

RESEARCH ARTICLE

## Investigating the vowel mispronunciation of undergraduate students of the Faculty of Management and Commerce, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka

Rifka Nusrath.GM<sup>1\*</sup>, Abdul Halik.AF

<sup>1</sup>DELT, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka

<sup>2</sup>T/Mu/Al Hilal Central College, New Jetty Road, Mutur, Trincomalee, Sri Lanka

Corresponding Author: Rifka Nusrath.GM: rifkanusrath@gmail.com

Received: 27 April, 2022· Accepted: 01 June, 2022· Published: 05 June, 2022

### Abstract

This study was conducted to investigate the vowel mispronunciation of undergraduate students of the Faculty of Management and Commerce, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. The aim of this study was to identify the problems and difficulties faced by the students in pronouncing vowel sounds in their loud reading and speaking, and the factors which affects students' pronunciation development. It has been observed that learners encounter number of pronunciation problems and difficulties in speaking and loud reading. In this study, fifty 2<sup>nd</sup> year Students of the Faculty of Management and Commerce, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka were randomly selected as sample population for investigation. The primary data were collected using qualitative and quantitative methods, and the research instruments used in this study were oral pronunciation test, questionnaire and audio tape recording. The instruments enabled the researcher to identify vowel mispronunciation with their opinions about pronunciation. According to the data analysis, the findings show that the learners encountered difficulties in pronouncing vowel sounds such as /i:/ as /i/, /u:/ as /u/ and /əʊ/ as /o/. Moreover, the opinion survey revealed that the learners show lack of interest in learning pronunciation and many factors that affect their pronunciation development. These pronunciation problems and difficulties can be overcome and improved through implementing pronunciation as a separate component like grammar and writing in English as a Second Language curriculum of Department of English Language Teaching of South Eastern University of Sri Lanka.

**Key words:** English as a Second Language; mispronunciation; South Eastern University of Sri Lanka; undergraduate

### Introduction

Pronunciation of a language seems to be a very significant part to expose a language and convey ideas in oral communication clearly. But nonnative speakers of English who learn English as a second language (L2) or foreign language (FL) find a lot of difficulties in acquiring correct pronunciation. In this sense, Garcia (2007) says that English pronunciation is one of the most difficult skills to acquire and learners should spend lots of time improving their pronunciation. It is the problem not only in Sri Lanka but also in many Asian countries since there are fewer similarities between their first language (L1) and English Language.

However, in every country, English is being learned as L1, L2, or FL around the world. Therefore, more prominence has to be given to learning English and developing learners' speaking ability with pronunciation, because it is a global language. In Sri Lanka, English is being learned as a second language and in most educational institutions. English is taught as either a main or optional subject. Pronunciation challenges are a common problem among most ESL learners in Sri Lanka. As a result, the pronunciation was focused on investigating the problems and difficulties faced by ESL learners of Faculty of

Management and Commerce at South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. Not only at the Faculty of Management and Commerce but also at other educational institutions such as private colleges, and schools, the learners have been reported to encounter numerous difficulties and problems in both speaking and pronunciation, since the very little emphasis is given for listening and speaking skills in the academic contexts. However, pronunciation plays vital role in communication that shapes the meaning of language in oral communication. Ruzkina et al (2016) point out that proper pronunciation; stress and intonation directly affect the appropriate communication in conversation. Always stress and intonation shape the meaning of the utterance produced by the speakers in oral communication.

Similarly, Wildan (2016) says "In order to be an understandable, people do have to deliver their speech with proper pronunciation. For instance, the word /li:v/ contains the sounds [l], [i:] and [v]. When the sound [i:] is pronounced [ɪ] that finally results in /lɪv/, the meaning is changed because /lɪv/ will be interpreted as the word /lɪv/. Then, the hearers will misunderstand the speech because the speaker is unintentionally misleading the speech by performing mispronunciation"

Therefore, producing appropriate sound is significant in oral communication. But learning pronunciation is quite difficult for Sri Lankan ESL learners. Ruzkina et al (2016) further state in their work that there are many challenges and barriers that hinder them to speak English with good pronunciation.

