

Effectiveness of Tutorial Videos in Enhancing Pronunciation: A Study on Cambodian EFL Learners and Social Implications

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Article Info

Article history:

Received Jan 28, 2025 Revised Feb 11, 2025 Accepted Apr 29, 2025 Online First May 2, 2025

Keywords:

Accent Mother Tongue Influence Pronunciation Teachers' Role

ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: The research aimed to examine how well tutorial videos could aid in developing the pronunciation skills of Cambodian EFL learners and to explore their perceptions of this learning method.

Methodology: Data collection employed both quantitative (pre-test and post-test) and qualitative (semi-structure interview) were used to figure out the significant difference between both groups and learners perceptions toward the use of tutorial video in enhancing pronunciation.

Main Finding: The findings indicate that using technology-based teaching approach—tutorial videos effectively enhance pronunciation for Cambodian EFL learners between different socio-economic backgrounds, with private students achieving greater improvement due to the early exposure and technology accessibility. Moreover, despite minor challenges, learners find learning pronunciation through tutorial videos enjoyable, motivating, and beneficial in reducing speaking anxiety through repeated practices. The study also demonstrates its social implications of technology in language learning, as it can close the socio-economic gaps by providing equal learning opportunities, making them more competitive in the job market and for future academic success. It emphasizes the important for instructor of integrating technology in pronunciation, as it is equally important as other language skills.

Novelty/Originality of this study: This study is original as no prior research at the researcher's organization, National University of Battambang (NUBB). It mainly focusses on the effectiveness of tutorial videos on learners' pronunciation from two different context—public and private schools which allows to explore the benefits of tutorial videos on English pronunciation development as well as fulfill the research gap at the institution.

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1. INTRODUCTION

English is acknowledged as a global language, spoken widely across the world. Many students are eager to learn and speak English with correct pronunciation [1], [2]. In many non-English-speaking countries, children are encouraged to learn English for daily communication and academic purposes. However, pronunciation often poses challenges for these children, impacting effective communication [3]. For numerous learners, mastering English pronunciation is one of the most difficult aspects, requiring explicit guidance from teachers. As Gilakjani [1] and Awadh et al. [4] observed, "Learners with good English pronunciation are likely to be understood even if they make errors in other areas, whereas learners with poor pronunciation will struggle to be understood, even if their grammar is flawless."

Journal homepage: http://cahaya-ic.com/index.php/JSKE

Effective communication plays a fundamental role in social interactions, as it facilitates meaningful exchanges and fosters mutual understanding between individuals [5]. In multilingual and multicultural societies, communication competence is essential for social integration, professional success, and academic achievement [6]. Among the key components of communication, pronunciation is particularly crucial because it directly affects intelligibility and comprehension in spoken discourse [7]. Mispronunciations can lead to misunderstandings, hinder interaction, and even create social barriers, limiting opportunities for learners to engage in diverse social and academic contexts [8].

For English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners, accurate pronunciation is not only a linguistic skill but also a social necessity. Clear pronunciation enhances confidence in conversations, fosters positive interpersonal relationships, and improves participation in educational and professional settings [9]. Moreover, effective oral communication allows learners to integrate into global communities and engage in cross-cultural exchanges more effectively [10]. In the Cambodian context, where English is increasingly used in education and business, pronunciation challenges can impede students' ability to communicate effectively, influencing their social interactions and professional prospects [11]. Therefore, addressing pronunciation difficulties is essential for enhancing both linguistic proficiency and social integration in English-speaking environments.

While English is globally recognized as an essential tool for communication, mastering its pronunciation remains a significant challenge, especially in non-English-speaking countries like Cambodia. This difficulty is not merely a linguistic hurdle; it is compounded by the broader social challenges, such as limited access to technology in education, which exacerbates disparities in learning opportunities [11]. In many regions, educational resources, including technological tools for language learning, are not equitably distributed, leading to a digital divide that affects the learning outcomes of students, particularly in rural or economically disadvantaged areas [12]. For Cambodian learners, this divide creates a barrier to utilizing modern tools that could support the development of essential skills such as pronunciation, which is critical for both social integration and professional success in a globalized world [10].

Similarly, in Cambodia, many students begin learning English at a young age, yet they often struggle with pronunciation, particularly with consonant sounds. Pronunciation skills are crucial for Cambodian EFL students [13]. Cambodian learners of English frequently substitute certain English sounds with others due to the absence of these sounds in Khmer phonology. For example, they may replace the voiceless palatal fricative /f/ (as in "she") and the voiceless dental fricative / θ / (as in "thing") with the voiceless alveolar fricative /s/ (as in "sea"). Similarly, they might substitute the voiced palatal fricative /3/ (as in "pleasure") with the voiced alveolar fricative /z/ (as in "zoo"), and the voiced dental fricative / δ / (as in "this") with the voiced alveolar stop /d/ (as in "day") [11]. Additionally, Bounchan & Moore [11] and Donley [14] noted that Cambodian students frequently omit final consonants such as /s/, /t/, or /d/. For instance, in the word "and," listeners may hear "an" instead, as students often leave out the final /d/.

Pronunciation challenges, particularly for students from non-English-speaking backgrounds, are often a result of phonological differences between their native language and English, as seen with Cambodian learners substituting certain English sounds with those in Khmer phonology [11]. Given the technological constraints faced by many Cambodian students, accessing additional, technology-enhanced resources such as tutorial videos for language learning is not always feasible. This study, however, seeks to contribute to the social sciences by exploring how the integration of accessible technology can overcome these challenges. The research aims to assess the effectiveness of tutorial videos in improving pronunciation skills, especially for learners in settings with limited resources. By examining how tutorial videos can be leveraged as an affordable and scalable learning tool, this study highlights the potential for technology to bridge the gap in educational access, empowering learners to overcome social barriers associated with language learning [13].

Although several studies have examined the pronunciation difficulties faced by Cambodian EFL students, there is a lack of research focused on strategies for improving their pronunciation. In stead those studies aimed to only explore the challenges of uttering the sounds encountered by EFL learners and their perspective toward those difficulties and what possible solutions should be applied. In addition, practical action research studies intergrated technology to counter the problem of pronunciation and its social impacts has not been done in the context of researcher's home country. This gap is particularly evident when it comes to exploring the role of modern technological tools in addressing pronunciation issues faced by not only the EFL learners but the intructors who seek for strategies in teaching pronunciation and encourage their students to actively participate in their classes and especially confidently use English to communicate in different settings.

