
Bridging the Gap: Effective Approaches for Teaching English to Non-Native Learners

Dr Mohammed Zaheer Ab KhanAssociate Professor of English Language, College of Arts and Education
English Language Department, Ajdabiya University

Article Received: 11/10/2025**Article Accepted:** 22/11/2025**Published Online:** 24/11/2025**DOI:**10.47311/IJOES.2025.7.11.196

Abstract

The learning process of English among non-native learners is a special challenge on its own, both to learners and teachers. These difficulties have typically been due to the nature of the English language itself; the irregular grammar, pronunciation and the idiomatic expressions of English, and the cultural and linguistic differences among the learners. The non-native speakers usually encounter the challenges of learning the subtlety of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency. Such difficulties may be complicated by psychological issues like language anxiety, the less confidence levels and fear to make mistakes that may inhibit effective communication and learning. Also, the cultural differences in the communication patterns, education requirements and methods of learning may further complicate the process of teaching.

The best approaches that can be used to teach English to non-native speakers include addressing the particular barriers affecting them and embracing approaches that suit them. In the development of fluency and confidence, communication approach is important, which lies in putting the language into practice and is based on speaking and listening. Language acquisition may also be facilitated by the use of technology i.e. using language learning applications, online practices, and multimedia tools where students have the opportunity to practice in a very interactive and engaging manner. Besides, culturally responsive teaching plays a vital role, and it will also enable learners to feel appreciated and understood and establish a favourable learning atmosphere. Another strategy is differentiated instruction where learners are known to possess different levels of proficiency, learning styles and backgrounds. Giving specific attention to every learner in a group work, one-on-one tutoring, or scaffolding will make sure that every student can move at their speed. This paper examines the key issues in educating English non-native speakers and provides the effective methods of solving those problems that will provide an inclusive and supportive atmosphere that will improve language learning.

Keywords: non-native speakers, language proficiency, online practices, effective methods, challenges in language learning etc.

Introduction

English has now taken over as the language of the world, first or native language of millions of people and second or foreign language of billions of people. Its popularity in the business communication, education, science, technology and in international relations has resulted in mastering of the language being in a high demand. British Council states that there are more than 2 billion speakers of English languages across the world, and this language is the main means of communication, media and business in the world. This is due to historical influences that have made English to diffuse all over the world like colonialism, globalization, and the emergence of the internet, which has further embedded English as linguistic facilitator in other areas. Consequently, it has made it necessary to learn English so that non-native speakers can have access to opportunities in other parts of the world, be able to engage in global dialogues and also enhance their socio-economic lives.

English proficiency is much greater than just in every-day discussion. To a student, learning English is vital to academic achievement in advanced level education, particularly in other countries where English is the major language of instructions. There are numerous academic journals, research work, and textbooks that are written in English and therefore it is inevitable to those wishing to have a career in academia or research. Moreover, there is a tendency to use English as a prerequisite to the professional growth. The multinationals, particularly those having headquarters in the English-speaking world, also need to find those employees who can speak fluent English. Moreover, the mastery of the English language is a frequent requirement of international labour markets and provides the non-native speakers with the possibility to work on the international level and cooperate with the professionals with various native languages. Although it is important, learning English poses special challenges to the non-native speakers. These issues include learning complicated grammar and vocabulary rules and aural fears like language anxiety and fear of mistakes. There is also a risk of pronunciation or accent difference or speaking a language similar to pronunciation and accent of people speaking other languages, which may slow down the process of communication and decrease confidence. Moreover, students do not always manage to be fluent, comprehend native speakers, or learn the cultural peculiarities inherent in the language. These may be enhanced by variations in educational systems and styles as well as availability of resources.

This paper will seek to discuss the difficulties encountered by the non-native English learners and

offer viable measures of dealing with these problems. This article aims to present a review on the various challenges encountered by the non-native speaker of the language with the aim of presenting a complete overview of the challenges and the pedagogical strategies that can be adopted in order to alleviate the issues. The objective is to provide pedagogues with a set of instruments in enhancing language learning and assist learners in their confusing experience of learning English as a second language.

