

## **“English in *Pesantren* Soundscape”: Linguistic identity and pronunciation development among Indonesian EFL learners in *pesantren***

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### **Abstract**

This study investigates how linguistic identity and educational ecology shape English pronunciation development among Indonesian EFL learners in a *pesantren* context. Situated within a multilingual Islamic boarding school environment where English is practiced alongside Indonesian, local languages, and Arabic, the study examines pronunciation not merely as a phonological skill, but as a socially negotiated and educationally mediated process. Using a qualitative case-study design, the research involved 11th-grade students at one of modern *pesantren* in East Java, Indonesia. The preliminary data were collected through pronunciation tasks and followed with semi-structured interviews, and contextual analysis of students' language practices within the practical environment. Preliminary pronunciation findings revealed systematic interlanguage patterns in the form of substitution, epenthesis, deletion, and cluster reduction, particularly in multisyllabic words and vowel production. These phonological modifications indicate the influence of first-language transfer and learners' adaptation to unfamiliar English sound structures. However, deeper analysis demonstrated that pronunciation development was also strongly shaped by broader educational and sociolinguistic factors. The findings show that peer interaction, institutional language practices, limited exposure to authentic pronunciation models, and affective pressures such as anxiety and fear of negative evaluation significantly influenced learners' confidence and spoken English performance. In addition, the *pesantren* soundscape created a unique linguistic environment in which non-target-like pronunciation patterns were collectively circulated and normalized among learners. From an educational linguistics perspective, the study argues that pronunciation acquisition in EFL settings should be understood as both a linguistic and identity-forming process embedded within social interaction and institutional culture. This study contributes to the growing discussion on educational ecology and second language pronunciation by highlighting how multilingual boarding school environments mediate learners' interlanguage development and English-speaking identity formation.

### **Keywords**

educational ecology, pronunciation learning, linguistic identity, interlanguage development, *pesantren*

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## Introduction

English has become an essential global language used across education, technology, international communication, and professional interaction, positioning English proficiency as a crucial competence for learners in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts (Chenenje, 2024). Among the various components of language competence, pronunciation plays a central role because it directly influences intelligibility, communicative confidence, and learners' participation in spoken interaction (Srakaew, 2021). In contemporary EFL pedagogy, pronunciation is no longer viewed merely as the production of accurate sounds, but as part of learners' communicative identity and social positioning within multilingual environments. Learners' ability to "sound English" often shapes how they perceive themselves and how they are perceived by others in educational and social interactions. Consequently, pronunciation development should be understood not only as a linguistic process, but also as a socially mediated and educationally situated practice.

In multilingual educational settings such as *pesantren*, pronunciation learning becomes even more complex. *Pesantren*, or Islamic boarding schools, represent unique linguistic environments where students are exposed to multiple languages simultaneously, including Indonesian, regional languages, Arabic, and English (Muhammad & Ashadi, 2019). English is frequently integrated into both academic and extracurricular activities such as classroom interaction, daily conversation, public speaking (*muhadharah*), and dormitory communication (Deyanti & Hindun, 2024). This intensive language exposure creates a distinctive educational ecology in which language learning occurs not only through formal instruction, but also through peer interaction, institutional language policies, and everyday communicative practices. From an educational linguistics perspective, such environments significantly shape learners' language behavior, linguistic identity, and pronunciation development.

Despite the increasing use of English in *pesantren* environments, pronunciation remains one of the most challenging aspects of English acquisition among Indonesian EFL learners. English phonology differs substantially from Indonesian phonological structures, particularly in vowel systems, consonant clusters, stress patterns, and syllable complexity (Larasati & Pammu, 2023). Indonesian learners therefore frequently rely on familiar first-language phonological patterns when producing English sounds. Within Second Language Acquisition (SLA) theory, this phenomenon can be explained through interlanguage theory, which conceptualizes learner language as a dynamic linguistic system influenced by first-language transfer and ongoing exposure to the target language (Selinker, 1972). Similarly, Odlin (1989) argues that language transfer plays a crucial role in shaping second-language pronunciation, especially when learners encounter unfamiliar phonological structures absent from their native language.

