

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **A. Findings**

This section represents the findings of the study obtained from semi-structured interviews conducted with six English Education students. The findings focus on participants' awareness of English phoneme structures, specifically their ability to recognize, differentiate, and describe English phonemes as foundational elements of pronunciation and listening. The data are organized thematically based on recurring patterns observed across participants' verbal responses related to English phoneme structures.

The participants consist of six students from English Education Department, each currently in their fifth semester of study and undergoing for teaching practice (PPL) at the time when this research is conducted. The interviews were conducted individually in one session per participant. The data presented below were extracted from the interview sessions with the participants, then grouped and sorted by key findings categorized by clear variables.

#### **1. English Department Students' Awareness to English Phoneme**

##### **a. Awareness of English Phonemes as Individual Sound Units**

Across participants, awareness of English phonemes as distinct sound units emerged at varying levels. Several participants reported that they became consciously aware that

English words consist of separable sounds only after receiving formal instruction at the university level.

Participant A stated “I’ve been unconsciously practicing it without even knowing what a phonetics is, until I studied it in this college.” that prior to studying phonetics, he used English sounds intuitively without understanding that these sounds represented individual phonemes. He reported that phoneme awareness developed after learning about pronunciation rules and sound systems in class. This suggests that phoneme awareness existed implicitly before becoming explicit through instruction.

Participant B said, “I choose my major because I followed my passion, and we learned phonology in 3<sup>rd</sup> semester.” similarly reported that her understanding of phonemes began after taking a phonology-related course. She added that “Phonemics helped us to pronounce words better, like how the word ‘cat’ is not pronounced as ‘chat’, you know?” and acknowledged that recognizing these sounds helped her notice pronunciation errors during speaking activities.

Participant C said that “I learned English a bit before attending this college, and I guess the classrooms and environments are the huge factors why it helped me more.” it indicated that she understood that English pronunciation

involved specific sounds, but she did not describe phonemes using technical terms, as when asked about what phonemic is she replied “I’m sorry, what’s a phonemic?” despite already learned it in previous semesters. Her responses suggested partial awareness, characterized by general recognition of sound differences rather than explicit phoneme identification.

In contrast, Participant D said “I learned English since elementary school, then junior high school, then senior high school, and then college.” She expressed difficulty articulating English sounds and did not demonstrate clear awareness of phonemes as distinct units. She stated, “I’m not really confident in speaking English because I’m not really good at it.” She described pronunciation problems broadly and emphasized a lack of confidence in speaking, without referencing specific sounds or sound contrasts.

#### **b. Identification of Specific Phoneme Difficulties**

Several participants were able to identify specific pronunciation difficulties related to English phonemes. Participant A said ”A lot of people often mispronounced the word ‘student’ like ‘studden’ because both have ‘stud’ in it.” He provided concrete example when he described pronouncing *student* as *studden*. He explained that this pronunciation resulted from confusion between similar sound patterns in English words,

indicating awareness of phoneme substitution occurring during speech production.

Participant E also described difficulty pronouncing certain words correctly before being exposed to authentic listening materials, as she stated “I’m having difficulties trying to understand different accents like Australian, it’s like entirely different to American or British.” She mentioned mispronouncing words based on spelling rather than sound, indicating awareness of inaccurate phoneme realization prior to corrective exposure.

Participant B acknowledged that she occasionally produced inaccurate sounds, particularly when speaking quickly or under teaching simulation conditions, as she stated “I still mispronounced some words, mainly from listening courses. Their English sounds so differently.” She noted that these errors were sometimes corrected after she noticed differences between her pronunciation and standard models.

Other participants, such as Participant F and Participant C, acknowledged pronunciation difficulties but did not specify particular phonemes or sound patterns. Their responses remained general, indicating awareness of pronunciation issues without phoneme-level detail.

### **c. Differentiation of Similar English Phonemes**

Difficulty differentiating similar English phonemes was reported by multiple participants, particularly in listening contexts. Participant E stated “I can’t understand well to Australian English accents, it sounds so different t.” She explained that she initially struggled to understand spoken English when exposed to different accents. She stated that distinguishing sounds in American and British accents was challenging, especially during rapid speech, as stated “I can’t really tell the difference if it’s American or British during our listening courses. They talked too fast.” This indicates difficulty in perceiving phoneme variation across accentual contexts.

