

Article

Language Learning Strategies In English Fricative Consonants Through Arabic

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Abstract: Many students face difficulties and lack confidence when it comes to English pronunciation, often doubting whether their pronunciation is correct. One significant challenge they face is the difference in dialect and pronunciation between their native language and the target language. In Indonesia, a Muslim-majority country, many students are familiar with Arabic, particularly in pesantren-based schools. Arabic and English share certain phonetic features, especially in the fricative consonant sounds, which could help Indonesian students learn English pronunciation more easily. This study explores how learning Arabic might aid in improving English pronunciation, specifically focusing on fricative sounds. Using a mixed-methods approach that combines both quantitative and qualitative data, this research applies a pre-experimental one-group pre-test and post-test design. The study involved fifteen junior high school students in grade VIII from an Islamic character school. The primary goal of the research was to assess how the students' English pronunciation, particularly on fricative sounds, improved after learning Arabic. The results show a significant improvement in the pronunciation of /f/, /ʃ/, /s/, /z/, and /ʒ/ sounds. However, the students showed less improvement in the pronunciation of /ð/ and /θ/ sounds. This suggests that while Arabic may offer some advantages in mastering specific English sounds, there may be challenges that still hinder the improvement of other English consonants. These findings could provide insights into language learning strategies and the potential role of Arabic in enhancing English pronunciation.

Keywords: English pronunciation, Fricative consonant, Makharijul huruf.

1. Introduction

In the academic culture system in Indonesia, English lessons play an important role in developing communicative competence. (Hapsari 2019). To this end, language strategies are needed by EFL learners. According to Abulhul 2021, students acquire knowledge in different styles, and what is effective for one student is probably not effective for another, so the role of teachers in providing learning strategies is crucial. In addition, successful learning is also based on learners who have a desire to learn, are willing to answer questions whether they are sure or not, have courage so that they are not afraid to make mistakes, have a desire to communicate so that good language learners can use good language and pay attention to the meaning in the discussion. (Griffiths 2004). The use of language learning strategies is more often used in higher-level students, where these strategies are used in various fields such as reading, language systems, vocabulary, management of learning, and utilization of available resources. According to (Chamot 2005), the existence of strategies in learning will help students increase their motivation and improve their abilities in the field of language, he also explained that schemes in language learning strategies are important, one of which is the metacognitive model where there are procedures in carrying out learning strategies, planning learning, monitoring tasks and ongoing learning processes, and evaluating learning outcomes.

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English Teaching Pronunciation

Learning English is not just about reading the text but also understanding how to pronounce it correctly, considering that there are different ways of reading in English even though the word structure is similar. In the process of learning language pronunciation, a common and effective way often found by researchers is to follow how native speakers (people who use English as their main language) pronounce words. Such sample materials can be obtained via the internet/social media following the development of the era, making the source of material able to be obtained through many media precisely and accurately. According to (Huwari and Mehawesh 2015), in learning English as a foreign language, a teacher needs to explain pronunciation. In this case, developing the pronunciation of the target language in learning becomes important and becomes a necessity for learners so that students can be listeners and understand the interlocutor with the correct pronunciation (Bin-Hady et al. 2020). Knowing pronunciation is valuable in a field of study; currently, learning pronunciation is also on the rise (Reed and Levis 2019). The important point in learning a language, not tied to English alone, is repeated practice by utilizing the media or opportunities available to get to know more about how to pronounce each word correctly to reach the level of fluent communication.

Challenges in Pronunciation for EFL Students

In teaching pronunciation, many techniques and activities can be done by EFL teachers to improve students' pronunciation skills. They can use games and dialogs, provide various learning themes, tongue twisters, and many more. (Hewings 2004). However, despite so many techniques and strategies for learning English pronunciation, many students complain that they still have difficulty pronouncing English because of various things, such as phonological differences in the target language and their native language. However, in this case, Jarvis and Pavlenko 2007 said that although there are many language differences in various countries, there are still many language similarities between countries. This can be seen in terms of phonology, which has the same place or sound of speech. In English as a foreign language (EFL), pronunciation is closely related to society in a language since it can help in distinguishing dialect differences and formal or informal aspects of speech that are part of social status (Reed and Levis 2019). In addition, students' perceptions about pronunciation must be like native speakers. This is also an obstacle for them in learning pronunciation. According to Gilakjani 2016, EFL teachers need to straighten out students' views about it, teachers need to explain that the purpose of learning is to create good communication.