Preliminary findings from the pronunciation task conducted in this study demonstrate that learners systematically modified English syllable structures during speech production. Several pronunciation patterns emerged, including substitution, epenthesis, deletion, and cluster reduction across monosyllabic, disyllabic, and trisyllabic words. For instance, learners frequently simplified English diphthongs into monophthongs, replaced unfamiliar consonants with more familiar Indonesian sounds, and inserted additional vowels within consonant clusters. Vowel modification in nucleus positions appeared particularly dominant, especially in longer lexical items. These findings indicate that pronunciation modification among *pesantren* learners is not random, but reflects adaptive interlanguage strategies shaped by learners' phonological knowledge and articulatory limitations. Such patterns are consistent with Flege's (1995) Speech Learning Model, which explains that learners tend to assimilate unfamiliar second-language sounds into the closest categories available within their first-language phonological system.

**Table 1.** Preliminary study on Pronunciation tasks

| Pronunciation Modification Type | Monosyllabic Words | Disyllabic Words | Trisyllabic Words | Total Cases |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| Substitution                    | 63                 | 77               | 90                | 230         |
| Deletion                        | 0                  | 31               | 13                | 44          |
| Epenthesis                      | 7                  | 19               | 28                | 54          |
| Cluster Reduction               | 3                  | 9                | 0                 | 12          |
| Total                           | 73                 | 136              | 131               | 340         |

However, pronunciation development in pesantren contexts cannot be fully understood through phonological analysis alone. Preliminary interview findings revealed that learners' pronunciation behavior was strongly influenced by broader educational and sociolinguistic factors. Many students reported confusion between English spelling and pronunciation, limited exposure to authentic pronunciation models, anxiety during public speaking, and fear of peer judgment when producing English orally. These findings suggest that pronunciation acquisition is closely related to learners' affective conditions and educational experiences. Krashen's (1985) Affective Filter Hypothesis explains that anxiety and low self-confidence may inhibit language acquisition by reducing learners' ability to process linguistic input effectively. Likewise, Schmidt's (1990) Noticing Hypothesis emphasizes that learners must consciously notice the gap between their own pronunciation and target-like forms in order to improve phonological competence. In pesantren settings where learners predominantly interact with peers sharing similar pronunciation patterns, non-target-like forms may become socially normalized and continuously reinforced within learners' interlanguage systems.

Previous studies on Indonesian EFL pronunciation have primarily focused on phonological errors, segmental deviations, or syllable-structure modification (Khoirunnisa & Misnadin, 2022; Li, 2023). Although these studies provide valuable insights into learners' phonological difficulties, many of them treat pronunciation as an isolated linguistic phenomenon without examining the broader educational and social ecology surrounding learners' language development. In addition, limited research has explored how multilingual boarding school environments influence learners' pronunciation practices, linguistic identity, and spoken English confidence. As a result, pronunciation development in pesantren contexts remains underexplored within the broader field of educational linguistics.

Addressing this gap, the present study investigates English pronunciation development among Indonesian pesantren learners by examining the relationship between interlanguage phonology, educational ecology, and linguistic identity formation. Rather than positioning pronunciation solely as an issue of phonetic accuracy, this study conceptualizes pronunciation learning as a socially negotiated process shaped by peer interaction, institutional language culture, multilingual exposure, and affective experience. By integrating phonological analysis with educational linguistics perspectives, this study aims to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how learners construct English pronunciation within multilingual Islamic boarding school environments. Ultimately, the study is expected to contribute to the growing discussion on pronunciation acquisition, educational ecology, and language learning in multilingual EFL contexts.

## Method

This study employed a qualitative case-study design to investigate English pronunciation development among Indonesian pesantren learners within a multilingual educational environment. The study focused on examining how educational ecology, peer interaction, and linguistic identity shaped learners' pronunciation development in English as a Foreign Language

(EFL) contexts. The research was conducted at one of Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) in East Java, Indonesia, where English is actively practiced in classroom interaction, dormitory communication, public speaking activities, and daily language programs. The participants consisted of 11th-grade students who were purposively selected based on their active involvement in English language activities within the pesantren environment. Several English teachers and language supervisors were also involved to provide contextual insights regarding language practices and pronunciation learning within the institution.

The primary data were collected through semi-structured interviews and contextual observations. The interviews explored learners' experiences, pronunciation difficulties, confidence in speaking English, exposure to authentic pronunciation models, peer influence, and strategies used when encountering unfamiliar English words. To facilitate deeper responses, the interviews were conducted in Indonesian and audio-recorded with participants' consent. In addition, contextual observations were conducted during classroom interaction, dormitory communication, and public speaking activities to examine how English pronunciation was socially practiced and negotiated within the pesantren environment. Field notes were used to document students' language behavior, peer interaction, code-switching practices, and responses toward pronunciation performance in both formal and informal settings.

