



EFL University Students' Perceptions of Shadowing Technique for Developing Speaking Skills

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ABSTRACT

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Investigating University students' perceptions of shadowing technique is the aim of the study to develop their speaking skills. There are 25 students of the third semester or second year in the class who become the participants of the research. Their learning process of speaking using shadowing technique in all classroom activities in ten weeks which is integrated in Speaking for Daily Communication Course. Feedback and reflections from the students are used for the research data. The research findings are dominantly positive with the aspects of effectiveness, accessibility and flexibility for independent practice for the sake of fluency and pronunciation improvement, and natural repetition of the shadowing activities. Intermediate level students get more benefit of the technique, the high ones also get significance refinement, and the low-achieved students finds the technique helpful for their initial step to improve their speaking skill significantly. Empirical proofs are reported as conclusion that shadowing technique can provide insightful findings that educators can implement it in speaking course.

Keywords

Student Perceptions, Shadowing Technique, Speaking Skills, EFL Learners, University Students

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking in formal English instruction is still challenging related to its proficiency that should be gained by EFL students. Language skills abilities especially speaking requires students to be able to be aware of fluency, grammar and pronunciation accuracy in spontaneous way of communication. In the issue of pedagogical approaches should be effectively implemented to combine both theoretical knowledge and practical competence.

Intensive listening and speaking practice can be gained in the shadowing technique. It is beneficial for the students to improve speaking skill in EFL context in which it becomes challenging for the students since the influence of first and second language. Shadowing technique is originally developed from

the interpreter's way to demonstrate the effective application of fluency, pronunciation accuracy, and the most important one is the authenticity of the language itself. Every approach including shadowing technique can be contextually different relate to the implementation, practice, and results. The learners' engagement, motivation, and perception also give more influence to this very simple but effective approach.

Students' perception is somehow important to be acknowledged for important reasons as well. First, the influence of learners' behavior and attitudes can influence the willingness and outcomes to be actively engaged toward the approach offered to them within instructional activities (Whitworth & Rose, 2025). The students' effort to overcome challenges through the technique determine whether they find it enjoyable and effective to be chosen as their main technique to improve their speaking skill. Second, teachers need the students' feedback and perceptions to make the implementation reach the maximum expectation and recognize problems by adjusting the technique in the classroom activities (Doan, 2025). Third, various perceptions from students with low, medium, and high achievement of speaking skills can help the teacher to identify the need of adjustment and enable the targeted results within various proficiency levels of the students.

Few research are found related to the students perceptions toward technique of shadowing especially in Indonesia encourage more contribution to prove that this technique can be easily applied in the classroom despite the challenge of the students' consistency. Shadowing technique is simple and easy to do because it is only repeating words and expressions based on the native speakers for the sake of its authenticity. Indonesian EFL students is a new variable to be examined. It is generally known that most of the students in Asia have English as their foreign language in which it still becomes a challenge to make the language authentic with high grammar and pronunciation accuracy. Educational tradition and learners' characteristics also influence how challenging the technique is, especially on students' perceptions. Questionnaires and surveys are used as the instrument of collecting the data in which they are enriched with statements and interviewed related to the aspects of the shadowing techniques used by students.

Recent international research has begun addressing this gap by exploring learner perspectives on shadowing. Studies with Ecuadorian pre-service EFL teachers found that participants valued shadowing for providing unique opportunities to develop fluency, pronunciation, and intonation naturally (Santos et al., 2023). Research with Vietnamese university students revealed positive attitudes toward shadowing, with participants reporting increased

confidence, improved fluency, and enhanced pronunciation (Doan, 2025). A systematic review of 44 studies on shadowing for pronunciation teaching found that learners generally view shadowing as interesting, enjoyable, and effective (Whitworth & Rose, 2025).