The phenomenon also happens to some EFL students at the Islamic Character, Baiturrahmah School. During classroom observations, some students are found to feel insecure when being asked to read English texts. They also always hesitate when pronouncing some words. When pronouncing one or two words, they frequently pause their pronunciation and ask the teacher to make sure whether the pronunciation is correct or not. In addition, when the teacher explains the correct pronunciation, they can follow it. However, they frequently make the same mistakes in different words with repeated mistakes.

Learning Strategies through Arabic

As Indonesia is a Muslim-majority country, Indonesian people more frequently use Arabic as a second language than English. Arabic is commonly used when they take prayers, and other religious activities and learnings. In other words, Arabic is more common than other foreign languages for Muslims; they learn it for religious matters such as understanding and reading the Qur'an, hadith, and other Sharia knowledge that comes from Arabic or others. (Yahya Y. 2022). A learning strategy that can be applied in classroom teaching is to take advantage of the similarities between the two languages, namely English and Arabic. An effective strategy that can be used is to understand and find absorption words that have similar roots in both languages. There are several absorption words in English and Arabic such for example 'Ardh' which means earth and in English 'Earth'. Therefore, understanding the root words can be a strong foundation in starting to learn English in an environment that focuses more on the other language. Outside of learning in the classroom, learning through both languages can still be done by considering the resources provided by digital media today, Another strategy can be done through language applications that are widely spread in

download media such as Google Play Store for every Android smartphone user. Utilizing this resource can make the learning process more effective and significantly improve the process of learning English through Arabic.

Understanding the articulation mechanisms involved in producing these sounds and practicing their pronunciation is essential in learning the language and achieving native-like proficiency. In addition, the fricatives that form the basis of English phonetics play an important role in differentiating words, aiding comprehension, and providing opportunities for effective communication in a variety of situations. English has fricative consonants, which are a distinctive and important aspect of the English phonetic system. These consonants are characterized by producing sound through friction or turbulence caused by partial blockage of the vocal tract. According to (Roach 1983) fricative is a consonant sound with a hissing sound when the sound is produced, fricative is a sound that can be made continuously without interruption as long as there is enough air in the lungs, There are fricatives which are twelve in number showing several phonemic contrasts There are three main fricative consonants in English: /f/, /v/, /θ/ (as in "thin") and /ð/ (as in "this"). The first pair, /f/ and /v/, are labiodental fricatives, produced by bringing the lower lip closer to the upper front teeth. These sounds often appear in words like "fine" and add to the variety of English sounds. The other sounds, /θ/ and /ð/, are interdental fricatives formed by placing the tip of the tongue between the upper and lower front teeth. The voiceless interdental fricative /θ/ appears in words like "think" and "math", and the voiced interdental fricative /ð/ appears in words like "this" and "brothers" (Roach 1983).

According to Jarrah (2013), in Arabic fricative consonants, there are seven sound places: first, labiodental, that the sound is produced with the lower lip touch with the upper teeth there are phonemes /f/ف. Second, interdental that the sound are produced when the tip of the tongue touched the tip of the upper teeth there are /ð/ث, /ð/ذ, /θ/ث. Third, alveolar is spoken with the tip of the tongue touching the lower front teeth. In Alveolar there are phonemes s/س/, s'/ص/, and z/ز. Fourth, alveolo-palatal Palatal these sounds are formed by the middle of the tongue as well as the upper and lower teeth In Alveolo Palatal there are /ʃ/ش, /ʒ/ج, /y/ي, /j/ج phonemes. Fifth, velar that the sounds are produced with the back of the tongue or the base of the tongue attached to the velum in Velar there are phonemes /x/خ/ and /g/غ/. Sixth, the glottal sound is produced when the glottis is open and no manipulation air comes out through the mouth. In Glottal, there are the phonemes ه, ع. Seventh, the pharynx is involved in the production of pharyngeal sounds with the pharynx and the back tongue.

