Englisia: Journal of Language, Education, and Humanities
November 2025. Vol. 13, No. 1, 308-324

When mother tongue shapes target language prosody: Suprasegmental transfer from Banjarese to English

Ridha Fadillah[*1], Muhammad Ridha[2]

[1]Universitas Islam Negeri Antasari Banjarmasin, Indonesia
[2]Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia

Manuscript received July 28, 2025, accepted November 11, 2025, and published online November 30, 2025.

Recommended APA Citation
Fadillah, R., & Ridha, M. (2025). When mother tongue shapes target language prosody: Suprasegmental transfer from Banjarese to English. *Englisia: Journal of Language, Education, and Humanities, 13*(1), 308-324. https://doi.org/10.22373/ej.v13i1.32272

ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of Banjarese prosodic features on English suprasegmental performance (stress, rhythm, and intonation) among undergraduate EFL students at UIN Antasari Banjarmasin. While these features are critical for intelligibility, they remain under-addressed in EFL instruction. Using a qualitative approach, seven native Banjarese speakers were purposively selected and engaged in semi-structured interviews that elicited both metalinguistic reflections and spoken English samples. Data were transcribed and subjected to content analysis. Results indicate systematic L1 transfer manifesting in three primary patterns: (1) a tendency toward final-syllable stress placement, (2) reduced intonational variation, and (3) a syllable-timed rhythmic structure. These prosodic transfers were found to compromise speech naturalness and intelligibility. Participants reported employing compensatory strategies—including auditory imitation, self-monitoring, and corrective feedback—to mitigate these challenges. The study contributes to second language acquisition theory by documenting suprasegmental transfer in a previously underexplored linguistic community. It further argues for the explicit integration of suprasegmental instruction within Indonesian higher education curricula. Pedagogical recommendations include rhythm-focused drilling, prosodic shadowing tasks, and metacognitive reflection to enhance phonological awareness. The

[*] ***Corresponding author*:**

Ridha Fadillah
Universitas Islam Negeri Antasari Banjarmasin, Jl. A. Yani No.Km.4 5, RW.5, Kebun Bunga, Kota Banjarmasin, Kalimantan Selatan 70235, Indonesia
Email: ridhafadillah@uin-antasari.ac.id

research concludes that fostering prosodic competence is essential for developing communicative proficiency in multilingual EFL contexts.

Keywords: *Banjarese students; Cross-linguistic transfer; English speaking performance; Mother tongue interference; Suprasegmental features*

1. Introduction

English pronunciation is widely recognized as a crucial aspect of second language (L2) learning and an essential indicator of communicative competence in global academic and professional contexts (Derwing & Munro, 2015; Levis, 2018). However, Amiruddin (2019) found that the most common errors in English speaking performance are pronunciation. Among the components of pronunciation, suprasegmental features—stress, rhythm, and intonation—have gained increasing scholarly attention because they strongly influence intelligibility and comprehensibility (Hahn, 2004; Hirschi & Kang, 2024). Unlike segmental accuracy, which deals with vowels and consonants, suprasegmental control determines the overall naturalness of speech and how well listeners can understand speakers.

In multilingual contexts, the role of the first language (L1) in shaping L2 suprasegmental performance is especially significant. Learners often transfer prosodic features from their L1 to English, leading to misplacement of stress, monotonous intonation, or syllable-based rhythm (Wang & van Heuven, 2018; Zielinski, 2008). Such a transfer may reduce learners' communicative effectiveness even when segmental articulation is accurate. Academically, examining L1 influence contributes to second language acquisition (SLA) theory by highlighting cross-linguistic phonological transfer (Ellis, 2015; Ortega, 2014). Practically, it informs pronunciation pedagogy by showing teachers which aspects of English prosody require targeted instruction (Gordon & Darcy, 2016), such as pitch, intonation, tone, loudness, rhythm and stress (Zhu & Mok, 2022).

Previous studies across Asia and Europe have documented clear evidence of suprasegmental transfer. For instance, Korean learners often exhibit syllable-timed rhythm when speaking English (Kim, 2017), Japanese learners tend to transfer mora-timed prosody (Aoyama & Guion, 2007), and Mandarin speakers sometimes carry over tonal pitch contours into English intonation (Kim & Lu, 2011). In Indonesia, several studies have shown similar patterns: Javanese students misplace English stress (Yanuar, 2023), Sundanese learners display monotonous rhythm (Alawiyyah & Pabriana, 2020), and Acehnese students encounter challenges with sentence stress (Masykar et al., 2022). These findings suggest that suprasegmental transfer is a widespread phenomenon requiring deeper pedagogical attention.

However, research on Banjarese learners remains scarce despite the fact that Banjarese is spoken by millions in South Kalimantan. The Banjarese language is characterized by relatively flat intonation, syllable-based rhythm, and a tendency toward final-syllable stress (Aulia, 2018; Jumainah et al., 2023). These features contrast sharply

with English, which is stress-timed and relies heavily on pitch variation for pragmatic meaning. To date, little empirical work has addressed how Banjarese students manage suprasegmental features in English.