The collected data were analyzed thematically using Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis framework. The analysis involved data familiarization, coding, theme generation, and interpretation to identify recurring patterns related to pronunciation learning and educational ecology. Several major themes emerged from the analysis, including spelling-pronunciation mismatch, limited exposure to authentic English, peer-mediated pronunciation practices, pronunciation anxiety, and multilingual language influence. To enhance the credibility of the findings, triangulation was applied by comparing interview data with observational findings, allowing the researcher to develop a comprehensive understanding of pronunciation development as a socially and educationally mediated process within the pesantren context.

## Results

The findings of this study reveal that English pronunciation development among pesantren learners is shaped not only by linguistic competence, but also by educational ecology, peer interaction, multilingual exposure, and affective experience within the boarding school environment. The interview analysis generated several interconnected themes illustrating how learners negotiate English pronunciation in their daily communicative practices. Although preliminary pronunciation findings showed recurring patterns of substitution, deletion, epenthesis, and cluster reduction, the interview data demonstrate that these pronunciation forms emerged within broader social and educational experiences rather than functioning merely as isolated phonological errors.

### Spelling–Pronunciation Mismatch and Reliance on Orthographic Knowledge

One of the most dominant themes emerging from the interviews was learners' dependence on written English forms when pronouncing unfamiliar words. Most participants admitted that they frequently relied on spelling patterns because they were uncertain about the correct pronunciation. This phenomenon was particularly evident when students encountered diphthongs, silent letters, and multisyllabic words as mentioned by one of the student:

*"Kadang kala saya bacanya kaya yang sesuai a-b-c-nya karena ga tau cara baca yang benar"*  
(Sometimes I read English words exactly like the spelling because I do not know the correct pronunciation) – STD 5

Similarly, another student also explained:

*"Suka pusing nulis huruf yang cara bacanya beda kaya yang ditulis"*  
(I get confused when the written word is different from how it is pronounced.) – STD 9

These findings indicate that learners tended to transfer Indonesian orthographic expectations into English pronunciation. Since Indonesian pronunciation is relatively phonetic and consistent with spelling, students often expected English words to follow similar sound-letter correspondence patterns. As a result, pronunciation production was strongly influenced by learners' previous linguistic experiences and orthographic familiarity. This condition demonstrates that pronunciation development among pesantren learners is closely connected to literacy practices and linguistic processing rather than merely articulatory ability.

### Peer-Mediated Pronunciation Practices within the Pesantren Environment

Another important finding concerns the strong influence of peer interaction on learners' pronunciation development. Although English was actively used within the pesantren environment, students reported that most English communication occurred among fellow learners who shared similar pronunciation patterns and linguistic limitations. Consequently, non-target-like pronunciation forms were frequently reproduced and normalized through daily interaction, as it had been stated by a student.

*"Biasanya sih praktek bareng temen di asrama (yang juga sama belajar), akhirnya malah salah bareng (pengucapannya)"*  
(I usually practice English only with friends in the dormitory, so we often make the same pronunciation mistakes.) – STD 2

Likewise, other student explained:

*"Kalau pas belajar bareng temen kadang suka saling cek sambal lihat cara baca di kamus, kadang juga sambil tanya ke temen yang kayaknya lebih bisa. Malah lebih sering salahnya pas cari sendiri soalnya he..he.."*  
(During the learning with friends, somehow we could make it by doing peer-checking or even by the dictionary check. Sometimes we also ask to who are smarter than us for this matter. However, we mainly create many mistakes if we study by ourself.) – STD 12

Observational findings further showed that students tended to imitate peers' pronunciation during dormitory conversation, classroom discussion, and public speaking preparation. In several situations, pronunciation forms that deviated from Standard English pronunciation became collectively accepted because they were repeatedly used within the peer community. This indicates that pronunciation learning in pesantren contexts is socially mediated and heavily influenced by the immediate communicative environment. The pesantren soundscape therefore functions not only as a space for language exposure, but also as a space where localized pronunciation patterns are continuously negotiated and circulated among learners.

### Limited Authentic Exposure and Pronunciation Awareness

The findings also reveal that intensive English exposure within the pesantren environment did not automatically lead to accurate pronunciation development. Although students regularly used English in formal and informal activities, most participants acknowledged that they had limited exposure to authentic English pronunciation outside peer interaction and classroom instruction. Students rarely engaged with native-speaker pronunciation models through digital media, academic listening activities, or direct interaction with proficient speakers as it is stated by one of the students.

