

PERCEPTION OF UNDERGRADUATE ENGLISH STUDENTS ON PHONETICS

By

***Priya, C. & **Lenin, S.**

**M.Ed. Student, Department of Education, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India.*

***Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India.*

Abstract

Phonetics is essential for students to be fully capable of communicating in English, phonetics is essential. Plenty of students struggle to acquire phonetics to a certain extent. Even though phonetics is difficult to acquire, it is essential to succeed in the acquisition of the English language. It is possible to lessen the dislike of phonetics by making some efforts. The perception of phonetics among undergraduate English students is the main topic of this study. There are 200 students in the sample. The study's sample was chosen using the random sampling technique. The CP's Scale was developed as a tool for measuring phonetic perception. The investigator examined and talked about the number of issues and challenges that instructors and students encountered while teaching and acquiring phonetic skills. This study explores the Perception of Undergraduate English Students regarding Phonetics, examining their understanding, interest, and challenges related to the subject. The study aims to provide insights into how students perceive phonetics, its relevance to their language learning journey, and potential areas for educational enhancement.

Keywords: *phonetics, undergraduate students, perception, language learning, english education.*

Introduction

Education is the process of acquiring knowledge, skills and values through formal or informal instruction. "Education is the process of fostering human development through

experience and learning" (Dewey, 1916).

English phonetics is the part of English language with a concentration on word sounds, employing phonetic transcription to depict accurate pronunciation. English alphabet

contains 26 letters, although English voices are 44 different sounds. Phonetics helps to improve pronunciation, spelling and reading skills. By acquiring English phonetics better knowledge of the language and its sounds are acquired to become a more confident speaker, reader and writer.

For Undergraduate English students, the study of phonetics often serves as a foundational element in their linguistic education, offering insights into pronunciation, speech patterns, and linguistic diversity. The perception of phonetics among these students varies widely, influenced by factors such as educational background, cultural exposure, and personal interest.

Phonetics is a crucial aspect of language learning, particularly for students of English as a second language. Understanding how undergraduate students perceive phonetics can shed light on effective teaching methods and curriculum development in ESL programs. This study investigates the attitudes, knowledge levels, and challenges faced by Undergraduate English students in relation to phonetics.

The necessity of the research

The students have a lot of trouble in speaking English. Their terror stems primarily from phonetics. The students studying English literature also struggle to comprehend, acquire and articulate the correct English language. The students believe that learning phonetics is not necessary in order to write and speak in English. They view phonetics as an uninteresting subject, and students struggle to comprehend the rules.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the level of perception towards phonetics among Undergraduate English Students.
2. To find out the level of Perception of Undergraduate English Students towards Phonetics with regard to their background variables age, parents education, locality, nature of institution, and gender.

Hypotheses of the study

A hypothesis is defined as a testable statement predicting a relationship between variables that can be investigated through research and

experimentation (Ashworth, K.A. 2020).

The hypotheses formulated for this study are:

1. There is no significant difference between male and female Undergraduate English students in their perception of phonetics.
2. There is no significant difference between rural and urban Undergraduate English students in their perception of phonetics.
3. There is no significant difference between Tamil medium and English medium Undergraduate English students.

Study's scope

This study is exceptional and crucial to the subject of education. The findings of this study will enable us to better understand the challenges associated with teaching and learning phonetics, as well as the perception that students feel while facing the language. The study's findings will enable to understand how students see studying phonetics. The study's findings will

enable to gauge students' anxiety levels while learning phonetics will also highlight the efforts made by the students in this area. This also introduces the mitigating strategies for the avoidance of phonetics. With the help of this outcome, phonetics can be made as simple and feasible.

Description of the problem

The investigator chose the term "Perception of Undergraduate English Students on Phonetics" for the inquiry. The goal of this study is to find out how well these students perceive phonetics. A great deal of phonetic errors are made by students for a variety of reasons, including lack of foundational understanding, fear of making mistakes or being imperfect, lack of vocabulary, and improper word and practice usage. Incorrect word pronunciation and transcription, results in extremely uncomfortable statement formulation, are other frequent issues. If the difficulty with learning phonetics is not resolved, it will negatively impact their career. Inappropriate sentences with meaningless pronunciation that alter the entire meaning or the information

that needs to be shared with everyone are the result of bad phonetics practice. The students' low performance has left them feeling helpless and overwhelmed.

Key Terms: Operational Definition

Perception

Perception refers to the mental process by which individuals interpret and make sense of sensory information received from the environment.

Undergraduate English students

Undergraduate English students in the context of academia, refers to students who are pursuing a Bachelor's degree in English Literature in affiliated college of Manonmaniam sundaranar university in Tenkasi District. These students are studying various aspects of English language, literature and writing, including literary analysis, critical theory, language structure and usage, cultural studies and more.

Population

"Population" refers to the entire group of individuals or items that researchers are interested in studying. It

represents the complete set of subjects that the study's findings are intended to generalize to. (Morrison,K.2018). The study's intended population is Undergraduate English students of Tenkasi District.