This study addresses this gap by analyzing how Banjarese suprasegmental traits influence English speaking performance. By focusing on stress, rhythm, and intonation, it contributes new empirical evidence to SLA theory and provides pedagogical recommendations tailored to the Indonesian multilingual context. On the other hand, the novelty of this study lies in its focus on an under-researched Indonesian linguistic group, thereby extending SLA research beyond commonly studied languages such as Javanese and Sundanese. Pedagogically, it provides evidence-based recommendations for teaching suprasegmentals in Indonesian higher education, particularly for learners from syllable-timed language backgrounds. Accordingly, this study aims to explore how Banjarese undergraduate students produce English suprasegmental features and to describe the ways in which their mother tongue influences their spoken English performance. The study addresses the following question: How do Banjarese students' L1 suprasegmental characteristics manifest in their spoken English performance during interview-based communication? Therefore, the lack of empirical research focusing on Banjarese suprasegmental transfer influence on their English performance as L2 calls for more qualitative insights to prescribe more precise learning strategies.

2. Literature review

2.1. Phonological transfer in second language pronunciation

Phonological transfer has long been identified as a central phenomenon in SLA, particularly in pronunciation (Ellis, 2015). Learners frequently apply L1 phonological rules when speaking in an L2, which can result in either facilitation or interference (Zhu Jie-xin, 2022). A positive transfer (facilitation) may occur when both L1 and L2 have the same or similar form, and a negative transfer (interference) occurs when L1 patterns lead to errors in L2 (Cheng, 2023). Segmental transfer affects individual sounds, such as vowels and consonants, while suprasegmental transfer influences broader features like stress, rhythm, and intonation (Foote et al., 2016). For instance, learners tend to substitute with similar or closest sounds when encountering unfamiliar or non-existent vowels and consonants in their L1 (Lado, 1957; Yulianti et al., 2025) or a flatter intonation pattern in L1 leads to a flat intonation and unnatural rhythm in English pronunciation as L2 (Zhang, 2025). When suprasegmental transfer occurs, it often reduces speech naturalness and intelligibility more than segmental errors (Hahn, 2004; Wang, 2018) because, for their comprehension, native listeners tend to rely more on stress patterns than on segmental features (Fraser, 2001).

2.2. Suprasegmental features and prosody in L2 English speaking

Suprasegmental features are integral to effective oral communication. Stress highlights lexical and phrasal prominence, rhythm organizes speech into perceivable

units, and intonation signals pragmatic functions (Isaacs & Harding, 2017; Levis, 2018). Prosody, encompassing these suprasegmental features, is increasingly recognized as a stronger determinant of intelligibility than segmental accuracy (Gordon & Darcy, 2016; Saito & Plonsky, 2019). Studies demonstrate that learners with accurate suprasegmental control are often perceived as more fluent and comprehensible, even if their segmental production is imperfect (Hirschi & Kang, 2024).

Cross-linguistic studies confirm that L1 prosody significantly shapes L2 performance. Zielinski (2008) observed that learners from syllable-timed languages often produce monotonous English speech, while Kang et al. (2022) emphasized that misplaced lexical stress reduces intelligibility. Such findings confirm that suprasegmental transfer deserves attention both theoretically and pedagogically.

2.3. Empirical studies on L1 influence in suprasegmental performance

A wide range of empirical studies document L1 suprasegmental transfer. Kim (2017) found that Korean learners transferred syllable-based rhythm into English, while Aoyama and Guion (2007) reported that Japanese learners transferred mora-timed rhythm. Kim and Lu (2011) demonstrated that Mandarin speakers often transferred tonal contours into English intonation. In Europe, Field (2005) showed that incorrect stress placement and lack of vowel reduction among EFL learners significantly affected intelligibility, while Zielinski (2008) confirmed that suprasegmental errors in rhythm and stress could cause greater communication breakdowns than segmental mispronunciations.

In Indonesia, Yanuar (2023) reported that Javanese learners frequently misplace English stress, although there is limited research on suprasegmental transfer in Acehnese EFL learners, a relevant study by Masykar et al. (2022) revealed their perceptual challenges with certain English vowel contrasts, and Alawiyyah and Febriana (2020) observed that Sundanese learners produced syllable-timed rhythm in English. On the other hand, learners with diverse first language backgrounds encounter distinct advantages and difficulties as a result of language transfer (Wang, 2022). Collectively, these findings highlight the significant role of L1 prosody in shaping English suprasegmental performance.

3. Method

This research employed a descriptive qualitative design to explore and describe how Banjarese undergraduate students produce English suprasegmental features and how the prosodic characteristics of their mother tongue influence their spoken performance. Qualitative inquiry is appropriate for this study because it allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' pronunciation behaviors and perspectives in a natural and contextualized manner (Creswell & Guetterman, 2021).

