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Analysis of Relationship Between Punctuation Mark and Pronunciation skills

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A B S T R A C T

"Punctuation is one of the most important aspects of the English language. However, punctuation is often associated with writing ability alone, even though in fact punctuation also plays a big role in pronunciation ability. And this research is intended to discuss the relationship between punctuation and pronunciation ability. To find out whether they are related and what causes them to be related. This research was conducted using the interview method by asking participants' opinions regarding the relationship between punctuation and pronunciation skills. The author also uses qualitative descriptive research to provide a systematic and factual description of the topic under study. And the results of this research are expected to provide a more in-depth picture of punctuation marks in improving pronunciation abilities."

INTRODUCTION

Punctuation refers to the use of punctuation marks, such as periods, commas, and exclamation marks, in writing to provide clues to intonation, pauses, and articulation. A good understanding of punctuation can improve pronunciation skills by helping speakers express meaning and nuances clearly in conversation or reading. Punctuation serves as an important guide in written language, assisting readers in understanding the structure, rhythm, and intended meaning of a text. Although the importance of these words in writing is widely known, their impact on spoken language, especially in relation to pronunciation, is often overlooked. This research aims to explain the often overlooked role of punctuation marks in spoken language and examine how their proper use and interpretation can significantly improve pronunciation, resulting in more effective verbal communication.

This research study examines the relationship between punctuation and pronunciation improvement through a qualitative approach. We utilize interviews, observations, and recordings to collect data from a variety of participants, including language learners, native speakers, and language teachers. Thematic coding is used to analyze data, identifying recurring themes and meaning patterns regarding the impact of the use of punctuation on pronunciation. The term qualitative according to Kirk and Miller (1986:9) originally came from quantitative observations. Quantitative observation involves measuring the level of a particular feature. To find something in observation, the observer must know what are the characteristics of that something. Therefore, the safety pin starts recording or counting from one, two, three, and so on. This qualitative research only describes how students' ability to improve punctuation in correct and clear student pronunciation. The results of this study aim to provide valuable insights for language learners, enabling them to apply punctuation awareness in their speaking practice, while offering language educators practical strategies for overcoming pronunciation challenges associated with the use of punctuation.

Effective pronunciation is a fundamental aspect of clear and meaningful communication. Although punctuation is usually associated with written language, it has the potential to significantly influence pronunciation in oral communication. This qualitative research also aims and seeks to deepen understanding to investigate the relationship between punctuation and pronunciation, examining how punctuation contributes to improving pronunciation abilities. As well as analyzing the correct use of punctuation marks in order to improve the ability to use punctuation in pronunciation skills.

METHOD

This research study uses a qualitative descriptive method. According to Sugiyono (2016:9) the qualitative descriptive method is a research method based on the philosophy of postpositivism used to research the conditions of natural objects (as opposed to experiments) where the researcher is the key instrument. Data collection techniques are carried out using triangulation (combination), data analysis is inductive/qualitative, and the results of qualitative research emphasize meaning rather than generalization. Descriptive qualitative research aims to analyze the problem to be researched by studying as much as possible an individual, a group or an event in more detail. This study aims to enhance understanding and also illustrate the relationship between punctuation and pronunciation, and also analyzes how participants use appropriate punctuation to improve pronunciation skills.

This research was conducted at the Islamic State University of North Sumatera and made students majoring in English Education as the subjects of this research. To be precise, there were 20 students who participated in this research. The data collection technique used in this research is by using interviews. Interviews in qualitative research are conversations that are usually preceded by informal/formal questions and have a specific purpose. Research interviews are more than just conversations and range from informal to formal (Rachmawati, I N,

2007). The procedure for this interview follows the interview procedure according to Creswell (1998), namely:

1. Identify the participants based on the selected sampling procedure,
2. Determine the type of interview to be conducted and what information is relevant in answering the research questions,
3. Prepare appropriate recording equipment,
4. Check the condition of the recording equipment,
5. Develop an interview protocol,
6. Determine the place to conduct the interview,
7. Provide informed consent to potential participants,
8. During the interview, adapt the questions, complete them on time (if possible), respect the participants and always be polite.

The questions asked to participants were as follows:

1. How do you believe that punctuation can influence pronunciation in everyday language?
2. Can you share a personal experience or observation about how punctuation plays a role in everyday conversational situations?
3. How do you see the relationship between understanding punctuation and a person's ability to pronounce words clearly?
4. Do you think that proper use of punctuation can improve expression and intonation in conversation?
5. In the context of language learning, to what extent do you believe that emphasizing punctuation can help students improve their pronunciation skills?
6. Is there a significant difference in pronunciation between sentences with punctuation used correctly and those that are not used correctly?
7. Do you notice any differences in pronunciation between different types of punctuation, such as commas, periods, and question marks?

