

HIJANETICS: THE COMBINATION OF HIJAIYAH SOUNDS AND ENGLISH PHONETICS IN FOSTERING STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION

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Abstract: Pronunciation comes up as part of speaking. Thus, to achieve communicative goals, individuals entail producing clear and understandable utterances. In the context of English teaching and learning, most of the students encounter problems with English pronunciation, especially English considered as a Foreign Language in Indonesia. To make learning easier for students, the researcher devised the English sounds learning by combining hijaiyah (Arabic alphabet) sounds that are close to students' background with English phonetics. The aim of the study is identifying the effect of several hijaiyah sounds in the way of pronouncing English words by Indonesian students. The participants in this study were 6 students of MA Almaarif Singosari Malang. The data of this descriptive quantitative research were collected through pre-experimental designs. Students read an English short story which consists of both English and hijaiyah sounds. Subsequently, the data were noted and transcribed to decide whether the English phonemes were correctly pronounced. The result shows that the hijaiyah sounds facilitated Indonesian students pronouncing English words appropriately with the approximate students got 80% for some targeted sounds.

Keywords: English phonetic, Hijaiyah sound, phonology, students' pronunciation

INTRODUCTION

Speaking skill aims to communicate. Thus, to achieve communicative goals, individuals entail producing clear and understandable utterances. According to Ur (1996), individuals must learn language aspects such as structure, vocabulary, comprehension ability, and pronunciation to achieve communicative skills. Therefore, pronunciation is being one of the crucial points to achieve speaking skills. In the English learning and teaching context, pronunciation is considered a problem encountered by Indonesian students. Many Indonesian students utter the English words in the way of uttering the Indonesian words. It means that they do not spell the word in the way of English pronunciation. Whereas, both pronunciation and spelling are different. Theoretically, pronunciation is concerned with the production of sounds, while spelling is about an order of letters. The improper pronunciation amplifies students' opinion that English is a difficult subject to be learned.

To address this issue, introducing phonemes as sounds' recognition and practice is considered as the first approach to teach English words pronunciation for the students. The English sounds which are represented by International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) are composed to help the students pronouncing the English words. On the other hand, based on the researcher's reflection and the statement of previous researchers (Lestiono & Gusdian, 2017; Wati, 2019), there are some similarities between producing English speech sounds and Hijaiyah sounds. Moreover, most Muslim people in Indonesia have experiences with learning hijaiyah as the fundamental for reciting Quran. Therefore, to make learning easier for students, the researcher devised the English pronunciation learning that closes to students' background by combining hijaiyah (Arabic alphabet) sounds with English phonetics. It aims to build their

understanding more clearly about how to pronounce the English word appropriately based on their hijaiyah sound background knowledge.

There may not have been many studies investigating the similarity between English speech sounds and hijaiyah sounds focusing on English pronunciation learning. Lestiono & Gusdian (2017) researched EFL students of Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang to dig out how they pronounce English words based on their knowledge of Arabic consonants. Their research which title is “Arriving at English Pronunciation by Means of Arabic Consonant Sounds: A Case Study on EFL Students in Indonesian Context” was inspired by the sameness of English and arabic phonological in the consonant aspect. The result shows that the phonological sameness of English and arabic especially in the sounds (/θ/, /ð/, and /ʃ/) can be the bridge to produce English sound more properly.

Furthermore, there is another research conducted by Wati (2019). The title of her research is “Hijanetics (Hijaiyah and English Phonetics) in EFL Pronunciation Classes: A Participatory Action Research”. This research aims to explore the process of teaching English pronunciation dealing with hijaiyah. She focused on the students who have Islamic background in the Ulumul Quran (MUQ) Langsa Aceh.

Similar to the previous study, this study is also inspired by some similarities between phonological English and hijaiyah sounds because most of the Muslim students in Indonesia got Arabic exposure since, they were child, especially in hijaiyah sounds. However, the research process, subject, and setting are different, while Lestiono & Gusdian did their research to compare the ability between the students who have much exposure to Arabic and not, this research will investigate the progress of the students' ability in the English pronunciation learning. Moreover, Wati's research talked about the English pronunciation learning process but did not show the result specifically. Therefore, this study aims to examine the ability of Indonesian students to pronounce English words in the context of the English teaching and learning process by connecting hijaiyah sounds into English phonetics. Hopefully, this study can foster students pronouncing English words properly.

