



**USING PHONETIC SYMBOLS TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION OF  
TENTH GRADE STUDENTS IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL 4 KEDIRI ACADEMIC  
YEAR 2014/2015**

**SKRIPSI**

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement to Obtain  
the Sarjana Pendidikan Degree (S.Pd.) of the English Education Department  
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**APPROVAL PAGE**

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This skripsi has been approved by the advisors to be proposed to the English  
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## **USING PHONETIC SYMBOLS TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION OF TENTH GRADE STUDENTS IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL 4 KEDIRI ACADEMIC YEAR 2014/2015**

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### **Abstract**

This research was conducted in order to improve students' pronunciation at tenth grade students of Senior High School 4 Kediri. The problem in this research is the students could not distinguish between Indonesia and English pronunciation. The aim of using phonetic symbol here is that phonetic symbol as standard pronunciation of English can help the students learn pronunciation independently by checking them in dictionary. To find out the effectiveness of phonetic symbols, she used Classroom Action Research (CAR) as method of the research. This method consists of two cycles where each cycle has four steps, start from planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. In collecting the data she used qualitative data from observation during teaching learning process, and quantitative data

from the result of pre test and post test. From the observation during teaching learning process the collaborator concludes that students are active in the class, and they were more interactive with the teacher because they felt comfortable with the situation in the class. Besides that, the result of pre test, post test 1, and post test 2 showed a significant progress. In pre test, there are only three items which reach the target. In post test 1, there are seven items which reach the target. In post test 2, all items were reached the target 75% of correct pronunciation. Therefore, it can be concluded that phonetic symbols can improve students' pronunciation at tenth grade students in senior high school 4 Kediri academic year 2014/2015.

**Key Word:** pronunciation, phonetic symbols

### **INTRODUCTION**

In learning English, students were show their ability through four skills, one of them is speaking. When they speak English the ability of pronunciation is attentive. Pronouncing the correct pronunciation it means understand the content of the language. According to Djiwandono (2008: 123), "Ability of pronunciation refers to use of language with good pronunciation, understandable and acceptable." By doing pronunciation correctly toward on language sound, syllable, words, phrases, and sentences commonly, the content expressed by someone will understand the listener without misunderstanding. While Harmer (2004: 183) states that teaching pronunciation makes students aware of different sounds and sounds features. So, teaching pronunciation is the priority in learning language, because pronunciation helps students to understanding the sounds, words, phrases, and sentences.



In KTSP basic competence of senior high school especially speaking aspect in first grade second semester, students must able use oral language in monolog text. While a teacher teaches speaking, absolutely she/he also teaches about pronunciation. The teacher as the model of learning must master the correct pronunciation of English words. To get correct pronunciation she/he should pay attention on phonetic symbols as the standard English pronunciation. According to Fahrudin (2010) an English teacher in *MA Assulaimaniyah Mojoagung*, “There are two reasons why English teacher should understand English phonetics. Firstly, English is not students’ mother tongue. Secondly, English teacher is expected to be the speech model for his students.”

From the writers’ teaching practice experience in senior high school 4 Kediri, most of the students do not realize when they get wrong pronunciation. It caused by pronunciation learning is thoughtless by the teacher and she also does not realize when they pronounce wrong word which finally her wrong pronunciation imitated by her students. According to Brown (2000: 284) “the goals as teacher of English Pronunciation should therefore be more realistically focused on clear, comprehensible pronunciation. Fahrudin (2010) states the difficulty faced by the students in learning English phonetics is thus brought about by the different elements found between their mother tongue and the target language (e.g. English). The aim of using phonetic symbols in this research is to make the students’ pronunciation clear and correct as the standard and they can distinguish between the mother tongue and English pronunciation. She conducted two research questions: (1) How can using phonetic symbols improve the students’ pronunciation of tenth grade students in senior high school 4 Kediri academic year 2014/2015? (2) What is the improvement of the students’ pronunciation of tenth grade students in senior high school 4 Kediri academic year 2014/2015 by using phonetic symbols?

### **Theoretical Review**

As human being we need language to communication with other. To get success in communication, people must speak the language. When we speak we must use the correct pronunciation in order to get misunderstanding between speaker and listener. According to Pratiwi (2010:12), “Pronunciation is the act or manner of pronouncing words; utterance of speech.” In other side, it can be said that pronunciation is the way in speaks the words, especially the words can be understand in commonly use.



