



Application of phonetic transcription for authentic pronunciation in English language teaching and learning in Bihar: A case study of English honours students under Jai Prakash University, Chhapra

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Abstract

The proposed research paper in English language investigated and examined TDC Part – 1 English Honours students under Jai Prakash University Chhapra in Bihar for observation of their proficiency in phonetic transcription and its structural aspects for authentic pronunciation in English language teaching and learning. The analytical, descriptive, and qualitative approaches were adopted and implemented for the survey of the intelligibility and proficiency of Bihar English learners in English language skills essential for spoken English during their communication. The research study was basically based on several test examinations. Two hundred English Honours students, fifty from each of the four degree colleges of Jai Prakash University were selected as the respondents who were administered by means of the four test examinations being conducted during the interval of fifteen days to observe their performance in English language skills –listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The competent teachers of spoken English were deputed to teach the respondents phonetic transcription and pronunciation by means of using the audio visual aids as well as the phonetic features. Two research questions were formulated to direct the course of the study. The data were analysed on the basis of the information gathered from the examination and evaluation of the performance of the respondents performed at the four semester test examinations conducted for survey of the intelligibility and proficiency in the phonetic transcription as a suitable method for authentic pronunciation during the communication of the spoken English language. The performance of the respondents in percentage was represented by means of the Bar Graph.

Keywords: proposed, transcription, pronunciation, analytical, qualitative, communication, respondents, gathered, formulated, intelligibility, proficiency, authentic, bar graph, etc

Introduction

The proposed research paper is basically based on two interdependent aspects for spoken English in communicative speech. These basic aspects of communicative English language are well known as 'The Phonetic Transcription and the Phonemic Pronunciation. The research study deals with the phonetic transcription the mother of authentic pronunciation in spoken English language. The research paper teaches the English honours learning students of Jai Prakash University Chhapra, to be the master of the four English language skills which are: listening, reading, speaking and writing. The listening and reading skills are said to be the receptive skills, while the speaking and the writing skills are productive ones. The pronunciation, functioning as the shoot system, cannot be separated from the English language flowing plant, which consists of the root system and the shoot system. Those students who know how to read and write English well can also speak in their communication with intelligible pronunciation. According to Kenworthy (2005), 'Pronunciation, integrated with the four English skills. But it is often forgotten and reluctant to be drilled. Some teachers ignore the remedy of the pronunciation and still got fossilized with some wrong sounded words.' The teachers teach the students by means of repeated drill method or repeat after me method in which the words or sentence given by the teachers is repeatedly read or pronounced by the students. It takes a long time to learn and makes the learners feel boring. Mompean and Lintunen explain this method, 'Teachers usually teach students by drilling

method. They give examples to students then students repeat after them. The repetition can be repeated many times. The students have to pronounce the words one by one and it consumes times.' The one and only one student can get a chance to pronounce the given word alone. Then there comes the chance for the next one. This paper is in favour of the same time direct participation of all the students to learn the pronunciation of words or sentences by supplying the phonetic transcription method, which is the only worldwide accepted method to teach the understandable and proficient pronunciation in English language. Atkielski, (2005) states, 'phonetic transcription, Non -a- days, there can be one good way to remedy students 'pronunciation and change the drilling or repeat after me method that could be boring for students.' Pelttari explains the importance of the phonetic transcription, 'It is because phonetic transcription of English uses the IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet).It can show precisely how the sounds produced and how the words pronounced. It is widely used in the activity of learning language. Beside that it can directly read and the students can know the correct pronunciation as well.' In the recent globalization of the world, It is obvious that the learning and teaching of the phonetic transcription for accurate transcription in merely possible with the application of the International Phonetic symbols in English language. Mompean and Lintunen assure the students, 'To study pronunciation with phonetic transcription, students, of course, have to be accustomed and know the symbols of sounds shown in the IPA.' This proposed research paper depicts the class room practice with phonetic transcription.

It shows some ways of teaching and remedy for pronunciation using phonetic transcription with International Phonetic Alphabet.

