

The Role of Vowels and Consonants In English Language Learning

Yani Lubis¹, Cindy Alia Ramadhany², Airen Widyana³, Elvida Putri Mahara⁴, Dian Fanny Sarahseti⁵

¹²³⁴⁵English Education, The State Islamic University of North Sumatera

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received May 30, 2024
Revised June 08, 2024
Accepted June 12 2024
Available online 14 June 2024

Keywords:

Vowels; Consonants; English



This is an open access article under the [CC BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/) license.
Copyright © 2023 by Author. Published by Yayasan Daarul Huda

ABSTRACT

Numerous studies indicate that consonants are more highly valued for lexical interpretation than vowels because of the richer and more powerful distinctions they can make. Consonants appear to be the most important phoneme for differentiating between lexical items in most language systems. Cross-linguistically, consonants are more common than vowels. The title "The Role Of Vowels And Consonants In English Language Learning" would be better served by a descriptive study. The purpose of this research is to examine how consonants function in language development, with an emphasis on their articulation and acquisition. The purpose of a descriptive study is to provide readers a thorough grasp of the subject of the investigation. Learners who experience immersion language situations or early exposure to English tend to acquire consonants more quickly. It is crucial to remember that every learner is different when it comes to the acquisition of consonants, and some students may find it difficult to make particular sounds correctly. The phonetic variations between the learner's native language and English may have an impact on this, making it harder for them to recognize and produce novel sounds.

PENDAHULUAN

Infants must learn words in addition to extracting and generalizing structural regularities that are necessary for learning grammar, such as syntax, in order to acquire language. For example, in order to comprehend the entire statement when we hear, "The girl kicks the boy," we need to know more than simply the definition of each word. The relationship between the verb and the subject and the object must be clear to the listener. Learning words necessitates memorizing particular input elements (girl, boy), such as that, and presenting them in a way that makes it possible to distinguish them from other words (boy vs. toy), whereas learning syntactic structure regularities necessitates being able to infer relationships between input elements. (for example, if the verb comes before or after the object) and apply them to new sentences.

Thus, a (partial) "division of labor" that would favorably support vocabulary acquisition in one speech category while focusing more on the identification of structural regularities—particularly those signaling relations between constituents—might be beneficial for young language learners. We will now discuss a number of findings that suggest vowels and consonants have distinct functions in language learning. Specifically, we suggest that because consonants are more suited for category perception than vowels, they are more involved in word identification and encoding. Selkirk, 1984; Nespors & Vogel, 1986).

In contrast, vowels contain variations in prosody and provide information regarding the boundaries and arrangement of syntactic elements. The Consonant-Vowel hypothesis, often known as the CV hypothesis, is based on the functional distinction between consonants and vowels (Nespor, Peña, & Mehler, 2003).

Sianipar, Herman, and Purba, (2022) emphasized that the main communication with individuals in the world is using language. Language is one of the most important aspects of human life, and every aspect is closely related to it; A child learns language for the first time when he is born, directly from his mother or father. Over time, as children grow and develop, they are certain to learn languages other than those taught by their parents, either as a second language. Third, learning a foreign language or another language is called language acquisition, and this depends on the child's cognitive level and the social context during the learning process. (Purba, N. et al. (2020).

We utilize language to communicate our feelings and expectations. Language variety has spread throughout the globe, and it's critical to understand how each individual should pronounce their name, particularly when speaking with others (Galingsing and Tannary, 2022). It is undeniable that language is

*Corresponding author

Email: yanilubis@uinsu.ac.id¹, aliacindy86@gmail.com², airenwidyana8@gmail.com³, elvidafutrimahara26@gmail.com⁴, dianfanysarahseti@gmail.com⁵

shaped by the underlying components that give it structure. Naturally, though, language has a diverse phonemic system as well as variability, especially when it comes to vowels and consonants. In 2013, Andi-Pallawa and Fiptar Abdi Alam. Vowels and consonants are commonly heard in spoken language; they can create low and high sounds or sounds and help understand sign language and the meaning of the language. Phonemes are the smallest units of contrasting sounds in a language, and can distinguish different sounds and meanings of several words.