Participant D also reported difficulty understanding spoken English, which she associated with problems in recognizing spoken words accurately. Although she did not explicitly mention phonemes, her description suggests challenges in phoneme perception during listening.

Participant A noted that sound similarity sometimes caused confusion during both listening and speaking, especially when words shared similar phonemic patterns, as he stated “There are a lot of English words that shared the same parts, so people often misspell those words because it was written similarly”.

He reported that repeated exposure helped reduce confusion, although errors still occurred.

#### **d. Awareness of Pronunciation–Spelling Inconsistencies**

Several participants demonstrated awareness that English pronunciation does not consistently align with spelling. Participant A explicitly stated that English spelling often misleads learners and that correct pronunciation requires familiarity with sound patterns rather than reliance on written form, as he stated earlier.

Participant E described learning correct pronunciation through listening to songs, interviews, and movies. She provided an example of previously pronouncing *better* incorrectly due to spelling influence, before learning its correct pronunciation through auditory exposure, as she stated “I actually learned English a lot from listening various English medias such podcasts, interviews, or songs I listened on Spotify. Oh! And I also tried Duolingo, but not anymore.”

Participant B also acknowledged that spelling sometimes influenced her pronunciation, especially when encountering unfamiliar vocabulary, as she stated “I think some of my problems are because some words or vocabularies are new to me and I don’t know how to pronounce it.” She reported checking pronunciation models to avoid errors.

Other participants, including Participant F and Participant C, did not explicitly address pronunciation–spelling mismatch, focusing instead on general speaking confidence and fluency.

**e. Role of Formal Instruction in Developing Phoneme Awareness**

Formal instruction was identified as a key source of phoneme awareness. Participant A, Participant B, and Participant E all stated that phonology or phonetics courses played a major role in helping them understand English sound structures. These courses introduced them to sound classification, pronunciation rules, and phonemic transcription. Participant A stated “I actually learned English because I want to understand the video games I played, but ever since I entered this college it helped me a lot to pronounce some words better.”

Participant A reported that instructional activities such as pronunciation drills and guided explanation helped him recognize recurring sound patterns. Participant B mentioned that classroom correction and lecturer feedback made her more aware of her own phoneme production, as she stated “I think one of the huge factors that helped me is the English speaking environment and my lecturers who helped me when I made some mistakes.”

In contrast, Participant D reported that although she attended English courses and used learning applications, she did

not feel that her phoneme awareness had developed sufficiently. She expressed continued difficulty in speaking accurately, suggesting limited impact of instruction on her phoneme production, as proved when she stated “I- I don’t think my English is not that good, I’m just shy when talking in English because it’s not that good.”

#### **f. Exposure Outside the Classroom and Phoneme Awareness**

Based on the various recordings from the interviews, participants described engaging with a diverse spectrum of English-language other than the classroom, which served as informal yet helpful exposure. This engagement from digital media, entertainment, and personal interests, including listening to music, watching films and videos, playing video games, reading online reading materials, and utilizing language-learning applications, such as Duolingo. For instance, Participant E explicitly identified the practice of listening to English songs and watching interviews as beneficial for acquiring natural pronunciation patterns and for observing how words are articulated in genuine communicative contexts, as she stated earlier “I learned a lot about English from watching podcasts, YouTube, and watching movies. Also listening to songs on Spotify.”

Other participants, such as Participant F, reported frequent interaction with English through reading game-related texts and listening to dialogue during gameplay. However, his reflection on these activities centered primarily on their contribution to overall comprehension and lexical fluency, with no explicit connection drawn to the development of segmental awareness, such as distinguishing individual vowel or consonant sounds. Similarly, Participant C and Participant D noted the regular use of platforms like Duolingo and the consumption of English-language films and series. While they perceived these medias as generally helpful for their language development, their accounts did not indicate a conscious or consistent association between such exposure and a formal understanding of the English phonological system, particularly its phonemic distinctions.

Collectively, these reports highlight that while learners are proactive in seeking out authentic English input, their engagement with it often remains at a holistic level of meaning and general fluency. The potential for these activities to serve as tools for conscious phonological noticing and the systematic refinement of perception and production appears to be an underutilized dimension of their informal learning strategies.

**g. Variation in Level of Phoneme Structural Awareness**

The findings indicate variation in participants' level of phoneme structural awareness. Participant A demonstrated the highest level of awareness by identifying specific pronunciation errors and explaining their causes. Participant B and Participant E showed moderate awareness, recognizing phoneme-related issues and acknowledging improvement through exposure and instruction.