### Problem Statement

ESL learners in Sri Lanka encounter a number of pronunciation difficulties in loud reading and speaking. It has been a crucial problem among primary, secondary and higher education students in Sri Lanka. Similarly, it was observed among the undergraduate students of the Faculty of Management and Commerce (FMC), South Eastern University of Sri Lanka (SEUSL) during lecture's hours that most of the students mispronounce segmental and suprasegmental sounds. However, in this study, only vowel mispronunciation of the undergraduate students were focused.

It was observed in lectures that the following sounds were mispronounced; the vowel [ɜ:], as in the words 'bɜ:d/', 'fɜ:n/' and 'pɜ:s/' is a mid-central vowel which was often mispronounced; vowel diphthong /əʊ/ was often mispronounced as short vowel /ɔ/, for instance, /ə'gəʊ/ as /ə'gɔ/, and /fəʊs/ as /sɔw/; the diphthong /eɪ/ was often pronounced as pure vowel /e/; short vowel /e/ was pronounced by most of the students as the short vowels /ə/ and long vowels /i:/ and /u:/ was pronounced as short vowels /i/ and /u/. Therefore, this study was conducted to investigate the vowel mispronunciation of the undergraduate students and the factors which contribute to the vowel mispronunciation.

### Objectives of the research

- 1.To identify the vowel pronunciation errors made by the 2<sup>nd</sup> year Students of the FMC, SEUSL.
- 2.To investigate the factors that cause pronunciation difficulties among the 2<sup>nd</sup> year students of the FMC, SEUSL.
- 3.To suggest suitable recommendations and remedies overcome the difficulties in pronouncing vowel sounds in loud reading and speaking.

### Research Questions

- 1.Do the learners mispronounce the vowel sounds?
- 2.What does cause the difficulties in pronunciation?
- 3.What factors affect learners' pronunciation?

### Limitations of the Research

The current research is concerned with only pronunciation problems since speaking is a vast area for investigation. This study focused only on the vowel mispronunciation. Many students at FMC, SEUSL often complained that they find difficulties in pronouncing vowel sounds in their speaking and loud reading. Therefore, this study was limited to the vowel mispronunciation, and focused on

investigating why they face pronunciation problems in speaking and loud reading. Further, there are six faculties around SEUSL. Thus, Faculty of Management and Commerce was selected for carrying out this research, where over 1000 students continue their degree in English Medium; such as B. Sc in Management Information Technology (MIT), Bachelor of Commerce (B.Com) and Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA). According to the ESL curriculum of Department of English Language Teaching (DELT), SEUSL, the English Language is an in-separate course. Out of 400 students in second year Commerce degree holders, 50 ESL learners had been randomly selected for the investigation of pronunciation problems and difficulties from the degree of Bachelor of Commerce.

### Literature Review

#### English Vowels

Mispronouncing vowel sounds is another problem observed among the learners initially in lecture's hours. This has been a common problem among ESL and EFL learners. Many studies have been carried out to investigate the vowel mispronunciation. Ambalegin and Arianto (2018) investigated the mispronunciation of English consonant and vowel sounds of the seventh president of the Republic of Indonesia. In their study, they state that English mispronunciation was found in the seventh president of the Republic of Indonesia's official English speeches. These mispronunciations were caused by some factors based on the respondent's background. They further say that the consonant sounds /θ/, /ð/, /v/, /z/, /ʃ/ were pronounced incorrectly, the vowel sounds /ə/, /ɒ/, /ɛ/, /i/, /e/, /ɪ/ were pronounced inconsistently, and the diphthongs sounds such as /ɪə/, /eɪ/, /əʊ/ and /aʊ/ were incorrectly pronounced. However, in lecture's hours, it was observed that the vowel sounds /e/, /əʊ/, and /eɪ/ was mispronounced by the students of FMC.

