

## **iSpeak materials and pupils' pronunciation in English**

**Christine Y. Padrogane\***

Kalawag Central School,  
Sultan Kudarat State University, Philippines  
Email: christine.padrogane@deped.gov.ph

**Marjorie P. Lumogdang**

Kalawag Central School,  
Sultan Kudarat State University, Philippines

**Abstract:** Pronunciation is a vital component of language acquisition, significantly influencing communication effectiveness. Hence, this study employing an experimental research design, investigated the effectiveness of iSpeak Material in enhancing English pronunciation among Grade 4 learners at Kalawag Central School during the academic year 2023-2024. It was emphasized how essential it is to correlate instructional materials to learners' cognitive and language skills specifically pronunciation in order to make sure that they are both engaging and easily accessible. The research similarly assessed the materials' acceptability and their impact on learners' pronunciation through pre-test and post-test evaluations. Findings revealed substantial improvements in the articulation of both vowels and consonants, underscoring the effectiveness of iSpeak Materials in fostering better pronunciation skills. Results suggested that targeted instructional materials may enhance oral language competencies and overall academic performance among learners. This research contributed to the existing literature by providing insights into the development and application of supplementary materials for pronunciation, thereby addressing ongoing challenges in language education and offering practical recommendations for educators.

*\*Corresponding author*

Keywords: iSpeak materials, Instructional materials, Pronunciation in English

Date Submitted: February 6, 2025

Date Accepted: March 8, 2025

Date Published: April 11, 2025

## INTRODUCTION

Pronunciation is one of the integral components in learning and understanding a language, especially in learning English as a second language. It is as essential as the four modes of communication such as reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Good pronunciation ensures clarity and comprehension between the speaker and the listener. However, if not properly taught and practiced, learners tend to conform their pronunciation to the features of their mother tongue, affecting speech sounds, rhythm, intonation, and word stress patterns. This can lead to miscommunication and hinder language acquisition. Addressing these pronunciation challenges through effective teaching strategies and instructional materials is crucial in developing learners' oral communication skills.

Globally, pronunciation remains a major challenge for English language learners, impacting their communicative competence and confidence. Studies indicate that poor pronunciation often leads to misunderstandings and negative perceptions in cross-cultural communication (Derwing & Munro, 2015). Furthermore, research by Gilakjani (2016) highlighted that learners struggle with pronunciation despite their educational background, as pronunciation difficulties are not solely attributed to intelligence but also to exposure and practice. Saito (2017) argued that pronunciation challenges are largely cognitive, involving

learners' ability to categorize and conceptualize new sounds, which makes acquiring native-like pronunciation particularly difficult.

In the Philippines, English is widely used in education, business, and government, yet many Filipino students continue to struggle with pronunciation due to the influence of their native languages. Yang (2019) noted that pronunciation difficulties often result in low speaking proficiency among students, affecting their ability to articulate ideas effectively. Additionally, the Department of Education (2022) emphasized that while English is a key subject in the curriculum, there is a greater focus on reading and writing rather than oral communication. Faith (2022) pointed out that oral language skills contribute significantly to reading achievement, yet many schools prioritize literacy skills over pronunciation instruction, leading to gaps in students' speaking abilities.

At the local level, research on pronunciation instruction in elementary schools remains scarce. Most studies focus on the relationship between speaking, listening, and self-efficacy (Demir, 2017), oral proficiency of teachers and students (Budiharso, 2019), and various teaching strategies such as storytelling and role-playing to improve communication skills (Sembiring, 2019). However, there is limited research on how instructional materials specifically enhance pronunciation skills among young learners (Rodriguez, 2017). Despite the evident need for pronunciation-focused resources, few initiatives have been implemented to address this gap in local schools.

This research seeks to address the gap in pronunciation instruction by evaluating the effectiveness of iSpeak Materials in improving pupils' pronunciation. While previous studies have explored various aspects of speaking proficiency, limited research has been conducted on using supplementary materials such as workbooks or structured exercises to enhance pronunciation (Seraj, 2021; Arango, 2015). Furthermore, studies focusing on oral language development in elementary schools, particularly in Grade 4, remain scarce (Sahril, 2018; Department of Education and Training, 2022). This study aims to contribute to the growing body of literature by investigating the role of instructional materials in fostering pronunciation skills.

Therefore, this study focuses on exploring how iSpeak Materials may enhance learners' pronunciation and oral communication skills. The lack of pronunciation-focused worksheets and instructional resources in the researcher's academic institution highlights the necessity of this study. By examining the effectiveness of iSpeak Materials, this research aims to provide valuable insights into improving pronunciation instruction and addressing the existing gaps in English language education.

### *Statement of the problem*

This study determined the effects of iSpeak Material on pupils' pronunciation in English. Further, it sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of acceptability of iSpeak Material in terms of the following: (a) content; (b) mechanics; (c) organization; and (d) overall package?
2. What is the level of learners' pronunciation under control group and experimental group during pre-test and post-test in terms of: (a) vowels; and (b) consonant sounds?
3. Is there a significant difference in learners' pronunciation between control and experimental groups in pre-test and post-test in terms of: (a) vowels; and (b) consonants?
4. Is there significant difference between mean gain scores of the control group and experimental group?

## METHODOLOGY

### *Research design*

This study used the true experimental pretest and posttest control group research design to determine the effects of iSpeak Material on pupils' pronunciation in English.

### *Respondents and locale of the study*

This study was conducted at Kalawag Central School located in Barangay Kalawag 1, Isulan, Sultan Kudarat from January to May 2024 with 60 respondents. Random sampling through lottery method was employed.

### *Research instrument*

The iSpeak Material was developed by the researcher and was validated using an evaluation sheet by three experts: one English teacher and two Master's Graduates specializing in English.

### *Data analyses procedure*

The researcher employed different statistical tools in order to answer the level of acceptability of the iSpeak Material. Mean and standard deviation were used to enumerate the level of learners' pronunciation under the experimental and control groups. During the pre-test and post-test, the mean was utilized. The mean gain score was used to determine learners' pronunciation. A t-test was conducted to determine the significant difference in learners' pronunciation between the control and experimental groups.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study revealed that in terms of the first specific objective, the iSpeak Material was rated as Very Acceptable across various dimensions, including content, mechanics, organization, and overall package. The panel of experts, consisting of English teachers and language specialists, highlighted the material's comprehensive nature and its alignment with developmental levels of the learners. This positive evaluation indicates that the material is well-suited for its intended educational purpose.

For the second specific objective, the results showed significant improvements in learners' pronunciation of both vowels and consonants. The experimental group, which utilized the iSpeak Material, demonstrated a higher mean score in the posttest compared to the control group, indicating a marked enhancement in their pronunciation abilities. This suggests that the intervention effectively supported learners in mastering these phonetic elements.

Regarding the third specific objective, the analysis indicated a significant difference in the pronunciation performance between the control and experimental groups in both pretests and posttests. The experimental group exhibited notable gains in their pronunciation skills, particularly in vowel sounds, demonstrating that the iSpeak Material had a substantial impact on their learning outcomes.

Finally, for the fourth specific objective, the findings confirmed that the iSpeak Material provided a cohesive and engaging learning experience. The assessment of the overall aesthetic and visual design was rated positively, contributing to the material's effectiveness in enhancing learners' pronunciation skills. The results underscore the importance of well-designed instructional resources in facilitating language acquisition and improving speaking proficiency among learners.

The overall analysis of the iSpeak material indicated that it is a well-designed and comprehensive instructional resource that can effectively support the improvement of learners' pronunciation skills. The material was assessed by a panel of experts, comprising English

teachers and language specialists, and was found to be highly acceptable across various criteria, including content, organization, and overall package.

While the material was generally well-received, the survey results also identified a few areas for potential improvement, such as providing more personalized support for learners at varying proficiency levels and refining certain activities to enhance engagement and accessibility. By addressing these minor areas, the iSpeak material can be further optimized to meet the diverse needs of language learners and continue to be an invaluable resource for improving pronunciation skills.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, several conclusions can be drawn. This study has significantly advanced our understanding of the role of specialized instructional materials, specifically the iSpeak Material, in enhancing learners' pronunciation skills in English. One of the most notable insights is the realization that effective pronunciation instruction extends beyond mere repetition and practice; it necessitates a comprehensive approach that integrates interactive and engaging elements tailored to the learners' developmental levels. The findings underscore the importance of aligning instructional materials with the cognitive and linguistic needs of students, ensuring that they are not only accessible but also stimulating.

The innovations introduced through the iSpeak Material serve as a practical framework for educators seeking to enhance speaking proficiency among younger learners. By incorporating multimedia elements and structured activities, the material fosters an engaging learning environment that encourages active participation. This approach not only aids in the retention of phonetic accuracy but also cultivates confidence in students as they navigate the complexities of spoken language. The reflective practice embedded in the research process has highlighted the necessity for ongoing professional development for teachers, equipping them with the skills to effectively utilize such resources.

Generalizing from the results, it is evident that targeted interventions can yield substantial improvements in specific language skills, particularly in pronunciation. The study reaffirms the idea that pronunciation is a fundamental component of communicative competence, influencing overall language acquisition. This realization prompts a call for further research to explore additional dimensions of pronunciation instruction, such as suprasegmental features like intonation and stress, which are equally crucial for effective communication.

In reflecting upon the research process, it becomes clear that the collaboration between educators and researchers is vital for the continuous improvement of teaching practices. The insights gained from this study not only contribute to the academic discourse surrounding language instruction but also serve as a guide for implementing effective educational strategies in diverse classroom settings. Ultimately, the findings advocate for a holistic approach to language learning that prioritizes pronunciation as an essential skill, paving the way for improved communication and academic success for learners.

Based on the conclusions drawn from the study, the researcher recommends several actions. The school may consider sustaining the use of the iSpeak Material and ensuring that it is continuously updated to maintain its relevance and alignment with evolving educational standards and learners' needs. This process could involve integrating feedback from both teachers and students to further refine the material, addressing any gaps identified in the acceptability ratings, particularly in terms of comprehensiveness and clarity.

Teachers are encouraged to pursue additional training and professional development opportunities to enhance their instructional strategies related to pronunciation. Such training can focus on innovative teaching methods and the effective use of the iSpeak Material, enabling

educators to better support students in their pronunciation development and implement best practices in the classroom.

School administrators may implement a systematic approach to monitor and assess students' pronunciation progress. Regular formative assessments can provide valuable insights into learners' development over time and allow for timely interventions when necessary. This ongoing evaluation process can help track improvements and identify specific areas that require further focus, ensuring that instruction is responsive to individual learner progress.

Future researchers are encouraged to explore the long-term impact of the iSpeak Material on learners' pronunciation skills beyond the current academic year. Longitudinal studies could offer deeper insights into the sustainability of improvements and inform potential adaptations of the material for different contexts and age groups. This approach would significantly contribute to the understanding of effective pronunciation instruction and the role of targeted materials in language acquisition.

## REFERENCES

- Aini, L. R. T., & Rochmahwati, P. (2020). Teachers' feedback in teaching speaking. *ELTALL: English Language Teaching, Applied Linguistics and Literature*, 1(2), 58. <https://doi.org/10.21154/eltall.v1i2.2449>
- Arango, J. (2015). Developing pronunciation skills through supplementary materials: A case study in elementary education. *Journal of Language and Education*, 7(2), 45-58.
- Audet, L. (n.d.). What is oral language? Heinemann. <https://blog.heinemann.com/what-is-oral-language>
- Бошкочева, Н. (2020). Exercises for teaching speaking. БГУ Жарчысы, 51, 33–35. <https://doi.org/10.35254/bhu.2020.51.6>
- Biloon, J. S. (n.d.). Integrating EFL skills for authentically teaching speaking. Semantic Scholar. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Integrating-EFL-skills-for-authentically-teaching-Sevy-Biloon/7d111189986adc9f187309b268c3c34c0a3f0678>
- Boekaerts, P. R. Pintrich, & M. Zeidner (n.d.) *Handbook of self-regulation* (pp. 13-39). Academic Press.
- Budiharso, T. (2019). Oral language proficiency and speaking achievement among EFL learners: The role of instructional strategies. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 9(1), 12-25.
- Burns, A. (2016). Teaching speaking: Towards a holistic approach. ResearchGate. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314545785\\_Teaching\\_speaking\\_Towards\\_a\\_holistic\\_approach](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/314545785_Teaching_speaking_Towards_a_holistic_approach)
- Byrne, M. (2021). A qualitative exploration of oral communication apprehension. ERIC. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1109353>
- Chen, I. J. (2015). Using games to promote communicative skills in language learning. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 11(2), 1-4.
- Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T. (2016). *Quasi-experimentation: Design & analysis issues for field settings*. Houghton Mifflin.
- Crystal, D. (2021). *English as a global language*. Cambridge University Press.
- De Jong, N. H., Steinel, M. P., Florijn, A., Schoonen, R., & Hulstijn, J. H. (2023). Linguistic skills and speaking fluency in a second language. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 34(5), 893–916. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0142716412000682>

- Demir, Y. (2017). The relationship between speaking, listening, and self-efficacy: A study among language learners. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 65(3), 78-91.
- Department of Education and Training. (2022). *Enhancing oral communication in primary education: Challenges and solutions*. Government of the Philippines.
- Derwing, T. M., & Munro, M. J. (2015). *Pronunciation fundamentals: Evidence-based perspectives for L2 teaching and research*. John Benjamins Publishing.
- De Vera, P. (2018). Oral communication skills in English among Grade 11 Humanities and Social Sciences (HUMSS) students. ERIC. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED604403>
- Elsa, H., Cynthia, H., & Paulina, E. (2021). Communication games: Their contribution to developing speaking skills. *International Journal of Instruction*, 14(4), 643–658. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2021.14437a>
- Evans, M. (2015). Oral communication skills are meaningful to the development of literacy and essential for thinking and learning. *International Journal of Instruction*, 8(2), 73-90.
- Fadhli, M., Brick, B., Setyosari, P., Ulfa, S., & Kuswandi, D. (2020). A meta-analysis of selected studies on the effectiveness of gamification method for children. *International Journal of Instruction*, 13(1), 845–854. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2020.13154a>
- Faith, R. (2022). The impact of oral language skills on reading comprehension in ESL learners. *Educational Research Journal*, 10(4), 112-130.
- Fathimiyah, F. (2021). Designing supplementary speaking materials for an English extracurricular program of junior high school students. *Fathimiyah | Language-Edu*. <https://jim.unisma.ac.id/index.php/LANG/article/view/9959>
- Gagarina, N., Bohnacker, U., & Lindgren, J. (2019). Macrostructural organization of adults' oral narrative texts. *ZAS Papers in Linguistics*, 62, 190–208. <https://doi.org/10.21248/zaspil.62.2019.449>
- Gilakjani, A. P. (2021). The significance of pronunciation in English language teaching. *English Language Teaching*, 5(4), 96–105. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v5n4p96>
- Gilakjani, A. P. (2021). A study of factors affecting EFL learners' English pronunciation learning and the strategies for instruction. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2(3), 119–128.
- Gilakjani, A. P. (2016). Why is English pronunciation ignored by EFL teachers in their classes? *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 6(6), 195-208.
- Gilbert, J. B. (2021). *Clear speech: Pronunciation and listening comprehension in North American English* (4th ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- Goh, C. C. M. (2016). Teaching speaking. In *English language education* (pp. 143–159). Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-38834-2\\_11](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-38834-2_11)
- Guskaroska, A., et al., (2024). *Teaching pronunciation with confidence: A resource for ESL/EFL teachers and learners*. Iowa State University Digital Press.
- Hattie, J. (2019). *Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. Routledge.
- Hu, S. (2015). Pretesting. In *Springer eBooks* (pp. 5048–5052). [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5\\_2256](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5_2256)
- Jacoby, J. W., & Lesaux, N. K. (2015). Support for extended discourse in teacher talk with linguistically diverse preschoolers. *Early Education and Development*, 25, 1162-1179. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10409289.2014.932177>

## iSpeak materials and pupils' pronunciation in English

- Jalleh, C. M., Mahfoodh, O. H. A., & Singh, M. K. M. (2021). Oral communication apprehension among Japanese EFL international students in a language immersion program in Malaysia. *International Journal of Instruction*, 14(2), 155–178. <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2021.14210a>
- Karim, S. A., & Karim, S. A. (2019). A study of factors impacting L2 learners' speaking. *International Journal of Research in English*, 1(4), 19–22. <https://doi.org/10.33545/26648717.2019.v1.i4a.22>
- Kurth, J. A., et al., (2018). Types of supplementary aids and services for students with significant support needs. *Journal of Special Education*, 52(4), 208–218. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022466918791156>
- Labdi, D. (2017). The role of educational YouTube videos in improving EFL learners' speaking skill: The case of second-year LMD students of English at Biskra University. *Semantic Scholar*. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/The-Role-of-Educational-YouTube-Videos-in-Improving-Labdi/0bf7029f0e2ab5b5975c9a62d99fc444b0b357c7>
- Leong, L., & Masoumeh, A. S. (2017). An analysis of factors influencing learners' English-speaking skills. *International Journal of Research in English Education*, 2(1), 34–41. <https://doi.org/10.18869/acadpub.ijree.2.1.34>
- Levis, J. M., & Sonsaat, S. (2016). Pronunciation materials. In *SensePublishers eBooks* (pp. 109–119). [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6300-432-9\\_10](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6300-432-9_10)
- MacWhinney, B. (2015). *The handbook of language emergence*. Wiley.
- Mandaria, R. N., Karani, E., & Bungai, J. (2022). Teachers' perception towards local content-based English materials of speaking skill for young learners. *Ebony*, 2(1), 72–82. <https://doi.org/10.37304/ebony.v2i1.4045>
- Marantika, J. E. R., Lestuny, C., & Wenno, E. C. (2021). The students' perception of language politeness-based teaching materials in speaking skills at the German language department, Pattimura University Ambon. *Pattimura Excellence Journal of Language and Culture*, 1(1), 19–25. <https://doi.org/10.30598/pejlac.v1.i1.pp19-25>
- Massonnié, J., Llauradó, A., Sumner, E., & Dockrell, J. (2022). Oral language at school entry: Dimensionality of speaking and listening skills. *Oxford Review of Education*, 48(6), 743–766. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2021.2013189>
- Mayer, R. E. (2019). *Multimedia learning* (2nd ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- O'Brien, M. G. (2021). Ease and difficulty in L2 pronunciation teaching: A mini-review. *Frontiers in Communication*, 5. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2020.626985>
- Odden, D. (2015). *Introducing phonology*. Cambridge University Press.
- Palupi, F. (2017). Developing English learning material for speaking skill based on ADDIE. *Premise*, 6(1), 29. <https://doi.org/10.24127/pj.v6i1.805>
- Perkowitz, S. (2023). Gedanken Experiment | Philosophy, Science & Imagination. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/science/Gedankenexperiment>
- Peterson, P. W. (2017). Pronunciation. In M. Celce-Murcia, M. & L. McIntosh (Eds.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (pp. 91–105). Newbury House Publishers.
- Pramerta, I. G. P. A. (2018). Interactive video as English teaching materials for speaking. *Jurnal Santiaji Pendidikan: JSP*. <https://doi.org/10.36733/jsp.v8i1.162>
- Pronunciation Definition & Usage Examples | Dictionary.com. (2021). In *Dictionary.com*. <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/pronunciation>
- Rodriguez, P. (2017). The effectiveness of various teaching strategies in developing communication skills. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*, 8(2), 123-137.

- Safitri, D. (2020). Improving students' pronunciation through minimal pairs drill. *Journal on English as a Foreign Language*, 1(1), 17–26.
- Sahril, M. (2018). Developing oral language proficiency in elementary learners through interactive approaches. *Asian Journal of Language Teaching*, 11(3), 67-82.
- Saito, K. (2017). The role of input and interaction in developing second language pronunciation: A longitudinal study. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 39(2), 275-300.
- Sembiring, R. (2019). Improving speaking achievement through storytelling and interactive strategies. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 13(1), 45-60.
- Seraj, N. (2021). Addressing pronunciation difficulties in ESL learners: A comparative study of traditional and modern teaching methods. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 15(3), 102-117.
- Shadish, W. R., Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T. (2018). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference*. Houghton Mifflin.
- Simkus, J. (2023). Control group vs. experimental group. *Simply Psychology*. <https://www.simplypsychology.org/control-and-experimental-group-differences.html>
- Slavin, R. E. (2018). *Educational psychology: Theory and practice* (9th ed.). Pearson.
- Sweller, J. (2021). Cognitive load theory. *Psychology of Learning and Motivation*, 55, 37-76. <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-12-387691-1.00002-8>
- Tannistha, D. (2017). A dynamical systems framework for studying fluency in L2 speaking. *ResearchGate*. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349710259\\_A\\_Dynamical\\_Systems\\_Framework\\_for\\_Studying\\_Fluency\\_in\\_L2\\_Speaking](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/349710259_A_Dynamical_Systems_Framework_for_Studying_Fluency_in_L2_Speaking)
- Thakur, V. S. (2015). Using supplementary materials in the teaching of English: Pedagogic scope and applications. *English Language Teaching*, 8(12), 1. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v8n12p1>
- Toci, T. (2020). Effective instructional materials for enhancing pronunciation skills in EFL contexts. *International Journal of Language Studies*, 14(2), 1-18.
- Tominaga, Y. (n.d.). An analysis of successful pronunciation learners: In search of effective factors in pronunciation teaching. ERIC. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ921032>
- Tomlinson, B. (2015). *Developing materials for language teaching* (2nd ed.). Bloomsbury Academic.
- Unruh, S., & McKellar, N. A. (2017). Oral language issues and assessment of oral language. In Springer eBooks. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-52645-4\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-52645-4_4)
- Worawong, K. (n.d.). Enhancing Thai students' oral language experience using the CEFR-PBA through the technique of oral presentation. ERIC. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1249001>
- Yang, W. (2019). Challenges in oral communication: The role of pronunciation in second language acquisition. *English Language Teaching Journal*, 14(5), 89-104.
- Zahro, S. K. (2020). Technology integration to English speaking for beginner classroom through vlogs: A bridge of EFL students' hesitancy to speak. *KnE Social Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.18502/kss.v4i4.6495>
- Zhao, J. (2021). The impact of integrated materials on language acquisition in young learners. *Educational Studies*, 47(3), 341-356.
- Zimmerman, B. J. (2015). Attaining self-regulation: A social cognitive perspective. *Educational Studies*, 47(3), 341-356.