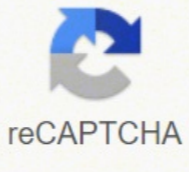


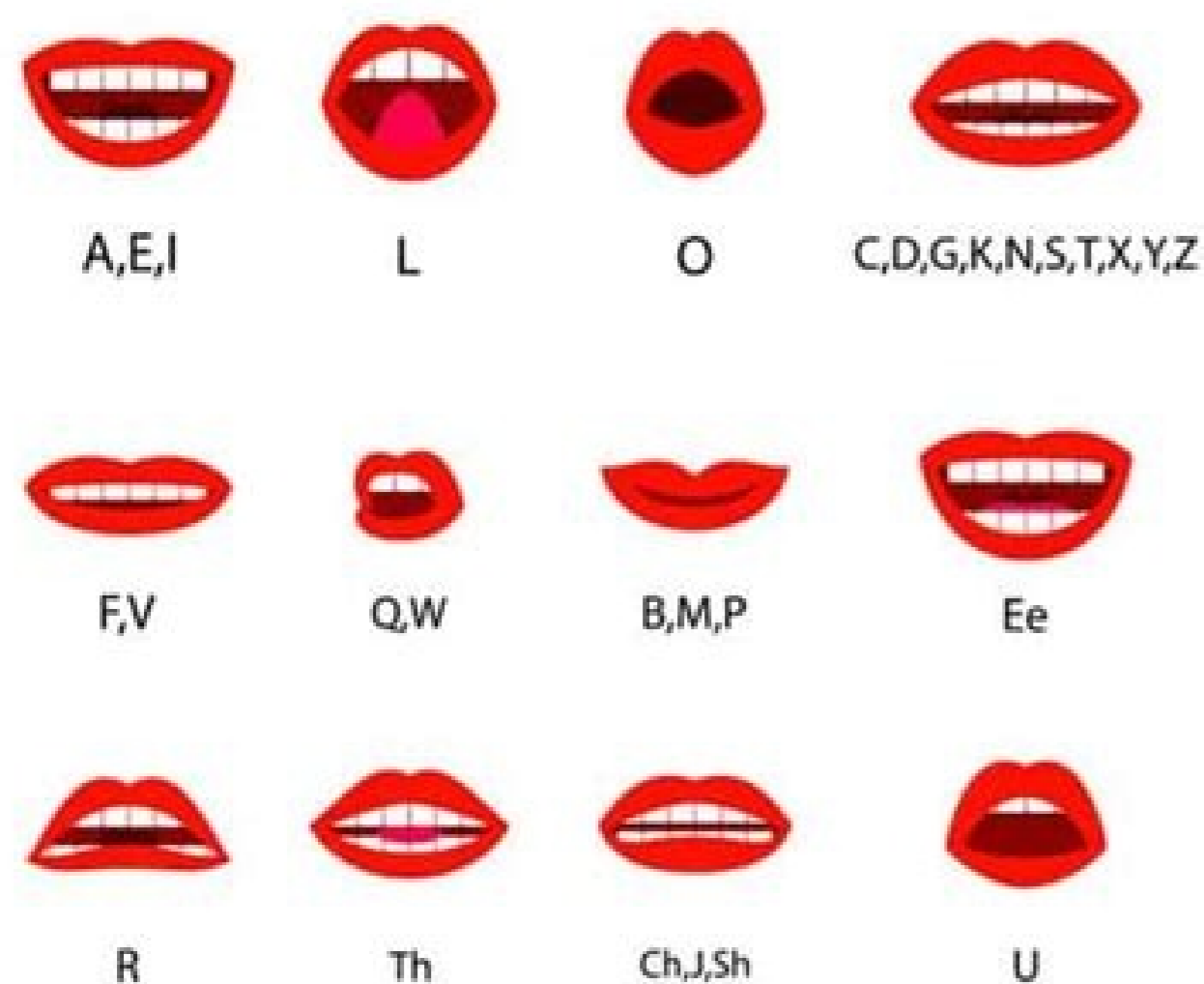


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SILENT LETTERS IN ENGLISH

Silent B	Silent T	Silent H	Silent K	Silent W
Bomb	Butcher	Ghost	Knee	Answer
Climb	Castle	Honest	Knew	Sword
Comb	Christmas	Hour	Knickers	Two
Crumb	Fasten	Mechanic	Knife	Whole
Debt	Hustle	Rhythm	Knight	Wrack
Doubt	Listen	Scheme	Knit	Wrap
Dumb	Match	School	Knitting	Wrist
Lamb	Mortgage	What	Knob	Wrinkle
Limb	Nestle	When	Knock	Wreck
Numb	Often	Where	Knot	Wren

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Pronunciation Problems: A Case Study on English Pronunciation Errors of Low Proficient Students

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Abstract

Pronunciation plays a vital part in employability. Graduates are often unfairly judged when they fail to convince others of their capabilities due to poor pronunciation and not having the language to express themselves well. In order to present confidently to impress potential employers or enhance mobility, it is important to improve students' pronunciation, especially those with low oral proficiency level. The primary step to counter this matter is finding out students' problems in their pronunciation. The aim of this study is to identify the specific sounds that are commonly mispronounced by low oral proficiency Malaysian students. This study employed the qualitative methodology where data came in the form of reading aloud voice recordings. Based on the thematic analysis conducted, the sounds that were commonly mispronounced by the students were vowels (pure short vowels, pure long vowels and diphthongs), consonants (plosives, fricatives and affricates), silent letters, and the 'ed' form. From the findings, this study recommends the use of the commonly mispronounced sounds as the content in producing an instructional pronunciation video for helping low oral proficiency students of the 21st century to address their pronunciation problems.

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Keywords: Instructional pronunciation video; Oral proficiency; Pronunciation problem

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Often fresh graduates are unfairly judged when they fail to impress or convince others of their capabilities due to poor pronunciation. In most cases, these students do not lack the knowledge or skills but rather they are put at a disadvantage because they do not have the language to express themselves well, including having poor pronunciation. To counter this, it is vital that students improve their pronunciation in order to present confidently, persuade others or win over prospective employers.

Pronunciation plays a significant part in our personal and social lives because the way we speak reflects our identities, and indicates our association to particular communities (Seidlhofer, 2001). For university graduates, clear pronunciation during job interviews, proposal presentation, negotiation and other professional instructions is vital to ensure their successful transition into the professional realm. For tertiary students, making pronunciation errors can be embarrassing especially when they are often required to make presentations and oral reports in various subjects in the higher education classroom. As a result, many are self-conscious and this in turn affects their confidence when presenting. Due to this, helping university students, especially those with low oral proficiency level to improve their pronunciation is crucial.

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