



**Independent Project with Specialization in English  
Studies and Education**  
15 Credits, First Cycle

**Teaching pronunciation effectively in an  
EFL classroom; a literature review**

*Effektivt undervisande i uttal på engelska som ett främmande språk  
i ett klassrum; en litteraturöversikt*

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# Abstract

This study provides a literature review of the most effective ways to teach pronunciation to EFL secondary school students in Sweden. There is limited time allocated to pronunciation leading to a scarcity of available effective methods. This impacts the important role which intelligibility holds in pronunciation. Therefore, the objective of this review centres around finding the most effective ways to teach pronunciation in a Swedish EFL secondary school classroom, considering a variety of approaches. A selection of electronic databases were used consisting of specific search terms and limitations, concentrating on English language pronunciation. This resulted in eight articles, all of which experimented on finding ways to teach pronunciation. These studies are different in their methods and objectives, studies all lead to different results which we categorised into three themes: computer-assisted learning, social network learning and unconventional learning. Although all studies reported positive outcomes, only two were proven to be the most effective for this context. The results indicate that computer-assisted learning in combination with a teacher is the most effective way to teach pronunciation to EFL learners. This aligns with both the Swedish curriculum and two educational theories formulated by Krashen and Vygotsky. Our findings demonstrate an opportunity to implement this combination into the Swedish school context and allow for future research projects on pronunciation.

**Key terms:** *effective teaching, English as a Foreign Language, intelligibility, secondary education, pronunciation.*

# Individual contributions

We hereby certify that all parts of this essay reflect the equal participation of both signatories below:

The parts we refer to are as follows:

- Planning
- Research question selection
- Article searches and decisions pertaining to the outline of the essay
- Presentation of findings, discussion, and conclusion

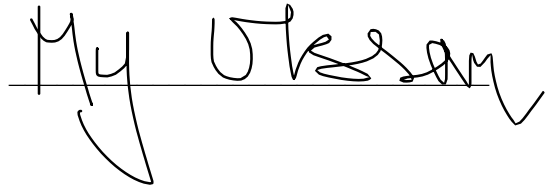
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# 1. Introduction

The English language shows a diverse variation in pronunciation, differing both on origin, social status and educational background (Çakır & Baytar, 2014, p.100). This contrast of language can be seen in EFL classrooms where we believe that all diversities of the English language should be welcomed. When including these diversities in speaking English our pronunciation plays an important role whereas intelligibility has a key role. If intelligibility is not the main goal for pronunciation it can lead to misunderstandings and the inability to speak effectively (Çakır & Baytar, 2014, p.106).

In Sweden, English is seen as a foreign language (EFL) and the English subject is a compulsory subject starting in first grade (Skolverket, 2022b, p.35). When communicating in a foreign language it relies on our ability to understand each other, placing a spotlight on pronunciation. With this in mind, we began discussing the role pronunciation has within the Swedish school context and how we should teach pronunciation in our future professions as English teachers.

Pronunciation guides us on how to articulate words differently. To articulate correctly, we use muscles located in our mouth, tongue, and lips. When speaking a foreign language, new kinds of pronunciations are needed, leading to our muscles adjusting to a new language. Along with this, new skills regarding word stress, sentence stress, and intonations may also be needed, which are all important parts of pronunciation. According to Britannica (6 October 2023) changes in pronunciation, such as the number of phonemes, diphthongal vowels and assimilation of consonants are inevitable as these muscles adjust.

Pronunciation can be practiced in many different ways, focusing on for example word stress. In this literature review, we use the term intelligibility based on the meaning of a "...listener's *actual* understanding of what is being said..." (Derwing & Munro, 2009, as cited in Bøhn & Hansen, 2017, p.56). Studies show that the intelligibility of English holds an important role for EFL teachers (Bøhn & Hansen, 2017, p.62-63). However, some teachers believe that students should acquire a British or American pronunciation to receive

higher grades while some do not believe that a native pronunciation matters (Bøhn & Hansen, 2017, p.60-61). Instead arguing that English itself is complex and offers a load of varieties (Bøhn & Hansen, 2017, p.60-61).