Linguistic Challenges in Learning English

Grammar-Related Difficulties

One of the most challenging issues that non-native English learners face is grammar. The English grammar includes the complexities, namely: the irregular verbs, tenses, articles, prepositions and order of words, and so on, which are especially hard to grasp by those whose first language (L1) does not follow the same pattern. The greatest source of confusion is irregular verbs (e.g., go → went, eat → ate): these verbs are not conjugated in the common way, i.e. the ‘-ed’ pattern. This inconsistency with the verb forms is not good to the learners especially those who have regular patterns of verb conjugations in their native languages. The English tense system makes this problem even worse. English has different present, past and future tense markers and it uses auxiliary verbs to a large extent (e.g. have, will) to form perfect tenses and the continuous form, which is also not the case in many L1s of learners. E.g. Chinese or Russian speakers might not be able to learn the continuous form of the English language as their mother tongues do not have verb conjugations that show continuity of an action. Another challenge to many learners is the use of articles (a, an, the), and this is more so to the learners whose languages do not employ articles whatsoever. As an example, Chinese and Russian speakers can even leave out articles in an English sentence as their language lacks such grammatical forms. Prepositions are also not easy because the English prepositional phrases do not tend to translate directly to the prepositional systems of other languages. As an illustration, the English language has the preposition on to mean contact with surfaces (such as on the table), but other languages (such as French and Spanish) contain different prepositions to serve different purposes of space. Interference of L1 may have a considerable influence on the correct usage of prepositions among learners. Research indicates that non-native speakers tend to generalize or make a mistake in the application of prepositional rules in their native language and therefore end up using such sentences as ‘I am on the bus’ rather than the right one, ‘I am in the bus’ in particular cases. Also, the word order in English is yet another hindrance. English is a Subject-Verb-Object (SVO) language, but other languages like Japanese or Hindi have a Subject- Object- Verb (SOV) structure. The difference usually makes learners form sentences such as ‘I the book read’ rather than the proper ‘I read the book’. Errors of word order, particularly more complicated sentences, are frequent due to the impact of L1 syntax of a learner

Vocabulary and Idiomatic Expressions

English vocabulary with the wide usage of polysemy (words with multiple meanings), synonymy (words with overlapping meanings), and idiomatic expressions is an added challenge to learners. As an example, the word ‘bank’ can be used to mean a financial institution, the river bank, or resources as the context dictates. Such meanings would not be easily differentiated by non-native speakers particularly where they are not represented by similar words using their mother tongue. Likewise, English and its synonyms have a wealth and variety, e.g. happy, joyful and content, which can be bewildering to the learners who have to select the most suitable word to fit the situation. This problem is even greater in academic environments where the accuracy is of utmost importance.

Easy-going verbs (e.g., give up, run into, put off) are especially challenging to a non-native speaker since they are not literal. An example is that the verb give may be used with different prepositions to form different meanings that a student should learn by heart, and such a notion is not directly comparable to a variety of languages. Another important challenge is idiomatic expressions, e.g. ‘spill the beans’ or ‘break the ice’. Such words frequently have meanings which do not directly relate to literal meanings of single words. This can pose a challenge to learners to comprehend and correctly apply idioms, due to its figurative characteristics, when it is not familiar to them in their native language. Also, there is an academic vocabulary-conversational vocabulary gap. Students are usually efficient in learning the conversational language but not the formal and academic terms that are required in writing and reading. Academic vocabulary contains abstract words and professional terminologies, and it takes more knowledge of grammar and context. Students can have the fundamentals of English communication, yet they do not always have an opportunity to work with academic papers or professional documents that require special vocabulary and syntax.

Pronunciation and Phonology Issues

The core of lingo problems of non-native English learners is their pronunciation and phonology. English has a huge number of sounds that are not present in other languages, which makes it hard to pronounce. An example is English phonemes such as /th/ (think) and / th /(this) which most learners find challenging to use especially those whose languages do not have such sounds. Conversely, English vowel sounds might be an issue to learners whose native languages have less vowel differences such as Spanish or Italian learners. The English pronouncing also involves stress, rhythm, and intonation because English is a stress-timed language. It implies that some syllables have more emphasized stress than others and learners who have a syllable-timed language such as French or Italian fail to come across as producing a natural sounding English. English rhythm may be choppy or even unnatural unless there is mastery of stress patterns, and it results in a lower level of intelligibility. Also, intonation, the elevation of pitch in words, signifies meaning in English especially in questions and

stress. The intonation pattern used is the wrong or a flat intonation pattern which non-native speakers who do not have experience with English prosody might inadvertently use, putting such wrong meanings.

