



Enhancing English Pronunciation Practice through Tongue Twisters among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Learners: A Literature Review

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Abstract: This literature review examines the role of tongue twisters in supporting English pronunciation practice among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. Pronunciation constitutes a fundamental component of communicative competence; however, many EFL learners encounter challenges in producing English sounds clearly, accurately, and intelligibly. Employing a qualitative literature review approach, this study synthesizes and evaluates previous research on the implementation of tongue twisters as a pedagogical strategy in pronunciation instruction. The reviewed literature consistently demonstrates that tongue twisters serve as an effective tool for fostering pronunciation skills, particularly in terms of articulation accuracy, phonological awareness, fluency, and confidence in spoken language use. Previous empirical and theoretical studies further indicate that the repetitiveness of tongue-twister activities encourages sustained pronunciation practice and promotes active learner participation. Furthermore, tongue twisters have been widely recognized as an enjoyable technique that can enhance learners' motivation to engage in pronunciation practice. The literature also highlights the potential of tongue-twister activities to foster learners' awareness of the development of segmental and suprasegmental features of English pronunciation, including sound distinctions, stress patterns, and rhythm, which are essential for intelligible pronunciation. Overall, the reviewed studies support the pedagogical value of tongue twisters as an interactive technique for pronunciation teaching in EFL contexts. Based on the synthesized evidence, the review recommends integrating tongue twisters into pronunciation teaching to provide learners with meaningful opportunities to improve their oral language proficiency.

Keywords: EFL learners; intelligibility; literature review; English pronunciation; segmental and suprasegmental features; tongue twisters.

Abstrak: Tinjauan pustaka ini mengkaji peran *tongue twisters* dalam mendukung latihan pengucapan bahasa Inggris bagi pembelajar Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing (*English as a Foreign Language/EFL*). Pengucapan merupakan komponen dasar dari kompetensi komunikatif; namun banyak pembelajar EFL menghadapi tantangan dalam menghasilkan bunyi bahasa Inggris secara jelas, akurat, dan mudah dipahami (*intelligible*). Dengan menggunakan pendekatan tinjauan literatur kualitatif, studi ini mempersatukan dan mengevaluasi penelitian-penelitian sebelumnya mengenai penerapan *tongue twisters* sebagai strategi pedagogis dalam pengajaran pengucapan. Literatur yang ditinjau secara konsisten menunjukkan bahwa *tongue twisters* merupakan alat yang efektif untuk mengembangkan keterampilan pengucapan, khususnya dalam aspek ketepatan artikulasi, kesadaran fonologis (*phonological awareness*), kelancaran berbicara, dan kepercayaan diri dalam penggunaan bahasa lisan. Berbagai studi empiris dan teoritis sebelumnya juga mengindikasikan bahwa sifat repetitif dari aktivitas *tongue twisters* mendorong praktik pengucapan yang berkelanjutan serta meningkatkan partisipasi aktif pembelajar dalam proses pembelajaran. Selain itu, *tongue twisters* telah diakui secara luas sebagai teknik yang menyenangkan dan mampu meningkatkan motivasi pembelajar untuk terlibat dalam pelatihan pengucapan. Literatur juga menyoroti potensi aktivitas *tongue twisters* dalam meningkatkan kesadaran pembelajar terhadap perkembangan fitur segmental dan suprasegmental dalam pengucapan bahasa Inggris, termasuk perbedaan bunyi, pola tekanan, dan ritme, yang merupakan unsur penting dalam menghasilkan pengucapan yang mudah dipahami. Secara keseluruhan, studi-studi yang ditinjau mendukung nilai pedagogis *tongue twisters* sebagai teknik interaktif dalam pengajaran pengucapan pada konteks EFL. Berdasarkan bukti yang telah dipersatukan, tinjauan ini merekomendasikan integrasi *tongue twisters* ke dalam pembelajaran pengucapan guna memberikan kesempatan yang bermakna bagi pembelajar untuk meningkatkan kemahiran berbahasa lisan mereka.

Kata Kunci: Pembelajar EFL; keterpahaman; tinjauan pustaka; pengucapan bahasa Inggris; fitur segmental dan suprasegmental; *tongue twisters*.