Research Problems

The learners of English language do not have knowledge enough the International Phonetic Alphabet by means of which the speech sounds are represented. The phonetic transcription is the method for transcribing the speech sounds by dint of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). The intelligible and proficient pronunciation in English language can be spoken by the learners who know how to transcribe the speech sounds by virtue of the phonetic transcription method. The supra-segmental features of English language also play an important role in the phonetic transcription for learning the authentic pronunciation of English language. This research paper deals with all those component features which are very essential for phonetic transcription for accurate pronunciation. It made the English language learners acquire the knowledge of the 44 International Phonetic Alphabet and the phonetic features which are mainly syllable, stress, rhythm, and intonation.

Review of Literature

Language: The language is the means of communication of our thought, feeling, emotion, and action which are propagated from one person to another by means of transmitting sounds generated during our expression. Henry Sweet has defined the language, "Language may be defined as the expression of thought by means of speech sounds." "The speech sounds produced during delivering a speech are systematic and are denoted by some practical symbols. According to Sabir, "Language is a primarily human and non-instinctive method of communicating ideas, emotions, and desires by means of a system of voluntarily produced symbols." "Hence language may be defined as a mixture of various sounds arranged in a systematic manner so as to produce a meaningful expression to the listeners in a particular known community.

Speech Sounds: The expression of thoughts or feelings produces speech sounds to communicate them by means of a particular language. The various speech sounds are produced and communicated by a speaker. These various sounds produced by speech are 44 which are classified into two major categories which are Vowels and Consonants.

Vowel Sounds: - There are 20 Vowel sounds in two classes (1) Pure vowels =12, (2) Diphthongs = 8, all 20 vowels are voiced in English language, which is noted below:

Short vowels: 07 Long vowels: 05 Diphthongs: 08

/e/ - dress /ɑ:/ - start, palm /aɪ/ - price
/ɒ/ - lot /i:/ - fleece /eɪ/ - face
/ə/ - comma, letter /u:/ - goose /eə/ - square
/ʊ/ - foot /ɜ:/ - nurse /əʊ/ - goat
/ʌ/ - strut /ɔ:/ - thought, north /ɪə/ - near
/æ/ - trap /aʊ/ - mouth /ɪ/ - kit
/ɔɪ/ - choice /ə/ - cure, tour

Consonant Sounds: - The consonant sounds in English language are 24, which are, voiced =15 and voiceless =09, which are noted below with examples:-

Voiced consonants:-15 Voiceless consonants:-09

/b/ - boat, job /p/ - pet, keep

/d/ - do, good /t/ - tea, put
/g/ - go, big /k/ - kiss, look
/v/ - vote, give /f/ - fit, staff
/z/ - zoo, was /s/ - sit, yes
/ʒ/ - pleasure, massage /ʃ/ - show, wash
/dʒ/ - job, age /tʃ/ - chat, much
/ð/ - this, bathe /θ/ - thin, both
/m/ - me, room /h/ - hot
/n/ - no, run
/ŋ/ - sing
/l/ - like, all
/r/ - red, year
/j/ - yes
/w/ - wet

International Phonetic Alphabet: All speech sounds either vowels or consonants in English language are represented graphically with the phonetic symbols which are universally known as International Phonetic Alphabet originated by the International Phonetic Association established in London, United Kingdom. These International Phonetic Symbols are noted below:-

Definition of the supra-segmental features: Phonology is based on segmental and supra-segmental information. Segments are related to vowels and consonants. The supra-segmental features also called phonetic features are the speech sound not limited to the single sounds and often extend over the syllable, words and phrases. The supra-segmental features of English language mainly consist of syllable, stress, rhythm and intonation.

The syllable: The syllable is the word or the part of the word which has only one vowel sound. J. Sethi & P.V. Dhamija have defined the syllable, "the unit of the next higher level than the phoneme is called the syllable."

Accent or stress: The relative emphasis is known as the stress or accent which is given to certain syllable in a word, or to certain words in phrase, or sentence. R.K Bansal and J.B. Harrison have defined the accent or the stress, "word accent is an important feature of English. In words of more than one syllable, not all syllables are equally prominent. Those that are more prominent than others are said to receive the accent."

Rhythm: The strong patterns of sounds, words or the musical notes which are used in music, poetry, and dancing is known as rhythm. J. Sethi and P.V. Dhamija defines, "rhythm in English language likewise refers to the periodic recurrence of certain complexes or patterns of sound utterances constituting a text." Similarly in this connection rhythm according to T. Balasubramanian, "English rhythm is said to be stress timed. This means that in an English utterance, strong or stressed or accented syllables tend to occur at regular intervals of time, irrespective of the number of weak unstressed or unaccented syllables between any two stressed syllables."