The most frequent pronunciation problems are problems with vowel sounds (confusion between /i:/ (beat) and /i/ (bit) or the inability to differentiate between minimal pairs (ship, sheep). In several learners, such mis-pronunciations may not be corrected even with a lot of practice; since the phonological rules of their L1 come in the way of their process of producing and recognizing the various sounds of the English language correctly.

Listening and Speaking Barriers

Non-native speakers face a lot of obstacles during listening and speaking particularly when interacting with native speakers in their speech. Listening comprehension may be especially difficult because of the rate of speech, accent variation and connected speech (linked or shortened words). A non-native speaker might not be able to comprehend a fast speech or an accent that is not the same as the one that he was accustomed to in the classroom. To illustrate, a learner who has mostly been exposed to the British English language would find an American or an Australian accent difficult to understand because of the difference in pronunciation and stress patterns. Moreover, connected speech is common among native speakers, whereby sounds are merged in quick speech and it becomes even harder to keep up with them when one is a non-native learner.

Speaking on the side, learners normally experience fluency challenges. Reticence, hesitation, and lack of confidence may slack speech production and especially when the learners are anxious about committing grammatical errors or they are mispronouncing words. It may lead to protracted pauses, fillers or even shunning of complicated sentences. As an example, students could ignore more complex vocabulary, grammar rules, which could reduce the level of self-expression in more formal situations, e.g., at work or at the time of making academic presentations. Shy behaviour in speaking is commonly associated with fear of speaking mistakes before other people, which can severely impede the progress of a learner (Rao, 2024). Moreover, speaking fluency may render learners reluctant to discuss and restrict their experience of the real-life language use.

One of the most prevalent psychological obstacles that non-native English learners have to overcome is language anxiety that heavily influences their capacity to communicate successfully. The fear of speaking and doing something wrong is one of the reasons why people usually hesitate and avoid speaking opportunities, especially in the classroom situation where students feel that they are under constant scrutiny. The stress to use correct pronunciation or the necessity to demonstrate high levels of grammatical correctness can cause self-doubt, and this situation can occur in cases when the learners think that even small errors can bring embarrassment. The anxiety causes them to avoid involvement in

conversations and practicing the language, which in turn scores them into more anxiety. This is commonly known as language anxiety and may result in fluency since the students will be overwhelmed by the fear of making mistakes such that they are unable to talk freely. The problem is exacerbated by classroom performance anxiety, particularly when it comes to performing a task that involves giving a presentation or leading a group discussion, which makes learners unable to engage in the language-learning process to the fullest extent. Studies have revealed that language anxious learners avoid speaking situations and this fact prevents language acquisition and general development of speaking skills (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1991). This is a self-restricted habit that is encouraged by fears of mispronunciation, grammatical errors, and the fear of being evaluated by colleagues and teachers.

Lack of confidence and motivation is another psychological problem faced by learners. The problems are usually interlaced because of the lack of confidence among learners who will not remain motivated and continue with studies. To acquire language, there is a lot of internal motivation, lack of which learners who lack the belief in their capacity to accomplish the mastering of the English language, may be disinterested or discouraged by failures. Indicatively, when a student continues to have a problem with pronunciation or grammar in English, he/she might start believing that he/she will never speak the language in a fluent manner and hence the lack of motivation. External motivation, however is the kind of motivation a person has because of the value they attach to learning in the English. Students that do not find a quick payback of mastering English might have a hard time remaining motivated. The influence of negative feedback is high especially where the learners have undergone earlier failure or criticism. Critical feedback or harsh correction may lower self-esteem and also destroy their confidence in using English. The acquisition experiences related to negative learning, particularly the cases in early phases tends to lead to a sense of insufficiency, thus incapable of staying motivated in the long-term. On the other hand, positive feedback and encouragement may increase confidence of the learners resulting in increased language development and continued interaction (Schunk, 1995). Indeed, the previous learning experiences, particularly, when they were full of failure or negative reinforcement, may permanently affect the esteem of a learner and his future motivation (Dornyei, 2001).