Sample

The sample for this study included 200 undergraduate English literature students from seven colleges in the Tenkasi area. The sample was selected using the random sampling technique.

Variable

Perception of Phonetics serves as the study's variable. Personal characteristics such as name, gender, college type, residence area, college type, institution type, habit of reading English news papers, school medium, and parents literacy are among the background variables of the study.

Instruments utilized

With the supervisor's assistance, the investigator created a tool for the investigation. By assessing the tool's validity and reliability and seeking expert advice, the created tool was standardized. The investigator's tool is

the CP scale on perception of phonetics. A five-point Likert scale. Perception towards speaking, Perception toward pronunciation, Perception towards learning phonetics, and Perception towards transcription are the four dimensions of the instrument. There are a set of questions in each dimensions that gauge perception of phonetics. Both

positive and negative items are included in the tool.

Procedure for gathering data

The investigator met the sample in person of the arts and science colleges in Tenkasi District, gave them the tool, requested them to fill it out on their own, and the results were analysed.

Data analysis

Table 1. Significant difference between male and female Undergraduate English Students in Perception of Phonetics

	Gender	No	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Perception on phonetics among Undergraduate English students with regard to gender	Male	31	99.60	10.614	1.149	0.257
	Female	169	97.11	12.701		

Given that the p-(0.25) value in table 1 is greater than 0.05, the null hypotheses is accepted. It shows that there is no significant difference in

perception of phonetics among the Undergraduate English students with regard to personal variable gender.

Table 2. Significant difference between Rural and Urban Undergraduate English students in their perception of Phonetics

	Locality	No	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Perception on Phonetics among Undergraduate English Students with regard to Locality of residence	Rural	37	96.22	12.142	0.684	0.497
	Urban	163	97.76	12.496		

Given that the p-value(0.49) in the table 2 is greater than 0.05, the null hypotheses is accepted. It shows that there is no significant difference in

perception of phonetics of phonetics among the Undergraduate English students with regard to personal variable Locality of residence.

Table 3. Significant difference between Tamil medium and English medium Undergraduate English students in their perception on phonetics

	Medium studied in school	No	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Perception on Phonetics among Undergraduate English students with regard to Medium studied in school	Tamil	145	97.58	12.689	0.186	0.853
	English	55	97.22	11.763		

Given that the p-value(0.85) in the table 3 is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. It shows that there is no significant difference in Perception of phonetics among the Undergraduate English students with regard to personal variable medium studied in school.

2. There is no significant difference in perception of phonetics among Undergraduate English students with regard to residence.
3. There is no significant difference in perception of phonetics among Undergraduate English students with regard to Medium studied in school.

Results of the investigation

1. There is no significant difference in perception of phonetics among Undergraduate English students with regard to gender.

Recommendations of the study

Some steps need to be taken to create a positive view by the undergraduate English students on perception of phonetics.

- 1) Classes on phonetics should be taught utilizing contemporary technology, such as holograms and additive reality, rather than the conventional style of instruction.
- 2) There should be chances for pupils to interact with native speakers.
- 3) The support materials that students require in order to improve their communicative and phonological skills must be given to them.
- 4) In order to assist students overcome their fear of phonetics and build confidence, teachers should promote their writing and communication in English.
- 5) Teachers should encourage their students to master the phonetic skills.
- 6) Teachers must provide tests to meet the needs for constant monitoring.

Conclusion

Phonetics instruction has to be improved. Phonetics must be taught by

hands-on activities or activity-based learning methods; it cannot be taught via lectures or explicit instructions. Instead of being taught explicitly, phonetics must be learnt through extensive instruction and appropriate examples. To make phonetics rules easier for pupils to retain and comprehend, they should be presented in diagrams in an understandable and highly visual. Teaching phonetics requires the use of appropriate teaching resources. Effective teaching tools, such as multimedia presentations, are the responsibility of the teachers. Students must prepare themselves by using online resources to learn. Teachers need to motivate their students to read lot of phonetic scripts and make it a habit. In order to help the students improve their phonetics and learn how to spell sentences correctly, they should also watch English-language movies, television shows, and news. In order to help students understand phonetics and its exceptions, teachers must take all reasonable steps to practice speaking with good pronunciation. In a similar vein, phonetic instructions should follow an inductive teaching approach that presents certain ideas

along with multiple examples. With this approach, the pupils are expected

to learn phonetics by making sense of the rules without any explanation.

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Priya. C. is a M.Ed. student, Department of Education, Manonmaniam sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu. She holds M.A, degree in English and she has presented two papers at International level.



Dr S. Lenin is a Faculty member of Department of Education, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India. He is an educationist with 15 years of teaching experience. He has published more than 20 articles in reputed journals. He is an author of 3 books on Educational Sociology, English Education and A handbook on teaching and learning and he has served as a resource person in more than 100 forums.