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INTRODUCTION

Pronunciation has long been recognized as a crucial component of communicative competence and successful oral interaction. As noted by Kenworthy (1987), intelligible pronunciation enables learners to communicate their intended meanings effectively, while pronunciation difficulties may lead to misunderstandings even when grammatical and lexical knowledge is adequate. This view is further supported by Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), who defined that pronunciation instruction should constitute an integral component of language teaching because communication may be hindered when pronunciation difficulties persist despite adequate grammatical and lexical knowledge. Consequently, developing pronunciation competence has become an important objective in English language teaching, particularly for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners who have limited exposure to authentic spoken English outside the classroom. Building on these perspectives, Gilakjani (2011) argued that pronunciation presents challenges for EFL learners due to differences between the phonological systems of learners' first language and English, limited exposure to authentic spoken interaction, and inadequate opportunities for pronunciation practice.

For many EFL learners, pronunciation remains a challenging aspect of language learning. Differences between learners' first-language phonological systems and English often result in difficulties with vowels, consonants, stress patterns, rhythm, and intonation. These challenges can reduce speech intelligibility and negatively affect learners' confidence in speaking. More recently, Derwing and Munro (2015) emphasized that the goal of pronunciation instruction is not to achieve native-speaker norms but to foster intelligible speech that facilitates successful communication among second-language users. They also added that pronunciation difficulties may increase learners' communication anxiety and hinder their participation in spoken interactions. Therefore, pronunciation instruction should incorporate engaging and meaningful activities that encourage learners to practice speech sounds in a supportive learning environment. In a similar vein, Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) highlighted that pronunciation is often neglected in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom despite its fundamental role in successful communication. In the context of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), Jenkins (2020) also maintained that intelligible pronunciation is more important than achieving native-speaker norms, as successful communication depends on mutual understanding among speakers from diverse linguistic backgrounds. As a result, language educators have increasingly investigated and incorporated innovative instructional techniques designed to strengthen learners' pronunciation abilities and enhance the intelligibility of their spoken language.

Among these techniques, tongue twisters have attracted attention as a potentially effective tool for pronunciation instruction. Tongue twisters are carefully constructed phrases that contain repetitive phonological patterns, encouraging learners to articulate target sounds accurately, rapidly, and repeatedly. Previous studies have suggested that tongue twisters can enhance pronunciation practice by increasing learners' awareness of problematic sounds, promoting fluency, and improving articulation accuracy. For example, Fatimah et al. (2020) reported significant improvements in students' pronunciation performance through tongue-twister-based instruction, while Nabung (2024) found that tongue twisters positively affected EFL learners' pronunciation achievement and reading fluency. Additionally, students demonstrated positive perceptions of tongue-twister activities, viewing them as an engaging pedagogical strategy for enhancing pronunciation accuracy and speaking proficiency. Taken together, these findings suggest that tongue twisters may play a significant role in fostering both learners' pronunciation development and their affective engagement, including increased motivation, engagement, and confidence in pronunciation learning.

Despite the growing number of studies investigating tongue twisters as a pronunciation teaching technique, and the increasing use of tongue twisters in EFL classrooms, the existing literature remains fragmented across different educational contexts, learner populations, and research methodologies. Most previous studies have focused on examining the effectiveness of tongue twisters through small-scale classroom interventions, while relatively few studies have synthesized and evaluated the collective findings of this research area. Furthermore, there is still limited understanding of which specific aspects of pronunciation — such as intelligibility, speech clarity, pronunciation accuracy, segmental features, stress patterns, or learner engagement and motivation, — are most effectively addressed through tongue-twister practice. Therefore, a comprehensive literature review is needed to consolidate existing evidence,

identify prevailing research trends, evaluate the pedagogical value of tongue twisters, and highlight directions for future research regarding the use of tongue twisters in enhancing English pronunciation among EFL learners.

Based on the gap identified above, this literature review aims to synthesize and evaluate existing research on the use of tongue twisters as a strategy for enhancing English pronunciation among EFL learners. Specifically, the review addresses the following two research questions:

1. How has previous research investigated the role of tongue twisters in enhancing pronunciation skills among EFL learners?
2. What pronunciation aspects and instructional practices are most addressed using tongue twisters in EFL pronunciation teaching?