Similarly, another research was conducted by Habibi (2016) investigating the segmental pronunciation problems encountered by advanced level students. In his study, he says that there were three vowel pronunciation problems encountered by the research subjects. First, they substituted some vowel sounds with other consonants. Second, they inserted a consonant sound between two consonant sounds. Third, they diphthongized a pure vowel sound. As above said, substituting the vowel sounds was one of the problems that were observed among the students in lecture's hours. They substituted /ə/ for /e/ and /ɔ/ for /əʊ/.

Further, Nsikan and Kusua (2017) say that English vowels are speech sounds that are less problematic to learners of the language as a second language. However, some vowel sounds constitute a serious problem to ESL students perhaps, as a result of the learner's linguistic and ethnic background whereas the problem in mispronouncing vowel sounds had been observed among most of the FMC students in SEUSL due to insufficient linguistic

knowledge and social background. Therefore, the linguistic background of the students is likely to be one of the factors that influence learners' mispronunciation mostly.

A study had been conducted by investigating the problems in using English consonants. In this study, Yuniarti (2009) says that a pronunciation problem occurs when the sound is not really difficult as such, but the learners are misled by the spelling. For instance, some words like '/ʌp/' /ʌ/, '/wɒl/' /ɒ/, '/θri:/' /i:/, '/blæk/' /æ/, '/skai/' /ai/, and '/haʊ/' /aʊ/ are not pronounced as they are written, so learning pronunciation is not easy for students. Similarly, many FMC students mispronounce certain sounds although they were good at writing words without making any spelling errors.

### **Factors Influencing Pronunciation**

L1 interference plays a vital role in affecting learners' pronunciation. Due to dissimilar pronunciations between L1 and L2, ESL/EFL learners find difficulties in acquiring correct pronunciation. Likewise, there is a number of differences between Tamil and English in all aspects including pronunciation. Some sounds do not exist in Tamil which exists in English. Several studies point out that mother tongue interference highly influences learners' pronunciation. In this sense, Ruzkina et al (2016) in their research state that there are several factors influencing the pronunciation of second language learners. They further say that through the observations in our study, it has been found that the learner's L1 (Tamil) influences the pronunciation of the target language (English) and is a remarkable factor in accounting for foreign accents. Accordingly, English and Tamil languages consist of various distinctions in phonological and phonetic features. Learners' age is an important factor in the acquisition of pronunciation. Adult learners encounter problems in acquiring correct pronunciation. Several studies investigated the learners' age, in which it is reported that adult ESL/EFL learners find difficulties in pronunciation. Senel (2006) reports that age plays a vital role in learning or improving pronunciation abilities. He further says that if learners can pronounce a second language with a native-like accent, they must have probably started to learn it during their childhood since they started their second language learning in a target language-speaking environment.

Another important factor commonly observed among the learners was lack of pronunciation practice. Ruzkina et al (2016) say that loud reading is the greatest way to practice pronunciation because this is an opportunity for them to correct their pronunciation errors. However, Ismail and Ilmudeen (2011) argue that most of the students do not practice accurate pronunciation because they write the pronunciation of English words in Tamil. Students do not read the correct pronunciation of words, instead, they read Tamil pronunciation without referring to English pronunciation. As discussed above, loud reading practice can improve learners' pronunciation whereas lack of

pronunciation practice is one of the causes of pronunciation difficulties for adult learners.

### **Other Relevant Studies**

Ruzkina et al (2016) investigated that pronunciation problems among Tamil-speaking undergraduates of South Eastern University of Sri Lanka. In this study, adult university students were taken as samples. 150 undergraduate students and instructors were taken as a sampling population. A qualitative method was used in this study, and the primary data were collected by using observation, interviews, and questionnaires that contained open-ended questions. Some errors were identified in consonant and vowel sounds, initial consonant clusters, and complex words.

Another research was conducted related to the pronunciation problems and difficulties in Ampara District by Ismail and Ilmudeen (2011), in which they investigated that the pronunciation difficulties made by Grade 10 & 11 students from two selected schools of Akkaraipattu Zonal Educational Division. In this study, 100 students were selected as a sampling population similar to the above study. The data were collected using a questionnaire containing open-ended questions. In this study too, an open-ended questionnaire was used for data collection.