However, student perceptions are not uniformly positive. Research has identified several challenges that may negatively impact learner attitudes. The repetitive nature of shadowing exercises can be frustrating and tedious, potentially dampening enthusiasm (Hamada & Suzuki, 2024). Students sometimes struggle with the cognitive demands of simultaneous listening and speaking, particularly when materials exceed their current proficiency level (Hamada, 2019). Additionally, learners may initially question the technique's relevance for communicative competence development if they do not immediately perceive connections between controlled shadowing practice and spontaneous speaking ability.

These mixed findings suggest that student perceptions of shadowing may vary based on multiple factors including proficiency level, prior learning experiences, instructional implementation, material selection, and individual learner characteristics such as motivation and learning preferences. Understanding these variations is essential for optimizing shadowing instruction and maximizing student engagement and learning outcomes.

The present study addresses these gaps by investigating Indonesian EFL University students' perceptions of shadowing technique following a ten-week intervention integrated into a speaking development course. The research examines how students perceive shadowing's effectiveness for developing various aspects of speaking proficiency, what challenges they encounter, and how perceptions vary across different proficiency levels. By focusing specifically on learner perspectives rather than performance outcomes, this study contributes unique insights into the subjective experience of shadowing practice and its perceived value for speaking development.

This study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are Indonesian EFL university students' perceptions of shadowing technique for developing speaking skills?
2. How do students perceive the effectiveness of shadowing for different aspects of speaking proficiency (pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, confidence)?
3. What challenges do students identify in shadowing practice, and how do these challenges vary across proficiency levels?
4. How do student perceptions differ across initial proficiency levels?

This research contributes to both theoretical understanding and practical implementation of shadowing in EFL contexts. Theoretically, it extends the limited research on student perceptions of shadowing, particularly in Indonesian higher education settings where such investigations remain scarce. By examining perceptions across different proficiency levels, the study provides insights into differential experiences that may inform more nuanced understanding of how and why shadowing works for different learner populations.

Practically, findings offer valuable guidance for Indonesian English educators considering implementing shadowing in university speaking courses. Understanding student perceptions helps instructors anticipate challenges, adjust implementation strategies, and communicate more effectively about the technique's purposes and benefits. Additionally, insights regarding proficiency-related variations in perceptions can inform differentiated instruction, enabling educators to adapt shadowing activities appropriately for diverse student groups.

Finally, this research contributes to the broader agenda of centering student voice in pedagogical research and practice. By systematically investigating how learners experience and evaluate shadowing, the study acknowledges students as active participants in their learning whose perspectives merit serious consideration in instructional decision-making. This learner-centered approach aligns with contemporary educational philosophy emphasizing student agency and participatory approaches to curriculum development.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to investigate student perceptions of shadowing technique. Qualitative methodology was selected as most appropriate for capturing the nuanced, subjective nature of learner experiences and perceptions that cannot be adequately quantified through numerical data alone. The descriptive approach focused on systematically documenting and analyzing students' perspectives as expressed through feedback and reflections following their shadowing practice experience.

The research was conducted at a public university in Semarang, Central Java, Indonesia, during the 2024/2025 academic year. Participants consisted of 25 second-year students (9 males, 16 females) enrolled in Speaking Development Course (SDC) B, a required course in the English Education program designed to enhance students' oral communication abilities. All

participants were Indonesian native speakers aged 19-21 years who had studied English for 8-10 years through formal instruction. Their proficiency levels ranged from intermediate to upper-intermediate (approximately B1-B2 on CEFR), typical of Indonesian university English Education students.

Before collecting perception data, participants engaged in a systematic ten-week shadowing intervention integrated into their regular speaking course. Shadowing activities occurred twice weekly for 30-45 minutes per session, totaling 20 sessions throughout the intervention period. Each session followed a structured five-phase procedure: pre-listening and context setting, initial listening for comprehension, guided shadowing practice (5-7 repetitions), transcript-based analysis and review, and post-transcript shadowing with self-recording.

