

THE ROLE OF VOWEL SOUND IN ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

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ABSTRAK

Jurnal ini mengeksplorasi peran bunyi vokal dalam struktur linguistik dan komunikasi, dengan fokus pada pengucapan bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan fonetik dan fonologis untuk memahami bagaimana kualitas bunyi vokal memengaruhi komunikasi. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan tentang bagaimana perbedaan bunyi vokal mempengaruhi persepsi dan interpretasi. Penelitian ini juga menyoroti implikasi untuk pembelajaran bahasa, khususnya meningkatkan pelafalan pelajar bahasa Inggris. Jurnal ini bertujuan untuk mengembangkan strategi pengajaran untuk membantu pelajar mengatasi kesulitan dalam memproduksi bunyi vokal yang tepat, sehingga memperkaya pengalaman belajar.

Jurnal ini meneliti peran bunyi vokal dalam linguistik dan fonetik, dengan fokus pada frekuensi, durasi, dan kualitasnya. Jurnal ini juga meneliti dampaknya terhadap pembelajaran bahasa, yang menunjukkan bahwa memahami fonetik bunyi vokal dapat meningkatkan kemampuan pengucapan dan pemahaman. Temuan ini dapat memandu pengembangan metode dan sumber daya pengajaran yang efektif untuk penutur asli dan pelajar, sehingga mendukung pengembangan kurikulum linguistik dan metode pengajaran yang memenuhi kebutuhan komunikatif yang beragam.

Kata kunci : *Peran, Vokal Bunyi dan Pengucapan.*

ABSTRACT

This journal explores the role of vowel sounds in linguistic structures and communication, focusing on English pronunciation. It uses phonetic and phonological approaches to understand how vowel sound quality affects communication. The study provides insights into how vowel sound differences affect perception and interpretation. It also highlights the implications for language learning, particularly improving English learners' pronunciation. The journal aims to develop teaching strategies to help learners overcome difficulties in producing appropriate vowel sounds, enriching the learning experience.

This journal examines the role of vowel sounds in linguistics and phonetics, focusing on their frequency, duration, and quality. It also examines their impact on language learning, suggesting that understanding vowel sound phonetics can improve pronunciation and comprehension skills. The findings can guide the development of effective teaching methods and resources for native speakers and learners, thereby supporting the development of linguistic curricula and teaching methods that cater to diverse communicative needs.

Keywords: *Role, Vowel Sound, and Pronunciation.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of learning a foreign language in addition to in everyday interactions, pronunciation is essential for language competency. Correct recording of sounds improves confidence in interacting

while simultaneously improving understanding and expressiveness. As a result, learning about and conducting research on pronunciation is crucial to the development of language competence.

Pronunciation is a crucial skill for students, and teachers must help them improve their pronunciation abilities. However, English language sounds and patterns can cause problems, and teaching strategies need to be innovative. Pronunciation teaching involves presenting new words, sentence patterns, and practice activities. Many teachers avoid teaching pronunciation due to difficulties in teaching, creating lessons around pronunciation points, feeling underprepared, and struggling with the phonetic alphabet. Some teachers are unwilling to teach pronunciation due to lack of mandatory curriculum guidelines.

Accurate pronunciation is crucial for clear communication and avoiding misunderstandings in a foreign language. However, many language instructors overlook this skill, focusing on grammar or vocabulary. English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in Costa Rica are not immersed in native English speakers, making it essential for them to improve their pronunciation. The Ministry of Education (MEP) in Costa Rica has reported that 20,7% of English teachers scored in the lowest levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. This indicates that many students graduate without mastering the language, negatively impacting high school students. Researchers at the University of Costa Rica conducted a longitudinal study to identify specific deficiencies in the pronunciation of vowel sounds in English teaching students. The study analyzed the pronunciation of students in the first, second, and third years of their major and recorded their pronunciation evolution over the years 2015, 2016, and 2017. The study also sought to gather students' and professors' perceptions of pronunciation difficulty to compare results with recordings.

Vowel sounds are crucial in language formation and teaching, providing expressive richness and shaping phonological identity. Understanding their characteristics is essential for linguistics and language learning. Vowel sounds are defined by quality, quantity, and articulation position. They impact foreign language teaching, speech recognition technology, and natural language processing. This journal investigates vowel sounds, covering phonetic and phonological characteristics, interlanguage differences, and applications in teaching and technology.

Vowel sound study not only helps in linguistic needs but also has implications for communication and language development. It helps in understanding the structure of language, improving effective communication, teaching using languages more efficiently, contributing to the development of sound technology, and aiding in multilingual and multicultural research. Vowel sound study also aids in understanding linguistic and socio-cultural aspects related to sound usage.

2. LITERATUR RIVIEW

Vowel sounds play a crucial role in English pronunciation, enabling proper identification, understanding regional accents, and sentence intonation. Understanding their structure, including long and short vowels, is essential for improved pronunciation. Effective teaching methods, such as auditory training and technology integration, can help improve pronunciation skills. A comprehensive understanding of vowel sounds can lead to significant progress in English pronunciation.

2.1 Vowel Sounds: Basics and Classification

2.1.1 Definition and Function of Vowel Sounds: Role in Phonology and Phonetics

Vowel sounds are essential in phonetic systems and phonology, forming phonemes and forming word patterns. They are produced without obstruction in the vocal tract, with the tongue and lips moving unhindered. Vowel sounds are identified and analyzed in phonetics, examining their articulatory and acoustic characteristics. The study of phonetics also examines the dynamics of production, examining how the tongue, lips, and other vocal tracts interact to produce various vowel sounds.