*"Ya jarang barget dengerin orang Inggris ngomong langsung jadi gatau juga cara ngomong yang bener gimana..."*  
(I rarely listen to native speakers, so I do not really know how some words should sound) – STD 4

Some students even mentioned about the pronunciation teaching in the classroom setting.

*"Gurunya (non-native) juga sering beda-beda cara pronunciation di kelas kak, jadi tambah bingung."*  
(The teachers sometimes differ in the pronunciation, it confused us) – STD 10

*"Kalau di kelas ustadz/ustadzah bisa beda-beda cara bacanya, jadi kadang gatau mana yang benar mana yang salah gitu."*  
(Sometimes, the teacher gave different pronunciation, so we don't know which one is correct.) – STD 1

As a result, many learners developed pronunciation habits based on peer imitation rather than phonological awareness. Several students explained that they were often unsure whether their pronunciation was correct because explicit pronunciation correction rarely occurred during communication activities. This condition reduced opportunities for learners to notice differences between their own pronunciation and target-like English forms. The findings suggest that the pesantren environment provided substantial language practice but limited phonological feedback, allowing certain pronunciation patterns to persist over time.

## Pronunciation Anxiety and Linguistic Identity

Affective factors also emerged as a significant dimension influencing learners' pronunciation development. Many students expressed feelings of anxiety, embarrassment, and fear of negative evaluation when speaking English publicly. These emotional experiences affected learners' willingness to practice pronunciation and participate confidently in oral communication activities as mentioned by a student.

*"Takut aja kak, kalau salah (pronunciation) takut diketawain sama temen-temen"*  
(I am afraid my friends will laugh if my pronunciation is wrong.) – STD 10

Similarly, one of the students also stated:

*"Saya nervous gitu lho kalau disuruh maju ngomong bahasa Inggris di depan kelas, soalnya aku rasa kaya jelek banget ngomongnya (pronunciation)."*  
(I feel nervous when speaking English in front of the class because I think my pronunciation is bad) – STD 8

These findings demonstrate that pronunciation was strongly associated with learners' self-confidence and linguistic identity. Speaking English in the pesantren environment was not simply viewed as language practice, but also as a form of public performance in which the students feared social judgment from peers. Observational findings revealed that some students avoided spontaneous English interaction because they worried about producing incorrect pronunciation. Consequently, learners with lower pronunciation confidence tended to participate less actively in communicative activities, limiting opportunities for pronunciation improvement and spoken language development.

## Multilingual Environment and Pronunciation Negotiation

The multilingual character of the pesantren environment also played an important role in shaping learners' pronunciation development. Students constantly navigated between Indonesian, regional languages, Arabic, and English in both academic and social interaction. This multilingual exposure created complex linguistic negotiation processes during English pronunciation production.

Several participants reported that they unconsciously mixed pronunciation habits from other languages when speaking English, particularly when producing unfamiliar consonant clusters or vowel sounds. Observational data showed that code-switching frequently occurred during conversation, with students alternating between Indonesian, Arabic expressions, and English lexical items within the same interaction. This linguistic flexibility reflects the dynamic nature of pronunciation learning in multilingual educational settings.

*“Pas nyoba ngomong atau baca gitu, kadang yang keinget malah yang arab atau Indonesia”  
(I unconsciously mix between other languages when reading or speaking in English.) – STD 15*

*“Seringnya mixing sih kak (ketika ngomong), kadang English terus tiba-tiba Arabic atau Indonesian”  
(I usually mix my languages during speaking) – STD 20*

Overall, the findings demonstrate that English pronunciation development among pesantren learners is deeply embedded within educational ecology, peer interaction, multilingual experience, and affective conditions. Pronunciation learning in this context cannot be understood solely as an individual phonological process, but rather as a socially negotiated practice shaped by institutional language culture and everyday communicative interaction within the boarding school environment.

## Discussion

The findings demonstrate that English pronunciation development among pesantren learners is shaped through the interaction of linguistic, educational, and sociocultural factors. Rather than functioning merely as isolated pronunciation errors, learners' pronunciation patterns reflect a socially negotiated interlanguage process influenced by multilingual exposure, peer interaction, affective conditions, and institutional language practices. These findings support the view that pronunciation acquisition in EFL settings should not be understood solely as an articulatory or phonological phenomenon, but also as part of educational ecology and identity formation within specific learning environments.