After that the research data was examined using the sample experience.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After conducting research using the interview method, the researcher recorded the results of the findings obtained from the participants' answers regarding the correct use of punctuation marks in improving pronunciation. The following data was obtained from 20 participants:

Table 1. Result of the Interview

Question	Answer
1. How do you believe that punctuation can influence pronunciation in everyday language?	Of course it has an effect, because by using good punctuation we can determine the appropriate intonation when speaking: 9 students In my opinion, the use of punctuation really influences pronunciation because punctuation can also help us use word stress when speaking: 7 students

	In my opinion, it certainly has an effect because if there are no punctuation marks it will be difficult for us to speak correctly: 4 students
2. Can you share a personal experience or observation about how punctuation plays a role in everyday conversational situations?	<p>For example, if we don't put periods or commas in our writing, then we will definitely be confused about when we should stop reading: 11 students</p> <p>Not just periods and commas, but other examples such as without a question mark, we would be confused about knowing the intention of the writer or even the person we are talking to, whether they are asking or just conveying something: 9 students</p>
3. How do you see the relationship between understanding punctuation and a person's ability to pronounce words clearly?	<p>Having an understanding of using punctuation marks can certainly make someone able to pronounce words clearly, both in intonation and pauses when speaking: 10 students</p> <p>Of course there is a connection because punctuation can create clarity when communicating with the person you are talking to: 7 students</p> <p>Understanding punctuation and pronunciation skills are certainly related because by understanding existing punctuation marks, it can provide clues to intonation, rhythm or even word stress when speaking or communicating: 3 students</p>
4. Do you think that proper use of punctuation can improve expression and intonation in conversation?	<p>I think that proper use of punctuation can greatly improve expression and intonation in conversation. Punctuation serves as communication effectiveness. Each punctuation mark can interpret a sentence being conveyed, whether the sentence is a question, command, exclamation, or statement. By using appropriate punctuation, we can pronounce sentences with expressions and intonation that match the intent and tone of the writer or speaker: 11 students</p> <p>I think that proper use of punctuation does little to improve expression and intonation in conversation. Punctuation is simply symbols</p>

	<p>added by the writer or speaker to clarify the message. What is more important is the context and situation of the conversation. We can say sentences with different expressions and intonation, depending on our goals and emotions. Punctuation does not determine our expressions and intonation, but only provides clues or suggestions: 5 students</p> <p>I think that the correct use of punctuation is something relative and not standard. Punctuation can vary depending on the style and preferences of the writer or speaker. There are no definite rules about how to use or pronounce punctuation. We can adjust punctuation to suit our needs and creativity. Punctuation is not a rigid thing, but a flexible and dynamic thing: 3 students</p>
5. In the context of language learning, to what extent do you believe that emphasizing punctuation can help students improve their pronunciation skills?	<p>I think that an emphasis on punctuation can really help students improve their pronunciation skills. Punctuation plays a role in showing the structure of writing, intonation, and pauses when reading. By paying attention to punctuation, students can pronounce sentences in a way that matches the author's intent and tone. This can also train students to master spelling, intonation and language rhythm: 11 students</p> <p>I would argue that an emphasis on punctuation does little to help students improve their pronunciation skills. Punctuation is just a symbol added by the author to make his writing clear. What is more important is the context and situation of the sentence. Students can say sentences in various ways, depending on their goals and emotions. Punctuation does not determine how students pronounce sentences, but only provides instructions or suggestions: 3 students</p> <p>I think that emphasis on punctuation is something relative and not standard. Punctuation can vary depending on the style and preferences of the writer. There are no definite rules about how to use or pronounce punctuation. We can adapt punctuation to</p>

	<p>their needs and creativity. Punctuation is not a rigid thing, but a flexible and dynamic thing: 5 students</p> <p>I argue that the emphasis on punctuation is something that needs to be balanced with other aspects of language learning. Punctuation is important to pronounce a sentence correctly and clearly. However, punctuation is not enough to improve pronunciation skills. We also need to study the elements of borrowing from other languages that can influence the use of punctuation marks in Indonesian and we also need to practice their pronunciation by listening and imitating good examples from trusted sources: 2 students</p>
6. Is there a significant difference in pronunciation between sentences with punctuation used correctly and those that are not used correctly?	<p>I would argue that there is a significant difference in pronunciation between sentences with correctly used and incorrectly used punctuation. Punctuation plays a role in showing the structure of writing, intonation, and pauses during reading. By using correct punctuation, we can pronounce sentences in a way that matches the author's intent and tone. On the other hand, if we do not use correct punctuation, we can mispronounce sentences in a way that is different from the author's intent and tone. This could cause misunderstanding or confusion for readers or listeners: 15 students</p> <p>I would argue that there is no significant difference in pronunciation between sentences with correctly used and incorrectly used punctuation. Punctuation is just a symbol added by the author to make his writing clear. What is more important is the context and situation of the sentence. We can say sentences in various ways, depending on our goals and emotions. Punctuation marks do not determine how we pronounce sentences, but only provide instructions or suggestions: 5 students</p>
7. Do you notice any differences in pronunciation between different types of punctuation, such as commas,	<p>I think that punctuation is very important to pronounce a sentence correctly and clearly. Punctuation helps us understand the author's intent and tone. Without punctuation, we can</p>

