

THE ROLE OF ALPHABET IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

The alphabet serves as a fundamental foundation in language learning and communication. This study aims to explore the role of the alphabet in building literacy skills, enhancing language comprehension, and strengthening communication abilities. Through literature review and case studies, the research finds that mastery of the alphabet facilitates the recognition of language structures, improves reading and writing skills, and supports vocabulary development. Additionally, the alphabet functions as a universal tool that enables effective message delivery, both in verbal and written communication. The study concludes that a strong understanding of the alphabet is a key element for successful language learning and cross-cultural communication. Recommendations are provided to optimize the teaching of the alphabet in various educational contexts.

Keywords: Alphabet, Communication, Writing Systems.

ABSTRAK

Abjad berfungsi sebagai fondasi fundamental dalam pembelajaran bahasa dan komunikasi. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi peran abjad dalam membangun keterampilan literasi, meningkatkan pemahaman bahasa, dan memperkuat kemampuan komunikasi. Melalui tinjauan pustaka dan studi kasus, penelitian menemukan bahwa penguasaan abjad memfasilitasi pengenalan struktur bahasa, meningkatkan keterampilan membaca dan menulis, dan mendukung pengembangan kosa kata. Selain itu, abjad berfungsi sebagai alat universal yang memungkinkan penyampaian pesan yang efektif, baik dalam komunikasi lisan maupun tertulis. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa pemahaman yang kuat tentang abjad merupakan elemen kunci untuk pembelajaran bahasa dan komunikasi lintas budaya yang sukses. Rekomendasi diberikan untuk mengoptimalkan pengajaran abjad dalam berbagai konteks pendidikan.

Kata Kunci: Alfabet, Komunikasi, Sistem Penulisan.

INTRODUCTION

The alphabet is a collection of letters or characters used to describe the phonemic structure of a language. The alphabet is usually arranged in a certain order, such as A, B, C, and so on.

The alphabet functions as a means of language, both for spoken and written varieties. Examples of its use in written varieties, such as on billboards, newspapers, books, and chats.

The word "alphabet" itself is a compound word derived from the first two letters of the Greek alphabet, namely "alpha" and "beta". The Phoenician alphabet developed in 1400 BC is thought to be the first alphabet in the world.

The alphabet is the basic foundation of the writing system in many languages. Each alphabet consists of symbols that represent specific sounds (phonemes), allowing humans to record and convey ideas in writing. In language learning and communication, the alphabet has a central role as it is, The first step to understanding the structure of language

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English is an international language, which recently plays an important role in communication. Therefore, English pronunciation, including the understanding of English phonology system is very important for students who learn English as a second or foreign language. Huwingz (2004) mentioned that pronunciation is important for speaking and listening in communication.

Having phonetic knowledge helps learners gain knowledge of the organs of speech, and places of articulation to make accurate English sounds. The more students can understand and pronounce words phonetically and correctly, the more likely they are to be able to pronounce English like native speakers. pronunciation skills by using English phonetic alphabet exercises to help them pronounce English correctly and effectively. The purpose of this study is to investigate how English phonetic alphabet exercises help the improvement of students' English pronunciation skills and become a guideline to improve students' English pronunciation.

METHOD

This study applied mixed methods to investigate the improvement of students' English pronunciation skills by using English phonetic alphabet exercises. having phonetic knowledge helps learners gain knowledge of the organs of speech, and places of articulation to make accurate English sounds. The more students can understand and pronounce words phonetically and correctly, the more likely they are to be able to pronounce English like native speakers. pronunciation skills by using English phonetic alphabet exercises to help them pronounce English correctly and effectively.

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This research applied mix-methods to investigate the improvement of students' English pronunciation skills by using the English phonetic alphabet drills.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results were divided into consonant pronunciation, voicing, vowel pronunciation, observation results, focus group interview results.

The English consonant pronunciation was divided into consonant pronunciation before and after applying the English phonetic alphabet d rills.

