

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Research

Many definitions of language have been stated by experts. In general, people have understood that language is a medium of communication between people. And there are many kinds of language around the world depending on each country and region. According to an English Phonetician and language scholar, Henry Sweet, stated : “Language is the expression of ideas by means of speech-sounds combined into words. Words are combined into sentences, this combination answering to that of ideas into thoughts.”

Regarding to discussion about language, especially in English for students non-native speakers, it is always associated with several academic abilities. One of them is speaking. The ability to speak English properly and correctly is one that must be mastered by English students. Aspects of pronunciation that can be learned are not composed only from segmental features like how to pronounce vowels and consonants correctly but also supra segmental features such as rhythm and intonation.

Teachers and their students need to realize that the correct pronunciation is essential. Learning English pronunciation correctly is quite a challenge for students. Some of the important factors that affect the learning of pronunciation according to Avery and Ehrlich (1992) claim that the sound pattern of the learners first language is transferred into the second language is likely to cause foreign accents. The mispronunciations of words by non-native speakers reflect the influence of the sounds, rules, stress, and intonation of their native language. Although many factors affect the difficulty of pronouncing English including the mother tongue. However, pronunciation of English should be practiced by English students. People with poor pronunciation even though their words and grammar are good, still difficult to understand in general. In addition, the crashed communication can be caused by the use of incorrect pronunciation. In other hand, being aware of correct pronunciation will give the advantage not only in production, but also the understanding of spoken

language. That should also be considered pronunciation typically is not being taught individually, but it is usually taught in speaking or English class.

For students especially students of English Literature at UIN STS Jambi, pronunciation might be one of the difficulties of English ability because they are not the native speakers. The characteristics of English words are different from Indonesian. In English, words have many characteristics and the words sometimes very different in pronunciation and writing. In Indonesian language, most of written words are the same as the words we read.

To analyze individual's pronunciation, there is study called Phonology. Phonology according to McMahon "is the language-specific selection and organisation of sounds to signal meanings" (2002, p. 2). Phonology concerns the rules of spoken language in a particular language. And David Odden (2005 p.2) also states that phonology is the study of sound structure in language, which is different from study of sentence structure (syntax), word structure (morphology), or historical linguistics.

Phonology is completely different from phonetics. Gut Ulrike (2009 p.7) phonetics deals with properties, the perception of the speech sound of human language, and the production. While phonology is about how to speech sounds form a pattern in particular language. In English phonology, the learners need to know the English words in vowels and consonants as the first division of speech sounds. There are some consonants that are not produced in English words but written in the words. Silent letter is a letter that appears in a particular word, but the reader or speaker should not pronounce it.

According to Phodaizer (1998 p.88), letters that are not heard making their usual sound in a word as silent. English words contain many silent letters and it makes the non-native speakers difficult to pronounce. The previous research conducted by Masterina Meta Sekarsarimurti, her own research is to analyze the ability of pronunciation silent letter "B" for Javanese people that using Java language in daily. Her research found out one of the main reason why there's a mistake in pronouncing the word is because the students are ignored the

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phonological processes. There are kinds and Errors of pronouncing silent letter in English words that English students need to be aware of it. Which will be discussed in this research.

In this research, the researcher is observing the error made by English Literature students in UIN STS Jambi in pronouncing silent letter “b” and “u” in English words. According to Richard (2002) error is the use of linguistic item, such as a word, a speech act, a grammatical item, in the way a learner of the language shows incomplete learning (p.184). Mastering language and effectiveness of learning technique in pronunciation are indicators of the error phenomenon. The interference of the mother tongue is one of the major factors causing the error as Corder said “This is called interference and the implication of this term can only be that his mother tongue habits prevent him in so many way from acquiring the habits of the second language”(1976,pp. 24-25)

Errors in pronouncing silent letters are often among English students. As an example, we often hear English learners pronounce “sight [sait]” with “[saig]” or “know [nəʊ]” with “[knəʊ]”. This study is concerned with identifying widespread errors in the pronunciation of silent letters in English words among English literature students. The researcher will also explain what are the types of errors in pronouncing silent letters made by English Literature students in UIN STS Jambi. The researcher believe that due to English being the standard language in academic world, it is essential to fully undersand English especially for English students.

For the reason above, the researcher decided to choose an error analysis of students’ pronunciation silent letter, and this research focuses on analysis of error in pronouncing silent letters “b” and “u”.

B. Formulation of the Research

According to the background of the research above, this research aims to find the answers to the following questions:

1. What are the types of errors in pronouncing words with silent letters made by the students?



2. Which type of silent letter is barely pronounced by the students correctly?
3. What is the type of error in pronouncing words with silent letters the students made the most and why is it so?

C. Purpose of the Research

According to the formulation of the research problems above, there are purpose of this research, which are:

1. To find out what are the types of errors in pronouncing silent letter.
2. To analyze what is the type of silent letter that barely pronounced by the students correctly.
3. To describe what type of error in pronouncing words with silent letters the students made the most.

D. Limitation of the Research

The writer will raise this title as research material with the source by collecting data from students of English Literature at the fourth semester with only focus on “b” and “u” silent letter. To carry out research using the sample from the participants, researcher also set several qualifications for the participants. First, fourth semester students from English literature department. Second, the participants have taken the pronunciation subject before. This research did not take any student’s background as a matter, such as how many grades they got from pronunciation subject before, or whether or not they had attended any English courses before.

The researcher only looked at the phenomenon that existed in students’ majoring in English literature at their campus. The participants’ pronunciation is recorded and transcribed. The data will be analyzed and the researcher will categorize the errors into 3 (three) types of error which are pre systematic, systematic, and post systematic (Corder in Ellis, 1994, p. 56). And other purpose of the research is to find out the factors causing the errors. In this research, the researcher used the pronunciation rules from American English. This is due to the fact that American English used more frequently in Indonesian academic circles.



E. Significance of Research

In this research entitled “*Analysis Of Pronunciation Errors In Words That Contain Silent Letter by English Literature Students at UIN STS Jambi*”, based on the formulation of the research above, it can be concluded that the objectives of this research is to analyse why English student mispronounce words with silent letter. The researcher wants to know what are the phonological factors cause the errors. This research also give an information to readers what types of errors in pronouncing silent letter and what is the purpose of silent letter. The writer will shows the table of data contain how the students pronounce the words with silent letters.

Last, this research is intended for linguistics enthusiast. This research is perfect for everyone who wants to study linguistics more deeply especially in phonology, whereas things can affect the way we speak.

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