In Jarrah (2013) explanation, it can be seen that there are similarities between English and Arabic fricative consonants. First, labiodentals- Fricatives sounds are produced with the lower lip touching the upper teeth, In English, these are /f/ and /v/, while Arabic has one /f/. Second, Dental- Fricatives Are produced when the tip of the tongue touched the inside of the upper teeth so that air escapes through the gap between the tongue and the teeth, In Arabic these are /θ/, /ð/, /ð'/ while English has two of them /θ/ and /ð/. Third, Alveolar-Fricatives The tongue with the alveolar ridge and air escape through the narrow opening of the oral cavity. In Arabic, these are /s/, /z/, and /s'/, but in English, they are /s/ and /z/. Fourth, Glottal- Fricative They are produced when the glottis is open, the base of the throat is on the vocal cords, and the air passes out through the mouth. This consonant is found in Arabic represented by /ه/ and in English by /h/ (Yeaqub 2018).

2. Theoretical Studies

Character Values

This research employs Mixed methods, combining quantitative and qualitative methods to get comprehensive data and phenomena being investigated. As described by (Creswell 2021), the research uses a pre-experimental one-group pre-test and post-test design, where measurements were taken on the same group before and after the intervention, without using a control group. This method matches (Palle Antonio 2020) study, which assessed the effectiveness of a metacognitive learning environment with a pre-test and post-test to evaluate students' skill development. In the pre-test, students were asked to read the text to evaluate their initial ability. After conducting treatment through Arabic, a post-test was conducted to measure the differences and improvement before and after learning through Arabic. Data will

be analyzed descriptively by comparing the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention.

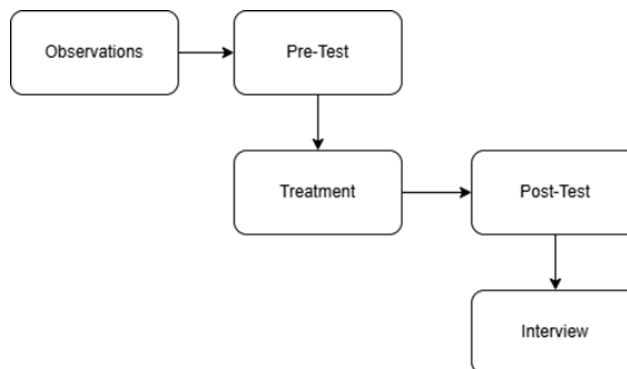


Figure 1. Techniques of Collecting Data

Respondents

This study involved fifteen junior high school students at the Islamic Character Baiturrahmah School located in Bandung. The research was conducted in a class that was already proficient in reciting the Quran. The school had Arabic language program activities, Qura’nic rote memorization, and reciting the Quran and Islamic classic manuscripts.

Instruments

For the implementation of the pre-test and post-test, the researcher prepared some vocabulary and assembled it into a text to be read by students. In the text, there is a classification based on fricative sounds, as follows:

Table 1. Classification of English Fricative Consonants

/f/	/ð/	/θ/	/z/	/s/	/ʃ/	/ʒ/	/h/
First	These	Theme	Breeze	Words	she	casual	her
formed	That	Thick	Zoo	Accent	imagination	vision	he
full	With	With	Horizon	Kissed	Shore	imagination	his
feel	This	Earth	Zip	Sights	Ship	gentle	horizon
from	Other	Through	Azure	Sounds	Sure	leisure	
phone	Those	Thought	Mesmerizing	Sense	Each	treasure	
found	Breathe	Method	Gazed	Seemed	Machine	energy	
	They	Thesis	Zooming	Experience		knowledge	
	Their			Cite			
	Them			Embracing			

In addition, the researcher also used the Oxford dictionary and the phonetic alphabet to help facilitate the analysis of pronunciation in students in determining the sounds they pronounce correctly or incorrectly.

Observation and Action

Before taking an action on the students, the students were asked to take the pretest as a comparison with the results after the action. They were asked to read the prepared text and take video recordings to facilitate the analysis of the data results. The following is the data from the students' pretest results.

Table 2. Results of pre-test scores

Participants	/f/	/ð/	/z/	/θ/	/s/	/ʃ/	/ʒ/	/h/
P. 1	90	0	30	30	40	60	50	100
P. 2	40	10	60	40	40	80	30	100
P. 3	80	20	80	50	80	60	60	100
P. 4	80	0	90	40	60	70	90	100
P. 5	70	0	60	0	70	60	70	100
P. 6	70	30	80	40	70	70	80	100

P. 7	80	10	90	30	50	80	100	100
P. 8	90	20	90	40	50	90	20	100
P. 9	90	80	90	60	80	100	80	100
P. 10	70	10	70	50	50	70	70	100
P. 11	60	0	60	20	40	50	40	100
P. 12	70	10	80	30	50	60	30	100
P. 13	90	0	70	0	30	40	30	100
P. 14	70	20	70	30	50	80	70	100
P. 15	80	0	80	0	30	70	60	100

The pronunciation learning activities were conducted by the students using Arabic through various methods. First, the students are informed that there are many sound similarities between English and Arabic sounds. After they were informed, they practiced it regularly with their teacher. After completing ten meetings in a month, the students took the post-test, to compare and find out whether the strategy of learning English pronunciation by using Arabic can be applied and improve the students' ability or not.