When referring to the Swedish curriculum and commentary material, it states that within communicative ability, pronunciation has to align with language skills to be completely understood and that one should aim for linguistic security (Skolverket, 2022a, p.8; Skolverket, 2022b, p.35). However, international research shows that pronunciation often is not included in lesson plans and has an insignificant role in English learning classrooms (Foote et al., 2016, p.187-190). Something else which is mentioned in the curriculum is self-confidence, this important attribute is also mentioned in Krashen's theory "the affective filter hypothesis". This theory emphasises motivation, self-confidence and low-level anxiety as important factors when learning a new language (Krashen, 1982, p.31).

In Çakır & Baytar's (2014, p.104-105) study, the majority of students state that they find importance in acquiring a pronunciation that is as similar as possible to the native English language. They also concluded that a larger amount of time in the classroom should be spent focusing on pronunciation (Çakır & Baytar, 2014, p.104-105). According to Foote et al. (2016, p.187) over 70% of the observation hours focused on vocabulary whilst only 10% of these hours were spent on pronunciation. Loc Tan Nguyen & Newton (2020, p.6-8) state that teachers believed that they spent about 15 minutes per lesson on pronunciation. However, when observed, it was clear that only around half or less of that time was spent on pronunciation (Loc Tan Nguyen & Newton, 2020, p.6-8). They also found that pronunciation activities are often not planned, but instead occur infrequently. During some lessons, pronunciation is brought up several times whereas sometimes it is neglected (Foote et al., 2016, p.187-188,190).

The majority of times, pronunciation is taught or simply corrected through error correction or classroom repetition (Foote et al., 2016, p.189). It can also be done through tongue-twister activities that focus on specific words in a phrase (Foote et al., 2016, p.190).

Another way is through recasts where the teacher replies with the correct pronunciation or through prompts where the teacher replies with both signalling the specifics of what was mispronounced along with the correct pronunciation (Couper, 2019, p.49).

Couper (2019, p.49) also refers to other studies in contrast to error corrections' usefulness which explains recasts are not always effective in the way where students do not receive enough of an in-depth understanding of their mispronunciations. To conclude, teachers, who are the foundation of what students learn, need to encourage and motivate students to enhance students' pronunciation (Çakır & Baytar, 2014, p.100-101). Teachers should focus on pronunciation in the sense of intelligibility to communicate, where the aim of the conversation is to be mutually understood (Çakır & Baytar, 2014, p.106).

When focusing on pronunciation, most teachers are in favour of a certain approach, this may not always be the most effective or modern one and therefore we see pronunciation teaching as something problematic. A common understanding of how pronunciation should be taught is vital for teachers when both assessing and teaching English. Although several methods, both traditional or digital ones can be adapted to ensure a positive learning outcome, it is according to Vygotsky the teacher who has one of the most crucial roles (Fani & Ghaemi, 2011, p.1550-1551). What methods and approaches should be used are individual and specific to what the teacher thinks is of importance when teaching pronunciation. In the educative teacher programme 7-9 at Malmö University, pronunciation teaching is not taught to future English teachers (D.Tutunjian, personal communication, November 27, 2023). In our opinion this could contribute to insecurities regarding teaching pronunciation, demonstrating the importance of finding effective methods, which can be included in all types of classrooms.

As for the teachers themselves, Levis et al. (2016, p.914) conclude in their study that the background of a teacher, whether they are native or non-native, does not impact their ability or accomplishment to teach English pronunciation. For that reason, we can conclude that it is the methods and approaches which matter when acquiring good pronunciation. These methods and approaches are not researched enough and therefore, we feel it is of utmost

importance to explore different approaches to teach pronunciation in an effective way for Swedish secondary school EFL students.



## 2. Aim and Research Questions

How we pronounce our words has a huge impact on how others perceive our level of English, therefore it is important to learn the correct pronunciation early, when first encountering the language, in school. How students should be taught to reach their full potential within pronunciation is not clearly stated in the Swedish curriculum, although it is perceived that students should be assessed on their pronunciation and fluency. Therefore, we want to investigate the most effective ways to teach secondary students regarding their pronunciation.

We will work to try and distinguish this with the following research question with a subordinate question:

How can pronunciation be taught in an EFL secondary school classroom?

What are the most effective ways to teach pronunciation to EFL secondary school students in Sweden?