The Combination of Hijaiyah (Arabic Alphabets) Sounds and Phonetics

Hijaiyah is the Arabic alphabet used to construct words. There are different statements of some experts about the number of hijaiyah set order (Jamil, 2015). There are about 30 letters, 29 letters, and 28 letters. However, most of the experts mention 28 letters exclude Lam-Alif and Hamzah which are:

ا ب ت ث ج ح خ د ذ ر ز س ش ص ض ط ظ ع غ ف ق ك ل م ن و ه ي

Phonetics is the study of speech sounds. English speech sounds are divided into two parts which are vowels and consonants. The following table shows the classification of speech sounds.

Table 1. English Speech Sounds

Speech Sounds	Number	Phonetics
Vowel	12	/i:/, /ɪ/, /ʊ/, /u:/, /e/, /ə/, /ɜ:/, /ɔ:/, /æ/, /ʌ/, /ɑ:/, /ɒ/
Consosnant	24	/p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /f/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /h/, /m/, /n/, /ŋ/, /l/, /r/, /j/, /w/

There are several similarities between Hijaiyah and English phonemes, especially in the articulation place and manner. For example, the phonetics /j/ which is the manner and place of articulation from the front tongue with the hard palate same with ي hijaiyah (Jaelani, 2015). Connecting hijaiyah sounds into English phonemes is required to stimulate the students'

enthusiasm in learning English. For illustrating the similarities, there are examples of phonetic symbols connecting with hijaiyah adapted from Wati (2019).

Table 2. Hijanetics (Hijaiyah and English phonetics)

Phonetic Symbol	Produced as Hijaiyah Sound
/b/	ب
/t/	ت
/d/	د
/k/	ك
/dʒ/	ج
/f/	ف
/θ/	ث
/ð/	ظ
/s/	س
/z/	ز
/ʃ/	ش
/h/	ه
/m/	م
/n/	ن
/l/	ل
/r/	ر
/j/	ي
/w/	و

METHOD

The participants in this current study were 6 students in grade X of MA Almaarif Singosari Malang. This research used the descriptive quantitative method to collect the data. Moreover, this study used a pre-experimental design to know the progress of students' ability in pronouncing English words. Students were asked to read an English short story that is rich in English speech sound that has some similarities with hijaiyah sounds. Based on the preliminary study, there were focused on five target sounds which are the most difficult sound pronounced by the students include /k/, /dʒ/, /θ/, /ð/, /ʃ/. Additionally, the research was divided into three steps. First, the teacher asked the students to read the short story as the pronunciation test before giving pronunciation learning. Second, the teacher gave some explanations about English phonetics connected by hijaiyah sounds. Last, students were retested to know the learning progress.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

First Step

The participants were asked to read aloud the short story consisting of speech sounds which have the similarity with hijaiyah sounds. The result is shown in the table below.

Table 3. Speech Sounds produced by students

No.	Research Subjects	/k/ Σ=10	%	/dʒ/ Σ=5	%	/θ/ Σ=5	%	/ð/ Σ=7	%	/ʃ/ Σ=7	%
1.	ANT	8	80%	3	60%	3	60%	5	71%	6	86%
2.	RAP	7	70%	2	40%	3	60%	4	57%	4	57%
3.	FA	7	70%	2	40%	2	40%	2	29%	3	43%
4.	ZNM	6	60%	2	40%	1	20%	3	43%	2	29%

