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## THE MULTIMODAL ASSESSMENT TASK: EXTENDING THE PEDAGOGICAL SHIFT IN L2 PRONUNCIATION TEACHING TO ASSESSMENT

TAREA DE EVALUACIÓN MULTIMODAL: AMPLIANDO EL CAMBIO PEDAGÓGICO EN LA ENSEÑANZA DE LA PRONUNCIACIÓN DE L2 HACIA LA EVALUACIÓN

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ESTUDIO

### Abstract

This article explores contemporary approaches to teaching and assessing L2 pronunciation, acknowledging a shift from prioritizing native-like pronunciation to emphasizing intelligibility. Leveraging this transition, the study introduces a Multimodal Assessment Task (MAT) aimed at assessing English pronunciation. The MAT empowers learners to handle the intricacies of spoken language with confidence through a number of structured activities. The participants were twenty-three pre-service teachers taking a pronunciation course in a TEFL program at a state-owned university in Argentina. Their responses to a self-assessment report revealed important advancements in their awareness of pronunciation, bolstered self-confidence, and self-efficacy in relation to learning L2 pronunciation. However, some students pinpointed certain challenges associated with the MAT, including the necessity for additional practice time and guidance, ongoing focus on certain sounds, and some difficulties related to prosody. This article advocates for further research to refine pronunciation teaching and assessment methods in language education, emphasizing ongoing exploration and improvement in this domain.

**Keywords:** Pronunciation teaching, assessment, multimodal assessment task, confidence, awareness, self-efficacy.

## Resumen

Este estudio explora los enfoques pedagógicos para la enseñanza y evaluación de la pronunciación en inglés y reconoce un cambio en los paradigmas actuales, pasando de priorizar una pronunciación nativa a enfatizar el desarrollo de la inteligibilidad. Aprovechando esta transición, se presenta una Tarea de Evaluación Multimodal (TEM) diseñada para evaluar la pronunciación. La TEM capacita a los estudiantes para enfrentar las complejidades del discurso hablado en inglés con confianza a través de una serie de actividades estructuradas. Los participantes fueron 23 estudiantes de un curso de pronunciación inglesa del Profesorado de Inglés de una universidad estatal en Argentina. Sus respuestas a un informe de autoevaluación revelaron avances importantes en el desarrollo de su conciencia fonológica, la confianza en sí mismos y en su auto-eficacia en relación con el aprendizaje de la pronunciación del inglés. Sin embargo, algunos señalaron ciertos desafíos asociados con la TEM, incluyendo la necesidad de contar con más práctica guiada por sus docentes. También destacaron tener cierta dificultad en la producción de algunos sonidos y con varios aspectos de la prosodia. El estudio aboga por más investigaciones en el área para refinar los métodos de enseñanza y evaluación de la pronunciación de L2.

**Palabras clave:** Enseñanza de la pronunciación, evaluación, tarea de evaluación multimodal, confianza, conciencia, autoeficacia.

## 1. Introduction

Teaching pronunciation skills has long been a focal point in language education, with traditional approaches historically emphasizing the attainment of native-like pronunciation (Levis, 2005). However, a growing recognition of the limitations of these traditional approaches has spurred a shift towards prioritizing intelligibility over native-like pronunciation (Derwing and Munro, 2015; Levis, 2020). This modern perspective acknowledges that effective communication transcends flawless pronunciation, emphasizing the importance of intelligibility in facilitating meaningful interactions among language learners (Levis, 2005, 2006; Munro and Derwing, 1995).

These approaches recognize the multifaceted nature of effective interaction, integrating mainly suprasegmental features alongside other linguistic components to improve comprehensibility (Isaacs and Trofimovich, 2012).

Aligned with this pedagogical shift, the assessment of English pronunciation has also undergone transformation (Isaacs, 2014). Traditional assessment methods have given way to more contextualized approaches that assess L2 learners' ability to communicate effectively (Fulcher, 2015). Embracing this modern approach to assessing pronunciation, this study aims to present an innovative method through a Multimodal Assessment Task (MAT). The MAT incorporates comprehensible input tasks (Krashen, 1985), covert rehearsal practice (Dickerson, 1994; Sardegna, 2022), metacognitive strategies (He, 2011), self-efficacy beliefs (Sardegna, Lee and Kusey, 2018) and a series of pronunciation learning strategies (PLS) (Sardegna, 2020; 2022) which aim to enable learners to handle the complexities of spoken language with confidence and proficiency.

