

**RESEARCH PAPER****Understanding Schwa Sound by ESL Learners: A Study of English Pronunciation in Pakistan****¹Muhammad Ali Shahid*, ²Syeda Iqra Shabbir and ³Noureen Aslam**

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***Corresponding Author:** muhammadalishahid05@gmail.com**ABSTRACT**

Schwa Sound denoted by [ə] in the IPA system is a critical issue that must be addressed to improve the pronunciation competence of EFL learners in Pakistan. Pronunciation is essential for achieving fluency in English. To be clear, comprehensible, and impressive to their listeners, speakers must be able to deliver their speech with proper and clear pronunciation. With the status of the Schwa Sound in English pronunciation in mind, the current study sought to investigate the common difficulties experienced by EFL learners in perceiving and pronouncing it. An English learner must pronounce the words correctly in the same way that a native speaker would. The ability of a non-native English speaker or learner to resolve miscommunication issues becomes increasingly important as time passes. However, as it has been discovered and experienced, a non-native English speaker can't speak exactly like a native English speaker, despite strenuous efforts to achieve perfection in English pronunciation.

English Pronunciation, EFL Learners, Native English Speakers, Non-Native English Speakers, Schwa Sound

KEYWORDS**Introduction**

For Pakistani students, learning English pronunciation is difficult because they have grown up speaking their mother tongue alongside Urdu as the official language. Furthermore, the sound patterns of English and Urdu or other Pakistani regional languages are vastly different, posing difficulties for EFL students in Pakistan. The study aimed to determine why EFL learners struggle with Schwa Sound [ə], as well as how much EFL learners perceive and understand Schwa Sound in English pronunciation. We cannot deny that there are many EFL students in Pakistan who, due to a lack of confidence, frequently make pronunciation errors when reading English texts because they lack practice and experience. We are all aware of the increasing spread and familiarity of the English language, which has permeated technology and media on a global scale. We all know that by correctly pronouncing English words, we can communicate with others intelligibly. Sáenz García, (2015) elaborates that intelligibility is the degree of understanding of the interlocutor's speech by the listener. It means, to what extent the speaker conveys the message to the listeners and to what extent they understand this message. Furthermore, according to Sardegna and Jarosz (2023), it is more important that English speakers achieve the three following aspects: intelligibility, comprehensibility, and interpretability. When speakers of English can produce understandable sound patterns as standardised by Native English speakers, they are said to be intelligent. Comprehensibility occurs when their speech is correctly pronounced and their meaning is clear. The listener understands the true message that the speaker wishes to convey with clarity if it is interpretable. Jenkins (2002), suggests improving supra-segmental production rather than segmental production to achieve more effective communicative pronunciation competence. The importance of linking, intonation,

and stress in effective Suprasegmental pronunciation cannot be overstated. (Burns, 2003). An important aspect of giving a speech is pronunciation. A message is obvious and intelligible when it is pronounced correctly and is clear. When a language is used in casual conversation, its pronunciation serves as the medium via which it is transmitted. Pronunciation in general is the production of meaningful sounds. (Dalton & Seidlhofer, 1994). In their opinion, the sound is significant in two different ways. In the first place, sound is significant because it is used as part of the code of a language. The distinct sounds of English, French, Thai, and other languages can now be discussed as a result of this development." In this sense, we can define pronunciation as the act of producing and receiving speech sounds in a spoken language. Second, sound is significant because it is used to convey meaning in a variety of contexts, which is why it is important. In this instance, the code is used in conjunction with other factors to facilitate communication. In this sense, we can talk about pronunciation in terms of the acts of speaking that take place. Sardegna and Jarosz (2023) are of the view that the process of pronouncing is divided into two stages, "It involves the recognition of sounds as well as the production of sounds." He adds, "A student faces the problem of recognizing and discriminating the sounds as well as the problem of producing the sounds." Kelly (2000) claims that in the production of speech sounds, we use the same speech organs that we were taught to use as children and that we have become accustomed to manipulating them under our ability to use the organs in question. The frequency and standard of use may differ from one individual to the next.

