MM	Questionnaire, Interview
Couper (2016)	Uruguay	QL	Interview

Note: QN = Quantitative, QL = Qualitative, MM = Mixed Method.

As depicted in **Figure 2**, the selected 22 studies utilized diverse research methodologies to investigate NNESTs' beliefs on pronunciation teaching, with qualitative methods (QL) being the most commonly used (n=12), followed by quantitative (QN) (n=6), and mixed-method (MM) (n=4) approaches. Qualitative studies, particularly those using interviews, provided deep insights into NNESTs' beliefs, shaped by their linguistic and professional experiences. Interviews were the most frequently used tool in qualitative studies, featuring 16 of the 22 studies. Classroom observations were incorporated in few-

er studies (n=10), reflecting a gap in directly correlating teachers' beliefs with their practices. Mixed-method studies such as Jafari et al. ^[11] and Tran and Nguyen ^[17] incorporated both questionnaires and interviews, allowing for triangulation of findings and the validation of teacher-reported beliefs with their classroom practices. However, studies that relied solely on questionnaires or interviews, such as Altoeriqi ^[18] and Abdul-Abbas et al. ^[19], may have limited their ability to comprehensively capture the practical implications of teachers' beliefs.

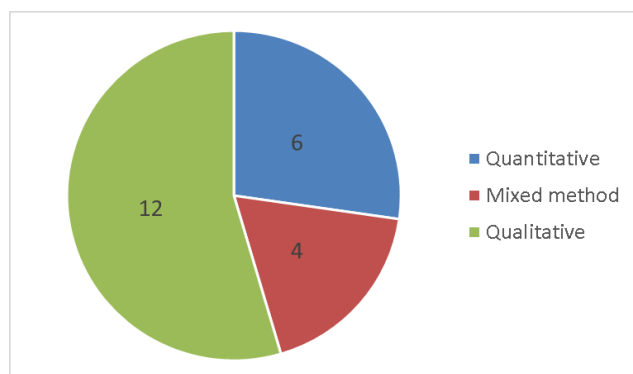


Figure 2. Frequency of the research design.

The geographical distribution of the studies (see Figure 3), with a concentration in Vietnam (n=6), Iran (n=2), and Turkey (n=2), emphasizes the role of context in shaping NNESTs’ beliefs. Vietnam, representing the largest share of studies, reflects a growing interest in pronunciation instruction in Asian contexts, where a focus on intelligibility aligns with shifts toward communicative language teaching. In contrast, studies from Turkey highlight a balanced emphasis on both intelligibility and accuracy, influenced by institutional expectations. These findings suggest that NNESTs’ beliefs are deeply influenced by the sociocultural and institutional factors of their specific teaching environments, rather than being formed in isolation.

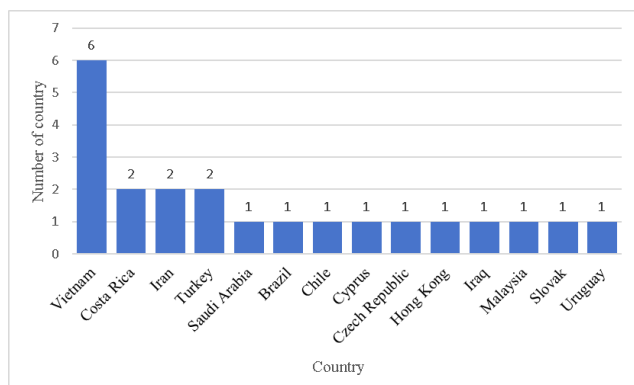


Figure 3. Geographical distribution of studies.

3.2. Emerging Research Themes in NNESTs’ Beliefs on Pronunciation Teaching

Upon reviewing the 22 selected studies on in-service NNESTs’ beliefs regarding pronunciation teaching, four major themes emerged. These themes reflect patterns of teachers’ beliefs, pedagogical approaches, challenges,

and contextual influences. These themes were developed through a descriptive coding process and then refined and grouped to ensure analytical clarity. The studies were then mapped into the following four major themes: 1) perceptions about pronunciation in language learning (n = 15); 2) pedagogical approaches used in pronunciation teaching (n = 15); 3) challenges in pronunciation teaching (n = 14); and 4) factors influencing pronunciation teaching (n = 14) (see Table 3). Several studies overlapped across these themes, indicating the complexity of the relationship between teachers’ beliefs, their instructional practices, and the broader context in which they operate.

