



**AN ERROR ANALYSIS ON ADULT STUDENTS' MASTERY
IN PRONOUNCING ENGLISH VOICELESS PLOSIVES IN
INITIAL STRESSED SYLLABLES**

a final project

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
of *Sarjana Pendidikan* in English

by

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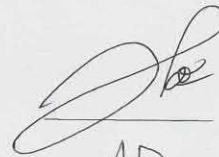
**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
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APPROVAL

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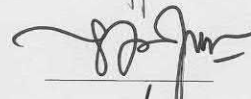
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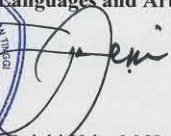


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DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I am Nur Listiana hereby declare that this final project entitles *An Error Analysis On Adult Students' Mastery In Pronouncing English Voiceless Plosives In Initial Stressed Syllables* is my own work and has not been submitted in any work form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institutes of tertiary education. Information derived from the published and unpublished works of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of bibliography is attached in the bibliography.

Semarang, September 2019



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MOTTO AND DEDICATION

“Verily, along with every hardship is relief” (QS. Al – Insyirah: 5)

This final project is dedicated to:

My beloved parents

Mr. & Mrs. Salim

My lovely brother & sister

Syafi'i & Sania

My Advisor

Ms. Pasca Kalisa

My KING family

Mr. Rohani and Ms. Yunita

Ms. Shela, Ms. Endang, Ms. Becik, Ms. Tri, Ms. Layli, Ms. Ery

And all teachers and staff of KING

All of my lovely friends from English Department

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Nur Listiana

ABSTRACT

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Mastering English pronunciation is a very crucial aspect of speaking skill for every foreign language learner. Native speakers of English consistently use aspirated variants of the consonants [p, t, k] when they occur at the beginning of words or stressed syllables. Meanwhile, native speakers of Indonesian only have one variant of the consonants [p, t, k] which is unaspirated. Indonesian students get worried about pronouncing English correctly, particularly when some English language students cannot distinguish the voiceless plosive consonants [p, t, k] whether they are pronounced aspirated or unaspirated.

This study analyzed the students' errors in pronouncing English voiceless plosive consonants in initial stressed syllables. The objectives of this study were to find out the errors and their causes in pronouncing English voiceless plosive consonants in stressed syllables pronounced by adult students. A qualitative method was used in this study. The participants were 20 of the eighth-semester students of English Education Program Universitas Negeri Semarang.

There were two instruments; the speaking test and the interview questions. The data were analyzed by using the theory of Ellis (2003), they were identifying, describing, explaining, and evaluating. The results revealed that the dominant error occurred in the pronunciation of the voiceless plosive sound [p] in the amount of 33%. Meanwhile, the fewest errors occurred in the voiceless plosive sound [t] and [k] which were only 18% and 19%. Furthermore, according to the interview, the causes of those errors were because of language interference and the lack of practice in speaking English.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the introduction of the present research. It consists of the background of the study, the reason for choosing the topic, the limitation of the study, the research questions, the objectives of the study, and the significance of the study and the outlines of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Pronunciation is one of language elements that plays an important role in oral communication. It is very important to be learned because with good pronunciation, our English can be easily and clearly understood by the interlocutors. The main function of communication is to understand each other saying. If someone speaks in appropriate pronunciation, his/her interlocutor(s) can understand what the speakers are talking about. Reverseely, if the speaker speaks in inappropriate pronunciation, it may cause misunderstanding for the listener in conveying the intended message.

Pronunciation is a part of speech includes word, intonation, and the sounds of language. Harmer (2001, p.26) defines pronunciation as knowledge of how to say a word – that is how to pronounce it. According to Allen (1960, p.35), pronunciation is one of the elements of the language that has a big contribution to better English speaking. Hornby (2010, p.1175) also states that pronunciation is the way in which a language or particular words or sounds is pronounced. While Dalton and Seidlhofer define pronunciation in general term as the production of significant sounds. According to them, sound is significant in two senses. The first

one is that sound is significant because it is used as part of a code of particular language. The second one, sound is significant because it is used to achieve meaning in the context of use.

Learning English pronunciation is not a simple process of memorizing words. As we know that in Indonesia, English is a foreign language. People do not use English in daily communication. Only certain communities use it as a daily language. No wonder that most of the Indonesian students have difficulties in speaking English with good pronunciation because their English is still influenced by their mother tongue language. Someone may be able to produce the foreign sounds correctly, but if the stress patterns of his mother tongue are transferred to the foreign language, his speech will be stamped as foreign by the native speakers. So, mother tongue has a big effect on learning and producing foreign language especially in English. In addition, Crystal (2003, p.372) stated that our mother tongue interferes with our attempts to function in the second or foreign language.

Indonesian students get worried about pronouncing English correctly, especially when some English language students themselves cannot distinguish English and Indonesian consonants. For example, in pronouncing plosive consonant sounds, the students tend to make errors as they do not find the English sound features in their L1 (mother tongue). It means that the more differences in sounds between the two languages the more errors of interference will occur. Furthermore, the errors may cause misunderstanding and reflect negatively on the three main language skills i.e. reading, listening, writing, and create a gap between the language of Indonesian students and the language of English native

speakers which makes them not be able to achieve a good communication each other.

In order to identify the ability in pronouncing English words experienced by the students, the researcher would like to focus on the study of the errors made by students especially in pronouncing English voiceless plosive sounds in initial stressed syllables. Some previous studies have been conducted dealing with pronunciation, such as Hago and Khan (2015), Jabali and Abuzaid (2017), Hentamaska (2015), and Al-Zayed (2017).