METHODE

The title "The Role Of Vowels And Consonants In English Language Learning" might be better suited for a descriptive study. The purpose of this research is to examine how consonants function in language development, with an emphasis on their articulation and acquisition. The purpose of a descriptive study is to provide readers a thorough grasp of the subject of the investigation. Data collection for a descriptive study would entail gathering information from a variety of sources, including pertinent theories, prior research, and empirical observations. The researchers would look over previous research and assess how the acquisition and articulation of English consonants are accomplished. This could entail looking at articulatory patterns, phonetic inventories, language acquisition stages, and possible learner obstacles. A descriptive research may use language learners and literature reviews as data collecting techniques. Information would be gathered by the researchers in order to characterize and examine how English consonants function in language development, including how they affect the generation of speech sounds, vocabulary, and overall language ability. A descriptive study's conclusions would offer insightful information on the connection between English consonants and language development. With the use of this study design, researchers are able to look closely at the topic and provide a full summary of how English consonants function in language acquisition and articulation.

RESULT OF RESEARCH

Numerous studies demonstrate that consonants are more devoted to lexical interpretation than vowels are, highlighting the richer and more powerful distinctions that consonants can produce. In most language systems, consonants are mostly responsible for helping speakers differentiate between lexical objects. Cross-linguistically, consonants are more common than vowels. For instance, the percentage is 20C: 5V in Malay, 24C: 7V in Italian, 32C: 5V in Hausa, 29C: 3V in Arabic, 27C: 8V in Igbo, and 46C: 10V in Sindhi.

Cases like Swedish with 16 consonants and 17 vowels are amazingly unprecedented. There are, all things being break even with, different systems that, comparable to Arabic, Aranda (a nearby dialect of Australia) or Greenlandic (of the Eskimo Aleutian family) have fair three vowels. In specific, five-vowel systems are the foremost broadly recognized, and most systems have north of 20 consonants. Systems with few consonants, comparable to Hawaiian with fair 8 or Rotokas with fair 6, are clearly curiously exemptions. In any case, indeed in such systems, there are a more prominent number of consonants than vowels. Typically clearly deficient since of the life frameworks of the talk plot: a greater collection of consonantal than vocalic parts can be accomplished by the human articulators, with the conclusion objective that truly gigantic changes on event take off the phonetic classification unaltered (considering quick creation), whereas other unimportant improvements might bring around a contrast in classification (Stevens 1998, among others).

Consonants are obviously more informative than vowels because they make up a larger percentage of most systems' vowel counts (Vs versus Cs), and this information burden may be the foundation for consonants' lexical specialization. As we will demonstrate, though, consonants serve a specialized purpose in lexical information transmission that extends beyond their numerical supremacy and is constant across languages with comparable V and C proportions. In addition to being more common than vowels, consonants also have a tendency to become more distinctive inside words due to their tendency to become disharmonized.

In other words, consonants that are part of the same lexical item have a propensity to switch up in quality. For example, Arabic avoids adjacent root consonants produced by the same articulator (McCarthy 1991), Japanese avoids the combination of two voiced obstruents within a root (Itô and Mester 1986), and classical Greek avoids three aspirated consonants within a word (the so-called Grassmann Law). On the other hand, while Vs tend to lose their distinctiveness more easily than Cs, they have less distinctive power than Cs due to their lower number in most systems. For instance, in many languages, vowels prefer to harmonize inside a word rather than harmonizing generally.

For instance, in Turkish, it encompasses not just all of a word's affixes but also the majority of its syntactically connected clitic elements, signifying syntactic constituency at the lowest level (Nespor and Vogel 1986). Independent of harmony, vowels also often lose their individuality when they are in an

unstressed position, as shown in many nonharmonic systems. This is true in many languages, including English, where unstressed vowels are central. However, in some languages, the shift is only partial; for example, in European Portuguese 4, there are eight vowels in stressed position but only four in unstressed position; likewise, in Italian, there are seven vowels in stressed position and five in unstressed position. Vowels lose their individuality in nonharmonic systems as well, but only when they are unstressed.