The following results of the scores were taken from the post-test.

Table. 3 post-test results

Participants	/f/	/ð/	/z/	/θ/	/s/	/ʃ/	/ʒ/	/h/
P. 1	90	10	40	50	70	80	90	100
P. 2	70	40	80	70	70	90	70	100
P. 3	100	50	100	100	90	100	70	100
P. 4	90	40	100	80	80	100	100	100
P. 5	90	60	100	50	100	70	100	100
P. 6	100	70	100	70	100	80	90	100
P. 7	90	50	100	70	70	90	100	100
P. 8	90	70	90	50	90	100	100	100
P. 9	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
P. 10	100	60	90	90	80	100	70	100
P. 11	80	60	70	60	70	60	70	100
P. 12	80	30	70	70	90	60	80	100
P. 13	100	30	90	50	80	70	50	100
P. 14	90	40	90	90	90	80	70	100
P. 15	90	50	80	80	80	80	90	100

Reflection

Reflection activities are when the researcher reflects on her research for the future and how the actions in her research will impact future experiences. (Porath, Thiele, & Jobe, 2020). In this case, the researcher reflected on all the series and results of the study. It was found that the /ð/ and /θ/ sounds were more difficult for students to learn, although students understood and were able but sometimes the errors were still repeated so the researcher concluded that the pronunciation of the /θ/ and /ð/ sounds required more practice and longer time for habituation to students, however despite this students experienced an increase in their ability to pronounce these sounds.

Data analysis

After planning, action, or observation, pre-test and post-test data are collected. Then, a series of data analyses is conducted. Data analysis is conducted by determining the score value of the pre-test and post-test results that have been conducted by students. In the assessment process, phonetic symbols are used to make it easier to determine correct and inaccurate pronunciation. After determining the score from the

results of analyzing student pronunciation skills, the following step is to determine the level of student ability based on the score. This can be seen from the level scores below:

90 – 100	Very Good
70 – 89	Good
40 – 69	Fair
20 – 39	Low/Remedial
0 – 19	Remedial

To determine whether learning English pronunciation using Arabic is effective or not, the average value was calculated at the pre-test and post-test stages. The following formula is used to get the students' average score.

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum f_i \cdot x_i}{\sum f_i}$$

Determining the average value aims to compare the pre-test and post-test scores on students to see whether this research makes an increase in students' abilities or not. After finding the students' average results, how mistakes were made and how sound changes occurred were carefully examined.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Although there are variations regarding the results of the effectiveness of strategy training, it is hypothesized that part of the success achieved by language learners comes from the application of effective language learning strategies that can attract students' attention. Similarly, there is a belief that language learning strategies that yield positive learner outcomes are the result of effective language learning strategies. Those students who achieve higher levels of success can serve as models for those who have not achieved similar gains, and the role of teachers in raising awareness and application of language learning strategies is crucial. Teaching skills is currently the focus of attention for educators and researchers interested in harnessing the potential of language learning strategies to improve individuals' ability to learn languages (Griffiths 2004).

There are several difficulties in learning the language encountered by EFL learners including students having difficulty in learning accents because English accents are quite complicated especially for those who want to mature, another difficulty is the existence of silent letters in English is also a difficulty for them, it is difficult for them to combine from one word to another, one example is the combination of consonants and vowels in English the two letters are usually put together but this is also an obstacle for EFL students (Ghounane 2018). In addition, in learning pronunciation, students experience some difficulties due to the difference between their native language and English.