Hago & Khan (2015) analyzed the difficulties of English pronunciation faced by Saudi secondary school learners when pronouncing English consonants. The fact is that the sound systems of Arabic and English are different in many aspects. Some English consonants do not exist in the Arabic sound like [p]. The similar consonant to some Arabic consonants like [t] or [k] is not identical but different in the manner and even in the place of articulation. For example, English sound [t] is alveolar and aspirated in word-initial position followed by a vowel like tea [tɪ:] where in the Arabic [t] is dental and non-aspirated in the same word position like teen [tɪ:n]. According to the observation, the study showed a considerable percentage of mispronunciation which is [p] at all positions, [k] in final position, and [k] in medial position. In that study, the researcher only focused on the pronunciation error without providing any suggestion on how to solve the error itself.

Moreover, Jabali & Abuzaid (2017) conducted a study focusing on consonant sounds that are mispronounced by native speakers of Palestinian. They

explored the most common mispronounced English consonants produced by Palestinian students. The result showed that the most problematic sounds include [p, tʃ, dʒ, ɹ, ɱ]. Knowing the findings, they recommended that the best way to learn the pronunciation of a second or foreign language is by listening to native speakers of that language and by practicing it regularly without providing the factor that causes the problematic sounds.

While Hentamaska (2015) analyzed the tendency of first language (L1) sound patterning on second language (L2) sounds done by Javanese students. The study focused on the English consonant sounds, the data were collected by recording the students' pronunciation of English words during the pronunciation test. The results showed that the patterning of L1 sounds happened on L2 sounds especially on eleven consonant sounds including the voiceless plosives [p, t, k] and the voiced plosives [b, d, g]. The patterning case emerged mostly due to the difference in the existence of consonant sounds and the rules of consonant distributions. In short, this occurs because of the difference in consonant clusters between L1 and L2. Because of the different consonant sounds that occur in both first and second language, Javanese students have to imitate and practice the English sound systems regularly so that they can achieve good pronunciation.

Al-Zayed (2017) in research about problems of the non-native pronunciation of English aims at analyzing some occurring problems concerning the pronunciation of English learners in Jordan. He analyzed thirty Jordanian students majoring English language and literature in two private universities. The result showed that the sounds which are existed in the Arabic language are easier

to pronounce, while the absent sounds in Arabic and exist in English caused some confusion for the students. The students tended to pronounce the nearest sounds from the Arabic phonemes to the English phonemes. The study concluded that the problematic sounds occur because of the different elements between the native and the foreign language.

Through the studies, it can be seen that there are some difficulties by English learners in pronouncing English consonants especially plosive consonant sounds since there is no sound system in their native language. The difficulties occur because of the lack of sound systems in native language towards the target language and language interference. This study focused on how Indonesian students pronounce voiceless plosive sounds [p, t, k] in initial stressed syllables that are different from Indonesian sound systems and try to find out the factors causing the students' errors.

1.2 Reasons of Choosing the Topic

The researcher chose this topic for some reasons; firstly, mastering English orally is very important for every learner. Some learners may deal with pronunciation problems. One of them is about pronouncing English voiceless plosive consonant sounds. English has more than variant for the plosive consonants [p, t, k] but Indonesian has one variant only. It is important for every student to master adequate pronunciation in order to achieve communication goals with interlocutors. Secondly, it is possible that every student will get difficulties in pronouncing English words especially the consonants as some features of English have different sounds produced in Indonesian. The consonants that have different

way of pronunciation in Indonesian are voiceless plosive sounds [p, t, k] for instance. In Indonesian, [p, t, and k] are pronounced as non-aspirated whether they are located in initial, medial, or final position. Meanwhile, in English, they are pronounced as aspirated when they are placed in stressed position. They will not be aspirated when their positions are in unstressed syllables. Against these backdrops, the researcher is interested in knowing the most common error in pronouncing English plosive consonant sounds especially in initial stressed syllables encountered by the eighth-semester students of English Department of UNNES in the hopes of presenting their ability in pronouncing English voiceless plosive sounds.

1.3 Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study are as further:

1. What are the dominant errors made by the students in pronouncing the English plosive sounds?
2. What might be the factors causing the students' error in pronouncing English plosive sounds?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are:

1. to find out the dominant errors in pronouncing English plosive sounds.
2. to find out the factors causing the students' errors in producing English plosive sounds.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is divided into three elements. Those are theoretical significance, practical significance, and pedagogical significance.

Theoretically, by doing this research, the researcher expects that her knowledge of learning and teaching English especially in the field of pronunciation can be developed. The result of this study is expected to provide information for English learners since English is considered as foreign language in Indonesia. It is also expected to provide information about the difficulties faced by the Indonesian adult learners of English in producing plosive consonant sounds. Furthermore, the researcher expects that the information in this study may be able to be a reference both for the teachers or lecturers and students to improve teaching and learning process, especially in the relation of pronunciation.

Practically, this study which is related to the analysis of students' error in pronouncing English voiceless plosive sounds, is expected to be one of the sources for English teachers or lecturers to create the best teaching and learning process of English subject. Moreover, the significance of this study for the readers is that it can enlarge their knowledge regarding English pronunciation.