The complexity of the English pronunciation system makes it difficult for Pakistani students of English as a Foreign Language to achieve distinction in their studies. A young kid learns their mother tongue from the sound of imitating others spontaneously. According to Rini (2016), children become habitual in listening to, imitating, and speaking to mothers since childhood. Their speech organs are used to the sound patterns of their mother tongue and when they broaden their view of language to a foreign language with complex sound systems, find it difficult to adopt the new systems alien to them. Consequently, their production of a new language is not praiseworthy. He further adds that a child who is raised in an English-speaking country will automatically become acquainted with the English-speaking environment and will be able to imitate her sound with ease, as well as use the phonemic set of the English language with ease, whereas a French-speaking child will naturally become acquainted with the French-speaking environment. It means that both the children brought up in different environments listened, imitated, and mastered varying sets of phonemes. Based on this very phenomenon, we can say that children brought to the Pakistani environment will do the same process in their respective mother tongue. When they jump up to the other language, they will face the problem of learning different sound systems. Syfei (1988) revealed hidden facts about why Indonesian English language learners why it hard to learn English. He went on to say that the first reason is the irregular spelling system which powerfully hinders the language learner to do it proficiently and the second reason is the interference from Indonesian to the English language. He further added that the learners of a new language will be at war with the new systems of sounds at the same time when have become habitual of the old systems in the mother tongue. In other words, they will have to face the 'habit inference'. When Pakistani English language learners embark on the same journey of learning English as a Foreign Language, the same story reverberates throughout their minds and hearts. Lei and Xu (2017) on the other hand, coined the term "habit inference" to refer to the concept of inference from habit. In his words, "cross-linguistic influence" or "language transfer" was what he was talking about. The impact brought about by the target language's similarities and differences with any other language previously studied is referred to as transfer. Because pronunciation directly affects learners' communicative skills and performance, it is a crucial part of learning a foreign language. Poor pronouncing abilities can undermine speakers' talents and credibility, hinder social connections, and lower learners' self-confidence (Gilakjani, 2012). Smith and Lado (1958) make the point that students who encounter a foreign language are likely to find some aspects of it to be quite simple while others to be very difficult. He will

find it simple to understand components that are comparable to his language while finding it challenging to understand those that are not. The teacher will be able to better support the student's education because they will have a better knowledge of their actual learning issues. Moreover, the following is how Ogden (2017) illustrates the type of pronunciation issues that arise when learning a foreign language: The identification of unfamiliar noises is the first aspect of the issue. To be able to recognise their acoustic features later on when they hear them in an utterance, learners must maintain their acoustic characteristics. Another issue is that when they talk, their speech organs are unable to make any sound. To be able to make foreign noises, one needs to be able to hear and recognise the acoustic characteristics of sounds. The final topic to be covered in this part is the creation of Suprasegmental properties like stress, length, pitch, and intonation.

To put it simply, the story of Pakistani English Language learners is that they have ingrained in their minds their mother tongue as well as other regional languages and Urdu as the country's official language. Meaning that they have already acquired some language systems without having learned the phonology and grammar rules of those languages. When they decide to study English as a foreign language, they must follow the prescribed rules for learning phonology and grammar, which present untidy difficulties for them, and because they worked so hard to learn, their results are implacable.

Schwa Sound in English | fwa: |

Roca, (1994) claims that the exchange of a "full vowel sound" for a "vowel reduction," is also known as the schwas sound. According to the English Vowel Sound Dictionary, the Schwa Sound is one of the seven vowels that can be made when the centre of the tongue is raised between the mid-close and mid-open positions and the lips are in a neutral shape. This phenomenon is depicted in the illustration below.