Intonation: The rise and fall of the voice of the speaker is known as intonation. Intonation is defined by R.L. Varshaney who says, "Intonation is significant variation in the pitch from one part of an utterance to another. The meaning of English utterance, for example, derives not only

from its changing sound pattern and the contrastive, accentual promises already referred, to but also from associated patterns of intonation”. Similarly intonation is also defined by, B.L. Kohli and others who say, “Intonation is the tone, the melody, the music of speech. When a speaker speaks, he does not say every word on the same note. There are changes in pitch. There is rise and fall of voice. The study of the changes of pitch is called intonation.”

Phonetic Transcription

The transcription is the process by means of which the utterance of the speech sounds spoken by the speakers is represented by dint of International Phonetic Alphabet, the phonetic symbols in the form of text of the pronunciation of the speech sounds. R. L. Varshne has defined, “Phonetic transcription is a device in which we use several symbols in such a way that one symbol always represent one sound. It is always known as phonetic notation, it is an attempt on paper, a record of the sounds that speakers make.

There is a great difficulty in the spelling and English alphabets, some of them stand for more than one sound. According to R.K. Sharma and others, “the letter ‘a’, for example, has different sounds in able, about, at, after, want,

all, any. Secondly different combinations of letters yield the same sound. For example, sea, key, feel, field, seize, people. There are certain letters which are silent in certain words as, b in dumb, debt, l in calf, etc.

It is evident that the spelling of the words does not give the real pronunciation. It is the International Phonetic Alphabet, each one of them represent one and only one pronunciation. It is known to all that phonetic transcription is represented by means of the International Phonetic Alphabet. Hence it is obvious that the transcription of the vowels and consonant of the speech sounds is the true and authentic pronunciation in English language teaching and learning.

According to J.C. Wells, “Phonetic transcription is the use of phonetic symbols to represent speech sounds ideally, each sound in a spoken utterance is represented by a written phonetic symbol, so as to furnish a record sufficient to render possible the accurate reconstruction of the utterance the value of phonetic symbols or the phonetic transcription is the accurate pronunciation of a word in the dictionary of the English language.”

The following are the examples which represent the IPA of speech sounds, ordinary spelling of the words and the phonetic transcription / authentic pronunciation:

Table 1

Sl. No.	Phonetic Symbols	Ordinary Spellings	Phonetic Transcription/ Pronunciation
1.	/e/	dress	/dres/
2.	/ɒ/	lot	/lɒt/
3.	/ə/	comma	/kəmə/
4.	/ʊ/	foot	/fʊt/
5.	/ʌ/	strut	/strʌt/
6.	/æ/	trap	/træp/
7.	/ɪ/	kit	/kɪt/
8.	/ɑ:/	start	/stɑ:t/
9.	/i:/ -	fleece	/fli:s/ -
10.	/u:/	goose	/gu:z/
11.	/ɜ:/	nurse	/nɜ:s/
12.	/ɔ:/	thought	/θɔ:t/
13.	/aɪ/	price	/praɪs/
14.	/eɪ/	face	/feɪs/
15.	/eə/	square	/skeə/
16.	/əʊ/	goat	/gəʊt/
17.	/ɪə/	near	/nɪə/
18.	/aʊ/	mouth	/maʊ θ /
19.	/ɔɪ/	choice	/tʃɔɪs/
20.	/ʊə/	cure	/kʊə/
21.	/b/	boat, job	/bbt/, /zb/
22.	/d/	do	/d əʊ/
23.	/g/	go	/g əʊ/
24.	/v/	vote	/v ɔ:t/
25.	/z/	zoo	/z u:/
26.	/z/	pleasure	/plezə/
27.	/dʒ/	job	/dʒ ɒb/
28.	/ð/	this	/ði /ʃ/
29.	/m/	me	/mi/
30.	/n/	no	/n əʊ/
31.	/ŋ/	sing	/sɪŋ/
32.	/l/	like	/l aɪk/
33.	/r/	red	/red/
34.	/j/	yes	/jes/
35.	/w/	wet	/wet/
36.	/p/	pet	/pet/
37.	/t/	tea	/ti:/
38.	/k/	kiss	/kɪs/
39.	/f/	fit	/fɪt/

40.	/s/	sit	/sit/
41.	/ʃ/	show	/ʃəʊ/
42.	/tʃ/	chat	/tʃat/
43.	/θ/	thin	/θin/
44.	/h/	hot	/hɒt/

Objective of the Research Study

1. To investigate the fundamental phonetic features for the phonetic transcription showing how they are explicated among the TDC part -1 English Honours students of Jai Prakash University Chhapra in Bihar in order to test their performance in authentic pronunciation by means of phonetic transcription in English language teaching and learning.
2. To categorize the impact of non – application of these essential features in communicative English language teaching and learning.