## 3. Method

For this literature review, we used different electronic databases which we gained access to through Malmö University library. The two databases used were the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) and the Education Research Complete (ERC). For both of these, we used the same inclusion and exclusion criteria which will be demonstrated below.

### 3.1 Search delimitations

We began to search within the databases, ERC and ERIC, adding different words, methods, and selection criteria. When approaching these electronic databases together, one researcher doing the searches in ERC and the other doing the searches in ERIC, we made sure the same criteria were used through a search table in a shared document where all details were provided. We included that all articles had to be peer-reviewed and published between 2013 and 2023. We conducted the searches through the search mode “Boolean/Phrase” with the expander “Apply equivalent subject”. We started with an overall search, to gain an overview, using relevant words related to our research question. Starting with “pronunciation teaching”, which resulted in 270 results in ERC and 173 results in ERIC. This led us to an understanding of the need for a much narrower search. If we received several articles higher than 60, we made our search narrower, including and excluding certain search words.

We began our first main search in ERC with the search words “pronunciation AND EFL OR English as a second language AND Secondary education OR high school OR junior high OR middle school OR secondary school”. This gave us a result of 35 articles. Furthermore, in our first main search with ERIC, we found 16 articles with the search words “Pronunciation OR diction OR enunciation OR utterance OR inflection OR accentuation or accent AND EFL OR English as a second language AND Secondary education OR high school OR junior high OR middle school OR secondary school AND challenges OR hardship OR straits OR difficulty”.

After these main searches, we modified our research question slightly, which drove us to incorporate different search words, which consequently gave us different results. When implementing new search words we did a second main search within ERC, where we found 23 articles and from these three were chosen for our literature review, the search words used were “pronunciation AND effectiveness AND computer-assisted”. Consequently, we did a second search in ERIC as well. This gave us a result of 52 articles, where we chose three articles for our result, the search words being “Pronunciation AND taught AND instruction OR instructional strategies OR effective way, EFL OR secondary school”.

After further investigation with different search words, we did a third search in ERIC, which led us to a result of 19 articles where we chose two additional articles for our result where the words “efficiency OR effectiveness” were added. In conclusion, we have included a table to show the articles which we have chosen which is demonstrated further down.

## **3.2 Inclusion Criteria**

Our inclusion criteria have been helpful when narrowing down research, resulting in more specific studies regarding pronunciation. All articles investigated different instructional methods on how to improve pronunciation. In the beginning, we focused on secondary school students, but we soon realised that this limited our search. We therefore expanded our search by including different age groups. Given that adult and young learners often have similar vocabulary and acquisition levels, we felt that the participants’ ages did not hold much importance and were therefore still applicable to our research purposes. We began our individual searches by choosing a certain amount of search words which led to a broad result of different instructional methods. We therefore limited our search to the search words above, which led us to focus on computer-assisted methods and creative instructional methods. All of our chosen articles focus on the English language.

### **3.3 Exclusion Criteria**

When choosing relevant articles for our literature review we had to exclude several articles which in our opinion fell outside of our area of research. Some articles were disregarded because they did not focus on English as their main language. We did not include review articles as they are seen as secondary sources. Some articles had a larger focus on the English language rather than English pronunciation, pronunciation played a very small part in these articles.

*The studies included.*

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Search engine	Author and publication date	Country	Age of participants	Keywords in articles
1. ERC	Wang, Y. -H., & Young, S. S. -C. (2015)	Taiwan	Seventh graders and adults	Automatic Speech Recognition; CALL system; English learning; corrective feedback
2. ERIC	Dillon, T., & Wells, D. (2023)	South Korea	Secondary Ed.	Automatic speech recognition (ASR); mobile language learning, pronunciation practice; word error; EFL learner
3. ERC	Gao, Y., & Hanna, B. E. (2016)	China	13-16 year olds	Attitudes towards pronunciation; human-aided instruction; instructional software; pronunciations; young learners
4. ERC	Xodabande, I. (2017)	Iran	Around 16 year olds	Pronunciation teaching; social media networks in language teaching; digital technologies and language learning; computer-assisted language learning (CALL)
5. ERIC	Berry, D.M. (2021)	South Korea	Higher Ed.	Not available *