As educational technology has become an integral part of language learning, the need to explore its impact, particularly through community-based education initiatives, has grown. The current research contributes to this field by examining how the use of tutorial videos—an accessible form of educational technology—can support Cambodian EFL students in improving their pronunciation. By providing learners with interactive and repeatable resources, this study seeks to empower them with the tools necessary for overcoming pronunciation challenges, thus contributing to a more equitable educational experience [15].

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Therefore, this paper not only explores the pronunciation challenges faced by Cambodian students but also examines how technology, specifically tutorial videos, can play a pivotal role in improving pronunciation. The research questions guiding this study are as follows:

- 1. How effective is the tutorial video in improving Cambodian EFL intermediate students' pronunciation?
- 2. How would intermediate EFL Learner view the practicing of using tutorial video to learn pronunciation?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Communication is essential in human life, shaping our experiences and helping to build meaningful connections within our communities [16]. Speaking, as a key part of communication, relies heavily on accurate pronunciation, which affects how spoken words are both delivered and understood in a conversation [17]. Wulanri et al. [18] point out that elementary school students often face pronunciation challenges when learning English as a foreign language, primarily due to the influence of their first language (L1). Teaching pronunciation to young learners early is advantageous, as postponing it can make learning more difficult. Nevertheless, some English teachers tend to overlook pronunciation instruction, despite its significance. Harmer [19] notes that "some teachers make little effort to teach pronunciation explicitly, only addressing it in passing. However, pronunciation instruction not only raises students' awareness of different sounds and their features but also significantly improves their speaking skills." Gower et al. [20] similarly assert that "focusing on pronunciation is crucial for two main reasons: it helps learners understand spoken English and enables them to speak more clearly and effectively." Research has consistently demonstrated that using technology in the classroom can be highly effective for teaching pronunciation [21].

Pronunciation involves the articulation of English sounds, refined through consistent practice and correction of errors. As students develop pronunciation skills, they form new habits and gradually overcome difficulties influenced by their first language [22], [23]. Khualid and Lubis [24] describe pronunciation as the production of sounds that convey meaning. According to Paulston [25], pronunciation refers to the creation of a sound system that facilitates clear communication for both speakers and listeners. Otlowski [26] defines pronunciation as the proper expression of words in an accepted manner. Similarly, Richard and Schmidt [27] define pronunciation as the systematic production of specific sounds.

Mastering English pronunciation is one of the most challenging skills for language learners, requiring significant time and practice [28]-[30]. Clear pronunciation is a fundamental component of effective communication and a cornerstone of language learning. Good pronunciation facilitates language acquisition, while poor pronunciation can create substantial obstacles [1].

To support effective pronunciation instruction, educators need access to training and resources that enhance their teaching methods. Fraser [31] along with McGregor & Reed [32] and Henrichsen [33], argue that the focus should shift from emphasizing the importance of pronunciation instruction to developing effective teaching strategies. Morley [16] and Levis [10] also stress that intelligible pronunciation should be a primary goal, as it is essential for communicative competence. They suggest that learners need to develop skills such as functional fluency, effective communication, greater confidence, self-monitoring, and strategies for modifying their speech.

The aim of pronunciation instruction is not to have students sound like native speakers, but rather to achieve clear and comprehensible speech. If learners want to improve how they pronounce English words, they must change their perception of English sounds, including individual phonemes, syllables, stress, and rhythm patterns. Unfortunately, pronunciation instruction is often neglected in English language teaching [21], [30], [34], [35].

James [36] outlines three key levels of pronunciation proficiency. At Level 1, the speaker's pronunciation is difficult to understand due to incorrect sounds or prosodic features, making communication nearly impossible despite strong grammar or vocabulary skills [37]. At Level 2, the speaker can be understood but has a heavy accent that may be distracting to listeners. According to Morley [38], this can hinder effective communication. At Level 3, the speaker's pronunciation is clear, easily understood, and pleasant to listen to—a level as "comfortable intelligibility," which should be the target for most learners. Achieving this level means the speaker's pronunciation is not only intelligible but also of good quality for communication.

James [36] acknowledges that some learners aim for a native-like accent, but this should not necessarily be the ultimate goal for teachers. Morley [38] suggests that an accent too far from a standard can be confusing, recommending that learners aim for a pronunciation close to a widely recognized variety. Heavy accents can lead to negative judgments about a speaker's competence or personality. Therefore, while learners don't need to sound exactly like native speakers, they should aim for a clear and familiar standard. For pronunciation models, teachers can draw from sources like CNN International, BBC, or Sky News, which provide exposure to diverse, yet clear, English accents from around the world.

Zielinski and Yates [39] emphasize that pronunciation plays a crucial role in English language acquisition, and it is the responsibility of EFL teachers to provide instruction on clear pronunciation. Teachers

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must present rules, principles, and effective techniques for mastering sounds, words, and phrases. They should use appropriate materials and methods that enable learners to acquire English pronunciation both efficiently and accurately.

Hismanoglu [40] underscores that pronunciation instruction is fundamental for oral communication and an integral part of communicative competence. Despite its importance, many English teachers do not devote enough attention to pronunciation in their classes. This issue has been highlighted by several researchers, including Morley [16], who calls for a greater emphasis on pronunciation training in both ESL and EFL contexts. Addressing this gap can significantly enhance learners' overall language proficiency.

Harmer [41] observed that many teachers often undervalue the importance of English pronunciation, largely due to several misconceptions. Some learners, for instance, consider pronunciation to be unimportant and believe that as long as they are understood, basic communication in English is sufficient. However, effective communication in any language requires not only speaking but also ensuring that one is clearly understood. Many students mistakenly believe they are proficient in English simply because they can converse with their teachers and classmates. According to Fraser [31], this misconception arises for a few reasons: first, teachers are accustomed to hearing "imperfect English" and can easily make sense of their students' speech; second, classmates often share similar linguistic backgrounds and common pronunciation errors, facilitating mutual understanding; and third, the classroom environment is a controlled setting, far removed from real-life communication with native speakers.

Many educators are unaware of the critical role of pronunciation in language learning. Teachers typically focus on grammar and vocabulary, guiding students in developing strong listening and reading skills. Additionally, pronunciation can seem complex and monotonous to both instructors and learners [41]. James [36] highlights that the lack of high-quality teaching materials and limited time for practice are significant reasons why pronunciation often gets overlooked. Some teachers feel overwhelmed by their workload and perceive pronunciation instruction as a time-consuming addition. Others assume that students will naturally acquire correct pronunciation without explicit instruction. Kenworthy [42] identifies factors like learners' phonetic aptitude, integrative motivation, and achievement drive as contributing to successful pronunciation acquisition, sometimes independent of direct teacher involvement. However, only a few students recognize the value of good pronunciation. It is the responsibility of teachers to emphasize its importance from the very beginning, ensuring that students form correct pronunciation habits early. Neglecting pronunciation at the start can hinder overall language success.

