

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter elaborates background of the research, research problem, research objective, scope and limitation, reason for choosing the topic, definition of key term, and contribution of the research.

A. Background of the Research

In the 21st century, English has become a requisite part of the world's citizen. It is increasingly used in all over the world for international communication. Consequently, sufficient skill is needed to communicate using English in accepted way. That is why any language learning including English is aimed to intelligibly communicate in the target language. For that reason, the term communication has to be clearly defined. According to Gilakjani (2016: 3), communication is simply meant to understand and be understood. Thus, to achieve English learning goal's, pronunciation must be considered despite any other language skills. It has significant roles in communication.

Pronunciation is an essential part in communication. Its importance must be earnestly understood. Several experts contribute to emphasize the significance of pronunciation. First, Allen in Hakim (2012: 244) states that pronunciation is one of

language element that has big contribution to better English speaking. Subsequently, Harmer in Gilakjani (2016: 3) also convincingly argues that having good pronunciation gives the students several benefits such as know sounds and sound features and improves their speaking immeasurably as well. Thus, pronunciation contributes in achieving better English speaking. In addition, native speakers are more likely to understand the speaker, even in spite of grammatical errors, if the speaker uses correct pronunciation. Hence, accurate pronunciation will aid the speaker to be easily understood by the listener. For that reason, Zhang (2009: 35), claims that accurate pronunciation eases the people to understand the speaker easily and be willing to listen to the speaker. The aforementioned explanations mentioned before briefly indicate that pronunciation can guarantee communication effectively.

Due to the importance of pronunciation, there are several elements of English pronunciation that must be well mastered. One of them is the English segmental features for both vowel and consonant sounds. Vowel and consonant sounds extensively contribute to construct words. Thus, the students must recognize how to produce acceptable vowel as well as consonant sounds. Subsequently, being skilled full in segmental features will make the students obviously understand and be understood by the others. Inasmuch as the students pronounce the set of sounds accurately and recognize the sounds being pronounced by the speaker. On the contrary, ignoring the segmental features of the target language will damage the students' achievement. Instead, the students cannot pronounce the sounds correctly, the students also get trouble in recognizing the sounds. As the result, it is difficult for

other people to understand what the speaker says as well as to follow the conversation. Therefore, English consonant and vowel sounds must be highlighted.

Pronunciation difficulties normally exist within the foreign language learners include those who have Javanese as their first language (L1). Javanese language has strong and unique accent, dialect, intonation, and diction. It is not surprising that Javanese language is pronounced clearly, explicitly, with short intonation and stressing in some parts. In some cases, it is pronounced longer whenever the sentence is ended with vowel sound. After all, the Javanese heavy accent is brought whenever the learners pronounce English words or sentences (Hakim, 2012: 255). Consequently, it hinders the students to pronounce the word accurately.

Both of English and Javanese languages have a number of similarities as well as differences. The similarities will not offer any pronunciation difficulties. On the contrary, the differences may hinder the students to get accurate pronunciation. Thus, the students have to be fully aware of the difference elements. There are several things that must be underlined from Javanese students' pronunciation. Javanese students find it problematic to produce the sounds that their speech organs have not been trained to produce it. As a result, Javanese students tend to pronounce the sound as its phoneme or substitute with other similar sound. Otherwise, Javanese students tend to replace the target sound with their native sound. However, replacing the target sound may result in different meaning. For instance, sound /θ/ is frequently replaced with Javanese sound /t, d/. Word *three* /θri:/ can be pronounced as *tree* /tri/ by Javanese students. In other cases, Javanese students have difficulties to recognize as

well as differentiate English sounds. For instance, sounds /f and v/ are pronounced with no distinction. Moreover, adding and omitting phoneme are usually done by Javanese students. The word *the* is commonly pronounced as /nthe/ by adding phoneme /n/. Furthermore, omitting aspiration /^h/ is usually done by Javanese students. Thus, such a phenomenon can lead unpleasant conversation and misunderstanding among the speakers.

Recent studies have been conducted to examine the pronunciation of Indonesian-Javanese students. First, a study conducted by Baso in 2013 with the title *A Comparative Analysis between English and Indonesian Phonological Systems*. The result shows that most of the respondents face difficulty in acquiring as well as pronouncing English sounds that do not exist in Indonesian phonological systems. Those sounds are / æ, ʌ, ɜ, v, θ, ð/. Second, Hakim in his study in 2012 *An Analysis of Phonetics b, d, g, j, dʒ, and ð into English Pronunciation for Java Students* found out that 83.34% of the respondents in his study are difficult to produce sound /θ/. Further study by Laila in 2012 *Pronunciation Quality of Javanese of ESL Students in Producing the English Sound* shows that Javanese students: 1) tend to articulate the sound as its phoneme, 2) omit and add certain sound, 3) replace the sound with Javanese sound such as /nd/ to replace /ð/, /th/ to replace /θ/, and /s/ to replace /z/. Subsequently, pronunciation ability is influenced by several factors such as such as age, exposure, native language, motivation, and gender as stated by Zhang (2009).

