


Pronunciation Errors in Reading Text Made By Students of English Language Education Department

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A B S T R A C T

The objective of this research is to find out the pronunciation errors in reading text made by students of English Language Education department of Simalungun University. This research applied the qualitative approach with content analysis method. The technique of collecting data used a recording, and data analysis by transcribing the students' pronunciation from recording into the phonetic transcriptions, grouping the students' errors in pronouncing English vowels and consonants into separate divisions, employing the percentage descriptive analysis to count all errors, and interpreting the result of the data analysis. The result of research is found on English Vowels and English Consonants error. The pronunciation error on English vowel, namely: /i:/, /æ/, /ə/, /ɜ:/, /ɔ:/, and /u:/. The vowel pronunciation error is commonly on pure vowel. It is on a long vowel sound and short vowel sound. While the pronunciation error of English consonants found: /ʃ/, /dʒ/, /θ/, /ð/, /ʒ/, /ʒ/. The consonant pronunciation error appears on voiceless and voice consonants. The other consonant pronunciation error is to pronounce the double consonant. The students assumed that every double consonant would be pronounced with double sounds. The pronunciation error on English vowels and English consonants were caused some factors. Factors of pronunciation error, namely; 1. Lack of understanding and knowledge. 2. Students are nervous. 3. Students are unable to distinguish between sounds that are almost the same. 4. Students lack practice. 5. Native language. 6. Lack of new vocabulary. 7. Lack of confidence.

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INTRODUCTION

When we talk about English Language, it seems to be that we are talking about the major window by which we get the whole view of the world since it is the first language used in most areas of life. English is closely associated with the leading edge of global scientific, technological, economic and cultural developments, where it has been unrivalled in its influence in the late 20th century. English is dominant in most of the region of the world now. It also means that English is also take an important role in education world. Overcoming English means, we have to be good in the four language skills, namely: Listening, Speaking, Writing and Reading which cannot be separated from one another. Usually speaking in learning activities gets a good priority (Ferdiyanto, 2019).

Speaking is one of four aspects that need to be learned and master by the students. To speak English well, students need to be able to fully understand its grammar, word stress, and pronunciation (Amiruddin, 2019). Pronunciation is one of the most important skill in speaking aspect that need to be learned. Pronunciation is the act of manner of speaking a word. According to Purba et al. (2019) pronunciation is a way in which in a particular word is pronounce. A good dictionary provides appropriate information on the way how to pronounce every word entered. Good pronunciation leads to learning while bad

pronunciation promotes to great difficulties in language learning (Gilakjani cited by Ferdianto, 2019).

Pronunciation learning in general, might entail a complex set of difficulties confronting the students (Al-Zuoud & Kabilan, 2013). Many students find it difficult to pronounce the English words correctly and make some errors. It is likely because the students are from different cultural and ethnics background. The students mostly speak and taught by their mother tongues which caused them to pronounce the English words incorrectly. A major difficulty, however, facing almost the second language learners is the achievement of acceptable pronunciation that enables them to be understood by first language English speakers. In fact, many of these learners master the elements of language such as syntax, morphology, or even semantics to the level of almost native like competence but often fail to master phonology (Heydari & Pourmohammadi, 2017). There are many English training courses teaching speaking but they do not focus on pronunciation. In Indonesia, however, pronunciation has not yet received similar attention. When speaking English, with very little or poorly trained pronunciation skills, they have problems either making themselves understood or understanding others (Purwanto, 2019).

The importance of pronunciation in communication cannot be denied. Teaching pronunciation is important in this case because words can have different meanings depending on how you say them. The pronunciation of the words matters a lot in conveying the exact meaning of the words. Some words are pronounced the same but have different spellings, some words have the same spellings but when pronounced have different meanings. According to Fraser cited by Abdul-samad (2021) teachers should be provided with courses and materials that help them improve their pronunciation instruction. However, Abbas (2016) stated that the goal of pronunciation instruction is not to ask learners to pronounce like native speakers. Instead intelligible pronunciation should be the real purpose of oral communication. If learners want to change the way of pronouncing English words, they have to change the way they think about the sounds of those words.

The students of English Language Education department of Simalungun University pronounce some words with the same sound but have different spelling, some words have the same spellings but when pronounced have different meanings. Therefore students found the pronunciation error on English vowel and English Consonant. The students could not differentiate the a length or duration sound and short sound, voice and voiceless sound, and manage the articulators well, that is why the students articulated the words incorrect pronunciation. Based on the explanation above, the researcher will investigate the pronunciation error on reading text made by the students of English Language Education Department of Simalungun University.

