

Chapter One

Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher elaborates seven points in order to deliver a basic understanding of this research. These points are background of the research, statement of the problem, limitation of the problem, research questions, objective of the research, significance of the research, and organization of the chapters respectively.

Background of the Research

Mastering a language involves a wide knowledge, such as its vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. One aspect is not necessarily more important than the others, which means each of these departments is equally significant. Nair, Krishnasamy, and de Mello (2006) cited that poor pronunciation will hinder the speaker to be understood despite being familiar with wide range of vocabulary and grammatical rules in target language. Therefore, pronunciation is crucial in mastering a language, in this case, English. On that premise, this research focuses on the pronunciation aspect especially on how certain sound is pronounced by participants of the research. The use of the word “sound” itself may differ depending on contexts; hence, the researcher from this point forward refers individual speech sound as *phone*.

Based on the researcher observation when studying in an English Language Education Department in a private university in Yogyakarta, she finds some curious realities. In the researcher’s experience, the researcher finds some words are pronounced differently by different students even though these are actually everyday words or familiar words, such as the word “department”. This occurrence happens repeatedly and awakens the researcher’s interest. Especially, how certain phones are pronounced.

The researcher realizes that English words that have been adapted into Indonesian language sometimes are pronounced similarly to how it is pronounced in Indonesian. This fact may spark another phenomenon in which borrowed words affect the pronunciations of the original words to the extent of which the words are pronounced similarly or exactly as in Indonesian.

To start this research, a pilot survey was conducted to three students of ELED of a private university to give a rudimentary understanding regarding the level of attention given by students of ELED of this private university toward pronunciation. The result of this pilot survey revealed that the participants rarely discuss or correct their pronunciation when they speak in English. Furthermore, they believe that only native speakers can speak Standard English pronunciation – in this research, Standard English pronunciations are Received Pronunciation (RP) and General American (GA). Therefore, they do not see the necessities to speak in English as native speakers do.

The pilot research pushed the researcher to further investigate regarding pronunciations, especially regarding how phones in English words are pronounced by the students of this private university. Based on the background mentioned, the researcher was interested in finding out any patterns that may transpire. By categorizing and describing how the students pronounce certain phones, the researcher believes this research may help teachers in the future to encourage their students in better pronouncing these phones.

Statement of the Problem

Cited by Nair et al (2006), Fasser stated that the main problem faced by English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners is the pronunciation, in spite of years of learning the language. In the

same paper, Nair et al stated that an issue that often precludes EFL learners to improve their pronunciation is their own native language. Zielinski (2011) in her paper, *The social impact of pronunciation difficulties: Confidence and willingness to speak*, wrote that learners' reluctance in speaking often triggers difficulty in speaking English properly. Burns quoted by Gilakjani (2012) mentioned that it is better if the speaker of English produces sound patterns that are recognizable as English (intelligibility), if the listener is able to understand the meaning of what is said (comprehensibility), and if the listener is able to understand the purpose of what is said (interpretability).

The pilot survey conducted before the researcher conducted this research revealed that the participants stated that they rarely discussed or corrected their pronunciation when they spoke in English. They also believed that only native speakers could speak Standard English pronunciation and did not see the need to speak in standard pronunciation. Their indifference toward pronunciation may obstruct them from communicating successfully and efficiently in English, and by extension, teaching.

English is a foreign language for all the participants in this pilot research who speak Indonesian or local dialects in their daily conversation. Even though these participants have high probability to teach English in the future, these participants cannot escape the fact that they are English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners. Therefore, the participants may also struggle in English pronunciation and may lead to difficulty to communicate in English successfully and efficiently.

As stated by Burns (2003) in Gilakjani (2012, p. 120), English learners are more likely to communicate effectively when they have good pronunciation and intonation, even though they

produce minor inaccuracy in lexis and grammar. Therefore, the researcher targets the English Language Education Department students for the case study to investigate about how certain phones in English words are pronounced by students of ELED of a private university in Yogyakarta.

In addition, Indonesian adapts numbers of English words into its vocabulary with some adaptations in the side of pronunciation and spelling. Peperkamp and Dupoux (2003) state that borrowed words or loanwords are words that are adapted by a language from different language or languages and transformed into well form words. Major (2001) in Araujo (2014) stated that language learners tend to incorporate the pronunciation of loanwords to the pronunciation of the original words. The researcher is trying to unravel this premise regarding whether English word that has been adapted into Indonesian language is pronounced similarly to its pronunciation in Indonesian.

Limitation of the Problem

The research focused on how certain phones in English words are pronounced by participants of the research and discounted on the stressing of said words. The researcher disregarded the supra-segmental features, such as intonation, linking, and stressing in account of better understanding of how the phones in each words are pronounced. Therefore this research provided data analysis on these said pronunciations of each phone alone, both vowels and consonants. Furthermore, the research pinpointed on which English words that have been adapted into Indonesian language provided in this research was pronounced similarly to its pronunciation in participants' native language, Indonesian language.

Research Question

Based on the background, the problems, and the limitations stated in previous sections, the research aims to answer the following questions:

1. How do students of English Language Education Department pronounce certain phones in English words used as the instrument in this research?
2. Which English words adapted in Indonesian language used as the instrument in this research are pronounced similarly as pronounced in Indonesian?

The Objective of the Research

The research aims mainly to provide an analysis regarding pronouncing phones in English words performed by students of ELED of a private university. This research is concerned with the pronunciation of the phones and discounts the stressing of the words. Furthermore, this research tries to find which English words that have been adapted into Indonesian language are pronounced similarly as it is pronounced in Indonesian.

Significance of the Research

The researcher expects that the information provided in this research will benefit the researcher herself, English learners, English teachers, and further researchers.

English learners. The researcher hopes that the research be beneficial for the English learners to understand how certain sounds are pronounced and find encouragements in pronouncing these sounds.

English language teachers. The researcher hopes that the information provided in the research be beneficial for the English language teachers to have better insights on teaching strategies in helping and encouraging their students in pronouncing difficult sounds, especially sounds that are not found in their native language.

Further researchers. The research is hoped to be helpful for the next researchers to give insight and as reference in writing their research especially research with similar theme, which is pronunciation.

The Organization of the Chapters

This research consists of five chapters. The first chapter is introduction, in which it presents the background showing the reasons why the researcher conducted the research. It also presents the statement of the problem, limitation of this research, research questions, and the objective of the research. Moving forward, in the second chapter of the research, the researcher pointed out studies and literatures that are being used to support the research and conceptual framework of the research. Chapter three presents the researcher recounting how the researcher collected the data for research and the instrument of the research. In the next chapter, the researcher describes the findings of the research to later be concluded in the last chapter, which is chapter five.