The phenomenon discussed previously can be concluded that pronunciation must be highlighted since it is crucial feature in spoken English as well as in

communication. A number of English sounds tend to be problematic for Javanese students. Consequently, several difficulties are faced by Javanese students on English pronunciation. Such condition may lead into misunderstanding among the speakers. Hence, the writer is interested to conduct a research entitled *The Difficulties of Javanese Students of English Pronunciation*. This research will investigate the difficulties of Javanese students on English sounds as well as provide the possible factors that affect Javanese students' pronunciation.

B. Research Problem

The writer finds some problems dealing with the topic that are mentioned as follows:

1. what English pronunciation difficulties are faced by Javanese students?
2. what factors influence Javanese students learning English pronunciation?

C. Research Aims

According to the aforementioned problems, the aims of the research are as follows:

1. to investigate pronunciation difficulties faced by Javanese learners.
2. to find out factors influencing Javanese students English pronunciation.

D. Scope of the Research

To limit the scope of the research, the researcher will only discuss a number of things as follows:

1. this research will examine Javanese students' pronunciation of English in English Education Department of Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto (UMP).
2. the subjects of this research are those who have passed pronunciation and phonetics subjects.
3. the subjects of this research are the students of who are pure Javanese, born in Javanese environment, grow up in Javanese society, and use Javanese language in everyday life. To make sure they fulfil the requirement the researcher will ask the identity card of each of them.
4. the pronunciation that will be studied is the segmental features only that cover vowel, diphthongs, and consonant sound.

E. Reason for Choosing the Topic

The reasons why the researcher chooses the topic "The Difficulties of Javanese Learners of English Pronunciation" are mentioned as follows:

1. pronunciation is important part in English spoken. However, the awareness of English pronunciation is insignificant.
2. Javanese students find it hard to move their speech organs. It results in incomplete acquisition.
3. quite a few English sounds are not found in Indonesian and Javanese phonological system. Many of Javanese students fail to produce the sounds. For instance, sounds /θ, ð, ʃ, tʃ, dʒ, ʒ, v/
4. there is a tendency to replace the target sounds with the students' native language

as well as to articulate the words as the orthographic writing.

5. Javanese students face difficulties to recognize English sounds as well as differentiate similar sounds.

F. Clarification of Term

In this research there are several terms that are needed to be clearly defined in order to avoid misunderstanding and misconception. The definition of term are as follows:

1. difficulty

The word *difficulty* means a trouble that obstructs someone in doing something. According to Oxford Dictionary defines the word *difficulty* as a thing that is hard to accomplish, deal with, or understand. In this research, difficulty refers to the trouble that causes Javanese learners of English fail to achieve accurate pronunciation.

2. pronunciation

In general, pronunciation deals with how the sounds are produced by human speech organs. According Richard and Schmidt in Gilakjani (2016: 2), pronunciation is a method of producing certain word. In accordance, Elmaksoud in Nakin and Inpin (2017: 188) state that pronunciation is the production of sounds that is used for making meaning.

3. phonetics

According to Lázló (2014: 4), phonetic is the study of speech sounds: how the speech sounds are produced, how the speech sounds are perceived, and what

speech organs are required to produce the speech sounds. There are two kinds of phonetics. Articulatory phonetics deals with the production of speech sounds by the speech organs. Acoustic phonetics refers to the study of physical attributes of speech sounds such as the degree of loudness, pitches, etc.

4. phoneme

According to Gimson in Baso (2013: 104), phoneme is the smallest meaningful unit of sound in a language. A meaningful sound is one that will change one word into another word. For instance, the words /θʌm/ (*thumb*) and /dʌm/ (*dumb*) are two separate words distinguished by the substitution of one phoneme /θ/ for another phoneme /d/. There are 44 English phonemes. Those are 24 consonants and 20 vowel sounds. A phoneme may have more than one alternative way to be pronounced. It is called allophone. However, allophone does not have meaning.

G. Contribution

The result of this research is expected to provide benefits for those who involved in educational field as stated in the following points.

1. Theoretically

There are several beneficial information from this research as follows. This research provides the difficulties encountered by Javanese students on English pronunciation for both vowel and consonant sounds. Thus, both of students and teachers or lecturers can highlight it. Further, this research also contributes kinds of factor that affect students' pronunciation.

2. Practically

Some beneficial points are to be considered for students, teacher or lecturer, and other researcher as follows.

a. For Students

From this research the students will know their pronunciation quality. The result of students' pronunciation, list of difficult sounds, as well as the factors that affect their pronunciation will be displayed. Thus, the students can highlight and practice more on it.

b. For Teacher and Lecturer

This research will give some information to the teacher and lecturer as follows. Teacher and lecturer will know the difficulties that are encountered by the students on English segmental features. In addition, the teacher and lecturer will know factors that cause pronunciation problems. Thus, the information mentioned previously can be a reference for the teacher and lecturer to teach pronunciation as well as find solution to help students acquire English pronunciation accurately

c. For Future Researcher

This research also provides benefits, references, as well as additional information to other researchers who want to conduct further research in the same field.