Harmer [41] also pointed out that pronunciation is often the first aspect noticed by native speakers in a conversation. While grammar and vocabulary are crucial, they lose significance if not pronounced correctly. Even with grammatical mistakes, native speakers can understand someone who has good pronunciation. Accurate pronunciation is essential for communicative effectiveness, and without it, one cannot claim to have a solid command of English.

Morley [16] argued that instructors should not merely teach pronunciation but should act as facilitators in the learning process. Their role is akin to that of a coach—specifically a speech and pronunciation coach—guiding learners to improve their spoken English. The pronunciation coach plays a vital role in monitoring and guiding changes at two levels: (a) speech production and (b) speech performance.

Teachers should begin by conducting diagnostic assessments of their students' pronunciation to identify key areas that, if improved, would significantly enhance comprehensibility. They should help students set both long-term and short-term goals for pronunciation improvement. Effective instruction requires a variety of teaching formats, including whole-class lessons, small-group activities, one-on-one tutoring, and the use of multimedia resources like prerecorded audio or video content, as well as advanced speech analysis software.

Classroom activities should incorporate opportunities for speaking and listening with both native and non-native English speakers. Instructors should provide clear pronunciation models, practical cues, and targeted feedback, encouraging students to adjust specific aspects of their speech. Monitoring students' progress should be a continuous process, with regular assessments to track improvements in speech patterns. Additionally, teachers need to foster self-awareness in learners, helping them develop realistic self-monitoring skills to continue improving their pronunciation independently.

Pearson [43] defines oral fluency as the smooth, effortless, and naturally-paced delivery of speech. In contrast, pronunciation refers to the articulation of speech sounds in a manner that is easily understood by the majority of regular speakers of the language. Regional or national accents of English pronunciation are considered correct to the extent that they are comprehensible to most speakers of the language.

Table 1. Scoring Criteria								
Score	Level	d Description						
5	Native-like	•	• All vowels and consonants are pronounced clearly, making them easily understandable to typical speakers of the language.					
		•	The speaker appropriately applies assimilation and deletions in					

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		continuous speech.
		• Stress is correctly placed on individual words, and sentence-level stress is accurately applied throughout.
4	Advanced	• Vowels and consonants are pronounced clearly and without confusion.
		• Minor distortions in consonants, vowels, or stress do not hinder
		comprehension, and all words are easily understood.
		• Some distortion may occur in certain consonants or consonant clusters.
		• Stress is correctly applied to most common words, and sentence-level
3	Good	stress is generally appropriate.
3	Good	• The majority of vowels and consonants are pronounced accurately.
		 Some recurring errors may cause occasional confusion with certain words.
		• A few consonants may be consistently distorted, omitted, or
		 A rew consolitants may be consistently distorted, of mispronounced in specific contexts.
		 Stress-related vowel reduction may occur in a few words.
2	Intermediate	 Certain consonants and vowels are consistently mispronounced in a way
-	Internetutet	that is characteristic of a non-native accent.
		• Approximately two-thirds of the speech is understandable, though
		listeners may need time to adapt to the accent. Some consonants are
		frequently omitted, and consonant clusters may be simplified.
_		• Stress may be incorrectly applied to some words or may be unclear.
1	Limited	• A significant number of consonants and vowels are mispronounced,
		leading to a noticeable foreign accent.
		• Listeners may struggle to understand about one-third of the words.
		• Many consonants may be distorted or dropped, and consonant clusters
		may not follow standard English patterns.
		• Stress is applied in a way that is not typical of English, with unstressed
		words possibly being reduced or omitted, and some syllables added or
	Disfluent	left out.
0	Disfluent	• The pronunciation strongly reflects the influence of another language.
		• Many consonants and vowels are mispronounced, disordered, or omitted.
		• More than half of the speech may be unintelligible to listeners.
		• Stressed and unstressed syllables are handled in a way that is not typical of English and several words may have an incorrect number of syllables
		of English, and several words may have an incorrect number of syllables.

An accent refers to "the cumulative auditory effect of those aspects of pronunciation that reveal a person's regional or social origin" [42]. Some learners may aim for a native-like pronunciation due to the demands of their work environment or company requirements [42]. Many adult English learners speak with foreign accents, which categorize them as non-native speakers. The Critical Period Hypothesis suggests that to acquire a native-like accent, language learning should begin before the age of 7. However, more recent studies argue that factors such as environment and motivation play a more significant role in achieving native-like pronunciation than the age of acquisition. Understanding the features of learner accents and their effects on intelligibility helps teachers identify and address pronunciation challenges [42]. The primary goal is for learners to be understood, and while good pronunciation is essential for this, a "perfect accent" is not required [41].

Heavily accented speech can sometimes still be intelligible, but errors in stress, intonation, and rhythm often have a greater impact on intelligibility than mistakes in individual sounds [43]. This is why pronunciation teaching and research emphasize not only the sounds of language (consonants and vowels) but also suprasegmental features, which involve vocal effects extending beyond individual sounds, such as stress, sentence and word intonation, and rhythm [43] In English, words with multiple syllables carry "prominence" or "stress" on certain syllables. If learners fail to stress the correct syllable or do so unevenly, listeners may struggle to comprehend the word. Stress patterns play a critical role in helping native speakers recognize words. For example, a misplacement of stress, like stressing the second syllable of "written" instead of the first, can lead listeners to mishear it as "retain." Similarly, stressing the wrong syllables in "comfortable" could cause it to sound like "come for a table" [42]. Such mishearing often results from incorrect stress patterns.

Rhythm is another key feature of English, and listeners expect speakers to maintain a regular alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables, with stressed syllables occurring on a consistent beat and unstressed syllables experiencing vowel reduction. For example, both "I'm twenty-one tomorrow" and "I'm seventy-seven tomorrow" have the same rhythm and syllable count, but the latter has more syllables due to unstressed syllables being "squeezed" between stressed syllables without disrupting the regular beat. In contrast, languages like

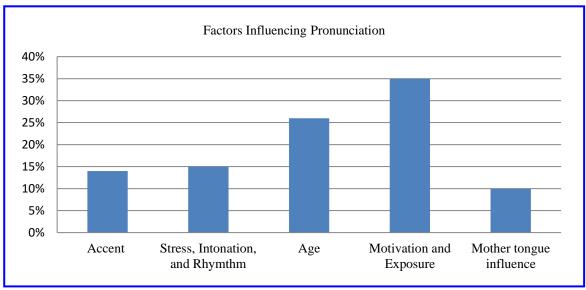
French and Turkish have different rhythmic patterns, and when speakers of these languages struggle with English, it often results from applying the rhythm of their native tongue [42].