This article begins with a comprehensive review of literature in which we explore trends in pronunciation teaching and assessment methods. Subsequently, the method section provides a detailed overview of the context, participants, the MAT, and the self-assessment report used for data collection with the 23 student participants. Following this, the results are presented and discussed. Finally, some suggestions for further research in the field are given.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Teaching pronunciation

Traditional pronunciation approaches to language teaching have historically emphasized achieving native-like pronunciation, often with the goal of producing speech that closely resembles that of a native speaker (Levis, 2005). These approaches are heavily influenced by the notion that language learners should strive for linguistic perfection, and that native-like pronunciation is the ultimate marker of language proficiency. However, over time, educators and researchers have become increasingly aware of some limitations and drawbacks inherent in these traditional approaches. One key limitation of traditional pronunciation approaches is that they tend to neglect the importance and role of intelligibility for effective communication (Levis, 2020). While aiming for native-like pronunciation can be a valid aspiration for some learners, it may not be practical or necessary for others, especially those

who use the language primarily for communication rather than for developing accurate speech.

Additionally, focusing solely on achieving native-like pronunciation may lead to feelings of frustration and discouragement among language learners (MacIntyre and Vincze, 2017), as it can be a challenging and time-consuming task, particularly for learners whose L1 differs significantly from the target language (Wesely, 2012). What is more, insisting on native-like pronunciation overlooks the rich diversity of accents and dialects found among native and non-native speakers themselves (Kormos, 2006), thereby restricting opportunities for broadening one's cultural awareness (Byram, 2020).

As a response to these limitations, more modern approaches to pronunciation teaching have shifted their focus towards enhancing intelligibility rather than solely aiming for a flawless emulation of native-like speech patterns (Crowther and Isbell, 2023; Pennington and Rogerson-Revell, 2019). This transition resonates with the notion of intelligibility (in its broad sense), as outlined by Levis (2006), which highlights effective communication overall, notwithstanding any non-native characteristics in pronunciation. Moreover, these contemporary pronunciation approaches recognize the importance of emphasizing suprasegmental aspects alongside other linguistic components such as lexico-grammar and discourse features, rather than solely focusing on isolated sounds. It is the integration of these multifaceted linguistic elements that collectively contributes to improving intelligibility (Saito, Trofimovich and Isaacs, 2016). These inclusive features aid in facilitating the understanding of accented speech, even if L2 learners fall short of achieving a near-native level of pronunciation proficiency (Saito and Hanzawa, 2018). Within the framework of these modern methodologies, a number of prosody-infused PLS emerges, all aiming at enhancing the effectiveness of speaking skills (Cohen and Macaro, 2007; Sardegna, Lee and Kusey, 2018).

Comprehensible input tasks (VanPatten, 2015), which immerse learners in real-world language contexts, expose them to authentic spoken language encompassing variations in rhythm, intonation, and stress. Learners may subconsciously absorb pronunciation norms, without the need of explicit instruction. Activities, such as listening to natural conversations, watching videos with native and non-native speakers, or engaging in oral interactions may also provide opportunities for learners to experience firsthand how prosody can be used to convey different shades of linguistic and pragmatic meanings (Wells, 2006).

To enhance prosodic proficiency, learners can actively engage in covert rehearsal practices, which involve visualizing, practicing and internalizing correct prosodic patterns. This form of cognitive rehearsal serves a dual purpose: it helps develop muscle memory while also fostering a heightened awareness of how prosody may impact on the overall message and emotional tone of spoken discourse. In line with this, Sardegna (2022) provides compelling research backing for a strategy-based approach to pronunciation instruction, analyzing the various factors that impact sustained improvement. In her studies, she emphasizes the importance of enhancing students' self-regulated learning through integrated measures, such as goal-setting, awareness-rising, covert rehearsal practice, online speech resources and video assessments, reflective practices, ongoing feedback, and post-improvement goal reassessments.