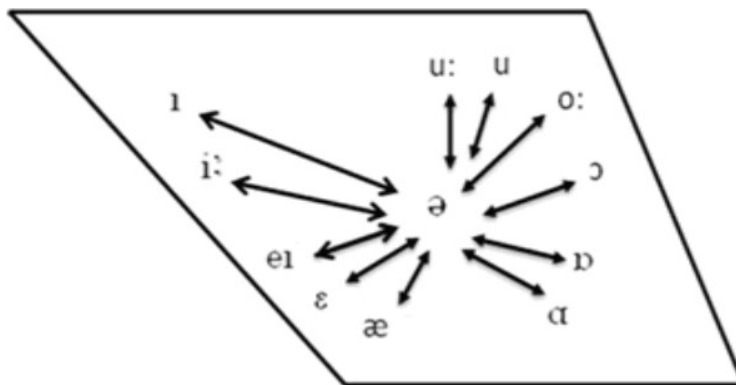


Figure No.1 Vowel Movement towards Schwa Sound

The schwa vowel, according to (B. L. Smith, 1983), is "the German form of the name of an obscure [ə]-like Hebrew vowel that is not widely known." As Major and Crystal (1992) points out, the term schwa comes from the German nomenclature for a vowel with this central feature present in Hebrew, and it is derived from there. The term schwa first appeared in German linguistics in the early nineteenth century, primarily through the writings of Jacob Grimm (1785), who is credited with popularising the concept. The form schwa appears in a large number of German terms, which reflects the fact that schwa is the most common form in German linguistics. Examples include the German words 'schwach', 'Schwank', and 'schwanken', which denote weak, varying, and unsteady qualities, according to their meanings (ThoughtCo., n.d.). Each of these words begins with the prefix schwa-, and their meanings correspond to what we already know about the schwa in English linguistics: it occupies weak positions, is susceptible to minor alterations, and has an intermediate

quality, among other characteristics. Uncertainty surrounds how the schwa symbol [ə] came to be used in the English language. Some experts believe that the English mathematician and philologist Van Helmont et al. (2007) was the first person to use the schwa in the English language. In the years that followed, the schwa symbol was included in the draught version of the International Phonetics Alphabet (IPA) in 1887, and from 1888 onwards, it was included in all official versions of the International Phonetics Alphabet.

The vowel schwa [ə] is defined as a short, mid-central, neutral, lax vowel in the English language. According to some sources, it is the most frequently used vowel sound in spoken English today. There are several labels on it. It is referred to as schwa because "schwa is the German word for the [ə]", (Johnson, 2006). Using the English phoneme [ə], Jones (1972)) divides the phoneme into three main varieties, only one of which is a schwa.

In the words of Jones (1972), the schwa is considered to be the "neutral vowel." To indicate mid-central vowel qualities, such as mid-front, the vowel symbol [ə] is used and is pronounced in a variety of ways depending on the context. Because it is dependent on the speaker, it differs slightly from one person to the next. As stated by Hill and Ladefoged (1977), "Many accents differ in a variety of ways, but they all fall within the range of a mid-central vowel that can be symbolized by [ə]. "

According to Noam Chomsky (1998)"any particular dialect will contain the specification and rules for phonetically precise [ə] sound," and "any particular dialect will contain the specification and rules for phonetically precise [ə] sound." In some circles, the sound / schw / is referred to as a reduced vowel. It is used in situations where the vowel quality has deteriorated due to a lack of stress. When vowels have a central, reduced vowel quality, the letter / is frequently produced, according to Johanson (2006) This is Schwa's goal: to make it possible for unstressed syllables to be uttered quickly, allowing the main beats of spoken words to be placed on the stressed syllable.

It is a call to the increasing and pressing need for English as a language used in technology and communication on a global scale. Pronunciation is essential for understanding and speaking any language, including English. English, as a foreign language, demanded more attention to be learned and used in a variety of contexts. The use of English, even as an EFL, varies from person to person. The importance and necessity of pronunciation cannot be overstated when it comes to language competency. If the pronunciation is off-kilter or incomprehensible, no good communication can be held, and no positive results can be obtained. Keeping this in mind, the current study focuses on the need for pronunciation and, in particular, Schwa Sound. To understand the Schwa Sound in the Pakistani context, two questions are considerable: Why do EFL students struggle to learn the Schwa Sound in English Pronunciation? To what extent do EFL students understand Schwa Sound in English Pronunciation?

Literature Review

Weber (2018) claimed that in academic publications with three or more syllables, the schwa is the sound that is most frequently used. It returns in a rhythmic alternation with stressed syllables, adding to the characteristic sound contour of a word. Schwa often appears in high-stress circumstances. To recognise multisyllabic words and carry in literate communication, pay attention to the schwa sound.