Pedagogically, the result of this study is expected to stimulate the students to improve their pronunciation skill mainly in pronouncing English voiceless plosive consonants. Besides, the students will see their pronunciation errors and know how to fix them. Besides, this is expected to provide additional information for the next researchers as a reference who are interested in conducting similar studies.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

The field of this study is English pronunciation skill. The data is limited to the errors in pronouncing voiceless plosive sounds [p, t, k] in initial stressed syllables by the eighth-semester students of English Department of Universitas Negeri Semarang in the academic year 2018/2019. Besides, the researcher also analyzes the causes of the errors.

1.7 Outline of the Research Report

This study consists of five chapters. In the first chapter, the researcher presents background of the study, reason for choosing the topic, statement of the problem, objective of the study, limitation of the study, and significance of the study. This chapter is mainly about introduction of the topic being studied.

The second chapter reveals about review of the related literature, related literature and framework analysis. Review of related literature explains about some previous studies related to the researcher's topic while related literature underlies the writing of this study. Furthermore, framework analysis consists of a description of how research is processed.

The third chapter discusses the research design, subject of the research, object of the research, the instrument of the research, procedures of collecting data, and procedures of analyzing data. This chapter mainly explains how the researcher gets the data and analyze them based on the method which has been discussed in chapter two.

The fourth chapter consists of findings and discussion. It presents the general description and the results of the study. In details, they are the description and the result of the students' ability in pronouncing English plosive sounds.

The fifth chapter presents conclusions and suggestions. It contains the conclusions of the final project and suggestions.

Finally, references and appendices are attached at the end of this final project.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter deals with the reviews of the previous studies, theoretical studies, and theoretical framework.

2.1 Reviews of the Previous Studies

There have been a number of researchers who conducted researches related to pronunciation which became the references of this research. Some of the studies focused on pronunciation problem.

Good pronunciation skills are a key element to every foreign learners to communicate in English. Proper pronunciation means reproducing sounds of words through speech in such a way that fluent speaker of the language would easily know and understand the message. However, pronunciation is not an easy skill to master especially for second or foreign language speakers of the English language.

It is quite natural that the learners of English as a foreign language encounter problems in their pronunciation. Hoque & Begum (2016) indicated that pronunciation problems occurred because of the massive language interference and pre-established systems of English pronunciation. It was conducted in the tertiary level students in Bangladesh. The study had been conducted with thirty five students from various districts from different departments of five universities in Bangladesh. The data of the research had been collected from two kinds of records. The first record contained the students' pronunciation reading English passages and the second one contained the interview between the researcher and

the students. In addition, Shahidi & Aman (2009) tried to investigate the pronunciation problems faced by Malaysian university students. Although English and Malay have similar phonemic contrasts for plosive, the phonetic property pattern differs (that is for native speakers of English). The study showed that there is significant interference between English and Malay. Furthermore, language interference also has been proved as one of the factors of pronunciation problems in a study conducted by Widyaningtyas (2014) in which she found interference between the first language and the target language. They were interference of first language (L1) and target language (L2), formal instruction, and the amount of L2 use.

The interference between the first and the target language is still considered as the major factor causing the pronunciation problem. Harun (2019) confirmed that Buginese language gave major negative transfer towards English vowels, diphthongs, and consonants. The patterning sounds emerged mostly due to the difference from both languages (Hentamaska, 2015). Moreover, Moedjito & Harumi (2008) proved that one of the reasons for major mispronunciation in producing English sounds is language interference. The existence of language interference is also arisen in a study conducted by Syaputri (2014) in which the students' pronunciation were affected by their mother tongue because the dialect, accent, and the similarities in pronouncing certain words. The students were difficult to differentiate between the sound [p] and [f] for instance. They tended to pronounce the word *thanksgiving* by using the sound [p] to replace the sound [v]. Another example was the word *kangaroo* that was pronounced as *kangguru*.

Additionally, the patterning of first language sounds happened on target language sounds. A study by Abugohar & Yunus (2018) also supports that language interference is the factor causing the students' problem in pronouncing English sounds. The majority of the participants expressed that there was a wide gap between their native language and English as the target language. Most of the difficulties were due to mother tongue interference and silent letters in English (Alarabi, 2014; Abahussain, 2016; Fareh, 2010; Hamad, 2013). Hasan (2014) also found that language interference is the factor of pronunciation problem in Sudan particularly at Sudan University of Science and Technology.

There are various types of language interferences that occur in pronunciation problems faced by foreign students. It can be mother tongue, different sound systems between both languages and different ways of pronouncing certain sounds. Mother tongue is considered to be one of the factors causing the pronunciation problem. Likewise, Chouchane (2016) analyzed the reasons of the students' difficulty in producing English sounds. The study showed that the main reason was from the mother tongue interference either by confusing sounds of both L1 and L2 or by inexistence of those sounds in their language.

Furthermore, consonant clusters between L1 and L2 have a big role in pronunciation problem. For example, Hago & Khan (2015) indicated that the sound systems of Arabic and English are different in many aspects in which it makes the students have difficulty in producing the English sounds. Some English consonants do not exist in the Arabic sound like [p]. The similar consonants to some Arabic consonants like [t] or [k] is not identical but different in the manner

and even in the place of articulation. According to the observation, the study showed a considerable percentage of mispronunciation in plosive sounds [p] at all positions, [t] in the final position, and [k] in medial position. Besides, Abayazeed & Abdalla (2015) showed that, according to the result overcoming the students' pronunciation problem, sound system differences between English and Arabic made the students difficult to produce some English words. They conducted the study in Sudan Univeristy. Brown (2000) also confirmed that second language learner meets some difficulties because of his L1 affects his L2 especially in adulthood and this effect is a result of L1 transfer, so it is a significant source of making errors for second language learners.