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Search engine	Author and publication date	Country	Age of participants	Keywords in articles
6. ERIC	Saldiraner, G., & Cinkara, E. (2021)	Thailand	10-12 year olds	Pronunciation teaching; songs in ELT classroom; young learners
7. ERIC	Moedjito. (2018)	Indonesia	Higher Ed.	Intelligibility; Pronunciation teaching; quiz-demonstration-practice-revision (QDPR)
8. ERIC	Coates, R. A. G., Gorham, J., & Nicholas, R. (2017)	Italy	High School	Critical period hypothesis; prosody; phonics; orthography; pronunciation; phoneme-grapheme decoding; TESOL

\* This study did not provide keywords, ERIC's provided descriptors of the study were; Pronunciation Instruction, Teaching Methods, Comparative Analysis, Instructional Effectiveness, Telecommunications, Handheld Devices, Pretests Posttests, Video Games, Second Language Learning, Second Language Instruction, English (Second Language), Educational Benefits, Language Tests, Student Attitudes, Undergraduate Students, Foreign Countries, Pronunciation.

## 4. Results

This result section will examine different methods which demonstrate how pronunciation can be taught in an EFL secondary school classroom. Firstly, it will focus on three different studies based on computer-assisted learning. Secondly, two methods using social network platforms will be demonstrated. Thirdly, three unconventional approaches will be displayed. These articles will assist us in illustrating which methods are the most effective when it comes to teaching pronunciation to EFL secondary school students in Sweden.

### 4.1 Computer-assisted learning

Three of our chosen research articles examine how pronunciation can be taught through computer-assisted learning. The first article, conducted by Wang and Young (2014) examined the effects of implicit and explicit feedback from an automatic speech recognition-based computer-assisted language learning system (ASR-based CALL) on pronunciation learning. The study was conducted on two groups, one containing 18 adults with a minimum of seven years of English language experience and another containing 16 thirteen-year-olds with a minimum of three years of English language experience, all of whom were studying in Taiwan. The participants underwent system training for eight weeks, where the learners spoke into a computer which assessed their pronunciation and replied with feedback. It also involved a pre-test, assessing the learner at a specific level and a post-test to determine if a level change was made. Additionally, questionnaires and individual interviews were conducted. Feedback was given in implicit ways of audio and graphics as well as in explicit ways of textual feedback. Wang and Young's (2014) findings demonstrated that both groups improved their speaking skills, with more improvement for the adults. The adults preferred the audial feedback, and the progress tracking features, while the teenagers preferred the textual feedback. The teenagers also wished for a teacher to accompany the method. From the questionnaires Wang and Young (2014) found that the system enhanced the learners' motivation, practice time, and willingness to continue using it. The system also reduced the learners' anxiety of making errors in public. The authors

suggested that suitable corrective feedback depends on the learner's age. The study also indicated that an ASR-based CALL system can improve pronunciation skills.

Another similar study, conducted by Dillon and Wells (2023) investigated if guided ASR could improve English learners' pronunciation accuracy and avoid common pronunciation errors. Primarily this study focuses on three different research questions, although only two of them are accurate for our line of investigation. Dillon and Wells (2023) conducted a study with 43 adult participants, with varying English levels, from a Korean private University. The three-phase experiment involved a pre-test recording, where students recorded themselves reading the challenging Rainbow passage without preparation. The study continued with a four-week treatment period with weekly practice, where the participants were divided into two groups. The treatment group, aiming to enhance pronunciation skills, received self-study ASR methods, such as using the Google Translations microphone application. The control group did not receive this training, excluding them from this extra method which could be practiced at home. After this, a post-test and questionnaire were conducted which showed that the treatment group had fewer pronunciation errors and that their overall pronunciation accuracy had improved, although only minor improvements were made. Dillon and Wells (2023) suggested that guided ASR practice can impact pronunciation accuracy, however, for maximal effect, this may have to be implemented over a longer period.

Another article examined computer-assisted learning, this time in collaboration with other components. Gao and Hanna (2016), evaluated three ways of teaching pronunciation to 60 Chinese teens with a low-intermediate English proficiency. The students, aged between 13-16, began with a pre-test, where all students gave a brief presentation on an ordinary subject and recited some short texts. Three groups were formed, whereas Group One received teacher-instructed pronunciation lessons, Group Two received computer-assisted instruction, and Group Three received combined lessons. After two weeks of instruction either from a teacher, a computer, or both, their pronunciation improvement was measured. Gao and Hanna (2016) inquired the students about their opinions on pronunciation and the instruction methods. The group that received computer-assisted instruction improved the



least out of all three groups. Still, they improved their pronunciation, mostly regarding individual sounds and sound clusters, in accordance with the other groups. Gao and Hanna's (2016) results demonstrated that the most optimal and motivating method was the combination of the teacher and computer.

