

LEARNING PHONEME IDENTIFICATION USING READING ALOUD TECHNIQUE: EFL LEARNERS' PERCEPTION

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Abstract

This research proposed to figure out about students' perception in learning phoneme identification using reading aloud. The research is a descriptive qualitative research. The research involved 17 students as the respondents. The researchers utilized questionnaires and interview in collecting the data. The results of this research revealed that most of the respondents (76.47%) had positive responses toward the use of reading aloud. The data from interview also revealed several benefits that the students obtained after learning by using Reading aloud such as having new knowledge in pronouncing each phoneme properly, reading aloud offers not only joyful but also enthusiasm booster in learning, by reading aloud, students can identify their own mispronunciation, and reading aloud has an imitation method which help students in sharpening students' oral-fluency.

Keywords: Reading Aloud; Phoneme Identification; Perception

INTRODUCTION

Since the status of English in Indonesia is as a foreign language, mastery English definitely needs mastering the four skills. One of them is reading skill which is particularly important for English as a foreign language (EFL) in Indonesia. Moreover, reading skill is really necessary for students' performance in their language learning process, especially English. Reading skill really needs the ability about how sound of words is manipulated and processed to pronounce words properly (Ariati, 2020). Identifying sound included as Phonemic awareness (PhA) skill, because decoding words is done by identifying and knowing individual phonemes (Erickson, 2021).

PhA is the understanding that words are constructed from phoneme and being proclaimed as basic awareness of speech sound covered by umbrella of phonological awareness (Mramboa & Ligembe, 2022). PhA is measured by segmentation, identification, blending, and deletion in phonemes from a word or syllable (Irnanda, 2018; Rokhman, 2022). While people gets mispronounce, it can affect to the words' meaning. That is why identifying phoneme is being one of the essential aspect to learn. The phoneme identification assignment should be like a student finding the letter 'b' and sounding /b/ (Simmons, 2021), recognizing letter 'a' and sounding it 'æ' in word 'cat'. Other example which is explained like students knowing what the first sound in word 'pen' is (Cardis & Fastame, 2023).

Phoneme is described as the smallest unit of sound, teaches students to understand sound relation with its letter representation (Alhumsi, 2020). Hence, it can be concluded that each letter is differentiated by a particular sound which performs students to identify the vocabularies (Alhumsi, 2020). Additionally, there are numerous factors contribute in affecting students' awareness towards speech sound. They are from Mramboa & Ligembe (2022) that declare several factors affect students' ability in awareness of speech sound.

1. The students experience difficulties in pronouncing words such as consonant & in decoding digraphs, using irregular Grapheme phoneme correspondences (GPC) to recognize the silent sounds and in o decoding words.
2. The students mix the phonemes like their outcome because of their mother tongue impact.
3. The students represent other words to show their confusion about the similar in the way the words are sounded or pronounced.
4. The students can integrate with written materials, digging up language by themselves to get into familiarity by using chosen books, newspapers, dictionaries, and surfing internet.
5. Sufficient drilling on sounds should be done on students so as make them possessing more awareness on English.

There are various ways to teach phonemic awareness toward students. Even though, there are certain methods are developmentally agreed by lots of educators, yet those should be flexibly combined by teacher's own creativity, strengthened by Copple & Bredekamp (2009) in (Simmons, 2021). Firstly, Reading aloud and following by identifying phoneme with each group start by reading aloud, thereafter followed by students identifying beginning and ending sounds written on a poster and completing a worksheet (Erickson, 2021). Secondly, Utilizing minimal pairs and minimal sets. The teacher provides minimal pair and set words which have only one similar sound. Initial, medial, or final are not specified. Afterwards, the student identifies the sound which shows the set or pair (Firdaus, 2022).

Reading aloud technique is always connected majority with pronunciation (Faraby & Kamaruddin, 2021). Furthermore, early graders genuinely used to be assisted by PhA in passing reading skill performance because PhA was acquainted with sound manipulation (Allouh, 2021). While, other researches used to link PhA with early graders and pronunciation with reading aloud technique, this researcher is going to observe phoneme identification through students pronunciation in EFL teenager learners as the students as Wardana et al (2022) claims that using phonological awareness approach in fixing the errors of elements of speech sound to encourage learners' accurate pronunciation, furthermore reading aloud as the media in phoneme identification' classroom activity.