This review seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of tongue twisters in pronunciation teaching and to offer insights for EFL educators and researchers.

Pronunciation has been widely acknowledged as a fundamental dimension of communicative competence due to its substantial effect on speech intelligibility and effective oral interaction. In this regard, Kenworthy (1987) emphasized that intelligible pronunciation enables learners to convey their intended meanings effectively, whereas persistent pronunciation problems can contribute to communication breakdowns and hinder effective communication. Correspondingly, Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) underscored the importance of pronunciation instruction within language education, arguing that persistent pronunciation-related difficulties may impede learners' communicative effectiveness. Extending this argument, Gilakjani (2011) explained that pronunciation is often regarded as one of the most challenging components of foreign language learning because of substantial differences between learners' first language phonology and the target language. Building on previous perspectives, Derwing and Munro (2015) affirmed that the aim of pronunciation instruction should be to enhance intelligibility rather than to achieve native-speaker-like pronunciation, as clear and comprehensible speech is a key for successful second-language communication. Similarly, Jenkins (2020) argued that within English as a Lingua Franca context, effective communication depends largely on mutual intelligibility rather than adherence to native-speaker pronunciation norms. Taking together, these perspectives highlight the growing importance of pronunciation instruction as an integral component of EFL education that supports effective oral communication in multilingual and multicultural settings.

Tongue twisters may contribute to intelligibility by providing focused practice on specific sounds and sound combinations. Through the repeated production of challenging phoneme sequences, learners can improve articulatory precision and enhance the clarity of their speech. Tongue twisters are widely used as a pedagogical technique to improve learners' articulation, pronunciation accuracy, and phonological awareness. They consist of sequences of words containing contrasting sound patterns that require precise articulation and rapid speech production. As tongue twisters repeatedly expose learners to target phonemes, they provide valuable opportunities for focused pronunciation practice while simultaneously increasing learner engagement. Previous research has provided empirical evidence supporting the effectiveness of tongue twisters in enhancing EFL learners' pronunciation performance and confidence in spoken communication (Fatimah et al., 2020). Extending these findings, Nabung (2024) presented that tongue-twister activities significantly improved learners' pronunciation skills and reading fluency, highlighting their pedagogical value as an interactive classroom technique. In addition, Suciati et al. (2025) found that students who engaged in tongue twisters achieved significantly higher pronunciation scores than their counterparts who received conventional pronunciation instruction.

The repetitive nature of tongue twisters encourages learners to pay attention to sound distinctions, stress placement, and speech rhythm, all of which are essential components of intelligible pronunciation. Through repeated and focused practice, learners are afforded opportunities to develop greater articulatory precision while increasing their awareness of key pronunciation features. Given these pedagogical benefits, tongue twisters have increasingly been recognized as an effective technique in pronunciation instruction, particularly within EFL settings where exposure to spoken English may be constrained. The pedagogical value of this technique is further corroborated by empirical studies indicating that sustained engagement with tongue-twister activities can sharpen pronunciation accuracy, articulatory control, and learners' confidence in oral communication, ultimately supporting the development of speech intelligibility (Fatimah et al., 2020; Nabung, 2024; Suciati et al., 2025).

From a linguistic perspective, tongue twisters provide learners with systematic exposure to specific phonological features that are often problematic in pronunciation teaching technique. Through repeated articulation of similar sounds, learners become more aware of the phonemic distinctions that characterize English pronunciation. This repeated practice can enhance both segmental features, such as vowels and consonants, and suprasegmental features, including word stress, rhythm, and intonation. Furthermore, tongue twisters encourage learners to monitor their speech production carefully, thereby improving articulatory control and pronunciation accuracy. As a result, tongue twister activities can serve as an effective means of developing intelligibility and phonological awareness, which are widely recognized as crucial components of successful oral communication. In addition to their linguistic benefits, tongue twisters offer considerable pedagogical value in pronunciation instruction. Unlike traditional pronunciation drills that some learners may perceive as repetitive or monotonous, tongue twisters introduce an element of challenge and enjoyment into a pronunciation teaching technique. Their playful and interactive nature can improve learners' motivation and engagement while reducing anxiety associated with speaking in a foreign language. Moreover, tongue twisters not only support the development of pronunciation skills but also foster learners' confidence and willingness to communicate, making them a valuable instructional resource in EFL classrooms.