## 4.2 Social network learning

Two additional research articles focused on other technological tools that could be used in language classrooms, however they are more aimed towards communication. Xodabande (2017) explored how a social network site can enhance learners' pronunciation skills. The study used Telegram, a platform with various media features, to send messages to 30 Iranian low-intermediate English-level boys, aged around 16. Before the four-week intervention, they conducted a pre-test where they read 20 sentences containing challenging words. The experimental group received pictures, explanations, and videos on how to pronounce the keywords, while the control group received different words and explanations. Four weeks later a post-test, identical to the pre-test, was carried out which demonstrated significant pronunciation improvement for the experimental group. In a delayed post-test the experimental group only demonstrated an insignificant improvement. Xodabande (2017) concluded that the social network site was a useful tool for pronunciation practice, and learning and interprets the improvement as a result of being able to practice at any time.

A similar article based on pronunciation learning through a technological gaming platform was conducted by Berry (2021) who investigated the effectiveness of students playing an ESL game called *Spaceteam* to enhance their pronunciation of English words and sentences. The participants of this study were 98 South Korean EFL students between the ages of 18-22, with varying levels of English. The participants were divided into two research groups, one experimental group (EG) and one control group (CG). The study took place over twelve weeks, whereas all participants conducted a pre-test where they recorded themselves reading aloud sentences consisting of 20 keywords. The EG received a video

game on their computers where they repeated instructions aloud to their partner, who responded by following the given instructions which resulted in levelling up. If the pronunciation of the instructions was incorrect the game ended. The reason for this game to be considered well-formulated for pronunciation training was that the teacher could add a lexicon into the game, which could be customised for each game, individual to each pair of participants. The CG instead practiced through standard pronunciation activities such as paper-based tasks for the same amount of time as the EG, 20 minutes per lesson. After these weeks, a post-test and later a delayed post-test were conducted, whereas Berry's (2021) results indicated that playing this game during class time led to the students making a substantial improvement in classroom performance. Through simultaneously executed interviews a connection could be drawn between its success and the participants' general positive attitude towards the game and its implications.

### **4.3 Unconventional learning**

The next three studies to be presented will not rely on technology but instead concentrate on more unconventional learning methods, emphasising the pivotal role of teachers. Saldiraner and Cinkara (2021) explored the effect of songs on the pronunciation skills of 72 young English learners. They conducted a study with two groups of Turkish students aged 10-12 who had around three to five years of prior exposure to English. Both groups conducted a pre-test where they read texts containing keywords that assessed their pronunciation. Then for six weeks, one group received pronunciation instruction through conventional methods such as reading, listening and worksheets, while the other group received instruction through song-related activities. Both groups practiced the same keywords in different contexts. After a post-test, the results indicated that the song group, which received instructions from a teacher to practice at home, enhanced their pronunciation more than the other group. The teachers also noticed that the song group was more motivated, engaged, and eager to learn new songs than the other group. The study suggested that songs can be an effective and enjoyable way to teach pronunciation to young learners.

Moedjito (2017) investigated the effectiveness of Quiz-Demonstration-Practice-Revision (QDPR) in improving EFL learners' pronunciation of English. The study, conducted during 11 lessons, involved an experimental group of 42 Indonesian adult students, with varying levels of English, where 31 of them acted as participants and the rest acted as teachers. First, the students were evaluated on their ability to pronounce English phonemes. Then they were taught by the teacher-students according to the QDPR method. They received a quiz where they were asked to pronounce certain phonemes. Then, in their native language, the teachers demonstrated the correct pronunciation and an explanation of the phoneme production. They were then divided into smaller groups where they practiced orally to recognise and learn the phonemes. Whilst the students practiced, the teacher identified their challenges. These identified challenges were then brought up in the revision where the students could revise their hardships individually or in groups. If the teacher did not identify any challenges, additional time for student-to-student feedback was granted. After the students had gone through this QDPR method their pronunciation ability was once again assessed, and the results showed a significant improvement of the EFL students' pronunciation of English phonemes. Moreover, Moedjito (2017) concluded that the QDPR method is an effective way for teachers to both identify learners' mispronunciations and difficulties and is also an effective way to teach pronunciation to EFL learners.