Problems and difficulties were identified in consonant and vowel sounds as this research was limited with segmental sounds. According to the data analysis, 85% of students found difficulties due to mother tongue interference. As already discussed in the previous review, interference of Tamil Language highly influenced in the acquisition of pronunciation. They mentioned some causes for pronunciation difficulties such as mother tongue interference, the inexperience of phonology, lack of knowledge in English phonetic script, inappropriate teacher's guidance, and lack of practice.

A study was conducted by Afsana and Hoque (2016) with the aim of investigating some problematic English vowel and consonant sounds the tertiary students often make. 35 tertiary level students from various districts in Bangladesh were taken as a sampling population for this study. In this study, some problems with consonant and vowel sounds, minimal pair, elision, stress, and intonation were identified. These are common problems for most ESL/EFL learners.

According to the data analysis, it was revealed that 70% of teachers agreed that pronunciation problems could be improved by learners' effort. Some recommendations were given to overcome the problems; such as the use of modern learning aids and drill practice and to improve stress and intonation. Drill practice can improve learners' pronunciation. This method was used in the audio-lingual teaching method, which gave more emphasis on listening and pronunciation.

### **Methodology**

This part discusses the methods used in this study for collecting primary data. It includes a sample of the study, research design, research instruments, and data collection.

**Sample of the study**

The sample of this study consists of 50 ESL learners from B.com undergraduates who learn English as a Second Language at FMC through DELT. The sample was randomly selected out of 400 B.com students.

**Research design**

This study was designed to investigate pronunciation problems faced by the ESL learners of FMC. This study was a survey research, and qualitative and quantitative methods were used for data collection. They were used to identify the pronunciation problems and difficulties encountered by ESL learners and to collect their opinions concerning pronunciation.

**Research instruments**

Some research instruments were used to collect primary data in this study: English pronunciation test (the test was on elements of pronunciation), a questionnaire which was used to collect data about the background information of the participants and opinions with regard to pronunciation and audiotape recording (by a recording of the performance of the oral pronunciation test). Then, their recordings were listened to identify their errors.

**Data collection**

In this study, primary data of this research were directly collected by oral pronunciation test and questionnaire, and the secondary data of this research were collected from research papers, journals, theses, articles, books, and reliable websites. Some steps were taken to collect the

data. The first step was conducting an oral pronunciation test, while the second step was audiotape recording which was used to record the performance of oral pronunciation test and their pronunciation errors were noted. The last step was giving a questionnaire to collect data on information of the participants and opinions about pronunciation.

**Results and Discussion**

**Analysis of Oral Pronunciation Test**

The oral pronunciation test was the first method of collecting data. The test consists of some set of words and short sentences, which were taken based on vowel sounds. In this test, all the participants (50) were involved, and they actively responded to the test. They were asked to pronounce the words and sentences aloud, and their errors were recorded using an audio tape recorder. Later, the responses were analyzed one by one.

According to the responses with regard to vowels, 42 of the participants (84%) incorrectly pronounced the words given whereas 8 of the participants (16%) correctly pronounced all the 16 words given. The analysis shows that out of 42 participants who incorrectly pronounced, 14 of the participants (28%) incorrectly pronounced all the 16 words given. 8 of the participants (16%) mispronounced between 1 – 5 words. 6 of the participants (12%) mispronounced 6 – 10 words. Moreover, 28 of the participants (56%) mispronounced between 11 – 16 words. These are the some of the words based on vowel sounds given in the test in which most of the participants faced difficulties to pronounce them: /gəʊ/, /'əʊvər/, /'əʊpən/, /'ɔ:ləʊ/, /'sekʃən/, /fə'get/, /bleɪm/, /geɪt/, /deɪt/, /leɪk/, /'ɪnkri:s/ and /rɪ'pi:t/. They are: /i:/ as /i/, /eɪ/ as /æ/, /e/ as /ə/ and /əʊ/ as /ɔ/. The following graph (4.1) shows participants' responses to the words given with regard to vowels.