Reading aloud facilitates both teacher and students in doing their own roles whilst reading aloud. By implementing reading aloud, student can carefully handle their sound producing by themselves, meanwhile teacher can immediately recognize students' failure in producing sound of words then giving them feedback. Cameron (2001) in Prihlaksono (2019) states about the effectiveness of reading aloud that beneficial on children in four English. Therefore, reading aloud also has huge advantages for EFL learners. Seeing that they also have the early phase of English learning, then they need to.

Nevertheless, reading aloud also offers several merits and demerits such as (Gibson, 2008) supervising pronunciation & intonation included discovering pronunciation issue and fluency improvement as a method (Pratama, 2022; Syiyami et al, 2021), while reading aloud students has occasion in obtaining the feedback on teaching connection, switching class atmosphere and eradicate boredom while teaching and learning (Syiyami et al, 2021), enriching students' vocabulary which should be sufficient for them to achieve fluent reading (Senawati et al, 2021). Meanwhile the demerits are reading aloud frequently reduces the reading speed, reading aloud will permits only several students to practice, whereas others are going to experience boredom, students easily feel hesitation when their turn. However, Gibson (2008) encourages that the merits of reading aloud overshadow its demerits, thereby the prior mentioned drawbacks can be minimized by careful and suitable activity during process (Siddiqui & Naz, 2019). Therefore, this research aims to discover about students' perception in learning phoneme identification using reading aloud technique for the ninth junior high school students in West Bandung.

METHOD

To accomplish this study, the researchers used descriptive qualitative method. It was in line with Bongdan dan Taylor in Moleong (2013) that qualitative method used in the research which resulted descriptive data, both of spoken and written text from the observed object or behavior. Naturally, resolving behavior or attitude is implemented by qualitative research theory (Widnyana et al., 2023). The researchers employed interview and questionnaire in collecting the data. The respondents of current research were 17 students of junior high school students. The researchers applied likert questionnaires and appropriate coding of these data. Likert scale is used to understand and measure respondent’s perception (Tanujaya et al, 2022). This likert scale has five items ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree (Schrum et al, 2020). The questionnaire consisted of 5 close-ended questions were employed to gain students’ perception about learning phoneme identification using reading aloud. While, interviews was used to obtain information into a experiences, ideas and motivations – as contrary to truth or behavior (Busetto et al, 2020). This interview was a complement for the former instrument. The interview consisted of 4 open-ended questions.

Table 1. Interview questions

Q	Answer
Q1	What are you feeling while reading aloud practice?
Q2	How does reading aloud help you in learning phoneme identification?
Q3	In your view, what factors can hinder you in learning phoneme identification in English?
Q4	What factors do you think are enable to help you in learning phoneme identification in English?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

1. Questionnaire

To get the EFL learners’ replies, the questionnaire provided statement with five degree of agreement. Those are SD (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), N (Neutral), D (Disagree), and SD (Strongly Disagree). The result from interview can be seen in Table 4 as follows:

Table 2. Questionnaires Data of EFL Learners’ Perception

Statements	Answers				
	SD	D	N	A	SA
I can do phoneme identification after several times learning English by reading aloud English-text	0	0	58,82	23,53	17,65
I need to hear English native speaker as role to help me in learning phoneme identification	0	29,41	29,41	29,41	11,76
I can learn phoneme identification using reading aloud English-text only by teacher’s pronunciation practice	11,76	5,88	5,88	58,82	17,65
Reading aloud English-text in the class very helpful for me in learning phoneme identification	5,88	11,76	5,88	47,06	29,41

I can learn phoneme identification without teacher's pronunciation practice	29,41	41,18	11,76	0	17,65
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Discussion

The previous responses display the positive responses. Based on questionnaires data, it was revealed that most of EFL learners (47,06%) agree that reading aloud is helpful to be the aid in learning phoneme identification. It is supported by students statements in their answer while interview. It can be seen in the following excerpt:

Reading aloud itu membantu dalam pengucapan bahasa inggris karena bisa tau dari mana letak salahnya dan juga bisa tau cara membaca bahasa inggris dengan benar. (S2)