Research Questions

1. To what range do the learners of TDC part – 1 English Honours students of Jai Prakash University Chhapra in Bihar know how to make the phonetic transcription for authentic pronunciation in their spoken English language?
2. What is the relevance of phonetic features and phonetic symbols for transcription and pronunciation in the speech of speakers of the bilingual English learners of Jai Prakash University Chhapra in Bihar?

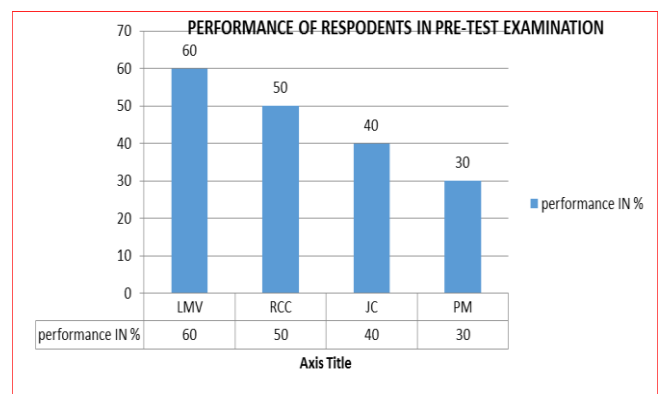
Methodology

This proposed research paper mainly managed the master key technical techniques how the TDC part – 1 English Honours students of four degree colleges under Jai Prakash University in Bihar could be managed for the successful achievement how they know how to learn all those methods by means of them they could learn to make the true transcription for authentic pronunciation in English language. First of all, the intelligibility and proficiency in spoken English language of two hundred selected students of four degree colleges were examined and evaluated on the basis of the performance report obtained in the pre- test examination conducted before starting of the research work pursuant to the plans already made and finalised. The performance obtained in the pre-test examination was represented by means of the Bar Graph. The competent teachers who were masters in making true transcription for authentic pronunciation in English language teaching and learning specialized for spoken English were deputed to teach them all those techniques which are very essential for phonetic transcription and authentic pronunciation for spoken English language. The respondents were examined and their performance was evaluated on the basis of marks obtained in the first semester examination which was conducted after 15 days teaching since starting of research work. The performance of the respondents was represented by means of the Bar Graph in percentage.

Similarly, the performance and evaluation of respondents of four colleges was represented in percentage by means of the Bar Graph on the basis of the examinations conducted after the termination of the allotted time durations of all the four semester courses.

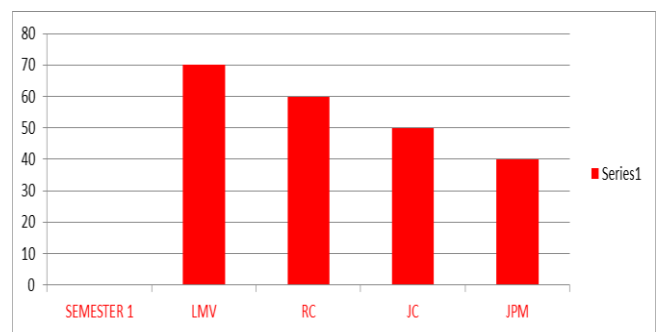
The performance of the respondents obtained on the basis of the pre-test and four semester test examinations including the pre-test represented by means of the Bar Graph in percentage is as follows:

Pre- Test Examination for performance report of the respondents:-The intelligibility and proficiency of the respondents were tested with 100 questions setting for the phonetic transcription and their pronunciation accordingly. The respondents of Lok Mahavidyalaya Hafizpur, Rajendra College Chhapra, Jagadam College Chhapra, and Jai Prakash Mahila College Chhapra could solve successfully merely 60%, 50%, 40% and 30% questions respectively. The performance was represented by the Bar Graph no. 01.



