


## The Effects of Shadowing Technique on Students' Pronunciation of -ED Ending Sounds: The Case of Saigon University

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### ABSTRACT

**Keywords:** Shadowing technique, the -ed ending sound, pronunciation

The shadowing technique has been recognized as an effective learning method for enhancing listening and speaking skills. However, research on the effects of shadowing on ending sounds, especially the -ed ending, has been limited. This research investigated the English Major Juniors' perception of using the shadowing technique for the -ed ending sound pronunciation. Employing an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, the study combined qualitative and quantitative methods and collected data through an online survey (213 participants) and semi-structured interviews (10 students). The results showed that the majority of students experienced positive cognitive and psychological effects from using the shadowing technique to improve the pronunciation of -ed ending. In contrast, they had negative emotional effects from this method. Additionally, the main difficulty identified was an interaction between performance factors and the forgetting of past-tense rules.

### Introduction

English is widely acknowledged as an international language and has increasingly become a primary means of communication in many countries. Furthermore, pronunciation is regarded as a fundamental component of foreign language learning (Ketabi & Saeb, 2015) and is essential for English conversations, including listening and speaking skills (Derwing & Munro, 2005; Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2010). However, the -ed ending sounds appear as one of the common challenges that many English as a Foreign Language EFL learners face in making conversation. In this context, the shadowing technique, which focuses on immediate imitation, has received much attention for its role in enhancing pronunciation, fluency, and listening comprehension in language education.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the effects of the shadowing technique on pronouncing the -ed ending sound among the English Major Juniors at Saigon University. To date, no study has addressed this specific pronunciation issue within this particular context.

### Literature review

#### *The definition of the shadowing technique*

Lambert and Moser-Mercer (1994) defined shadowing as a process in which shadowers listen to audio through headphones and repeat what the speaker says without a written script.

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According to Tamai (1997), "shadowing is defined as an active and largely cognitive exertion in which learners track speech they hear and vocalise it as easily as possible while listening" (p.105). Kadota (2007) argued that the processes of repeating incoming dispatches and controlling the shadowed accoutrements occurred across numerous areas of the brain, especially in the language centres. According to Shiki, Mori, Kadota, & Yoshida (2010), shadowing is "an online immediate process" (p.81 - 82), while repeating was considered to be "off-line" as students were given silent pauses to reproduce the sounds.

### *Shadowing varieties*

A classification was introduced by Kadota and Tamai (2004). While mumbling, listeners had to focus on the sounds they heard. In synchronised reading, listeners shadowed the input audio and read the script aloud. Prosody shadowing focuses on various patterns, such as rhythm, stress, intonation, speed, and pauses, of the language (Wiltshier, 2007, p. 43). Regarding content shadowing, Wiltshier (2007) stated that listeners try to understand the meaning of the script as they listen.

Table 1

Kadota and Tamai's types of shadowing (2004)

Procedure	Procedure
Mumbling	Listeners shadow by focusing not on their own pronunciation but on the incoming sounds they listen to.
Synchronised reading	Listeners shadow the audio, reading aloud the script, and simulating every sound and intonation.
Prosody shadowing	Listeners try to shadow as they do in the synchronised reading without a script.
Content shadowing	Listeners shadow as well as focus on the content of the speech.

(Source: Based on Hamada, 2012)

According to Kurata (2007), there were six types of shadowing used in Japanese as a Foreign Language (JFL). In full shadowing, the learners repeated what they heard with as few pauses as possible. Slash shadowing is helpful for students because it allows them to gradually focus on the meaning of the speech. As a result, slash shadowing will be a simple task, especially for beginners and those who have difficulty listening. Although full shadowing is a similar technique, slash shadowing is considerably easier (Wiltshier, 2007, p. 502). Silent shadowing is similar to full shadowing, except it is conducted in a quiet environment. In silent shadowing, listeners shadow words in their minds; therefore, no one can hear what they are saying.

Table 2

Kurata's types of shadowing (2007)

Procedure	Procedure
Full shadowing	Listens to input then tries to repeat the auditory input as soon as it is heard
Slash shadowing	The speaker purposely delivers their speech with pauses between phrases to give the shadower more time to recognize the words
Silent shadowing	Full shadowing is done in the head, sub-vocalization
Part shadowing	The shadower picks up the last word or the stressed words and just shadows these
Part shadowing + comment	The shadower adds a comment
Part shadowing + question	The shadower adds a question

(Source: Based on Hamada, 2012)

*The definition of -ed ending sounds*

The final sound of a word is called its ending sound and it is often a consonant. Correspondingly, the regular past tense in English is formed by attaching the inflectional morpheme –ed to the base form of a verb, regardless of person or number (Salaberry, 2000). Therefore, the –ed ending sound is regarded as a bound morpheme that has the grammatical meaning of past tense.