METHOD

In a research, it's important to determine the approach of a research (Silalahi, et.,al, 2022). The research approach is a plan and strategy for the researcher to conduct a research with methods of data collection, analysis technique, and data interpretation. This research is using qualitative approach. Qualitative research is an approach to conducting research that focuses on natural phenomena or symptoms (Abdussamad, 2021). Qualitative research is fundamental and naturalistic in nature in one of situation or place. A qualitative research is needed to explore this phenomenon from the perspective of distance education students (Creswell, 2012). The phenomenon in a situation should be naturalistic happened. Then, Sugiyono, (2017) says that qualitative research method is often referred to as naturalistic research method because the research is carried out in natural condition or natural. This method is often referred to as an explanatory method because research data refers to the interpretation of data found in the field.

The methods of research that used in this research is qualitative contents analysis. Content analysis is an in-depth analysis that can be used in quantitative and qualitative techniques to examine messages using scientific methods (Neuendorf, 2002). It is not limited

to types of variables that can be measured or the context in which messages are created or presented. According to Crowley & Delfico, 1996) Qualitative content analysis is a research method that systematically analyzes textual information, which is then standardized to obtain an interpretation of that information. As a form of qualitative research, content analysis can provide an in-depth description, enhance research understanding of a phenomenon, and inform a series of actions based on the textual form presented (Krippendorff, 2004).

In doing a research, data is an important tool in the research which is in the form of phenomenon in the field and number. In this research, the data of research is the pronunciation errors that found on reading the English text made by the students. The source of data is the fourth semester students of English Language Education Department of Simalungun University.

The researcher would explain how to collect the data on this research. The researcher gave the students five types of English text with length 150 words for each of text, and then the students were asked to read the text in turn. When the students read the text, the researcher recorded the pronunciation or way of speaking of the students in pronouncing the word for word in the text, and coding the words which was pronouncing errors. From the recording, the researcher analyzed the form of errors made by students when reading the text. However, the researcher focused on examining the English vowel pronunciation errors and the English consonant pronunciation errors.

After collecting the data, the researcher analyzed the data that used qualitative analysis which applied content analysis. According to Myring (2014) the procedures of data analysis on qualitative content analysis, namely: 1. Formulation of issue or problem, 2. Determination of analysis units, 3. Coding units, 4. Classifying and analysis units, 5. Computation and comparison of frequencies, 6. description and interpretation of the results. In analyzing the data, the researcher analyzed the recording especially to know the pronunciation error of English vowel and English consonant which applied by the students. Content analysis was used in which there were four steps: transcribing the students' pronunciation into the phonetic transcriptions, grouping the students' errors in pronouncing English vowels and consonants into separate divisions, employing the percentage descriptive analysis to count all errors, and interpreting the result of the data analysis.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After the data was analyzed, it was found that there were two types of pronunciation errors in reading texts made by students majoring in English language education at Simalungun University, namely pronunciation errors of English vowels and pronunciation errors of English consonants.

Pronunciation Errors of English Vowels

English vowel pronunciation errors in reading texts made by English language education students will be explained in this section. There are two types of vowels in English: pure and diphthong. Pure vowels consist of 12 vowels, while diphthongs consist of 8 vowels. So, there are 20 vowels in English. The pronunciation errors in English vowels in reading texts made by English language education students at Simalungun University were found in 6 of the 20 vowels in English: /i:/, /æ/, /ə/, /ɜ:/, /ɔ:/, and /u:/. These pronunciation errors will be explained in detail.

Vowel /i:/

This vowel sound /i:/ is defined as a long pure high vowel in General British English, but as a short pure high vowel in General American English and transcribed as vowel /i/. This vowel is regarded as the sound of the vowel letters e, i, ee, ea, ae, ie, ei, ey, ay, and eo. The Vowel sound /i:/ is articulated with the position of tongue is in front, height of tongue is close, and position of lips is spread/neutral or unrounded. The vowel /i:/ is pronounced with a long sound, while the vowel /I/ is articulated with a short sound, but the students regarded that vowel /i:/ was pronouncing with a short vowel sound. This error happened because the students were not able to differentiate a long vowel sound, and short vowel sound, so they

pronounced it with the same manner. The pronunciation error that made by a speaker could cause the meaning error for the listener.

Vowel /æ/

The English vowel /æ/ is classified as a short pure vowel and it has the same quality both in general British and American English. This vowel is represented by a limited number of graphemes in General British English, and it is regarded as the sound of the vowel letters *a*, and *ai*, but in General American English, it is also represented by both graphemes such as *a*, *au*, and *er*, which constitute long low back vowel /ɑ:/ in General British English. This vowel is articulated by position of tongue is in front, height of tongue is between open and half open, and Position of the lips is spread or neutral. The pronunciation error of this vowel, students assume that the vowel /æ/ is pronounced with the vowel sound /e/, while these two vowels have different accents. The pronunciation error made by students when reading text is due to a lack of careful distinction between accents and vowel sounds, and a lack of practice.