One of the major findings of this study concerns learners' dependence on orthographic forms when pronouncing English words. Most participants admitted that they tended to pronounce English according to spelling conventions because they were uncertain about the correct phonological realization. This finding strongly supports Odlin's (1989) theory of language transfer, which explains that learners often rely on existing first-language systems when processing unfamiliar second-language forms. Indonesian orthography generally demonstrates a transparent relationship between spelling and pronunciation, unlike English, which contains inconsistent grapheme-phoneme correspondence. Consequently, learners transferred Indonesian orthographic expectations into English pronunciation production. This finding is consistent with previous studies by Khoirunnisa and Misnadin (2022), who found that Indonesian EFL learners frequently mispronounced English words due to spelling interference and unfamiliar vowel representations. Similarly, Inka et al. (2024) reported that Indonesian learners experienced substantial difficulty producing English diphthongs because they relied heavily on written forms rather than phonological awareness.

However, the present findings extend previous pronunciation studies by showing that orthographic dependence is not merely a phonological issue but also part of learners' educational experiences. In pesantren contexts, learners frequently encounter English through written vocabulary memorization, classroom texts, and peer conversation rather than through intensive phonological training or authentic auditory exposure. This condition supports Schmidt's (1990) Noticing Hypothesis, which argues that learners must consciously recognize

discrepancies between their own production and target-language forms in order to improve language competence. Since many learners rarely received explicit pronunciation correction, their orthographically influenced pronunciation forms persisted and became normalized within daily communication practices. Nevertheless, this finding partially contrasts with Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis, which emphasizes the importance of language exposure in acquisition. Although students in this study experienced continuous English exposure through pesantren language programs, pronunciation difficulties remained persistent, suggesting that exposure alone is insufficient without phonological awareness and corrective feedback.

Another significant finding concerns the role of peer-mediated pronunciation practices within the pesantren educational ecology. Students reported that they primarily practiced English with fellow learners who shared similar linguistic backgrounds and pronunciation patterns. As a result, non-target-like pronunciation forms were frequently reproduced collectively through dormitory interaction, classroom communication, and public speaking preparation. This finding reflects the socially mediated nature of language learning emphasized in sociocultural approaches to Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Within multilingual educational settings, peer interaction functions not only as language practice but also as a mechanism for constructing shared linguistic norms.

This finding supports Swain's (1985) Output Hypothesis, which emphasizes the importance of language production in facilitating language development. The pesantren environment provided learners with substantial opportunities to produce spoken English through daily communication activities. However, the findings simultaneously indicate that output alone did not guarantee pronunciation accuracy because corrective feedback was limited. Consequently, inaccurate pronunciation patterns became repeatedly circulated among learners and gradually stabilized within their interlanguage systems. In this context, the findings reinforce Selinker's (1972) concept of fossilization, where non-target-like forms persist despite continued language exposure. Similarly, Deyanti and Hindun (2024) found that public-speaking activities in pesantren environments improved learners' confidence and speaking participation, yet did not necessarily ensure phonological accuracy. Therefore, the current study suggests that communicative exposure without explicit phonological guidance may contribute to the reinforcement of localized pronunciation forms within multilingual learning communities.

The findings also reveal that limited exposure to authentic pronunciation models significantly influenced learners' pronunciation awareness. Although students regularly used English in educational activities, most participants rarely listened to native speakers or proficient English users outside classroom settings. Consequently, learners depended heavily on peer pronunciation models, regardless of whether those models reflected target-like pronunciation. This finding supports Flege's (1995) Speech Learning Model, which explains that learners tend to assimilate unfamiliar second-language sounds into the closest phonological categories available in their first language when accurate phonetic input is limited. The persistence of vowel modification and consonant simplification observed in the preliminary pronunciation findings reflects this process of perceptual assimilation.

The present findings are also aligned with Muñoz Mallén and Vázquez (2019), who argued that learners from syllable-timed language backgrounds frequently experience difficulty producing English vowel reduction and stress variation because their native languages do not contain comparable phonological features. However, the current study extends previous phonological research by emphasizing the educational dimension of pronunciation development. The findings indicate that learners' pronunciation competence was influenced not only by linguistic transfer but also by the availability of authentic listening experiences within their educational environment. Thus, pronunciation learning in pesantren contexts appears to be strongly mediated by institutional language ecology rather than by individual phonological ability alone.