The -ed morpheme is classified as one of the inflectional suffixes in English, which “are always suffixes in English, perform a grammatical function; they are representatives of a grammatical category” (Jackson, 1982, p. 110). It is important to note that the formation of the past simple verb is regarded as inconsistent because it can take one of three different forms: the regular verb form (show-showed), the irregular verb form (go-went), or the semi-irregular verb form (sweep-swept). The morphology of the English regular past tense includes three allomorphs: /t/ as in checked, /d/ as in played, and /ɪd/ as in decided. These three phonological realisations of the –ed inflectional morpheme are defined by phonological principles.

*Pronunciation of -ed ending sounds*

There are many words in the English language that end in -ed, in addition, they appear in past tense and past participle forms. Syafei (1988, p. 90) states that the -ed ending has three pronunciation forms: /t/ as in "picked" /pɪkt/, /d/ as in "believed" /bɪli:vd/, and /ɪd/ as in "needed" /ni: dɪd/. Additionally, he provides the following guidelines for pronouncing the –ed ending:

- a. /d/ after all voiced consonants except /d/, and after all vowel sounds as in planned /plænd/, begged /begd/, played /pleɪd/.

- b. /t/ after all voiceless consonants except /t/ as in stopped /stopt/, kissed /kɪst/, picked /pɪkt/.
- c. /ɪd/ after /d/, and /t/ as in needed /niːdɪd/, and wanted /wɒntɪd/.

While Syafei focuses on the pronunciation of the –ed ending as the past tense and past participle forms, Bowler, Bill, and Cunningham (2004, p. 29) focus on the –ed ending as an adjective only. In past forms and past participles, the -ed ending in adjectives also has three pronunciations: /t/, /d/, and /ɪd/. The guidelines suggested by Bowler and Cunningham for -ed adjectives are similar to those stated by Syafei for verbs.

- a. When –ed follows the sound /d/ or /t/, it is pronounced /ɪd/.

Example: Wanted /'wɑːn.tɪd/.

- b. When –ed follows a voiceless consonant such as: /p/, /k/, /f/, /s/, /θ/, /ʃ/, /tʃ/, it is pronounced /t/.

Example: Fixed /fɪkst/.

- c. When –ed follows a vowel sound, or a voiced consonant sound, such as: /b/, /g/, /v/, /z/, /ð/, /ʒ/, /dʒ/, /m/, /n/, /ŋ/, /l/, /r/, it is pronounced /d/.

Example: Closed /kloʊzd/.

However, Bowler and Cunningham (2004) note that there are some exceptional adjectives that do not follow these rules. They have –ed endings which are pronounced /ɪd/, such as in naked /neɪkɪd/, wicked /wɪkɪd/

### *Definition of student engagement*

Student engagement is viewed as multidimensional, encompassing students' emotions, behavior (participation, academic learning time), and cognition (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). Kuh (2001) defined engagement as students' involvement in “educationally purposeful activities” (p. 12). In addition, Krause and Coates (2008) noted that research on student engagement is often concerned with “the extent to which students are engaging in a range of educational activities that research has shown to be as likely to lead to high quality learning” (p.493)

### *Types of Engagement*

Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004) suggested three categories of student engagement: cognitive, emotional, and behavioral.

1. Behavioral engagement: Students who are behaviorally engaged typically follow behavioral norms, such as attending class and participating in class discussions. It emphasizes the positive behaviors and manners displayed by students during the teaching process, and it is related to the students' actions.
2. Emotional engagement: Students who engage emotionally experience affective reactions such as interest, enjoyment, boredom, rejection, or a sense of belonging
3. Cognitive engagement: Cognitive engagement is linked to the learner's thinking during the learning process. It refers to the student's psychological investment in their education. Cognitively engaged students would be invested in their learning, seek to go beyond requirements, and relish challenges.

### *Related research*

Lambert and Moser-Mercer (1994) agree that shadowing is an important activity for enhancing attention to listening. Wiltshier (2007) claimed that "it provided them with a chance to practice speaking English successfully." (p. 501) Learners can communicate effectively, share their ideas, and relay messages. Shadowing can also be beneficial in pronunciation. Trang (2021) indicated that the shadowing technique not only improves listening and speaking ability but also vocabulary size. Hsieh, Dong, and Wang (2013) showed that shadowing skills can be applied to EFL learners' pronunciation training when they learned new words and sentences. Similarly, a study by Villanueva and Gimena (2022) recommended using the shadowing technique to improve listening and speaking skills. Zhou and Tang (2023) found that the shadowing technique increased their interest in and self-confidence about learning English. In addition, they believed that this technique motivated them to speak English. Sumiyoshi and Svetanant (2017) found positive effects on cognitive, emotional, and psychological outcomes when Australian university students used the shadowing technique while practicing Japanese.