Participant C and Participant F demonstrated partial awareness, recognizing pronunciation difficulties without detailed phoneme analysis. Participant D showed limited awareness, expressing difficulty in speaking and listening without referencing specific phoneme structures.

Overall, the findings reveal that English Education students demonstrate varying levels of awareness of English phoneme structures. While most participants recognized phonemes as individual sound units after formal instruction, difficulties persisted in differentiating similar sounds, handling pronunciation-spelling mismatches, and articulating phonemes accurately. Instruction and exposure contributed to phoneme awareness development, but the depth of understanding differed across participants.

## 2. English Phoneme-Related Difficulties Recognized by Students

### a. Difficulties with English Vowel Quality and Vowel Contrast

A consistent and explicitly articulated challenge among participants involves the perception and production of English vowel sounds, particularly those qualitative distinctions that are either absent or markedly less salient in the Indonesian phonological system. This difficulty extends beyond passive awareness to active moments of confusion, as evidenced by numerous self-corrections and detailed retrospective accounts during interview sessions. Participants frequently described uncertainty when encountering vowels that share orthographic representations but correspond to distinct phonemes in spoken English. Specific examples included the substitution of an incorrect central vowel in words like *student* or the articulation of *better* using a full, spelling-influenced vowel rather than the schwa typical of natural, reduced speech.

Moreover, this vowel-related challenge was consistently framed by learners as a dual-sided obstacle impacting both output and input. In listening comprehension contexts, participants reported a significant disconnect between their visual recognition of vocabulary and their ability to immediately identify those same words in authentic spoken discourse. This was particularly pronounced when vowel sounds underwent reduction,

centralization, or other connected speech alterations, rendering familiar words momentarily unfamiliar. Consequently, the participants' own analysis reveals that they perceive this not simply as a matter of articulation, but fundamentally as a barrier to decoding and understanding natural, fluid English as it is spoken. This recognition underscores a metacognitive understanding of vowel mastery as integral to overall communicative competence, rather than an isolated phonetic exercise.

### **b. Consonant Substitution, Omission, and Weak Articulation**

Another prominent difficulty recognized by participants relates to English consonant phonemes, especially those that are absent from or function differently in Indonesian.

Participants acknowledged problems with:

- 1) Producing certain consonant sounds accurately
- 2) Maintaining consonant clarity in word-final positions
- 3) Handling consonant clusters in continuous speech

Some students reported avoiding words they perceived as "hard to say," indicating an awareness of consonant complexity as a barrier to fluent speech. In spontaneous speech segments within the recordings, consonant articulation was sometimes reduced or omitted, particularly in word-final contexts.

In listening experiences, participants reported misinterpreting words due to unclear consonant perception, especially when speech was fast or heavily accented. This suggests that consonant-related difficulties were recognized as affecting both pronunciation and listening.

Importantly, students framed these difficulties as sound-based, rather than grammatical or lexical, indicating awareness that the issue lay at the phonemic level.

**c. Phoneme–Grapheme Mismatch and Spelling-Based Pronunciation**

Several participants explicitly recognized difficulty caused by inconsistencies between English spelling and pronunciation. This issue emerged repeatedly when participants discussed learning English through reading, games, subtitles, or written materials.

Participants noted that:

- 1) They often pronounced words as they were written
- 2) Written familiarity did not guarantee correct spoken production
- 3) Listening comprehension was disrupted when spoken forms did not match expected spelling patterns

This difficulty was particularly salient for students who reported strong reading habits but weaker speaking confidence. They expressed awareness that reliance on orthography often resulted in inaccurate phoneme production.

The recognition of phoneme-grapheme mismatch reflects an understanding that English pronunciation cannot be inferred reliably from spelling alone, and that this mismatch poses a persistent challenge in both pronunciation and listening.

#### **d. Accent-Related Difficulties in Phoneme Perception**

Participants consistently reported difficulty understanding spoken English when exposed to different English accents, particularly British, Australian, and American varieties.

These difficulties were not described simply as “accent problems,” but rather as challenges in identifying familiar words when their phonemic realization differed from expectations. Students explained that they could understand written English or classroom speech but struggled when encountering native-speaker pronunciation in media such as films, interviews, or songs.