Integrating metacognitive strategies into prosody teaching empowers learners by fostering self-awareness and self-regulated learning (He, 2011; Sardegna, 2022). Through metacognition, learners become attuned to their own speech patterns, identify linguistic challenges related to prosody, and proactively seek solutions. By reflecting on these challenges and utilizing effective learning strategies (Cohen and Macaro, 2007; Sardegna, 2011), learners develop the skills to convey various emotions and nuances in their speech. Metacognition plays a pivotal role in enabling learners to understand how prosody influences meaning and thus are pushed to adapt their speech accordingly (Peñuela, 2018). Through metacognition learners are enabled to take a proactive approach to addressing linguistic challenges instead of passively struggling with prosodic issues. They are pushed to seek solutions, whether through targeted rehearsal practice, self-assessment (Dlaska and Krekeler, 2008), feedback from peers or instructors, or using resources such as (self-) recordings or speech analysis tools, among others.

Building learners' self-efficacy is integral as it instills in students the belief in their ability to effectively use stress, rhythm and intonation to convey intended meanings and emotions (Magogwe and Oliver, 2007; Mills, Pajares and Herron, 2007). This confidence is nurtured through achievable prosody-related goals, constructive feedback, and the celebration of their progress in effectively using prosody to convey their proposed message (Sardegna, 2022).

Simultaneously, learners are encouraged to employ specific PLS to further enhance their prosodic competence (Sardegna, Lee and Kusey, 2018). These strategies encompass practicing with diverse speech contexts to understand the impact of prosody on communication, analyzing prosodic patterns in authentic speech samples, and

seeking feedback from instructors or peers regarding their prosodic expressiveness. Through the potential combination of developing self-efficacy alongside the strategic application of specific oral language self-regulation skills (Sardegna, 2011; 2012), learners may have the opportunity to build self-confidence in their prosodic abilities and potentially reinforce their belief in their capacity to excel in the intricate domain of conversation (Sardegna and McGregor, 2013).

Through the integration of comprehensible input tasks, covert rehearsal practice, metacognition, self-efficacy, PLSs, and self-regulated learning, instructors should be able to empower learners to take an active role in their prosody development, allowing them to convey purposeful meaning and emotions effectively in spoken language.

## 2.2. Assessing pronunciation

In alignment with the shift in the pronunciation teaching paradigm, the assessment of English pronunciation has also undergone transformation (Pennington and Rogerson-Revell, 2019). Traditional assessment methods, still prevalent in many pronunciation classes, typically focus on mechanical exercises and controlled practices centered solely on replicating native speech models. These methods heavily emphasize individual sounds and phonetic accuracy through activities such as phonetic/tonemic dictations, transcriptions and drilling exercises. However, these conventional approaches have faced criticism for their narrow scope in addressing the overarching goal of enhancing comprehensibility for effective communication (Crowther and Isbell, 2023; Trofimovich and Isaacs, 2017)

Contemporary methods of pronunciation assessment, however, embrace more contextualized activities, such as role-playing, scenario-based exercises, dramatizations, research-driven tasks (Luchini and Alves, 2021), and classroom presentations (Pennington, 2018). Among these modern approaches, the introduction of the MAT stands out as an innovative means of assessing L2 pronunciation. An important characteristic of the MAT is that demands students to integrate various modes and sources. By doing so, it challenges learners to blend course materials with multimedia resources, resulting in a comprehensive final outcome. This task serves as a platform for students to reflect on their language learning processes, empowering them to articulate the theoretical connections they have established in their classes, outline their aspirations for ongoing learning, and provide additional evidence of their understanding of theory, practice, and research in English pronunciation skills.

### 3. Research questions

This article explores the efficacy of the MAT in enhancing students' pronunciation development within the context of spoken English skills. Two primary research questions guide this investigation:

- To what extent does the MAT influence students' pronunciation awareness and how does this influence correlate with their perceived improvements in spoken English skills?
- What challenges do students encounter during the MAT implementation, and how can these be addressed to optimize pronunciation development?