Lastly, another unconventional learning method was investigated by Coates et al. (2017), who studied which of the two strategies was the most effective way to improve pronunciation for an exam. The study targeted 17-18 year-old Italian participants with varying levels of English, preparing for the standard language test conducted by Cambridge English Assessment (EFC). To ensure improvement of pronunciation, this study was conducted over multiple lessons, confining to a timespan of 20 hours, focusing on refining pronunciation through the assistance of phoneme-grapheme decoding (GP). The study consisted of one control group, consisting of 17 participants and one trial group, consisting of 24 participants. The control group focused on unconventional learning methods whilst the trial group focused on learning phoneme patterns through rhymes, songs, and other activities provided by a teacher, all of which the main goal was to create Event Related

Potential (ERP). Both groups took part in a pronunciation test where they read aloud 32 sentences, which they were assessed on. Coates et al. (2017) results showed that the trial groups' pronunciation improved significantly, both based on the improvements from the pre-test to the post-test and the results from the interviews. These refinements were seen as the result of their heightened recognition of pronunciation patterns as well as the variety and quantity of resources available to them.

## 5. Discussion

Having now demonstrated the variety of ways that pronunciation can be taught the research articles will now be discussed and related to the Swedish school classroom, the Swedish curriculum, and a few major educational theories.

In secondary education the English subject is allocated a total of 200 hours, making it the 7th highest time-allocated subject (Skolverket, 2023). In the Swedish curriculum for English, pronunciation is mentioned in the core content, seen as an important factor for the pupils' production and interaction (Skolverket, 2022b, p.38). While it is mentioned only a moderate number of times, it is crucial to remember the importance of pronunciation. Darcy (2018, p.13) depicts pronunciation as a key element in the spoken language, as in the absence of pronunciation, there is a lack of sound, resulting in the absence of both grammar and vocabulary. As seen in Footes et al. (2016, p.187) study, more emphasis is put on grammar and vocabulary in school. However, the weight of having intelligible pronunciation is emphasised in the knowledge requirements where the importance of pupils being capable of expressing themselves understandably, clearly and with ease, is underscored (Skolverket, 2022b, p.40-41). This aligns with our selected focus on pronunciation, that the most crucial part of learning English is for pupils to communicate in an understandable way (Çakır & Baytar, 2014, p.106).

While the majority of studies have demonstrated positive improvements regarding pronunciation, various other factors have led us to dismiss some as effective pronunciation teaching methods. The first was Xodabande's (2017) study, in which his findings diverged from the intended research question and therefore the results could not apply to our research purpose. This was done by having one group practice the exact words that would later be assessed while the other group did not. The result did therefore not mirror the importance of pronunciation but instead showed that practicing the same words which will be assessed helps the learners more than practicing irrelevant words. The second was Saldiraner and Cinkara's (2021) study, where the positive effects of songs were demonstrated with both greater motivation and engagement. While we acknowledge the

potential for songs to make pronunciation learning enjoyable, we argue that they are not the most effective method and should not be seen as the primary learning method for pronunciation. When also considering the differences in learners' ages and the instructional setting it may not be well implemented in a Swedish secondary educational context, both because of the variation in maturity and social norms. Basing this decision on our own experience in secondary educational classrooms due to the absence of pronunciation studies conducted in Sweden which reveal the true methods and assessments of pronunciation employed in English language classrooms. The third was Coates et al. (2017) study, whose aim was to find the most effective way to improve pronunciation in a relatively short amount of time to take a test, which we found was not relevant to our research question. As Soderstrom and Bjork's (2015, p.182) overview demonstrates, a short amount of learning time may provide good test scores, however, it is the learning spaced out over a longer period which will lead to long-term learning. Although this study may not be relevant to our literature review, there are parts of this study that we find important. In particular, having the teacher strive for a variation of teaching methods and resources.