Dewi (2009) pointed out that Indonesian students enrolled in English programs tended to replace the /d/ with the /t/ sound in words ending with a vowel sound, while with words that had the -ed ending after voiced and voiceless consonants, students mispronounced the /d/ and /t/ sound and substituted /t/ with /d/. The issue stemmed from a lack of knowledge of the pronunciation of the -ed ending, the absence of English final consonant clusters in Indonesian, and a failure to practise orally. Kowalczyk (2018) found that Polish learners tended to use sound substitutions, deletions, and insertions when learning and speaking past-tense words in English. Wahyuni and Nur (2021) claimed that students in the English Study Program of IAIN Bone experienced difficulties in pronouncing and distinguishing words ending in /ed/, /d/, or /t/, due to their limited understanding of the pronunciation of the -ed ending and their inability to apply it orally. Hayashi (2008) pointed out that Vietnamese students seemed to have difficulty recognising the morpheme -ed and tended to omit consonants and grammatical endings when speaking English. This difficulty stems from the monosyllabic nature of Vietnamese, which leaves students unfamiliar with the structure of multisyllabic words.

When 50 Teacher Education Program College students participated in the research, Candilas, Diane, Gaid & Kolog (2023) found that memory is necessary for both English speaking and pronunciation as learners recalled their term memory on how words and phrases are pronounced in English. Abdi (2025) found that one of the main challenges of students at Moon College in Hargeisa, Somaliland, was psychological issues such as low confidence, anxiety, and poor motivation.

### *Research Questions*

To fulfill the purpose of the study, the survey sought to answer the following research question:  
What are students' perceptions about the effects of using shadowing techniques to pronounce -ed ending sounds?

## **Methods**

### *Pedagogical Setting & Participants*

The target participants of this study were Junior students of the Faculty of Foreign Language at Saigon University. Out of the 213 individuals who participated in the online survey, 197 were English Linguistics majors, and 16 were English Pedagogy majors. Regarding the interview,

five participants majoring in English Language and five majoring in English Pedagogy were invited to participate in an online semi-structured interview via Google Meet.

The English majors (referring to both Language and Pedagogy) were selected using purposive sampling to ensure they had the required knowledge and experience with both English pronunciation and shadowing techniques.

### *Design of the Study*

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods research design. The justification for this approach is that the quantitative data and results provide a general picture of the research problem. Additionally, through an in-depth qualitative exploration, the general picture is refined, elaborated, and explained. (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

The investigation had a two-part design. Firstly, a 21-item survey was used as the instrument for a quantitative method to assess students' perceptions of using the shadowing technique for the pronunciation of -ed ending sounds. Secondly, to provide a more objective reason for the results, a semi-structured interview was used as the qualitative method for this study.

The questionnaire survey was adapted from Sang (2022) to provide insights into the benefits, drawbacks, and challenges of shadowing with the enhanced script. In addition, Sumiyoshi and Svetanant (2017) also adapted their six-point Likert-scale survey, which lacked a neutral option, making the results more reliable and valuable. Furthermore, the three main sections: cognitive, emotional, and psychological effects were based on the questionnaire adapted from Yamina (2020) and Villanueva and Gimena (2022). Finally, the research cited Kowalczyk (2018) because it addressed pronunciation difficulties with -ed endings. A pilot test was conducted with 10 English Major Juniors, and feedback highlighting ambiguous wording or technical problems in the items was incorporated. The final questionnaire's reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a value of 0.67.

The instrument used in the qualitative study was a semi-structured interview, adapted from the questionnaire and comprising 9 core open-ended questions. The interviews focused on students' evaluations of shadowing techniques, their difficulties with them, and their recommendations to address these problems.

### *Data collection & analysis*

To secure access for the study, the researchers conducted a student survey during in-class and after-class time. The questionnaire was distributed online via Google Forms in January 2024, and responses were collected a month later. In addition, the Google Forms tool was used to administer the survey electronically, and after the specified period, the study collected 213 answers. Regarding the qualitative part, the interview was conducted the following week, in English, with five volunteer participants via Google Meet. Furthermore, only the audio portion of the video calls was stored for analysis, with an average recorded length of 5 minutes.

Data from the student survey were analysed using descriptive statistics software (SPSS) to understand students' perspectives on the use of shadowing techniques and their impacts on pronunciation and speaking skills. To assess the questionnaire's reliability, IBM SPSS Statistics was used to analyze each category.

All of the items were examined using Cronbach's alpha to strengthen the reliability of the questionnaire. The total Cronbach's alpha was required to exceed 0.6. Furthermore, the Correlated Item - Total Correlation had to be higher than 0.3, and Cronbach's alpha if the item deleted was smaller than Cronbach's alpha. In this questionnaire, 2 of 14 items were eliminated, items 5 and 6 in section 2: Emotion effects. As a result, the final questionnaire consisted of 4



main parts, including personal information (3 items), general questions (2 items), effects of the shadowing technique on pronouncing ending sounds among Junior students (12 items), and difficulties and solutions of using the shadowing technique on pronouncing -ed ending sounds (3 items).