Besides the psychological aspects, the non-native learners are usually met with the problem of cultural shock and identity. When students of various cultural background engage in the circles of English speaking, they are learning not only a new language, but also learning new social conventions and communication patterns. Classroom norms can include the expectation of participating actively or the preference of direct, overt communication and thus

be confusing to learners who reveal in a slower, indirect way of communicating. As an example, in one cultural group, students must keep quiet and never defy the instruction of the teacher, whereas in another, it is better to be able to discuss the issue widely and openly. This difference may make learners feel awkward or out of place in classrooms where the kind of expectation is that they come out and talk, and participate in interactive activities. Additionally, communication style within the English-speaking societies tends to be more direct and straightforward, which is not always acceptable in the culture of the learners whose cultures put entertainment and politeness first. Such difference may create certain misunderstandings particularly when students accidentally do not live to the expectations of either politeness or aggressiveness in the English-speaking world. To take an example, it is inappropriate in one culture to speak up or to interrupt the conversation and vice versa, because in another culture it is believed that one is expressing their ideas vigorously. This is an incompatibility in expectations that may prompt anxiety and a feeling of disbelief in the capability of the learners to communicate productively (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

The contradiction between preserving the cultural identity and acquiring new linguistic norms may also produce the internal conflict. The experience of loss of their cultural identity due to the use of linguistic and cultural standards of their English-speaking surroundings is a challenge to many learners. To illustrate, there are learners who may be convinced that speaking in a heavy accent or using some expressions that are typical of their first language makes them do not feel as true or close to their origins. This conflict may influence their readiness to immerse in the process of language learning completely. One might also find the idea of having to balance cultural heritage and a new linguistic identity to be emotionally demanding and cause identity crisis or alienation (Ting-Toomey, 1999). Language is not only a means of communication but also negotiating to an identity and learners tend to struggle between being able to stay true to the cultural background and the new linguistic identity.

All these psychological and affective issues, including the language anxiety, confidence problem, motivation problem, and cultural shock are interrelated and may have a significant negative impact on a learner to acquire English. They cause the lack of effective communication and prevent the interests of learners toward the language. The barriers mentioned above should be overcome by the environment of positive reinforcement, participation, and respect of cultural differences that is a part and parcel of a supporting and inclusive learning environment. The teachers become very instrumental in lessening language anxiety and enhancing the confidence of the learners by making them feel safe, where the occurrence of mistakes is regarded as part of the learning process. Also, the cultural background of learners and personalized support of the latter may allow them to be more comfortable and a part of the learning. It is important to understand these affective

issues to be able to create effective teaching methods, which would not only dwell upon the linguistic competency but also on the creation of psychological strength and confidence in the learners.

Socio-Cultural and Educational Challenges

The next most prominent problem that non-native English learners face is their lack of exposure to English in the outside world. A lot of learners particularly in rural or remote regions have limited access to genuine English content like books, movies, music, or on-life interactions with the native speakers. This problem is worsened by the rural-urban divide since students are usually not provided with some facilities such as internet access or English-speaking communities in rural areas which are more common in urban centers. In the absence of such exposure, learners find it difficult to train their listening and speaking abilities, which are essential in the process of becoming a fluent listener. To illustrate, learners who do not communicate with native speakers of English in real life cannot perceive colloquial language, slang, or regional accents, which are all the essential elements of a real-life language use (Wang, 2019).

The other problem can be explained by the fact that mixed-proficiency classes are often taught in schools, where students with different degrees of English proficiency have to study in the same classes. The teachers who operate in such classes should be able to cater to the needs of both the beginners, intermediates and advanced learners simultaneously. All these varied abilities may pose a challenge to the instructors in offering relevant lessons both without overwhelming the beginners and also not being too easy on the more advanced students. The teachers usually encounter a challenge in planning the lessons to accommodate such diverse needs resulting in frustrations to both the learners and the teachers. Moreover, considering that lesson plans fail to take into consideration diverse levels of proficiency, some students might be disengaged due to either the complexity of the content or their inability to accomplish possible language acquisition because the content is either too challenging or too easy (Richards and Rodgers, 2014).

Limitation of the curriculum and teaching materials in most of the English language classes is also a major factor. A majority of ESL and EFL programs are dominated by traditional grammar-based approaches with excessive attention on written grammar and instruction based on rules. Although grammar is very essential, this emphasis may create an imbalanced perspective whereby speaking, listening and practical language skills are neglected. Besides, most of the textbooks and materials are too old, and they do not provide real-world application of the language as well as they do not reflect the current situations in which English is practiced. Indicatively, a textbook which is too dependent on formal and written language might not expose a learner to kind of conversational English that a learner requires to be successful in day-to-day communication. The use of the old and highly organized texts

can thus impair the students in grasping and learning modern use of the English language (Brown, 2007).