## 4. The Study

### 4.1. Method

#### 4.1.1. Context and participants

Twenty-three students, consisting of 19 females and 4 males aged between 19 and 27 ( $M = 20.39$ ), took part in the MAT implemented in *Oral Discourse II* (ODII), a pronunciation course offered within the TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) program at the Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata, Argentina. ODII focuses on English pronunciation, particularly emphasizing suprasegmentals, and is typically undertaken in the program's second year following the completion of *Phonetics and Phonology I and II*. Students enrolled in ODII are expected to have a proficiency level equivalent to C1 (Common European Framework Reference for languages) in English. Within ODII, the MAT provides students with an opportunity to monitor and self-assess their pronunciation development, apply theoretical concepts, and demonstrate their proficiency in English pronunciation by selecting, analyzing, and enhancing a chosen text. This task serves as the second term test administered at the end of this course, with students required to pass it to successfully win promotion to subsequent classes within the program.

#### 4.1.2. The MAT

Throughout the MAT, students engage in a structured task sequence aimed at improving their English pronunciation skills, with a focus on prosody. Table 1 sum-

marizes the main steps of the MAT sequence, providing a clear outline of the activities students undertake.

**Table 1.** Sequence of steps to complete the MAT

Step	Description
1	Analyze a designated video to identify concepts from previous classes and note any new ideas.
2	Choose a video featuring a native English speaker and transcribe a segment of it.
3	Analyze the segment applying tonality, tonicity, and tone.
4	Imitate the chosen video segment using rehearsal practice and pronunciation learning strategies.
5	Record a video of themselves reading the selected passage aloud, focusing on pronunciation.
6	Compare their recording with the native speaker's version to identify areas needing improvement and areas that show progress.
7	Write a self-assessment report on their pronunciation strengths and weaknesses.
8	Reflect on how the task sequence has enhanced their understanding and practical application in L2.
9	Upload the recorded video and the self-assessment report to the virtual classroom.
10	Teachers evaluate students' productions based on theory-practice integration, reflection depth, and practical application.

Students begin by closely analyzing a designated video that integrates theory and practice, such as a lesson on the fundamentals of English intonation: melody, rhythm, and stress. Students will watch this video to identify relevant concepts from previous classes, establish connections, and note any new ideas introduced.

Subsequently, students select a video featuring a native English speaker of their preference and meticulously transcribe a segment, applying Wells' (2006) analytical framework to explore tonality, tonicity, and tone (the 3Ts). Following that, learners immerse themselves in an imitation exercise, utilizing covert rehearsal practice and a repertoire of PLS previously discussed and applied in class.

With that foundation, students videotape themselves reading aloud the selected passage while concentrating on refining their pronunciation skills within a limited timeframe. They then conduct a comprehensive comparison between their rendition and the native speaker's, identifying areas for improvement and acknowledging progress made throughout the task sequence.

Finally, they craft a reflective self-assessment report in which they evaluate their strengths and weaknesses across the various pronunciation facets of the MAT, alongside an exploration of areas necessitating further improvement. The students then reflect on how the task sequence has enriched their understanding of theoretical

constructs and reinforced their practical application in L2 contexts.

Ultimately, teachers evaluate students' outcome based on their proficiency in integrating theory with practice, the depth of their reflections, and the effectiveness of their practical application, ensuring comprehensive development in English pronunciation proficiency. The tape-recorded videos featuring students' productions, along with their self-assessment reports, are uploaded to the Learning Management System (LMS) Moodle (version 3.7.2) (Dougiamas, 2002).

## 5. Data collection and analysis

The data were gathered through self-assessment reports in which students wrote a self-reflective narrative<sup>1</sup>. In this narrative, they addressed the extent to which the MAT task sequence had helped them better understand the theoretical concepts discussed in class and relate them to L2 use. If they noticed a lack of progress in their L2 pronunciation, they were encouraged to explain that as well. Students were asked to support their claims with samples from their video recordings.

Data were analyzed using a categorization process with MAXQDA 24 (version 2.0.0) (VERBI Software, 2021). This process facilitated the identification of affirmative and negative responses in the students' narratives. Positive responses indicated areas where students perceived progress in their pronunciation development, while negative responses highlighted aspects they found challenging. The students' comments in their self-assessment reports were then categorized based on their frequency of occurrence.