Consonants can weaken (which sometimes results in neutralization) or neutralize in particular contexts, but, unlike vowels, their overall loss of uniqueness does not occur throughout a word. This is partly because not all consonantal types weaken. Rather, in many systems, vowel harmony or reduction affect all vowel kinds, and as a result, their effects are visible throughout a word (Vigario, 2001). In certain languages, consonants—but not vowels—may serve as morphological roots. With Semitic languages, this is the case. For instance, the Arabic word "ktb" has lexical meaning "to write." Depending on which vowel is used to separate the consonants, several word forms and words are created. As a result, in these languages, the consonants play the sole role in lexical root differentiation, rather than the consonants being substantially more important.

Consonantal roots in Semitic dialects have been a significant inspiration for the consonantal level, the degree of phonological portrayal shaped only by consonants (McCarthy 1985). That is, the inspiration for the consonantal level is chiefly lexical. In contrast, the inspiration for the vocalic level has been of prosodic nature, for instance, the record of the areas of vowel amicability or apparent spreading (Goldsmith 1976). Since prosody signals sentence structure, it is possible that the data contained in the vocalic level is straightforwardly or in a roundabout way a prompt to grammar. We can conclude from these observations that the task of specifying lexical entries is more closely related to Cs than to Vs⁵. In addition, it has been demonstrated that, in word recognition, consonant information restricts lexical selection more strongly than vowel information does. (2000).

Subjects modify vowels more often than consonants when allowed to change one phoneme to create something from a non-word. In this way, audience members will frequently come up with the word cobra rather than the word zebra when a nonword like "kebra" is introduced, demonstrating that a vowel substitution is easier to understand than a consonantal one. The test was administered to speakers of Dutch, a language where the ratio of vowels to consonants is highly regulated, as well as speakers of Spanish, a language with a lot more consonants than vowels.

We shall discuss tones' specialized function in communicating particular kinds of information in a different paper. This paper's proposal only applies to languages where word contrast is absent from tone, a language's unique phonemic repertoire. These findings are especially significant for the thesis that we are advocating. While the nature of the vocal tract may account for consonants' more distinctive role, the fact that consonants play a major role in lexical entry distinction even in systems where vowels outnumber consonants in distinctiveness supports the two distinct functional roles we are proposing for Cs and Vs.

That consonants incite the dictionary more than vowels do besides surfaces in lingo insight, tolerating one recognizes the going with gedankenexperiment. On the off chance essentially annihilate the consonants of a sentence and take off its vowels, indeed with their right musicality and sound, you'll not be able to actuate a handle on the importance of the words inside the to start with sentence. On the off chance that or maybe you delete the vowels, you'll truly have to be encourage a handle on a few though possibly not most lexical things reasonable based on their consonants. Vowels don't tend to substitute in quality that con sonants have:though words with a comparable vowel in each syllabic center are not troublesome to track down in different tongues, transparently of congruity or vowel centralization, as in Italian 'banana' or rotolo 'roll', Turkish kelebek 'butterfly' or arkadaş 'companion', Greek irini 'harmony' or thalasa 'ocean', it is dubious trisyllabic words with comparative consonant in each one of the three onsets, conceivably but for honomatopeias

In other words, not at all like vowels, consonants once in a while endure all through a word, with the special case of reduplications. As a result, the beginnings of progressive syllables regularly have consonants of shifting quality. In step, in spite of the reality that they substitute in amount, vowels don't show up to be required to interchange in quality, as we are going see underneath. The centrality of esteem variety in consonants is appeared also by tongue twisters. Tongue twisters as a run the show solidify areas that are difficult to program in closeness in this way bewildering the articulatory program (Schourup 1973). Over lingos, they depend on the similarity or possibly irregularity of the consonants that frame a string, not of the vowels⁶. Tongue twisters are troublesome to express on the grounds that the conso ⁶ This recognition depends on the primary Worldwide Collection of Tongue Twisters, in which models from 100 tongues are given. It exceptionally well may be counseled at www.uebersetzung.at nants or consonant bunches are unreasonably like one another. A gathering of sentences with comparative vowels doesn't make a comparable bewildering distinction.

The fact that different rhythmic classes of languages have quite diverse counts of vowels in each of the most common words is a last observation that highlights the limited role vowels play in the lexical meaning of words. The quantity of consonants, not so. So-called stress-timed languages have a rich syllabic structure and a high monosyllabic content, as we will see later. Hence, a popular word frequently consists of two or more consonants and one vowel. In so-called syllable-timed languages, the ratio of Cs to Vs is less extreme since they have a simpler syllabic structure and usually longer words. Common words in these languages typically feature two or three vowels and two to four consonants.