Agor (2019) examines schwa variations and insertions in the speech of 200 adolescent English second-language learners. The study included third-year students from an urban junior high school in Ghana, a multilingual post-colonial African country south of the Sahara. The discovered variations were classified and described following their most likely sources. According to the findings, all of the unexpected schwa variants observed in

their speech can be traced back to their mother tongues. Second language theory, research, and education are all affected by this.

Ariyani (2019) expressed that students from Universitas Sains Al-Qur'an offer a pronunciation mistake analysis of English sounds (UNSIQ). Different difficulties concerning the use of English sounds in class were raised by the students. The vowel "schwa" is analysed using the IPA as [ə] in the phonetic script (International Phonetic Association). This qualitative study of research is pertinent. The researcher wanted to create a manuscript for pupils to read that had all utterances with the Schwa sound. The findings indicate that the student's mother language speaking practices had an impact on the English schwa sounds they produced. Despite Indonesians pronouncing the word schwa as a long "a," the tests utilised in this study do not ensure that participants comprehend what they read.

Indrayani and Nugraha (2020) reported that the English schwa, a short vowel with a mid-central character, is absent from the Muna language. This study aims to investigate the situations under which speakers of the Muna language can grasp the non-existent English schwa. The results are anticipated to reveal, in part, that some English schwa words sound like a mid-central vowel in Muna that the speaker recognises as a close variant of Schwa [ə]. Additionally, the speaker tries to avoid pronouncing schwa incorrectly because it doesn't exist in Muna. Anyone who lacks a phonetic system that includes a mid-central vowel or schwa might learn English using anything. Students are more likely to recognize the English schwa sound when it appears in real words when associating is used in the teaching of English phonemes, particularly vowels.

Priva and Strand (2023) asserted that the results refute the idea that the context in which Schwa's position appears is the only factor affecting it. Because the change to higher F1 values when schwa's duration is longer is not always distinct from the shift to higher F1 values when other vowels' length is longer, it is unnecessary to assert that schwa's mid-vowel qualities are because it has a goal in F1 terms.

Null Hypothesis

H₀= There is no significant correlation between the performance of the girls and boys in the Pakistani context regarding perception and pronunciation of the Schwes Sound in English.

Research Design

Wyntm (1940) defines a population as "any collection of persons who share one or more qualities that pique the researcher's interest in gathering information for a study project," which leads us to the conclusion that the population is the entire membership of a specific group that piques the researcher's interest in gathering information for a study project. Students from five different private schools make up the population of this classroom action research. The researcher met the principals of each of these schools, who greeted him with delight and respect and graciously allowed him to research their respective campuses. This made gathering data from the students much easier for him. Data was collected from 225 students. Hope School of Science, The Right School, The Knowledge Hub, Vision Leads School, and Zia-ul-Quran High School are just a few examples. A sample is a subset of the population. Sampling is required to aid the researcher in data collection. Sampling is the process of selecting a small group of cases from a larger group (Emmert et al., 1971). As the present study required resonance in groups from different schools, hence, stratified sampling was implemented for this purpose. The Slovin Formula was used to calculate the sample size $n = N/1+Ne$, where n represents the sample size, N represents the total population, and 'e' represents the error margin. The sample size is $n=225$ due to the process in the formula. The 225-person sample was divided into five schools. Candidates with The Hope School of Science (THSS) =51, The Right School (TRS) =63, The Knowledge

Hub (TKH) =48, Vision Leads School (VLS) =42, and Zia-ul-Qur’an High School (ZQHS) =21 were divided into three performance groups: poor, good, and excellent. The 'Reading aloud Technique' developed by L. Huang (2010) was used to assess the students' pronunciation abilities (Siyami et al., 2020). The students were given a list of 20 allophonic words beginning with the letter 'A.' The examination was divided into two sections. They were told to sift the word with the focus of the 'Schwa Sound' and then use the 'Read aloud Technique' to pronounce the same words in front of the researcher.