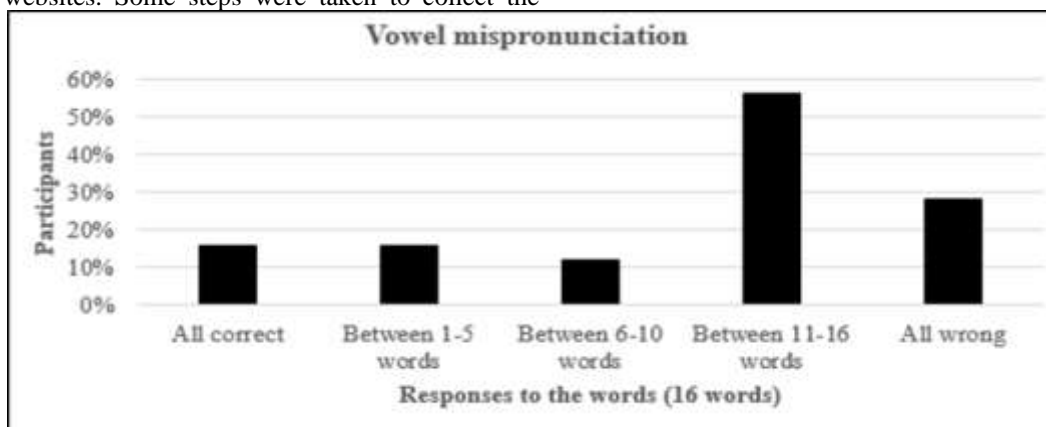


Fig 4.1 (Vowel mispronunciation)

According to the findings of vowel mispronunciation, certain problems were found in pronouncing vowel sounds among the participants. They mispronounced some vowel sounds; /i:/ as /i/, /u:/ as /u/, /e/ as /ə/, /əʊ/ as /ɔ/ and /eɪ/ as /ae/. In a similar study reviewed in chapter 2, Ambalegn

& Arianto (2018), (2.4) pointed out some vowel mispronunciation such as short vowels /ə/, /ɒ/, /e/, /i/, /e/, /i/ and diphthongs /ɪə/, /eɪ/, /əʊ/ and /aʊ/. However, in the current study, the participants incorrectly pronounced certain vowel sounds. Due to time limitation, all such their errors could not be focused during the investigation.

Nawaf (2017), Afsana and Hoque (2016), (2.9) in their study reviewed in chapter 2, the consonant and vowel mispronunciation were investigated. According to the researchers' suggestion and opinion, these problems can be overcome and their pronunciation can be improved by giving extensive listening and speaking practice with sufficient phonological and phonetics components to the learners. The problem can be overcome when the learners have sufficient knowledge of consonant and vowel sounds, and they practice loud reading.

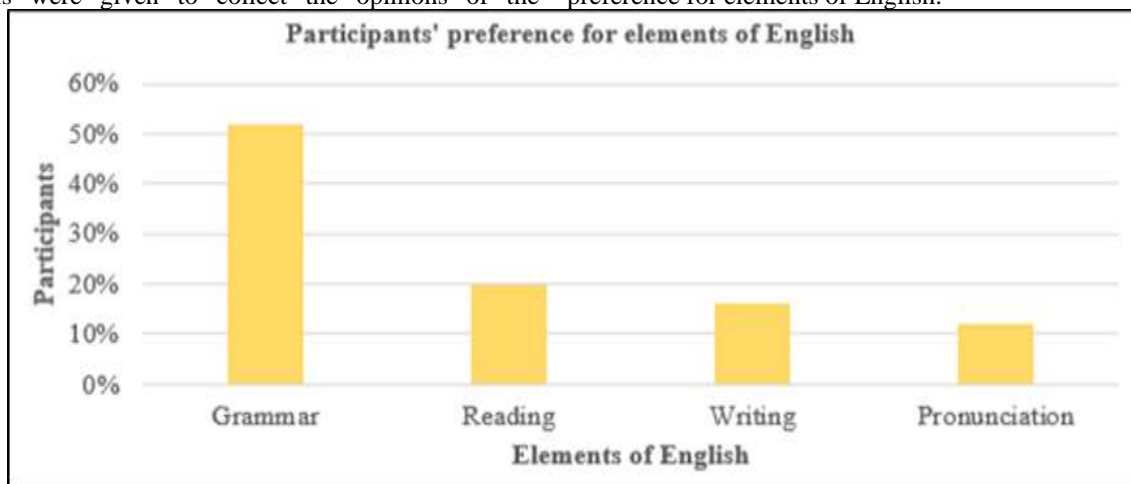
**Analysis of Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was the second data collection instrument, which consists of two parts: background information and close-ended questions. The close-ended questions were given to collect the opinions of the