To enhance the validity of gathering accurate information, the nine core questions were developed by referencing the existing literature by Kowalczyk (2018) and Sang (2022). While the nine main questions provided a solid foundation, the interview delved deeper with additional, more specific questions to explore the intricacies of each criterion. To ensure the quality and objectivity of the interviews, all were recorded with participant consent. The researchers conducted all five interviews in a two-on-one format (2 interviewers and 1 interviewee) to maintain consistency in questioning and avoid interviewer bias. Furthermore, fostering rapport with participants and allowing ample interview time strengthened the validity of the findings.

## Results/Findings

### *Demographic information*

Figure 1

Results of participants' genders

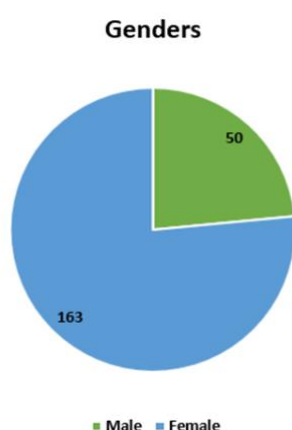


Figure 2

Results of participants' majors

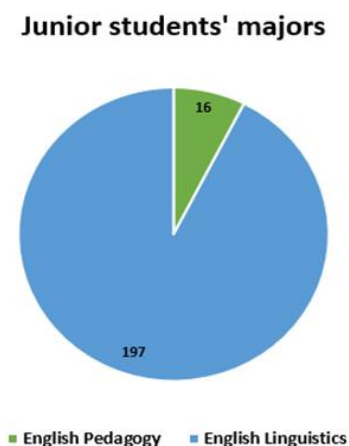
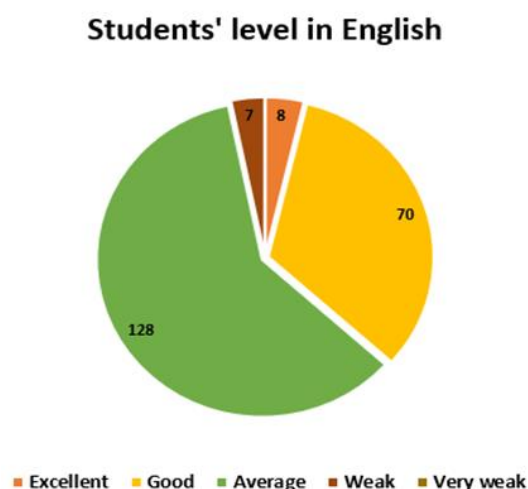


Figure 3

Results of participants' levels in English

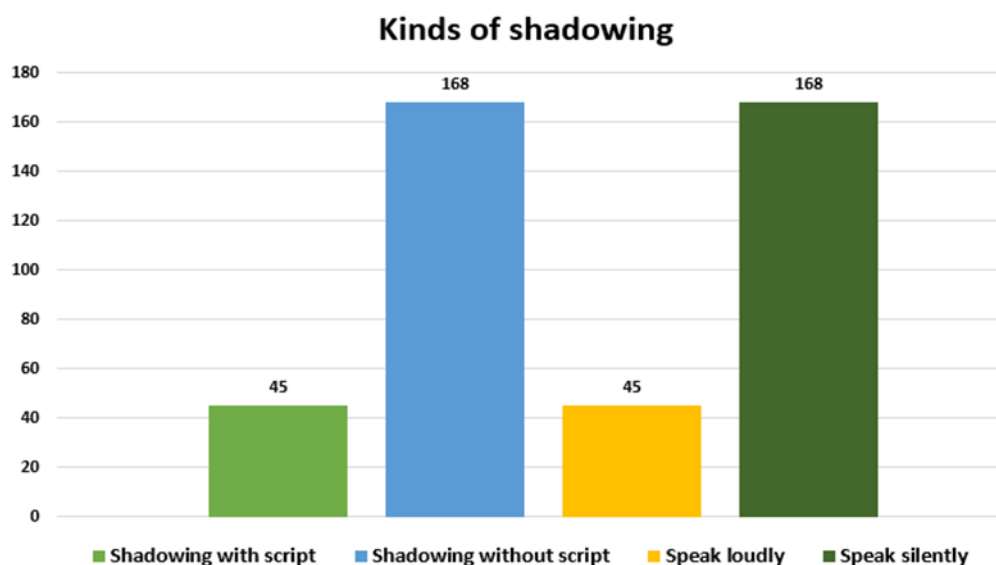


213 participants were involved in this study. The proportion of female students was 163 responses, while that of male students was 50 responses. In addition, 197 of the total participants responded were in English Linguistics, followed by 16 in English Pedagogy. Participants were asked to self-evaluate their English proficiency. The results showed that 8 student responses were Excellent, followed by Good, Average, and Weak, with 70, 128, and 7 responses, respectively.