Almost all of the previous researchers believe that first language has interference in the second language acquisition. For example, Abolhasan (2012) investigated the differences in consonant clusters orally in the first and second language and pointed out if the structures of first and second language were different. Learners have difficulty in L2 pronunciation because they faced to unfamiliar phonological rules. Towell & Hawkins (as cited in Nemati & Taghizade, 2013, p.2479) point out that very few L2 learners become successful in achieving native speakers level, the majority of L2 learners cannot achieve native speakers level of ability. Further, Dulay at al. (1982) showed that the path of second language acquisition is different from the acquisition of first language, but the errors of L1 and L2 learners are very similar.

There are two types of transfer in learning a second or foreign language. Selinker (1983) points out that there are two types of transfer in learning a second

language: positive and negative transfer. In positive transfer, L1 facilitates the acquisition of second language, but in negative transfer, the first language has negative impact on L2 and interferes in L1. Zhang & Yin (2009) also analyzed some frequently occurring problem in pronunciation. In their study, the following elements influenced their pronunciation: native language interference; learners' age; learners' attitude; prior pronunciation instruction; insufficient language of phonology and phonetics and words which displayed a sound and spelling dissimilarity. L1 interference was the most challenging problem for producing correct pronunciation. In addition, Neto (2016) confirmed that L1 has a negative influence for learners in pronouncing target language since the sounds systems do not occur in the target language.

Since L1 affects L2 in language learning especially in pronunciation, there are some English sounds that are produced with errors in their production. As we know, Indonesian and English have some different sound systems including consonants. English has twenty four consonants including the sounds [p, t, k]. Ali (2008) analyzed the Sidrapnese students' pronunciation in producing English consonants. It showed that the students made pronunciation errors when pronouncing the English sounds which are different from Buginese sounds, i.e [p, t, k]. They tended to substitute those English sounds with Buginese language. In addition, Mees (2012) investigated the pronunciation errors made by Faroese speakers. They made errors in voiceless plosive consonants [p, t, k]. They tended to pronounce those sounds unaspirated both initially and medially. It occurred because Faroese speakers have problems with certain phonemic contrasts which

are very similar to those facing many other non-native speakers of English. In short, it was a matter of the different sound systems both English and Faroese. English sounds have certain sounds that do not occur in Faroese.

Besides, non-English speaking countries also have difficulties in pronouncing certain sounds. Pashto speakers have difficulty in producing the voiceless plosive [p, t, k]. They produce voiceless [t] unaspirated in the stressed syllables. The reason for this may be absence of aspirated stops in the phonemic inventory of Pashto (Syed, 2011). In British English, on stressed position, normally voiceless plosives are produced with aspiration and in unstressed syllables, they are produced as unaspirated plosives (Davenport & Hannahs, 2010). While for Pakistani speakers, they only have voiceless unaspirated plosives in all positions. They tended to pronounce the voiceless plosives [p, t, k] unaspirated even they occurred in stressed syllables (Syed, Ansari, & Gopang, 2017).

In addition, many Indonesian students have difficulty in pronouncing consonant sounds particularly the sounds [p, t, k]. One source of difficulties is caused by similar sounds in the two languages, which have different variants or allophones. An allophone is a conditioned variant of a significant group of sounds which occurs in a fixed and predictable environment. Both English and Indonesian have voiceless plosive consonants [p, t, k]. The Indonesian plosive consonants have one variant only but English plosive consonants have more than one variant. Arifiana (2009) analyzed the errors of the fifth-semester students' pronunciation especially in producing consonants. The errors were classified into

two categories. They were English voiceless plosive consonants [p, t, k] in stressed syllables and English voiceless plosive consonants [p, t, k] in unstressed syllables. The study showed that the students were categorized as excellent in pronouncing English voiceless plosive consonants [p, t, k] in unstressed syllables but they were fair in pronouncing the stressed ones. Hago & Khan (2015) also analyzed the difficulty in pronunciation encountered by Saudi learners. According to the observation, the students made errors in the sound [p] at all positions, [t] in the final position, and [k] in medial position. Moreover, Jaya (2008) found that students' mastery level in pronouncing consonant [p, t] was good but they were fair in pronouncing the sound [k]. Besides, Jabali & Abuzaid (2017) conducted research about pronunciation errors made by Palestinian students. It showed that only 25% of the students were able to pronounce the sound [p] correctly but non-aspirated. The students mispronounced the sound [p] as [b] as it was noticed in the recordings. The reason why students pronounced the sound [b] in most cases was that it exists in the Arabic phonological system while the sound [p] does not. The English syllables are difficult to learn for Palestinian students of English because they sometimes follow the phonological system of Arabic in their pronunciation. Meanwhile, the sound [t] presented higher levels of correct production of aspiration but the level of correct production for [p] was higher than for [k] as well as the level of mistakes (Neto, 2016).