## 6. Results

In this section, we present the outcomes from the self-assessment reports written by the students during the final stages of the MAT. Table 2 shows the distribution of positive and negative responses among the students, covering various aspects of their English pronunciation progress. The analyzed aspects were classified and grouped under the headings of skills and task design characteristics. This grouping was done to organize the data, facilitate the analysis, and guide the description of the results.

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<sup>1</sup> Prior to data collection, all student participants completed a consent form in which they agreed to share their productions anonymously for the purpose of this study. The consent forms are available.

**Table 2.** Distribution of students' positive and negative responses

Aspects	Positive Response (%)	Negative Response (%)
Skills		
Increased confidence in imitating native speakers	83	0
Enhanced awareness of pronunciation nuances	74	9
Development of effective learning strategies	70	13
Appreciation for suprasegmental features	70	13
Heightened sensitivity to stress patterns	61	22
Improved ability to produce vowel sounds	22	61
Improved ability to produce consistent rhythm and intonation	17	70
Task design characteristics		
Choice of preferred native speaker videos	87	0
Video analysis for improvement	78	4

Source: own elaboration.

Results reveal a substantial positive response from students towards various aspects of the MAT. Notably, it significantly boosted their self-confidence in emulating native speakers, with 19 out of 23 participants reporting heightened assurance in their speech emulation task. Some perspectives from 2 students further illustrate this:

Student A: Before the MAT, I struggled and feared with imitating native speakers, feeling self-conscious about my pronunciation. However, the structured practice I did during the sequence of these tasks helped me increase my confidence. Now, I feel much more comfortable and confident imitating native speakers.

Student B: The MAT gave me support to practice imitating a native speaker. Through the guided tasks and encouragement from my teacher, I gained confidence little by little and trust in my pronunciation. I'm now more willing to take risks and imitate other speakers without fear of making so many mistakes.

A substantial majority of students (18 out of 23) noted improvements in their ability to discern tonal patterns in English, indicating the MAT's effectiveness in improving this aspect of pronunciation. One student's testimony further supports this observation:

Student E: These tasks in the MAT helped me to understand and recognize the tones. Before, I fought to understand intonation, but focusing on this practice improved my awareness and now, I feel more confident to recognize and produce the different tones.

Additionally, 16 students expressed appreciation for the emphasis laid on the development of suprasegmentals using the MAT, reflecting a deeper awareness and understanding of this pronunciation aspect. Below are two testimonies from students who found this facet of the MAT particularly beneficial:

Student J: The way the MAT helped me to work with suprasegmentals was very useful. Now I can understand stress, rhythm, and intonation better. This can help me with my speech better in the future and also improve my listening.

Student K: I found very helpful the emphasis of suprasegmentals in this task. I also pay attention to sounds, but I can understand the importance of stress and intonation now more than in the theory. This awareness will help me with my pronunciation and feel more confident to express my ideas.

The impact of the MAT on students' perceived awareness of pronunciation nuances is evident from the 74 positive responses indicating an enhanced recognition of these nuances, along with 61 positive responses indicating sharp sensitivity to stress patterns. This suggests that the MAT facilitated students' understanding of finer details, including intonation, stress patterns, and rhythm, which are pivotal for improving spoken English skills. Through activities such as analyzing native speaker videos, transcribing speech segments, and engaging in imitation exercises and self-assessment reports, students likely felt an increased sense of exposure to and internalization of pronunciation patterns. These activities likely prompted reflection and, according to the students' perspective, contributed to the development of more accurate and confident L2 pronunciation skills.

While the majority of comments supported the use of the MAT for enhancing prosody, a few challenges were brought to light by certain students. A minority subset of participants (5 out of 23) faced difficulties in reproducing specific vowel sounds, suggesting areas where focused support and more intervention could be beneficial. Students F and G's testimonies highlight this:

Student F: I fought with producing some smiling "a", for example and long /i:/. Although I do much effort, these vowels are still challenging for me, and this affects my pronunciation. I believe we need more help from our teachers and more practice.

