



The Effectiveness of Phonetic Transcription in EFL Students Pronunciation

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Abstrak

This journal aims to analyze the effectiveness of using phonetic symbols in the pronunciation of students who speak English as a foreign language (EFL) by measuring students' capabilities in pronouncing English reading or sentences with phonetic transcription. This study explores to what extent the use of phonetic symbols can help EFL students improve their pronunciation. The research method used Quantitative Descriptive by using table percentage with 25 EFL students in 4th semester in the English department from State Islamic University of North Sumatera as participants. These students were selected to read the sentences with phonetic transcription by using WhatsApp application and Voice note features to read the sentences. During the research, students weren't given teaching materials containing phonetic symbols and were asked to read and pronounce the English sentences with their pure ability. Data was collected through pronunciation tests. This test is intended to measure students' pronunciation abilities and the progress in reading sentences using phonetic symbols. The results showed that there were 72% of the English department students who were categorized as capable in reading sentences using phonetic transcription and 28% of all students are incapable of reading the sentences provided. It was concluded that the phonetic symbols helped EFL students to pronounce difficult sounds in English. In conclusion, the use of phonetic symbols proved effective in improving the pronunciation of EFL students. Phonetic symbols can be a useful tool in helping students improve their pronunciation in speaking English due to the capability of most students in reading English sentences.

Kata Kunci: Phonology, Phonetic transcription, EFL students, Pronunciation

INTRODUCTION

English is a foreign language for EFL students, so this language difference greatly affects the way of reading used in it. In this case, English has a reading system that is commonly used by students, both native students and EFL students. In English there is a term known as Phonetic Symbol which is a rule of reading in English so that someone can more easily understand how to read words and sentences in English correctly. Considering that English has a reading structure that is different from writing, it requires the ability to understand reading and distinguish the sound of letters in English. Additionally, having an understanding of phonetics aids learners in learning about the speech organs and points of articulation necessary to produce appropriate English sounds. It is more likely that students will pronounce English like native speakers the more words they can comprehend and pronounce phonetically and accurately. Students are more assured in their pronunciation as a result according to (Ruslan Samae and Premin Karawi 2015 and Kulachit and Nuang Chalerm 2021) it could improve communication. Knowing phonetics or learning pronunciation could be helpful tools for practicing proper pronunciation. Pronunciation plays a vital role when it comes to second language learning. When it comes to second language study, pronunciation is crucial. "Pronunciation is a vital aspect of language learning because poor pronunciation distorts or mars the communication process," write Tsojon and Aji (2014). Pronunciation is sometimes disregarded by educators while teaching English as a second language due to a lack of required phonetic and phonological knowledge. Pronunciation for English as an International Language connects phonetics, phonology, and pronunciation, providing the reader with a research-based strategy for teaching the English language (Low 2014). Every language speaker requires solid pronunciation skills. In other words, successful speaking necessitates good pronunciation, particularly when dealing with persons outside one's own linguistic environment or speech community."

Language is a method of communication in everyday life. Linguists place a higher importance on speaking skills than the average user. They simply take things for granted, assuming that speaking and

understanding are as natural to them as breathing. Many English students prefer to learn "DUMB ENGLISH" rather than English pronunciation, which causes learners to be astonished when they meet challenges with oral communication. The most important factor, among many others, is phonetics, which weakens the learner's confidence in both hearing and speaking. The capacity to talk in English entails correct pronunciation and intonation, which has a direct impact on appropriate conversational communication. (Zhang and Yin 2009). If you live in a place where English is not commonly used and no one speaks it for general communication, your English pronunciation may reflect the disparities between your first language and English. The English accent you employ in your home nation could not be the same in another place. As language teaching has transitioned to communicative competency, more teachers are highlighting the importance of pronunciation instruction, arguing that "pronunciation should be taught in all second language classrooms using a range of exercises."2002 (Wei and Zhou). Students who are not native English speakers make several pronunciation errors when talking in English. Because poor pronunciation leads to poor communication, this might lead to misunderstandings between the speaker and the listener.

The purpose of this research is to discover the impact of phonetic symbols on student pronunciation and how effective phonetic transcription helps students to read the English sentences properly. Students in ESL classes experience a variety of challenges, one of which is pronunciation. Many strategies are utilized in the ESL/EFL classroom to teach pronunciation. The most well-known technique among these is teaching pronunciation using phonetic symbols. Teaching phonetic transcription is needed to improve pronunciation. Phonetic transcription is the study of sounds that does not focus on the spelling of a word but rather on its sound. According to Al- Zayed (2017), the study of phonetics is concerned with explaining the sounds of speech and the patterns they form. Among its many practical applications, most readers would think of teaching and mastering the pronunciation of a second language first). Teaching pronunciation is difficult for a variety of reasons. Teachers are sometimes left in the dark regarding how to teach pronunciation and face contradictory methods. Therefore, Rajamangala University of Technology-ok is doing research to examine how students who specialize in English and International Communication might improve their English pronunciation skills. This study aims to improve participants' English pronunciation abilities by using drills based on the English phonetic alphabet. In this case, this study's goal is to determine whether the EFL Students in the English Department of State Islamic University of North Sumatera are capable of using the English phonetic alphabet to help students with their pronunciation and to have the proper way of speaking English.

METHODOLOGY

The method used to collect the data is Quantitative Descriptive to describe students' ability in applying the reading skill from phonetic symbols. The aim of this research is to figure out how effective phonetic symbols are based on EFL students' ability. The students were given some sentences using phonetic symbols and the researcher asked the students to read the sentences with the correct pronunciation. In this research, 25 students are involved and all of them are 4th semester students in the English Department from State Islamic University of North Sumatera. There are 4 participants from TBI-1, 14 participants from TBI-2, 4 Participants are from TBI-3, and 2 participants from TBI-4. The participants from TBI-2 are dominated since the researchers are also from TBI-2 class.