Materials were carefully selected and progressively sequenced from shorter passages (30-60 seconds) with clear articulation and familiar topics to longer, more complex materials (90-120 seconds) covering diverse genres including dialogues, narratives, descriptions, and presentations. All materials featured native or highly proficient English speakers with clear pronunciation. Students were encouraged to engage in independent shadowing practice outside class, with approximately 60% reporting regular additional practice averaging 45-60 minutes weekly.

Data were collected through two primary sources designed to capture authentic student perceptions throughout and following the intervention period. Throughout the ten-week intervention, instructors provided personalized written feedback to each student based on their shadowing performance and speaking assessment results. This feedback documented observed strengths, areas for improvement, and specific recommendations for continued development.

At the conclusion of the intervention, students responded to open-ended reflection prompts designed to elicit their perceptions of the shadowing experience. Prompts included: "Describe your overall experience with shadowing practice. What aspects did you find most beneficial? What challenges did you encounter? How has shadowing affected your speaking confidence and abilities? Would you recommend shadowing to other students? Why or why not?" Students were encouraged to provide honest, detailed responses and assured that their reflections would not affect their course grades.

Data analysis followed a thematic coding approach appropriate for qualitative descriptive research (Santos & Barcelos, 2018). The process involved several stages. Researchers first read through all feedback documentation and

student reflections to gain overall familiarity with the data. Initial codes were generated inductively by identifying recurring words, phrases, and concepts related to students' perceptions, experiences, and evaluations of shadowing.

Preliminary codes were then examined for patterns and relationships, leading to consolidation into broader themes. Codes with similar meanings or addressing related aspects of perception were grouped together. To address the research question regarding proficiency-related variations in perceptions, students were divided into three groups based on their pre-intervention speaking assessment scores: Low-intermediate (78-79, n=4), Intermediate (80-84, n=17), and Advanced-intermediate (85-92, n=4).

Several strategies enhanced the trustworthiness of findings. Data triangulation combined instructor feedback documentation with student self-reflections, providing multiple perspectives on the shadowing experience. Prolonged engagement through the ten-week intervention enabled researchers to develop deep familiarity with participants and their experiences. Peer debriefing among the research team involved regular discussions to challenge interpretations and ensure findings were well-grounded in data. Finally, thick description in reporting provides sufficient detail for readers to assess transferability to their own contexts.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of student feedback and post-intervention reflections revealed rich insights into how Indonesian EFL university students perceive shadowing technique for developing speaking skills. Three major themes emerged from the data: perceived effectiveness for pronunciation and fluency development, accessibility and flexibility for independent practice, and challenges encountered during shadowing practice. These themes manifested differently across proficiency levels, with students' initial abilities significantly influencing their perceptions and experiences.

The most prominent theme in student perceptions related to shadowing's effectiveness for improving pronunciation and fluency. Across all proficiency levels, students recognized shadowing as particularly beneficial for these aspects of speaking, though the specific nature of perceived benefits varied based on initial competence.

Students consistently highlighted pronunciation improvement as shadowing's primary benefit. This perception aligns closely with research findings that pronunciation shows the most substantial improvements following shadowing practice (Whitworth & Rose, 2025). Students described developing greater awareness of English sound patterns, improved accuracy in

individual phonemes, and enhanced control over suprasegmental features like word stress and intonation.

Representative student comments illustrate these perceptions. One intermediate-level student reflected, "Shadowing helped me notice sounds in English that I previously missed or pronounced incorrectly. By repeating immediately after the speaker, I became more aware of how words should really sound." Another noted, "My pronunciation of difficult sounds improved because I practiced them many times in context rather than in isolation." A high-achieving student observed, "Shadowing refined subtle aspects of my pronunciation like intonation patterns and rhythm that I knew about theoretically but struggled to produce naturally."