Student G: Producing vowels like the difference between long and short /i/ is very difficult for me. I practice but I can't get them quite right when I speak. It is frustrating for my confidence. I believe I need more help and focused exercises with this.

Likewise, a small group of students (4 out of 23) struggled with maintaining consistent rhythm and using the correct intonation patterns, suggesting the need for further practice, extra time and more guidance from their teachers in this area. Here is a testimony from a student who experienced some challenges with rhythm and intonation:

Student H: I found difficult to keep consistent rhythm and sometimes I confused the intonation patterns in the video. Despite of my efforts to match the rhythm of the video, I can't be consistent, and this affects the intonation too. I know that I need more time and practice to improve this.

Recognizing these challenges highlights the need for further refinement in the implementation of the MAT. Nevertheless, the overall value and benefits of the MAT outweigh its shortcomings. Addressing these issues in future iterations will optimize its effectiveness and result in even greater outcomes for students' pronunciation development.

In terms of the design characteristics of the MAT and their influence on students' perceptions of their pronunciation improvements after completing the task, all students expressed appreciation for the flexibility offered in selecting preferred native speaker videos. They emphasized the personalized learning experience enabled by the MAT, noting the importance of choosing their own practice material. They highlighted how this increased their motivation and interest in continuing their learning process. Two testimonials from these fellow students underscore these points:

Student C: Having the possibility to choose my favorite video was awesome. It allowed me to engage with someone that I like and that helped to improve my learning style. This personalized approach was more funny and I think more effective for learning.

Student D: The possibility of choice of my idol as a native speaker model helped my learning experience. I chose a speech by Taylor Swift because I love her. Exploring her accent and the content of her speech made me understand pronunciation better. Being able to choose made my motivation grow.

Similarly, regarding the task design characteristics of the MAT, the incorporation of video analysis elicited enthusiastic participation from 18 students who actively utilized this tool to refine their pronunciation skills. This task provided them with a valuable opportunity to self-assess their speech, identify specific pronunciation aspects requiring improvement, and implement changes accordingly. This process significantly contributed to the students' development of self-confidence. Student I below underlined the significant impact of video analysis on her outcome:

Student I: Integrating the analysis of a video I chose was new for me. This gave me a great opportunity to evaluate my pronunciation, identify the aspects I have to improve and make the changes to improve. By “dissecting” speech, I was able to recognize my problems and improve them. This helped me to improve my pronunciation and raise my confidence in speaking.

The results highlight the beneficial influence of the MAT on students' pronunciation advancement in the DOII course. Most students valued the adaptable design of the MAT, noting its enhancement of their learning experience. This individualized approach spurred students' motivation and sustained their interest in their pronunciation progress. Overall, these findings emphasize the MAT's effectiveness as a pedagogical tool for improving students' speaking skills and fostering a personalized and reflective learning atmosphere.

## 7. Discussion

The first research question examined the extent to which the MAT influenced students' pronunciation awareness and how this influence correlated with their perceived improvements in spoken English skills. The MAT has played a pivotal role in bolstering students' confidence upon completing the entire task sequence. The majority of participants reported a notable increase in assurance during their speech emulation tasks, attributing this improvement to the structured and guided practice provided by the MAT. Undoubtedly, the MAT has fostered students' self-efficacy, a crucial component in the development of their pronunciation skills. Engaging in structured and guided practice likely enabled them to attain mastery over their pronunciation, leading to a heightened belief in their ability to effectively emulate native speakers. This newfound sense of self-efficacy is poised to empower students to approach similar pronunciation tasks with greater confidence, ultimately enhancing their overall speaking proficiency (Jackson, 2002).

The emphasis on suprasegmentals within the MAT, coupled with a focus on the connection between theory and practice and covert rehearsal exercises, deepened students' awareness and understanding of how pronunciation functions within discourse. By focusing on stress, rhythm, and intonation patterns as they occurred in authentic contexts, students not only enhanced their ability to recognize them but also developed a deep understanding of how prosody influences communication. While students widely appreciated the emphasis laid on suprasegmental features, as evidenced by their expressions of gratitude for the personalized learning experience facilitated by the MAT, they also acknowledged the importance of continued practice with certain sounds, particularly vowels, to facilitate and improve their oral skills.