periods, and question marks?	<p>misunderstand or misinterpret the meaning of the sentence: 10 students</p> <p>I think that punctuation doesn't really affect the pronunciation of a sentence. Punctuation is just a symbol added by the author to make his writing clear. What is more important is the context and situation of the sentence. We can say sentences in various ways, depending on our goals and emotions: 6 students</p> <p>I think that punctuation is something relative and not standard. Punctuation can vary depending on the style and preferences of the writer. There are no definite rules about how to use or pronounce punctuation. We can adjust punctuation to suit our needs and creativity: 4 students</p>
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The findings from this research contain data analysis through direct interviews. Interviews were conducted directly with 20 students majoring in English Education UINSU and lasted for three days. Data collection was seen from recordings made during the interview. This percentage analysis is carried out to find the most relevant answers regarding the questions given. The answers obtained were interpreted descriptively. The following is an image of the answers to each question submitted to participants:

1. How do you believe that punctuation can influence pronunciation in everyday language? Based on the table above, there were 20 participants who answered questions from the interview, there were 45% of students who thought that "Of course it has an effect, because by using good punctuation we can determine the appropriate intonation when speaking." 35% thought that "I think the use of punctuation really influences pronunciation because punctuation can also help us use word stress when speaking." And there were 20% of students who thought that "I think it certainly influences because if there is no punctuation it will be difficult for us to speak correctly."

2. Can you share a personal experience or observation about how punctuation plays a role in everyday conversational situations? Based on the table above, there were 20 participants, 55% of whom gave the opinion that "For example, if we don't put periods or commas in our writing, then we will definitely be confused about when we should stop reading." And there was also another 45% who thought that "Not just periods and commas, but other examples such as even without a question mark, we would be confused about knowing the intention of the writer or even the person we are talking to, whether they are asking a question or just conveying something."

3. How do you see the relationship between understanding punctuation and a person's ability to pronounce words clearly? Based on the table above, there were 20 participants. And there are 50% of students who think that "Having an

understanding of using punctuation marks can certainly make someone able to pronounce words clearly, both in intonation and pauses when speaking.” And there were 35% of students who thought that “Of course there is a connection because punctuation can create clarity when communicating with the person you are talking to.” And there were also 15% of the 20 students who thought that “Understanding punctuation and pronunciation skills are certainly related because by understanding existing punctuation marks, it can provide clues to intonation, rhythm or even word stress when speaking or communicating.”

4. Do you think that proper use of punctuation can improve expression and intonation in conversation? Based on the table above, there were 20 participants who answered questions from the interview, 55% of students thought that “I think that using appropriate punctuation can really improve expression and intonation in conversation. Punctuation serves as communication effectiveness. Each punctuation mark can interpret a sentence being conveyed, whether the sentence is a question, command, exclamation, or statement. By using appropriate punctuation, we can pronounce sentences with expressions and intonation that match the intent and tone of the writer or speaker.” There are 25% who think “I think that using proper punctuation does not really improve expression and intonation in conversation. Punctuation is simply symbols added by the writer or speaker to clarify the message. What is more important is the context and situation of the conversation. We can say sentences with different expressions and intonation, depending on our goals and emotions. Punctuation does not determine our expressions and intonation, but only provides clues or suggestions.” And another 15% of students thought that “I think that the correct use of punctuation is something relative and not standard. Punctuation can vary depending on the style and preferences of the writer or speaker. There are no definite rules about how to use or pronounce punctuation. We can adjust punctuation to suit our needs and creativity. Punctuation is not a rigid thing, but a flexible and dynamic thing.”