Vowel /ə/

The English vowel /ə/ has the same quality in both General British and American English, but it is sifted to retroflexed /ɚ/ in American English when it is followed by sound /r/. In other words, the retroflexed /ɚ/ is the same with vowel /ə/ which is directly followed by sound /r/. The various numbers of graphemes that regarded as the sound of the vowel letters *a*, *ar*, *e*, *er*, *i*, *o*, *or*, *oar*, *u*, and sometimes *ou* in both dialects. This vowel is pronouncing with short and weak sound, the position of tongue is on center, height of tongue is a half open, and position of lips is spread or neutral but the student pronounced it as vowel /e/ sound. This English vowel pronunciation error can occur due to a lack of understanding of the differences between vowel sounds and a lack of practice.

Vowel /ɜ:/

The English vowel /ɜ:/ is a long pure vowel. When it is followed by consonant /r/, it is sifted to retroflexed /ɝ:/ in American English. The retroflexed /ɝ:/ is pronounced by curling the tip of the tongue while pronouncing the vowel /ɜ:/. This vowel sound is represented by various numbers of the vowel letters *er*, *ir*, *ur*, *ear*, *our*, *o*, *or*, and *yr*. This vowel is articulated with long sound, the position of tongue is on center, height of the tongue is a half close, and position of lips is spread or neutral but the student pronounced it as vowel /e/ sound. This vowel pronunciation error occurs because students thought that the vowel /ɜ:/ is pronounced as the vowel /e/, and they lack practice.

Vowel /ɔ:/

The English vowel /ɔ:/ is regarded as a long pure mid back vowel in General British, but as a short pure back vowel in American English. This vowel is approximately pronounced in the same manner in both dialects, except when it is followed by retroflexed /r/ sound, and it is therefore regarded as diphthong /ɔr/ in American English. The English vowel /ɔ:/ is the sound of the vowel letters *a*, *au*, *aw*, *or*, *ore*, *ou*, and *oar*. This vowel is uttered with the position of tongue on back, the height of tongue is a half open, and the position of tongue is rounded. The pronunciation error in reading the text made by the student because they could not differentiate the vowel /ɔ:/ sound with vowel /o/ sound. The vowel /ɔ:/ is articulated with long sound, but the students articulated with short vowel as vowel /o/.

Vowel /u:/

The vowel sound /u:/ is regarded as a long pure high back vowel in General British, but it is regarded as a short pure back vowel in American English. This Vowel /u:/ is the sound or representation of vowel letters *o*, *oo*, *u*, *ue*, *ou*, *oe*, *eu*, *ui*, and *ew*. The vowel /u:/ is articulated with a long sound, the position of tongue is on the back, and position of lips is rounded. The pronunciation error of this vowel could happen because the students regarded that the vowel /u:/ is articulated with a short sound as vowel /u/. The pronunciation error that addressed by the speaker could make the listener be confused and will get the meaning error.

There were 6 vowels that pronouncing error in reading the text made by students of English Language Education department of Simalungun University. The vowel pronunciation error is commonly on pure vowel. It is on long vowel sound. This pronunciation error could

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happen because the students could not be able to differentiate a long vowel sound and short vowel sound.

Pronunciation Error on English Consonant

A consonant is regarded as a typical speech sound that is articulated either with complete or partial closure of the air stream in the mouth cavity by means of certain speech organs. As a matter of fact, the number of the English consonants is more than the number of consonant letters of the Latin alphabets. The features of consonants can be determined by three main aspects. They are place of articulation, manner of articulation, and vibration of the vocal cords. When we articulated the English Consonants, we have to care the features of consonants, so that the English Consonants could be pronounced by us correctly. The pronunciation error of English consonants on reading text made by the students of English Language Education Department of Simalungun University found 6 consonants from 24 English consonant, namely: /ʃ/, /dʒ/, /θ/, /ð/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/. This error would explain clearly on this part.

The English Consonant /ʃ/

The English consonant /ʃ/ sound is defined as a voiceless palate-alveolar affricate consonant. This consonant is articulated by the tongue tip or the fore part of the tongue against the back part of the teeth ridge. This consonant is produced by blocking the air stream compressed from the lungs, the blockage is then slowly opened so that the air is released out through the mouth and produces the hissing sound. The vocal cords are not made to vibrate during the production of this sound. This consonant in English is regarded as the representation of letters *t*, *c*, *ch*, and *tch*. This consonant /ʃ/ is articulated by the students of English Language Education Department on reading text as the consonant /t/ sound. This pronunciation error happened because the students could not set the position of the speech organs correctly, and could not be able to differentiate the voiceless and voice consonant.