At final, assumed mora-planned lingos, with essentially a not numerous syllable sorts have impressively longer words and the amount of Cs and Versus will for the most part be more comparative, habitually 2 and 2 or 3 and 3. In this way in each one of these tongues, the foremost broadly recognized words have 2 or 3 Cs, whereas the amount of vowels depends for the most part upon the melodic course. The number of vowels in a word changes the foremost over cadenced classes, not the number of consonants. The amount of consonants, as a matter of truth, whether they have a put with something exceptionally comparative or to different syllables, that's whether a word is mono-or pluri syllabic, is exceptionally comparative. The way that over tongues that have a put with different melodic classes the amount of consonants that include a word will in general be comparative, whereas that of vowels changes an uncommon course of action may be a further idea that consonants are required more than vowels for lexical dis colorations. With everything taken under consideration able to make the assurance that the errand of recognize ing lexical things lays more on consonants than on vowels. It is in this way not out of the standard that there are a greater number of consonants than there are vowels in most of lingos.

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH

The aim of teaching English vocabulary to the general public, especially language learners, is to increase awareness about how to create and understand English vocabulary. discourse about sounds that originate from partial or complete obstruction of wind flow, thereby producing clear examples of sound. to hone their ability to produce different consonant sounds as they progress. produces the desired sound, this interaction involves the synchronization of several articulatory elements, such as the lips, tongue, teeth and vocal cords. (B. Lewis) A. dan L. Thompson. 1992).

The procurement of consonants in English follows a general example, with specific sounds being obtained sooner than others. For instance, plosive sounds like /p/, /b/, /t/, and /d/ are regularly gained right off the bat, while fricative sounds like /f/, /v/, /s/, and /z/ might be obtained later. The authority of additional mind boggling consonant sounds, like affricates (/tʃ/, /dʒ/) and laterals (/l/), may take additional time and practice. During the securing system, students depend on both hear-able insight and impersonation. They pay attention to the consonant sounds delivered by others and endeavor to recreate them. This cycle includes experimentation as students refine their articulatory developments and tweak their elocution. Different variables can impact the procurement of consonants in English, including the student's age, openness to the language, and first language foundation. Small kids by and large have a more prominent limit with regards to language procurement and will generally obtain consonant sounds more effectively than more seasoned students. (Lewis, B. A., and Thompson, L. A. 1992).

Also, students who are presented to English at an early age or in vivid language conditions frequently exhibit more fast advancement in consonant obtaining. It's important to remember that every person learns consonants differently, and some students may have trouble making certain sounds correctly. This can be influenced by the phonetic differences between the learner's native language and English, making it hard to tell the difference and make sounds that aren't familiar. Understanding the course of consonant obtaining in English gives important bits of knowledge to teachers, discourse language pathologists, and students themselves. It illuminates educational techniques and mediations pointed toward supporting students in creating exact articulation and successful relational abilities in the English language. Besides, research has recognized a few critical achievements during the time spent consonant obtaining in English. During the beginning phases, babies normally produce less complex sounds, like bilabial and alveolar consonants. As they create, they steadily integrate more mind boggling sounds into their collection, including velar and dental consonants. This movement mirrors the development of their articulatory muscles and the refinement of their phonetic capacities. The course of consonant securing is likewise affected by phonological examples and limitations. Youngsters start to perceive and deliver phonological examples, for example, syllable designs and sound successions, which further shape their consonant creation. For example, they figure out how to recognize starting, average, and last places of consonants in words. Notwithstanding creation, the course of consonant securing includes perceptual turn of events. Students become progressively delicate to the unobtrusive contrasts in consonant sounds, empowering them to recognize comparative phonemes. (McLeod, S., and Bread cook, E. 2017).

This perceptual sharpness is fundamental for precise elocution and understanding of communicated in language. It is important that singular varieties exist in the securing of consonants. A few students might show quicker progress and display exact creation of consonant sounds, while others might encounter hardships or show phonological cycles, like replacements or cancellations. Factors like language climate, openness to models of English, and individual discourse and hearing skills can add to these varieties. Learning how English consonants are learned has real-world implications for language instruction and intervention. (McLeod, S., and Crowe, K. 2018).

