AN ANALYSIS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' PROBLEM IN LEARNING ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

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Abstract

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah menganalisis kesulitan siswa dalam mempelajari pengucapan bunyi-bunyi dasar Bahasa Inggris. Desain penelitian ini adalah studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan dengan menganalisa rekaman pengucapan siswa. Subyek penelitian ini adalah siswa-siswa kelas lima SD. Rekaman tersebut dianalisis menggunakan *inter-rater reliability*. Hasil analisa menunjukkan bahwa parasiswa hanya mampu mengucapkan 27 bunyi dari 44 bunyi dasar Bahasa Inggris yang ada. Bunyi-bunyi yang sulit di ucapkan siswa adalah:Consonants (initial /p/, final /b/, final /d/, middle dan final /g/, /ʧ/, /ʤ/, /v/, /θ/, / ð/, /ʒ/, /z/, /ʃ/ and /r/). Vowels (/i:/, /æ/, /ɑ:/, /ɔ:/, dan initial /ə:/). Diphthongs(/əʊ/, middle and final /aʊ/, initial /eɪ/, initial dan middle /ɪə/, /eə/ and /ʊə/). Kesulitan mereka dalam mengucapkan bunyi-bunyi tersebut disebabkan oleh perbedaan cara pengucapan atau bahkan bunyi-bunyi tersebut tidak ada dalam sistem pengucapan Bahasa Indonesia.

The objective of this research was to analyze the elementary school students' problem in learning English basic sounds pronunciation. The research design was case study. The data were collected by recording the students' pronunciation. The subjects of the research were the elementary students grade five. The recorded sounds were analyzed through inter-rater reliability and it was found that all the students could only pronounce 27 of 44 English basic sounds correctly. The result showed that there are several English basic sounds considered difficult to pronounce by the students; they were: consonants (initial /p/, final /b/, final /d/, middle and final /g/, /ʧ/, /ʤ/, /v/, /θ/, / ð/, /ʒ/, /z/, /ʃ/ and /r/). vowels(/i:/, /æ/, /ɑ:/, /ɔ:/, and initial /ə:/). diphthongs(/əʊ/, middle and final /aʊ/, initial /eɪ/, initial and middle /ɪə/, /eə/ and /ʊə/). The students found problem in pronouncing those sounds which are pronounced in different ways with Indonesian or even the sounds are not found in Indonesian.

Keywords: pronunciation, consonants, vowels, diphthongs

INTRODUCTION

Pronunciation is a very important aspect master. In order to master the three language

skills; listening, speaking, and reading,the students need to master how to pronounce

English words. Therefore it is important to start teaching English pronunciation from the level of elementary school.

Indonesian English learners have different culture from English which the two languages are different. English and Indonesian do not have the same system of language it makes Indonesian students difficult to pronounce English words as good as natives do. Each language has its own sound system.We can find some English sounds that do not occur in Indonesian such as the sound of /θ/ in *thank* and the sound of /ð/ in *this.* These two sounds are frequently uttered as /t/ for /θ/ as in Indonesian words *tari, tamu, tugas, and etc.*and utter /ð/ as /d/ as in Indonesian words *dadu, dasi, doa,* and *etc.*

Dardjowidjojo (2009: 49) point out that there are two types of problem in learning pronunciation: phonetic and phonemic. The phonetic problem will bring about a foreign accent; phonemic problem may create a misunderstanding. He also gives further explanation about Indonesian learners' English pronunciation problems such as Indonesian learners get difficult to utter the English words which contain English consonant that are not found in Indonesian such as /θ/ and /ð/ and English consonant clusters at the end of a syllable or a word since there is no consonant cluster occurring at the end of Indonesian syllables or words also may cause a problem for Indonesian learners. Indonesian learners will also somewhat get problem to utter the English sounds that are actually found in Indonesian but the sounds are not made in exactly same as way as their counterpart in English, the sounds are /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ as in the words*much* and *courage.*

Futhermore, Herdiana's finding(2003:39) on teaching pronunciation at the second year of SMUN 13 Bandar Lampung, has proved that there are several English phonemes which considered difficult to learn by the students. Those sounds /ŋ/, /ʤ/, and /θ/, students tend to pronounce them in their own language system of sounds. Those sounds will also be difficult to pronounce by the students of SDN 2 KampungBaru.