Theme 1: Perceptions about Pronunciation in Language Learning

NNESTs’ perceptions of pronunciation teaching form the foundation of their instructional practices. Through 15 of the reviewed studies, teachers consistently emphasized the importance of pronunciation for enhancing learners’ communicative competence. However, there is a growing recognition that teaching native-like pronunciation is no longer the primary goal; instead, the focus has shifted toward intelligibility.

The belief that pronunciation is crucial for clear communication was a common thread in studies [20–24]. Nguyen et al. [20], for instance, found that both teachers and students in Vietnamese tertiary institutions considered pronunciation a vital component of language learning. Buss [21] similarly noted that Brazilian teachers recognized the role of pronunciation in helping students meet communicative goals, even though many still relied on traditional methods like repetition and drills.

An important shift in perception is that NNESTs’ beliefs from native-like pronunciation toward prioritizing intelligibility. Across various contexts, teachers increasingly recognize that their goal should be to help learners achieve clear communication rather than mimic native-speaker accents. Escobar [25] noted that Chilean teachers favoured intelligibility as a more attainable and practical objective for their learners, especially in multilingual settings. In studies such as Tran and Nguyen [17] and Quoc et al. [26], Vietnam teachers emphasized the role of authentic and intelligible materials, aligning their teaching practices with helping learners communicate effectively in real-world situations.

This shift is supported by frameworks like Jenkins' ^[5] *Lingua Franca Core*. This shift signifies a pedagogical move toward learner-centered approaches, where teachers focus on helping students communicate effectively in real-world settings, rather than merely correcting isolated pronunciation errors.

Theme 2: Pedagogical Approaches to Pronunciation Teaching

The pedagogical approaches to pronunciation instruction among NNESTs were explored in 15 studies, revealing a spectrum of methods ranging from traditional drills to more communicative, integrative practices. Despite the shift toward more communicative goals, many NNESTs continue to rely on traditional methods, such as drills, repetition, and imitation. For instance, Jafari et al. ^[11] and Yunus et al. ^[27] found that NNESTs teachers primarily used traditional methods such as reading aloud drills and repetition and imitation exercises to correct pronunciation. Similarly, Buss ^[21] noted that Brazilian teachers focused on word-level features and individual sounds through repetitive drills. These practices, while effective in addressing segmental features (individual sounds), tend to be limited in addressing broader communicative goals.

Conversely, several studies highlighted a growing interest in integrating pronunciation with broader communicative tasks. In Altoeriqi ^[18], the teachers stated that communicative practice was the best way to teach pronunciation. Nguyen et al. ^[20] and Shah et al. ^[28] demonstrated that Southeast Asian teachers were increasingly embedding pronunciation into speaking and listening activities. This approach allows learners to practice pronunciation in real-life contexts, improving their overall communicative competence. In contrast to traditional drills, communicative tasks like role-plays and debates provide learners with opportunities to apply pronunciation in a more holistic, meaningful manner.

An important distinction in pronunciation pedagogy lies between the focus on segmental (individual sounds) and suprasegmental (intonation, stress, rhythm) features. Studies including Tran and Nguyen ^[17] and Nguyen and Newton ^[10] indicate that NNESTs tend to prioritize segmental features over suprasegmental ones. Teachers in these studies believe that addressing segmental errors,

such as vowel and consonant sounds, is more manageable and leads to immediate improvements in learners' speech. However, fewer teachers place emphasis on suprasegmental features, which are equally crucial for achieving natural, intelligible speech. In addition, Phuong ^[29] highlighted that while teachers recognized the importance of stress and intonation, they often lacked the training to address these features effectively, resulting in an overemphasis on segmental corrections. On the other side, in Altoeriqi ^[18] and Bodorik ^[30], respondents advocated concentrating on both segmental and suprasegmental, but desired for more phonological knowledge.

Theme 3: Challenges in Pronunciation Teaching

The reviewed studies consistently pointed to the significant challenges NNESTs face in teaching pronunciation effectively, as identified in 14 studies. These challenges include insufficient training in pronunciation pedagogy, time constraints, and a lack of adequate materials and resources.