In particular, participants recognized difficulty with:

- 1) Reduced vowels (e.g., schwa)
- 2) Connected speech
- 3) Variations in stress and intonation that altered phoneme perception

This finding highlights that students recognized accent-related issues as phoneme perception problems, rather than vocabulary gaps, indicating awareness of the role of phonemic variation in listening comprehension.

**e. Awareness of Gaps in Phonemic Knowledge and Control**

Across all interviews, participants demonstrated varying degrees of awareness regarding their own phonemic limitations.

Several participants explicitly stated that they:

- 1) Had learned phonetics or phonemics in earlier semesters
- 2) Had not retained or consistently applied this knowledge
- 3) Needed to “remember phonemes” or “review phonetics again”

This self-recognition indicates that students were aware not only of surface-level pronunciation errors, but also of underlying gaps in phonemic awareness. Some participants connected these gaps to their lack of confidence in speaking or

teaching English, while others acknowledged that phonemic knowledge had become passive rather than actively used.

The finding suggests that students recognized phonemic awareness as a foundational skill that directly influences pronunciation accuracy and listening effectiveness.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that students recognized English phoneme-related difficulties in multiple, interrelated areas. These difficulties affected both pronunciation and listening and were consistently framed by participants as sound-based rather than lexical or grammatical.

The identified difficulty types provide a concrete phoneme-level profile of student challenges, which forms a direct basis for the subsequent discussion of phonemic awareness and teaching preparation.

## **B. Discussions**

The section aims to interpret how English Education students demonstrate awareness of English phoneme structures and how such awareness relates to their readiness to teach English. The discussion integrates empirical findings with established theories of phonemic awareness, second language phonology, and teacher preparation, while also situating the results within the context of previous studies.

## **1. Students' Awareness of English Phoneme Structures**

### **a. Phoneme Awareness as an Explicit Skill Developed Through Instruction**

The findings indicate that most participants did not initially conceptualize English pronunciation in terms of phoneme structures. Instead, phoneme awareness emerged primarily after formal instruction at the university level. This aligns with phonological theory suggesting that phonemic awareness does not automatically develop through exposure alone, especially for second language learners (Gillon, 2004; Yopp & Yopp, 2009).

Participants such as Participant A and Participant B demonstrated explicit awareness of phonemes only after being introduced to phonetics courses. Prior to instruction, their pronunciation practices were intuitive and experience-based rather than analytically grounded. This supports Couper's (2017) argument that adult L2 learners often possess implicit phonological knowledge but lack explicit phonemic awareness unless instruction makes sound structures salient.

The distinction between implicit and explicit phoneme awareness is crucial. While implicit awareness allows learners to communicate, explicit awareness enables them to consciously identify, explain, and correct phoneme-level errors. In this study, only participants who articulated specific sound-related issues

demonstrated this explicit awareness, indicating a higher level of phonemic competence.

### **b. Phoneme Identification and Pronunciation Accuracy**

Several participants demonstrated the ability to identify problematic phonemes through examples of mispronunciation. Participant A's explanation of pronouncing *student* as *studden* reflects awareness of phoneme substitution and vowel reduction issues commonly observed in EFL contexts. This aligns with research showing that learners often rely on familiar phoneme patterns from prior lexical exposure, leading to systematic pronunciation errors (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010).

Similarly, Participant E's account of correcting pronunciation through exposure to authentic input illustrates how auditory input reinforces phoneme discrimination. Her example of mispronouncing *better* demonstrates the role of phoneme realization rather than orthographic representation, supporting the phonological awareness framework proposed by Nation and Newton (2009).

In contrast, participants such as Participant D acknowledged pronunciation difficulties but could not specify phoneme-level problems. This suggests limited phoneme identification ability, consistent with le Roux's (2017) findings

that learners with weak phonemic awareness struggle to isolate and manipulate sounds, leading to reduced pronunciation accuracy.

### **c. Phoneme Differentiation in Listening and Accent Exposure**

Building upon the documented challenges with vowel perception, the study's findings further underscore that difficulties with phoneme differentiation constituted a significant barrier, a challenge that became particularly acute in listening contexts featuring varied English accents. For example, Participant E's expressed difficulty in reliably distinguishing speech sounds across American, British, and Australian accents points to a core issue in perceptual processing rather than a purely productive one. This aligns with theoretical perspectives, such as that of Field (2008), who argues that a primary source of listening comprehension breakdown for second language learners lies in the failure to accurately segment the continuous stream of speech into its constituent, recognizable phonemes.