Further, Kamelia (2004:2) in her research found that students where she conducted her teaching practice in SMA SwadhipaNatar got problems to read English sentence with good stress, intonation and plosive sounds or consonants. They do not know what word should have heavy or light stress, or that the word should be read with high or low intonation. Her students also found difficulty to differentiate the English words that have similar sounds but it is actually different in phonemic and meaning, e.g. same /seim/ and shame /ʃeim/, bed /bed/ and bad /bæd/, see /sie/ and /ʃi:/. When the words are mispronounced they may cause miscommunication.

Moreover, even Indonesian and English have different sound systems that make English sounds are difficult to pronounce, difference will not cause communication problem as long as the speaker and the listener able to catch the message uttered. Mispronunciation may create such problems; misunderstanding and confusing to both speakers and listeners. When this misunderstanding occur automatically the aim of communicating will not accepted. Communication will run smoothly when the message is understood well by both speaker and listener.

Further, Kenworthy (1987:3) states that the goal of teaching pronunciation is not to be native-like accent since it is an inappropriate goal for most learners. The goal for most of English learners is to be comfortably intelligible. It means that the students will be said to be fluent if they are able to say the words at least the listener understand the message said. Shortly, communication using English as a foreign language will run smoothly when both speaker and listener have the intelligibility. Intelligibility occurs when both speaker and listener do understand the message. In contrast, the listeners will get confuse when Indonesian speaker could not make the sounds correctly or unless understandable. So, Indonesian English teachers should have to teach the students to have the intelligibility of English pronunciation.

In accordance with syllabus of teaching English at elementary school grade five, students should be able to have conversation in asking and giving information, it is important the English teachers to work seriously in order to make the students' speaking understandable. Dardjowidjojo (2009) sais that the goal of foreign language teaching is to make the students able to communicate. Furthermore, he also said that Indonesian has a different sound system from English that may bring a learning problem. The difference might confuse the recipient or even will create miscommunication.

In correlation with the explanation above the writer felt that it is necessary to find out what problems are faced by the students. In learning English pronunciation especially the three English basic sounds; consonants, vowel and diphthongs. The writer is

interested to find out those difficulties hoping there will be solutions to solve it. The writer chose the elementary school students as the object of her research since the teachers need to know their students' problem in learning pronunciation earlier than, hopefully they can find the solution as soon as possible.

METHOD

In this research the researcher used case study as research method. The aim of the research is to investigate the difficulties or the problems that SDN 2 KampungBaru, Kedaton, Bandar Lampung students meet when they learn English pronunciation and to recommend some suggestions for teachers and learners to overcome these problems or difficulties. This method was chosen since the writer finds that it is the most appropriate method to be used in collecting the data to answer the research question.

The data were collected by analyzing the students' pronunciation. The data were taken by recording the students' voice when they were pronouncing the sentences provided by the researcher. The data were analyzed by using inter-rater reliability. The subjects of this research were the students of grade five of SDN 2 that consisted of 23 students. This was done with consideration that the class score in English was relatively good so that it can produce the data required.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The process of recording of the students' pronunciation was administrated on January 8th and 15th, 2013. There were 30 sentences recorded which consisted of 84 target words that represented 44 English basic sounds; 24 consonants, 12 vowels and 8 diphthongs. In conducting the research the researcher divided the 30 sentences provided into six sessions every session consisted of five sentences. Then, the researcher wrote those five sentences including the phonetic transcription on the white board.After that,the writer read the first sentence slowly and asked the students to repeat and did it for the next sentences and each sentence was read three times. After finishing the last sentence the researcher asked the students to come one by one and read the five sentences loudly while she was recording their voice.