British Received Pronunciation gave them a performance grade based on IPA guidelines. The United Kingdom, especially England, has a large population of middle-class people who speak with a Received Pronunciation accent. RP can be traced back to public schools and universities in nineteenth-century Britain. Lane and Brown (2010) claimed that it was utilized in public institutions and colleges, and RP was referred to as public school pronunciation. During its heyday, RP was often considered the language of wealth, influence, and power. Given that it was developed by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), was known as Oxford English, and was regarded as posh, it shouldn't be shocking.

Results and Discussion

**Table 1
Case Processing Summary**

| | Cases | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|---------|---------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Valid | | Missing | | Total | |
| | N | Percent | N | Percent | N | Percent |
| Girls & Boys * Performance Grade | 225 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 225 | 100.0% |

The preliminary note on data analysis tells the story of the current study's participants, who were chosen using a completely randomized Design based on the researcher's connection with the administrators of the schools where the students were chosen to participate in both activities. The first activity was the Sort-out Test, which was followed by the Pronunciation Test. There were 225 students in total, divided into two major groups: 140 girls and 85 boys. These two major classifications were further subdivided into Poor, Good, and Excellent positions after RCD. This subgrouping was determined using grading marks. Students with grades ranging from 1 to 10 were classified as poor, students with grades ranging from 11 to 15 as good, and students with grades ranging from 16 to 17 as superb. For ethical reasons, individual student performance at school was kept private.

**Table 2
Girls & Boys * Performance Grade Cross tabulation**

| | | Performance Grade | | | Total |
|-------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------|-----------|--------|
| | | Poor | Good | Excellent | |
| Girls | Count | 71 | 32 | 37 | 140 |
| | % within Girls & Boys | 50.7% | 22.9% | 26.4% | 100.0% |
| | % of Total | 31.6% | 14.2% | 16.4% | 62.2% |
| Boys | Count | 16 | 26 | 43 | 85 |
| | % within Girls & Boys | 18.8% | 30.6% | 50.6% | 100.0% |
| | % of Total | 7.1% | 11.6% | 19.1% | 37.8% |
| Total | Count | 87 | 58 | 80 | 225 |
| | % within Girls & Boys | 38.7% | 25.8% | 35.6% | 100.0% |
| | % of Total | 38.7% | 25.8% | 35.6% | 100.0% |

Cross tabulation provides a detailed description of the subjects' performance in the Sort-out Test. The table is divided into two parts, girls and boys, and is further divided into Poor, Good, and Excellent positions based on performance in the rows. The column of percentage totals follows. Figures show that 71 girls were placed in a poor position, 32 in a good position, and 37 in an excellent position in the girls' row. This means that 31.6 percent, 14.2 percent, and 16.4 percent of the girls' grade points remained in the poor, good, and excellent categories, respectively.

In the row of boys, out of 85, 16 boys (7.1 percent), 26 boys (30.6 percent), and 43 boys (50.6 percent) secured the positions of poor, good, and excellent, respectively. When the results of girls and boys are compared, it is found that girls were poor 31.6 percent of the time, while boys were poor 18.8 percent of the time. Girls were in a good position 14.2 percent of the time, while boys were in a good position 30.6 percent of the time. In the excellent category, girls scored 16.4 percent higher than boys, who scored 19.1 percent higher.

In total, 38.7 percent of students were assigned a poor position, 25.85 percent were assigned a good position, and 35.6 percent were assigned an excellent position. Overall, the girls received 62.5 percent of the marks, while the boys received only 37.8 percent. It was clear that the girls' performance as a whole had the upper hand when compared to the boys'.

Table 3
Chi-Square Tests

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|--------------------|---------------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 23.820 ^a | 2 | .000 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 25.054 | 2 | .000 |
| N of Valid Cases | 225 | | |

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is 21.91.

There is a significant relationship between the performances of other boys and girls regarding the perception of Schwa Sound in English. The values of the Chi-Square Test (Sort-out) are $X^2(2, N= 225) = 23.820, p=.000$. Degree of Freedom in the Test is 2, 225 is the total number of participants, 23.820 is the value of the Chi-Square test. The P-value which is .000 manifests the probability of the Sort-out Test. P-value = .000 is less than .05, which clarifies that the Null, is rejected and Alternate Hypothesis is accepted. Consequently, we can say that there is a significant relationship between the performance of girls and boys.