This perceptual bottleneck directly supports assertions, like those of le Roux (2017), that phonemic awareness serves as a foundational pillar for effective listening comprehension. The cognitive process necessitates that learners first accurately perceive and differentiate discrete sounds before they can efficiently map them to lexical items and attach meaning. When

stable mental representations of phonemes are absent or underdeveloped, even familiar spoken words can become a fragmented and ambiguous signal, impeding comprehension irrespective of the learner's breadth of vocabulary knowledge.

The strategies employed by participants themselves corroborate this interpretation. Their reported reliance on repeated exposure and contextual guessing to navigate accented speech indicates the use of compensatory, top-down processing mechanisms to offset less-automated bottom-up phonemic decoding skills. While such exposure undoubtedly fosters gradual adaptation, the findings suggest that the absence of systematic, phoneme-focused perceptual training limits the learners' ability to achieve consistent and reliable speech perception across different accent varieties. Consequently, their comprehension remains effortful and vulnerable to disruption in novel or unpredictable acoustic environments, highlighting a critical area for pedagogical intervention aimed at strengthening the very building blocks of aural understanding.

#### **d. Awareness of Spelling–Sound Mismatch**

Several participants recognized that English spelling does not reliably reflect pronunciation. This awareness is significant, as orthographic interference is a well-documented barrier to phoneme acquisition in English (Ehri, 2005). Participant A and

Participant E explicitly noted that relying on spelling led to incorrect pronunciation, while auditory exposure helped correct these errors.

This finding reinforces the phonemic awareness model, which emphasizes sound-based processing over orthographic reliance (Gillon, 2004). Learners who recognize spelling–sound inconsistency are more likely to attend to phoneme structures during pronunciation and listening tasks.

Participants who did not mention this mismatch may still rely heavily on orthography, contributing to persistent pronunciation errors. This differentiation among participants highlights varying levels of phoneme structural awareness.

## **2. Recognized Phoneme-Related Difficulties in Pronunciation and Listening**

The findings reveal that English Education students are able to explicitly recognize a range of phoneme-related difficulties that affect both their pronunciation and listening experiences. Rather than perceiving these challenges as general language problems, participants demonstrated an emerging awareness that many of their communication breakdowns originate at the phoneme level. This indicates that phonemic awareness among the students is not merely theoretical but reflective,

allowing them to identify specific sound-related issues in their own language use.

**a. Vocal-Related Difficulties in Pronunciation and Perception**

One prominent difficulty recognized by participants involves English vowel production and perception. Students frequently reported uncertainty when distinguishing between similar vowel sounds or producing vowels accurately in connected speech. These challenges were particularly evident in spontaneous speaking and listening to natural speech, where vowel reduction and variation occur. The findings support previous research indicating that vowel systems present significant challenges for EFL learners due to differences between native-language phonemic inventories and English vowel contrasts (Couper, 2017).

From a theoretical perspective, vowel perception and production are closely linked to phonemic categorization. When learners have not fully stabilized phonemic representations, they may recognize vowel differences cognitively but fail to consistently perceive or produce them accurately (Ehri & Flugman, 2018). The participants' ability to articulate these difficulties demonstrates emerging phonemic awareness, even though phonetic accuracy remains unstable.

**b. Consonant Substitution and Articulatory Challenges**

In addition to vowel difficulties, participants identified challenges related to consonant production, particularly for English phonemes that do not exist or function differently in their first language. These challenges often manifested as phoneme substitution or hesitation during speech. Importantly, students frequently recognized these substitutions themselves, indicating conscious awareness of deviation from target pronunciation.

This finding aligns with Couper's (2017) assertion that phonemic awareness precedes full articulatory control. Learners may understand which phoneme is required but lack the motor or perceptual precision to produce it accurately. The recognition of consonant-related difficulties suggests that participants are engaging in metalinguistic reflection, a key component of phonemic awareness development in adult second-language learners.

**c. Listening Difficulties Related to Accent and Speech Variation**

Participants also reported phoneme-related listening difficulties when exposed to different English accents or fast speech. Rather than attributing comprehension problems solely to unfamiliar vocabulary, students recognized that variation in phoneme realization disrupted their ability to identify known

words. This awareness reflects an understanding of English as a variable phonological system rather than a fixed pronunciation model.