The effectiveness of language teaching is also dependent on the teacher-related issues. A non-native English-speaking teacher, usually comprising a substantial part of ESL/EFL, might have some challenges in regards to his or her competence in English. Even well-versed teachers can be faced with the difficulty in pronunciation, fluency or lack of confidence in teaching the English language at higher levels. Also, not all teachers have been trained to use contemporary pedagogical practices including communicative language teaching (CLT) or task-based language teaching (TBLT). These contemporary approaches are more pragmatic and student oriented in the use of language and lay emphasis on communication and not on grammar rules. However, in the absence of appropriate training on these modern teaching strategies, teachers would be unable to connect with the students and be able to foster an active classroom (Seidlhofer, 2011).

Effective Strategies for Overcoming the Challenges

There are a number of effective teaching practices that can be used to overcome the challenges encountered by the non-native English learners. One such practice is the use of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) which lays stress on the practical aspect of communication and use of language. Teachers can impart the use of language in real-life situations by including role-plays, group discussions, and real-life simulations. CLT does not emphasize perfection but focuses on fluency and assists the learners to develop confidence in speaking and enhance the capacity to comprehend and produce English in real-life contexts. Indicatively, students can practice making orders in a restaurant or requesting directions, among other activities, which simulates real life interactions (Richards, 2006).

Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) adds to CLT as it puts emphasis on accomplishing meaningful tasks. TBLT also promotes such tasks among students as directions, interviews, or debates. These activities are meant to simulate real-life language application and help the learners to use their language in a practical problem-solving situation. TBLT is learner-focused; this implies that students are taken as the responsibility, the students are inclined to participate actively in the process of language acquisition. This method enables learners to learn language through experience and language is not merely an object of learning but as a means of communication (Ellis, 2003). Another strategy of importance in mixed-proficiency classrooms is differentiated and individualized instruction. In this model, educators make students receive special attention depending on their specific language needs and levels of proficiency. This can be in the form of scaffolding, tiering activities or flexible grouping, so that everyone gets the desired level of support and at the same time get challenged accordingly. An instance is that advanced learners can be assigned more complex tasks and beginner learners can be assigned simpler and easily accessible activities. The strategy will

also guarantee that the students will be able to work at their own pace and still enjoy the benefits of a collaborative learning environment (Tomlinson, 2001).

Another good strategy is to integrate technology in language teaching. Learners can have immediate feedback and can practice the English language in an interactive, engaging way with the help of mobile applications, online dictionaries and pronunciation aids. Multimedia focused techniques, including podcasts, videos and online courses can be used as effective listening and speaking practice techniques, as they can assist students to build their receptive skills and work on pronunciation. Such online sources also offer access to original materials in English, and as a result learners are exposed to the real-life use of the language, with all variants of accents and speech patterns (Chapelle, 2001).

Engaging the diverse cultural students requires culturally responsive teaching approach. The style entails the acknowledgement and appreciation of the cultural orientation of learners and incorporating their experiences in learning. Teachers can foster respect and cooperation by providing culturally relevant content and recognizing the cultural diversity of the classroom environment to build a more inclusive classroom environment. In addition, intercultural communication skills help learners to learn the functioning of English in various cultural contexts, and this helps them deal more effectively with the speakers of different backgrounds (Gay, 2010). Also, feedback and error correction strategies play an important role in enhancing the language ability of the learners. There is need to have a balance between fluency and accuracy as part of ensuring that the students are able to communicate well and at the same time learn to use language correctly. The teachers are supposed to correct students softly, taking into consideration the important mistakes which affect communication and not necessarily give students a lot of corrections simultaneously. The methods of peer correction and self-reflection are also useful in facilitating the process of learning because they enable the student to be more self-dependent and reflective when using language (Lyster and Ranta, 1997).

Role of Teachers in Facilitating Effective Learning

Teachers can be very instrumental in advancing the language learning process among the non-native English speakers. Effective teaching is among other issues that require the established inclusive classroom environment where every learner is respected, valued, and understood. To a multi-cultural classroom, where the students belong to different cultural and language backgrounds, it is a responsibility of the teachers to make sure their style is open to everyone. Inclusivity is not merely recognizing diversity, it is inclusion that takes the diverse cultural perspectives into the learning content and the method of teaching. Culturally relevant examples, texts, and activities can be used, as an example, to allow the teachers to identify the gap between the experiences that the learners have and the English

language they are learning. Once students can feel that their identity is acknowledged as well as that their learning is being significant within their cultural setting, they will be more prone to becoming active learners and be in control of their own learning (Gay, 2010).