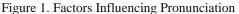
Intonation, which refers to pitch variation and tone, plays a vital role in English communication. It conveys important information about the speaker's intentions—such as whether they are asking a question, seeking agreement, or making a statement. Misusing intonation patterns can lead to misunderstandings, just like mispronounced sounds can. Inconsistent or inappropriate intonation may also contribute to judgments about the speaker's attitude, character, or behavior [43]. Research by O'Brien [44] on German pronunciation revealed that native German speakers focused more on stress, intonation, and rhythm than on individual sounds when rating American students' German pronunciation. This underscores the importance of teaching learners not only how to pronounce individual sounds but also how to use proper stress, intonation, and rhythm to sound more native-like. This research suggests that teachers should devote time to teaching these suprasegmentally features alongside sound production to improve learners' overall intelligibility.

The development of native-like pronunciation in a second language is influenced by factors such as the learner's age at acquisition, motivation, and the cultural group they associate with. Research has shown that having specific personal or professional goals for learning English can increase the desire and necessity for native-like pronunciation [45]-[48]. According to Marinova-Todd et al. [47], adults can achieve high levels of proficiency, even native-like fluency, in a second language if they are motivated. Moyer [48] also found that positive experiences with and attitudes toward the language play significant roles in achieving native-like pronunciation. Shively's [49] study of Spanish learners revealed that factors such as age at first exposure, formal instruction, immersion in a Spanish-speaking environment, out-of-class exposure to the language, and a focus on pronunciation and accent in the classroom, teachers should encourage students to engage in English outside of class and assign tasks that promote these interactions.

The learner's native language plays a significant role in language pronunciation, as demonstrated by the characteristics of a foreign accent, which often mirrors elements of the learner's first language [42]. Avery and Ehrlich cited in [50] argue that the sound patterns of the first language (L1) are transferred into the second language (L2), leading to a foreign accent. Non-native speakers' mispronunciations often reflect the influence of their native language's sounds, rules, stress, and intonation. For example, studies on English rhythm found that learners' native language patterns affected their ability to produce English-like stress alternation. Avery and Ehrlich identify three ways the native language's sound system impacts target language pronunciation: first, if a sound in the target language is absent in the learner's native language, they may struggle to produce or perceive it; second, differing phonotactic rules (rules for combining sounds into words) between languages can cause issues for learners, as these rules are language-specific; and third, differences in rhythm and melody between languages influence stress and intonation patterns, which learners may transfer into the target language [51], [52].

In conclusion, while other factors also affect L2 pronunciation [53], the factors outlined above provide ESL/EFL teachers with insight into potential challenges learners from different linguistic backgrounds may face. Understanding these influences helps teachers identify pronunciation difficulties caused by foreign accents and improve students' pronunciation skills. Additionally, this understanding enables teachers to tailor their pronunciation instruction and teaching methodologies to better meet students' specific needs.





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In the digital age, English plays a crucial role as the global language in education [54]. It facilitates communication between teachers and learners from different backgrounds, providing access to a wealth of knowledge. The primary goal of learning English is to enable students to communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing. Additionally, English education aims to enhance students' language skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, mastering these skills can be challenging due to the various aspects of each skill that require focused attention [55].

Among the four language skills, speaking is often considered the most important, as anyone learning a language is expected to become a proficient speaker [56]. Nunan [57] defines speaking as a productive oral skill that involves constructing systematic verbal expressions to convey meaning. Speaking encompasses five key components: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. As such, it can be difficult for teachers to find the right teaching strategies to effectively improve students' speaking skills [58].

Technology can be an effective tool in enhancing English language teaching and learning. It can also help learners improve their speaking and pronunciation skills. Tutorial videos, for example, are a valuable learning tool for speaking practice. A tutorial provides step-by-step instructions and demonstrations, closely mimicking timing, phrasing, and lip movements [59]. Danan [60] highlights video dubbing as another technological method that can enhance vocabulary acquisition, speaking fluency, and pronunciation. This technique also promotes creativity and initiative. As a result, the researcher has used video dubbing as a learning tool to improve students' speaking and pronunciation skills.

In addition to videos, Benzies [61] introduced several pronunciation teaching programs designed to help students improve their English pronunciation. Programs like Talk to Me English, Integral Inglés, Teach Yourself English Pronunciation, and TP (Perceptual Training / Perceptual Tests) are particularly noteworthy.

Talk to Me English and Integral Inglés, for example, have similar content and formats. However, the instructions in Talk to Me English are presented in English, while Integral Inglés provides them in Spanish. Talk to Me English offers two CDs—one for Beginner/Intermediate students and another for Intermediate/Advanced learners—while Integral Inglés includes four CDs, one for each proficiency level and a fourth dedicated to Business English. Both programs come with headphones for listening to audio files, and they feature voice recognition software that compares the user's speech with native speaker models. These programs can identify pronunciation errors, pinpointing areas where the user's pronunciation deviates from the native version. Additionally, the software generates intonation curves, allowing students to compare their pronunciation of specific words or sentences with the ideal native speaker intonation.

Many previous studies have explored how pronunciation impacts the development of EFL learners and identified various factors contributing to pronunciation difficulties. For example, pronunciation positively affects second language acquisition, helping learners gain essential skills for effective communication in English [50].

A study on English consonant pronunciation issues at Mae Fah Luang University revealed that Thai students struggled with sounds not present in the Thai phonological system, particularly in final positions, such as /g/, /z/, and /l/ [3]. Similarly, research on Sudanese students of English, whose first language is Sudanese Spoken Arabic, highlighted problems with vowel pronunciation and contrasts in consonant sounds like /z/ and / δ /, /s/ and / θ /, /b/ and /p/, and /tʃ/ [62]. Studies from Thailand, China, and Sudan found that factors such as mother tongue interference, differences in sound systems, inconsistencies in English sounds, learners' age, attitudes, motivation, psychological factors, prior pronunciation instruction, and insufficient knowledge of phonology and phonetics all significantly affect the acquisition of English pronunciation [62]-[64]. It is clear that many EFL learners face challenges in pronouncing English words, with various factors contributing to these difficulties.