Table 1. Mean and Standard Deviation of English consonant pronunciation classified by initial consonants, medial consonant, and final consonants before using the English phonetic alphabet drills

Consonants distinguished by manner of articulation	Initial consonant			Medial consonant			Final consonant			Total		
	\bar{x}	SD	$\bar{x}\%$	\bar{x}	SD	$\bar{x}\%$	\bar{x}	SD	$\bar{x}\%$	\bar{x}	SD	$\bar{x}\%$
1. Stop	0.713	0.219	71.3	0.774	0.293	77.4	0.249	0.332	24.9	0.579	0.251	57.9
2. Fricative	0.533	0.222	53.3	0.497	0.223	49.7	0.277	0.362	27.7	0.436	0.260	43.6
3. Affricate	0.505	0.309	50.5	0.450	0.397	45.0	0.319	0.413	31.9	0.425	0.331	42.5
4. Nasal	0.371	0.456	37.1	0.429	0.384	42.9	0.111	0.214	11.1	0.304	0.302	30.4
5. Lateral	0.305	0.438	30.5	0.300	0.441	30.0	0.152	0.317	15.2	0.302	0.432	30.2
6. Approximate	0.435	0.211	43.5	0.448	0.238	44.8	0.162	0.365	16.2	0.348	0.227	34.8

Table 2. Mean and Standard Deviation of English consonant pronunciation classified by initial consonants, middle consonants, and final consonants after using the English phonetic alphabet drills

Consonants distinguished by manner of articulation	Initial consonant			Medial consonant			Final consonant			Total		
	\bar{x}	SD	$\bar{x}\%$	\bar{x}	SD	$\bar{x}\%$	\bar{x}	SD	$\bar{x}\%$	\bar{x}	SD	$\bar{x}\%$
1. Stop	0.951	0.111	95.1	0.950	0.118	95.0	0.862	0.203	86.2	0.921	0.123	92.1
2. Fricative	0.781	0.236	78.1	0.790	0.238	79.0	0.739	0.284	73.9	0.770	0.249	77.0
3. Affricate	0.781	0.236	78.1	0.857	0.245	85.7	0.833	0.221	83.3	0.838	0.215	83.8
4. Nasal	0.905	0.468	90.5	0.857	0.243	85.7	0.816	0.275	81.6	0.804	0.314	80.4
5. Lateral	0.914	0.284	91.4	0.914	0.284	91.4	0.810	0.336	81.0	0.879	0.283	87.9
6. Approximate	0.825	0.250	82.5	0.852	0.372	85.2	0.571	0.447	57.1	0.734	0.267	73.4

From Table 2 it can be said that the most problematic sound of English pronunciation students made after using English phonetic alphabet drills was in the final position. Overall, the approximate sounds were the most problematic sound, followed by fricative sounds, lateral sounds, nasal sounds, affricate sounds, and stop sounds, respectively. On the other hand, students could pronounce stop sounds accurately in the initial position