Another important part of effective teaching of English is the promotion of risk-taking and active involvement. Learning a language is a process of errors but most non-native speakers are very reluctant to talk or participate because of the fear of committing a mistake. It is important that teachers provide an atmosphere in the classroom where errors are viewed as part of the learning process. The modelling of such attitude will allow teachers to decrease the stigma associated with mistakes and foster a culture in which students are not afraid to make any mistake in language usage. Interactive activities like group discussions, debates, or role-plays enable the learners to use English in the less pressurizing and enabling environment. Also, these activities encourage the fluency of students as they will be motivated to share their ideas and thoughts in real-time, influencing a feeling of confidence and self-efficacy.

Developing confidence and eliminating anxiety are key ingredients of a successful language-learning process. Language anxiety can be high in many cases among the non-native learners, and this can be a detrimental factor to the desire to engage and speak English. Teachers can help the students grow by giving positive results, praising and delivering constructive feedback. Teachers can contribute to the development of resilience and empowerment of students to use English in various situations by establishing the classroom environment that values effort and improvement over the focus on perfection. A blend of a soft error correction, peer reviews, and self-introspection would prompt the learners to establish a positive rapport with their language learning process (Schunk, 1995).

Another area that teachers can respond to in order to ensure effective language learning is continuous professional development. The world of language teaching is dynamic and constantly changes with the new researches, techniques, and technologies. The more the teachers are practicing professional development, the more they are designed to manage the challenges of learners and apply the most up-to-date and effective teaching methods. This can be in terms of participating in workshops, seeking additional qualification or even working with fellow employees in order to share ideas and resources. Keeping up with the emerging trends in language learning and teaching, teachers are able to offer the learners the most effective in terms of the educational experience and be flexible towards the needs of the students in terms of their evolving needs (Richards and Farrell, 2011).

Case Examples / Classroom Scenarios (Optional)

A case study of the difficulties and achievements in the teaching of non-native learners can offer great information about the efficient teaching practice. As an example, one of the most

commonly experienced learner challenges is the incorrect pronunciation of English sounds that are not present in the language of the learner. A student with Arabic as the first language can experience the difficulty with English consonants such as /v/ and /p/ because they are not used in Arabic. An example of a successful intervention might be the case of a technique based on the focused pronunciation exercises of minimal pairs (e.g., pat vs. vat), with the help of auditory discrimination tasks. With such minimal pairs and practicing the position of the mouth based on interactive exercises, the student is able to overcome the pronunciation problem gradually.

Lack of confidence or being fearful of language is also another common challenge that makes the learners during the time they are in the classroom reluctant to speak. One of the ways, in which a teacher can overcome this, is by building a non-threatening atmosphere, may be through pair and group tasks where they can practice speaking in a smaller group, and then when they are asked to present their work before the entire group they will have had some experience and feel at ease with it. Confidence may be encouraged by encouraging peer feedback, where students are encouraged to provide positive comments to one another and this reduces anxiety. With time, the strategy may result in a higher turnout and more confident use of the language.

Non-native English learners have to contend with various linguistic and psychological issues, and they depend on the country of origin and the peculiarities of the native languages. In those countries such as China, students are exposed to pronunciation problems because some sounds are not pronounced in Mandarin e.g. the /v/ sound since such a sound is not found in the phonetic system of the learners. Consequently, students can also spell out words such as vest wrongly as best. Also, the Chinese speakers usually experience problems with the English th, which is substituted with the sounds s or z and the mispronunciations occur, e.g., 'think' is 'sink'. The tonal aspect of the Mandarin language also complicates learning the English stress patterns in which the meaning of a word may vary when a syllable is stressed. As an illustration, record is a noun or a verb, depending on the stress pattern, which is confusing to the Chinese learners. To overcome these problems, educators may introduce minimal pair exercises, such as 'vest vs. best' and 'think vs. sink', and stress and intonation patterns exercise, which is practiced with the help of repetition and rhythm.