Table 4
Case Processing Summary

| | Cases | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|---------|---------|---------|-------|---------|
| | Valid | | Missing | | Total | |
| | N | Percent | N | Percent | N | Percent |
| Girls & Boys * Performance Grade | 225 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 225 | 100.0% |

The preliminary note on data analysis tells the story of the current study's participants, who were chosen using a completely randomized Design based on the researcher's connection with the administrators of the schools where the students were chosen to participate in both activities. The first activity was the Sort-out Test, which was followed by the Proficiency Test. There were 225 students in total, divided into two major groups: 140 girls and 85 boys. These two major classifications were further subdivided into Poor, Good, and Excellent positions after RCD. This subgrouping was determined using grading marks. Students with grades ranging from 1 to 10 were classified as poor, students with grades ranging from 11 to 15 as good, and students with grades ranging from 16 to 17 as superb. For ethical reasons, individual student performance at school was kept private.

Table 5
Girls & Boys * Performance Grade Cross tabulation

| | | Performance Grade | | | Total |
|--------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------|-----------|--------|
| | | Poor | Good | Excellent | |
| Girls & Boys | Count | 72 | 44 | 24 | 140 |
| | Girls % within Girls & Boys | 51.4% | 31.4% | 17.1% | 100.0% |
| | % of Total | 32.0% | 19.6% | 10.7% | 62.2% |
| | Boys Count | 28 | 27 | 30 | 85 |
| | % within Girls & Boys | 32.9% | 31.8% | 35.3% | 100.0% |
| | % of Total | 12.4% | 12.0% | 13.3% | 37.8% |
| Total | Count | 100 | 71 | 54 | 225 |
| | % within Girls & Boys | 44.4% | 31.6% | 24.0% | 100.0% |
| | % of Total | 44.4% | 31.6% | 24.0% | 100.0% |

The performance of the subjects in the Pronunciation Test is described in detail by cross-tabulation. As with the previous table, this table is divided into two parts, girls and boys, and is further divided into Poor, Good, and Excellent grades achieved by the students in the columns. At the end of the rows and columns, the percentage of total marks is given. In the girls' row, the figures show that 72 girls were considered to be in a poor position, 44 girls were in a good position, and 24 girls were in an excellent position. It means that the girls received 32.0 percent, 19.6 percent, and 10.7 percent grade points in the positions of poor, good, and excellent, respectively.

In the row of boys, 28 boys received 12.4 percent, 27 boys received 12.0 percent, and 30 boys received 13.3 percent marks in the positions of poor, good, and excellent, respectively. When the results of girls and boys are compared, it is found that girls were poor 32.0 percent of the time, while boys were poor 12.4 percent of the time. Girls were in a good position 19.6 percent of the time, while boys were in a good position 12.4 percent of the time. In the excellent category, girls scored 10.7 percent higher than boys, who scored 13.3 percent higher.

In total, 44.4 percent of students were assigned a poor position, 31.6 percent were assigned a good position, and 24.0 percent were assigned an excellent position. In total, the girls received 62.2 percent of the marks, while the boys received only 37.8 percent. It was clear that the girls' performance as a whole had the upper hand when compared to the boys'.

Table 6
Chi-Square Tests

| | Value | Df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|--------------------|---------------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 11.330 ^a | 2 | .003 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 11.235 | 2 | .004 |
| N of Valid Cases | 225 | | |

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is 20.40.

There is a significant relationship between the performances of other boys and girls regarding the perception of Schwa Sound in English. The values of the Chi-Square Test (Pronunciation) are $X^2 (2, N= 225) = 11.330, p=.003$. The degree of Freedom in the Test is 2, 225 is the total number of participants, and 11.330 is the value of the Chi-Square test. The P-value which is .000 manifests the probability of the Sort-out Test. P-value = .003 is less than .05, which clarifies that the Null, is rejected and Alternate Hypothesis is accepted. Consequently, we can say that there is a significant relationship between the performance of girls and boys.