#### *Students' perception of the shadowing techniques*

Figure 4

Results of the kinds of shadowing techniques that the students use



There were two questions in this part. Regarding the type of shadowing, most participants chose "Shadowing with script" (168 responses), while 45 participants chose the other option.



Moreover, 168 student responses agreed that the shadowing technique would be useful if they spoke loudly, whereas 45 chose to talk silently when they shadowed.

### *Effects of the Shadowing Technique on Pronouncing Ending Sounds among Junior Students*

Table 3

Results of Cognitive Effects of the Shadowing Technique on Pronouncing Ending Sounds

Section one: Cognitive effects	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. I find shadowing is effective in improving the -ed ending sound.	213	4.54	1.249
2. I find that practising shadowing may help me familiarise with the intonation patterns of the target system.	213	4.53	1.062
3. I find the shadowing technique can enhance vocabulary size.	213	4.15	1.202
4. I find the shadowing technique can enable me to get used to the speed rate for better comprehension.	213	4.43	1.116

The highest rate for item 1 was the “Agree” option with 84 responses, followed by 49 responses from participants who strongly agreed. (M=4.54 and St.D=1.249). Items 2 and 4 showed a similar pattern, with all having the highest percentage of selection in the “Agree” option: 78 responses (M=4.53 and St.D=1.062), and 80 responses (M=4.43 and St.D=1.116). Turning to item 3, the majority of students chose “Partly agree”, which received 74 responses of the total figure (M=4.15 and St.D=1.202).

Table 4

Results of Emotional Effects of the Shadowing Technique on Pronouncing Ending Sounds

Section two: Emotional effects	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. I find practising shadowing the -ed ending sounds makes me tired.	213	3.14	1.281
2. I find using the shadowing technique to practise the -ed ending sounds is a waste of time.	213	2.54	1.315
3. I find difficulty when using the shadowing technique to practise the -ed ending sounds.	213	3.13	1.273
4. I find using the shadowing technique to practise the -ed ending sounds is boring because of the repetition.	213	3.01	1.279

Items 1 and 4 had similar figures, with all had the highest percentage of selection in the “Partly disagree” option: 64 responses, and 60 responses, respectively. They slightly disagreed that practising shadowing the -ed ending sound made them tired and bored (M=3.14 and St.D=1.281), (M=3.01 and St.D=1.279). Additionally, 66 responses of students partly disagreed that using the shadowing technique to pronounce the -ed ending was difficult for them (M=3.13

and  $St.D=1.273$ ). Regarding item 2, some participants disagreed that the shadowing technique was time-consuming when practising the -ed ending sounds with 75 responses ( $M=2.54$ ,  $St.D=1.315$ ).

Table 5

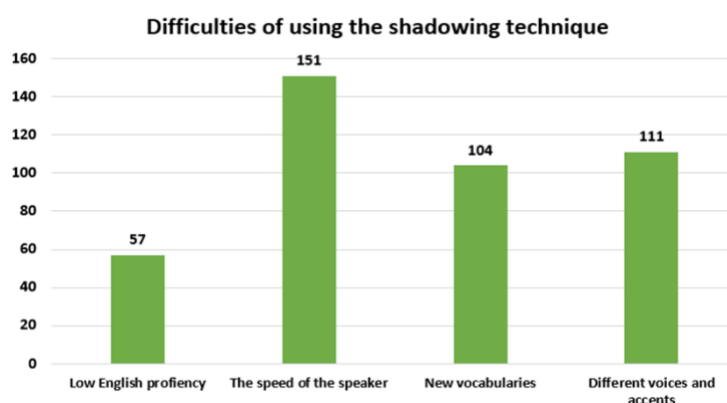
Results of Psychological Effects of the Shadowing Technique on Pronouncing Ending Sounds

Section three: Psychological effects	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. I find practising shadowing the -ed ending sounds can reduce the stress level for pronunciation mastery.	213	4.05	1.132
2. I find practising shadowing the -ed ending sounds can reduce anxiety.	213	3.82	1.188
3. I find practising shadowing the -ed ending sounds can strengthen phonological working memory capacity.	213	4.37	1.067
4. I find I am motivated to carry out and complete shadowing tasks successfully.	213	4.24	1.109

Starting with items 1 and 2, the results of the two questions showed the same pattern, with “Partly disagree” and “Partly agree” approximately equal. The number of votes in item 1 accounted for 58 and 64 responses ( $M=4.05$  and  $St.D=1.132$ ), whereas that of item 2 made up 62 and 61 responses ( $M=3.82$  and  $St.D=1.188$ ). Turning to item 3, 68 students chose the “Partly agree” option, while 70 students chose the “Agree” option ( $M=4.37$  and  $St.D=1.067$ ). Moreover, some participants partly agreed that they found motivation when completing the shadowing technique exercises, with 80 responses. ( $M=4.24$  and  $St.D=1.109$ ).