5. In the context of language learning, to what extent do you believe that emphasizing punctuation can help students improve their pronunciation skills? Based on the table above, there were 20 participants who answered questions from the interview, 55% of students thought that “I think that emphasizing punctuation can really help students improve their pronunciation skills. Punctuation plays a role in showing the structure of writing, intonation, and pauses when reading. By paying attention to punctuation, students can pronounce sentences in a way that matches the author’s intent and tone. This can also train students to master spelling, intonation and language rhythm.” There were 15% of the opinion with “I think that emphasizing punctuation does not really help students improve their pronunciation skills. Punctuation is just a symbol added by the author to make his writing clear. What is more important is the context and situation of the sentence. Students can say sentences in various ways, depending on their goals and emotions. Punctuation marks do not determine how students pronounce sentences, but only provide instructions or suggestions.” And 25% of students also thought that “I think that emphasis on punctuation is something relative and not standard. Punctuation can vary depending on the style and preferences of the writer. There are no definite rules about how to use or pronounce punctuation. We can adapt punctuation to their needs and creativity. Punctuation is not a rigid thing, but

rather a flexible and dynamic thing” And another 10% argued “I think that the emphasis on punctuation is something that needs to be balanced with other aspects in language learning. Punctuation is important to pronounce a sentence correctly and clearly. However, punctuation is not enough to improve pronunciation skills. We also need to study the borrowing elements from other languages that can influence the use of punctuation marks in Indonesian and we also need to practice their pronunciation by listening and imitating good examples from trusted sources.”

6. Is there a significant difference in pronunciation between sentences with punctuation used correctly and those that are not used correctly? Based on the table above, there were 20 participants who answered questions from the interview, 75% of students thought that “I think that there is a significant difference in pronunciation between sentences with punctuation marks that are used correctly and those that are not used correctly. Punctuation plays a role in showing the structure of writing, intonation, and pauses during reading¹. By using correct punctuation, we can pronounce sentences in a way that matches the author’s intent and tone. On the other hand, if we do not use correct punctuation, we can mispronounce sentences in a way that is different from the author’s intent and tone. This could cause misunderstanding or confusion for the reader or listener.” And there is another 25% who think that “I think that there is no significant difference in pronunciation between sentences with punctuation that is used correctly and those that are not used correctly. Punctuation is just a symbol added by the author to make his writing clear. What is more important is the context and situation of the sentence. We can say sentences in various ways, depending on our goals and emotions. Punctuation marks do not determine how we pronounce sentences, but only provide clues or suggestions.”

7. Do you notice any differences in pronunciation between various types of punctuation, such as commas, periods, and question marks? Based on the table above, there were 20 participants who answered questions from the interview, 50% of students thought that “I think that punctuation is very important to pronounce a sentence correctly and clearly. Punctuation helps us understand the author’s intent and tone. Without punctuation, we can misunderstand or misinterpret the meaning of the sentence.” Another 30% of students said, “I think that punctuation doesn’t really affect the pronunciation of a sentence. Punctuation is just a symbol added by the author to make his writing clear. What is more important is the context and situation of the sentence. We can say sentences in various ways, depending on our goals and emotions.” And another 20% of students thought that “I think that punctuation is something relative and not standard. Punctuation can vary depending on the style and preferences of the writer. There are no definite rules about how to use or pronounce punctuation. We can adjust punctuation to suit our needs and creativity.”

Based on the students’ opinions, it can be concluded that the use of punctuation marks greatly influences pronunciation abilities. This is because punctuation can help in providing instructions for intonation, pauses, word stress and even helps in conveying expressions and thoughts more clearly through pronunciation when speaking or even when communicating with the other person. According to Nick Moore (2016), intonation provides a suitable unit of information

for the spoken mode by facilitating distinctions in the flow of sound, with the tonic foot realizing the focus of information, or New, through the natural association of pitch change with auditory focus. Allen (1954: 39) defines intonation as the melody of speech, the changing pitch of the voice. This means that without punctuation marks there will be no melody or pitch when speaking or speaking. Jones (1979: 275) argues that intonation is the variations which take place in the pitch of the voice in connected speech, i.e. the variation and pitch of the musical note produced by the vibration of the vocal cords.

Punctuation marks can also help use correct word stress. As Harmer (2007:32) stated that “stress is the term used to describe the point in a word or phrase where pitch changes, vowel lengthen and volume increases”. It means that when we show something important among others, we have to put emphasis on it and we have to use the correct punctuation marks in it.

By having punctuation marks can also help to understand the meaning of sentences more clearly. Punctuation mark is a symbol that helps the readers in expressing the meaning of sentences (Nuriyanti, 2017:119).

This means that punctuation has a big role in improving pronunciation abilities. This is shown from the results of research conducted that many people are of the opinion either because of experience or knowledge that pronunciation has an influence on pronunciation skills.

CONCLUSION

From the research conducted using the interview method on 20 students majoring in English Education UINSU, it can be concluded that based on the results of the participants' opinions, it is clear that punctuation has an important role in improving pronunciation skills. This is because punctuation marks help determine the correct intonation, pauses, word stress and meani in sentences. They play an important role in understanding sentence structure and provide the necessary clues to convey meaning appropriately while speaking.

Therefore, it is necessary to have a deep understanding of punctuation marks, not only in writing skills but also in correct pronunciation skills so that the purpose of the information you want to convey through pronunciation can be realized correctly when speaking or communicating with the person you are talking to.

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