


Developing the ability to pronounce English by organizing International Phonetic Alphabet learning for grade 5 students

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Article history: Received February 4, 2024 Revised May 12, 2024 Accepted June 6, 2024</p> <p>Keywords: Action research English IPA learning Reading aloud</p>	<p>This action research promotes English reading by organizing International Phonetic Alphabet or IPA learning for 5th grade students. The participants were eight students; the tools for data collection included IPA learning plans and reading aloud tests. We analyzed the data using descriptive statistics. In the first cycle, the ability to read and pronounce English received the highest score of 10 points, which is the total score. There were 8 students who did not pass the 70% criteria, accounting for 24.24% of the total number of students. The second cycle showed that the students passed the 70% criteria. It can conclude that IPA can improve students' English learning skills and foster their proficiency in handling foreign language. Teachers can employ this instructional method in their English class to encourage students to learn authentic phonetics as well.</p> <p><i>This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA license.</i></p> 
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1. INTRODUCTION

Thailand places importance on teaching and learning English. This can be seen from the inclusion of English as a main subject in every learning curriculum. Education in Thailand is a curriculum that aims to develop the English proficiency of Thai people and develop learners to have the ability to use English at a communicative level. This can be observed by being able to receive and send messages effectively and to have the knowledge and understanding of various information by emphasizing students' knowledge and abilities in culture and language skills. In learning any language, every language has important elements that learners need to understand. These are the knowledge of structure of the language and the meaning of words.

Therefore, it can be said that vocabulary is one element which is considered to be the heart of language. The fact that students have learned a lot of vocabulary and can use it correctly and fluently will help them learn the language effectively. Without the knowledge of vocabulary, teaching will be slow and difficult. Therefore, learning vocabulary is very necessary for students in primary school, which is the beginning level. Teachers should aim to teach students vocabulary so that they can use it in basic sentences. In addition, learning vocabulary is the foundation that will allow students to create simple sentences that are enough to communicate before speaking more advanced sentences. Teaching vocabulary must be taught correctly. Students should be able to know the meaning of a word and be able to use that word in a sentence or in real life. For English communication skills to be effective, students must have vocabulary to be able to interact and understand the messages they hear or read, and they will be able to write sentences to convey meaning (Plaphaithong, 2019).

The ability of learners to use English accurately, whether it is for everyday use or preparation for studying English at an advanced level, basic English knowledge, especially in the matter of using vocabulary correctly in various situations, is very necessary. It is important for a learner to express his opinion and if the learner does not know the meaning of the word, it will result in miscommunication, or he will be unable to express himself effectively. In addition, lack of confidence in using English is another factor that results in not being brave enough to speak or use English. This is because not being able to pronounce words in English correctly may result in communication failure. When a learner spends most of their time studying grammar, their English language will not improve much. But you can see that his language improves as he learns about vocabulary and expressions. Learners will be less able to use the language to communicate from learning grammar. But they can say almost anything once they learn the words (Kim, 2020).

From the above reasons, the pronunciation is based on the principles of phonetics or phonics. It is a basically learned to read in English that shows the relationship between letters and their sounds. Students learn to read words by memorizing the sounds and letter shapes. The sounds are linked together to form words. In summary, the Phonics teaching method involves learning basic pronunciation through relationships between consonant shapes, vowels, consonant sounds, and vowel sounds to connect sounds together by mixing sounds used to connect sounds until they become words. The aim of this research is to develop phonetic pronunciation abilities in English for grade 5 students by organizing International Phonetic Alphabet learning. The importance of this research is to obtain guidelines for developing learning management and also to promote the ability to pronounce phonetics in English.

2. METHOD

The target group of the study consisted of 8 students from grade 5 at Phon Thong Kindergarten School, Phon Thong District, Roi-Et Province under the jurisdiction of the Roi-Et Primary Educational Service Area Office, Area 3, who were studying in the second semester of the 2023 academic year with ELSA skills test scores not passing the criteria of 70. The content used in research is the English subject and the duration of the study is 9 hours. The data collection used in this research employed learning activities according to IPA guidelines, study

period length using a teaching period of 3 weeks, 3 hours each, for a total of 9 hours, and 3 learning management plans according to the IPA study guidelines.

