

# MISPRONUNCIATION DETECTION IN NON-NATIVE ENGLISH

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## **ANNOTATION:**

Detecting mispronunciations in non-native English speakers is a multifaceted process that requires a deep understanding of phonetics, phonology, and linguistic contrasts between the speaker's native language and English. This comprehensive analysis involves examining segmental features such as consonants and vowels, as well as suprasegmental features including stress, intonation, and rhythm. Phonetic transcription using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) aids in comparing the pronunciation of words against their standard forms. Moreover, acoustic analysis through spectrograms and waveform analysis provides visual insights into speech sounds. Speech recognition technology complements this process by quantitatively evaluating pronunciation accuracy.

**Key words:** a comprehensive approach, allowable sound combinations, facilitating effective communication.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Native language influence plays a crucial role, as common mispronunciation patterns often stem from differences in phonological rules and allowable sound combinations. Contextual understanding, cultural sensitivity, and continuous feedback are essential for guiding non-native speakers towards improved pronunciation skills over time. This detailed approach ensures clearer communication and fosters language development in non-native English speakers.

Detecting and addressing mispronunciations in non-native English speakers is a crucial aspect of language teaching and communication. As English continues to be a global lingua franca, understanding how to identify and correct mispronunciations is essential for effective language learning and successful communication across diverse linguistic backgrounds. This detailed exploration delves into the methods, strategies, and considerations involved in the precise detection of mispronunciations among non-native English speakers.

The complexity of mispronunciation detection stems from the fact that pronunciation errors can manifest in various forms, ranging from subtle deviations in speech sounds to incorrect stress patterns and intonation. <sup>1</sup>These errors often reflect the influence of the speaker's native language phonetics and phonology on their English pronunciation. Therefore, a comprehensive approach is necessary, integrating knowledge from phonetics, phonology, speech analysis, and cultural sensitivity to accurately identify and address mispronunciations.

By understanding the challenges faced by non-native English speakers and employing effective detection methods, educators, language instructors, and speech professionals can provide targeted feedback and guidance to enhance pronunciation skills and facilitate clearer

<sup>1</sup> Sergeant, P., and Swann, J. (2012). English in the World "History, Diversity, Change". London. Routledge.

communication.<sup>2</sup> This exploration aims to elucidate the intricacies of mispronunciation detection, offering insights and strategies for improving language learning outcomes and promoting linguistic diversity in the global English-speaking community.

Detecting mispronunciations in non-native English speakers involves a detailed understanding of phonetics, phonology, and the differences between the speaker's native language and English. Burns and Claire<sup>3</sup> claim that good pronunciation is also needed because of:

- Intelligibility (the speaker produces sound patterns that are recognizable as English),
- Comprehensibility (the listener is able to understand the meaning of what is said),
- Interpretability (the listener is able to understand the purpose of what is said).

To prove the points made by Burns and Claire regarding the importance of good pronunciation, we delve into each aspect:

1. Intelligibility: Good pronunciation ensures that the speaker produces sound patterns that are recognizable as English. This is important as it allows the listener to grasp the basic sounds and structure of the language being spoken. Without intelligible pronunciation, speech can break down, leading to misunderstandings and confusion.

2. Comprehensibility: When a speaker has good pronunciation, it enhances comprehensibility. Identifying the listener can understand the meaning of what is being said. Clear pronunciation helps in conveying words and sentences accurately, making it easier for the listener to interpret the intended message.

3. Interpretability: Pronunciation also plays a role in interpretability, which refers to the listener's ability to understand the purpose or intention behind the spoken words. Proper pronunciation aids in conveying tone, emphasis, and subtle nuances that contribute to the overall message's clarity and effectiveness.

Sum up, Burns and Claire highlight that good pronunciation is essential not only for making sounds recognizable as English but also for ensuring that those sounds are understood and interpreted correctly by listeners, facilitating effective communication.

There is more detailed explanation of the process.

In phonetic Transcription, using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) to represent speech sounds accurately. <sup>4</sup>Then compare the phonetic transcription of words as pronounced by the speaker with their standard pronunciation to identify discrepancies.

Second, segmental Features like consonants and vowels. Learner should look for substitutions, omissions, additions, or distortions of speech sounds. For instance, a non-native speaker might substitute the English "th" sound with "s" or "z."