One frequently cited challenge is the lack of sufficient teacher training in pronunciation pedagogy. Several studies reported that many NNESTs felt ill-prepared to teach pronunciation effectively. In Phuong ^[31], for instance, Vietnamese teachers admitted that their lack of formal training in pronunciation pedagogy limited their ability to implement innovative or communicative approaches. Bai and Yuan ^[32] in Hongkong also found that the lack of initial training and professional learning opportunities constrained teachers' pronunciation pedagogy. Consequently, teachers often resorted to traditional methods like drills, despite recognizing the benefits of more interactive strategies.

Time constraints also impede teachers' ability to provide comprehensive pronunciation instruction. Tran and Nguyen ^[17] observed that Vietnamese teachers often provided unplanned, reactive feedback on pronunciation due to insufficient time for structured lessons. In the similar vein, Shah et al. ^[28] found that Malaysia teachers faced considerable time pressures, which hindered their ability to systematically teach pronunciation. Georgiou ^[33] highlighted similar time-related challenges for Cypriot teachers. This scarcity of time forced teachers to prioritize other skills, leaving little opportunity for explicit pronunciation

teaching.

Table 3. Overview of themes in selected studies on pronunciation teaching.

Theme	Sub-theme	Codes	Sources
1. Perceptions about Pronunciation in Language Learning (n = 15)	- Importance of Pronunciation	PA/FI/SB/ TC	[9,11,18–24,29,30,32]
	- Shift from Native-like to Intelligibility	WE/EI/AM	[17,25,26]
2. Pedagogical Approaches to Pronunciation Teaching (n = 15)	- Traditional Methods	TP/CF/TE	[11,19,21,24,27,33]
	- Communicative and Integrated Practices	TM/CT/IP	[18,20,25,28]
	- Focus on Segmental vs. Suprasegmental Features	FS/BSS	[10,17,18,29,30]
3. Challenges in Pronunciation Teaching (n = 14)	- Insufficient Training	PT/LT/ITE	[9–11,17–19,21,24,31–33]
	- Time Constraints	IT/TL	[17,26,28,31,33]
	- Lack of Resources	IR/IPT	[9,17,29,32]
4. Factors Influencing Pronunciation Teaching (n = 14)	- Linguistic Backgrounds	PE/OA/NNS	[19,27,28,31,32,34,35]
	- Sociocultural Expectations	SC/BAE/SE	[19,25,29,32]
	- Institutional Contexts	SRE/ED/CFR	[9,10,17,19,23,28,32]

Note: PA = Positive attitudes toward pronunciation; FI = belief in feedback importance; SB = strong belief in communicative teaching; TC = necessity of time contribution to pronunciation teaching; WE = world Englishes as an important element; EI = emphasis on intelligibility; AM = role of authentic materials; TP = traditional teaching practices; CF = instant correction feedback; TE = transcription exercises; TM = technology as a forced methodology; CT = communicative pronunciation teaching; IP = integration of pronunciation with other skills; FS = focus on segmental features; BSS = both segments and supra segments; PT = poor training; LT = lack of training; ITE = invalid teacher education; IT = insufficient time for instruction; TL = time limitation; IR = insufficient learning resources; IPT = inadequate pronunciation textbooks; PE = previous teaching and learning experiences; OA = their own foreign accents; NNS = non-native English teacher status; SC = sociocultural contexts; BAE = the lane of British and American English; SE = current status of English in today’s world; SRE = syllabus requirements and examination-focused format; ED = examination demands; CFR = intended curriculum and other formal requirements

Another major challenge is the lack of resources specifically designed for pronunciation instruction. Teachers in studies by Bai and Yuan ^[32] and Couper ^[9] expressed concerns about the scarcity of suitable materials tailored to address pronunciation issues. Tran and Nguyen ^[17] also noted the insufficient availability of pronunciation teaching resources, which compelled many teachers to rely on generic materials that did not address the specific needs of their students. These challenges highlight the need for more targeted teacher training and resources in pronunciation pedagogy, indicating a crucial area for future research and curriculum development to ensure effective pronunciation instruction.

Theme 4: Factors Influencing Pronunciation Teaching

The reviewed research highlighted several key influences, including NNESTs’ linguistic backgrounds, socio-cultural expectations, and institutional contexts, as identified in 14 studies. Studies across different contexts reveal shape how teachers approach pronunciation pedagogy,

affecting their confidence and instructional strategies.