Regarding this statement, it happened to students of Baiturrahmah Islamic Junior High School, This school is based on pesantren (Islamic boarding school) therefore, learning in Arabic is more prevalent. They are more fluent in pronouncing the sounds of Arabic than English, even though Arabic language learning lasts for three hours a day while English is only one hour a week. As Muslims, Arabic is mostly used for worship, reading the Quran, and other activities. In the observation, students' pronunciation skills were quite low, therefore, the teacher made a learning strategy by incorporating Arabic sounds in line with Jarrah's research (2013) that there are similarities in the sounds of Arabic and English. At the time of observation, students were dominantly less able to pronounce fricative consonants in English, thus, the researcher focused on learning strategies using Arabic on fricative consonants.

Here are the results of the pre-test and post-test that have been carried out by students.

Table. 4 The average pre-test /f/ sound

Skor	Pre-test	%
90 - 100	4	27%
70 - 89	9	60%
40 - 69	2	13%
20 - 39	0	0%
0 - 19	0	0%
TOTAL	15	100%

Table.5 The average post-test /f/ sound

Skor	Pos. Test	%
90 - 100	12	80%
70 - 89	3	20%
40 - 69	0	0%
20 - 39	0	0%
0 - 19	0	0%
TOTAL	15	100%

In the table above, it can be seen that at the pre-test stage two students had low scores from 40 - 69 from the results of data analysis students experienced changes in the sound /f/ to /p/ this was mostly done by students on the word "phone" students changed /foʊn/ to /phon/ but in other vocabulary whose initial words used /f/ there were not many mistakes that students made, it can be concluded that writing vocabulary that is different from its sound is a factor in the mistakes that students make. After conducting the post-test by explaining that the /f/ sound is the same as the "fa" sound in Arabic, students had an improvement where the smallest score obtained by two people from the scores of 40-69 at the pre-test stage did not exist at the post-test stage, even 80% of students got the highest score with scores of 90-100.

Table. 6 The average pre-test /ð/ sound

Skor	Pre_test	%
90 - 100	0	0%
70 - 89	1	7%
40 - 69	2	13%
20 - 39	4	27%
0 - 19	8	53%
TOTAL	15	100%

Table. 7 The average post-test /ð/ sound

Skor	Pos. Test	%
90 - 100	1	7%
70 - 89	2	13%
40 - 69	9	60%
20 - 39	2	13%
0 - 19	1	7%
TOTAL	15	100%

The sound /ð/ is the smallest sound that students get compared to other sounds, This sound is quite challenging for students because in their native language, there is no such sound, but in Arabic, the sound /ð/ is the same as the sound /dza/. In the pronunciation of the sound /ð/, many students change it to /d/ or /t/ as in the word "that" /ðæt/ becomes /dæt/. After the researchers conducted classroom action through Arabic, there was a slight increase in the number of students who got the smallest score during the pre-test. There were 53% with a score of 0-19, while after the post-test, only 7% of students got this score.

Table. 8. The average pre-test /z/ sound

Skor	Pre_test	%
90 - 100	4	27%
70 - 89	7	47%
40 - 69	3	20%
20 - 39	1	7%
0 - 19	0	0%
TOTAL	15	100%

Table. 9. The average post-test /z/ sound

Skor	Pos_Test	%
90 - 100	10	67%
70 - 89	4	27%
40 - 69	1	7%
20 - 39	0	0%
0 - 19	0	0%
TOTAL	15	100%

In the /z/ sound, many students change the /z/ sound to /ʒ/; as in the word "breeze," the /bri:z/ sound changes to /bri:ʒ/. The sound /z/ in English is the same as the sound "zai" in Arabic. After the researcher took class action, students got a high enough increase in grades. When doing the pre-test, there were 27% of students scoring 90-100, but after the post-test, it increased to 67%.

Table. 10. The average pre-test /θ/ sound

Skor	Pre-test	%
90 - 100	0	0%
70 - 89	0	0%
40 - 69	6	40%
20 - 39	5	33%
0 - 19	4	27%
TOTAL	15	100%

Table. 11. The average post-test /θ/ sound

Skor	Pos-test	%
90 - 100	4	27%
70 - 89	6	40%
40 - 69	5	33%
20 - 39	0	0%
0 - 19	0	0%
TOTAL	15	100%

The sound /θ/ is not much different from the sound /ð/, and students have difficulty with it for the same reason as with the sound /ð/. In Arabic, the sound /θ/ is the same as the sound /tʃa/, it can be seen in the table that students experienced a slight increase after the class action, in the sound /θ/ students experienced a shift in sound to /t/ or /d/ as in the sound "with" from the sound /wiθ/ to /wit/ "method" /meθəd/ to /metəd/.