0	Pre-test			Post-test			t-test	Df	Sig.
	\bar{x}	SD	$\bar{x}\%$	\bar{x}	SD	$\bar{x}\%$			
Monophthong	0.390	0.282	39.0	0.798	0.281	79.8	8.774	34	0.000**
Front vowel	0.483	0.344	48.3	0.821	0.283	82.1	6.955	34	0.000**
/i/	0.546	0.450	54.6	0.843	0.339	84.3	4.196	34	0.000**
/I/	0.488	0.401	48.8	0.729	0.373	72.9	4.142	34	0.000**
/e/	0.543	0.435	54.3	0.886	0.280	88.6	4.955	34	0.000**
/æ/	0.354	0.326	35.4	0.825	0.272	82.5	8.808	34	0.000**
Central vowel	0.344	0.287	34.4	0.773	0.289	77.3	8.113	34	0.000**
/ɜ/	0.421	0.403	42.1	0.850	0.310	85.0	6.047	34	0.000**
/ʌ/	0.200	0.320	20.0	0.643	0.401	64.3	6.741	34	0.000**
/ə/	0.229	0.363	22.9	0.764	0.306	76.4	8.548	34	0.000**
/a/	0.525	0.336	52.5	0.836	0.276	83.6	4.632	34	0.000**
Back Vowel	0.343	0.294	34.3	0.800	0.301	80.0	8.038	34	0.000**
/u/	0.361	0.357	36.1	0.721	0.352	72.1	5.251	34	0.000**
/ʊ/	0.364	0.374	36.4	0.811	0.341	81.1	5.830	34	0.000**
/ɔ/	0.450	0.359	45.0	0.814	0.328	81.4	5.797	34	0.000**
/ɒ/	0.196	0.349	19.6	0.854	0.293	85.4	9.684	34	0.000**
Diphthong	0.227	0.332	22.7	0.614	0.399	61.4	6.765	34	0.000**
/aI/	0.189	0.366	18.9	0.629	0.430	62.9	6.229	34	0.000**
/ao/	0.200	0.339	20.0	0.604	0.441	60.4	6.093	34	0.000**
/ɔI/	0.282	0.413	28.2	0.611	0.459	61.1	4.626	34	0.000**
/eI/	0.204	0.352	20.4	0.621	0.404	62.1	6.273	34	0.000**
/eə/	0.336	0.415	33.6	0.604	0.446	60.4	3.996	34	0.000**
/əʊ/	0.196	0.368	19.6	0.600	0.452	60.0	5.499	34	0.000**
/Iə/	0.182	0.364	18.2	0.629	0.437	62.9	6.156	34	0.000**

The study also shows the results of diphthong pronunciation of students before using the English vowel alphabet drill. The findings of diphthongs pronunciation showed that the accuracy of students before using the English vowel alphabet drill was at 22.7% and after using the drill was at 61.4% with statistically significant at 0.01 (Sig.=0.000). The students were able to pronounce /eə/ at 33.6%, /ɔI/ at 28.2%, /eI/ at 20.4%, /ao/ at 20.0%, /əʊ/ at 19.6%, /aI/ at 18.9%, and /Iə/ at 18.2%. After using the English vowel alphabet drill, students were able to pronounce diphthong more accurately, which are as follows, /aI/ and /Iə/ at 62.9%, /eI/ at 62.1%, /ao/, and /eə/ at 60.4%, /ɔI/ at 61.1%, and /əʊ/ at 60% respectively.

CONCLUSION

This study applied English phonetic alphabet drills to improve students' English consonant and vowel pronunciation. The results showed that students were able to pronounce English consonants and vowels more accurately after applying the drills, but the

nasal sound in final position, and the lateral sound in the initial and the medial position were still the problematic sounds. For English vowel sounds, central and back vowels were the problematic sounds for students. It was clear that students had difficulties pronouncing voiced sounds. The results of the observation and the focus group interview found the causes of pronunciation errors were from the differences in sound system between Thai and English, including structure and patterns, manners of articulation, mother tongue interference, and inconsistency of English sounds and spelling. Therefore, to improve English pronunciation especially consonant and vowel is important to have an appropriate way. English phonetic alphabet drills effected the students' pronunciation development. It can be said that if students have phonetic knowledge, their pronunciation can be improved. Moreover, students should pay attention to their pronunciation learning strategies. In light of the finding of this study, we suggest further studies should drive the motivation and good attitude about English competence and pronunciation, provide a wide and interesting variety of listening, speaking and pronunciation drills in stress and intonation and interesting English pronunciation activities to develop students' pronunciation skills in higher level. Additionally, English instructors should provide a conducive English learning environment for students such as technology-aided instruction set in a classroom, and various educational materials. Improving English pronunciation has to take time to see the obvious changes, so we suggest the researchers should be concerned about the duration of the study in this field, including instruments in the study.

We use the third method in Table 3 to improve communication between people by improving the pronunciation of each letter of the alphabet. Because if there is one letter that is mispronounced then, communication between people can be damaged, because of the difference in understanding between the listener and the pronunciation. Where the speaker says something (in the wrong pronunciation) then the listener will catch different things. Therefore, to prevent this from happening, this method is needed in communication.

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