The instrument of data collection is the pronunciation test by using sentences provided, but these sentences are not the ordinary one. They are sentences which had been changed into the one with Phonetic Symbol form and the researcher told the participants to read them properly. Firstly, the researcher provided three sentences which used phonetic symbols. Then, researchers send the sentences via WhatsApp to the participants and ask them to read the sentences with correct pronunciation by using WhatsApp features called voice note. Next, researchers take the data from the voice notes by listening carefully and consider if the participants read the sentences in the right way or vice versa. If the participants can read the sentences properly, then it is categorized as 'capable'. Then, if the participants can not read the sentences properly, then it is categorized as 'incapable'. After collecting the data, the researcher makes the percentage table to describe the results of data. The description is put in the finding and discussion column.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hasil After making the research, the researchers found the data used in this study. Previously, the researcher asked to read sentences that had been exchanged using Phonetic Symbols. Below shows the sentences that we used as research instruments. Phonetic transcription:

1. fə'netɪk ɪz ðə 'stɑːdi ʌv spiɪʃ saʊndz
2. sʌm 'pi:pəl θɪŋk ðæt fə'netɪk ɪz 'veri 'ɪntrəstɪŋ
3. aɪ tʊld məi frend ðæt məi kəm'pjʊtər wʌz 'brʊkən

As information, the researcher uses American Phonetic Transcription in the sentence media. The phonetic form used is intended to see the ability of the participants so that researchers can determine

whether English department students at the Islamic State University of North Sumatra are able to read this. Before processing the research results, the researcher determined in advance the method of data collection and compiled all the results of the participants to be put together and taken as a percentage. Furthermore, the researcher used Arikunto's scale to calculate the results as seen below:

$$S = R/N \times 100\%$$

Where:

S = Correct Percentage

R = Correct answers

N = Total Questions

Table 1. The Students Capable Of Reading Sentences Using Phonetic Transcription

Number of correct participants	Total Participant	Percentage of correct pronunciation
18	25	72% (FAIR)

As shown in table 1, there were 25 participants following the research test by sending their sample voice in WhatsApp using voice note. After conducting the research, the researcher found that there were 18 participants who managed to read the three sentences correctly. Most participants managed to read the first sentence which was actually written as "Phonetic is the study of speech sounds." In the first number, the researcher found that this sentence could still be comprehended, but there were some participants who did not understand the word 'ev' and read it with the other word pronunciation. In the second sentence, the participant reads the sentence that is actually written as "Some people think phonetic is very interesting". In this sentence, there were also many participants who were able to read the sentence well. since the participants are students in the English department, there are still many who can read it. Then in the third sentence, the researcher also found that many participants could read it, but there were also participants who misread one or two words in this sentence. However, the researcher concludes that if there are one or two wrong words it does not make him incapacitated. Therefore researchers still consider capable people who read it if it only has one or two errors in reading. From the results obtained there were 18 participants out of a total of 25 participants who were classified as able to read sentences that had used Phonetic transcription. The results obtained are then processed using the Arikunto scale and so the results of the study are the number of correct participants multiplied by 100% and then divided by the total Participant. so that it was found that there were 72% of participants who were classified as able to read English sentences who had used Phonetic transcription.

Table 2. The Students Capable Of Reading The Sentence Using Phonetic Transcription

Number of correct participants	Total Participant	Percentage of correct pronunciation
7	25	28% (FAIR)

As shown in table 2, there are seven participants who are unable to read sentences with Phonetic transcription properly. Some participants have not even tried to read it via voice note but stated that they are unable to read it instead. Some participants read well but there were many mistakes found in their sentences. To find out the percentage, the researcher used the Arikunto scale by multiplying the number of participants by 100%, then the results were divided by the total number of participants. it was found that there were as many as 28% of participants who were categorized as Incapable. From here the researcher concluded that there were fewer participants who could not read sentences with Phonetic transcription.

It was found that the number of the participants who can read the sentences with phonetic symbols correctly indicated that there were more participants who are able to read sentences with Phonetic transcription. It should be underlined that data collection is also based on the researcher's policy, where participants who have one or two errors in reading sentences are also classified as participants who are capable. Meanwhile, participants who could read a few words but read more incorrectly or could not read them at all were categorized as incapacitated. It was found that as many as 72% of the participants were able to read English sentences with Phonetic transcription correctly and as many as 28% were unable. Eventually, It can be concluded that Phonetic Symbol and Phonetic transcription are effective for use by EFL students who want to read English sentences correctly.

CONCLUSION

In Conclusion, phonetic symbols are one of the tools to help students learn English as a foreign language. in this study aimed to find out whether phonetic symbols are effective in helping students to pronounce and speak English. This study took 4th semester students in the English Department at State Islamic University of North Sumatra as participants. This study involved four classes in the English department which each had representatives as participants. The participants were not told anything about phonetic symbols so they read those sentences to the best of their ability and pure understanding. After collecting the data, it was

found that 72% of the total 25 participants were categorized as being able to read English sentences with phonetic transcription. While 28% of the total participants were categorized as unable to read those sentences. from the results obtained, finally it can be concluded that Phonetic Symbols are effective in helping students to pronounce and read difficult sentences in English this is evidenced by the large number of participants who were able to read the sentences correctly considering that English and their mother tongue have a pronunciation and different system or reading rules. This also indicates that Phonetic transcription can be used by students learning English as a foreign language to improve their reading skills. so that EFL students can easily learn English pronunciation in the native way.

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