Likewise, students of Japan usually find it challenging to deal with the English sounds that are non-existent in the Japanese language. The /l/ and /r/ sounds are not differentiated in the Japanese language thus students might pronounce light and right in the same manner. Also, Japanese learners can have difficulties in the structure of sentences since the Japanese language is marked with the Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) type of structure, whereas English has Subject-Verb-Object (SVO). Such variation may result in such mistakes as 'I apple eat',

as opposed to 'I eat an apple'. Moreover, the Japanese learners can be unable to use articles because Japanese does not have definite and indefinite articles. Such omission may lead to the production of sentences such as I saw dog rather than I saw a dog. The teachers will be able to assist Japanese learners with sentence-building activities that could strengthen SVO structure and the correct use of articles, and with exercises, which could differentiate the sounds /l/ and /r/.

Students in more-speaking languages with English as their second language, like in most parts of the Arab world, have to create difficulties in the areas of pronunciation and grammar. Arabic speakers, say, are inclined to neglect /p/ sound, which is not native to the Arabic language and use /b/ instead, which can cause the misunderstanding of such words as pat and bat. Verb conjugation in Arabic is also a complicated system and this enables the Arabic learners to have hard time mastering tenses in English especially when conveying what has been done in the past or what lies ahead. The tense structure in Arabic is not the same as it is in English and as a result, mistakes like 'I will studied' will be made instead of 'I will study'. The prepositions are also a major problem, because the prepositional system in Arabic is very different compared to the one in English. Arabic speakers might make wrong use of the prepositions by placing them on the table instead of saying in the table, or vice versa. The possible ways in which teachers can assist Arab learners include paying attention to pronunciation exercises, especially to minimal pairs such as pat vs. bat, and practicing the tense system with the help of the controlled exercises and real-life conversations.

Students acquiring the English language in Latin American states, such as Mexico or Brazil, have difficulty with grammar and pronunciation. As an example, Spanish speaking students usually express some problems in English vowel but especially in a short vowel such as /i/ in bit and long vowel as /i:/ in beat. The stress-based rhythm of the English language is also an issue to those who have syllable-based languages such as Spanish where all syllables receive equal weight. Therefore, speaking English, Spanish speakers will not sound natural because they will use the syllable-timed rhythm. Additionally, the English th sound is not represented in Spanish and this will be pronounced dis or ziss by the learners. Such problems in pronunciation tend to exist even in a more advanced level. To solve these issues, teachers may pay attention to the vowel discrimination activities, stress and rhythm activities that help students get accustomed to the English patterns, and the direct training of the pronunciation of the sound 'th'.

English is very popular in India, and learners continue to experience difficulties as a result of the impact of their mother tongues, which differ widely depending on the area. The learners with the Hindi-speaking backgrounds might have problems with English prepositions and word arrangement, as an example. Hindi is more of a Subject- Object- Verb

(SOV) structure thus one can easily translate sentences such as 'I eat apple' into English without the appropriate subject-verb-object arrangement. Moreover, English pronunciation may also be challenging to the Indian learners as English has more vowel sounds than most of the Indian languages and thus creates a problem of pronunciation errors like 'ship vs. sheep'. The great impact of the regional accents and stress-timed English are also responsible factors which lead to issues of fluency as learners can stress the syllables in an uneven manner. To assist the Indian learners in achieving the targeted outcome, teachers may assist them in special attention to word order, as well as help students build some sensitivity to English stress patterns and pronunciation with the help of interactive activities and feedback.

Clients in most African nations where English is a second language have special problems. Learners in such countries as Nigeria are often unable to master the English phonology, particularly the articulation of consonants clusters and end consonants. The languages of Nigeria tend to evade the use of consonant blends such as in start or kept in /st/ and /pt/ respectively and, therefore, learners tend to reduce or delete these words or sounds. In addition, the Nigerian learners experience problems with sentence structure in English, especially with auxiliary verbs and word order because the use of auxiliary verbs is not similar in most African languages. As an example, such sentences as 'She is going to school' may be turned into 'She going to school' in the speech of learners. To deal with these problems, teachers should address particular pronunciation tasks on consonant clusters and certain grammar tasks that would make students understand about auxiliary verbs and their proper positioning in a sentence.

Such examples demonstrate how diverse the problems of non-native English learners in any part of the globe can be, depending on their first languages and cultural backgrounds. In the process of identifying the particular challenges learners in other countries face, teachers will be able to develop more specific and efficient instructional techniques that will meet the needs of their students. All these difficulties and the ability to provide selective and context-specific interventions will contribute to the development of the skills and confidence that learners will require to communicate in English efficiently.