Based on the previous studies mentioned above, it can be concluded that there are some problems related to pronunciation. The problems of pronunciation that have been explored by the researchers are because of language interference

including mother tongue influence and the different sounds between native language such as Indonesian and English as the target language. The students have some difficulties in pronouncing English words particularly the words or sounds which differ in Indonesian. English voiceless plosive consonants, for instance. Those consonants exist both in Indonesian and English but they have more than one variant in English while in Indonesian they have only one variant. The area that has not been explored is the ability level of the students in pronouncing voiceless plosive consonants in stressed syllables in which Indonesian sound systems have only one variant called unaspirated and analyze the reasons of their ability. This present study seeks further evidence that Indonesian students have difficulty in pronouncing voiceless plosive consonants particularly in initial stressed syllables and the factors causing the difficulty. In short, it is valuable for the researcher to investigate the dominant errors pronounced by the students and find out the possible factors causing the errors.

2.2 Theoretical Studies

In this section, the researcher presents a number of concepts used in this study. Theories that are underlying the research explain the definition of pronunciation, pronunciation problems, English plosive consonants, and factors that influence pronunciation mastery.

2.2.1 *Definition of Pronunciation*

Pronunciation has an important role in oral communication. This is the way in which a word or a language is spoken. A person who wants to deliver a speech and communicate with others in English is expected to be able to pronounce the

utterances correctly and clearly. The aim to pronounce the correct and clear utterances is to be understandable by the interlocutors. There are some studies about pronunciation.

Brown (2001, p.68) stated that pronunciation is referred to as 'psychomotor skills' is the element constituting communicative competence, which is said to be the ideal goal of every language instruction. Burns & Claire (2003, p.5) emphasize pronunciation refers to the phonology of the language or the meaningful perception and production of the sounds of that language and how they impact on the listener. Hornby (2010, p.1175) asserts that pronunciation is the way in which a language or particular words or sounds is pronounced. The word can be uttered in many ways by various individuals or groups, depending on many factors such as the area which they grew up, the ethnic group, their social class, and their education. In addition, Dalton and Seidlhofer (1994, p.3) defined pronunciation in general term as the production of significant sounds. they add that sound is significant in two senses. First, sound is significant because it is used as part of a code of particular language. Second, sound is significant because it is used to achieve meaning in the context of use.

From the explanation above, we can see that pronunciation is one of the ways to transfer information in order to know and understand what the speaker means. It depends on the individual ability in pronouncing words.

2.2.2 Pronunciation Problems

Pronunciation has become a crucial problem for Indonesian students in learning English since they have different sound systems. The difficulty found by the

students is caused by the different elements found between their language and the target or foreign language. If someone wants to learn a foreign language, he will surely meet with all kinds of learning problems. He will learn new sound systems, learn the vocabulary items, learn the unfamiliar ways of arranging words into sentences, and learn how to produce the sounds for instance.

A foreign language students will meet those difficulties in the learning process. Since childhood, he has been speaking his mother tongue which has been deeply implanted as part of his habit. His speech organs have been set to produce the sounds of his first language. It will be difficult for him to change the habit of moving his speech organs in such way as to produce the foreign sounds.

If the target or foreign language is exactly the same in its sound system as the student's own language which is impossible, there would be no learning problem at all. The degree of the difficulty in learning new language is also determined by the degree of difference between the two languages.

Ramelan (2003, p.4-8) categorizes several kinds of pronunciation problems appear in learning a foreign language:

1) Speaking is a matter of habit

Mostly, students who want to learn a foreign language will have learning problems in increasing vocabulary items, arranging words into sentences, and producing new sound system. Producing new sound system is an essential problem to solve. From early childhood, foreign language students have been speaking their mother tongue. It is a part of their habit. Their speaking have been set to produce the sounds in their own language. Thus, it will be rather difficult

for them to produce sounds that do not exist in their mother tongue. They will learn a new set of habits in speaking.

Since students have had their old habit of speaking their mother tongue or first language, the effort to learn the new language will cause strong opposition from the old established habits, which is called language interference. In trying to produce the foreign sounds, they will tend to replace them by similar sounds picked up from their first or native language. An Indonesian student, who wants to pronounce an English word like *paper* [ˈpeɪpə] tends to say [peɪpə] as found in the Indonesian word *pecel*. The English word should be pronounced aspirated, however the Indonesian sound system has no any aspirated consonants like English does.

2) Different elements found between the first and the target language.

Basically, each speaker wants to speak English with the correct pronunciation. In fact, it is not easy to directly imitate English native speaker to pronounce words. The sound system in Indonesia is different from English. That is why Indonesian learners have difficulty in pronouncing English words.

The degree of the difficulty is determined by the degree of difference between the two languages. An Indonesian student will find it more difficult to learn English than to learn Javanese, for instance, because the degree of similarity between Indonesian and English is lower than that found between Indonesian and Javanese. He tends to substitute a non-existing Indonesian sound system of English with the closest Indonesian sound system.

The different elements in the sound system between Indonesian and English may be several kinds. The English sound is completely new to the student. Indonesian students will find difficulty in pronouncing *pilot* since his speech organs have not been trained before to produce or pronounce it. The word 'pilot' is aspirated or pronounced with a slight puff of breath that makes them difficult to pronounce. They tend to pronounce 'pilot' without any aspiration.

3) Sounds which have the same phonetic features in both languages but differ in their distributions.

Indonesian has many different sound systems towards English, but it also has some phonetic features which are the same in both languages but differ in their distribution. We can take voiced plosive consonant and voiceless plosive consonant as the examples. For voiced plosive consonants, we have [b,d,g] in both Indonesian and English but they have different distributions.