3.1. Participants

The participants of this study consisted of seven purposively selected undergraduate students enrolled in the English Department of Universitas Islam Negeri Antasari Banjarmasin. All participants were Banjarese by ethnic background and used the Banjarese language as their first and dominant language in daily communication. They were chosen on the basis of the following criteria: (1) currently studying at least in their fourth semester, which means they had already taken speaking and phonology courses, and (2) frequently use the Banjarese language in informal contexts. Purposive sampling was used to ensure that the participants possessed characteristics relevant to the research focus and were considered rich sources of information (Palinkas et al., 2015).

3.2. Data collection

The data were collected through semi-structured interviews conducted individually with each participant. Each interview session lasted approximately 30–40 minutes. The interview aimed not only to elicit the students' reflections on their pronunciation experiences but also to obtain authentic samples of their English oral production. Therefore, the interview questions were designed in such a way as to invite the participants to produce spontaneous oral responses in English. In addition, during the interview, the researcher explicitly asked each participant to produce several examples sentences in English (e.g., "Could you give me an example sentence about the importance of English in your life?") to capture suprasegmental features such as stress, rhythm, and intonation. All interview sessions were audio-recorded with the participants' consent to allow for detailed transcription and analysis.

3.3. Instruments

A semi-structured interview guide was developed as the main instrument. The guide consisted of open-ended questions focusing on the students' perceptions of their pronunciation difficulties and the possible influence of their mother tongue, as well as requests for short, spontaneous sentences to observe their spoken performance. The instrument was validated by two experts in applied linguistics. Specifically, the experts checked for the clarity of questions to ensure their relevance to elicit students' reflection on English pronunciation experiences and naturally encourage students to demonstrate their English oral production.

3.4. Data analysis

The audio recordings were transcribed verbatim and analyzed using content analysis. Content analysis was chosen because it allows the researcher to systematically code textual and spoken data, identify patterns, and derive categories directly from the dataset (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017). *First*, the transcripts were read repeatedly to obtain familiarity with the data. *Second*, initial codes were generated by highlighting sentences or utterances where participants mentioned prosodic difficulties or produced

suprasegmental features influenced by L1. *Third*, the codes were grouped into broader categories, such as Banjarese stress transfer, monotonous intonation, and syllable-based rhythm. To ensure trustworthiness, member checking was conducted by returning summaries of the findings to the participants for confirmation and clarification. Peer debriefing was also conducted with a colleague in applied linguistics to strengthen the credibility of the interpretations.

3.5. Ethical considerations

All participants were informed about the purpose of the study and were assured that their information would remain confidential. Informed consent was obtained before the interviews were conducted. Participants were also informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any consequence.

4. Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore how Banjarese undergraduate students produce English suprasegmental features and to describe the ways in which their mother tongue influences their spoken English performance. Analysis of interview transcripts and elicited sentence production revealed several recurring themes that characterized the suprasegmental patterns of the seven participants. Four overarching themes were identified: (1) stress transfer from Banjarese, (2) monotonous intonation patterns, (3) syllable-based rhythm, and (4) strategies for overcoming pronunciation difficulties. Each theme is presented below with supporting evidence drawn from participants' reflections and spoken examples.

4.1. Stress transfer from Banjarese

One of the most prominent findings was the tendency of participants to transfer stress patterns from Banjarese into their English speech. In Banjarese, stress is often placed on the final syllable of words, while in English, stress placement varies depending on lexical and morphological rules. This mismatch led participants to consistently shift stress towards the last syllable in English words. Participant 2 noted: *"*When I speak English, I usually stress the last part, like in the word com-ˈPU-ter /kəmˌpuːˈter/, because in Banjar we always push the last sound*."* Similarly, Participant 5 explained: "Sometimes my friends laugh because I say tea-ˈCHER /tiːˌtʃer/, with more stress at the end. I realize it is from Banjar style."

These statements illustrate a systematic pattern where participants projected their L1 stress rule onto English words, thereby affecting intelligibility and naturalness. Importantly, all seven participants reported that they were aware of this difficulty, yet they often lacked explicit strategies to overcome it.

4.1.1. Monotonous intonation patterns

Another recurring theme was the use of flat or monotonous intonation contours in English sentences. Whereas English relies heavily on pitch variation to signal emphasis, emotion, and sentence modality, Banjarese intonation tends to be relatively level, with limited pitch fluctuation. Participants reported that this characteristic carried over into their English speech. Participant 1 shared: "I think my English sounds flat. When I say a question, like Where are you going? →, It still sounds like a statement because my intonation does not go up." Participant 7 added: *"*In Banjar we do not really use rising or falling tones. When I speak English, my voice stays almost the same, so people sometimes ask me to repeat."

These examples highlight how intonation transfer from Banjarese reduced the naturalness of English speech and occasionally led to communication breakdowns. Several participants reflected that their teachers had corrected them in class, but the habit persisted. This theme demonstrates that suprasegmental transfer is not merely mechanical but deeply rooted in learners' habitual speaking rhythm and tone.