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<sup>2</sup> Willis, D. (2003). Grammar and Lexis in English Language Teaching "Rules, Patterns and Words". Cambridge University Press.

<sup>3</sup> Burns and Claire Clearly speaking" Pronunciation in action for teachers" January 2003 Edition 1 Publisher: National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research ISBN: 1 86408 873

<sup>4</sup> Brawn, J. R. (2010). A Framework for Teaching Pronunciation "Teaching Pronunciation GetsBad R.A.P.". Hanuk University of Foreign Studies. Retrieved on 21.11.2020 from <http://www.tesolreview.org/download/2-6.%20James%20R.%20Brawn.pdf>.

Thirdly, considering suprasegmental features such as stress, intonation, and rhythm. Incorrect stress patterns or intonation can significantly affect the overall intelligibility of speech.

Forth, native language influence provides to understand the phonological rules of the speaker's native language. Identify common mispronunciation patterns based on the native language's phonetic inventory and phonotactics (allowable sound combinations).

Fifth, Acoustic Analysis use spectrograms and waveform analysis to visualize speech sounds.<sup>5</sup> Student should look for deviations from standard acoustic patterns that indicate mispronunciations.

Sixth, Speech Recognition Technology can leverage speech recognition software that can analyze and compare spoken words with their correct pronunciation. These tools can supply quantitative data on pronunciation accuracy.

Seventh, contextual understanding is considering the context in which speech occurs. Some mispronunciations may be more acceptable in informal contexts or specific dialects. Moreover, students differentiate between mispronunciations and variations due to regional accents. This confusing use was detected from the context and it seems to have been mixed with another verb. It was apparent that students were using the verb sell instead of /seil/ or /seil.

Eighth, feedback and correction can supply non-native speakers with targeted feedback on their pronunciation. They must offer exercises and practice materials focused on improving specific areas of pronunciation.

Ninth, cultural sensitivity is approaching mispronunciation detection with cultural sensitivity and awareness. Furthermore, understand that linguistic differences are natural and not indicative of a lack of language proficiency.

Tenth, continuous improvement is recognizing that improving pronunciation is an ongoing process and encouraging non-native speakers to engage in regular practice and seek feedback to refine their pronunciation skills over time.

By summarizing these detailed approaches, educators, language instructors, and speech professionals can effectively detect and address mispronunciations in non-native English speakers, facilitating clearer communication and language development. Here are the correct pronunciations and common mispronunciations of the root words we've listed:

Root word	Correct pronunciation	Mispronunciation
Analysis	ə'næləsis	ə'nəlaɪzɪs
Accept	ək'sept	ak'sept
Except	ɪk'sept	ek'sept
Expect	ɪk'spekt	ek'spekt
live vs. Leave	lɪv vs. li:v	lɪv vs. lɪv
Vegetable	'vedʒɪtəbl	'vedʒɪteɪbəl
Purpose	'pɜ:rpəs	'pɜ:rpous

<sup>5</sup> Gilakjani, A. P. (2012). "The Significance of Pronunciation in English Language Teaching". Lahijan Branch.

Islamic Azad University. Lahijan, Iran. Retrieved on 17.11.2020 from

<http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/elt/article/view/15940/10703>.

These examples illustrate how minor variations in pronunciation can lead to different meanings or misunderstandings, underscoring the importance of accurate pronunciation in communication.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, detecting mispronunciations in non-native English speakers requires a comprehensive and nuanced approach that considers phonetic, phonological, and cultural factors. Through the use of phonetic transcription, acoustic analysis, speech recognition technology, and native language understanding, educators and language professionals can effectively identify and address pronunciation errors.

It is crucial to recognize that mispronunciations are a natural part of the language learning process, influenced by the speaker's linguistic background and exposure to English. Therefore, providing constructive feedback, tailored practice exercises, and ongoing support is essential for helping non-native speakers improve their pronunciation skills over time.

Cultural sensitivity and awareness play a significant role in mispronunciation detection, as linguistic variations and accents contribute to the richness of global English communication. Emphasizing clear communication and mutual understanding, rather than perfection in pronunciation, fosters a positive and inclusive learning environment.

Ultimately, by employing a holistic approach that combines technical analysis with empathy and cultural appreciation, mispronunciation detection can contribute to enhanced language learning outcomes, improved communication, and greater linguistic diversity in the global English-speaking community.

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