These teaching methods and resources need to be chosen by the teachers, as it is them who know their student's needs and can find the most appropriate learning methods (Almusharraf, 2021, p.137). Even though all students may share a common goal during a lesson or a course, "There are also different ways of attaining these goals." (Skolverket, 2022b, p.6). Teachers can find these different ways since the Swedish curriculum lacks clarity regarding what aspects and how pronunciation should be taught. It also requires teachers to take each pupil's needs and circumstances into consideration and allow for a varied combination of content and working methods (Skolverket, 2022b, p.9,14). This ambiguity advocates for teachers to challenge traditional ways of teaching pronunciation. One example of this is error correction, which may be an effective approach for some pupils, but hardly for everyone. Instead, teachers should try to find an effective method to primarily teach pronunciation, while at times implementing other approaches such as songs or error correction.

Since every student is individually unique, their experiences are too. Moreover, it has been observed that young pupils experience language anxiety and embarrassment, especially during oral production in English lessons, and that with increasing age comes a fear of making mistakes in front of others (Nilsson, 2020, p.116,118; Wang & Young, 2014, p.499-500). This leads to a problem, as according to Krashen's "affective filter hypothesis" (1982, p.31,75-76), if the learner feels they are stressed or afraid of making mistakes, new pronunciation skills or languages cannot be learnt effectively. Thus, leading to the need for a stress-free and low-anxiety classroom, where the affective filter is as low as possible, allowing for greater learning possibilities and enhanced self-confidence (Krashen, 1982, p.31). An enhanced self-confidence should according to Morley (1991, p.500) be one of the goals for students learning English as a foreign language. This aligns with the curriculum's fundamental values and tasks of the school, which highlights that pupils' self-confidence should be stimulated (Skolverket, 2022b, p.8). As was observed in Wang and Young's (2014, p.499-500) study, the participants' fears were minimal when using the ASR-based CALL system, demonstrating the effectiveness of using computer-assisted learning methods to decrease in-class anxiety and increase self-confidence.

Furthermore, Krashen (1982, p.31) describes that to succeed in learning a second language, the anxiety in an EFL classroom needs to be as low as possible. We can draw a parallel between studying at home, as presented in Dillon and Well's (2023) study, as being a place which can offer low levels of anxiety. The classroom setting may not suit everyone since some students may have a difficult time in larger groups, and therefore perform better at home. While we believe this to be an additional way to ensure pronunciation practice, it is not relevant to our research question since we are focused on finding effective methods to teach pronunciation in the classroom.

Teachers face a considerable number of challenges in the classroom, and identifying each student's pronunciation difficulties is nearly impossible. Moedjitos's (2017, p.12) QDPR method may be able to help with this, as it provides a quick overview in the beginning for the teacher to detect these difficulties and then help them to achieve the right pronunciation through demonstration, practice and revision, it may still be too much of an effort put on

the teacher. As Collie et al. findings show, there is a correlation between teachers being stressed and their ability to provide efficient instruction, showing the importance of not putting too much work on the teachers' shoulders (2012, p.1199). Additionally, the QDPR method might not be as effective in Sweden as it was in Indonesia, as one of its main factors was to provide a demonstration of the correct pronunciation in the students' native language. The Swedish classrooms include pupils with different backgrounds and first languages, therefore, this method might not be the most effective approach to teach pronunciation to Swedish secondary education pupils.

Even though there exists a variation of pupils, some common factors for learning are shared between all. Motivation is one of them, it plays a crucial role when acquiring a new language. Gao & Hanna (2016) discussed that their study led to stronger motivation and improvement in achievement, as a result of combining computer-assisted learning with a teacher. The need for a teacher was demonstrated by the participants' inquiry of a teacher being able to give individualised instruction, feedback, and explanation while adapting to the pupil's needs (Gao & Hanna, 2016, p.214). This need of a teacher is also in line with Hall et al. (2023, p.18-19) study which demonstrates the benefits of what one simple conversation can do to one's well-being and affiliation.

Furthermore, Berry's (2021, p.3) study also demonstrated increased motivation, in this case when playing an ESL game. This game creates a low-stress and enjoyable environment, where students can experiment with language, being a possible aid in lowering the affective filter in a classroom. Moreover, the game can improve motivation since it provides a sense of achievement which can also lower the affective filter, making students more receptive to language input. Berry's (2021) method may be fun and sometimes applicable, although it is not the most effective method regarding our research questions. For learners who require explicit instruction, this game will not be sufficient in trying to reach complete language acquisition. So, while language learning games may be fun and motivating, they should be complemented with other methods to ensure a well-rounded and effective language acquisition.