5.	MK	4	40%	1	20%	1	20%	2	29%	2	29%
6.	JZ	5	40%	1	20%	1	20%	1	14%	1	14%

From the table, we know that the highest percentage of /k/ sound is 80%, the second place is 70% and the lowest is 40%; the highest percentage of /dʒ/ and /θ/ sounds are 60%, the second place is 40% and the lowest is 20%; the highest percentage of /ð/ sound is 71% and the lowest is 14%; while the highest percentage of /ʃ/ sound is 86% and the lowest is 14%. Unsurprisingly, some students made some errors in pronouncing some target speech sounds. All the students as the research subject failed to produce /k/ sound in “became” and “including”; then, to deal with these difficulties, they used /tʃ/ sound. It means that they spelled the words. They also failed to pronounce /dʒ/ sound in “age” and “language”, they replaced it with /g/ sound. Then, they also mispronounced /θ/ sound with /t/ sound, for example in “author” and “thousands”. They were also difficult to pronounce /ð/ in “the” and “mother”, they used /d/ sound to pronounce those words. In addition, they also produced the wrong pronunciation of /ʃ/ in “British” and “publisher”. They pronounced /s/ sound as the replacement. Therefore, they commit some errors in producing the target sounds. Most of them pronounced many English words based on the letters, not the sounds.

Second Step

Introducing the English phonological is the first approach to teach English pronunciation for the students. Then, to ease students’ understanding, the teacher connected with hijaiyah sounds, especially in the target sounds. The teacher conducted a drilling activity as the technique of learning and teaching. The students were guided and drilled to pronounce some English vocabularies by inserting hijaiyah sounds as exposure (‘show’ and ‘shopping’ use /ش/ /ʃin/; ‘then’ and ‘them’ use /ظ/ /ðo’/; ‘computer’ and ‘second’ use /ك/ /kaf/). It can be assumed that the drilling technique is widely used in the education field (Lestiono et al., 2018). By doing this technique, students looked enthusiastic to encourage their selves pronouncing English word in a good way.

Last Step

As the target of learning, students were asked again to read the story aloud to know their progress after learning English pronunciation by combining hijaiyah sounds. There is the result represented in the table below.

Table 4. Speech Sounds produced by students

No.	Research Subjects	/k/ Σ=10	%	/dʒ/ Σ=5	%	/θ/ Σ=5	%	/ð/ Σ=7	%	/ʃ/ Σ=7	%
1.	ANT	10	100%	4	80%	4	80%	6	86%	7	100%
2.	RAP	9	90%	4	80%	4	80%	5	71%	6	86%
3.	FA	8	80%	3	60%	4	80%	4	57%	6	86%
4.	ZNM	8	80%	3	60%	3	60%	5	71%	5	71%
5.	MK	6	60%	3	60%	3	60%	5	71%	4	57%
6.	JZ	7	70%	2	40%	2	40%	3	43%	4	57%

From the table, we know how the way students pronounce the targeted English words. After learning the English pronunciation connected with hijaiyah sounds, students improved their ability to pronounce English words. The first students got the perfect score for producing /k/ and /ʃ/ sounds. Then, most of the students got 80% for pronouncing /dʒ/ and /θ/ sounds; 71% for /ð/ sounds. Therefore, most students correctly pronouncing the targeted words and the mistakes were very rare. they can notice how to pronounce some target speech

sounds properly. However, it is still found some mispronunciations that students made in some words, i.e., 'cursed' and 'conceived'. This realization indicates that students still need more practice to make their pronunciation more perfect.

From the result above which is from the first step to the last step, we can conclude that pronunciation is crucial in learning a foreign language. Learning a language especially a foreign language entails acquiring its abilities. Pronunciation should be learned in order to improve one's communicative abilities. Moreover, more efforts are needed to encourage students to practice the language and solve their learning problems. Teachers viewed learning to pronounce words through sound association as a useful alternative in teaching English pronunciation. as well as facilitated practice. When the students mispronounced words, teacher could link the sound production to hijaiyah and facilitated practice. Students learned to produce sounds by presenting their knowledge and experience in producing hijaiyah during the learning process. The method of producing hijaiyah has been assimilated to produce English phonetics, which has similar sounds. students practice it easier to learn pronunciation by using sound associations because they could pronounce hijaiyah letters as they background knowledge and could adapt them to learn the foreign language.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Pronunciation is a common problem encountered by Indonesian students, especially for learning English. By combining Hijaiyah sounds with English phonetics, it can be an alternative way to teach English pronunciation for the students. Students can relate their prior knowledge about hijaiyah sounds with English speech sounds. this was expected to foster their ability in producing English sounds. the result of the study indicated that most students get improvement on how to produce English words. Meanwhile, they still need to make some practices for improving their quality. however, this study is expected to give a contribution to the English teaching and learning context.

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