

# Enhancing post-secondary language majors' accentual awareness through video analysis and reflection

Wience Wing-sze Lai

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong

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## Abstract

This study examines the impact of video analysis and reflective practice on accentual awareness in phonetic education for language majors. Twenty-two students completed assignments using authentic YouTube videos featuring diverse English accents, identifying segmental and suprasegmental features, transcribing words in IPA, and providing written analyses and reflections. Results showed strong performance in understanding and explanation, relevance and originality, and analyses, but weaker reflection, indicating challenges in metacognitive skills. Correlation analysis revealed understanding and explanation, relevance and originality as key predictors of success, while reflection had minimal influence. Students excelled in segmental recognition but struggled with suprasegmental features. Findings highlight the need for explicit instruction and scaffolded reflection to enhance analytical depth and self-awareness in phonetic education.

Keywords: phonetic education, accentual awareness, video-based learning, reflective practice, suprasegmental analysis

## Introduction

English is spoken worldwide with diverse accents reflecting regional, social, and cultural variation. British Received Pronunciation (RP) has traditionally served as the standard in phonetic education and pronunciation teaching (Roach, 2004; Wells, 1982). Conventional instruction prioritises segmental features within RP or General American (GA), offering limited exposure to authentic speech from other varieties (Jenkins, 2000). This narrow focus can hinder learners' ability to interpret diverse accents in academic and professional contexts. Recent research highlights technology-enhanced approaches to address these limitations. Video-based tasks improve awareness of suprasegmental features such as rhythm and intonation, while shadowing enhances pronunciation and attitudes towards authentic input (Phan et al., 2024). Structured reflection supports metacognitive growth, enabling learners to monitor progress and refine strategies (Paterson, 2022). Exposure to multiple accents positively influences awareness and attitudes towards global Englishes (Chiu & Lin, 2024). Although learner-produced videos are increasingly used (Lam & Yunus, 2022), their application in phonetic

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education, especially for fostering metacognitive engagement, remains limited. Instruction typically relies on scripted teaching videos rather than authentic speech, and systematic engagement with learner-generated video analyses and unscripted multimedia resources is rare (Zhang et al., 2022; Wedlock & Binnie, 2023; Mukhtarova, 2024).

To address these gaps, this study implements a two-tiered video task structure within phonetic education. First, students analyse authentic YouTube videos featuring global English varieties, identifying segmental and suprasegmental features. Second, they create self-recorded explanatory videos articulating phonetic differences. This approach discourages reliance on pre-existing IPA transcriptions and fosters deeper engagement through analysis and explanation. Guided reflection further promotes metacognitive awareness, enabling learners to evaluate understanding and identify challenges. Against this backdrop, the study explores two research questions: (1) How does engaging in authentic video analysis and explanatory video creation influence students' ability to perceive and articulate accent differences beyond RP? (2) How do these tasks, combined with guided reflection, impact phonetic analytical skills and metacognitive awareness?

## Methodology

Twenty-two post-secondary language majors enrolled in a phonetics course participated. The assignment was graded as part of coursework to ensure authentic engagement. Students provided informed consent through a written statement embedded in the assignment template, confirming agreement to anonymised reporting and data destruction within two years. The assignment comprised three components: (1) a 2–3 minute MS Teams video analysing a YouTube accent sample, explaining segmental and suprasegmental features, (2) IPA transcription of five words differing from RP and a 150–200 word analysis supported by two sources, and (3) a 50–100 word reflection on accent familiarity and challenges. Strict technical requirements ensured academic integrity. Students were required to transcribe authentic speech rather than copy IPA from dictionaries, promoting practical transcription skills.

Quantitative scores were collected for each assessment criterion. Correlation analysis was conducted to examine how scores for “Understanding and Explanation”, “Relevance and Originality”, “IPA Transcription”, “Analyses”, and “Depth of Thoughts in Reflection” were related to the overall “Assignment Mark” and “Coursework Mark”. Qualitative data from student reflections and written analyses were thematically coded to identify patterns in accent awareness and learning challenges. All procedures adhered to institutional ethical standards.

## Results

Two-tiered tasks broadened exposure to accents beyond RP, including Hong Kong Cantonese, Mandarin, American, Canadian, Scottish, Liverpool, Italian,

Japanese, Korean, Malaysian, Filipino, Indian, Australian, and New Zealand (Māori). This breadth of engagement was reflected in strong performance in understanding and explanation (average: 79.1/100) and relevance and originality (83.6/100), indicating that learners were able to identify salient phonetic features and articulate distinctions across accents with clarity and creativity. For example, students observed features such as /v/→/b/, /r/ and /l/ → [r], and vowel epenthesis in Japanese English; /θ/→/p/ and vowel insertion after final consonants in Korean English; omission of final consonants, /n/-/l/ confusion, and lack of vowel length distinction in Cantonese English; and retroflexion of /t/ and /d/ along with diphthong monophthongisation in Indian English. Suprasegmental analysis was less consistent. Some students identified mora/syllable-timed rhythm and monotone intonation in Japanese and Korean English, and expressive intonation in Italian and Indian English. However, many analyses lacked depth in describing rhythm and stress patterns, suggesting the need for scaffolding in prosodic analysis. IPA transcription scores were moderate (75/100), indicating technical competence with room for improvement. Most students provided accurate IPA transcriptions for at least five words, demonstrating proficiency in phonemic representation. However, some assignments revealed minor errors, such as missing stress marks or incomplete transcription.

Reflection scores were lowest (65.9/100), indicating challenges in articulating nuanced distinctions and connecting observations to learning strategies. Correlation analysis revealed understanding and explanation strongly predicted assignment and coursework marks ( $r = 0.87$  and  $r = 0.79$ , respectively), followed by relevance and originality ( $r = 0.75$  and  $r = 0.52$ ). Technical proficiency in transcription ( $r = 0.58$  and  $0.65$ ) and analytical writing ( $r = 0.62$  and  $0.4$ ) exerted a moderate influence. Reflection exhibited weak correlations (ranging from  $-0.27$  to  $0.12$ ), suggesting metacognitive skills require targeted support. Strategies such as structured prompts, peer feedback, and exemplar-based modelling could help students move beyond surface-level reflections.

## Discussion and conclusion

This study demonstrates the pedagogical value of integrating authentic video analysis and learner-generated explanatory tasks into phonetic education. The approach aligns with calls for technology-enhanced instruction beyond RP-centric models (Roach, 2004; Jenkins, 2000) and supports findings on the benefits of authentic input for accent recognition and positive attitudes towards global Englishes (Phan et al., 2024; Chiu & Lin, 2024). Students showed strong analytical writing and IPA transcription skills (Lam & Yunus, 2022), and correlation analysis confirmed that detailed analyses predicted higher overall performance.

However, challenges persisted in suprasegmental analysis, echoing Jenkins' (2000) observation that prosody remains difficult for learners. Many reflections were descriptive rather than evaluative, indicating that metacognitive growth requires structured prompts and exemplars (Paterson, 2022). Limited progress in rhythm and intonation analysis highlights the need for targeted scaffolding and peer feedback mechanisms.

Overall, multimedia tasks broadened exposure to diverse English accents, moving beyond RP and GA, and enhanced segmental analysis skills. Structured reflection emerged as a distinct area needing explicit support to foster deeper metacognitive engagement. Providing clear examples of suprasegmental analysis and collaborative review can strengthen critical insight and learning strategies. This model offers a practical framework for bridging theory and practice in multilingual phonetic education.

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