

EVALUATION OF STUDENTS' MASTERY OF ENGLISH LETTERS

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi tantangan yang dihadapi siswa dalam menguasai alfabet bahasa Inggris, dengan fokus pada kemampuan mengenali dan menulis huruf. Penelitian ini dilakukan pada mahasiswa semester pertama Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara. Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi kesalahan umum, pengaruh bahasa ibu siswa, dan huruf tertentu yang menyebabkan kesulitan. Dengan menggunakan metode survei kuesioner, ditemukan bahwa 60% peserta mengalami kesulitan, yang sering kali disebabkan oleh interferensi bahasa ibu mereka, yang memengaruhi kemampuan mereka mengenali dan mengucapkan huruf bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa strategi pengajaran yang terfokus, seperti latihan rutin, kartu flash, dan video edukasi, direkomendasikan untuk meningkatkan penguasaan huruf bahasa Inggris oleh siswa.

Kata Kunci: Penguasaan Alfabet Bahasa Inggris, Pengaruh Bahasa Ibu, Huruf-Huruf Bahasa Inggris.

ABSTRACT

This research investigates the challenges faced by students in mastering the English alphabet, with a focus on recognition and writing skills. Conducted among first-semester students of the English Education Department at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra, the study identifies common errors, the influence of the students' native language, and the specific letters causing difficulties. Using a questionnaire survey method, it finds that 60% of participants experience difficulties, often due to interference from their native language, which affects their recognition and pronunciation of English letters. The research concludes with recommendations for targeted teaching strategies such as regular practice, flashcards, and educational videos to enhance students' mastery of English letters.

Keywords: English Alphabet Mastery, Native Language Influence, English Letters.

INTRODUCTION

Understanding English letters is a fundamental element in mastering the language. These letters not only serve as the foundation for verbal and written communication but also help improve pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, and fluency in reading and writing.

For English language learners, the ability to accurately recognize and write letters is essential for enhancing listening and speaking skills, particularly in understanding different accents and speech speeds.

Introduction to English Letters

The English alphabet, commonly referred to as "English letters," consists of 26 characters that form the foundation of written and spoken communication in the English language. These letters are divided into two categories: uppercase (capital letters) and lowercase (small letters). The alphabet plays a crucial role in constructing words, enabling individuals to express ideas, convey emotions, and engage in meaningful interactions.

The English alphabet is rooted in the Latin script, which was introduced to Britain by Christian missionaries around the 7th century. Over time, the alphabet adapted to suit the

phonology of Old English, eventually evolving into its modern 26-letter format by the 16th century. This alphabet includes five vowels (A, E, I, O, U) and 21 consonants, which work together to create the sounds necessary for forming English words and sentences.

Mastery of English letters is fundamental for language development and literacy. It aids in developing essential skills like reading, writing, pronunciation, and vocabulary acquisition. The ability to recognize and correctly use English letters also improves listening and speaking skills by enabling learners to interpret and produce sounds accurately, even across different accents and speeds.

In addition to language, English letters are widely used in various fields, such as science, mathematics, and technology. They form the basis of alphanumeric systems, codes, abbreviations, and digital communication. Understanding the English alphabet is, therefore, not only essential for language proficiency but also for succeeding in academic, professional, and personal domains.

This study aims to explore the challenges students face in recognizing and writing English letters, including the influence of their native language on these abilities. By understanding the factors that hinder progress and identifying effective learning strategies, this research is expected to contribute to the development of better teaching methods to enhance students' competence in English.

METHOD

This research employs a quantitative approach to collect data on students' understanding of the English alphabet letters. The focus is to identify challenges in recognizing and using specific letters and the factors contributing to the errors they make.

The participants of this study are first-semester students from the English Education Department at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra (UINSU) for the 2024 academic year. The sample consists of 5 randomly selected respondents, who are active students enrolled in the program.

NAME	CLASS
Rizki Nurhasanah Lubis	TBI - IV
Amanah Maulidya	TBI - IV
Adila afrianti	TBI - IV
Aura Azzahra	TBI - IV
Munawwarah putri	TBI - IV

The data collection method for this research involved conducting a questionnaire survey with the participants to gather their responses regarding their familiarity with English letters. This written approach allowed participants to provide clear and concise answers at their own pace. Through this method, the researcher collected data on three key areas:

1. Participants' familiarity with the English alphabet.
2. The influence of their mother tongue on recognizing or writing English letters.
3. The difficulties participants face in recognizing or writing English letters.