In addition, a study involving children using English language learning software, English films, and speech-to-text software demonstrated improvement in pronunciation through these tools, suggesting a new pedagogical approach [65]. Research on the use of video clips with subtitles found that students improved their fluency, comprehension, pronunciation, stress, and intonation [66]. Similarly, a study by Wulandari et al. [18] showed that video and audiovisual aids helped fifth-grade non-native English speakers, particularly in word stress. In Thailand, Varasarin [67] found that providing teachers with appropriate techniques and materials, such as videos and phonetic symbol cards, helped students enhance their speaking skills. Teachers who received proper training were better able to guide students in improving their pronunciation and building confidence.

Tseng [68] found that both video and written feedback significantly aided the development of English speaking skills. Written feedback helped students with grammar rules and word usage, while video feedback improved their intonation. However, neither method significantly impacted pronunciation or fluency. In addition, Shih's [69] study on blended learning with video-based blogs for public speaking suggested that this approach could enhance learning efficiency and student satisfaction, provided it was supported by the right tools and course planning. Feedback from peers and instructors, as well as features like free access, revision opportunities, and valuable learning material, played key roles in motivating students to learn effectively.

Technology-based learning has revolutionized education, providing new opportunities for individuals to access knowledge and improve their social mobility. With advancements in digital platforms, online education, and e-learning tools, students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds have greater access to quality education.

The integration of technology in education has significantly expanded learning opportunities. According to Selwyn [70], digital learning tools, such as massive open online courses (MOOCs) and virtual classrooms, have democratized education by making high-quality content accessible to learners regardless of geographic location. Furthermore, research by Means et al. [71] suggests that online education can be as effective as traditional classroom learning, particularly when incorporating interactive and adaptive learning technologies.

Despite these benefits, disparities in access to technology remain a challenge. Warschauer and Matuchniak [72] highlight the concept of the digital divide, wherein students from low-income backgrounds often lack access to essential digital resources, limiting their ability to benefit from technology-based learning. This inequality underscores the need for policy interventions to ensure equitable access to educational technology.

Social mobility is closely linked to educational attainment, and technology plays a crucial role in providing pathways for upward mobility. Research by DiMaggio and Bonikowski [73] indicates that digital skills and access to online education contribute to higher employability and career advancement opportunities. Additionally, Bynner and Parsons [74] emphasize that individuals who engage in lifelong learning through digital platforms are more likely to experience economic and social mobility.

Online learning platforms also offer reskilling and upskilling opportunities, particularly for marginalized groups. A study by Carnevale et al. [75] found that workers who pursued online certifications and vocational training programs experienced significant career progression compared to those who did not engage in continuous learning. These findings suggest that technology-based learning serves as a catalyst for breaking cycles of poverty and promoting social advancement.

While technology-based learning offers numerous benefits, it is not without its challenges. Digital literacy, infrastructure limitations, and affordability remain significant barriers. According to Van Dijk [76], disparities in digital literacy contribute to the "second-level digital divide," where individuals may have access to technology but lack the skills to use it effectively for educational and career growth. Moreover, Hodges et al. [77] argue that the rapid transition to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic exposed gaps in technological readiness, particularly among disadvantaged students.

Moreover, Vireak et al. [78] and Sam [79] highlight that successful technology integration in Cambodian education requires addressing its challenges and capitalizing on the opportunities. Vireak and Bunrosy [80] emphasize the importance of integrating technology, using communicative teaching strategies, and fostering a learner-centered environment. Studies by Hung [81] and Crook et al. [82] on the use of video technology for feedback show that video feedback encourages students to engage more with the material, improving their listening, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Hung's [81] research further revealed that video feedback motivated students to interact more with both classroom content and social activities.

Similarly, Hung & Huang [83] investigated the effectiveness of video blogs in enhancing EFL students' abilities to deliver oral presentations, as well as their views on video blogging. Thirty-six English-major juniors participated in a six-month video blog project, during which they uploaded three-minute virtual presentation videos over the course of eighteen weeks. The videos were evaluated by three raters using a scale that assessed fourteen presentation skills. The findings revealed significant improvements in the learners' overall presentation performance, with notable progress in skills such as projection, pronunciation, intonation, posture, introduction, conclusion, and purpose.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1. Research Design

This study was designed as a practical action research modeled [84]. In addition, a mixed methods research design (qualitative and quantitative research) was used in this research due to research objectives and research questions. The quantitative data was used to examine how effective are tutorial videos in improving intermediate students' pronunciation. Meanwhile, the qualitative data was utilized to seek for the students' perception on using video to improve their pronunciation skill.

3.2. Sample size

Following the action research framework outlined [85], the participants in this study consisted of thirtytwo students from the English for Adult program at two English schools in Battambang province, Cambodia. Sixteen students were selected from each school, all of whom were at the intermediate level and had studied English for at least three years. The participants' ages, as recorded in their birthdates, ranged from 14 to 20 years old.

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3.3. Sampling methods

The subjects were purposively selected. To establish whether there was a difference in general language proficiency in the subject selected, the researcher checked their score in their placement exam. The placement exam was the Preliminary English Test (PET). This test was established by Cambridge University Press to check if the students have the intermediate level of English. After checking the score, the researcher found that the target subjects had no difference in general language proficiency.

3.4. Instruments

There are two instruments: research instrument and instructional instrument. The research instruments are Pre-test, Post-test, and semi-structured interview. Pre-test and post-test were employed in this study. There were two sections in both pre and post-test. First section consisted of 15 items—5 items were /ʃ/ sound, 5 items were / θ / sound, and other 5 were / δ / sound. Second section consisted of 10 sentences that include all /ʃ/, / θ /, and / δ / sound. The researcher created the test independently, but sourced 15 items from the BBC Learning English and British Council websites. The final 10 sentences were taken from the reading section of the Preliminary English Test (PET) [86]. Both the pre-test and post-test included the same items, though the order of the items in the post-test was altered. After administering the pre/post-tests, a semi-structured interview was conducted. The interview consisted of six questions divided into three themes: learner opinions, challenges, and suggestions. Additionally, instructional materials included lesson plans and tutorial videos, which were used in the classroom during the treatment period.