Theoretically, this aligns with phonological models emphasizing that listening comprehension depends on accurate phoneme perception across varied input (Moats, 2019). Accent variation challenges learners' phonemic boundaries, requiring flexible phoneme mapping rather than reliance on a single pronunciation norm. Participants' recognition of this difficulty indicates growing sensitivity to phoneme variation, an essential component of advanced phonemic awareness.

### **3. Phonemic Awareness in Relation to Teaching Preparation**

#### **a. Phoneme Awareness as a Foundation for Teaching Confidence**

Teaching readiness in this study was closely linked to participants' confidence in pronunciation and listening accuracy. Participants who demonstrated higher phoneme awareness, such as Participant A and Participant B, expressed greater confidence in explaining pronunciation and correcting errors during teaching simulations.

This supports Derwing and Munro's (2015) claim that teachers' pronunciation awareness directly affects instructional

clarity and credibility. Teachers who understand phoneme structures are better equipped to explain pronunciation rules and respond to students' difficulties.

In contrast, participants with limited phoneme awareness, such as Participant D, reported low confidence in teaching, particularly speaking and pronunciation-focused lessons. This aligns with Couper's (2017) finding that teachers' lack of phonological confidence often leads to avoidance of pronunciation instruction.

### **b. Phoneme Awareness and Instructional Decision-Making**

Participants with higher phoneme awareness demonstrated an ability to adjust explanations and anticipate learner difficulties. Participant A explicitly mentioned simplifying explanations and linking phoneme knowledge to other language skills. This reflects pedagogical phonological awareness, where teachers not only recognize phonemes but also understand how to teach them (Foote et al., 2016).

Meanwhile, participants with limited phoneme awareness focused primarily on fluency and general communication, often prioritizing meaning over form. While fluency is important, the absence of phoneme-focused instruction may hinder learners'

pronunciation development, particularly at lower proficiency levels.

### **c. Exposure, Practice, and Self-Correction in Teaching Preparation**

Participants reported that exposure through media, games, and applications contributed to pronunciation improvement. However, these activities alone did not consistently result in structured phoneme awareness. This supports le Roux's (2017) conclusion that incidental exposure must be supplemented with explicit phoneme instruction to achieve measurable phonemic development.

In teaching preparation, participants relied on feedback from lecturers and peers to identify pronunciation errors. This external correction served as a trigger for phoneme awareness development, emphasizing the importance of guided practice in teacher education programs.

The findings of this study are consistent with le Roux (2017), who found that ESL learners with limited phonemic awareness experienced difficulty in word recognition, segmentation, and pronunciation accuracy. Both studies highlight the role of phoneme perception in listening and pronunciation. Similarly, Couper (2017) emphasized that phonological awareness among teachers is essential for effective pronunciation

instruction. The present study extends this by showing how phoneme awareness influences teaching readiness among pre-service teachers. However, unlike quantitative studies focusing on phoneme identification tasks, this study provides qualitative insight into how learners conceptualize phoneme structures through reflection and experience. This adds depth to existing literature by revealing how phoneme awareness develops subjectively in teacher preparation contexts.

The findings suggest that phoneme structural awareness is a critical component of teaching readiness among English Education students. Teacher education programs should place greater emphasis on explicit phoneme instruction, phoneme differentiation activities, and pronunciation pedagogy. Additionally, exposure-based learning should be integrated with reflective phoneme analysis to prevent reliance on intuition alone. Without explicit phoneme awareness, future teachers may struggle to model accurate pronunciation and address learners' difficulties effectively.

This study relied on self-reported data from interviews, which may not fully capture participants' actual phoneme production accuracy. Additionally, the absence of phoneme production tasks limits the ability to objectively measure phoneme awareness. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insight into how phoneme structures are perceived and conceptualized by pre-service English teachers.

In summary, the discussion demonstrates that English phoneme awareness among pre-service teachers varies significantly and is strongly influenced by formal instruction. Participants who demonstrated clearer understanding of phoneme structures exhibited greater teaching readiness, particularly in pronunciation-focused instruction. Conversely, limited phoneme awareness was associated with low confidence and instructional hesitation. These findings directly address the research questions and underscore the importance of phoneme structural awareness as a foundation for effective English teaching preparation.