Given these linguistic and pedagogical advantages, a growing number of researchers have investigated the effectiveness of tongue twisters in improving pronunciation development among EFL learners. The following section reviews empirical studies that have examined the impact of tongue-twister-based instruction on learners' pronunciation performance, fluency, and engagement.

A growing number of studies have examined the effectiveness of tongue twisters in improving EFL learners' pronunciation skills. Hakim and Sampurna (2020) investigated the use of tongue-twister exercises in teaching English pronunciation to students in an Early Childhood Education Study Program through a qualitative research design. The researchers employed tongue twisters as pronunciation practice materials to help students develop more accurate production of English vocabulary. The findings revealed that tongue-twister exercises contributed positively to students' pronunciation development by improving their ability to articulate English words more accurately. In addition, the learners demonstrated high levels of enthusiasm and engagement during pronunciation practice, suggesting that tongue twisters can serve as an effective and motivating instructional technique for pronunciation learning. The study concluded that repeated exposure to tongue-twister activities allows learners to strengthen their pronunciation skills while improving participation in classroom learning activities. Similarly, Suciati et al. (2025) examined the effects of tongue twisters on the pronunciation proficiency of eleventh-grade students through a quasi-experimental study involving 64 participants. Using pre-test and post-test assessments, the researchers compared the pronunciation performance of students who received tongue-twister instruction with those who followed conventional learning methods. The results showed a substantial improvement in the pronunciation scores of the experimental group, with mean scores increasing from 51.56 on the pre-test to 77.97 on the post-test. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended the integration of tongue twisters as an interactive technique in English pronunciation instruction, emphasizing their potential to improve learners' articulation and overall pronunciation performance.

In addition to improving pronunciation performance, tongue twisters have been found to promote learner engagement and positive attitudes toward pronunciation learning. Fatimah et al. (2020) found that students who received pronunciation instruction through tongue twisters demonstrated significantly higher pronunciation achievement than those taught using conventional methods. Furthermore, Nabung (2024) reported that tongue-twister-based instruction positively influenced learners' pronunciation skills and contributed to improvements in reading fluency. These findings suggest that tongue twisters provide meaningful opportunities for repetitive pronunciation practice that can support learners' phonological development. Moreover, Aulia (2020) observed that tongue-twister activities helped learners identify problematic English sounds and encouraged continuous pronunciation practice through technology-assisted learning. In a similar vein, Puspita et al. (2023) reported that students responded enthusiastically to tongue-twister activities and viewed them as an effective strategy for enhancing pronunciation and speaking skills. Salainti and Neman (2024) found that learners expressed positive perceptions of tongue-twister activities and considered them motivating learning experiences. Collectively, these findings suggest that tongue twisters may contribute not only to learners'

pronunciation development but also to increased motivation, engagement, and confidence in speaking English.

Overall, the reviewed literature suggests that pronunciation plays a crucial role in effective communication and that tongue twisters represent a promising pedagogical technique for supporting pronunciation development among EFL learners. Previous studies have highlighted the potential of tongue twisters to improve pronunciation accuracy, articulation, fluency, motivation, and learner engagement. However, the available findings remain dispersed across different contexts and research focuses. Consequently, a systematic examination of existing studies is required to provide a comprehensive understanding of the contribution of tongue twisters to English pronunciation practice and to identify areas that warrant further investigation.

METHOD

This study adopts a qualitative literature review approach to synthesize and evaluate existing research on the use of tongue twisters in improving English pronunciation among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners. A literature review was selected appropriate because it enables the systematic integration of scholarly knowledge, the evaluation of empirical evidence, and the identification of recurring themes and research gaps within the field. According to Synder (2019), literature reviews play a crucial role in advancing knowledge by systematically collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing findings from previous studies to provide a comprehensive understanding of a research phenomenon. Accordingly, this review seeks to synthesize evidence on the implementation of tongue twisters in pronunciation instruction and to evaluate their reported contributions to learners' pronunciation skills.