Figure 5

Results of difficulties in using the shadowing technique



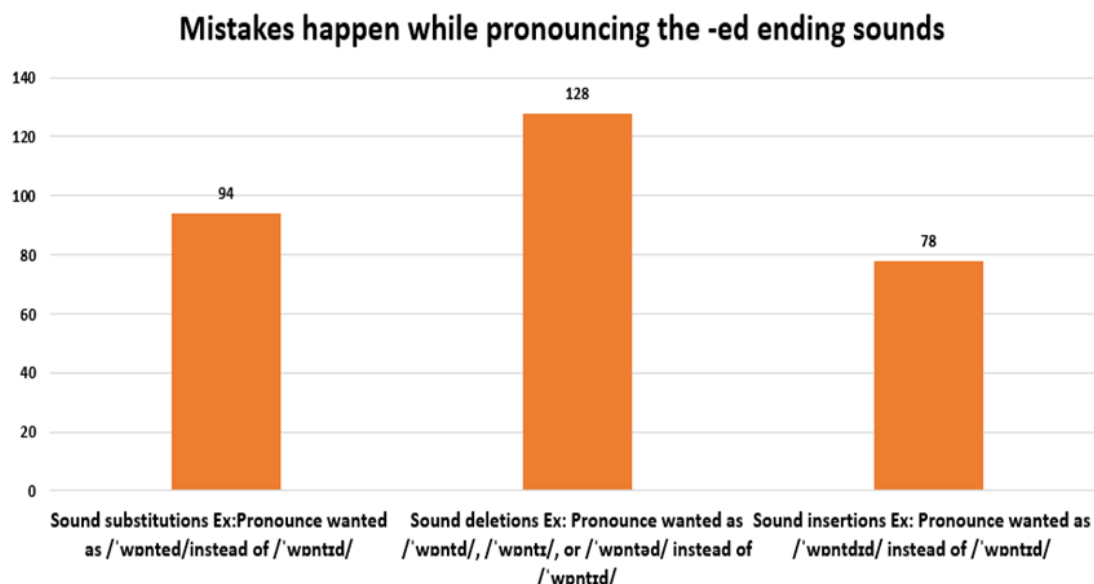
Regarding the first question, the “The speed of the speaker” option received the most responses, with 151. It was followed by “Different voices and accents” and “New vocabularies,” with 111 and 104 responses, respectively. In the meantime, “Low English proficiency” received the fewest votes, with only 57 responses.

For the second question, the option “Sound deletions” received the most votes, with 128 responses. In addition, the number of participants who chose the “sound substitutions” option

was 94 responses, whereas 78 responses suffered “Sound insertions” while pronouncing the -ed ending sound.

Figure 6

Results of some mistakes happen while pronouncing the -ed ending sounds



Concerning the first open-ended question, the vast majority of students commented that they prefer to use /ɪd/ for every past tense word, with 128 responses, primarily because they could not remember the pronunciation rules of the -ed. A small number of participants mentioned their ignorance of the -ed pronunciation; they shared that there were still other words that could imply the past tense besides verbs, such as adverbs of time. Therefore, they did not need to pronounce the -ed pronunciation.

#### *Difficulties and solutions of using the shadowing technique for pronouncing -ed ending sounds.*

The last question was about participants' suggestions or comments to help students use the shadowing technique to easily and effectively improve the -ed ending sound pronunciation. We collected and assembled these responses in groups. The majority of participants agreed that this practice should be taught in detail by teachers. Some participants recommended that students listen to English audio from videos, podcasts, movies, etc., and repeat what the speakers said. This action may strengthen not only their listening ability but also their pronunciation of -ed ending sounds. Additionally, one of these participants noted that students should listen at a lower speed initially to become familiar with the speakers' pronunciation and accents. Other participants commented that students should learn IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) before using the shadowing technique to get used to the vowels and consonants, especially the -ed ending sounds, before listening and shadowing audio. However, many participants agreed that the shadowing technique may not be effective in classes with more than 40 students. This was because the students may feel awkward repeating out loud or pronouncing incorrectly without the teacher noticing. Therefore, they failed to correct their pronunciation errors. Moreover, when using the shadowing technique in traditional classrooms, some participants believed that students must listen to both the audio and their classmates' shadows. As a result, students may find it distracting to decide which sound source to listen to and shadow. Some participants recommended that students study better by using this technique as a self-study method. They

believed students could listen to the audio as many times as possible until they could accurately mimic the speaker, which was not possible in classes.