NNESTs’ own linguistic backgrounds significantly impact their beliefs and practices regarding pronunciation teaching. Teachers’ experiences as non-native speakers shape their perceptions of pronunciation norms and their confidence in teaching pronunciation. Gordon ^[34,35] found that some NNESTs lacked confidence in their ability to teach pronunciation due to their non-native status. Similarly, Abdul-Abbas et al. ^[19] reported that teachers viewed their own foreign accents as a potential hindrance to effective pronunciation instruction, leading them to rely on external resources, such as audio recordings of native speakers, to provide pronunciation models for their students. Despite these negative impacts, some NNESTs expressed that their own experiences as learners gave them unique insights into their students’ struggles with pronunciation. This empathetic understanding allowed them to tailor their instruction to meet the specific needs of non-native learners, particularly those who share similar linguistic backgrounds ^[28].

Sociocultural expectations also play a significant role in shaping teachers' approaches to pronunciation teaching. In many contexts, societal expectations of native-like pronunciation persist, even though NNESTs recognize that this is an unrealistic goal for most learners. Bai and Yuan^[32] reported that teachers in Hong Kong felt pressure to conform to native-speaker models, which undermined their confidence in teaching pronunciation. In Escobar^[25], teachers expressed concerns that students' local accents would hinder their ability to communicate effectively. Teachers believed that fostering a certain standard of pronunciation was essential for students to succeed in global contexts. However, this focus on a particular accent could inadvertently lead to the marginalization of diverse English varieties.

Institutional contexts, particularly exam-oriented curricula and limited resources, significantly affect teachers' capacity to teach pronunciation. For example, Tran and Nguyen^[17] and Couper^[9] found that teachers often sidelined pronunciation because it was not assessed in high-stakes exams. Shah et al.^[28] reported that Malaysian schools did not prioritize pronunciation instruction, offering minimal support in terms of labs, software, and materials. Similarly, Altoeriqi^[18] highlighted that the absence of audio/visual labs hindered pronunciation teaching. Furthermore, Abdul-Abbas et al.^[19] identified institutional constraints in Iraq, which limited teachers' ability to allocate sufficient time and resources to pronunciation instruction, despite acknowledging its importance.

Overall, the 22 reviewed studies highlight four key themes that shape NNESTs' beliefs and practices regarding pronunciation teaching: perceptions about pronunciation, pedagogical approaches, challenges in teaching pronunciation, and contextual and instructional influences. While NNESTs generally view pronunciation as crucial for communicative competence, they face significant challenges in delivering effective instruction, particularly due to a lack of training, time constraints, and limited resources. Additionally, contextual factors such as sociocultural expectations and institutional support play a pivotal role in shaping their instructional practices. Addressing these challenges will require targeted professional development, increased institutional resources, and a shift away from

native-speaker models of pronunciation to focus more on intelligibility and communicative competence in diverse English-speaking contexts.

4. Discussion

This discussion synthesizes findings from an analysis of 22 studies focused on non-native English-speaking teachers' (NNESTs) beliefs regarding pronunciation instruction. The review reveals a complex landscape in which NNESTs acknowledge the significance of pronunciation for communicative competence but often struggle to translate these beliefs into effective classroom practices. Various challenges, including insufficient training in pronunciation pedagogy, time constraints, and inadequate materials, hinder the consistent integration of pronunciation-focused instruction. Additionally, teachers' experiences as non-native speakers, coupled with sociocultural expectations for standardized accents and institutional pressures especially exam-oriented curricula, further complicate their teaching approaches and diminish their confidence in delivering effective pronunciation lessons. These findings underscore the complexities inherent in aligning pedagogical beliefs with actual teaching practices.

A common theme across studies on NNESTs is the persistent gap between their beliefs about pronunciation teaching and actual classroom practices. Borg's^[36] model of teacher cognition highlights how contextual factors—such as institutional policies and resource availability—often hinder teachers from translating their beliefs into practice. In Vietnam and Hong Kong, for example, exam-driven curricula prioritize grammar and vocabulary over pronunciation, limiting teachers' opportunities to focus on it, despite their belief in its importance^[10,32]. This issue extends globally, with similar findings in European contexts where curriculum and resource constraints also prevent the effective integration of pronunciation instruction^[33,37]. Overall, teachers' beliefs are heavily influenced and shaped by external factors like educational policies and institutional demands, underscoring the need for systemic changes to better align instructional practices with pedagogical beliefs.

