

## **AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION ERRORS**

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### **Abstract**

This study deals with students' pronunciation errors in English consonants. It was conducted under the consideration that pronouncing English words played an important role. A descriptive qualitative was used as the research method. The subject of this research was forty seven students of first year of English Language Education Study Program at Pamane Talino College of Education, Landak Regency, West Kalimantan. Pronunciation test and interview were used to collect data. The result reveals that the students got difficulties in pronouncing /θ/, /ð/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /tʃ/ and /dʒ/. Then, the factors affecting the students' pronunciation are interference, phonological system and motivation.

**Keywords:** error, pronunciation, English consonants

### **INTRODUCTION**

English is regarded as a foreign language in Indonesia. It affects to the level of difficulties in practicing English both in spoken and written. Pronunciation is one of the aspects that an English language learner should master, especially in speaking. A correct and appropriate pronunciation is needed to communicate properly since it affects to understanding of the meaning. Unfortunately, it is difficult to learn since the phonological features of both English and Indonesian language are definitely different.

The English pronunciation is complicated and confusing because the system of vowels and consonants has a lot of different sounds. It drives to the reason of why it is very hard for non-native speakers to deal with the English pronunciation. Zhang & Yin (2009) stated that a particular sound which does not exist in the native language can therefore pose a difficulty for the second language learners to produce or some times to try to substitute those sounds with similar ones in their mother tongue. While it happened to the second language learners, it is obvious that the foreign language learners would get more difficulties.

The pronunciation difficulties might be caused by several factors. In line with the result of research by Mulansari, et al (2014) that the students might do mistakes and errors in pronouncing English words because of internal and external factors, this study poses two purposes that (1) how the students of English Language Education Study Program of Pamane

Talino College of Education pronounce the sounds of English consonants; (2) the factors affecting the students' difficulties in pronouncing English sounds.

### Teaching English Pronunciation

Teaching good pronunciation to students will affect to the improvement of students' ability in learning English. In accordance with the important of pronunciation, Ahmed (2017) states that English teachers found that emphasis on rhythm, word stress, sentence stress and intonation is the best way to teach pronunciation to non-native students. Pronunciation refers to the producing sounds in order to make meaning. There are 44 phonemes which are considered by 24 consonants, 12 vowels and 8 diphthongs. Since this study only focuses on the English consonants, here is the chart of English consonants (Lacy, 2007).

Table 1 English Consonants

	Bilabial		Labio-dental		Dental		Alveolar		Post-alveolar		Palatal	Velar		Glotal
Plosives	p	b					t	d				k	g	
Fricatives			f	v	θ	ð	s	z	ʃ	ʒ				h
Affricates									tʃ	dʒ				
Nasals	m						n					ŋ		
Lateral							l							
Approximants	w								r		j			

### METHOD

This study was a descriptive qualitative research. It was done for forty seven students of the first year of English language education study program of Pamane Talino College of Education in Landak Regency, West Kalimantan. The students got two credits for pronunciation practice subject. In order to determine the students' pronunciation errors, test was used. They were asked to pronounce English words, but the analysis focused on pronouncing the English consonants. In addition, interview was also used to identify their factors in producing errors.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

To know the students' ability in pronunciation, a test which consisted of 10 words were given and then their answers were calculated. Moreover, the students also got the interview.

### Pronunciation Errors

Table 2 Pronunciation of /θ/

Item No	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
1	Correct	13	28%
	Incorrect	34	72%
	Total	47	100%

Test number one was sound of /θ/ for 'thursday'. The incorrect answer showed that the students pronounced /θ/ as /ð/, /t/, and Ø.

Table 3 Pronunciation of /ð/

Item No	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
2	Correct	10	21%
	Incorrect	37	79%
	Total	47	100%

Test number two was sound of /ð/ for 'they and then'. The incorrect answer showed that the students pronounced /ð/ as /θ/, /t/, /d/ and Ø.

Table 4 Pronunciation of /ʃ/

Item No	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
3	Correct	16	34%
	Incorrect	31	66%
	Total	47	100%

Test number three was sound of /ʃ/ for 'sharpener'. The incorrect answer showed that the students pronounced /ʃ/ as /s/, /z/ and /tʃ/.

Table 5 Pronunciation of /ʒ/

Item No	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
4	Correct	8	17%
	Incorrect	39	83%
	Total	47	100%

Test number four was sound of /ʒ/ for 'usually'. The incorrect answer showed that the students pronounced /ʒ/ as /s/, /z/ and /f/.

Table 6 Pronunciation of /tʃ/

Item No	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
5	Correct	5	11%
	Incorrect	42	89%
	Total	47	100%

Test number five was sound of /tʃ/ for 'chalk'. The incorrect answer showed that the students pronounced /tʃ/ as /t/, /k/ and /ʃ/.

Table 7 Pronunciation of /dʒ/.

Item No	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
6	Correct	17	36%
	Incorrect	30	64%
	Total	47	100%

Test number six was sound of /dʒ/ for 'vegetable'. The incorrect answer showed that the students pronounced /dʒ/ as /g/ and /z/.

Table 8 Pronunciation of /ŋ/

Item No	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
7	Correct	32	68%
	Incorrect	15	32%
	Total	47	100%

Test number seven was sound of /ŋ/ for 'thing and thank'. The incorrect answer showed that the students pronounced /ŋ/ as /n/ and /k/.

Table 9 Pronunciation of /k/

Item No	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
8	Correct	45	96%
	Incorrect	2	4%
	Total	47	100%

Test number eight was sound of /k/ for 'classroom'. The incorrect answer showed that the students pronounced /k/ as /tʃ/.

Table 10 Pronunciation of /p/

Item No	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
9	Correct	35	64%
	Incorrect	12	36%
	Total	47	100%

Test number nine was sound of /p/ for 'picture'. The incorrect answer showed that the students pronounced /p/ as /f/.

Table 11 Pronunciation of /b/

Item No	Answer	Frequency	Percentage
10	Correct	47	100%
	Incorrect	0	0%
	Total	47	100%

Test number ten was sound of /p/ for 'bag' and all of the students pronounced it correctly.

### Factors Affecting Pronunciation Difficulties

The students' ability in pronouncing English words was influenced by several factors. First is interference. The interference of the first language causes difficulties in pronouncing the sounds of target language. The students are accustomed with their phonological system. Second is phonological knowledge that the students had difficulties in the aspect of phonetic transcription. Since they have to pronounce the English words correctly based on its phonetic transcription, they forget the phonetic symbol. It might be said that they replaced those sounds with the closest sounds they are familiar with. Third is motivation. Although not all the students have low motivation, most of the students show that they do not eager to repeat or remember when they pronounce incorrectly.

### CONCLUSION

After analyzing the data, only one from ten English words that the students of first year could pronounce correctly. They still get difficulties in pronouncing the English consonants of /θ/, /ð/, /f/, /z/, /tʃ/ and /dʒ/. It is caused by three factors, namely interference, phonological knowledge and motivation. Regarding to the analysis above, the researcher would give some suggestions as follows: (1) the students should realize that learning English pronunciation is different with Bahasa Indonesia; (2) the students should ask the lecturer if they do not understand the material; (3) the lecturer should use appropriate technique in order to improve the students' pronunciation.

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