### *Interview*

#### *Demographic information*

Table 6

Summary of Participant Demographics

Demographic Variable	Category	English Language (n=5)	English Pedagogy (n=5)	Total (n=10)
Years of English Learning	> 13 years	2	2	4
	> 10 years	2	3	5
	> 7 years	1	0	1
Self-Assessed English Level	Advanced	1	1	2
	Upper-Intermediate	2	4	6
	Intermediate	2	0	2

As shown in the table, participants were evenly distributed across two majors, and the majority had been learning English for more than 10 years, indicating they had extensive and valuable experience in English learning.

#### *Students' Perceptions of the Shadowing Technique*

All participants agreed that the shadowing technique was effective. Among them, two English Language participants argued that this technique was most effective for 'enhancing intonation and natural rhythm' while the eight remaining students believed it could improve learners' -ed endings.

Furthermore, students highlighted different opinions about the appropriate learner level for this technique. Surprisingly, students from the Pedagogy program (n=2) tended to believe that beginners can implement this technique to improve the -ed pronunciation.

In contrast, English Language participants (n=2) agreed this technique was suitable for learners with pre-intermediate level or above "*because they have to listen to long and complex sentences two to three times per video.*" (S1). The remaining students believed that 'every learner can use this technique'.

Participants expressed a variety of views on the difficulties of using the shadowing technique. They were categorized into two main difficulties: linguistic challenges and learner-related issues. Interestingly, linguistic challenges were more frequently cited by English Language students, whereas learner-related issues were predominantly highlighted by their English Pedagogy counterparts.

*"It is the elision of the speaker because it confuses me while I am practicing, and makes me pronounce some words wrongly." (S5).*

Additionally, three participants (two English Language and one Pedagogy students) admitted the 'speakers' accent' was a major problem, the reason was that they 'were used to the Vietnamese accent, and mainly focused on grammar rather than pronunciation during the learning process'. The other three students (two English Language and one Pedagogy student) stated that 'the rate of speech of the speaker is quite fast, so it is really hard for them to keep up with the speaker's pace'. Regarding the latter issue, three Pedagogy students each mentioned three distinct difficulties, which were 'poor listening skills', 'learner autonomy', and 'lack of motivation and discipline'.

### *Students' Perceptions of the -ed ending sounds' difficulties*

There were only two Pedagogy students who admitted to tending to 'ignore these morphemes', while eight out of ten participants claimed that they could not remember 'the -ed ending pronunciation rules'. As a result, they tended to default to using /ɪd/ for every past tense word, as one student stated.

*"I don't remember the rules to pronounce the -ed ending sounds, so I use /ɪd/ when it comes to irregular words in speaking." (S1)*

While using the shadowing technique to enhance the -ed pronunciation, a majority of participants (n=8) reported the main difficulty was not a single issue, but rather the combination of performance factors and the forgetting of past tense rules. Specifically, five participants agreed it was both 'the speed of the speaker and the -ed rules confusion', and two Pedagogy students stated 'both the accent and the difficulty in distinguishing the /t/, /d/ or /ɪd/ sounds' made it hard to mimic words.

*"It is the combination of the elision and the forgetting of the -ed rules, they both made it hard to hear what the speaker said." (S5)*

Meanwhile, one Pedagogy participant mentioned that the student did not fully understand the pronunciation rules for -ed endings and the difficulty when producing consonant clusters like /skt/ and /kt/. Only one English Language participant cited the speakers' accents, because the student was familiar with the Vietnamese accent, leading to mispronunciation of every past-tense word during shadowing.

### *Proposed Solutions for Improvement*

There were many possible solutions to improve the pronunciation of the -ed ending through the shadowing technique. However, there were two main themes: modifying the learning materials and enhancing learner strategies. Regarding the first theme, learners should adjust the speed of the video to 0.75 or 0.5. In addition, two students were mentioned as applying technology tools, specifically, using an online dictionary to pre-check pronunciation and the Elsa application for real-time feedback. Furthermore, one student recommended using a list of common regular verbs grouped by ending sounds /t/, /d/, /ɪd/ before learners start shadowing. Regarding the latter theme, one opinion noted the involvement of teachers or friends, stating that 'learners can receive more guidance, immediate feedback, motivation, and engagement'. The remaining students mentioned that learners should practice as much as possible.

*"I think that the more we practice, the better we are because keeping practicing can make learners get used to -ed rules and eventually improve the -ed pronunciation." (S1)*

## Discussion

The research revealed a gap in the literature: students continued to use /id/ for every past-tense word, which posed a new difficulty. Furthermore, the study identified that the primary challenge when using the shadowing technique to improve -ed pronunciation was an interaction between performance factors (e.g., speed, accent) and the forgetting of past tense rules. Primarily, this is because the shadowing technique is a dual-task, requiring learners to concentrate on cascading actions, from listening to the sounds to remembering the pronunciation, while simultaneously mimicking them. This was illustrated when most students admitted that the difficulty with the shadowing technique was the video's speed and the speaker's accent. Therefore, when learners attempt to use the shadowing technique while trying to recall and apply the -ed rules, their cognitive capacity may be overwhelmed, preventing them from performing both tasks effectively. As Candilas et al. (2023) demonstrated, there is a correlation between memory and speaking skills; consequently, the shadowing technique might overload students' memory and cause them to forget grammar rules. Regarding students' tendency to use /id/ for every past-tense word, this could be a simplification strategy when the brain is overloaded. Specifically, learners perceived the letter "ed" in past tense words is relatively more similar to the sound /id/ than to /t/ or /d/. Therefore, when students feel overwhelmed, they may instinctively rely on the spelling form rather than the sound form.