2.1.2 Classification of Vowel Sounds: Types Based on Their Phonetic Qualities and Attributes.

Vowel sound classification helps identify differences and similarities between different types of sounds. Key dimensions include tense and loose vowels, rounded and unrounded vowels, and unrounded and rounded vowels. Vowel sound quality is determined by the acoustic and articulatory characteristics of the vowel sound. Phonemic attributes include tongue height, which indicates the tongue's position when pronouncing a vowel sound, and back or front of tongue, which indicates the horizontal position of the tongue when pronouncing a vowel sound. Understanding these aspects helps in recognizing the diversity of vowel sounds within a phonetic system.

2.2 Variations in Vowel Sound Quality

2.2.1 Dimensions of Variation in Vowel Sounds: Investigating Tongue Height, Lip Position, and Vowel Length

Vowel sounds are diverse in quality and physical dimensions, affecting how they are produced and understood. Research on factors like tongue height, lip position, and vowel length provides insight into their complexity. Tongue height-low affects the quality of vowels, while lip position affects the rounding and quality of vowels. Vowel length, the duration of a sound's pronunciation, can affect the meaning of words.

2.2.2 Implications on Word Formation: Demonstrates how variation in vowel sound quality affects word meaning.

Vowel sound quality significantly impacts word formation and lexical structure. Quality variability creates variation in syllables, affecting word meaning. Changes in vowel sound quality can result in minimal pairs, where a single vowel phoneme can significantly change meaning. Vowel quality also influences affixation and morphology, as seen in the comparison between "sing" and "song." Understanding these effects is crucial for effective language development.

2.3 Phonological Analysis:

2.3.1 Role in Word Structure: Discusses how vowel sounds shape word patterns and structure.

Vowel sounds significantly influence word structure and phonological richness in a language system. They create continuity and contrast between words, define morphology and phonology, and help group morphemes into specific categories. Vowel sound patterns also determine syllable strength, impacting word structure. Some languages have a close relationship with vowel sounds and phonetic script

structure. Vowel sounds also influence the formation of absorbed words, enriching vocabulary and demonstrating their role in word development.

2.3.2 Impact on Phoneme Identification: Explains the relationship between variation in vowel sound quality and phoneme identification.

Vowel sound quality significantly impacts phoneme identification in a language's phonological system. Variations in vowel sound quality can form phonemic contrasts and distinguish words. Phonemic distribution can be affected by these variations, especially in certain contexts or positions. Allophones and complementary distributions can also be influenced by these variations. Interdisciplinary studies and understanding of production and perception contribute to the role of phonetics and phonology in phoneme identification.

2.4 Regional and Social Factors in Variation:

2.4.1 Dialectal Differences: Investigates vowel sound variation in the context of regional dialects.

Regional dialects create phonetic diversity in vowel sound pronunciation, reflecting a region's linguistic richness. Research on dialectal differences in vowel sound quality offers insight into the complexity of language variation. Geographical and cultural factors in dialects influence vowel sound characteristics, which can be a strong feature of regional identity. Dialects often have unique vowel sound patterns, such as tongue height, lip position, and vowel length. Some vowel sound variations in dialects can have historical roots and create unique community identity. Comparative study of dialects often involves phonetic analysis to understand differences and similarities in vowel sounds.

2.4.2 Sociolinguistic Aspects: Explores the role of social factors in shaping vowel sound variation.

Vowel sound variation is influenced by phonetic and phonological factors, as well as complex social factors. Social class, education, speech style, social context, ethnic and cultural group influences, regional variation, migration dynamics, and accent analysis are all key factors in shaping vowel sound patterns. These factors can be influenced by social class, education, speech style, social situation, ethnic and cultural group influences, and the connection between accent and identity.

2.5 Teaching and Learning:

2.5.1 Teaching Strategies: Presents teaching strategies to improve accurate pronunciation of vowel sounds.

Teaching accurate pronunciation of vowel sounds is crucial for developing students' speaking skills. Effective teaching strategies include using interactive activities to understand the position of the tongue, lips, and vocal tract when pronouncing vowel sounds. Listening and imitating are also essential for teaching pronunciation. Production and recording activities allow students to practice pronunciation with guidance and identify areas for improvement. Technology utilization, such as apps and online

resources, can be used to practice pronunciation. Continuous support, such as constructive feedback and sharing additional teaching resources, is also essential for continuous improvement.

2.5.2 Technology in Learning: Assesses the role of technology in supporting vowel sound learning.

Vowel sound learning is a crucial aspect of phonetics and language teaching, and technology has significantly impacted the educational landscape. Interactive apps and software, audio-visual devices, e-learning platforms, in-depth digital resources, and wearable technology devices all play a role in helping students understand and practice vowel sounds. Interactive apps like vowel articulation simulators, speech games, and transcription apps help students compare their pronunciation with correct models. Audio-visual devices like video tutorials and animations help visualize the position of the tongue, lips, and airflow in producing specific vowel sounds. Wearable technology devices, like sensors connected to phonetic apps, provide immediate feedback to improve articulation techniques.

CONCLUSION

Vowel sounds significantly impact language pronunciation, causing errors that can affect communication. Understanding the phonetic and phonological aspects of vowel sounds is crucial for developing pronunciation skills. Studying vowel sounds helps foreign language speakers adjust to the target language, understanding differences between sounds that may not exist in their home language. Research also provides insights into pronunciation variations in different dialects, especially in globalization and cross-cultural interactions.

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