These perceptions are supported by research demonstrating that shadowing enhances pronunciation through multiple mechanisms. The technique encourages close attention to phonological features while training articulatory muscle memory through nearly simultaneous repetition (Hamada, 2019). The immediate feedback inherent in shadowing allows learners to self-monitor and adjust their production in real-time, facilitating development of accurate phonological representations (Foote & McDonough, 2017). Students' recognition of these benefits suggests they developed metacognitive awareness of how shadowing supports pronunciation learning.

Interestingly, pronunciation improvement was perceived as beneficial by students across all proficiency levels, though motivations differed. Lower-proficiency students valued basic accuracy improvements, intermediate students appreciated development of more natural-sounding speech, and advanced students prized refinement of subtle features contributing to native-like quality. This differential perception aligns with research showing that shadowing benefits learners at various levels through different mechanisms and focuses (Hamada, 2019).

One student explained, "After practicing shadowing regularly, I noticed I could speak more continuously without stopping to think about every word. Some expressions just came out automatically." Another reflected, "Shadowing helped me develop a rhythm in speaking English. I learned to maintain flow even when I wasn't sure about every single word." A third student noted, "The practice of keeping up with the speaker, even when it was difficult, trained me to think faster and speak more fluidly."

These perceptions align with theoretical explanations of how shadowing enhances fluency. The technique stimulates automatization of speech production through intensive practice under time pressure that mirrors authentic communication conditions (Hamada & Suzuki, 2024). By requiring

real-time processing and production, shadowing helps learners develop the rapid access to linguistic resources necessary for fluent speech (Yavari & Shafiee, 2019). Students' recognition of increased automaticity and reduced hesitation suggests they experienced these theoretically predicted effects.

However, fluency perceptions were more nuanced than pronunciation perceptions. Some students, particularly at lower proficiency levels, felt uncertain about fluency improvements, noting, "I'm not sure if I'm actually more fluent or just better at imitating the recording." This uncertainty may reflect the fact that fluency development requires more extended practice to manifest clearly, as suggested by research showing that fluency gains from shadowing may emerge more gradually than pronunciation improvements (Mu & Wasuntarasophit, 2025).

Representative reflections include: "Shadowing gave me confidence because I could hear myself improving. When I listened to my recordings from early in the course compared to later ones, the difference was obvious." Another student shared, "Practicing shadowing helped me overcome fear of speaking because I got used to producing English sounds quickly without time to worry about making mistakes." A third noted, "The regular practice through shadowing made speaking feel more natural and less scary. I stopped overthinking every word."

This confidence-building effect is significant because learner confidence strongly influences speaking performance and willingness to communicate (Alotumi, 2021). Research has documented that EFL learners often struggle with speaking anxiety and lack of confidence that impede their ability to demonstrate their actual competence (Santos & Barcelos, 2018). Shadowing appears to address this challenge by providing structured, low-stakes practice that builds competence while gradually reducing anxiety through repeated exposure and skill development.

The confidence-building aspect of shadowing may also relate to its provision of models and frameworks for speech production. As one student explained, "Shadowing gave me examples of how to say things correctly. Having those models in my mind made me feel more prepared when I needed to speak spontaneously." This suggests that shadowing supports confidence not only through skill improvement but also through expanding students' repertoire of linguistic patterns they can draw upon in communication.

A second major theme in student perceptions related to shadowing's accessibility and flexibility as a practice technique that could be implemented independently outside formal classroom instruction. Students valued the

technique's simplicity, resource availability, and adaptability to individual schedules and preferences.

Students appreciated that shadowing required minimal resources and could be practiced with readily available materials. Unlike some speaking activities requiring conversation partners or specialized technology, shadowing needed only audio materials and, optionally, transcripts. This accessibility made the technique feasible for independent practice without dependence on external resources or complicated arrangements.

Students commented, "I liked that I could practice shadowing anytime I had some audio materials and my phone. It was much easier than trying to find someone to practice conversation with." Another noted, "The technique itself was straightforward once I understood the procedure. I didn't need special equipment or complicated setup, just audio files and determination to practice." A third reflected, "Shadowing was accessible in a way that other speaking practice methods weren't. I could do it alone without needing a teacher or classmate present."