Based on the audio data of the students' pronunciations that have been identified the results of this research are described below. The students' English pronunciation of English basic sounds has been identified by two raters on the tables of English basic sounds identification the correct pronunciation of sounds was marked by one (1) and the incorrect pronunciation was marked by zero (0). The sounds were considered as correct sounds when the student's average of correct pronunciation was more than 50%. Simply, the following table presents the percentage of the students' English basic sounds pronunciation resulted from.

Table 1. Percentage of English Basic Sounds Pronunciation

No.	Basic Sounds	Positions	Correct (%)	Average of Correct (%)	Note
1	Consonants	Initial	60.5	58.6	Correct
		Middle	61.9		
		Final	53.3		
2	Vowels	Initial	67.41	67.6	Correct
		Middle	67.36		
		Final	68.1		
3	Diphthongs	Initial	59.1	59.1	Correct
		Middle	56.9		
		Final	61.3		
Average				61.8	Correct

The previous table shows that the English consonants which pronounced correctly were only 58.6 %, from the total number of English consonants; 24, there were fifteen English consonants pronounced correctly and the rest, nine English consonants were pronounced incorrectly in certain position (initial, middle, final).In terms of vowels, the above table shows that English vowels were pronounced 60.6% correct. It means that the subjects pronounced correctly seven (7) vowels in three provided words.The table percentage of English basic sounds showed that the percentage of English diphthongs pronounced correctly by the students was 59.1%.

There were six English consonants which were found difficult to pronounce for all the subjects in all positions. They were /ʧ/, /ʤ/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, and /ʒ/, which were replaced by another sound such as Indonesian Palatal-Affricative /c/ for /ʧ/,

Indonesian Palatal-Affricative /j/ for /ʤ/, /ʒ/, Voiceless-affricative /f/ for /v/, Voiceless-Plosive /t/ for /θ/, Voiced-Plosive /d/ for /ð/.

In initial position, English consonants were pronounced 60.5 % correct since there were 14 students pronounced the initial /p/ in the word *pay* as /pei/ with the sound of /p/ was not aspirated, 10 students pronounced the initial /t/ in the word *ten* as /ten/ with the sound of /t/ also was not aspirated, 8 students pronounced the initial /f/ in the word *fans* incorrectly as /pens/, the /f/ sound was pronounced as Indonesian /p/, 12 students pronounced the initial /z/ in the word*zoo* incorrectly as /juː/ the /z/ sound was pronounced as Indonesian /j/, 19 students pronounced the initial /ʃ/ in the word*shoes* incorrectly as /suːs/, the /ʃ/ sound was pronounced as /s/,17 students pronounced the initial /r/ in the word*rich* incorrectly as /ric/, the /r/ sound was pronounced as Indonesian /r/, and there were no students pronounced the initial /ʧ/, /ʤ/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/ and /ʒ/ in the words *Cherrybell, job, very, thank, they,* and *genre* correctly as /*c*eribel/, /*j*op/, /*t*eng/, /*d*ei/, and /*j*enre/.

In middle position, the percentage of the English consonants correct pronunciation was 61.9 %. There were ten English consonants in the middle position which pronounced incorrectly. They were /g/, /ʧ/, /ʤ/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /ʒ/, /z/, /ʃ/ and /r/. There were 12 students did not pronounce the middle /g/ in the word *English*, 18 students pronounced the middle /z/ in the word *closet* as /kloset/ the /z/ sound was pronounced as /s/, 19 students pronounced the middle /ʃ/ in the word *fishing* as /fising/ the /ʃ/ sound was pronounced as /s/ and all the 23 students pronounced the middle /ʧ/, /ʤ/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/ and /ʒ/ in the word *teacher, angel, every, healthy, although,* and *pleasure*

incorrectly as /ti**c**ər/, /en**j**əl/, /e**f**ri/, /hel**t**i/, /ɔl**d**ou/ and /ple**s**ər/. The /ʧ/ sound was pronounced as Indonesian /c/, the /dʒ/ sound was pronounced as Indonesian /j/, /v/ was pronounced as /f/, /θ/ was pronounced as /t/, /ð/ was pronounced as /d/ and /ʒ/ sound was pronounced as /s/.