4.1.2. Syllable-based rhythm

A third theme identified in the data was the prevalence of syllable-based rhythm in participants' English speech. Unlike English, which is stress-timed, Banjarese tends to assign relatively equal duration to each syllable. Consequently, participants often produced English words and sentences with uniform syllable timing, neglecting the reduced vowels and stress distinctions expected in English. Participant 3 explained: "When I say the sentence 'I am going to the market,' I give the same length to every word. It becomes like I-am-go-ing-to-the-mar-ket with no reduction." Participant 4 echoed this tendency: "In Banjar language, every syllable is important. So, in English I also pronounce clearly every syllable. But my lecturer told me it should be shorter on some parts."

This transfer of syllable-timed rhythm was consistent across participants, indicating a strong influence of the Banjarese phonological system on English suprasegmental production. While the strategy of giving equal prominence might aid clarity, it also reduced fluency and made participants' English sound less natural to listeners accustomed to stress-timed rhythm.

4.1.3. Strategies for overcoming pronunciation difficulties

Despite the challenges posed by L1 transfer, participants reported several strategies they employed to improve their English suprasegmental performance. These strategies included conscious imitation of native or proficient speakers, practice through listening to English songs or watching movies, and reliance on teacher feedback. Participant 6 shared: "I try to listen to songs and repeat the way singers say the words. It helps me to follow the rhythm and stress." Participant 2 added: "When my lecturer corrects me, I write down the word and try to practice the stress at home. For example, the word ˈTEA-cher /ˈtiː.tʃər/, not tea-ˈCHER."

Interestingly, some participants also developed their own adaptive methods, such as exaggerating pitch movements or deliberately slowing down their speech to monitor stress placement. Participant 5 described: "I sometimes speak slowly and make my intonation higher than normal. It feels strange but I think it helps me learn." Participant 3 said: "Sometimes I stand in front of a mirror and try to imitate how native speakers move their mouths and use their voice. It helps me control my stress and intonation more consciously."

These self-reported strategies demonstrate that learners are not passive victims of L1 transfer but actively engage in processes to negotiate between their L1 habits and L2 expectations. However, participants acknowledged that improvement was gradual and required consistent practice and exposure.

Table 1

Summary of findings with full participant quotations.

Theme	**Full Quotation from Participant**	**Suprasegmental Notation**	**Effect on English**
Stress Transfer	P2: *"When I speak English, I usually stress the last part, like in the word com-ˈPU-ter, because in Banjar we always push the last sound."*	/kəmˌpuːˈter/	Final syllable stress reduces naturalness and intelligibility
Stress Transfer	P5: *"Sometimes my friends laugh because I say teacher as tea-ˈCHER, with more stress at the end. I realize it is from Banjar style."*	/tiːˌtʃer/	Final stress instead of initial
Intonation	P1: *"I think my English sounds flat. When I say a question, like 'Where are you going? →', it still sounds like a statement because my intonation does not go up."*	Flat contour (no rising)	Question sounds like a statement
Intonation	P7: "*In Banjar we do not really use rising or falling tones. When I speak English, my voice stays almost the same, so people sometimes ask me to repeat."*	Level intonation	Reduces expressiveness, causes repetition requests
Rhythm	P3: "*When I say the sentence 'I am going to the market,' I give the same length to every word. It becomes like I - AM - GO - ING -*	Equal duration -	Syllable-timed, lacks vowel reduction

	TO - THE - MAR - KET with no reduction."		
Rhythm	P4: *"In Banjar language, every syllable is important. So, in English I also pronounce clearly every syllable. But my lecturer told me it should be shorter on some parts."*	No reduction	Clear but unnatural rhythm
Strategies	P6: *"I try to listen to songs and repeat the way singers say the words. It helps me to follow the rhythm and stress."*	Shadowing rhythm/stress	Improved rhythm and stress control
Strategies	P2: *"When my lecturer corrects me, I write down the word and try to practice the stress at home. For example, the word ˈTEA-cher, not tea-ˈCHER."*	Corrected stress placement	Awareness of error
Strategies	P5: *"I sometimes speak slowly and make my intonation higher than normal. It feels strange but I think it helps me learn."*	Overt pitch movement ↑	Learning aid, not natural speech
Strategies	P3: *"Sometimes I stand in front of a mirror and try to imitate how native speakers move their mouth and use their voice. It helps me control my stress and intonation more consciously."*	Mouth/voice imitation	Helps control stress and intonation

Note: Suprasegmental notation in this table is based on IPA conventions and researcher observation, not on acoustic measurement.

Overall, the findings indicate that Banjarese students face systematic challenges in English suprasegmental production that can be traced to their L1 prosodic system. Stress placement was consistently influenced by a tendency to emphasize the final syllable, intonation patterns were often flat or monotonous, and rhythm was characterized by syllable-based timing rather than stress-timing. These features not only reduced the naturalness of speech but also sometimes affected intelligibility in classroom communication. Nevertheless, participants demonstrated awareness of their difficulties and described various strategies to overcome them, highlighting the potential for targeted pedagogical intervention.