This perceived accessibility is significant in Indonesian EFL contexts where opportunities for authentic English interaction are limited. Students often report difficulty finding native speakers or proficient English users for conversation practice (Doan, 2025). Shadowing addresses this challenge by enabling meaningful speaking practice without requiring interlocutors, making it particularly valuable in low-exposure environments typical of many Indonesian educational settings.

The simplicity students perceived may also contribute to shadowing's sustainability as a practice technique. Activities that require extensive resources or complicated procedures are less likely to be maintained over time, whereas techniques like shadowing that integrate easily into daily routines have greater potential for long-term implementation and habit formation (Hamada & Suzuki, 2024).

Students valued shadowing's flexibility for independent practice adapted to individual schedules, interests, and proficiency levels. They appreciated being able to select materials matching their interests, adjust practice duration to available time, and control difficulty levels by choosing appropriate audio sources. This flexibility supported learner autonomy and personalized practice that many students found motivating.

Reflections illustrating this theme include: "I could practice shadowing whenever I had free time, even just 15 minutes between classes. The flexibility fit well with my busy schedule." Another student shared, "I liked being able to choose materials about topics I found interesting. This made practice more

engaging than always using textbook materials." A third noted, "When class materials felt too difficult, I could find easier recordings to practice with until I built up my ability."

This flexibility addresses a key challenge in speaking instruction: providing sufficient practice opportunities given limited class time. Even in courses focused on speaking development, actual speaking practice time per student is constrained by class size and session duration. Shadowing's suitability for independent practice extends practice opportunities beyond classroom boundaries, potentially accelerating skill development through increased practice volume (Mu & Wasuntarasophit, 2025).

The ability to personalize practice by selecting materials aligned with interests and proficiency levels also supports motivation and engagement. Research has shown that learner autonomy and choice enhance motivation and persistence (Khotimah et al., 2019). Students' appreciation for shadowing's flexibility suggests the technique successfully enables self-directed learning that many students value.

Students reported, "I used apps on my phone to record my shadowing practice. Being able to listen back and compare with the original helped me notice areas to improve." Another shared, "YouTube and podcast apps gave me endless materials for shadowing practice. I could find recordings on any topic at any difficulty level." A third noted, "Having materials on my phone meant I could practice anywhere, even during my commute. Technology made shadowing much more practical for regular practice."

These perceptions align with research on mobile-assisted language learning showing that learners hold positive perceptions toward mobile app affordances for developing speaking skills (Zhang & Zou, 2024). The integration of shadowing with readily available technology amplifies the technique's accessibility, making it feasible for students to engage in regular practice without specialized resources or equipment.

Many students described finding shadowing very difficult when first attempting the technique. The simultaneous demands of listening comprehension and speech production while maintaining minimal delay created high cognitive load that students initially struggled to manage. This challenge was particularly pronounced for lower-proficiency students but affected learners across all levels to varying degrees.

Students reflected, "The first few times I tried shadowing, it felt overwhelming. I couldn't keep up with the speaker and felt frustrated." Another shared, "Trying to listen and speak at the same time was really hard at first. My brain felt overloaded trying to do both things simultaneously." A third noted, "I

sometimes focused so much on trying to repeat the words that I lost track of the meaning. Balancing comprehension and production was challenging."

These perceptions align with research explaining that shadowing's cognitive demands can initially exceed learners' processing capacity, particularly for those with limited working memory resources or lower proficiency levels (Hamada, 2019). The technique requires coordinating multiple processes—auditory perception, lexical access, phonological encoding, and articulatory execution—within compressed timeframes that allow little opportunity for controlled processing.

Importantly, most students who described initial difficulty also reported that the technique became easier with practice, suggesting that persistence through early challenges yields improvement. As one student explained, "Shadowing was very hard at first, but after several weeks of practice, I could do it much more easily. My brain seemed to adapt to the demands." This progression from difficulty to relative ease reflects the skill acquisition process through which controlled, effortful performance gradually becomes more automatic and fluent (Hamada & Suzuki, 2024).