3.5. Data Collection Method

Primary and Secondary data were used in data collection. For primary data, researcher collected from pre-test and post-test. Pre-test was administered to all participants one week before the treatment. They were asked to pronounce all the 15 items and 10 sentences. After the pre-test, participants were given the instruction on pronunciation for three weeks. Students were taught for two sessions consisted of two hours each week during the treatment. The non-native teacher gave them the normal instruction and then let them watch pronunciation video that focus on $/\int'$, $/\theta'$, and $/\delta'$ sound and practices. The native teacher will be asked to score the subject with score ranging from zero to five (disfluent to native-like) [43]. The whole study lasted for 5 weeks (One week for pre-test, three weeks for treatment—50 minutes each instruction, and one week for post-test). Post-test was administered after the instruction finished. The participants' pronunciation test was recorded and given the marks by the native English teacher. After that, twelve students (six from public school and six from private school) from those who scored the lowest, medium, and the highest were also interviewed; so that, the researcher could gather more information about their perception on using video to improve their pronunciation. On the other hand, the secondary data were gathered from research articles, journals, books, and other related scholar works.

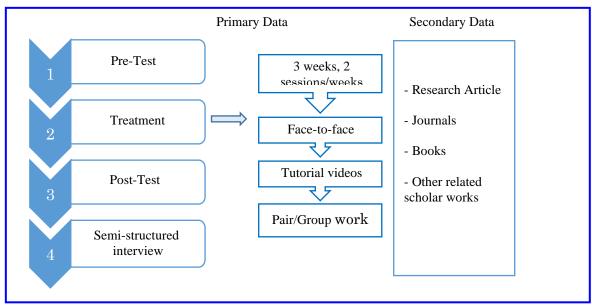


Figure 2. Data Collection Method

3.6. Data Analysis

Pre-test and post-test score were corded by using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). After finishing corded, pair-samples t-test was used to check whether there was significant different between pre-test and post-test after the instruction. Semi-structured interview was also used to study in deep about the students' perception on using video to improve their pronunciation.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Result

4.1.1. Effectiveness of Tutorial Videos on Learners' pronunciation

Table 2. Paired Sample Statistics of Private and Public Schools

Paired Samples Statistics of Private and Public Schools							
		Mean	Ν	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean		
Private School	Pre-Test	99.44	16	9.960	2.490		
	Post-Test	118.50	16	3.183	.796		
Public School	Pre-Test	98.69	16	9.016	2.254		
	Post-Test	112.44	16	5.215	1.304		

	Table 3. Paired Sample	Test between Pre-Test a	nd Post-Test of Private	School and Public School
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	Paired Samples Test (Private School)								
	Paired Differences								
		Mean	Std.	Std.	95% Co			Sig. (2-	
			Deviation	Error	Interval of the		t		df
				Mean	Difference				tailed)
					Lower	Upper	_		
Private	Pre-Test	19.063	7.425	1.856	23.019	15.106	10.269	15	.000
School	- Post-								
	Test								
Public	Pre-Test	13.750	6.496	1.624	17.212	10.288	8.467	15	.000
Scholl	- Post-								
	Test								

Paired Sample Test's results shows that the participants made a lot of wrong pronunciation in pre-test (Mean=99.44, SD= 9.960) than post-test (Mean= 118.50, SD= 3.183) with the 19.063 mean different. It also reveals that there is statistically significant different between pre-test and post test score (t-value= 10.269, p<0.001).

The table also indicates that the participants' pronunciation mean score before the treatment (Mean=98.69, SD= 9.016) was lower than the mean score after the treatment (Mean= 112.44, SD= 5.215). The result additionally shows that the mean score different was 13.7530. Importantly, the Paired Sample Test has revealed that there is statistically significant different between pre-test and post test score (t-value= 8.467, p<0.001).

Based on the results of the two groups, it is clearly seen that tutorial videos really help EFL intermediate learners to improve their pronunciation which is supported by all participants who stated that the practice of using tutorial video to learn pronunciation assisted them with this matter.

"It's interesting to learn pronunciation through video tutorials. I can improve my pronunciation." said S1, S2, and S6.

Interestingly, this result also revealed that the participants from the private school tend to improve their pronunciation better than those who are from public school. This happened as the private school ones enrolled in English classes earlier than those who are from the public ones since they were busy assisting their family farming and due to lack of English school at their hometown.

"Video tutorial is good for helping me with the pronunciation, but what can help me too is because I got into English class earlier and I used to study with foreign teachers." said S4.

"I can improve my pronunciation skill through video tutorials, but it's a bit hard for me to follow and produce the correct sound because I am not familiar with the move of the tongue." said S9.

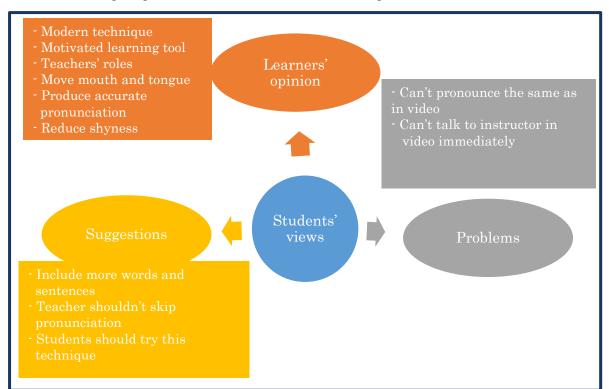
Effectiveness of Tutorial Videos in Enhancing Pronunciation: A Study on ... (Hak Chamroeun)

"It's difficult for me to follow the tutorials because I started school late and no school at my hometown." said S7, S8, and S10.

The study revealed significant differences between students from different socio-economic backgrounds. Private school students, who had earlier exposure to English and more opportunities to practice with foreign teachers, showed greater improvement in pronunciation. In contrast, public school students faced more challenges due to later enrollment in English classes and limited access to language learning resources. These differences highlight the role of educational opportunities in shaping language learning outcomes.

This finding underscores broader social challenges in language learning, particularly the disparity in access to technology and resources between private and public schools. Students in private schools often have access to better educational technology, such as high-quality tutorial videos, stable internet connections, and early language instruction, giving them a significant advantage over their public school counterparts. Public school students, on the other hand, may struggle with insufficient resources and a lack of early exposure, which can hinder their ability to develop strong pronunciation skills. Addressing this digital divide is crucial for ensuring equal educational opportunities for all learners.

The findings suggest that the use of tutorial videos positively impacts students' confidence in interacting with others. Many participants expressed that they previously felt shy about pronouncing certain sounds, but the engaging nature of the videos helped them overcome their hesitation. By providing a structured and visually supportive learning method, tutorial videos encouraged learners to practice pronunciation repeatedly, reducing their anxiety and making them more comfortable speaking in English.