participants concerning pronunciation. The questionnaire was distributed among all the participants with clear instruction. Part two consists of 7 questions including Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) and yes-no questions.

**Focus on elements of English**

The first question was regarding the elements of English. A question was asked about the elements of English the participants like the most to study. All the participants responded to the question. According to the opinions given, 26 of the participants (52%) like grammar the most, and 10 of the participants (20%) like reading the most. 8 of the participants (16%) like writing the most. However, just 6 of the participants (12%) like pronunciation the most. The following graph (4.2) shows participants' preference for elements of English.



**Fig 4.2** (Participants' preference for elements of English)

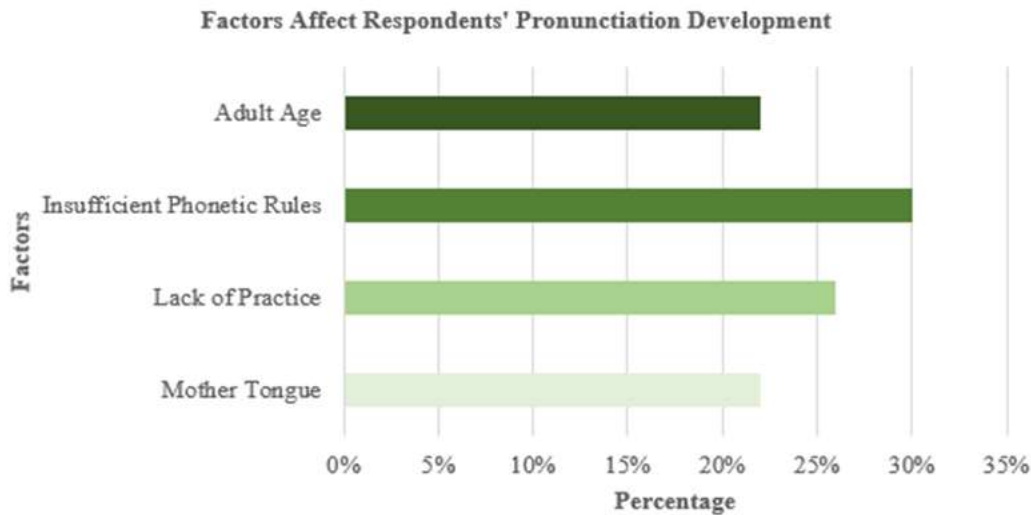
This findings can be concluded that students do not prefer to learn pronunciation and they do not give importance although they make a number of pronunciation errors in their loud reading and speaking. Pronunciation errors are not considered in ESL classroom from schools.

As a result, students do not care about pronunciation errors like other reading, writing and grammatical errors. Therefore, most of the students prefer other components rather than pronunciation.

**Focus on factors that affect learners' pronunciation development**

This question concentrates on the factors which affect learners' pronunciation development. The question was asked about the factors. Some factors were given to select a factor that affects their pronunciation development. According to their opinions, 11 of the participants (22%) selected 'mother tongue interference'. 13 of the participants (26%) selected 'lack of practice'. 15 of the participants (30%) selected 'insufficient phonetic rules. Moreover, 11 of the participants (22%) selected 'adult age'. The following graph (4.3) shows the factors affecting learners' pronunciation development.