Another way in which our computer-assisted learning methods align with the curriculum is the emphasis put on the digitalisation of Swedish schools, that as the world becomes more and more digitalised, the opportunities for digital tools are widened (Skolverket, 2022a, p.9). The incorporation of computer-assisted learning methods allows pupils to learn at their own pace, which is preferable since all Swedish pupils hold different levels of English. It also allows for individualised learning, which today is nearly impossible for the teacher to implement. Furthermore, through a computer-assisted system, pupils are given formative assessments throughout their education, which according to Lozic's (14 September 2023) research is an effective way to enhance pupils' learning and accomplishments. While computer-assisted learning methods may be seen as one of the most effective ways to teach pronunciation, it was found in both Wang & Young's (2014) and Gao & Hanna's (2016) studies that the participants wanted the company of a teacher. This can be explained through Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which highlights that some tasks cannot be fulfilled without instruction from a teacher (Fani & Ghaemi, 2011, p.1550-1551). Computer-assisted learning programs can give out instructions, and provide tasks on given levels, within the pupil's ZPD, however, the teacher is needed to provide support (Fani & Ghaemi, 2011, p.1550-1551).

In brief, our findings reveal that there are several different ways in which pronunciation can be taught. Nevertheless, this combination of a teacher and a computer-assisted learning system is the most effective way to teach pronunciation to EFL secondary school students in Sweden, since classrooms are becoming more digitised while having a teacher stationed in the room during class. The implementation of this combination is useful for Swedish teachers because of their lack of pronunciation training, given little or no such training is provided during teacher training programs. However, for this combination to be implemented, further research regarding teaching pronunciation in Sweden needs to be conducted. If this is done, a more substantial change can be made by national educational agencies, teacher training programs, and teachers themselves.

## 6. Conclusion

In this literature review, we have discovered several different ways in which pronunciation can be taught. Computer-assisted learning is an effective way to learn pronunciation as it can lower pupils' anxiety and fear of making mistakes in front of others. It also allows learners to practice at their own pace and receive formative feedback. It was also demonstrated that teachers are needed as a supplement to computer-assisted learning, as the pupils manifested the desire to have a teacher in the classroom, as they also gave a personal touch, and individualised instruction. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated that the combination of computer-assisted teaching and in-person teaching gives the best results.

With this study, some limitations have been unveiled. The three unconventional learning studies presented were all non-relevant because of age, background, and disassociated aim. The two social network learning studies along with one of the computer-assisted studies were also not relevant enough because of either their failed experiment or lack of classroom application. Further limitations involved the shortage of studies conducted in Sweden, as our chosen exclusion criteria made this unachievable. Our studies' applicability in the Swedish school context was challenged due to multiple factors. One being that our inclusion criteria allowed for a sizable age span, perhaps leading to the study not being transferable to our students in secondary education. Another being the differences between the studies participants and Swedish students regarding their cultural backgrounds. An additional one being the level of English proficiency the participants held, which may differentiate from the levels Swedish students hold. Depending on background and language level, this combination of teacher and computer-assisted teaching might not apply to everyone. Furthermore, many approaches and methods were discarded during our database search which could have left out an even more effective method. Additionally, our chosen studies were conducted on a small number of participants and perhaps we could have received a clearer result if the studies were conducted on a larger number of participants.

Our investigation has revealed that there exists an absence of research conducted in Swedish EFL classrooms as well as an absence of pronunciation training in Swedish teacher training programs. This is coherent with the vagueness of pronunciation displayed in the Swedish curriculum and commentary material. Based on our research findings, we advise further comprehensive research regarding pronunciation teaching in Sweden. Further research in this area can be conducted through observations and systematic approaches, discovering the methods and allocated time Swedish schools invest in teaching pronunciation to their pupils. This could be executed in multiple classes, with various teachers, and in different schools where the teachers could complete a questionnaire, indicating whether they incorporate pronunciation instruction in their classrooms and expressing their views on its importance. This type of research would be imperative to unveil future research possibilities regarding the most effective way to teach pronunciation to EFL students.

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