Insufficient training in pronunciation pedagogy

emerges as a significant barrier for NNESTs. Many teachers, particularly those who received limited instruction on pronunciation during their training, feel unprepared to effectively teach this aspect of language^[38,39]. Consequently, they often rely on outdated or ineffective methods, which erode their confidence and reduce the frequency and impact of pronunciation instruction in their classrooms. Conversely, studies by Nguyen and Burri^[40] and Tsunemoto et al.^[12] demonstrate that teachers who receive comprehensive training in pronunciation pedagogy are more likely to integrate effective strategies into their teaching routines. This implies the urgent need for structured and practical training programs that focus specifically on pronunciation teaching strategies in teacher education.

The review also uncovered regional discrepancies in the emphasis placed on different aspects of pronunciation instruction. Studies conducted in Western contexts, such as Costa Rica and Cyprus, tend to focus more on suprasegmental features like intonation, rhythm, and stress^[33,35], reflecting a greater emphasis on communicative competence^[41]. Conversely, in Asian contexts like Vietnam, the focus remains on segmental features such as phonemes and word sounds^[10,31]. These regional differences illustrate systemic disparities in educational policies and teacher training programs. Rigid curricula and inadequate training in communicative pronunciation approaches in many Asian settings limit teachers' capacity to adopt more comprehensive instructional methods. This highlights the necessity for global initiatives aimed at balancing the teaching of segmental and suprasegmental features to enhance pronunciation instruction worldwide.

Lastly, the reliance on qualitative data, particularly interviews, in the reviewed studies indicates a limitation in the current research landscape. While interviews effectively elicit teachers' beliefs, they may not fully capture the complexities of classroom practices. For instance, although teachers may express strong beliefs in the importance of pronunciation, their actual classroom practices often reflect different priorities, particularly in exam-driven settings. This limitation underscores the need for a more robust research approach that combines qualitative interviews with classroom observations. Observations provide direct insights into instructional practices, allowing

researchers to observe how teachers' stated beliefs about pronunciation teaching translate into real-world actions^[42]. By employing such mixed methodologies, researchers can achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the belief-practice relationship and better identify the contextual factors influencing instructional choices.

5. Conclusion

This systematic review provides a comprehensive synthesis of 22 studies that explore EFL teachers' beliefs regarding pronunciation teaching, focusing on research conducted from 2014 to 2023. The analysis revealed four key themes: perceptions of pronunciation in language learning, pedagogical approaches to pronunciation teaching, challenges faced by NNESTs, and factors shaping their beliefs and practices. A significant trend was the shift from native-like pronunciation to intelligibility as a priority, particularly in Asian contexts such as Vietnam^[17,20]. Despite this shift, many teachers continued to rely on traditional methods like drills and repetition^[11,21], suggesting a disconnect between evolving pedagogical principles and classroom practices.

The findings highlight a pressing need for more comprehensive teacher training programs that bridge the gap between beliefs and practices. While teachers recognize the importance of communicative competence, limited resources and knowledge prevent them from adopting more innovative methods^[18,31]. Furthermore, sociocultural and institutional constraints, including exam-oriented curricula, continue to influence pronunciation teaching strategies, underscoring the need for system-level reforms.

To facilitate pronunciation teaching and address existing gaps, practitioners and policymakers should implement several key recommendations. First, teacher training programs must be improved to integrate theoretical foundations with practical strategies, including workshops that emphasize communicative approaches. Second, adequate resources, such as digital tools and multimedia materials, should be allocated to support innovative teaching techniques. Third, it is crucial to advocate for curriculum reforms that prioritize communicative competence over rote memorization, thereby fostering greater learner engage-

ment. Finally, creating opportunities for peer collaboration among teachers can establish a responsive framework that enhances EFL/ESL learners' communicative competence and confidence in diverse linguistic environments.

This review contributes to the growing body of literature by offering a nuanced perspective on the interplay between NNESTs' beliefs and practices in pronunciation instruction. However, its findings are limited by the regional concentration of the studies, particularly in Vietnam, potentially affecting the generalizability of the results. Moreover, the reliance on qualitative studies highlights a gap in quantitative data, suggesting the need for more balanced research designs.

Future research should expand geographically to include underrepresented regions such as Africa and South America, where NNESTs' experiences with pronunciation teaching remain underexplored. Additionally, mixed-method approaches integrating qualitative and quantitative data would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how teacher beliefs translate into classroom practices. Teacher training should prioritize practical strategies that align communicative objectives with instructional methods, ensuring a more coherent implementation of pronunciation pedagogy.

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