Teachers and discourse language pathologists can configuration designated exercises and procedures to work with consonant procurement, for example, explanation works out, phonemic mindfulness preparing, and hear-able segregation assignments. By offering suitable help and direction, students can defeat difficulties and foster capable consonant creation abilities. All in all, the course of consonant procurement in English includes the progressive improvement of articulatory control, perceptual keenness, and phonological mindfulness. It is impacted by different factors and shows individual varieties. By acquiring bits of knowledge into this cycle, teachers and experts can improve language opportunities for growth and assist students with accomplishing precise and compelling relational abilities in English.

The English vowel and consonant system is part of the phonemic system. There are 20 vowels and 24 consonants in English. Here are the vowels:

Short vowel:

{/: pick /pɪk/, fit /fi:t/ - pet /pet/, sent /sent/, challenge /'dɪ.fɪ.kælt/ /e/ , focus /ə'ten.fən/ /æ/ - pat /pæt/, flat /flæt/, family /'fæ.mə.li/ /ʌ/ - cut /kʊt/ jump /dʒʌmp/ , write /praɪt/, book /bʊk/; cover /'kʌ.vər/; /i/ pillow /'kʊ.fən/ /ɒ/ - pot /pɒt/, dog /dɒg/, hospital /'hɒs.pɪ.təl /ə/ - information /ə'baɪt/ , system /'sɪs.təm/ , whole (kəm'plɪs/.

Long vowel :

/i:/ week /wi:k/, foot /fi:t/, medium /'msaya.di.jə/ /ɑ:/ hard /ha:/, park /pa:k/, article /ɑ\ . tɪ.kəl/ /ɔ:/ fork /fɔ:k/, walk /wɔ:k/ august /'ɔ:gʌst/ /ɜ:/ hear /hɜ:d/, word /wɜ:d/, surface /'sɜ\ . fɪs/ /u:/ boot /bu:t/, group /gru:p/, beautiful /'bjʊ\ . tɪ.fəl/ Double diphthong vowel : /eɪ/ place /pleɪs/, late /leɪt/, dangerous /'deɪn . dʒərəs/; /oʊ/ home /hoʊm/, telephone /foʊn/, global /'gləʊ.bəl/; /aʊ/ mouse /maʊs/ brown, /braʊn/accounting /ə'kaʊn.tənt/ /ɪə/ transparency /klɪə/, anxiety /fɪə/, profession /kə'rɪə/ /eə/ attention /keə/in /weə/, toy /tɔɪ /, cry /kraɪ.jə.bəl/ /aɪ/ find /faɪnd/, bite /baɪt/, tiger /'taɪ.gə/ /ʊə/ tour /tʊə/, pure /pʊə/, mature /mə'tʊə/.

Double diphthong vowel:

/eɪ/ place /pleɪs/, late /leɪt/, dangerous /'deɪn.dʒərəs/; /oʊ/ home /hoʊm/, telephone /foʊn/, global /'gləʊ.bəl/; /aʊ/ mouse /maʊs/brown, /braʊn/accounting /ə'kaʊn.tənt/ /ɪə/ transparency /klɪə/, anxiety /fɪə/, profession /kə'rɪə/ /eə/ attention /keə/, use of /weə/, express child boy /bɔɪ/ /dɪ'kleə/ /ɔɪ/, toy /tɔɪ/, fun /fʌn.dʒə.bəl/ /aɪ/ find /faɪnd/, bite /baɪt/, tiger /'taɪ.gə/ /ʊə/ tour /tʊə/ , pure /pʊə/, mature /mə'tʊə/.

If we focus on the Toba Batak language, viz: e and I. The letter E can replace the letter I in the second syllable. At this angle, the suffix applies:

Since the syllable after a has i.

