

EFL Students' Perspective In Learning Phonetic Symbols

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Abstract. *Phonetic symbols are symbols used to explain how a sound is formed. Phonetic symbols can help students explain the different sounds of various English words. The purpose of this study is to find out students' perspectives on learning phonetic symbols. This research uses descriptive qualitative to find English Foreign Language (EFL) students' perspectives on learning phonetic symbols. Data was collected through a questionnaire created with google form that the writes has calculated and analyzed. The results show that students' perspectives are positive in learning phonetic symbol, and earning phonetic symbols, students feel helped in pronunciation and make it easier for them to distinguish each word that has the same pronunciation. Even though many students agree that learning phonetic symbols is difficult, they also strongly agree that learning phonetic symbols can help them speak English better. With this paper, the writers hope that students are able to apply phonetic symbol learning in English language activities so that English pronunciation becomes better.*

Keywords : phonetic symbols, student, perspective, pronunciation, learning

Abstrak. *Phonetic symbol atau simbol fonetik adalah simbol yang digunakan untuk menjelaskan gimana suatu bunyi terbentuk. Phonetic symbol dapat membantu siswa dalam menjelaskan perbedaan bunyi dari berbagai kata bahasa Inggris. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui perspektif siswa tentang belajar phonetic symbol. Penelitian ini menggunakan kualitatif deskriptif untuk menemukan perspektif siswa English Foreign Language (EFL) tentang belajar phonetic symbol. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner yang dibuat dengan google form yang telah penulis hitung dan analisis. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa perspektif siswa adalah positif dalam belajar phonetic symbol. Serta dengan belajar phonetic symbol siswa merasa terbantu dalam pengucapan dan memudahkan mereka membedakan tiap kata yang pengucapan sama. Walaupun banyak siswa yang setuju bahwa belajar phonetic symbol itu sulit tetapi mereka juga sangat setuju jika belajar phonetic symbol dapat membantu mereka dalam berbahasa Inggris lebih baik lagi. Dengan tulisan ini penulis berharap siswa mampu menerapkan belajar phonetic symbol dalam kegiatan berbahasa Inggris agar pengucapan bahasa Inggris menjadi lebih baik.*

Kata kunci: phonetic symbol, siswa, perspektif, pengucapan, belajar

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INTRODUCTION

People are definitely adjusting to learning English well as it is one of the requirements for this era. English is being taught and used as a secondary language in Indonesia both through digital and traditional media channels. As it is one of the basic needs for self-development in a professional work, English is important. Furthermore, Rini (2014) argues that learning English is important because it can lead to higher income and better job prospects. This makes many universities in Indonesia compete to establish English departments or study programs that will prepare and educate students to understand the language.

Speaking in English is a talent that could effectively show how successfully a learner manages to learn a second language. Students who want to speak English more fluently obviously need to have good pronunciation (Janu (2020). According to Gilakjani (2016), clear pronunciation is one of the most important components of language training and one of the basic requirements of a learner's ability. Varasarini (2007) adds that mastering speaking skills in a second language requires one to master the pronunciation. Therefore, others can understand one's views, ideas, and such by having excellent pronunciation or proper English sounds (ASC English, 2020). However, as with any development, students must lay the foundation to understand the topic they want to master. In this situation, students must know the International Phonetics Alphabet (IPA) in order to pronounce English words correctly.

According to Szczeniak and Porzuczek (2019), students will benefit from practicing their pronunciation in addition to learning how to apply the International Phonetic Alphabet to represent English sounds. In other words, to create accurate pronunciation, students must learn how to use IPA. Moreover, if these requirements are not understood, students cannot improve their pronunciation. This is consistent with the researchers' findings that a number of English language learners continue to experience challenges or problems, such as forgetting how to use certain symbols, lacking motivation or expertise, or appearing to underestimate IPA.

Because of these problems and difficulties, the researchers decided to conduct this study, which tries to understand and analyze the factors that might cause the difficulties experienced by English education students in speaking English words. The purpose of the writers conducting this study is to find out the students' perspectives on learning phonetic symbols.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

The phonetic alphabet is referred to as IPA. IPA provides an explanation of the normal phonetic symbols for each English alphabet. Latin symbols are usually used to write IPA symbols. IPA is considered the norm in linguistics. However, there is also an American phonetic alphabet because typing IPA symbols on popular signs can be difficult due to the shortcomings of IPA. by using making the customers learn the transcription written incorrectly, IPA also increases the error rate (Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers & IEEE Signal Processing Society, 2007).