Data Source

The sources reviewed in this study consist of scholarly publications and peer-reviewed journal articles related to applied linguistics, English language teaching, phonetics, and pronunciation instruction. Relevant studies were identified through systematic searches of academic databases and scholarly resources, including Google Scholar, ERIC, ResearchGate, Scopus-indexed journals, and university library resources. The search was conducted using combinations of the following keywords:

1. tongue twisters and pronunciation.
2. English pronunciation learning.
3. phonological awareness.
4. EFL pronunciation teaching.
5. Tongue twister strategy and speaking clarity.

Only studies relevant to pronunciation instruction in EFL contexts were included. These search terms were chosen to capture a broad range of studies related to pronunciation instruction through tongue-twister activities.

Data Collection Procedure

The literature search was conducted in several stages. First, relevant studies were identified through keyword searches in selected databases to identify potentially relevant publications. Second, titles and abstracts were screened to determine their relevance to the topic. Third, the full texts of potentially eligible studies were examined according to the established criteria. Finally, the selected articles were organized based on publication year, research objectives, methodology, findings, and instructional techniques. This process facilitated comparison among studies and supported the identification of common trends concerning the effectiveness of tongue twisters in pronunciation instruction.

Data Analysis

The selected literature was analyzed using thematic analysis, a widely used qualitative analytical method that focuses on identifying, organizing, and interpreting meaningful patterns within a dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method enabled the researcher to synthesize findings across studies and identify recurring themes related to the use of tongue twisters in pronunciation instructions. The analysis involved reviewing and familiarizing with the selected studies, identifying findings related to pronunciation practice, comparing evidence across studies, and interpreting the implications of the findings for EFL pronunciation instruction. The analysis revealed five recurring themes:

1. Improvement in articulation accuracy.
2. Development of segmental and suprasegmental pronunciation features.
3. Enhancement of phonological awareness.
4. Increased learner motivation and confidence.
5. Contribution to speech intelligibility.

These themes formed the basis for interpreting the pedagogical value of tongue twisters in English pronunciation instruction for EFL learners.

Inclusion Criteria

The selected studies met the following inclusion criteria:

- a. Published in peer-reviewed journals or conference proceedings.
- b. Focused on English pronunciation instruction using tongue twisters.
- c. EFL learners as research participants involved.
- d. Reported empirical findings.
- e. Provided relevant theoretical discussions.
- f. Published between 2020 and 2025.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question 1

The first research question examined how previous research has investigated the role of tongue twisters in enhancing EFL learners' pronunciation skills. To address this question, the reviewed studies were categorised into thematic areas to identify common research approaches, key findings, and emerging trends in the literature (Aulia, 2020; Fatimah et al., 2020; Hakim & Sampurna, 2020; Puspita et al., 2023; Nabung, 2024; Salainti & Neman, 2024; Suciati et al., 2025).

Overall, previous studies have consistently investigated tongue twisters as a pronunciation teaching technique through classroom-based, experimental, quasi-experimental, and qualitative approaches. The findings indicate that tongue twisters enhance learners' articulation, pronunciation accuracy, phonological awareness, fluency, and speaking confidence through repeated practice of English sounds. Studies such as Fatimah et al. (2020) and Nabung (2024) investigated tongue-twister-based instruction through experimental and quasi-experimental designs and reported positive improvements in pronunciation performance among EFL learners. Such findings align with pronunciation theories that emphasize the importance of repeated exposure and focused practice in developing phonological competence. In addition, tongue-twister activities helped learners identify difficult English sounds and provided opportunities for continuous pronunciation practice, which contribute to more intelligible speech (Aulia, 2020). From this perspective, tongue twisters function not only as articulation exercises but also as tools for increasing learners' awareness of the sound system of English, which is essential for intelligible speech production.

Tongue twisters commonly employed in EFL pronunciation instruction are designed to target various aspects of pronunciation, including fluency (*She sells seashells by the seashore*), pronunciation

accuracy (*Peter Piper picks a peck of pickled peppers*), stress and rhythm (*Betty Botter bought a bit of butter*), intelligibility (*I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream*), and segmental features, particularly vowel and consonant production (*Red leather, yellow leather, lavender leather*).