The success of teaching pronunciation is measured from some factors, for example what strategy that used in teaching pronunciation, and how effective the strategy in teaching pronunciation. In a case, students use English in a condition, they speak with wrong pronunciation it can cause a problem. The listener cannot receive message from the speaker well because of different understanding among them. The speaker doesn't get correct feedback from listener. Take one example, when a learner says *soap* /səʊp/ in a situation such as a restaurant where they should have said *soup* /su:p/, the inaccurate production of phoneme can lead to misunderstanding (Kelly, 2000:11). Therefore, pronunciation is important to be learned, because good communication occurs when listener and speaker understand each other.

As the case above, Kelly was exploring about a condition where the speaker and the listener got misunderstanding because the wrong pronunciation. Actually when students learn about pronunciation they should know about how to read the phonetic symbols. Kelly (2002:9) states that phonetics refers to the study of speech sounds. Based on two definitions above, the writer concludes that phonetic symbol is the symbols of sounds and how they are produced.

There are some kinds of phonetic symbols, but in this research the writer would use three kinds of them. The first is consonant, according to Kelly (2002: 47), "Consonants are sounds that are produced with closed or nearly closed articulations and are formed by interrupting, restricting or diverting the airflow in variety of ways." The second is vowel, according to Malmberg in Pratiwi (2010:25), "Vowel is sounds produced with a free passage." A free passage here means that vowel sounds are sounds made with opener oral cavity position. The last is diphthong, according to Crannel (2000:121), "a diphthong is a speech sound composed of two vowels within the same syllable."

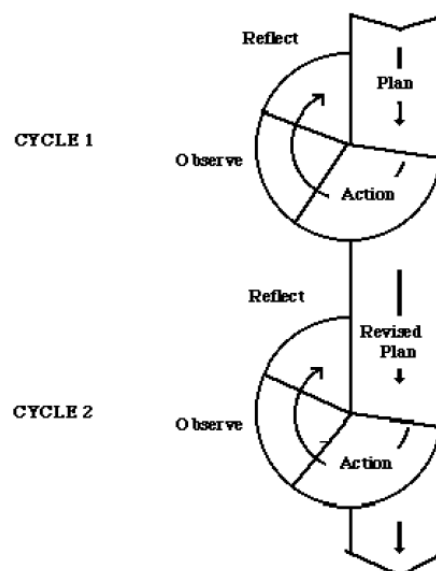
Besides the three phonetic symbols, there is one symbol that students should know when they learn pronunciation. Stress symbol is very important since different stress may convey different meanings. The word which stressed will pronounce louder than the others. E.g. *moustache* /mo'sta:ʃ/ stressed syllable, in a word in isolation, also has a change in the pitch, or the level of the speaker's voice, and the vowel sound in that syllable is lengthened. For stressed syllables, three features were identified: loudness, pitch change and a longer syllable (Kelly, 2000:67).



Teaching pronunciation using phonetic symbols is one of technique that used by the writer to help students to improve their pronunciation practice. According to Doff (1988:44), “In teaching pronunciation teacher should focus on a sound which students find difficult.” Meanwhile, Brown (2000:284) states that the goals as teacher of English Pronunciation should therefore be more realistically focused on clear, comprehensible pronunciation. As Brown statement, teaching pronunciation for student high school is focus on basic sound of pronunciation. They have to know about how pronounce word correctly. For the beginner it is no need to know how the sounds produced by organ of speech, of the manner of articulation. So they will get easy way to continue the next level of pronunciation, if the beginner learner mastery the basic well. Know the basic well is more crucial than we learn much but we don’t know whether it is correct or not.

## METHODS OF THE RESEARCH

The method used in this research is Classroom Action Research (CAR) consists of two cycles, each cycle has four steps they are: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. This steps are similar with Kemmis and McTaggart’s theory that action research occurs through a dynamic and complementary process, which consists of four essential ‘moments’: planning, action, observation and reflection. These moments are the fundamental steps in a spiraling process. The spiral model can seen illustrated in figure 1:



**Figure 3.1 Action Research Spiral (Kemmis & McTaggart)**



The data would present in qualitative data and quantitative data. The qualitative data is the result of observation while teaching learning process going on, and the quantitative data is the result of pre-test and post tests. The observation was done by the collaborator; she is the writer's friends who help the research process such as giving suggestion to make the research run well. This research held in senior high school 4 Kediri with the participants are the students of X-11 academic year 2014/2015. The numbers of the students are twenty three students consist of twelve female and eleven male students.