Graph 1

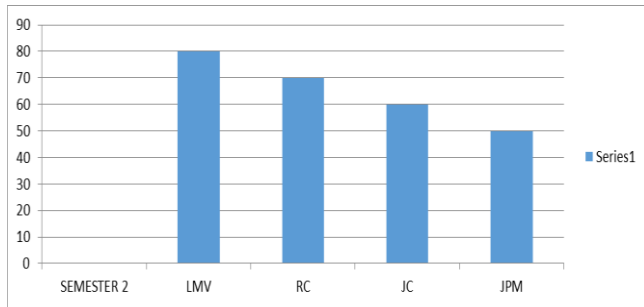
First Semester Test Examination for performance report of the respondents



Graph 2

Similarly after conducting classes for 15 days, 100 different questions on phonetic transcription for learning authentic pronunciation were set to test the performance. The respondents of Lok Mahavidyalaya Hafizpur, Rajendra College Chhapra, Jagadam College Chhapra, and Jai Prakash Mahila College Chhapra, could solve only 70%, 60%, 50%, and 40% respectively, which were represented by the Bar Graph no.-02.

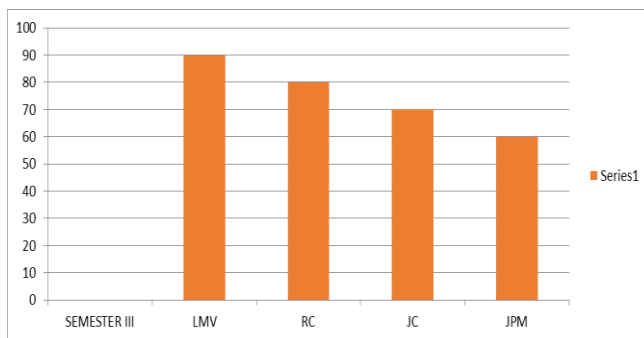
Second Semester test Examination for performance report of the respondents



Graph 3

Out of 100 set questions on the phonetic transcription for learning authentic pronunciation, the respondents of LokMaha Vidyalaya Hafizpur, Rajendra College Chhapra, Jagadam College Chapra and Jai Prakash Mahila College, Chhapra could solve merely 80%, 70%, 60% and 50% questions respectively. This performance was represented by the Bar Graph no.03.

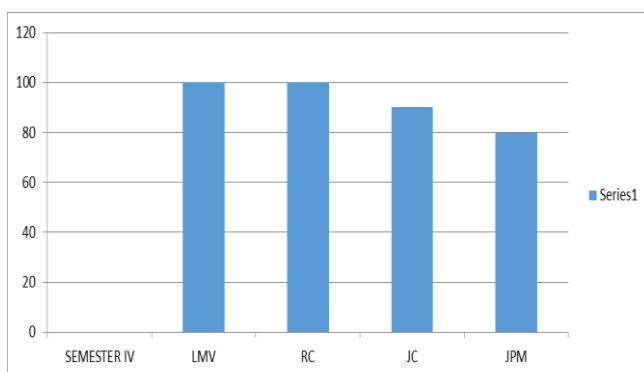
Third -Semester Test Examination for performance Report of the Respondents



Graph 4

Similarly out of 100 different set questions from the previous examinations on the phonetic transcription for leaning authentic pronunciation, the respondents of Lok Mahavidyalaya Hafizpur, Rajendra college, Jagadam College and Jai Prakash Mahila college could solve merely 90%, 80%, 70%, and 60% respectively, which were represented by the Bar Graph no. 04.

Fourth Semester Test Examination for Performance Report of the Respondents



Graph 5

Similarly, out of the 100set mixed questions from the previous conducted examination on the phonetic transcription for learning the authentic pronunciation, the respondents of Lok Mahavidyalaya Hafizpur and Rajendra College, could solve 100% questions, while the respondents of Jagadam College and Jai Prakash Mahila College could solve merely 90%, and 80% respectively, which were represented by the Bar Graph no.05.