The researchers carried out the following steps to develop English pronunciation ability by organizing learning using the IPA method for grade 5 students who received learning management according to the IPA method for primary school students. The researcher studied the Basic Education Core Curriculum 2008 (Revised Edition 2017) and the educational institution curriculum of Phon Thong Kindergarten School. Foreign language learning group grade 5 level 5 determined the content of the English subject. It was used in organizing learning with the target group of students and studied the concept of developing English pronunciation ability. The researcher prepared one learning activity plan that focuses on the development of English pronunciation and organize activities to create interest. The tools used to collect data were reading aloud assessments and spelling practice assessments. Application ELSA was presented to the thesis advisor and then revised according to the suggestions given. The research tools created were presented to 3 experts.

In grouping the students, the English reading pronunciation assessment for learning foreign languages in the first semester of the 2023 academic year and sorted them to see students' reading pronunciation problems in the classroom investigated. The total number of students who participated was 33. It was found that 8 students did not pass the criteria. The sequence of the teaching steps of the IPA learning management began by starting to teach students from phonemes until taking each phoneme and combining it into syllables and words.

Step 1: Preparation step. The researchers prepared the students to be ready to study using language activities.

Step 2: Learning the sounds of the letters. The researchers presented the sound to students by emphasizing a variety of vowels but having the same vowel sound. The teacher gave leading questions on separating each sound of the word and have the students answer.

Step 3: Mixing sounds into words. The researchers suggested a method for combining each sound into words by letting the respondents combine the sounds in that word and allowing them to try and help each other to practice mixing up the sounds of the sample words. After that, the students combined words from the exercises as well as studying the meaning of words by using pictures, language activities, and exercises for students to practice pronunciation and vocabulary knowledge.

Step 4: Teaching the correct accent in language use and pronunciation. The researchers had to teach the separation of the main accents of English before there were American, British, Australian, etc.

Step 5: The respondents used vocabulary learned in various activities.

The researcher tested the results of organizing learning activities according to IPA learning management teaching that develops pronunciation and spelling abilities by teaching first phonemes to the students until bringing each phoneme together to form syllables and words. The respondents also read aloud in cycle, which was organized to create interest in the students. Students were engaged with learning lesson and discussed the objectives of each study. Then, they had a review of their previous knowledge before teaching new concepts to students. It helped students connect their new knowledge with their previous knowledge and made learning meaningful to them.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

From the collected data of the result at the end of the first practice cycle, it was found out that the students were interested and cooperative in the activities because it was something new to them as a teaching method and they showed interesting behavior as a response. Students are more attentive to learning in class if they are interested in the subject that they study, which signifies that the learning in class will be better. Students begin to practice reading English consonants and begin pronouncing them in a good sequence, and students become familiar with, and interact well with each other. There will be an exchange of opinions with each other. Students accept and listen to other people's opinions. They can also practice their communication skills by asking questions and expressing their opinions. This will make students more attentive in class and the researcher will make more interesting classroom activities by opening a video on Youtube.

Students practiced their listening and speaking English pronunciation to be as similar as possible to native speakers by employing tongue training using the mouth vent teeth and internal organs of the mouth so that students should be able to pronounce and spell English words. The activities from IPA learning to improve English reading aloud, the respondents scored 10 points as the highest and the lowest was 3 points. There were 8 students who failed to meet the 70% requirement, representing 24.24% of the total number of students. Some students had difficulty reading English aloud correctly and memorizing words. The researchers adapted activities to suit the students who did not pass and provided additional explanations to make them clear so that the respondents can read English aloud correctly.

Students were interested in and participated learning activities, in which a total of 8 students had the ability to improve their English reading aloud through the criteria of 70%, or 100%. The researcher observed from the behavior of the students that they were enthusiastic in the classroom and interested in the teaching and learning process (Figure 1).