## FINDINGS

### 1. Cycle one

In cycle one the writer identified the problem that the students could not distinguish between Indonesia and English pronunciation. This problem caused by the teacher who thoughtless about teaching pronunciation. She used phonetic symbols as the standard English pronunciation to improve the students' pronunciation. The material based on KTSP especially focus on vocabularies which relate with describing people. She used Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary Third Edition (2008) as the standard phonetic symbols. The phonetic symbols that taught in this cycle are consonant, vowel, and diphthong. The medium that used are the facilities in the class (whiteboard, board marker, etc), laptop and headphone for record the student's voice when they did the test. The teaching steps were focus on the pronunciation practice: (1) in the beginning class, she explained how to pronounce the phonetic symbols, and then students repeat. (2) She offered ten vocabularies about describing people such *handsome* /'hæn.səm/, *pretty* /'prɪ.ti/, etc. (3) She asked the students to look for the phonetic symbols in dictionary. (4) Finally, the students write down their work on the whiteboard and practice pronounce them together until they got correct.

The result of pronunciation test in this cycle showed a good improvement. Comparing with the test in preliminary study which there was only three items which got more than 75% of correct pronunciation, in this cycle there was seven items which got more than 75% of correct pronunciation. Actually the result of this test was not reach the target yet, because the target is there are more than seven items reach more than 75% of correct pronunciation. So the writer decided that she would carry this strategy in next cycle.



To know whether the result of the test reach the criteria of success or not, the writer tabulate the test data with look for the frequency of true pronunciation per each item, then count the percentage per each item. After the number of frequency knew, then she tabulate the percentage each item. The result of post test 1 can be seen on table 1:

**Table 1 Result of the Post Test 1**

Item number	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	21	<b>91</b>
2	13	56
3	21	<b>91</b>
4	20	<b>87</b>
5	10	43
6	19	<b>83</b>
7	17	74
8	19	<b>83</b>
9	23	<b>100</b>
10	22	<b>96</b>

## 2. Cycle two

In cycle two the writer indentified the problem that the students' pronunciation was not clear enough because some of them spell the phonetic symbols. To solve this problem, she introduced stress symbols. The students have to know that there are some words which have stress symbols where the stress syllable pronounced louder. The medium and the reference were same with cycle one, but the material is ten vocabularies about describing animals such *wild* /waɪld/, *team* /ti:m/, etc. The teaching steps were almost similar with the process in cycle one: (1) in the beginning class, she explained how to pronounce the stress syllable in some words, and then students repeat. (2) She offered ten vocabularies about describing animals, and then asked the students to look for the phonetic symbols in dictionary. (3) She reviewed the previous material about the phonetic symbols (consonant, vowel, and diphthong). (4) Finally, the students write down their work on the whiteboard and practice pronounce them together until they got correct.

The result of pronunciation test in this cycle reached the target. All items reached more than 75% of correct pronunciation. This success also supported with the observation during the teaching learning process. The collaborator concluded that the class was conducive; the students are active giving feed back to the teacher because they felt more comfort. The result of post test 2 can be seen on table 2:

**Table 2 Result of the Post Test 2**

Item number	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	22	96
2	19	82
3	22	96
4	20	87
5	23	100
6	23	100
7	23	100
8	21	91
9	18	78
10	20	87

## CONCLUSION

In senior high school curricula, actually there is no specific part about teaching pronunciation, but it doesn't mean that the teacher cannot give other knowledge such introduce phonetic symbol to support students' learning. Moreover, phonetic symbol can improve the students' pronunciation. This statement has been proven with the result of this research.

The significant difference can be seen from the result of post test-1 and post test-2 which showed the percentage of correct pronunciation per items. In pre-test the writer would know about the students' pronunciation before the treatment, and from that pre-test she got three items reached 75% of correct pronunciation. In post-test 1 she used phonetic symbols as the strategy in teaching pronunciation, and she got seven items reached 75% of correct



pronunciation. In post-test 2 she used stress symbols as the strategy to improve the student's score, and the result of this test were all items reached 75% of correct pronunciation.

From the observation sheet that filled by the collaborator showed that the students are interest during teaching and learning pronunciation using phonetic symbol. They are active join the class because they felt comfort with the teacher. The English teacher's response about phonetic symbol for teaching pronunciation was positive and it would be alternative strategy to improve students' pronunciation.

From the conclusion above, the writer would give some suggestions for the teacher and further researchers. For the English teacher, she should pay more attention in her pronunciation and students' pronunciation, because it would be a problem when the teacher pronounce wrong and the students only imitated her. Therefore, the writer suggest to the teacher to use phonetic symbol in teaching pronunciation because phonetic symbol is standard pronunciation of English, and it would help the students learn pronunciation independently. For further researchers, the result of this study can be used as an additional reference for other discussion especially English pronunciation.

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