Affective factors also emerged as a central dimension influencing learners' pronunciation development. Many students expressed anxiety, embarrassment, and fear of negative evaluation when speaking English publicly. Learners often associated pronunciation accuracy with intelligence, confidence, and social acceptance among peers. This finding strongly supports Krashen's (1985) Affective Filter Hypothesis, which explains that emotional barriers such as anxiety and low self-confidence may inhibit language acquisition by limiting learners' ability to process linguistic input effectively. In this study, learners who feared making pronunciation mistakes tended to avoid spontaneous oral interaction, thereby reducing opportunities for spoken language practice and pronunciation improvement.

These findings are consistent with Gumelar and Lestari (2024), who found that Indonesian learners' pronunciation performance was closely related to self-confidence and classroom emotional climate. Similarly, Srakaew (2021) emphasized that pronunciation competence significantly affects learners' willingness to communicate in English. However, the present study provides a broader sociolinguistic perspective by demonstrating that pronunciation anxiety within pesantren contexts is closely connected to linguistic identity and public performance. Speaking English in pesantren environments often occurs in highly visible social settings such as classroom presentation and public speaking practice, where learners become vulnerable to peer evaluation. Consequently, pronunciation learning becomes not only a linguistic task but also an identity negotiation process shaped by social acceptance and institutional expectations.

Furthermore, the multilingual environment of the pesantren significantly contributed to learners' pronunciation negotiation. Students continuously navigated between Indonesian, local languages, Arabic, and English within daily interaction. This multilingual exposure created complex phonological interactions during English speech production, particularly when learners encountered unfamiliar consonant clusters, vowel distinctions, or stress patterns. The findings support the perspective of interlanguage phonology proposed by Selinker (1972), which conceptualizes learner language as a dynamic and hybrid linguistic system influenced by multiple linguistic sources.

At the same time, the findings partially challenge traditional deficit-oriented perspectives toward pronunciation learning. Previous pronunciation studies often framed learners' pronunciation patterns primarily as errors requiring correction (Khoirunnisa & Misnadin, 2022; Li, 2023). In contrast, the present study suggests that pronunciation modification may also function as an adaptive communicative strategy within multilingual educational contexts. Learners developed localized pronunciation patterns that enabled them to maintain communication and social participation within the pesantren community. This perspective aligns with broader discussions in World Englishes and English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), which argue that intelligibility and communicative effectiveness may be more relevant than native-like pronunciation in multilingual English environments.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that pronunciation development among pesantren learners is influenced by multiple interacting dimensions, including orthographic transfer, peer-mediated learning, multilingual exposure, affective conditions, and institutional language ecology. Pronunciation learning therefore emerges as both a linguistic and social process shaped by learners' everyday communicative experiences within the pesantren environment. By integrating interlanguage phonology with educational linguistics perspectives, this study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of pronunciation acquisition in multilingual EFL contexts.

## Conclusion

This study demonstrates that English pronunciation development among Indonesian pesantren learners is shaped not only by phonological competence, but also by educational ecology, peer interaction, multilingual exposure, and affective experience within the boarding school environment. The findings reveal that learners' pronunciation practices were influenced by spelling-pronunciation mismatch, limited authentic exposure, peer-mediated language interaction, pronunciation anxiety, and multilingual language negotiation. Preliminary pronunciation findings also showed systematic modification patterns such as substitution, deletion, epenthesis, and cluster reduction, reflecting learners' adaptive interlanguage development rather than random pronunciation errors. These findings support Second Language Acquisition (SLA) perspectives emphasizing that pronunciation learning is both a linguistic and socially negotiated process. Therefore, this study contributes to educational linguistics by positioning pronunciation development as part of learners' identity formation and institutional language culture in multilingual EFL contexts.

However, this study has several limitations. The research was conducted within a single pesantren context in East Java, which limits broader generalization to other multilingual educational settings. In addition, the study primarily employed qualitative approaches through interviews and observations, focusing more on learners' perceptions and educational experiences rather than longitudinal measurement of pronunciation improvement. Nevertheless, the study expands previous pronunciation research by integrating interlanguage phonology with educational ecology perspectives, showing that pronunciation acquisition cannot be fully understood through phonological transfer alone.

Based on these findings, the study recommends that pronunciation instruction in pesantren environments should combine communicative exposure with explicit phonological awareness, authentic listening practice, and supportive corrective feedback. Teachers and language supervisors are encouraged to create learning environments that reduce pronunciation anxiety and promote confident spoken interaction. For future research, comparative and longitudinal studies across different pesantren contexts are recommended to explore how multilingual educational ecology influences pronunciation development and linguistic identity over time.

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