Discussion

Demirezen (2010) says that Turkey has developed a fossilised articulation error because of the use of the schwa phoneme in their speech. Mao (2013) claims that the transfer of learners' mother tongues influences their Elision of Schwa in English. Bhide et al. (2014) are of the view that Schwa sounds, both early and late bilinguals, spoke Spanish and English with varying degrees of fluency. Rose-Marie (2018), Schwa is present; it is usually in high-stress situations. Listen for the schwa sound to identify multisyllabic words and engage in literate conversation. Agor (2019) examines all of the unexpected schwa variants observed in their speech that can be traced back to their mother tongues

Weber (2018) stated that the schwa is the most frequently encountered sound in academic texts with three or more syllables. Agor (2019) discovered variations were classified and described following their most likely sources. According to the findings, all of the unexpected schwa variants observed in their speech can be traced back to their mother tongues. Ariyani (2019) showed that the students' habits of speaking in their mother tongue influenced the English schwa sounds they produced. Although Indonesians pronounce schwa as a long "a" the tests used in this study do not guarantee that they understand what they read. Indrayani & Nugraha (2020) claimed that some English schwa words sound like a mid-central vowel in Muna that the speaker recognises as a close variant of Schwa [ə]. Priva & Strand (2023) asserted that the findings contradict the notion that schwa's position is only influenced by the context in which it appears. It is unnecessary to claim that schwa's mid-vowel qualities are because it has a target in F1 terms because the shift to higher F1 values when its duration is longer is not necessarily distinct from the shift to higher F1 values when other vowels' length is longer

The problem statement of the current study predicts that phonological rules of English pronunciation will be difficult. The complex sound system of the English language presents a challenge to Pakistani English learners. There is an issue with students confusing various English sounds with their native tongue and being unable to recognise foreign sounds easily. Even though the sounds of English and Urdu are distinct in Pakistan, students attempt to shape their speech organs to pronounce English sounds in Urdu. This is because Urdu is the mother tongue of the Pakistani people. The simple fact is that the Schwas sound in the English sound system is the most frequently used, particularly by native speakers. Pakistani English learners do their best to follow suit to meet their standards, but they are unable to fully adopt it, partly due to mother tongue interference and partly due to a lack of true guidance.

Conclusion

The current study focuses on the need for pronunciation and, in particular, Schwa Sound [ə]. To understand the Schwa Sound in the Pakistani context, two questions are considerable: Why do EFL students struggle to learn the Schwa Sound in English Pronunciation? To what extent do EFL students understand Schwa Sound in English Pronunciation? The first question answers that Schwa is frequently used in English pronunciation by Native speakers of English and by EFL or ESL learners. Most of them try to follow the set rules by native speakers to meet the set standards of English. When it is known schwa is most frequently used, it will be all preposterous not to master this sound pattern. The second question provides the following answer in two parts. i. $X^2(2, N= 225) = 23.820$, and ii $p=.000 X^2(2, N= 225) = 11.330, p=.003$. The findings of the study clarify that in the Sort-out Test In total, 38.7 percent of students were assigned a poor position, 25.85 percent were assigned a good position, and 35.6 percent were assigned an excellent position. Overall, the girls received 62.5 percent of the marks, while the boys received only 37.8 percent. It was clear that the girls' performance as a whole had the upper hand when compared to the boys'. While in Pronunciation Test the findings show that in total, 44.4 percent of students were assigned a poor position, 31.6 percent were assigned a good

position, and 24.0 percent were assigned an excellent position. In total, the girls received 62.2 percent of the marks, while the boys received only 37.8 percent. It was clear that the girls' performance as a whole had the upper hand when compared to the boys'. The study is limited to Schwa Sound and the implications regarding sounds by Pakistani EFL learners. It is only one sound of the English Pronunciation. There are many other short and long vowel consonants which should be studied in detail. Non-native English speakers must deal with several problems with English pronunciation. An English learner must pronounce the words correctly in the same way that a native speaker would. The ability of a non-native English speaker or English learner to resolve miscommunication issues becomes increasingly important as time passes. However, as has been discovered and experienced, a non-native English speaker can't speak exactly like a native English speaker, despite strenuous efforts to achieve perfection in English pronunciation.

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