Students commented, "Sometimes practicing the same passage over and over felt boring. I had to remind myself why I was doing it to stay motivated." Another reflected, "The repetitiveness of shadowing could be tedious. I found it helped to use different materials and not practice the same thing too long." A third noted, "While I understood that repetition was necessary for improvement, it was sometimes hard to maintain enthusiasm when doing the same exercise repeatedly."

This challenge aligns with research acknowledging that shadowing's repetitive nature can be frustrating and may temporarily dampen student enthusiasm (Hamada & Suzuki, 2024). The technique requires multiple repetitions of the same material to build automatic speech responses and enhance retention, but this very repetition may conflict with learners' desire for variety and novelty in learning activities.

Reflections included: "When the audio was too fast or used words I didn't know, I couldn't keep up and felt discouraged." Another student shared, "I learned that I needed to choose materials at the right level. Too easy was boring, but too hard was just frustrating." A third noted, "It took time to figure out what difficulty level worked best for me. The materials our teacher selected were generally good, but when practicing independently I sometimes chose poorly."

This challenge highlights the importance of careful material selection and progressive sequencing in shadowing instruction. Research has emphasized

that different shadowing procedures benefit learners at various proficiency levels differently and that materials must match learners' current abilities while providing appropriate challenge (Hamada, 2019). The zone of proximal development concept suggests that optimal learning occurs when tasks are slightly beyond current competence but achievable with effort—a principle that applies directly to shadowing material selection.

Analysis of perceptions across proficiency groups revealed important variations in how students at different levels experienced and evaluated shadowing technique.

Students at the low-intermediate level expressed mixed perceptions. While they recognized shadowing as potentially beneficial, they also found it particularly challenging and sometimes questioned whether they had sufficient foundational skills to benefit fully. Their feedback emphasized the need for extensive practice and persistence to overcome initial difficulties.

Characteristic reflections from this group included: "Shadowing was very hard for me at first because my basic pronunciation and listening weren't strong enough. I needed extra practice just to keep up." Another noted, "I appreciated the structured approach of shadowing, but I sometimes felt frustrated that I couldn't perform as well as my classmates. It made me realize I needed to work on fundamentals." A third shared, "The technique helped me identify specific sounds I struggled with, which was useful, but the overall practice was quite demanding for my current level."

These perceptions suggest that while lower-proficiency students can benefit from shadowing, they may require additional support, more gradual material progression, and explicit acknowledgment that initial difficulty is normal and expected. Instructors working with this population should emphasize growth mindset principles, celebrate incremental progress, and ensure materials are appropriately accessible to prevent excessive frustration that could undermine motivation.

Students at intermediate levels expressed the most uniformly positive perceptions of shadowing. They described the technique as well-matched to their needs, providing appropriate challenge while remaining achievable with effort. This group reported clear perceptions of improvement and high motivation to continue shadowing practice beyond the formal intervention.

Representative comments included: "Shadowing was perfect for my level. It was challenging but not overwhelming, and I could see myself improving week by week." Another reflected, "This technique addressed exactly what I needed to work on—pronunciation and fluency. I felt it was designed for

students like me." A third noted, "I plan to continue shadowing even after this course ends because I experienced real benefits and enjoy the practice."

These highly positive perceptions align with research suggesting that shadowing may be most effective for learners at intermediate proficiency levels (Hamada, 2019). These students possess sufficient foundational skills to engage meaningfully with the technique while still having substantial room for development in areas where shadowing proves beneficial. The strong motivation to continue practice expressed by this group suggests that positive perceptions can translate into sustained engagement that extends learning beyond required coursework.

High-achieving students expressed generally positive but more qualified perceptions than intermediate students. While they valued shadowing for refining subtle aspects of pronunciation and prosody, they sometimes questioned whether the technique represented the most efficient use of practice time given their already strong speaking abilities. Their perceptions focused on incremental refinement rather than fundamental development.