The second research question investigated the challenges students faced during MAT implementation and how these obstacles could be mitigated to enhance their pronunciation skills. The findings highlighted several specific difficulties: reproducing certain vowel sounds, maintaining consistent rhythm, and using appropriate intonation patterns when imitating speech from selected videos. To tackle these issues, students would benefit from targeted instruction that emphasizes covert rehearsal practices tailored to their individual needs. Moreover, providing ample opportunities for form-focused productive practice, along with constructive feedback and instructors modeling proper stress and intonation patterns, would be highly advantageous. This approach would not only reinforce and improve vowel production but also enhance the students' stress, rhythm, and intonation in speech.

Recapitulating the findings related to the first research question, a significant impact of the MAT on students' pronunciation was linked to its task design. The integration of video analysis within the MAT framework not only promoted reflective learning but also sparked enthusiastic participation among students. This approach encouraged learners to critically evaluate their pronunciation choices and strategies, fostering a reflective process essential to metacognition (He, 2011). Through this practice, students gained a deeper understanding of their pronunciation strengths and weaknesses, enabling them to take an active role in their pronunciation development. Moreover, autonomy and self-regulation—crucial aspects of language learning (Pawlak, Cziszér and Soto, 2020; Sardegna, 2020)—were significantly enhanced through MAT. By giving students control over their pronunciation improvement journey, MAT empowered them to become more self-directed and proactive in their learning.

Multimodal tasks, such as the one deployed in this study, offer a distinct advantage by immersing learners in authentic and dynamic contexts, contrasting with traditional approaches reliant on rote repetition. These innovative assessment methods serve to bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world communication, providing learners with opportunities to apply pronunciation skills in situations closely mirroring genuine interactions (Pennington, 2008; 2015). The flexibility afforded in selecting preferred native speaker videos, as appreciated by all students, underscores the personalized learning experience facilitated by the MAT, which equips learners with the ability to communicate effectively beyond the classroom (Sardegna, 2012; 2022). Engagement and motivation are pivotal for successful language learning (Pintrich and de Groot, 1990; Papi, 2010), and multimodal tasks, like the one presented here, inherently engage students by integrating various media, interactions, and creative elements. This dynamic nature transforms pronunciation practice into an enjoyable, motivating, and fulfilling experience, prompting learners to participate and invest in their pronunciation improvement (Busse and Walter, 2013; Hwang, 2008; MacIntyre and Vincze, 2017).

## 8. Conclusion

In this article, we have introduced the MAT and assessed its effectiveness in developing pronunciation skills, with a focus on prosody. The inclusion of multimodal tasks in pronunciation assessment represents a significant innovation in teaching and evaluation methods. Modern pronunciation teaching approaches prioritize intelligibility over achieving native-like pronunciation, and recognize its importance in effective communication. The MAT embodies this shift by integrating elements, such as a strong emphasis on suprasegmental features, metacognition, self-efficacy and PLS. Through structured and guided practice, video analysis, and covert rehearsal, the MAT has notably increased students' confidence in emulating native speakers. It has also contributed to enhancing their awareness of stress, rhythm, and intonation patterns, aspects that are expected to translate into tangible developmental gains over time. Multimodal tasks like the MAT may help to bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world communication, providing learners with dynamic and engaging practice opportunities. By immersing them in authentic language contexts and tailoring experiences to their needs, these tasks foster motivation and active participation. Despite its benefits, some challenges still persist, particularly in reproducing certain vowel sounds and maintaining consistent rhythm and accurate intonation patterns. Addressing these challenges requires targeted support, additional practice in and outside the classroom, and

constructive feedback from instructors.

The incorporation of the MAT into pronunciation instruction marks a notable departure in approach, prioritizing clear communication and equipping learners with the skills to proficiently engage in spoken language. We urge fellow pronunciation educators to embrace this evolution and integrate the MAT into their curriculum. While the proliferation of new technologies for teaching and learning is undeniably beneficial for education, it necessitates continual evaluation and, importantly, customization to suit the unique needs and cultural backgrounds of learners. Further exploration across varied contexts and student demographics will refine this methodology, fostering its continual enhancement and widespread effectiveness.

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