Discussion of the Findings

On the basis of the obtained report of the findings, it was observed that the phonetic transcription and its subsidiary aspects, which are the very vital tools for intelligible and authentic pronunciation in English language, do not receive adequate attention as appropriate. The phonetic transcription is the representation of the speech sounds by means of International Phonetic Alphabet, which is also known as the received pronunciation of United Kingdom. But the stress or accent also plays a vital role in the structure of the phonetic transcription. The wrong placement of stress or accept on the word changes its both pronunciation and grammatical functions. Bihar learners of English language do not know how to place the stress to the proper place, and consequently their pronunciation is neither intelligible nor proficient to the native English listeners. They have not good knowledge of the intonation using in their speech. Bihar English learners know how to use falling tune only in all utterance, whereas, the English use two tunes which are: falling and rising or at times they use the combined tunes: fall- rise or rise- fall, whichever the case may be. According to the report, even the English honours students do not know how to use the true transcription for the authentic pronunciation. So their English language is neither intelligible nor proficient. Even the English teachers do not teach English language intelligibly and fluently in the class. The research scholar, making her research paper successful, managed the competent English teachers to teach the respondents of the four colleges under Jai Prakash University Chapra in Bihar to acquire the spoken English as intelligible as the native English speakers. The deputed teachers taught all aspects of spoken English language using such skilful approaches that the 100% respondents of this research study could achieve the target of spoken English language.

The next important means for right transcription and authentic pronunciation are the materials which play a very vital role in learning of the spoken English language. The deputed teachers for teaching the respondents properly and technically began to use the materials essential for spoken English language, specially the audio – visual aids, computer, gramophone, etc., based on the modern teaching techniques to learn spoken English language quickly and intelligibly. It was observed that the audio visual aids played a positive part in acquiring the technical techniques of the spoken English language by the respondents.

It was also observed that the interest of the respondents for acquiring the techniques was also very high. The learners can learn any art if they have intentions, determinations, fears, and shyness in their mind at the family and the social levels.

At last but not least, the researcher has given message to the global learners of spoken English language to keep in their mind that the structure and functions of the human brain are similar. The difference arises merely because of their thinking and working style are different. As the learners of

spoken English think and work so will they acquire its knowledge. Whether we are Indians or the English, the American or the Australian the store house of our brain is the same.

Recommendations and Suggestions

This proposed research paper recommends the following suggestions to the teachers and the learners of English language:

1. The teachers are suggested to pay their attention to those factors which are very essential for the phonetic transcription for authentic pronunciation. They can use in their teaching the International Phonetic Alphabet, stress, rhythm, and intonation which are the structural factors being used for true phonetic transcription and authentic pronunciation in spoken English.
2. The teachers use many methods and techniques during teaching in the class. But according to Celce Murcia (2010), "Adopting their methods to fit them and their needs, and helping them practice effectively to overcome any difficulties they might have."
3. The teachers should teach the learners by providing them the practical lessons through proper demonstration, as practical knowledge makes one perfect.
4. The slow teaching techniques train the spoken English language expression proficient and understandable. According to Rasekhiand others, Slow speech with good pronunciation is much better than fast speech with wrong pronunciation. Learners should know that understandably is more important than fast speech."
5. The teachers should teach their learners so that they may communicate their proficient ideas. Morley and Otloskistate, "Communicative approaches to pronunciation instruction in order for non-native speakers to communicate both effectively and understandably with native speakers."
6. The teachers are suggested for using the modern teaching language equipments like computer, audio visual aids, gramophone, etc.
7. The learners are also suggested to follow how they articulate during their teaching in the class. As the learners follow the teachers, so will they learn. According to Bradley, Bennett (2007), "English foreign language teachers should speak clearly and slowly in their pronunciation classes and they should convince their learners that their language is understandable. This can help their learners improve their pronunciation by listening to them carefully."

Conclusion

The phonetic transcription has great educational importance in English language teaching not only in Bihar but all over world also. The teachers of the foreign language do not know how to use the phonetic transcription, for they are not familiar with this method of English language. They understand the International Phonetic Alphabet too difficult to understand. But the matter is not so. They can understand it very easily. It has been provided very beneficial to the spoken English language. Those who have not used the phonetic transcription in English language previously, they should learn as shortly as possible by means of which the phonetic transcription of sound system can be learned shortly and easily.

This research study does not strongly intend to the teachers and the learners to use the phonetic transcription truly and deliberately in English language. But on the basis of the analysis of the findings in this proposed research study, the researcher has come to the conclusion that the phonetic transcription can serve as an imperative method in English language teaching and learning.

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