**Fig 4.3** (Factors affecting learners' pronunciation)

As discussing the factors influencing learners' effective pronunciation, The findings of the opinions with regard to factors that affect participants' pronunciation show that the highest number of the participants opted both insufficient phonetic and phonological knowledge, and lack of practice which were the major factors for them to find difficulties in pronunciation, because pronunciation was not taught separately at schools. As a result, they did not have any previous knowledge about phonetics and phonology. The findings of several previous studies too show that insufficient phonetic and phonological knowledge is one of the factors which affect ESL/EFL learners' pronunciation.

As reviewed in chapter 2, Ismail and Ilmudeen (2011), (2.8.4) carried out a study regarding the pronunciation problems of grade 10 & 11 students in Ampara District, in which they point out that students have lack of knowledge in phonetic. They possess lack of knowledge in reading the phonetic scripts in the dictionary. Further, lack of practice was another factor for finding difficulties in pronunciation. As mentioned in chapter 2, in a previous study, Ruzkina et al (2016), (2.8.5) say that loud reading is a great way to practice pronunciation because this is an opportunity for them to correct their mispronunciation. As far as adult age is concerned, almost all the ESL learners of NAITA are adult learners who are above 18. Most of the participants encountered problems and difficulties in pronunciation. Therefore, acquiring natural pronunciation seems to be difficult for adult English learners. According to the theories and researches, it is revealed that natural pronunciation of second/foreign language can be easily acquired before the age of 13 (before puberty). As mentioned in chapter 2, Senel (2006), (2.8.2) says that if learners can pronounce a second language with a native-like accent, they must have probably started to learn it during their childhood since they started their second language learning in target language speaking environment

The rest of the questions in the questionnaire were yes-no questions. The third question focuses on teaching

pronunciation as a separate component in ESL classes. The participants were asked whether their teachers at school taught pronunciation as a separate part of the lesson. According to the responses to the question, 42 of the participants (84%) responded 'no' whereas 8 of the participants (16%) responded 'yes, because at government schools in Sri Lanka, pronunciation is not taught as a separate component in ESL classes. Further, in the school ESL curriculum, pronunciation is not a separate component to be taught like grammar, reading and writing. Moreover, at schools, time is not allocated for pronunciation practice.

Similarly, the fourth question was with regard to correcting pronunciation errors. The participants were asked whether their teachers corrected pronunciation errors in their loud reading and speaking activities. According to the responses to the question, 38 of the participants (76%) responded 'no' whereas 12 of the participants (24%) responded 'yes, because in most of the ESL classes, learners' pronunciation errors are not corrected by teachers. The ESL teachers at most of the schools in the Eastern Province may not have sufficient knowledge of pronunciation rules since they conduct English classes in mother tongue.

Further, the sixth question focuses on learners' age for language acquisition, since the participants of this study were adults. The participants were asked whether their adult age makes them find difficulties in developing pronunciation. According to the responses given, 37 of the participants (74%) responded 'yes' whereas 13 of the participants (26%) responded 'no'. The seventh question concentrates on motivation for pronunciation development, in which the participants were asked whether they were positively motivated by their teachers to give more focus on improving pronunciation. According to the responses given, 45 of the participants (90%) responded 'no' whereas 5 of the participants (10%) responded 'yes, because in most of the ESL classes, especially at schools, the participants were not motivated by teachers to give more focus in improving pronunciation. Since teachers at government schools in the Eastern Province teach English using grammar translation method (GTM), they give less

emphasis for listening and speaking in the classroom. So the learners are not motivated to learn pronunciation.

### Conclusions

This study was conducted with the aim of investigating vowel mispronunciation and the factors which contribute to the pronunciation errors among the undergraduate students of FMC, SEUSL. According to the data presentation and results of the oral pronunciation test, the findings show that 39 participants found difficulties in pronouncing in pronouncing vowel sounds. They incorrectly pronounced certain sounds such as /i:/, /e/, /eɪ/ and /əʊ/. Further, according to the participants' opinions, most of the students do not prefer to learn pronunciation. Regarding the factors affecting learners' pronunciation, insufficient phonetic rule is a significant factor which affect their pronunciation development. Moreover, pronunciation was not taught as separate component at schools and the participants were not motivated to learn pronunciation and correct pronunciation errors. Finally, learners' adult age plays a significant role in affecting their pronunciation development.