While Abdi (2025) identified low confidence, anxiety, and poor motivation as the main psychological barriers to learning English, the findings from this study suggested that practicing the shadowing technique to improve -ed pronunciation reduced stress and anxiety, boosted motivation, and improved working memory capacity.

The findings were in line with the research of Lambert and Moser-Mercer (1994), Wiltshier (2007), and Hamada (2012), which found that listening to English audio from videos, podcasts, movies, etc., and repeating what the speakers said could be beneficial for listening ability. The results closely matched those of Zhou and Tang's study (2023), suggesting that the shadowing technique could have positive cognitive and psychological effects on the students. These findings are consistent with those of Trang (2021), who found that the shadowing technique not only improves listening and speaking abilities but also increases vocabulary size.

Additionally, Full shadowing was chosen by more than half of the students, which could help fill the literature gap in Kadota and Tamai (2004) and Kurata (2007), as they briefly reported the majority of students' shadowing choices. The shadowing technique can only improve intonation and word pronunciation, which had the same result as Hsieh, Dong, and Wang's study (2013). The finding was consistent with Sang's (2022) study, indicating that most students experienced difficulty with the speaker's fast pace and different accents while shadowing.

It was evident that these findings could fill the literature gap in Sumiyoshi and Svetanant's study (2017) as there was no study on the cognitive, emotional, and psychological effects of the shadowing technique on Vietnamese students' pronunciation of the -ed ending sound. One recommendation was that the shadowing technique could be the most suitable for beginner and pre-intermediate students, which could help address the literature gap on the technique.

The study's findings and results accorded with difficulties reported by Kowalczyk (2018), Dewi (2009), and Hayashi (2008), namely the need to substitute, delete, and insert sounds in certain words when pronouncing past-tense words. Additionally, the results were in accordance with the study of Dewi (2009) and Wahyuni and Nur (2021), who claimed that the root of these incorrect pronunciations stemmed from the forgotten knowledge of the pronunciation of the -ed ending. However, the research revealed a gap in the literature students continued to use using



/ɪd/ for every past-tense word, which was a new difficulty. Furthermore, the study found that the main difficulty when using the shadowing technique to improve -ed pronunciation was an interaction between performance factors (e.g., speed, accent) and the forgetting of past-tense rules. Primarily because the shadowing technique requires learners to absolutely concentrate on cascading actions, from listening to the sounds to remembering the pronunciation while trying to mimic them. Therefore, when learners use the shadowing technique while trying to remember and apply the -ed rules, they might feel overwhelmed and be unable to perform both tasks effectively.

### *Implications*

The discovered core issue is the interaction between the recall of -ed rules and performance factors. Therefore, learners should deconstruct the tasks. Students should master the past tense rules using tools such as the common words lists and a dictionary to check pronunciation. Subsequently, they should apply the learned knowledge with easy and slow videos and gradually adjust the speed to a normal pace. Through this scaffolded self-learning approach, students can develop valuable self-study and self-assessment skills, allowing them to practise English independently beyond classroom instruction, fostering a deeper interest and motivation for learning English.

Teachers should tailor their lesson plans into scaffolded parts. The lesson should start with the pre-task, which focuses on teaching theoretical knowledge of -ed rules or pre-teaching target verbs from a video clip. Afterwards, a practice task begins with a slow video and gradually accelerates to normal speed. Finally, a post-task stage that focuses on peer or teacher feedback on the target-ed sounds.

### **Conclusion**

The study found that most students reported positive cognitive and psychological effects from using the shadowing technique to improve the -ed ending sound pronunciation; however, they had a negative perception of its emotional effects.

The research was limited by the small number of participants, and the study relies exclusively on self-reported data - students' perception about using shadowing in improving pronunciation, their difficulties, and practices. Therefore, the findings and results may not be applicable to students in different years, particularly English language learners in general.

Research based on the findings of this study is recommended to be conducted on a larger proportion in other locations, such as Ho Chi Minh City in particular and Vietnam in general. Moreover, future studies should focus on other participants, such as students from other years, high school students, non-major students, and teachers, and use other types of experimental research to provide a clearer picture of Vietnamese learners' English pronunciation-related issues.

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