In final position there were 53.3 % English consonants pronounced correctly. It means there were more English consonants pronounced incorrectly. They were /b/, /d/, /g/, /ʧ/, /dʒ/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /ʒ/, /z/, and /ʃ/. The final /b/ in the word *job* was replaced by /p/, final /d/ in the word *bed* was replaced by /t/, final /g/ in the word *bag* was replaced by /k/, final /ʧ/ in the word *much* was pronounced as /c/. Final /dʒ/ in the word *language* was pronounced as /j/, final /v/ in the word *love* was replaced by /f/, final /θ/ and /ð/in the words *math* and *with* were pronounced as /t/, and final /z/ and /ʃ/ in the word *please* and *English* were pronounced as /s/.

While, there were six English vowels found difficult to pronounce; they were /i:/, /æ/, /ɑ:/, /ɔ:/ and /ə:/. The three provided words were difficult to pronounce by the students.In term of diphthong there were six diphthongs which were found difficult to pronounce; they were /əʊ/, /aʊ/, /eɪ/, /ɪə/, /eə/ and /ʊə/. There were no students could pronounced correctly all the provided words of /əʊ/ and /eə/ sounds and the second and the third provided words of /ʊə/.

English consonants were pronounced correctly about 58.8 %, the English vowels were pronounced correctly about 67.6 % and the English diphthongs were pronounced correctly about 59.1 %. English vowels had the highest percentage and

the lowest is the percentage of English consonants. So, it can be stated that the easiest English basic sound is English vowels and the most difficult one is English consonants.

There were six English consonant that all the students found difficult to pronounce in all positions. They were /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, and /ʒ/, which were replaced by another sound such as Indonesian Palatal-Affricative /c/ for /tʃ/, Indonesian Palatal-Affricative /j/ for /dʒ/, /ʒ/, Voiceless-affricative /f/ for /v/, Voiceless-Plosive /t/ for /θ/, Voiced-Plosive /d/ for /ð/.

According to Nunan (1991) the difficulty of pronouncing English basic sounds might be caused by the learners' mother tongue that influences the learners' acquisition of English as a foreign language in some ways such as transference and interference. Transference means that the similarities between the phonetic and phonemic systems of the first and the second languages can facilitate the acquisition of pronunciation, and interference means that the differences between the two languages can hinder the process of pronunciation acquisition. Therefore learners of foreign languages can have a lot of difficulties in learning pronunciation. Transference were found on this research since the subjects were students that learn English as a foreign language.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the data analyzed and the discussions of finding, the researcher draws conclusion as follows:

There were 27 of 44 English Basic Sounds which were pronounced correctly by the students of fifth grade B of SDN 2 Kampung Baru. The students pronounce 59.3 % of English Basic Sounds correctly. It means only 26 sounds out of 44 English basic sounds were pronounced correctly. The basic sounds which the students found it difficult to pronounce were Consonants : initial /p/, final /b/, final /d/, middle and final /g/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /v/, /θ/, / ð/, /ʒ/, /z/, /ʃ/ and /r/.Vowels : /iː/, /æ/, /ɑː/, /ɔː/, and initial /əː/, Diphthongs: /əʊ/, middle and final /aʊ/, initial /eɪ/, initial and middle /ɪə/, /eə/ and /ʊə/.

Based on the result of the research and conclusion, stated previously, some suggestions are proposed as follows:

1. Since learning pronunciation cannot be done by the students without teacher's guidance and it needs the English teacher of SDN 2 Kampungbaru, Kedaton, Bandar Lampung who has good pronunciation, the teacher should be familiar with the English basic sounds and capable of pronouncing them correctly at least be close to Received Pronunciation (RP).

2. The researcher recommends the English teacher of SDN 2 KampungBaru, Kedaton, Bandar Lampung to encourage the students to practice English with their friends at least during following the English subject. It is aimed at making the students pronounce English words correctly and to minimize the students' mistake in pronouncing the words.

3. Practicing pronunciation in the classroom activities by listening audio media is useful for the students to increase their motivation or ability in pronouncing English sounds correctly.

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