### Recommendations

Previous studies have pointed out that various recommendations and remedies to overcome pronunciation difficulties and to improve their pronunciation skill. Similarly, according to the results of the findings of this study, 84% of the participants said that pronunciation was not taught as a separate part of the lesson at schools. Therefore, it is suggested to include pronunciation or phonology as a separate component in English lessons like grammar, reading, and writing among FMC Students at SEUSL. The ESL curriculum designers can implement pronunciation as a separate component in the ESL curriculum of FMC students and other educational institutions in Sri Lanka.

When grammar is taught in ESL class, the rules of grammar are presented so that learners can build up their own mental system of grammar in the target language. Similarly, if the pronunciation is taught in ESL classes, the rules of pronunciation can be presented so that it will facilitate learners to build up their own mental system of pronunciation. By implementing pronunciation as a separate part of English subject, the followings can be included in the curriculum and implemented in ESL classrooms:

Pronunciation rules can be taught to improve pronunciation.

Various pronunciation practices with drilling can be used. More emphasis can be given to listening practices and pronunciation games in ESL classes.

Pronunciation errors can be corrected as correcting other components like writing and other activities.

**Acknowledgement:** We shower our massive thanks to the students of Faculty of Management and commerce at

South Eastern University of Sri Lanka for giving their ultimate support.

**Funding:** The research is carried out with our own cost.

### References

- Afsana, B., & Hoque, A. M. (2016). English Pronunciation Problems of the Tertiary Level Students in Bangladesh: A Case Study. *Journal of Arts, Science & Commerce*, 6(4), 50.
- Ambalegin., & Tomi, A. (2018). English Vowels and Consonants Mispronunciation of the Seventh President of Republic of Indonesia in His Official English Speeches and Its Influencing Factors Language Literacy. *Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Language Teaching*, 2(2), 111-125. <https://10.30743/ll.v2i2.678>
- García, A. C. (2007). The Role of Phonetic Training in L2 Speech Learning [Paper presentation]. Proceedings of the Phonetics Teaching and Learning Conference, University College, London.
- Ismail, M. B. M., & Ilmudeen. (10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> December, 2011). Pronunciation difficulties confronted in Akkaraipattu Zonal Educational Division: A special reference on two selected schools of Grade 10 & 11 students (Paper presentation). National Conference on Regional Development, Faculty of Arts & Culture, South Eastern University of Sri Lanka.
- Nawaf Al-Zayed, N. (2017). Non-Native Pronunciation of English: Problems and Remedies, American International Journal of Contemporary Research, 7(3), 86-90.
- Nsikan, S., & Kusua, S. (2017). English Vowel Pronunciation and Its Implications for Speech Communication among Secondary School Students in Uyo Nigeria. International Journal of English Language and Communication Studies, 3(3), 27-41.
- Ruzkina, R. F., Nizla, M. L. F., Marjiya, M. I. F., Arjiya., & Rushda, M. R. F. (2016). A Study of Pronunciation Problems among Tamil Speaking English Learners in Sri Lanka. 6th Intsymposium (Symposium). South Eastern University of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka.
- URI: <http://ir.lib.seu.ac.lk/handle/123456789/2032>
- Senel, M. (2006). Suggestions for beautifying the pronunciation of EFL learners in Turkey. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, 2(1), 111-125.
- Wildan Habibi, M. (2016). English Pronunciation Problems Encountered by Indonesian Advanced Students (Published bachelor degree thesis). Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University of Malang, Indonesia.
- Yuniarti, D. A. (2009). A Study on the Pronunciation of English Vowels by the English Department Students. [Published bachelor dissertation]. FKIP Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta.