

***FIXED MINDSET AND PRONUNCIATION SKILLS:
A STUDY OF 5TH SEMESTER ENGLISH STUDENTS*****POLA PIKIR TETAP DAN KETERAMPILAN PENGUCAPAN:
SEBUAH STUDI PADA MAHASISWA BAHASA INGGRIS
SEMESTER 5****Jacqueline Laoli¹; Okta Christoper Laoli²; Sharley Grace Mendrofa³;
Adieli Laoli,⁴**¹University Of Nias, email: jacquelinelyyy@gmail.com²University Of Nias, email: oktactl@gmail.com³University Of Nias, email: sharleygrace105@penulis.com⁴University of Nias, email: Laoliadieli65@gmail.com

Received: 3 Februari 2025

Accepted: 18 Maret 2025

Published: 21 Maret 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.29303/kopula.v7i1.6317>**Abstrak**

Studi ini meneliti dampak fixed mindset terhadap pelafalan bahasa Inggris mahasiswa program pendidikan bahasa Inggris di Universitas Nias. Fixed mindset, yaitu keyakinan bahwa kemampuan tidak dapat berubah, memengaruhi motivasi belajar pelafalan. Dengan purposive sampling, sepuluh peserta dipilih, dan wawancara semi-terstruktur mengeksplorasi tantangan terkait mindset mereka. Analisis tematik menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa dengan fixed mindset sulit meningkatkan pelafalan karena takut gagal, menghindari tantangan, dan enggan menerima kritik. Sebaliknya, mereka yang memiliki growth mindset lebih gigih, terbuka terhadap kritik, dan melihat kesalahan sebagai peluang belajar. Studi ini menekankan pentingnya mindset dalam pembelajaran bahasa, terutama dalam mengatasi kesulitan pelafalan. Hasilnya menyoroti perlunya menumbuhkan growth mindset di kalangan pelajar. Guru sebaiknya menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang menarik, memberikan umpan balik konstruktif, dan mendorong ketekunan. Riset ini berkontribusi pada pemahaman tentang pengaruh mindset terhadap perolehan bahasa, khususnya pelafalan bahasa Inggris.

Kata kunci: *Fixed Mindset, Growth Mindset, English Pronunciation, Language Learning, University Students.*

Abstract

This study examines how a fixed mindset affects university students' English pronunciation, focusing on students in Nias University's English education program. A fixed mindset, the belief that abilities are unchangeable, impacts students' motivation to learn pronunciation. Using purposive sampling, ten participants were selected, and semi-structured interviews explored their mindset-related challenges. Thematic analysis revealed that students with a fixed mindset struggled to improve pronunciation due to fear of failure, avoidance of challenges, and reluctance to accept feedback. In contrast, those with a growth mindset showed persistence, openness to criticism, and willingness to learn from mistakes. The study highlights the crucial role of mindset in language learning, especially in overcoming pronunciation difficulties. Findings suggest the need to foster a growth mindset among learners. Teachers should create engaging learning environments, provide constructive feedback, and encourage perseverance. This research

contributes to understanding how mindset influences language acquisition, particularly English pronunciation.

Keywords: *Fixed Mindset, Growth Mindset, English Pronunciation, Language Learning University Students.*

INTRODUCTION

The process of learning a language, particularly in acquiring proper pronunciation, presents various challenges for students, especially those who exhibit a fixed mindset. A fixed mindset, as described by (Dweck, 2006), is the belief that abilities and intelligence are innate and unchangeable, leading to a tendency to avoid challenges and give up easily in the face of failure. This mindset can significantly hinder students' progress in language learning, particularly in English pronunciation, where mistakes are often seen as a reflection of inherent inability rather than opportunities for growth. In contrast, a growth mindset, characterized by the belief that abilities can be developed through effort and perseverance, has been shown to foster resilience, confidence, and persistence in overcoming challenges (Dweck, 2006).

(Albert Bandura, 1997) asserts that self-efficacy is a key factor in how people address problems and challenges. High self-efficacy students have confidence in their capacity to get better, are more willing to practice often, and welcome constructive criticism—all of which are crucial elements of language acquisition. Students with a fixed mindset, on the other hand, frequently find it difficult to absorb criticism and may see errors as failures, which causes them to avoid situations and limit their chances for growth. The purpose of this study is to investigate how students' pronunciation of English is affected by a fixed mindset, especially at the university level where advanced language competency is anticipated. Teachers can better assist students in conquering their anxieties and enhancing their language abilities by comprehending how mentality and pronunciation interact.

THEORY REVIEW

The concept of mindset plays a crucial role in language learning, particularly in pronunciation acquisition. This study primarily focuses on the impact of a fixed mindset on university students' pronunciation of English. To better understand this issue, this section reviews relevant theories and previous studies concerning mindset, self-efficacy, and language learning.

1. Mindset Theory

(Dweck, 2006) mindset theory distinguishes between two types of mindsets: the fixed mindset and the growth mindset. Individuals with a fixed mindset believe that intelligence and abilities are static and unchangeable, leading them to avoid challenges and view mistakes as failures rather than learning opportunities. In contrast, individuals with a growth mindset believe that intelligence and skills can be developed through effort, practice, and perseverance. This theory has been widely applied in educational settings, including language learning, to explain how students' beliefs about their abilities influence their motivation and performance.

In the context of pronunciation, a fixed mindset can limit students' willingness to practice, try new sounds, or engage in speaking activities for fear of making mistakes. Conversely, a growth mindset fosters resilience, encourages students to take on challenges, and helps them see errors as part of the learning process. This distinction is

critical for language educators aiming to create a more supportive learning environment that promotes continuous improvement in pronunciation skills.

2. Self-Efficacy Theory

(Albert Bandura, 1997) self-efficacy theory explains how individuals' beliefs in their ability to succeed in specific tasks influence their motivation, behavior, and performance. Self-efficacy is particularly relevant in pronunciation learning, as students with high self-efficacy are more likely to engage in repeated practice, seek feedback, and persist in overcoming difficulties. Those with low self-efficacy, often associated with a fixed mindset, tend to avoid pronunciation tasks, fearing negative evaluation and failure.

(Albert Bandura, 1997) emphasizes that self-efficacy develops through four main sources: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion, and physiological and emotional states. Encouraging students to practice pronunciation in a positive and non-judgmental environment can enhance their self-efficacy and willingness to improve.

3. The Role of Mindset in Language Learning

Several studies support the idea that mindset influences language learning outcomes. (Dweck, 2006) found that students with a growth mindset are more likely to persist in challenging tasks, which is essential for mastering pronunciation. (Yeager & Dweck, 2012) further elaborated on how students with a growth mindset perceive feedback as constructive, whereas those with a fixed mindset view it as a threat to their self-esteem. This distinction is crucial for pronunciation learning, where receiving and applying corrective feedback is fundamental to improvement. Connection between mindset and second language acquisition, concluding that learners with a growth mindset demonstrate greater flexibility, adaptability, and motivation in their language-learning journey. These findings highlight the importance of fostering a growth mindset among students to enhance their pronunciation skills.

4. The Influence of Feedback on Pronunciation Learning

Feedback is a crucial component in pronunciation learning, as it helps learners identify and correct errors. However, the way students perceive and respond to feedback depends largely on their mindset. (Wiliam, 2013) argued that feedback should be formative, encouraging students to see mistakes as opportunities for growth rather than indicators of failure. When students with a fixed mindset receive corrective feedback, they may become discouraged and avoid further attempts, whereas those with a growth mindset are more likely to use feedback to refine their pronunciation.

Incorporating positive reinforcement and process-focused feedback can help students shift towards a growth mindset. For example, instead of saying, "You mispronounced this word," teachers can say, "You're improving; try focusing on this sound next time." Such approaches can significantly impact students' attitudes toward pronunciation learning.

5. Strategies to Promote a Growth Mindset in Pronunciation Learning

To help students overcome the limitations of a fixed mindset and develop a more positive approach to pronunciation learning, educators can implement several strategies:

- a. Encouraging Risk-Taking and Redefining Mistakes: Teachers should create a safe environment where students feel comfortable making pronunciation mistakes without fear of embarrassment.
- b. Providing Constructive and Growth-Oriented Feedback: Feedback should emphasize progress and effort rather than innate ability.
- c. Developing Self-Efficacy Through Practice: Regular and meaningful pronunciation exercises can help students build confidence in their ability to improve.
- d. Using Peer Support and Group Activities: Collaborative learning can help reduce anxiety and promote a more positive attitude towards pronunciation challenges.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative research approach to investigate how university students' fixed mindsets affect their ability to pronounce words correctly in English. Purposive sampling was used to choose ten participants, all of whom were Nias University English education students, based on their self-reported language learning experiences. Semi-structured interviews were used to gather data, enabling participants to discuss their perspectives and experiences about their pronunciation issues as well as how their mentality affected their learning process.

The purpose of the interview questions was to find out how participants felt about their errors, how they responded to criticism, and how committed they were to continuing to work on their pronunciation. Recurring themes and patterns associated with the fixed mindset, such as fear of failure, avoiding difficulties, and being reluctant to accept criticism, were found using thematic analysis. The findings were then contrasted with accepted conceptions of growth and fixed mindsets, especially as they relate to language acquisition.

Throughout the investigation, ethical considerations were maintained, including confidentiality and informed consent. In addition to offering useful implications for educators in encouraging a more adaptable and resilient approach to language learning, the studies seek to shed light on the ways in which mentality influences language acquisition, particularly pronunciation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained from thematic analysis of participant interviews showed a strong correlation between fixed mindsets and challenges in English pronunciation. Participants who exhibited a fixed mindset demonstrated a fear of failure, often avoiding pronunciation tasks altogether to prevent potential embarrassment or judgment. This fear stemmed from the belief that their pronunciation abilities were static and unchangeable, leading to decreased self-efficacy and a reluctance to try again after making mistakes. They viewed mistakes as a reflection of inherent limitations, rather than an opportunity for growth. As a result, these students were less receptive to feedback, viewing it as criticism rather than a tool for improvement. This avoidance and lack of engagement significantly hindered their pronunciation development. In contrast, participants with a growth mindset demonstrated a more positive approach to pronunciation

learning. They viewed mistakes as a natural part of the learning process, essential for improvement. These students were more likely to persist despite challenges, demonstrating resilience and a willingness to learn from their mistakes. They embraced feedback as a valuable resource for development and focused on the process of learning and practice, rather than simply achieving perfect pronunciation. This growth-oriented perspective fosters greater self-confidence, motivating them to actively engage in pronunciation practice and seek out opportunities for improvement. These findings highlight the significant impact of mindset on pronunciation acquisition, emphasizing the need for interventions that foster a growth mindset in language learners.

Here is the discussion:

Many pupils have trouble correctly pronouncing words when learning the English language. Their performance is significantly impacted by a fixed perspective, which restricts their ability to develop and get better. Ten participants' answers provided insight into how a fixed attitude may impact their desire to acquire, try, and enhance their pronunciation of English words. Their viewpoints will be examined, and their experiences will be linked to scholarly theories and concepts regarding fixed thinking and language acquisition.

1. Understanding Fixed Mindset in Language Learning

Carol Dweck coined the term "fixed mindset," which describes the conviction that one's intelligence and skills are unalterable and unchanging (Dweck, 2006). Because people tend to shy away from tasks where success is uncertain, this thinking frequently results in a lack of perseverance and a fear of failing. Students with a fixed mindset may find it difficult to learn a language, especially when it comes to learning how to pronounce words correctly. They may view errors as a sign of their innate incapacity to get better rather than as chances for personal development.

2. Responses to Fixed Mindset in Pronunciation

a. Fear of Failure and Avoidance of Challenges

Numerous participants (Participant 1, Participant 3, Participant 5, and Participant 7) stated that avoidance behavior and concern over making mistakes are caused by a fixed mindset. They talked of feeling embarrassed, afraid of being judged, and reluctant to use English because they might pronounce it wrong. For instance, "I fear if I say something wrong, it means I'm not smart enough to speak," said Participant 7. This supports the findings of (Dweck, 2006), who found that students with a fixed mindset shy away from difficulties in order to preserve their sense of self-worth and prevent feelings of inferiority.

b. Impact on Confidence and Self-Efficacy

A fixed mindset, according to a number of participants, also has a detrimental effect on their self-esteem and faith in their capacity to get better. As an example, Participant 6 mentioned, "I avoid speaking English because I feel that my ability is limited." This illustrates a fundamental aspect of locked mindset, in which pupils feel their potential is defined by their present skill set. (Albert Bandura, 1997) highlighted the significance of self-efficacy in learning, arguing that people are more inclined to take on difficult tasks and persevere despite failures if they think they can get better with effort. Students with fixed mindsets, on the other hand, would give up easily, which would impede their language development.

c. Reluctance to Try Again After Making Mistakes

After making mistakes, many participants (Participant 1, Participant 5, Participant 9) said they were hesitant to attempt again or keep getting better. "I feel anxious and embarrassed, and sometimes I find it difficult to try again after making a mistake," for example, said Participant 1. This supports (Dweck, 2006) claim that people with a fixed mindset tend to shy away from challenges following failure because they interpret errors as a reflection of their own limitations. This thinking runs counter to the growth mindset, which views errors as teaching moments rather than failures.

d. Fixed Mindset vs. Growth Mindset: Perception Differences

The responses of the participants (Participant 1, Participant 5, and Participant 7) clearly showed the difference between fixed and growth mindsets in terms of English pronunciation. Individuals who had a growth mentality were more willing to keep learning from their errors and developing their abilities. According to participant 3, "Students with a growth mindset keep trying despite their mistakes, while those with a fixed mindset give up easily." This supports (Dweck, 2006) claim that a growth mindset encourages perseverance and resilience, empowering pupils to overcome obstacles and keep improving.

The participants pointed out that being receptive to constructive criticism and feedback was a notable difference. While students with a fixed mindset can shy away from feedback out of fear of being judged or failing again, individuals with a development mindset are more likely to ask for it and use it to better (Participant 6; Participant 8). According to (Yeager & Dweck, 2012), this bolsters the notion that students who have a growth mindset see feedback as a useful instrument for personal development rather than a danger to their self-esteem.

e. Strategies for Overcoming Fixed Mindset

Participants offered a number of solutions to combat the detrimental impacts of a fixed mentality on pronunciation, such as reframing errors as a necessary part of learning (Participant 10), positive reinforcement (Participant 8), and additional practice (Participant 6). These recommendations support (Dweck, 2006) assertion that cultivating a development mindset requires work, perseverance, and a positive outlook on obstacles. Students can acquire a more adaptable and resilient approach to language acquisition by being encouraged to see errors as necessary components of the learning process and by being given regular practice opportunities.

3. *The Influence of Mixed Mindset on Vocabulary Pronunciation*

a. Fear of Mistake

Because they feel their vocabulary pronunciation is limited and unimprovable, participants with a fixed mentality frequently fear making mistakes. As Participant 1 noted, "I often feel afraid to say words because I worry that if I get it wrong, I'll look stupid." This is a prime illustration of a fixed mindset, in which errors are interpreted as a sign of incapacity. Students that have this anxiety may find it extremely difficult to speak because they refrain from doing so out of shame or fear of being judged negatively by others. In the same way, Participant 2 said, "I feel unsure because I'm afraid others will mock me if I pronounce words incorrectly." This demonstrates how students' fear of social rejection can intensify their anxiety of making mistakes, making them even less inclined to try speaking. (Dweck, 2006) asserts that people with a fixed mindset typically

shy away from challenging situations because they see failures as an indication of incapacity rather than a chance to grow.

b. Limitations in Receiving Feedback

Accepting criticism is another challenge for students with a fixed perspective. They can interpret criticism of their pronunciation as proof that their English is inadequate. For instance, "Yes, I'm afraid if I make a mistake, it will make me feel even more insecure," said Participant 5. This uneasiness frequently results from a failure to acknowledge that making errors is a necessary component of learning. "I feel anxious because I think my mistakes will be obvious, and others will judge me," added Participant 6. This demonstrates how speech avoidance can result from a fear of being judged, which exacerbates the anxiety of making mistakes. According to (Dweck, 2006), eliminating this anxiety requires giving kids constructive criticism and altering their perspective on errors.

c. Tendency to Give Up

When they struggle with pronunciation, students who have a fixed perspective are more likely to give up more quickly. "After making a mistake, I'm afraid to try again because I think I'll fail again," said participant 4. People with a fixed attitude, who see failure as the end of their endeavor, frequently go through this cycle. Their progress in learning English is slowed because they are more inclined to give up trying than to keep getting better.

4. Effects of Growth Mindset on Vocabulary Pronunciation

a. Facing Mistakes Positively

As demonstrated by Participant 1's response, "Perhaps by practicing more and focusing on improvement, not just on the mistakes," students who have a growth mindset, on the other hand, typically see mistakes as a necessary component of the learning process that allows them to grow and do not feel ashamed or let down when they make mistakes.

b. Focus on Process and Effort

Pupils that have a growth mentality prioritize the process and effort over the final result. The eighth participant stated, "Maybe providing positive feedback and building confidence after making mistakes can help." This indicates that they are less focused on their mistakes and more receptive to ongoing efforts to do better. They concentrate on how to practice more and keep improving their pronunciation rather than dwelling on their errors.

c. Openness to Feedback

Pupils who have a development mentality are more open to criticism and see it as a means of getting better. "It's important to remember that our abilities can improve with effort and ongoing practice," for instance, said Participant 5. This illustrates the idea that, with perseverance, errors become opportunities for growth rather than obstacles.

d. Resilience and Perseverance

Even in the face of difficulties, students with a growth attitude persevere. "We need group speaking practice so we don't feel embarrassed when making mistakes," said Participant 7. This indicates that individuals are more likely to deal with their anxiety of making mistakes in a positive way, like increasing their practice in a nurturing setting. Even if they face challenges along the way, students who have a growth mindset think that perseverance and continuous effort will pay off.

e. Establishing a Helpful Environment

Teachers must foster an atmosphere where students feel free to attempt without worrying about criticism in order to assist them in overcoming their fear of making mistakes. One participant stated, "Training a positive mindset and believing that our abilities can improve can help overcome the fear of mistakes." Praising pupils for their efforts and refraining from giving them harsh criticism are two ways to achieve this. Based on the responses of the participants and the influence of fixed and growth mindsets, several approaches can be applied in English language learning to help students overcome their fear of making pronunciation mistakes:

1) Using Positive Feedback

Giving feedback that emphasizes the pupils' efforts as well as their errors is crucial. One participant said, "Treating every mistake as a step to improvement can reduce the impact of a fixed mindset." Giving kids constructive and encouraging criticism might help them see their errors as a necessary part of learning and help them pronounce words more correctly.

2) Focusing on the Process, Not the Outcome

Teachers should instill in their children the idea that effort is just as important to success as the outcome. This can encourage pupils to keep trying even if they have trouble pronouncing words correctly.

3) Encouraging Practice and Perseverance

Last but not least, students must be given lots of chances to practice in both casual group settings and more structured contexts, such as class presentations. Frequent practice helps students gain confidence in their pronunciation and get over their anxiety of making mistakes.

Setelah pembahasan, sebelum masuk ke dalam bab PENUTUP, beri satu paragraf yang mengantarkan pembaca pada simpulan sebagai jawaban atas permasalahan penelitian.

PENUTUP (15%)

The findings of this study highlight the significant impact of a fixed mindset on students' pronunciation learning, particularly in fostering fear of failure, reluctance to receive feedback, and a tendency to give up easily. Participants with a fixed mindset often avoided speaking English due to concerns about making mistakes and being judged. In contrast, those with a growth mindset demonstrated resilience, actively sought feedback, and viewed mistakes as learning opportunities. This aligns with (Dweck, 2006) theory, which emphasizes that a growth mindset encourages persistence and improvement, leading to better language learning outcomes.

To address these challenges, fostering a supportive learning environment is crucial. Teachers should emphasize the importance of effort over perfection, provide constructive feedback, and encourage consistent practice. By promoting a positive mindset and reframing mistakes as part of the learning process, students can build confidence in their pronunciation skills. Ultimately, developing a growth mindset can empower learners to embrace challenges, persist through difficulties, and achieve greater success in English language acquisition.

DAFTAR PUSTAKA

- Albert Bandura. (1997). Albert Bandura Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control. In *W.H Freeman and Company New York* (Vol. 43, Issue 9, pp. 1–602).
- Dweck, C. S. (2006). *The New Psychology of Success*. In *Random House*.
- Wiliam, D. (2013). *The-Main-Idea-Embedded-Formative-Assessment*. https://cloudfront-s3.solutiontree.com/pdfs/Reproducibles_EFA/The-Main-Idea-Embedded-Formative-Assessment-March-2013.pdf
- Yeager, D. S., & Dweck, C. S. (2012). Mindsets That Promote Resilience: When Students Believe That Personal Characteristics Can Be Developed. *Educational Psychologist*, 47(4), 302–314. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2012.722805>