In English, those stops occur at utterance-initial, medial, and final position such as in the following words: *back*, *ago*, *bad*. However, Indonesian occurs only at utterance-initial and medial position but never at utterance-final position. In Indonesia, the letters [b, d, g] in final position are pronounced as voiceless plosive consonants, that is [p, t, k]. We can see the word *kebab* for instance. The final position of the word *kebab* is pronounced as [p] than [b]. Therefore, Indonesian students have difficulty in pronouncing voiced plosive consonants and tend to pronounce them in voiceless plosive consonants without any aspiration at all.

- 4) Similar sounds in both Indonesian and English, which have different variants or ‘allophones’.

Both Indonesian and English have voiceless plosive consonants [p, t, k]. Indonesian plosives have one variant only and the phonetic features are unchanged whenever and wherever they occur. Plosive consonant [p] in *pagar*, *api*, *asap*, for instance. Nevertheless, English plosives have more than one variant: aspirated and unaspirated. First, it occurs in stressed syllable (aspirated) as in *pack* [pæk], *table* ['teɪbl], and *cake* [keɪk]. Second, they will be un-aspirated as in the words *apple*, *butter*, and *monarchy* because the plosive sounds are not in the stressed syllable. In short, Indonesian students will have difficulty in pronouncing the English voiceless plosive sounds in the stressed positions since their own voiceless plosive consonant sounds do not have such variant in similar situations.

According to Shumin (1997), in a country which assumes that English as a foreign language, English is often considered as a difficult language because the speaker should learn, practice, and adjust the appropriate language in a variety of interactions. Basically, each speaker wants to speak English in correct pronunciation like native speaker does. However, it is not easy for foreign people if only hear or imitate the whole new sound system. Furthermore, the sound system that Indonesian has is different from English sounds. Mnao (2015) states that learners tend to substitute non-existing Indonesian phonemes of English with the closest Indonesian phonemes.

Hidayatun (2009) viewed that it is not easy for Indonesian speakers when pronouncing English sounds. Indonesian speakers tend to pronounce

English sounds the same or perhaps similar with Indonesian phonemes. Some of English sounds are different from Indonesian. If the Indonesian speakers want to master English pronunciation, they should get out the habit from producing the sounds they use in daily life communication. In addition, most of Indonesian people use their first language or mother tongue as a daily language in communication. Thus, it affects them since they will bring their mother tongue when producing other languages such as English.

Erinastasia (2018) stated that mother tongue refers to community or groups which live in a region, make some natural thought and communication. Regarding to the explanations, it is clear that the difficulty in pronouncing English sounds are caused by differences found between the students' language (Indonesian) and the target language (English). These differences may be in individual sounds like plosive consonants, similar sounds between the two languages, and so on. They occur because of the existence of mother tongue. They tend to use their mother tongue sounds or substitute English sounds that the Indonesian language has. To be concluded, language interference does occur here. The researcher is eager to analyze the students' difficulty in pronouncing such English words, especially voiceless plosive sounds in initial stressed syllables and their factors causing the errors in producing them.

2.2.3 *English Plosive Consonants*

The way of producing a plosive consonant is mainly characterized by a complete obstruction somewhere along the speech track, and after which the air is suddenly released so that an explosive sound is heard (Ramelan, 2003, p.109). English has

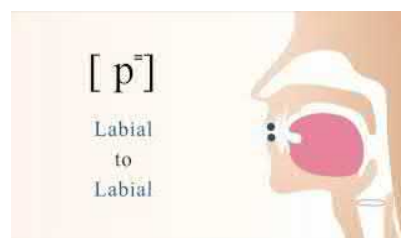
6 plosive consonants, which are called voiced and voiceless plosive consonants. Voiced plosive consonants are [b, d, g] and [p, t, k] are for the voiceless plosive consonants. In fact, utterances in Javanese and Indonesian never start with a vowel sound, since initial vowel sounds are almost always preglottalized. English voiceless plosive consonants differ from the Indonesian counterparts in that they are aspirated in stressed syllables. By aspiration is meant here 'a slight puff of breath resembling a *h* sound so that in phonetic writing it is usually symbolized with apostrophe after the aspirated consonant.

Since Indonesian voiceless plosives are never aspirated, Indonesian students should have much practice in producing aspiration after English voiceless plosives in stressed syllables. Their failure in producing such aspiration will result in an un-English pronunciation and may sometimes cause some misunderstanding. The presence of aspiration may be checked by the back and forth movement of a thin piece of paper held before the mouth of the student when he is producing an aspirated English plosive consonant.

This study only focused on voiceless plosive consonants [p, t, k] produced in initial stressed syllables. The stressed or aspirated voiceless plosive sounds are not found in both Javanese and Indonesian sound systems because they have only one variant, which is unaspirated. Therefore, it is not surprising Indonesian students have difficulty in pronouncing the following English voiceless plosives [p, t, k] since these sounds are not used by most Indonesian speakers in speaking their language.

1.2.3.1 Voiceless Plosive Consonant [p]

Sound [p] is a voiceless bilabial stop/plosive. The articulation occurs when the outgoing air is completely blocked up in the mouth by putting the two lips into tight contact; the soft palate is raised to close off the nasal passage so that there is no air passes out through the nose; the soft palate is raised to close off the nasal passage so that no air passes out through the nose; the vocal cords are not vibrating during stoppage; aspirated in strongly stressed syllables and unaspirated in unstressed syllables (Ramelan, 1994, p.112). When [p] is followed by [m] or [n], the release of the stoppage is not carried out through the mouth, but it is carried out through the nose.