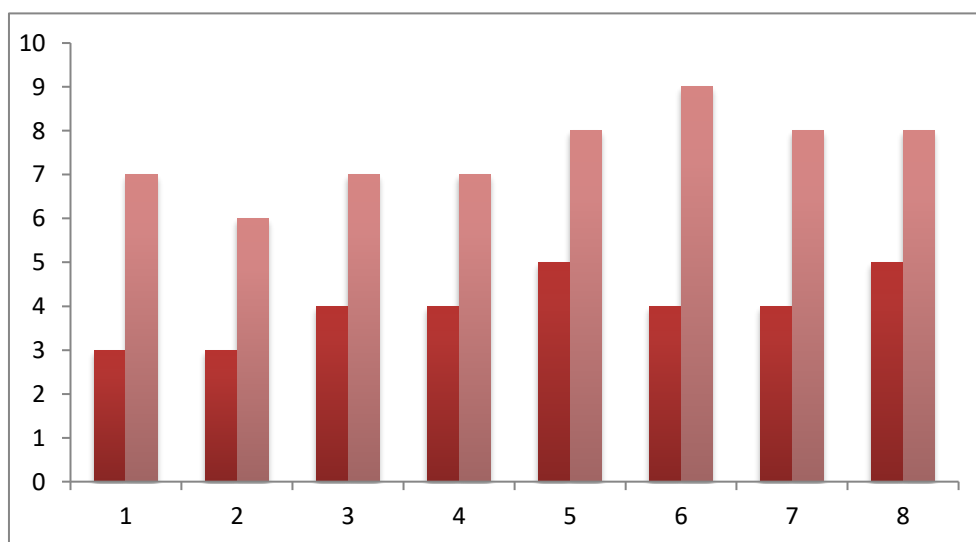


Figure 1 Learning English in each cycle

From the reflection in the first action cycle, the teacher came up with a solution and adjusted the activity to make students more interested and understand the topic. The learning activities were adjusted by allowing students to practice speaking aloud according to the book with the teacher choosing individual Q&A to suit the content taught (Newton & Nation, 2020; Atkinson, 2021). Then, the teacher repeated the question until the student pronounced the words correctly. The results of IPA learning activities in the second action cycle, the teacher had all 8 students read the words from the worksheet given to them. Teacher repeated each word with its meaning until the students were able to read the English words aloud correctly (Ehri, 2022).

The end of the first cycle, there were problems that occurred. Students took longer than the allotted time to answer. Some students had difficulty reading aloud in English, i.e. not being able to pronounce them correctly and students have difficulty memorizing words, i.e. not being able to remember words with sounds according to the consonants. The researchers adapted activities to suit those learners who have difficulty in English and provided additional explanations to make them clear so that students can read English aloud correctly. From the solutions found in first cycle, but the second cycle can be developed. The researchers observed the performance of learning management activities at the end of the second cycle.

The result showed that some students were still unable to read English aloud correctly as native speakers. This may be because English in Thailand is not yet an official language at all, so most students in the country do not use English in their everyday lives (Plaphaianthong, 2019; Oeamoum & Sriwichai, 2020; Pechapan-Hammond, 2020). Therefore, the researchers planned to adjust the activities to make students more interested and understand the lesson. The learning activities were adjusted by allowing students to practice speaking aloud according to the text book, with the teacher choosing individual Q&A to suit the content taught, and repeated the question until the student pronounces it correctly. Learning and knowing only vocabulary and sentence structure alone is not enough. If the learner cannot articulate a voice that native speakers can understand, it is still considered that language cannot be used to communicate (Thuycharoen, 2001).

Additionally, speaking English with a Thai accent makes communication not as effective as it should be because of mispronunciation of some words. They also commented that because Thais learn English as a foreign language, speaking fluently is therefore minimal, especially in most educational institutions, from secondary to tertiary education, still use Thai language as the medium of instruction (Tipprachaban, 2022). Practice and exposure to English with native speakers can help improve the learners' knowledge and pronunciation of English. Developing the ability to read English aloud with IPA learning should start with a broad view. English learning habits should be encouraged for students to have a good attitude towards English so that students have a good perspective on learning English.

Thai speakers struggle to converse in English due to their native accent. Thai people commonly mispronounce English words with their own accent. Mispronunciations reduce communication and cause misunderstandings. Teaching English as a foreign language in Thailand also hinders communication. Learning English and talking to native speakers is essential to overcome these hurdles (Chand, 2021; Malik et al., 2021). Native speakers may enhance students' pronunciation and language comprehension. Reading English aloud can improve pronunciation. Students should initially learn the International Phonetic Alphabet

(IPA). It offers a clear structure for precise English sound pronunciation. Teachers can promote positive thinking when learning English, it makes a tremendous difference.

4. CONCLUSION

IPA can improve in English reading aloud skills as a result of the engaging and active learning activities in which students participated. Based on their actions in class, students seemed engaged and passionate about what they were studying. The students met the 70% requirement in the second cycle. It follows that IPA may help students become more proficient in learning and using other languages. Using this strategy, English teachers can assist their students in learning real phonetics alongside the rest of the language.

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