The identification of these themes provides valuable insight into how indigenous language backgrounds shape the English-speaking performance of EFL learners in Indonesia. It also emphasizes the importance of pronunciation instruction that explicitly

addresses suprasegmental transfer and incorporates context-sensitive approaches for learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

5. Discussion

This study set out to investigate the extent to which Banjarese students' suprasegmental performance in English is influenced by their mother tongue. Four themes emerged from the analysis: stress transfer, monotonous intonation, syllable-based rhythm, and learner strategies. Collectively, these results show that suprasegmental challenges are not incidental but are deeply rooted in the structural and prosodic features of the L1. More importantly, the findings reveal that Banjarese learners are conscious of these difficulties and attempt to address them through personal strategies and classroom input. This suggests that suprasegmental transfer is not a rigid barrier but a negotiable space in which learners balance their L1 habits with the demands of English prosody. Such insights highlight the dynamic interaction between phonological systems and learner agency in second language acquisition (Ortega, 2018).

5.1. Stress transfer and cross-linguistic influence

A striking feature of the data is the consistent placement of stress on the final syllable in English words, reflecting a transfer from Banjarese prosodic rules. This tendency resonates with the notion of negative transfer in SLA, where learners map familiar categories of their L1 onto L2 forms (Ortega, 2018). According to Flege's (1995) Speech Learning Model, when learners face unfamiliar stress rules in English, they fall back on familiar L1 patterns as perceptual and articulatory anchors. This explains why Banjarese learners repeatedly revert to final-syllable stress, even in common English words. Globally, studies have shown that learners from different L1 backgrounds often exhibit systematic stress misplacement due to rhythmic constraints (Gordon & Darcy, 2016; Hirschi & Kang, 2024; Zielinski, 2008).

The implications for pedagogy are significant. Teachers cannot assume that learners will naturally "pick up" English stress patterns through exposure. Instead, they need to explicitly contrast English stress rules with the default final-syllable stress of Banjarese. Teaching interventions consist of orthographic word-stress rules, such as minimal pair drills (e.g., ˈTEAcher vs teaˈCHER), and visual stress marking can help learners destabilize their reliance on L1 transfer (Duckinoska-Mihajlovska & Kirkova-Naskova, 2023). Without targeted intervention, final-syllable stress risks becoming fossilized, reducing both naturalness and intelligibility in learners' spoken English.

5.2. Intonation and monotony in English speech

The second theme relates to flat intonation, which diminishes the pragmatic and expressive power of speech. English relies heavily on pitch contours to mark sentence modality and attitude (Levis, 2018). Banjarese students' failure to employ rising or falling intonation mirrors findings in other contexts where L1 does not emphasize pitch

movement. For instance, Kim & Lu (2011) showed that Mandarin speakers often transfer tonal habits, resulting in atypical contours in English. Similarly, Alawiyyah and Pabriana (2020) observed Sundanese learners' tendency toward level pitch. These parallels indicate that intonation transfer is a widespread phenomenon among learners from syllable-timed or tonal L1s. The communicative consequences are notable. Hahn (2004) demonstrated that inappropriate intonation patterns can reduce comprehension more than segmental errors, while Jenkins (2014) emphasized intonation as central to international intelligibility. For Banjarese learners, flat intonation makes questions sound like statements, reduces listener engagement, and may even require repetition. Thus, intonation training should be seen not as "optional polish" but as a communicative necessity. Pedagogically, teachers could employ visual pitch trackers or drama-based activities to sensitize learners to English intonation contrasts.

5.3. Rhythm and the influence of syllable-timed speech

A third theme is the transfer of syllable-timed rhythm into English. Banjarese learners tend to give equal duration to all syllables, contrasting sharply with English's stress-timed rhythm where unstressed syllables are reduced. Derwing & Munro (2015) argue that such rhythm mismatches significantly affect fluency and listener perception. Cross-linguistically, Ling et al. (2000) identified how syllable-timed learners often produce English with "machine-gun" rhythm, disrupting natural flow. The findings here confirm that Banjarese learners face the same issue, resulting in clarity but reduced naturalness.

The persistence of syllable-based rhythm also reflects cultural preferences for explicit articulation. In Banjarese, clarity and balance across syllables are valued, but in English this leads to overly deliberate speech. Teachers, therefore, need to help learners "recalibrate" timing through rhythm-focused tasks. Jazz chants, clapping exercises, or shadowing native models can train students to feel English stress-timing physically and auditorily. Such methods go beyond correcting isolated words and target the flow of speech, which is essential for fluency and comprehensibility.

5.4. Learner strategies and agency

Despite the challenges, participants demonstrated creativity and persistence in addressing suprasegmental issues. Strategies included imitating proficient speakers, listening to songs or movies, and practicing with teacher feedback. These findings align with Isaacs and Hardings (2017), who found that conscious monitoring and imitation are key to developing L2 fluency. The fact that Banjarese learners engaged in these strategies shows that they are not passive recipients of transfer but active negotiators of their phonological repertoires.

Beyond imitation, some learners reported slowing down speech, exaggerating pitch, or practicing in front of mirrors. Such methods may seem artificial, but they reflect metalinguistic awareness and learner agency. Darvin & Norton (2016) argue that learners

invest in strategies that help them navigate linguistic constraints and assert identities as competent speakers. Teachers can build on this agency by validating learners' strategies and providing structured opportunities to practice them in meaningful contexts. This not only improves pronunciation but also fosters confidence and autonomy in oral communication.