Beyond linguistic improvement, previous studies also report positive learner perceptions. Tongue twister activities increase motivation, engagement, and confidence in speaking while making pronunciation practice more enjoyable (Puspita et al., 2023; Salainti & Neman, 2024). Nevertheless, the reviewed studies vary in research focus, ranging from pronunciation accuracy and fluency to learner motivation and speaking performance, making direct comparisons difficult. Furthermore, most studies have investigated only the short-term effects of tongue-twister activities, leaving their long-term impact on pronunciation development largely unexplored.

For the synthesis statement addressing RQ1, previous studies have shown that tongue twisters serve primarily as a pronunciation-focused instructional strategy that enhances learners' articulation, phonological awareness, pronunciation accuracy, fluency, and motivation. While the overall findings generally indicate positive pedagogical outcomes, the diversity of research contexts, methodological approaches, and outcome measures underscores the need for a comprehensive synthesis of the literature to provide a deeper understanding of the effectiveness and pedagogical value of tongue twisters in EFL pronunciation instruction.

Research Question 2

The second research question examined what pronunciation aspects and instructional practices are most addressed using tongue twisters in EFL pronunciation teaching. To answer this question, the reviewed literature identified five recurring themes: articulation accuracy, segmental and suprasegmental pronunciation features, phonological awareness, learner engagement and confidence, and speech intelligibility (see Appendix A).

The most frequently reported outcome is the improvement of articulation accuracy. Previous studies found that repeated tongue-twister practice enables learners to produce English sounds more clearly and accurately by strengthening articulatory control through intensive repetition (Fatimah et al., 2020; Nabung, 2024). Closely related to this, tongue twisters also facilitate the development of segmental and suprasegmental features, particularly difficult consonants, vowels, stress, and rhythm. Repetitive phonological patterns help learners distinguish similar phonemes while increasing awareness of English sound patterns (Aulia, 2020).

Another recurring theme is phonological awareness. The reviewed studies indicate that tongue twisters promote learners' ability to recognize sound contrasts, discriminate phonemes, and attend to stress and rhythm, thereby supporting more accurate pronunciation and oral communication. Furthermore, tongue twisters positively influence learner engagement and confidence by creating enjoyable, motivating, and interactive pronunciation practice. Their playful nature encourages repeated oral production while reducing speaking anxiety, leading to greater confidence in using English (Aulia, 2020; Puspita et al., 2023; Salainti & Neman, 2024). The literature also suggests that tongue twisters contribute to speech intelligibility by improving articulation, fluency, rhythm, and phonological awareness, all of which are essential for comprehensible spoken communication rather than merely accurate production of isolated sounds (Gilakjani, 2011; Derwing & Munro, 2015; Jenkins, 2020).

Regarding instructional practices, previous studies predominantly implemented tongue twisters through repetition-based pronunciation drills, teacher modelling, guided pronunciation activities, peer feedback, collaborative speaking tasks, and technology-assisted learning using audio and video resources. Despite methodological differences, these instructional practices consistently provide meaningful and repeated exposure to target pronunciation features in engaging learning environments.

For the synthesis statement addressing RQ2, the literature demonstrates that tongue twisters emerge five major aspects of pronunciation development: articulation accuracy, segmental and suprasegmental features, phonological awareness, learner engagement and confidence, and speech intelligibility. Instructionally, they are most effectively implemented through repetitive practice, guided pronunciation activities, collaborative learning, and technology-supported instruction. Collectively, these findings indicate that tongue twisters function as a valuable pedagogical strategy for improving

both the linguistic and affective dimensions of EFL pronunciation learning (Fatimah et al., 2020; Aulia, 2020; Puspita et al., 2023; Nabung, 2024; Salainti & Neman, 2024).

CONCLUSION

This literature review demonstrates that tongue twisters represent an effective and engaging instructional technique for improving English pronunciation among EFL learners. The reviewed studies consistently indicate that tongue-twister activities enhance articulation accuracy, phonological awareness, speech fluency, learner confidence, and speech intelligibility through repetitive and meaningful pronunciation practice. Furthermore, tongue twisters promote learner motivation and active participation, making pronunciation instruction more interactive and enjoyable. Relatively, the findings support the integration of tongue twisters into EFL pronunciation teaching as a practical strategy for developing learners' oral communication skills.

