

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Research Background

As stated by Meiklejohn (2007: 12) the English language is the speech spoken by the Anglo-Saxon race in England, in most parts of Scotland, in the larger part of Ireland, in the United States, in Canada, in Australia and New Zealand, in South Africa, and in many other parts of the world. In the middle of the fifth century it was spoken by a few thousand men who had lately landed in England from the continent: it is now spoken by more than one hundred millions of people. The fact mentioned before is a proof that English was born in England and not in America as some people said. Thus, we can say that between British and American accent, the first one is the original accent of English. English as a language becomes one of the media in communication. People communicate using language particularly in English to express their idea orally. Oral communication highly relates to pronunciation. Mastering pronunciation is one of the keys in the communication, it can help people in oral communication to understand the idea. It is important for everyone to hone their pronunciation skill because people will be easier to understand each others' idea while communicating.

Al-Azzawi and Barany (2015: 154) said one of the most complicated aspects of EFL teaching is the teaching of pronunciation. Teaching pronunciation needs to consider several aspects such as speech sounds, stress, intonation, and so on. All of the aspects are collected and divided into segmental and supra-segmental feature. Segmental feature is called as the basic material of pronunciation, it

consists of speech sounds. Pronouncing words motivate people to pay attention to the speech sounds, because the help of mastering speech sounds can make change to the flow of the communication. For example, the word “ship” /ʃɪp/ and “sheep” /ʃi:p/ both have different meanings but almost have similar pronunciations, if someone wants to mention “ship” /ʃɪp/ instead of “sheep” /ʃi:p/ but he mentions it as “sheep” /ʃi:p/, it can make misunderstanding.

Segmental feature consists of speech sounds, they are consonants and vowels. Most of the people particularly in a non-native speaker country like Indonesia assume, there is only one type of vowel which is pure vowels or monophthongs. Meanwhile, there are two types of vowel they are monophthongs, and diphthongs. Diphthongs are a combination of two different positions of the tongue, with an audible ‘glide’ from one another (Jeffries, 2006: 35). The ‘glide’ in diphthongs should be pronounced clearly, as we can see from the phonetic transcription. For example, word “compared” has phonetic transcription /kəm'peəd/, the /eə/ is the diphthong.

As the status of English in Indonesia is foreign language, the possibility of Indonesian for making error in pronouncing English sounds particularly diphthongs, is high. Furthermore, Indonesian curriculum still has lack on improving students’ pronunciation skill. Hidayat and Kurniawati (2018: 772) stated the result of English learning in Indonesia is unsatisfactory. It is shown by speaking mastery of senior high school graduation. The majority of them cannot speak English fluently on their daily lives. It can be happened because of their pronunciation skill, as mentioned before Indonesia still has lack on increasing student’s pronunciation skill. Besides that, many factors can influence students’ pronunciation skill.

Based on the problem mentioned, the researcher is very interested in conducting research about the most difficult diphthongs to be pronounced and the factor influence students' difficulty in pronouncing diphthongs at ELT (English Language Teaching) Department, Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto.

## **B. Reasons for Choosing the Topic**

Diphthongs are not as many as monophthongs, also people' recognition toward diphthongs is not high, unless they study English professionally. Many words are pronounced not as it should be pronounced because people do not recognize the diphthongs in the word. The phenomenon might affect oral communication, because the idea they want to express is not delivered well due to the absence of diphthong. Moreover, the difficulty might appear when we talk to native speaker who has used to speak English in their daily lives.

As mentioned before, the impact of diphthongs is huge in oral communication, so the researcher is interested in finding out error made by the students, as Indonesian is English non-native speaker. Moreover, Kurniawati and Hidayat said that the majority of senior high school graduation students have lack on pronunciation, the researcher also interests in finding out the result of ELT Department, UMP students in pronouncing diphthongs, as they already received diphthongs material at the first semester. The researcher is interested in finding out students' error in pronouncing diphthong through test. Besides that, the researcher wants to know the factor influencing the difficulties of the students in pronouncing diphthongs.

### **C. Research Questions**

Based on the background of research, the researcher presents the following problems:

1. Which diphthong is the most difficult to be pronounced by students of ELT Department at Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto?
2. What are factors influencing students' difficulties in pronouncing diphthongs at ELT Department, Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto?

### **D. Research Aims**

The aim of the research are as follows:

1. To find out which is the most difficult diphthong to be pronounced by students of ELT Department at Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto.
2. To know what factors are influencing students' difficulties in pronouncing diphthongs at ELT Department, Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto.

### **E. Research Contributions**

This research is expected to give contributions to:

#### **1. English Teachers or Lecturers**

For lecturers or teachers, they can use the result of the research as reference in teaching pronunciation to the students. As the result of the research presents number, they can take action for the moves in teaching pronunciation. If the result is not as they expected, they can take action in the moves of improving students' pronunciation skill.

## 2. Readers and Future Researchers

For future lecturers, they can use this research as the reference in conducting other researches related to the pronunciation problem, particularly in pronouncing diphthongs. They can decide the next move to conduct better researches in the future. For readers, they can read and add more knowledge about research related to diphthongs pronunciation.