5.5. Academic contribution

Academically, this study contributes to the field of second language phonology by documenting a relatively under-researched case: the influence of Banjarese suprasegmental features on English-speaking. While much prior research has focused on segmental pronunciation issues or on larger ethnic groups such as Javanese or Sundanese, this study highlights how regional languages with smaller populations also exert strong effects on L2 pronunciation. By identifying specific suprasegmental transfers—final-syllable stress, flat intonation, syllable-based rhythm—this research extends our understanding of cross-linguistic influence and provides data that can inform broader theories of SLA.

Furthermore, the study highlights the sociophonological context of Indonesia, a multilingual society where hundreds of local languages potentially shape English acquisition. Documenting these contexts enriches the global literature on L2 suprasegmentals and challenges the dominance of studies conducted in European or East Asian contexts.

5. 6. Implications

5.6.1. Pedagogical implications

The study highlights the necessity of integrating suprasegmental features—stress, rhythm, and intonation—into the teaching of English pronunciation in Indonesian higher education. Traditionally, pronunciation instruction in many EFL classrooms has focused predominantly on segmental accuracy, such as consonants and vowels, with little attention given to prosody (Derwing & Munro, 2015). However, this research demonstrates that prosodic features strongly influence students' intelligibility and fluency. For Banjarese learners, the transfer of syllable-based rhythm and monotonous intonation into English creates communication challenges that cannot be resolved solely by correcting segmental errors. Classroom instruction should therefore move beyond segmental accuracy and incorporate explicit training on suprasegmentals.

Therefore, lecturers and curriculum designers should incorporate systematic prosody training into speaking and phonology courses. Suggested practices include: (1) rhythm exercises that contrast syllable-timed and stress-timed speech; (2) prosodic shadowing activities using authentic audio-visual materials; and (3) peer-based feedback sessions focusing on intonation and stress placement. Moreover, teachers should raise learners' metacognitive awareness by encouraging reflection on their pronunciation difficulties and the influence of their mother tongue. Such reflective practices can

empower learners to take active responsibility for their oral communication development (Darvin & Norton, 2016; Khezrlou, 2021). Recent studies also suggest that combining explicit instruction with learner reflection can lead to more sustainable improvement in suprasegmental competence (Ammar Hassan Hassan et al., 2025; Ohashi, 2025).

5.6.2. Research implications

This study underscores the importance of expanding SLA research to include suprasegmental transfer in underexplored contexts such as Indonesia. While much existing scholarship has examined segmental phonology, fewer studies have investigated how prosodic features of local languages shape English learning outcomes. The results suggest that prosody plays a pivotal role in determining comprehensibility, making it a fruitful area for future pedagogical intervention (Derwing & Munro, 2015; Saito & Plonsky, 2019). Future research should build on these findings by conducting comparative studies across different Indonesian ethnolinguistic groups to reveal patterns of suprasegmental transfer. For instance, comparative studies involving other ethnic groups—such as Dayak, Aceh, Bugis, or Madurese students—would help illustrate how different local languages influence English suprasegmental in distinct ways.

Additionally, future studies should incorporate acoustic analysis tools (e.g., Praat software) to provide objective measurements of stress, pitch, and rhythm. This would complement the qualitative descriptions and strengthen claims about L1 transfer. Longitudinal research tracking students' suprasegmental development across semesters could also reveal how transfer effects evolve with increased exposure and instruction. Research could also evaluate the role of technology, such as computer-assisted pronunciation training, in supporting prosody acquisition. Such directions would not only enrich SLA theory but also provide evidence-based guidance for pedagogy.

5.6.3. Policy implications

At the institutional level, the findings suggest that teacher training programs should emphasize prosody as an integral part of English language pedagogy. By equipping future teachers with both theoretical and practical knowledge of suprasegmental instruction, universities can foster more effective pronunciation teaching in Indonesian classrooms. Policy makers in higher education should also consider allocating resources for pronunciation labs or software that can aid students in practicing stress, rhythm, and intonation. The implications of this study extend beyond the classroom. They speak to broader pedagogical practices, academic inquiry, and educational policy in Indonesia, underscoring the critical role of suprasegmental awareness in shaping EFL learners' communicative competence.

6. Conclusion

This study investigates the production of English suprasegmental features—stress, intonation, and rhythm—by Banjarese-speaking undergraduate students at UIN Antasari

Banjarmasin, examining the influence of first-language (L1) prosodic transfer. Employing a descriptive qualitative design, semi-structured interviews were conducted to elicit spoken English samples and learner reflections. Analysis revealed systematic L1 transfer, manifesting in three principal patterns: (1) a tendency toward final-syllable stress placement, (2) restricted intonational variation, and (3) the use of a syllable-timed rhythmic structure. Participants reported employing adaptive learning strategies—including self-monitoring, auditory imitation, and peer feedback—to mitigate these challenges.