Table. 12. The average pre-test /s/ sound

Skor	Pre-Test	%
90 - 100	0	0%
70 - 89	4	27%
40 - 69	9	60%
20 - 39	2	13%
0 - 19	0	0%
TOTAL	15	100%

Table 13. The average post-test /s/ sound

Skor	Pos-Test	%
90 - 100	7	47%
70 - 89	8	53%
40 - 69	0	0%
20 - 39	0	0%
0 - 19	0	0%
TOTAL	15	100%

The /s/ sound has become a common sound found in the students' native language so it is not so difficult for students to pronounce it, but even though it is like that some students still have difficulty when writing and pronunciation are different, in this /s/ sound also students make many mistakes in the word "cite" to /cit/ which should be /sit/. After the practice, when the researcher did the class action, there was not a single student who got a low score. In the pre-test, as many as 73% of students scored 20-69 as in the table. In Arabic, the /s/ sound is the same as the 'sin' sound.

Table. 14. The average pre-test /j/ sound

Skor	Pre-Test	%
90 - 100	2	13%
70 - 89	7	47%
40 - 69	6	40%
20 - 39	0	0%
0 - 19	0	0%
TOTAL	15	100%

Table. 15 The average post-test /j/ sound

Skor	Pos-Test	%
90 - 100	7	47%
70 - 89	6	40%
40 - 69	2	13%
20 - 39	0	0%
0 - 19	0	0%
TOTAL	15	100%

In Arabic, the sound /j/ is the same as the sound "sho" but because this sound is not found in the students' native language, they change the sound /j/ to /s/ a lot, as in the word

"she" to /si:/. After the class action, students experienced an increase in the highest score from 13% to 47%.

Table. 16 Rata-rata pre-test /ʒ/ sound

<u>Skor</u>	Pre-Test	%
90 - 100	2	13%
70 - 89	5	33%
40 - 69	4	27%
20 - 39	4	27%
0 - 19		0%
TOTAL	15	100%

Table. 17 Rata-rata pre-test /ʒ/ sound

<u>Skor</u>	<u>Pos-Test</u>	%
90 - 100	8	53%
70 - 89	6	40%
40 - 69	1	7%
20 - 39		0%
0 - 19		0%
TOTAL	15	100%

For the sound /ʒ/ in Arabic, such as "jim", students sometimes change the sound to /g/ as in the word "energy" read to /energy/. However, despite this, students got an increase in scores. In the pre-test, 54% of students scored 20-69, but after doing the post-test, only one student, or 7%, scored 40-69.

On the /h/ sound, students did not experience any difficulty at all because this sound is so easy to pronounce, even in everyday life, such as the sound of the mother tongue of the students.

From all of the above, it can be dissected into a graph as follows:

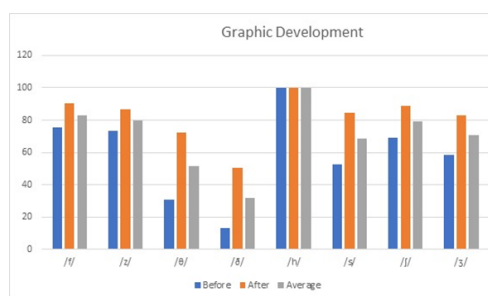


Figure 2. Graphic of the result pre-test dan post-test language learning strategies in English fricative consonants through Arabic

Arabic sounds can affect the learning of English pronunciation in terms of sound, structure, phonetics, or morphology. This similarity can provide convenience in learning English sounds. The influence of Arabic sounds on English sounds is a fact that must be

recognized (Al-Zoubi 2019). This statement is proven by this research, which shows students' grades and abilities after doing language learning strategies in English fricative consonants through Arabic.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This research was conducted at Islamic Character Baiturrahmah school in English language learning less than Arabic, thus the ability of students in pronunciation is still lacking, students have difficulty in pronouncing English sounds due to various factors, therefore the researcher arranged a language learning strategy through Arabic, since Arabic and English sounds have many similarities both in terms of structure and pronunciation. The results of the study can be proven by the increase in percentage and average on each sound, but on the sounds /ð/ and /θ/ students still need to be improved in a longer time, because these sounds need more significant practice and habituation even though students get an increase in value however the value obtained is not satisfactory, in contrast to the sound /h/ students do not experience any difficulties at all.

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