Reflections included: "Shadowing helped me polish details of my pronunciation and intonation, which was useful, but I sometimes wondered if I should focus on other aspects of speaking proficiency." Another noted, "As someone who already speaks English fairly well, shadowing was beneficial for fine-tuning but perhaps not as transformative as for students at lower levels." A third reflected, "I appreciated the practice, but I think shadowing is especially valuable for intermediate students. For advanced students like me, it's one useful technique among many rather than the primary approach."

These perceptions reflect ceiling effects common in educational interventions where high-performing students show smaller gains because they approach the upper limits of assessment scales or have less room for improvement. The refined focus on subtle features rather than fundamental skills aligns with research showing that advanced learners benefit from shadowing primarily through enhanced prosodic control and naturalness rather than basic accuracy (Whitworth & Rose, 2025).

The findings of this study provide rich insights into how Indonesian EFL university students perceive shadowing technique for developing speaking skills. The predominantly positive perceptions across multiple dimensions—effectiveness for pronunciation and fluency, accessibility for independent practice, confidence building—suggest that students recognize substantial value in this approach. However, perceptions were not uniformly positive, with students also identifying real challenges related to cognitive demands, material selection, and the repetitive nature of practice.

The perceptions documented in this study align closely with existing research on learner attitudes toward shadowing. Studies with Ecuadorian pre-service teachers similarly found that students valued shadowing for developing fluency, pronunciation, and intonation naturally (Santos et al., 2023). Research with Vietnamese students documented positive attitudes with participants reporting increased confidence and perceived improvement (Doan, 2025). A systematic review of shadowing for pronunciation teaching found that learners generally view the technique as interesting, enjoyable, and effective (Whitworth & Rose, 2025).

The challenges identified by Indonesian students also mirror those reported in international research. The repetitive nature creating potential monotony has been documented across multiple contexts (Hamada & Suzuki, 2024). Cognitive demands and initial difficulty have been recognized as predictable challenges requiring instructor support and student persistence (Hamada, 2019). Material difficulty as a key factor affecting student experience aligns with research emphasizing the importance of appropriate material selection (Mu & Wasuntarasophit, 2025).

The findings offer several practical implications for Indonesian English educators considering implementing shadowing in university speaking courses. First, instructors should prepare students for the initial difficulty of shadowing by explicitly acknowledging that the technique will feel challenging at first but becomes easier with practice. Second, careful material selection and progressive sequencing are essential for maintaining appropriate challenge levels and sustaining student motivation. Third, addressing the repetitive nature of shadowing requires thoughtful implementation strategies. Fourth, differentiated instruction based on proficiency levels can optimize shadowing's benefits for diverse student populations. Fifth, leveraging technology can enhance shadowing's accessibility and appeal.

CONCLUSION

Students across proficiency levels recognized shadowing as particularly beneficial for improving pronunciation accuracy and developing speaking fluency, with many also describing increased confidence and reduced anxiety about oral communication. Perceptions varied significantly across initial proficiency levels. Intermediate students expressed the most uniformly positive attitudes, perceiving shadowing as well-matched to their developmental needs and reporting clear improvements. Lower-proficiency students recognized potential benefits but found the technique challenging and sometimes questioned whether they possessed sufficient foundational skills for full

participation. Advanced students valued shadowing for refining subtle pronunciation features but sometimes questioned whether it represented the most efficient use of practice time given their already strong abilities.

This study demonstrates that when implemented thoughtfully with attention to student needs and challenges, shadowing can be a valued and effective technique for developing speaking proficiency among Indonesian EFL university students. The predominantly positive perceptions documented here, combined with growing empirical evidence of effectiveness from international research, support continued exploration and implementation of shadowing in Indonesian higher education contexts where innovative approaches to speaking instruction remain urgently needed.

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