Theoretically, this research contributes to second language acquisition (SLA) scholarship by extending the focus from segmental to suprasegmental transfer within an underexplored linguistic community. It underscores the influence of L1 prosodic systems on acquiring the stress-timed rhythm of English and highlights the role of suprasegmental in oral intelligibility and communicative competence.

Several limitations warrant consideration. The small, purposive sample (N=7), while methodologically appropriate for qualitative inquiry, limits the generalizability of findings. Data collection relied on interview-based speech, which may not fully reflect spontaneous communicative contexts. The analysis was confined to three suprasegmental features; phenomena such as speech rate, pausing, and connected speech were not examined. Furthermore, strategy use was self-reported, and observational or longitudinal data would strengthen empirical support.

Future research should employ mixed-method designs, integrating qualitative insights with quantitative acoustic analysis to enhance triangulation. Expanding the scope to include additional suprasegmental features, larger and more diverse samples, and longitudinal classroom observations would provide a more comprehensive understanding of prosodic development in EFL learners.

References

Alawiyyah, A., & Pabriana, H. (2020). The analysis of Sundanese language to students' English consonant pronunciation conducted in SMA Mutiara Palabuhan Ratu. *Dialectical Literature and Educational Journal*, *5*(1), 13–21. https://doi.org/10.51714/dlejpancasakti.v5i1.17.pp.13-21

Amiruddin, A. (2019). Researching students' oral performance: What's wrong with their use of grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation? *Englisia: Journal of Language, Education, and Humanities*, *6*(2), 88. https://doi.org/10.22373/ej.v6i2.3485

Ammar, W., Ghabanchi, Z., & Mahdi Adday Al-Mamoory, S. (2025). Explicit vs. implicit instruction of phonotactic constraints: Enhancing pronunciation and sensitivity in Iraqi EFL learners. *Journal of New Trends in English Language Learning (JNTELL)*, *4*(1). https://doi.org/10.57647/JNTELL.2025.0401.02

Aoyama, K., & Guion, S. G. (2007). Prosody in second language acquisition: Acoustic analyses of duration and F0 range. In O.-S. Bohn & M. J. Munro (Eds.), *Language Learning & Language Teaching* (Vol. 17, pp. 281–297). John Benjamins Publishing Company. https://doi.org/10.1075/lllt.17.24aoy

Aulia, V. (2018). Identifying the problem of Banjarese speaking students in learning English pronunciation. *Journal of English Language Studies*, *3*(1), 1. https://doi.org/10.30870/jels.v3i1.2582

Cheng, J. (2023). Acquisition of English liaison among Chinese EFL learners from the perspective of language transfer. *Heliyon*, *9*(10), e20418. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e20418

Creswell, J. W., & Guetterman, T. C. (2021). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (Sixth edition, global edition). Pearson.

Darvin, R., & Norton, B. (2016). Investment and language learning in the 21st century: *Langage et Société*, *N° 157*(3), 19–38. https://doi.org/10.3917/ls.157.0019

Derwing, T. M., & Munro, M. J. (2015). *Pronunciation fundamentals: Evidence-based perspectives for L2 teaching and research* (Vol. 42). John Benjamins Publishing Company. https://doi.org/10.1075/lllt.42

Duckinoska-Mihajlovska, I., & Kirkova-Naskova, A. (2023). *A short teaching intervention on word-stress rules and pronunciation learning strategies: An exploratory study*. Zenodo. https://doi.org/10.5281/ZENODO.8174024

Ellis, R. (2015). *Understanding second language acquisition* (Second edition). Oxford University Press.

Erlingsson, C., & Brysiewicz, P. (2017). A hands-on guide to doing content analysis. *African Journal of Emergency Medicine*, *7*(3), 93–99. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.afjem.2017.08.001

Field, J. (2005). Intelligibility and the listener: The role of lexical stress. *TESOL Quarterly*, *39*(3), 399. https://doi.org/10.2307/3588487

Flege, J. E. (1995). Second language speech learning: Theory, findings, and problems. In W. Strange (Ed.), *Speech perception and linguistic experience: Issues in cross-language research;* Workshop on Cross Language Speech Perception, Timonium, MD. York Press.

Foote, J. A., Trofimovich, P., Collins, L., & Urzúa, F. S. (2016). Pronunciation teaching practices in communicative second language classes. *The Language Learning Journal*, *44*(2), 181–196. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2013.784345

Fraser, H. (2001). *Teaching pronunciation: A handbook for teachers and trainers three frameworks for an integrated approach*. Sydney, NSW: Department of Education Training and Youth Affairs.