In agreement with Brown (2012), the global Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) is a group of symbols designed to represent the unique sounds of language. After the submission of the IPA as a letter to Paul Passy of the Global Phonetic Association, this work was carried out in the late 19th century using AJ Ellis, Henry Sweet, Daniel Jones, and Passy, in line with Britannica. Otto Jespersen became the first person to define this concept. The IPA concept tries to help people avoid mistakes or misunderstandings as a result of ambiguous common spellings used in each language by providing a common spelling for spoken language. Moreover, the character transcription system is supposed to be replaced by using this concept. The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) originally debuted in 1888, and during the 20th and 21st centuries, extensive improvements have been made to the IPA to make it better (Britannica, n.d.). The vowel, diphthong, and consonant symbols that make up the IPA are divided into the following three (3) groups. Each type has specific characteristics that affect how words are pronounced.

METHOD

This research was conducted using a qualitative method to find out students' perspectives on learning phonetics symbols. The data were described qualitatively based on students' experiences in learning phonetic symbols. Data was taken from this study using a questionnaire distributed to respondents in the form of Google Forms. Sampling was done by random sampling using quota sampling. Random sampling is the taking of sample members from a population that is carried out randomly without regard to the strata in that population (Sugiyono, 2017). Researchers have determined 30 people to fill out a questionnaire that has been given to respondents containing statements that researchers have provided. The purpose of this study is to find out students' views on learning phonetic symbols.

The research data were analyzed using percentages because a person's level of agreement or disagreement with an object can be measured using a Likert scale to find out their perceptions of their views in learning phonetics students. Each statement in the questionnaire accompanying the survey will be scored based on how strongly the respondent agrees or disagrees with the statement, using the following scale: (1). strongly agree = 50, (2). agree = 40, (3). neutral = 30, (4). disagree = 20, and (5). strongly disagree = 10. According to (Azhuri et al., 2021), positive statements were given a positive score. Conversely, negative statements are given negative values.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The data from this study that has been collected will analyze the answers from the questionnaires that have been answered by the students. The result of this study shows the students' perspective toward learning phonetic symbols.

Table.1 shows the results of the data obtained by computing the percentage of the students' total answers. The data results are divided into five sections based on the responses given by the students, and then the results are grouped based on the scores given. The responses are divided into five categories: strongly disagree (10), disagree (20), neutral (30), agree (40), and strongly agree (50).

Table.1 Students' Perspective In Learning Phonetic Symbols

No	Statment of Quesioner	50	40	30	20	10
1	Learning phonetic symbols is difficult	23,3%	60%	16,7%	0%	0%
2	Learning phonetic symbols allows students tobecome morecomprehensible English speakers	16,7%	53,3%	30%	0%	0%
3	Learning phonetic symbols is important	46,7%	36,7%	16,7%	0%	0%
4	Learning phonetic symbols is beneficial to English language acquisition	23,3%	46,7%	30%	0%	0%
5	Phonetic symbols make it easier to pronounce English words easily.	30%	46,7%	23,3%	0%	0%
6	Phonetics symbol is very effective to improve pronunciation.	23,3%	46,7%	30%	0%	0%
7	Learning phonetic symbol can improve your listening skills	20%	43,3%	33,3%	3,3%	0%

In the questionnaire results, it can be seen that the majority of students 'strongly agree' and 'agree' with the statements in the questionnaire. The questionnaire results show a positive opinion toward learning phonetic symbols. Learning phonetic symbols helps students in English pronunciation, especially for those who are EFL students, as the phonetic symbols help students to distinguish the same pronunciation. Although many students' perspectives agree that learning phonetic symbols is difficult. However, students also feel that learning phonetic symbols is very important to learn and makes it easier for them to understand English speakers.

According to previous research (Putri, 2018) in a thesis entitled "EFL Students' Perception Towards IPA Symbols As Pronunciation Learning System" concluded that students provided very positive responses about the use of science symbols because they believed that it could improve their oral skills and techniques for learning pronunciation.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This research shows the importance of learning phonetic symbols from the student's perspective. The results obtained on average EFL students agree and strongly agree on the importance of learning phonetic symbols. In addition, EFL students also agree and strongly agree that phonetic symbols help them improve pronunciation and make it easier for them to listen because English is not their native language so learning phonetic symbols can help in pronunciation.

In addition, this study purpose to find out the perceptions of EFL students in learning phonetic symbols, and the results of the students give a positive view of learning phonetic symbols. Even though many of the students thought that learning phonetic symbols is difficult they also said that phonetic symbols can help them with oral skills when they find the same pronunciation. Learning phonetic symbols is expected that students can learn and practice to improve their ability in English pronunciation, Students can also increase their knowledge by reading articles related to phonetic symbols which may be able to find new things or differences from other researchers that are not discussed by the writers in this article which still has limitations.

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