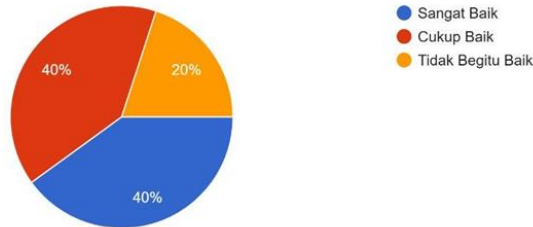
By using this systematic approach, the researcher was able to collect structured and reliable data that directly addressed the research objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

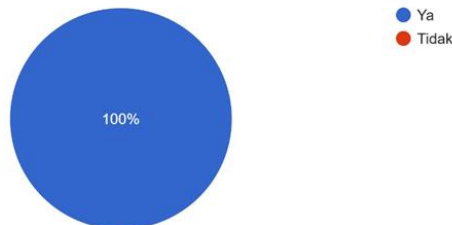
The research questionnaire consisted of 3 multiple-choice questions designed to test students' understanding of the basics of the English alphabet. Below is a diagram presenting

the correct answer distribution for each question.

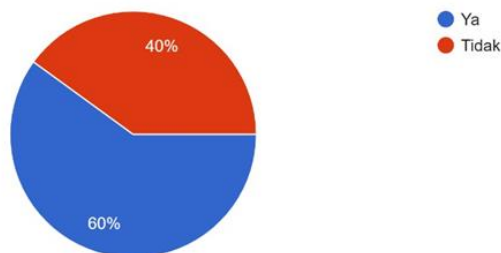
Seberapa baik Anda mengenal alfabet bahasa Inggris?
5 jawaban



Apakah Anda merasa bahasa ibu (misalnya, Bahasa Indonesia) mempengaruhi kemampuan Anda dalam mengenali atau menulis huruf bahasa Inggris?
5 jawaban



3. Apakah Anda merasa kesulitan untuk mengenali atau menulis huruf-huruf bahasa Inggris?
5 jawaban



Findings

Based on the analysis of data collected through questionnaires distributed to participants, this survey focuses on students' understanding and recognition of the English alphabet.

1. 40% of participants indicated a very good understanding of the English alphabet, while 20% reported being not very familiar with it.
2. 100% of participants agreed that their mother tongue has an influence on their ability to recognize and write English letters, highlighting the significant role of their native language in the learning process.
3. 60% of participants reported experiencing difficulty in recognizing or writing English letters, while 40% did not face these challenges.

Discussion

This study highlights the importance of understanding and familiarity with the English alphabet in effective communication.

1. Familiarity with the English Alphabet

40% of participants agreed that they have a very good understanding of the English alphabet, while 20% reported being not very familiar with it. This suggests that while most students have a decent understanding, there is still a portion who may need further support

to become more confident in recognizing and using English letters.

2. Influence of Mother Tongue

100% of participants agreed that their mother tongue influences their ability to recognize and write English letters. This finding emphasizes the impact of native language interference, which may create difficulties when learning a new alphabet system, suggesting that educational strategies should take this into account.

3. Difficulty Recognizing/Writing Letters

60% of participants acknowledged facing challenges in recognizing or writing English letters, while 40% did not report any difficulties. This shows that a majority of students still struggle with certain aspects of the English alphabet, indicating the need for more focused practice and teaching methods to address these issues.

CONCLUSION

The research highlights the significant challenges faced by students in recognizing and writing English letters, primarily influenced by their native language, Indonesian. Participants reported common difficulties such as confusing similar letters, struggling with specific sounds that are not present in their mother tongue, and forgetting how to write certain letters. The influence of the native language was evident, as many students found it challenging to recognize or pronounce letters that do not exist in Indonesian, leading to frequent errors.

Additionally, the study revealed that students tend to confuse letters with similar shapes or sounds, which complicates their ability to write and recognize English letters accurately. To address these issues, participants suggested strategies such as regular practice, using flashcards, and engaging with educational videos.

Overall, this study emphasizes the need for targeted instruction on English letters, considering the specific challenges faced by Indonesian learners. By implementing focused teaching strategies and offering more practice opportunities, educators can help improve students' letter recognition and writing skills. This research serves as a stepping stone for future investigations into effective teaching methods for English alphabet recognition, addressing the unique needs of language learners.

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