Gordon, J., & Darcy, I. (2016). The development of comprehensible speech in L2 learners: A classroom study on the effects of short-term pronunciation instruction. *Journal of Second Language Pronunciation*, *2*(1), 56–92. https://doi.org/10.1075/jslp.2.1.03gor

Hahn, L. D. (2004). Primary stress and intelligibility: Research to motivate the teaching of suprasegmental. *TESOL Quarterly*, *38*(2), 201. https://doi.org/10.2307/3588378

Hirschi, K., & Kang, O. (2024a). Data-driven learning for pronunciation: perception and production of lexical stress and prominence in academic English. *TESOL Quarterly*, *58*(3), 1081–1107. https://doi.org/10.1002/tesq.3302

Isaacs, T., & Harding, L. (2017b). Pronunciation assessment. *Language Teaching*, *50*(3), 347–366. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444817000118

Jenkins, J. (2014). *Global Englishes* (0 ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315761596

Jumainah, J., Krismanti, N., & Lestary, A. (2023). Banjarese women's language features: a gender study. *Journal of English Teaching, Applied Linguistics and Literatures (JETALL)*, *6*(2), 149. https://doi.org/10.20527/jetall.v6i2.16232

Kang, O., Hirschi, K., Hansen, J., Looney, S., & Miao, Y. (2022). *Using lexical stress, speech rate, rhythm, and pauses to characterize and normalize second language speech intelligibility*. 060008. https://doi.org/10.1121/2.0001790

Khezrlou, S. (2021). Learners' reflective practice between the repeated performances of tasks: Effects on second language development. *Dutch Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *10*. https://doi.org/10.51751/dujal9458

Kim, J.-M. (2017). Prosodic transfer of speech rhythm: Substituting fundamental frequency for vowel durationin Korean learners' English speech. *Studies in English Language & Literature*, *43*(4), 181–203. http://dx.doi.org/10.21559/aellk.2017.43.4.10

Kim, M., & Lu, Y. (2011). Prosody transfer in second language acquisition: Mandarin Chinese tonal alignment in English pitch accent. *The Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *129*(4_Supplement), 2659–2659. https://doi.org/10.1121/1.3588886

Lado, R. (1957). *Linguistics across cultures: Applied linguistics for language teachers*. University of Michigan Press.

Levis, J. M. (2018). *Intelligibility, oral communication, and the teaching of pronunciation* (1st ed.). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108241564

Ling, L. E., Grabe, E., & Nolan, F. (2000). Quantitative characterizations of speech rhythm: Syllable-timing in Singapore English. *Language and Speech*, *43*(4), 377–401. https://doi.org/10.1177/00238309000430040301

Masykar, T., Hassan, R. B., & Pillai, S. (2022). Perception of English vowel contrasts by Acehnese-Indonesian bilingual learners of English. *Indonesian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *11*(3), 718–728. https://doi.org/10.17509/ijal.v11i3.35086

Ohashi, K. (2025). *Effects of explicit instruction and corrective feedback on segmental and suprasegmental pronunciation*. Kansai Chapter, Japan Association for Language Education and Technology. https://doi.org/10.50924/letkansai.23.0_41

Ortega, L. (2014). *Understanding second language acquisition*. Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203777282

Ortega, L. (2018). Second language acquisition as a road to bilingualism. In A. De Houwer & L. Ortega (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of bilingualism* (1st ed., pp. 408–434). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/9781316831922.022

Palinkas, L. A., Horwitz, S. M., Green, C. A., Wisdom, J. P., Duan, N., & Hoagwood, K. (2015). Purposeful sampling for qualitative data collection and analysis in mixed method implementation research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, *42*(5), 533–544. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10488-013-0528-y

Saito, K., & Plonsky, L. (2019). Effects of second language pronunciation teaching revisited: A proposed measurement framework and meta-analysis. *Language Learning*, *69*(3), 652–708. https://doi.org/10.1111/lang.12345

Wang, H., & van Heuven, V. J. (2018). Relative contribution of vowel quality and duration to native language identification in foreign-accented English. *ICCSP 2018: Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Cryptography, Security and Privacy*. https://doi.org/10.1145/3199478.3199507

Wang, X. (2022). Segmental versus suprasegmental: Which one is more important to teach? *RELC Journal*, *53*(1), 194–202. https://doi.org/10.1177/0033688220925926

Yanuar, I. D. (2023). Exploring the impact of age and proficiency: English word stress placement in Indonesian EFL learners. *English Education: Jurnal Tadris Bahasa Inggris*, *16*(2), 197–208. https://doi.org/10.24042/ee-jtbi.v16i2.15886

Yulianti, L. D., Marhum, M., & Kamaruddin, A. (2025). Pronunciation problems of English segmental sounds encountered by EFL learners of English education study program. *Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Undiksha*, *13*(1), 124–139. https://doi.org/10.23887/jpbi.v13i1.86838

Zhang, Y. (2025). Exploring the negative transfer effect of Hanzhonghua accent on English pronunciation and countermeasures against it: A case study of an English major from Shaanxi province. *Journal of Literature & Language*, *1*(1), 13–35. https://doi.org/10.71204/wv9n4360

Zhu Jie-xin. (2022). On L1 negative transfer in second language acquisition based on Chinese students' writing composition. *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*, *12*(11). https://doi.org/10.17265/2159-5836/2022.11.011

Zhu, Y., & Mok, P. (2022). The role of prosody across languages. In *The Routledge Handbook of Second Language Acquisition and Speaking* (1st ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003022497

Zielinski, B. W. (2008). The listener: No longer the silent partner in reduced intelligibility. *System*, *36*(1), 69–84. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2007.11.004