(Reading aloud helps to know English pronunciation because we can know our own mistakes and also how to read English word properly). (S2)

The data above showed that by using reading aloud in the classroom, it can help students in learning phoneme. They said that they are able to know how to differ each sound and learning them, student said that *'we get to know about sound of 't', there is reflection (air released sound)*. It is in line with what has been explained by Alhumsi (2020) that the learning process in how to read entails introducing the letters to separate into each phonemes. It is also supported by Scola (2009:16) in Siahaan et al (2024) that reading aloud enable to develop students' linguistic reflexes, to help the tongue response the new combination of sound and to acclimate word patterns for the brain.

Another respondent also said the benefit of using reading aloud. It can be seen in the following excerpt:

Pokoknya kalau bahasa inggris belibet hurufnya, sedangkan kalau bahasa inggris mah kalimatnya diacak ga sesuai, jadi sulit. Reading aloud kan membacanya berulang-ulang, jadi kita juga gampang faham sama hurufnya, karena huruf bahasa inggris bikin bingung, kalau bacanya berulang-ulang kitanya jadi lebih faham. (S3)

(the thing is English performs difficult letters, meanwhile between peronunciation and actual written is different, it makes harder. Reading aloud offers an imitation. So, we get easier in understanding the letter sound, if we imitate it repeatedly, we also get easier). (S3)

The data above revealed that with reading aloud, they can recognize their own pronunciation mistakes and can correct the faults immediately. Thus, reading aloud can help the students pronounce the word properly. it is supported by Vetsch-Larson (2022) that repeated readings have been shown to develop students' oral reading fluency. It is also in line with the statement of Ocvika (2017) that students are going to recognize their mistake while reading aloud the passage.

Another positive responses also can be seen in the data interview as stated by Student It can be seen in the following excerpt:

Reading aloud dikelas itu seru, terus rame-rame sama asik juga dan juga bisa mengucapkan bahasa inggris dengan benar dan tau dimana letak salahnya. (S5)

(Reading aloud in the class is fun, learning collectively is enjoyable and also through it we learn how to pronounce English properly and knowing own mistakes). (S5)

The data above showed that reading aloud is fun. It is also similar with Siahaan et al (2024) that the application of Reading Aloud makes students more active in class and creates an atmosphere of learning activities that stimulate student interest.

Furthermore, the data from interview also revealed that students also have numerous factors can help them in learning phoneme identification. Most of students agree that they need the role from the suitable teacher and they do not believe if they can learn phoneme identification without teacher. As stated by S1:

Bicara dengan orang luar sangat membantu untuk speaking, listening lagu bahasa Inggris, dan googling atau belajar dengan guru Inggrisnya langsung. (S1)

(Speaking with foreigner can really help to speaking, listening English song, and googling or learning with English teacher). (S1)

The data above indicates that there are several ways to help the students in learning pronunciation such as speaking with native speaker, listening English song and learning with English teacher. This means that learning with suitable teacher also helps them in learning phonem identification. It is in line with Gillon (2017) that teacher should have strong understanding of phonemic awareness which is an important component to be the foundation for the students in order to strengthen their knowledge while learning the relation between sounds and symbols (Alloh, 2021). Furthermore, students not only need support from their teacher, but also they need the interaction with English native speakers and listening English song. It is supported by (Sundari et al, 2023) that some individuals are motivated in learning pronunciation because of the English native speaker, also some habitually watch movies and listen song in English.

CONCLUSION

The current study concludes about learners' perception in reading aloud application in learning phoneme identification. Depending on the findings of the qualitative design, the majority of students state that reading aloud technique is profitable to be employed in learning phoneme identification with the numerous reasons such as joyful technique, imitation method is helpful, and recognizing own mistake. Likewise, students consider not only their positive responses toward reading aloud implementation in learning phoneme identification but also their chosen ways which contribute students' learning in phoneme identification. Numerous ways are teacher's aid and English activity such as listening English music, watching English movie, and speaking with the foreigners. In addition, from the questionnaire and interview attached was drawn, it can be implied that EFL students had the positive responses in reading aloud technique in phoneme identification learning and offered several ways in helping them to grasp their phoneme identification ability.

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