4.1.2. Students' perception toward tutorial videos on learners' pronunciation

Figure 3. EFL Cambodian Learners' views on using tutorial video to learn pronunciation

Participants are positive about the use of tutorial video in teaching and learning pronunciation. They commonly mentioned that tutorial video was a good and modern technique which should be used by teachers to help their students improve their pronunciation since students may sooner later produce native like pronunciation and change their wrong habit of pronouncing the words in the wrong way; for instance, instead of saying *Thank*, Milk*sh*ake, and *Th*ough, most of them said *Sank*, Milk*s*ake, and *D*ough respectively. Most of the participants claimed that they enthusiastically learned the pronunciation while previously they didn't really want to pronounce any words especially the three sounds tested since they felt shy and probably because their previous teachers usually taught them those sounds by pronouncing themselves. Students could reduce their shyness when they

studied pronunciation via tutorial videos. In addition, it was motivated because the videos' sound and words were clearly pronounced and demonstrated that the learners could easily followed.

Through the in deep interview, it was seen that tutorial video was useful for EFL learners to learn and improve their pronunciation which is the most important aspect in speaking.

"I laughed and enjoyed learning pronunciation when you used the tutorial video to teach us and it is helpful for us as we can improve our pronunciation and this can also help us improve our speaking as a whole; so that I can communicate with native speakers easily" said S1.

Furthermore, other participants stated that tutorial video assisted them to change the wrong pronouncing habit, and helped them move the mouth and tongue correctly. Interestingly, it was known that participants could learn pronunciation, listening, and vocabulary at the same time since those videos were designed to fit their ability. Plus, the vocabulary was relevant to their level.

Even though tutorial videos were effective and useful for learning pronunciation, participants still met a couple problems during their study. Yet those problems were mostly from students themselves. For example, participants said that it was hard for them to move their mouths and tongues as demonstrated in the videos, and they couldn't pronounce the same way as what were pronounced in the video for the first time; however, they were positive that these problems would be solved day by day after they watched and practiced through the videos.

"Actually the videos were great, but one small thing I don't really like is I cannot ask the demonstrator immediately" said S10.

Besides, most of the participants said that they had problem pronouncing the voiceless consonant sound $/\mathfrak{f}/, /\theta/$, and voiced consonant sound $/\delta/$ but this was solved by this learning strategy.

There is one common comment given by the participants on using tutorial video to learn pronunciation. They want the video producer to add more words and include sentences into the video; so that, students would have more choice to practice not only the words but the sentences. All participants are courageous to suggest teachers to use this teaching technique to teach pronunciation since it is fun and reduces the mistake of uttering the words. This means that teachers can use video to teach pronunciation rather than pronounce the words by themselves as they were not native speakers. Furthermore, teachers should not skip the pronunciation sessions; so that, students will have a chance to practice pronouncing the words which could be advantageous for their communication. On the other hand, they would also recommend this technique to other learners, as they can enjoy it and it could significantly improve their pronunciation. They acknowledged that it might be difficult at first, but they believed that improvement would come with time and practice.

The study reveals that improving communication skills through pronunciation practice can have a direct impact on students' social and economic opportunities. Enhanced English proficiency can boost students' confidence in professional and social interactions, making them more competitive in job markets and higher education. Many careers today require strong English communication skills, and proficiency in pronunciation can be an essential factor in securing employment, networking effectively, and accessing international opportunities. Therefore, integrating pronunciation-focused learning strategies, such as tutorial videos, into both private and public educational settings can help bridge this gap and equip students with the skills needed for future success.

4.2. Discussion

The result of the study revealed that there was statistically significant different between pre-test and posttest of the two groups with the different mean score of (M =19.063) for the private group and (M= 13.7530) for the public group along with (t-value= 10.269, p<0.001) and (t-value= 8.467, p<0.001) reflected how institutional access to digital resources influences learning outcomes. As research by Warschauer [87] indicates, access to digital tools alone is not sufficient; effective integration into the curriculum and pedagogical practices is necessary to bridge educational gaps. Even theoretical perspectives of Digital Divide Theory conducted by Van Dijik [76] suggesting that disparities in access to and use of technology create differences in educational outcomes. This means that access to tutorial videos can mitigate educational inequalities.

Ultimately, it was aslo supported by the study of Chaimaa & Wiam [88], Hung [81], Hung & Huang [83], Abdurrahman [66], Crook et al. [82], Shih [69], Wulandari et al. [18], and Varasarin [67] which demonstrate clear benefits of using videos to enhance students' pronunciation. This disparity is a reflection of broader social challenges in language learning, particularly unequal access to educational resources, including technology. Moreover, One of the key social challenges influencing language learning is the digital divide between public and private school students. Private schools often have better access to digital resources, such as tutorial videos, interactive language software, and multimedia-equipped classrooms. In contrast, public schools, particularly those in rural or underfunded areas, may lack the necessary technology, limiting students' ability to benefit from digital tools for language learning. However, when technology access is unequal, students in public schools are at a disadvantage, leading to slower progress in pronunciation and overall communication skills. This gap reinforces

existing inequalities, as students from well-resourced schools have a higher chance of mastering English pronunciation and, consequently, gaining better opportunities in higher education and employment.

It was seen that the outcome of the present study was similar to the previous study of Gilakjani & Ahmadi [50], Harmer [41], and Po'latova & Yokutkhon [89] in term of the importance of having the accurate pronunciation as well as the development of EFL learners' pronunciation together with a positive effect of pronunciation on learning a second language which they gain the skills they need for effective communication in English. This means that poor pronunciation can hinder learners' ability to express themselves clearly, potentially affecting their confidence in both academic and professional settings. By improving pronunciation through tutorial videos, students gain skills that are directly linked to better job prospects, particularly in fields where English proficiency is required, such as tourism, business, and international NGOs. Moreover, communication skills play a pivotal role in social mobility. Students who can articulate their thoughts clearly in English are more likely to participate in international scholarship programs, engage in networking opportunities, and secure higher-paying jobs. In contrast, those who struggle with pronunciation may face barriers in accessing these opportunities, further widening economic inequalities.