Conclusion

To conclude, the process of teaching English to non-native speakers is particularly complicated, but with the assistance of the appropriate strategies, one will manage to navigate the challenges. Psychological barriers that complicate the linguistic challenges of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and listening include anxiety, lack of confidence, and cultural readjustments. Nevertheless, teachers can help students overcome such challenges by creating a more welcoming classroom, stimulating them to take risks, and becoming active learners. The learner-centered methods that can be applied to address this issue are

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), when students are able to apply language to real-life scenarios, it boosts their confidence and fluency.

Cultural awareness, empathy, and innovation cannot be overemphasized as being important in teaching. Both the culture and the identity of learners should also be regarded in order to establish the environment that helps to make them engage and learn the language. By keeping abreast with the latest research and best practices in the field of teaching languages, teachers will be able to keep up with the changing needs of their students. The more the language teaching field improves, the more the educators training and development should improve. Life-long learning keeps teachers efficient and sensitive to issues that their students encounter. Research in language acquisition and pedagogy ought to continue to develop and refine ways of teaching a second language in different classrooms with placement on the psychological, cultural, and socio-economic issues given to the learning process. Furthermore, the studies of how to properly consider technology as a means of teaching languages with the restrictions of access and equity will be essential in the years to come. Training of teachers should also focus on continuity of culturally responsive, communicative and adaptive teaching practices, which provide educators with the instruments to develop inclusive, dynamic and helpful learning classrooms that are inclusive to all learners.

Works Cited

- Abdalhadi, M. A. S. (2023). *The impact of the first language transfer on English prepositions by Arab English learners* (Master's thesis). Retrieved from <https://scholarworks.uark.edu/etd/6757/>
- Al-Bawaleez, M. M. (2023). Difficulties in using prepositions in the English language: Evidence from university EFL learners. *Journal of Languages & Literacy Studies*.
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (5th ed.). Pearson Longman.
- Chapelle, C. A. (2001). *Computer applications in second language acquisition: Foundations for teaching, testing, and research*. Cambridge University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2001). *Motivational strategies in the language classroom*. Cambridge University Press.
- Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice* (2nd ed.). Teachers College Press.
- Gilakjani, A. P. (2011). Why is pronunciation so difficult to learn? *English Language Teaching*, 4(3), 74–83. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v4n3p74>

-
- Gvarishvili, Z. (2013). Interference of L1 prepositional knowledge in acquiring of prepositional usage in English. *Procedia — Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 70, 1539–1546. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.01.220>
- Haddad, M. T. A. (2018). *The impact of L1 transfer on the interaction of EFL learners with English prepositions*. University Press.
- Islam, S. M. (2022). Rhythmic errors in nonnative English pronunciation: A study of speech rhythm and stress. *Journal of English Studies and Overseas Culture*.
- Kurtuldu, E. (2022). The investigation of different English accents on listening comprehension of non-native English learners. *The Reading Matrix*, 22(2). Retrieved from <https://www.readingmatrix.com/files/29-xr7dbcqu.pdf>
- Lyster, R., & Ranta, L. (1997). Corrective feedback and learner uptake. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 19(1), 37-66. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263197001034>
- MacIntyre, P. D., & Gardner, R. C. (1991). Methods and results in the study of language anxiety: A review of the literature. *Language Learning*, 41(1), 85–117. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1991.tb00692.x>
- Rao, M. J. (2024). The quest for fluency: English language challenges for non-native learners. *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, 9(3). DOI: 10.22161/ijels
- Richards, J. C. (2006). *Communicative language teaching today*. Cambridge University Press.
- Schunk, D. H. (1995). Self-efficacy and education and instruction. In J. M. Kendall (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching* (pp. 1045–1074). Macmillan.
- Seidlhofer, B. (2011). *Understanding English as a lingua franca*. Oxford University Press.
- Ting-Toomey, S. (1999). *Communicating across cultures*. The Guilford Press
- Tomlinson, C. A. (2001). *How to differentiate instruction in mixed-ability classrooms* (2nd ed.). ASCD.
- Zielinski, B. (2012). The social impact of pronunciation difficulties: Confidence and willingness to speak. In J. Levis & K. LeVelle (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 3rd Pronunciation in Second Language Learning and Teaching Conference* (pp. 18-26). Ames, IA: Iowa State University.