LIMITATIONS

This review is limited to published studies focusing on EFL contexts and relies exclusively on secondary data from previous research. First, the reviewed studies differ in research design, participant characteristics, instructional duration, and outcome measures, making direct comparisons difficult. Second, most studies examined short-term classroom interventions, providing limited evidence regarding the long-term effects of tongue-twister-based pronunciation instruction. Third, as a literature review, this study relied exclusively on previously published research and did not collect primary empirical data. Therefore, the conclusions presented in this review are dependent on the quality, scope, and methodological rigor of the existing studies.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Future research may investigate the long-term impact of tongue twisters on pronunciation development and speech intelligibility using larger and more diverse samples. Researchers are also encouraged to examine specific pronunciation features, including segmental and suprasegmental aspects, through more rigorous research designs. Moreover, integrating tongue twisters with digital learning technologies and artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted pronunciation tools can provide innovative opportunities to improve pronunciation instruction in EFL classrooms.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

The tongue twisters presented in this appendix were adapted and compiled from widely recognized English pronunciation resources and traditional tongue-twister collections commonly used in pronunciation teaching materials, speech training, and language-learning contexts (All Tongue Twisters, n.d.; Purdom, 2021; Wikipedia contributors, 2026). Several examples have been adapted for pedagogical purposes and categorized according to pronunciation features relevant to the present study.

A.1 Tongue Twisters for Consonant Sound

/θ/ and /ð/ (th sounds):

1. Thirty-three thirsty thieves thought that they thrilled the throne throughout Thursday.
2. The thoughtful thief thanked the three brothers for their thick threads.
3. I think I think I think of thinking of thanking you.
4. Whether the weather be fine, or whether the weather be not, will weather the weather.

Purpose: practicing voiced and voiceless th sounds, improving articulation accuracy, and increasing awareness of English dental fricatives.

/ʃ/ and /tʃ/ (sh and ch sounds):

1. She sells seashells by the seashore.
2. Which witch switched the Swiss wristwatch?

Purpose: differentiating /ʃ/ and /tʃ/ and improving consonant discrimination.

/r/ and /l/ sounds:

1. Red lorry, yellow lorry, white lorry.
2. Larry rarely rolls red rugs.
3. Red leather, yellow leather, lavender leather.

Purpose: practicing liquid consonants and reducing confusion between /r/ and /l/.

A.2 Tongue Twisters for Pronunciation Accuracy and Fluency

/p/ and /b/:

1. Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
2. Big black bugs bleed blue-black blood.

Purpose: practicing bilabial consonants and enhancing articulation speed and accuracy.

/s/ and /z/:

1. Six slippery snails slid slowly seaward.
2. Zany zebras zigzag through the zoo.

Purpose: improving articulation of fricative sounds and developing speech clarity.

A.3 Tongue Twisters for Stress and Rhythm.

1. Betty Botter bought some butter, but she said the butter was bitter.
2. A proper copper coffee pot.

Purpose: practicing English rhythm and improving stress placement and increasing speech fluency.

A.4 Tongue Twisters for Intelligibility Development

1. I scream, you scream, we all scream for ice cream.
2. Can you can a can as a canner can can a can?

Purpose: enhancing comprehensibility and developing rapid yet intelligible speech production.

A.5 Tongue Twisters Used in EFL Speaking Activities:

“Blue birds fly by.” “Four fine fresh fish for you.” “A big black bear sat on a big black rug.” “Fred fed Ted bread, and Ted fed Fred bread.” “The sixth sick sheikh's sixth sheep's sick.” “Pad kid poured curd pulled cod.”

Appendix B

Suggested Classroom Procedure for Using Tongue Twisters

Step 1: Teacher Modelling

The teacher reads the tongue twister slowly while students listen.

Step 2: Choral Repetition

Students repeat the tongue twister together several times.

Step 3: Individual Practice

Students practice individually and receive corrective feedback.

Step 4: Speed Challenge

Students gradually increase speaking speed while maintaining pronunciation accuracy.

Step 5: Reflection

Students identify sounds that were difficult to pronounce and discuss strategies for improvement.

These examples support the themes discussed in the review, particularly articulation accuracy, segmental features (vowels and consonants), stress and rhythm, fluency, and intelligibility, which were the primary pronunciation aspects identified in the literature.