On the other hand, several studies stated that EFL learners should have personal or professional goal in order to study; so that, they can improve their English learning [45]-[48], [90] and the study of Shih [69] showed that students' learning satisfaction was achieved when blended learning using video was implemented with sufficient equipment and careful course plans. Similarly, the current study outcome showed that tutorial video could be considered as a motivational tool which EFL learners can improve their English language study particularly pronunciation. The findings also align with Vygotsky's [91] Sociocultural Theory, which emphasizes the importance of mediated learning and scaffolding. The improvement in pronunciation observed in the study participants supports the idea that guided, technology-enhanced learning using video is combined with sufficient technological resources and well-structured instructional plans. The use of tutorial videos in the present study served as a form of digital scaffolding, allowing students to receive guided pronunciation instruction while actively engaging in their learning process.

The study's results also align with Self-Determination Theory [92], which posits that intrinsic motivation and autonomy are crucial for effective learning. Research has shown that students learn more effectively when they have personal or professional goals [93]. The implementation of tutorial videos provided learners with an accessible and engaging way to improve their pronunciation, increasing their intrinsic motivation. The study findings suggest that video tutorials serve as motivational tools that empower learners to take control of their English language acquisition, similar to the findings of Danan [94] and Kalyanov [95], who demonstrated the impact of video resources on lexis acquisition, speaking fluency, and pronunciation.

The findings of the present study demonstrate the effectiveness of tutorial videos in improving Cambodian EFL intermediate learners' pronunciation. This aligns with contemporary social science theories that emphasize the role of technology in reducing educational inequalities. The integration of technology in education is increasingly recognized as a means of addressing social disparities by providing equitable access to learning resources, personalized instruction, and enhanced engagement [70]. The findings also align with Vygotsky's [91] Sociocultural Theory, which emphasizes the importance of mediated learning and scaffolding. The improvement in pronunciation observed in the study participants supports the idea that guided, technology-enhanced learning fosters deeper linguistic competence. Shih [69] found that students' learning satisfaction increases when blended learning using video is combined with sufficient technological resources and well-structured instructional plans. The use of tutorial videos in the present study served as a form of digital scaffolding, allowing students to receive guided pronunciation instruction while actively engaging in their learning process.

Interestingly, EFL teachers should be aware of their role in teaching English particularly in pronunciation. They may have to choose the appropriate technique to teach; for instance, using tutorial video to teach it which was suggested by the result of the present study. This was also seen as the suggestion from the study of Danan [52], and Spring [96] mentioned that videos could also improve lexis acquisition, speaking fluency and pronunciation, yet the result of present study revealed that students are not only able to improve vocabulary, pronunciation but also the listening.

Sweller's [97] Cognitive Load Theory explains the challenges learners face when processing new linguistic information. The present study revealed that Cambodian EFL intermediate learners had problem uttering voiceless consonant sound /J/, / θ /, and voiced consonant sound / δ / and the final plural sound and past tense of the verb. This finding was supported by the study of Kea [13], Bounchan & Moore [11], and Abidin [98] whose studies claimed that Cambodian students found it was hard to pronounce those sounds because in their language, there were not any voiced and voiceless consonant sounds, and they did not normally pronounce the last consonants of the words. Henrichsen [99], who argued that video tutorials act as instructional guides that synchronize visual demonstrations with spoken language, helping learners regulate cognitive load and develop more accurate pronunciation. However, these problems were solved after they watched the video and practiced it because those tutorial videos help them move their mouth and tongue properly which was the same as the result

of Nabylah [100] and Henrichsen [101] indicated that tutorial is manual or guide that provides instructions for and demonstrations which attempts to follow as closely as possible the timing, phrasing and lip-movements.

This study emphasizes the broader role of digital learning in promoting independent learning among EFL students. The noticeable gap in pronunciation improvement between private and public school learners highlights the importance of equal access to digital resources. Incorporating tutorial videos into language instruction provides an effective solution for pronunciation difficulties, especially in underprivileged settings. By improving pronunciation accuracy, these videos help build confidence in spoken communication, which is vital for academic and career success. The findings reinforce the value of technology-assisted learning in fostering learner autonomy and advocate for increased investment in digital tools to reduce educational disparities.

The study was conducted at two educational institutions (a public and a private) school in Battambang province, Cambodia because they are ones of the popular English schools. Due to the time constraint, this study focused only on students who are studying in intermediate level and especially this study focused on the voiceless consonant sound $/\beta/$, $/\theta/$, and voiced consonant sound $/\delta/$. For further research study, other researchers may think of this possible research topic "Pronunciation Training, Language Learning Strategies and Speaking Confidence" so instructors may find some more useful teaching techniques and learning strategies to teach pronunciation or speaking as the whole. However, this study has some limitations. First, the small sample size of thirty-two students from two schools in Battambang limits the generalizability of the findings. Second, the use of a researcher-designed pronunciation test, though adapted from reputable sources, may lack full standardization. Lastly, the short intervention period may not capture long-term pronunciation improvements.

5. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the significant role of tutorial videos in enhancing the pronunciation skills of Cambodian EFL intermediate learners. More importantly, it sheds light on the broader social implications of technology-driven language learning, particularly in reducing educational disparities. The results indicate that students in private schools, who have greater access to digital resources, demonstrated greater improvements in pronunciation compared to those in public schools. This digital divide reflects a larger issue of unequal access to quality education, which can further reinforce socioeconomic inequalities in academic and professional opportunities.

To address this gap, policymakers and educators should prioritize the development of more inclusive technology-based education policies. Investments in digital infrastructure for public schools are essential to ensure that all students, regardless of their background, can benefit from tutorial videos and other digital learning tools. Additionally, teacher training programs should be introduced to equip educators with the necessary skills to integrate technology effectively into language instruction. These initiatives can help bridge the divide between public and private educational institutions, fostering equal learning opportunities for all students.

Further studies should investigate the long-term social impact of integrating tutorial videos into language education. Future research could explore how continued use of digital learning tools influences students' overall language proficiency, self-confidence, and career prospects. Additionally, studies should focus on strategies for expanding digital learning access to students in rural or underprivileged areas, where technological resources are often limited. Understanding these long-term effects will provide valuable insights for shaping education policies that promote equal access to technology-enhanced learning.

In conclusion, this study underscores the transformative potential of digital learning in education. By improving access to digital resources, particularly in underserved communities, tutorial videos can play a crucial role in enhancing language skills, boosting academic achievement, and increasing social mobility.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I sincerely appreciate the authors whose research has greatly influenced the progression of my study, " Effectiveness of Tutorial Videos in Enhancing Pronunciation: A Study on Cambodian EFL Learners and Social Implications " Their groundbreaking work in pronunciation teaching, multimedia learning, and language acquisition has offered invaluable insights and support throughout my research.

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