(Source: <http://wikivisually.com>)

Picture 1. The sound of [p]

1.2.3.2 Voiceless Plosive Consonant [t]

Sound [t] is a voiceless alveolar stop/plosive. It occurs when the outgoing air is completely blocked by putting the tip of the tongue into close contact with the teeth-ridge (alveolum); the soft palate is raised to close off the nasal cavity, so that no air passes out through the nose; the vocal cords do not vibrate during the stoppage; when the tip of the tongue is suddenly drawn away from the teeth-ridge

(sudden release) the air escapes with a plosive sound; this voiceless stop is aspirated in strongly stressed syllables and unaspirated in weakly stressed syllables (Ramelan, 1994, p.114). When [t] is immediately followed by a nasal consonant, the plosion is carried out through the nose.

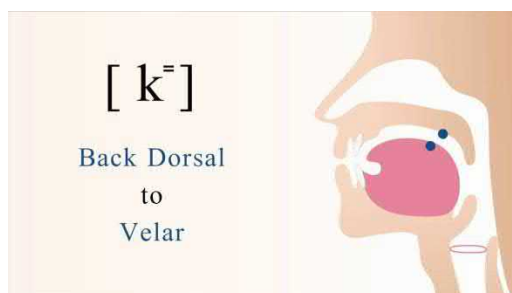


(Source: <http://wikivisually.com>)

Picture 2. The sound of [t]

1.2.3.3 Voiceless Plosive Consonant [k]

Sound [k] is a voiceless velar plosive or stop. It occurs when the outgoing air is completely blocked up by putting the back of the tongue into close contact against the soft palate (velum); at the same time the soft palate is also raised to close off the nasal cavity so as to prevent the air from going out through the nose; the vocal cords are not in vibration during the stoppage; when the back of the tongue and the soft palate are suddenly separated from each other (sudden release of the stoppage) the air escapes with a plosion; the voiceless stop is aspirated in strongly stressed syllables, and unaspirated in weakly stressed syllables (Ramelan, 1994, p.116-117). The sound [k] may be spelled with the letters *c*, *ch*, *ck*, *k*, and *qu*.



(Source: <http://wikivisually.com>)

Picture 3. The sound of [k]

2.2.4 Error

Ellis (1997, p.15) states that “at first sight, it may seem rather odd to focus on what learners get wrong than they get right. However, there are good reasons for focusing on errors”. It is useful for teachers to know the errors made by the learners. It is possible that making error can help them to learn when they self-correct the errors.

2.2.5 Error Analysis

Some language learners are afraid of practicing English with other people. One of the reasons is because of their fear of making mistakes and errors. Some linguists use error analysis as a strategy to manage this problem. Brown (1980, p.166) states that error analysis is the study of students’ errors which can be observed, analyzed, and classified to reveal something of the system operating within the learners. The students’ errors mean that there are some problems with their learning of the target language. It is important for teachers to analyze the errors the students make.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

This research focused on the error of students' production of English voiceless plosive sounds [p, t, k] in initial stressed syllables. There are some relevant theories underlying this study. Started by the pronunciation theory (Brown, 2001; Hornby 2010; Dalton & Deidhofer, 1994), followed by the theory of pronunciation problems (Ramelan, 2003).

The first way to observe is by giving the participants of the study a list of utterances containing English voiceless plosive sounds, such as [p] in the word *peanut*, [t] in the word *taste*, and [k] in the word *castle* (Ramelan, 2003, p. 131-134). The list of words are examined in the speaking test. After conducting the speaking test, the researcher conducts interview. As stated by Cohen, Lawrence, and Keith (2004) that interviews allow the participants to state how they assume the situations from their own point of view (p. 349). It contains some questions related to the research problems and all the participants will get the same questions.

The last step is analyzing the data collected from the speaking test and interview. Ellis (2003) stated that data analysis involves identifying, describing, explaining, and evaluating the data (p.18). Thus, from the analysis, the researcher concludes th findings of this study.

The framework of the study is described in Figure 2.1:

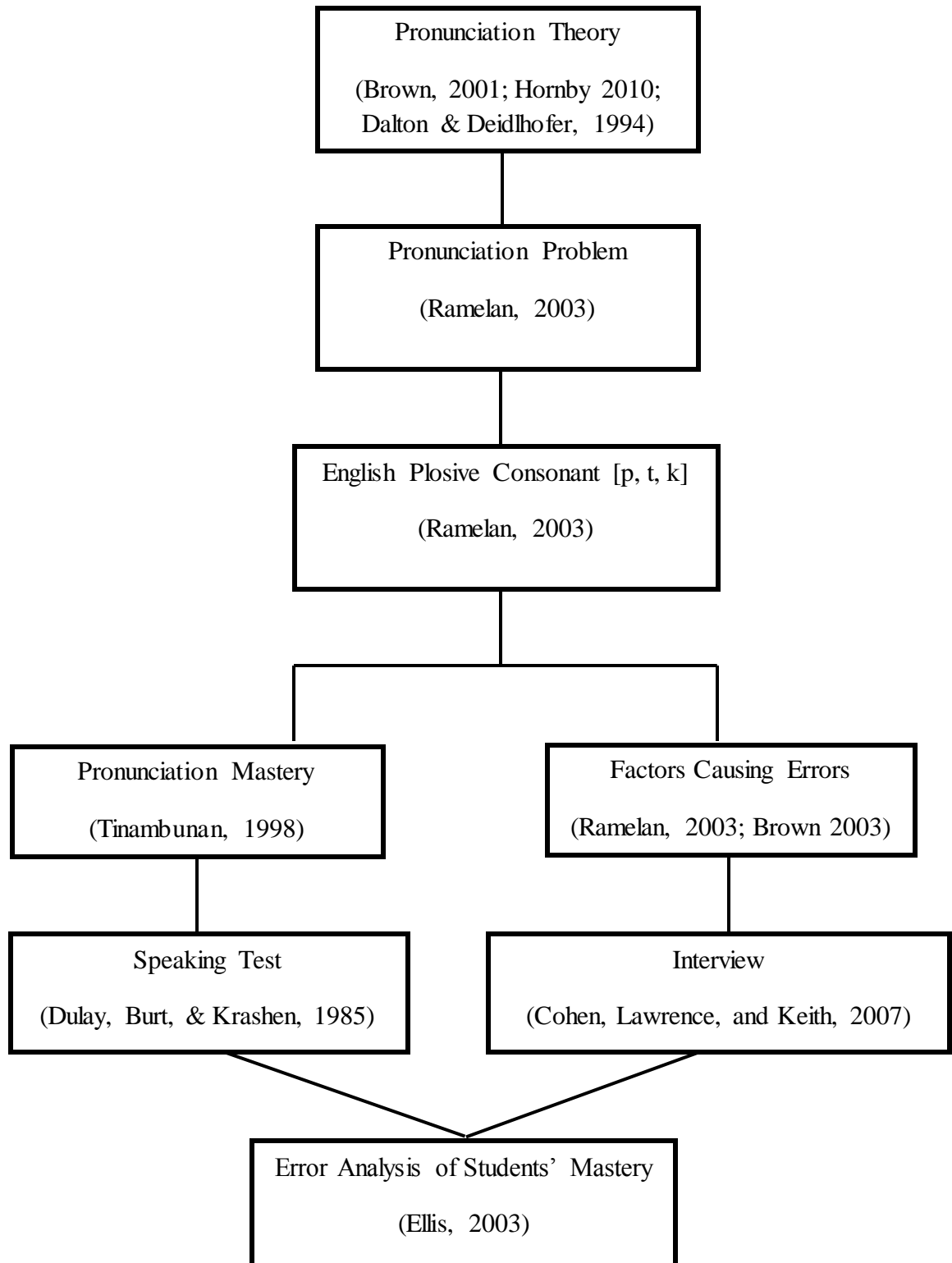


Figure 2.1 Framework of the Study

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

This chapter provides conclusions and suggestions for the research. The researcher hopes that the conclusions and the suggestions can be useful for teachers, lecturers, and students, particularly students of the English Education program of Universitas Negeri Semarang and also for the readers in general. Moreover, it is expected that the conclusions and the suggestions can give lots of contributions to improve students' mastery in pronouncing English voiceless plosive sounds in initial stressed syllables.

5.1 Conclusions

The first objective conducted was describing the dominant error of the students' pronunciation in producing English voiceless plosive sounds in initial stressed syllables. The result revealed that the dominant error made by the students was the sound [p] located in the initial stressed syllables. The percentage of the students' error in pronouncing the sound [p] was 33%, 18% for the sound [t], and 19% for the sound [k]. Based on the criterion of the data interpretation, the conclusion showed by the percentage of students' mastery of the eighth-semester students of Universitas Negeri Semarang in pronouncing English voiceless plosive sounds in initial stressed syllables were considered as excellent in the also for [t] and [k] but good for the sound [p].

The errors of the students in pronouncing English voiceless plosive sounds occurred because of two factors. The first factor was language interference and the

second one was the lack of practice in speaking English. Language interference was considered as the major factor that causes the students' error because the plosive sounds [p, t, k] were pronounced aspirated in initial stressed syllables in English while in Indonesian native language are not. The students tended to pronounce those sounds the same as Indonesian sound system has, which is not aspirated.

While for the second factor about the lack of practice, the students realized that practice is the key to master pronunciation. That is why they cannot pronounce the sounds aspirated because the sounds [p, t, k] have only one variant in Indonesia which is not aspirated in all positions: initial, medial, and final. It is also because the lack of practice since they are students of English Department of Universitas Negeri Semarang that should have a good pronunciation.

5.2 Suggestions

Considering the result of this study, some recommendations are directed to the students, the lecturers, and future researchers. Firstly, the suggestion is for students. They need to practice more frequently to pronounce the English voiceless plosive sounds which do not exist in Indonesian language such as the sound [p, t, k]. Moreover, the frequency of practicing is the prior way to master the pronunciation. They can practice speaking or having a conversation with their supporting partners such as friends, lecturers, and English native speakers. By practicing regularly, with great sure they can improve their pronunciation.

The second suggestion is pointed to lecturers. Lecturers have the responsibility of guiding the students to pronounce with good and proper

pronunciation. Therefore, they must be role models for the students. They must have a good ability in pronouncing English sounds to guide and teach the students. The students will imitate their English lectures' pronunciation. Perhaps some of them will follow the way or they can search the correct pronunciation by themselves. Furthermore, the lecturers particularly speaking lecturers can provide drilling to the students to improve their ability in pronunciation.

The third suggestion is directed to future researchers who are going to conduct research in the same field. It is suggested that they should develop and improve this research into a broader level of complexity or range. In addition, they can analyze different objects or try to find another topic regarding the object of this study such as analyzing the voiceless plosive sounds in the medial and final position or analyzing the voiced plosive sounds [b, d, g].

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