1. E can appear instead of a in heavy syllables, e.g. mamutuhei instead of mamutuhai from buthu. In creations, this change can also occur in light syllables, due to the presence of the letter I in the next syllable wo1 "d, e.g. seen in the syllable).
2. E can replace a in pale syllables, while the preceding syllable has I, especially if there is no strong consonant between the vowels, e.g. talinge = talinga, halilinge = halilinga, sandihe = sentika. Rarely found with u in the first syllable, but the model is south, from South.
3. E and i If the previous syllable has a, e replaces i in the last syllable. 893. E and o. Parumaen means "small" instead of Parumao which means "brought into the house" and bahen or Baen are examples of e appearing next to or replacing o in the last bright syllable.
4. You and o. Usually o replaces u on the last syllable if the last choice closes with a guttural or trill consonant. Regardless of the model, the following can be referred to: gaor rather than Gaur.
5. In other dialects, o corresponds to u on the penultimate syllable. In the words tola and Dana, there is o instead of u : however, soma becomes suma to make these foreign words authentic.
6. U specifications in penultimate accented syllables, e.g. Moss = limut.
7. Sometimes the T. Having o is a - the reverse is less common, e.g. ambol6ng = embalang, sorat = sarat, ganap = ganup and sopo = sabun.

CONCLUSION

Consonants can weaken (which sometimes results in neutralization) or neutralize in particular contexts, but, unlike vowels, their overall loss of uniqueness does not occur throughout a word. This is partly because not all consonantal types weaken. Rather, in many systems, vowel harmony or reduction affects all vowel kinds, so their effects are evident throughout a word. In certain languages, consonants—but not vowels—may serve as morphological roots. Semitic languages exhibit this. For instance, the Arabic word "ktb" has lexical meaning "to write." Depending on which vowel is used to separate the consonants, several word forms and words are created. Consequently, in these languages, the role of differentiating lexical roots, relies solely on them rather than comparatively more on the consonants.

The consonantal tier, or the level of phonological representation made up only of consonants, was largely motivated by the consonantal roots found in Semitic languages. In other words, lexical factors drive the consonantal tier. In contrast, prosodic elements such as the explanation of the domains of vowel harmony or tonal spreading have served as the driving force behind the vocalic layer. It is possible that the information in the vocalic layer serves as a direct or indirect cue to syntax because prosody signals syntax. We might infer from these data that the task of lexical entry specification is more closely associated with Cs than with Vs. Additionally, it has been demonstrated that vowel information constrains lexical selection less tightly than consonant information in word recognition.

REFERENCE

- Cutler, A. et al. (2000), *Constraints of Vowels and Consonants on Lexical Selection: Cross-linguistic Comparisons*, «Memory and Cognition», 28, 5, 746-55
- Galingging, C. and Tannuany, A. (2022). *Contrastive Analysis between English and Indonesian Quotes in The Utterances of the Character in the Movie "Doctor Strange 2 Multiverse of madness"*. Journal of Social Science and Humanities Research (JSSHR), 1(1), 1-11
- Itô, J. and A. Mester (1986), The Phonology of Voicing in Japanese, «Linguistic Inquiry», 17, 49-73.
- Lewis, B. A., & Thompson, L. A. (1992). *A study of consonant acquisition in young children*. Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 35(1), 85-97.
- McLeod, S., & Baker, E. (2017). *Speech sound disorders in children: An evidence-based approach*. John Wiley & Sons.
- McLeod, S., & Crowe, K. (2018). *Children's speech: An evidence-based approach to assessment and intervention*. Pearson Australia.-
- Nespor, M., & Vogel, I. (1986). *Prosodic phonology*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. (2ndedn., 2008. Dordrecht: Foris.)
- Nespor, M., Shukla, M., van de Vijver, R., Avesani, C., Schraudolf, H., & Donati, C. (2008). *Different phrasal prominence realization in VO and OV languages*. *Lingue e Linguaggio*, 7, 1–28.
- Purba, R., Van Thao, N., Herman, Sitohang, D. R., & ThiQuynhTrang, P. (2022). *How to Attract Viewers through Advertisement Slogans? A Case on Figurative in Semantic Study*. *Universal Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 2(1), 1–5. DOI: 10.31586/ujssh.2022.213
- Stevens, K.N. (1998), *Acoustic Phonetics*, Cambridge (MA), Mit Press.
- Schourup, L. (1973), *Unique New York, Unique New York, Unique New York*, Papers from the Ninth Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society, 587-96.