The English Consonant /dʒ/

The English consonant /dʒ/ sound is defined as a voiced palate-alveolar affricate consonant. This consonant is articulated by the tongue tip or the fore part of the tongue against the back part of the teeth ridge. This consonant is produced by blocking the air stream compressed from the lungs, the blockage is then slowly opened so that the air is released out through the mouth and produces the hissing sound. This consonant in English is regarded as the representation of letters *j*, *g*, *d*, and *dg*. The consonant /dʒ/ is uttered by the students on reading text as the consonant /j/. The pronouncing error could happen because the students were not able to manage their articulators well, and they could not utter or compare the voiceless and voice consonant.

The English Consonant /θ/

The English consonant /θ/ sound is defined as a voiceless dental fricative consonant that articulated by the tongue tip against the upper teeth. This consonant is produced by forming a narrow air passage between the two articulators, the air is released out through the mouth and produces a hissing sound. The vocal cords are not made to vibrate during the production of this sound. This consonant in English is considered as the representation of letter *th*. The consonant /θ/ was uttered by students of English Language Education Department on reading the text as the consonant /t/ sound. This pronunciation error may happen because the students regarded that this consonant articulated with the voice, while it is voiceless consonant, and they were not able to set the speech organs correctly.

The English Consonant /ð/

The English consonant /ð/ sound is defined as a voiced dental fricative consonant that articulated by the tongue tip against the upper teeth. This consonant is produced by forming a narrow air passage between the two articulators, the air is released out through the mouth and produces a hissing sound. The vocal cords are made to vibrate during the production of this sound. This consonant is considered as the representation of graphemes *th*. This English consonant /ð/ was pronounced by students as consonant /d/ sound. This error could appear because the students were not able to manage their articulators correctly, when they were reading the text or speaking.

The English Consonant /ʃ/

The English consonant /ʃ/ sound is defined as a voiceless palato-alveolar fricative consonant that is articulated by rising the front part of the tongue closely to the back or hinder part of the teeth ridge. This consonant is produced by forming a narrow air passage between the two articulators, the air is released out through the mouth and produces a hissing sound. The vocal cords are not made to vibrate, and the lips are protruded during the production of this sound. This consonant is regarded as the representation of letters *s*, *ss*, *sh*, *t*, *c* and *ch*. The consonant /ʃ/ was uttered by students of English Language Education Department on reading a text as the consonant /s/ sound, while the consonant /s/ is pronounced by the tongue tip against the teeth ridge. The pronouncing error may happen because students could not set the speech organs well, and differentiate the voice and voiceless consonant, so the students expressed it with voice.

The English Consonant /ʒ/

The English consonant /ʒ/ sound is defined as a voiced palato-alveolar fricative consonant that is articulated by rising the front part of the tongue closely to the back part of the teeth ridge. This consonant is produced by forming a narrow air passage between the two articulators, the air is released out through the mouth and produces a hissing sound. This consonant is also considered as the representation of letters: *s*, *z*, and *g*. The consonant /ʒ/ was expressed by students on reading a text as consonant /j/, while the consonant /j/ sound is defined as a voiced palatal semivowel. This sound has both the vowel and consonant features. This sound is produced by starting the vowel /ɪ/, but the tongue is moved or glided to the position of the following vowel sound. This pronunciation error could appear because the students were not able to compare the sound of both consonants, and they could not manage the articulators correctly. The other consonant pronunciation error is to pronounce the double consonant as example: "Hurry" is articulated by student with sound /hʌrri/. The students assumed that every double consonant would be pronounced with double sounds.

CONCLUSIONS

After describing the finding and discussion detail, so the conclusion of this research will be described. The pronunciation errors on reading the text made by students of English Language Education department of Simalungun University found on English Vowels and English Consonants. The pronunciation error on English vowel were monophthong (pure) and diphthong as many as 6 vowels from 20 English vowels, namely: /i:/, /æ/, /ə/, /ɜ:/, /ɔ:/, and /u:/. The vowel pronunciation error is commonly on pure vowel. It is on a long vowel sound and short vowel sound. While the pronunciation error of English consonants found 6 consonants from 24 English consonant, namely: /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /θ/, /ð/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/. The consonant pronunciation error appears on voiceless and voice consonants. The other consonant pronunciation error is to pronounce the double consonant. The students assumed that every double consonant would be pronounced with double sounds. The pronunciation error on English vowels and English consonants were caused some factors. The factors of pronunciation error, namely; 1. Lack of understanding and knowledge. 2. Students are nervous. 3. Students are unable to distinguish between sounds that are almost the same. 4. Students lack practice. 5. Native language. 6. Lack of new vocabulary. 7. Lack of confidence.

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