CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The first chapter discusses the research background, research questions, research purposes, research significance, research scope, conceptual framework, and previous studies.

A. Research Background

This research aims to find out the students' pronunciation errors. Pronunciation is an essential aspect for students when communicating in English. Schmitt (2010) states in his book that pronunciation is a term used to capture all aspects of how employ speech sounds for communicating. Pronunciation is essential for effective communication since proper pronunciation always leads to the recipient needing to understand the message. Pronunciation is the production of sounds that use to make meaning (Kobilova, 2022). Speaking without considering pronunciation could result in differing interpretations of meaning between speakers and listeners. Poor and incorrect pronunciation can cause many misunderstandings about the meaning of spoken words. Hence, proper pronunciation is essential while speaking English in order to clarify the ideas.

Unfortunately, students occasionally make errors while pronouncing English words. It is common for students to make errors while learning English pronunciation. This situation prompted linguists to separate errors into certain contexts, called taxonomy (Sahan, Bria, Ulu, Syahdan, Kariadi, and Prasetyanti, 2023). Errors can be studied from the standpoint of linguistic components, a process known as linguistic category taxonomy. In pronunciation, mistakes are evaluated by the discipline of phonology. Meanwhile, a surface strategy taxonomy focuses on missing, augmenting, misinforming, or rearranging speech sounds. Pronunciation errors can dramatically impair communication, leading to misconceptions and misinterpretations of the intended message. Error is systematic in which it is likely to occur repeatedly and is not recognized by the learner. Error arises when students lack linguistic maturity and have not yet learned the foreign language rules (Buana and Irawan, 2021). Pronunciation error is the inaccurate

production of sounds or words in a language, notably in the case of English as a foreign language (EFL). It is a typical occurrence in language acquisition, where learners may fail to pronounce words appropriately due to many causes, such as variances in phonology between their mother tongue and English, lack of exposure to native speakers, and insufficient training.

Furthermore, pronunciation is a critical aspect of speaking accuracy in EFL, and students must focus on it. It is a key component of language learning that must be well mastered to support the development of students' competence in language skills, particularly speaking skills (Irwan, Willian, Arafiq, Amin, 2023). Pronunciation accuracy is crucial since it directly influences the comprehensibility of the speaker's message. Learners struggling with pronunciation can lead to misconceptions and misinterpretations, which can prevent efficient communication. An error, which has always been a fundamental concern in language learning, is currently the central concern in approaches to pronunciation. Students who have good pronunciation in English are more likely to be understood, even if they make errors in other areas; students whose pronunciation is difficult to understand will not be understood, even if their grammar is excellent.

According to a preliminary survey to a number of 3rd semester students at a state islamic university in Indonesia, they have taken several pronunciation subjects in the first semester and speaking subject in the second semester. Students face several problems in speaking english, including pronunciation. They accept that faults in pronunciation are the result of insufficient practice and language understanding. Aside from that, the nervousness of making errors in pronunciation is one of the factors. They receive the task in the form of a vlog, demonstration video, and presentation for helping them to improve their pronunciation.

Besides, the pronunciation might determine whether or not students comprehend them. Suadi (2020) states that to activate students' speaking skills, their speaking video recordings are used for correcting, commenting, and evaluating their performance that students are expected to perform efficiently in all sorts of speaking duties; thus, their pronunciation should be good. More than just an extensive vocabulary and solid grammar is required; pronunciation is also essential

to convey the sounds of the words used for interaction with others (Azzahroh, 2022). This means that English pronunciation must be good in order to engage effectively. In this case, students' pronunciation must be of good quality because they are frequently assigned comparable tasks.

Moreover, in this digital era, there are many applications or software that can be used to analyze students' pronunciation. One of them is PRAAT software. PRAAT stands for Patchogue Rotary Animal Assisted Therapy. It is a free computer software package for speech analysis in phonetics. It is designed in 1991 and continues to be developed by Paul Boersma and David Weenink of the University of Amsterdam. PRAAT is a popular speaking analysis program that provides an acoustic analysis of the speech signal, usually in the form of a visualization of the speech waveform, spectrogram, and pitch, to provide feedback for students to improve their EFL pronunciation and raise awareness of speech errors. PRAAT software is a software containing tutorials on the analysis and reconstruction of acoustic speech signals (Surahman, 2022). It allows them to analyze the visual patterns of their own speech to distinguish how it differs from the target pronunciation. Thus, the use of PRAAT proves to be very useful for helping EFL learners improve their english pronunciation.

Furthermore, there has been a number of research conducted relevant to the current research. The use of PRAAT for language learners pointed out in a article by Damanik, Rangkuti, and Ganie (2023) that focused on Indonesian Chinese students who use Hokkien in their daily lives. The use of Praat in speaking skills research is also found in research written by EL-Garawany (2021). The research examines the development of intonation production in English majors' EFL. Following this, Juniar (2023) found that the use of the ASR system in teaching pronunciation helps students' learning process in recognizing various pronunciations of English vocabulary. This software is similar to PRAAT.

On the other hand, the current study uses PRAAT software to analyze EFL students' pronunciation. The program can show the tone, intensity, and performance of the sound. This study is done on EFL students and focused on their pronunciation.

Hopefully, this research can provide particular information about the pronunciation reported in the PRAAT software wave findings.

B. Research Questions

There are several questions that researchers should answer in this study:

1. What are the common errors detected in the EFL students' pronunciation?
2. How accurate is the pronunciation of EFL students according to PRAAT software?

C. Research Purposes

Related to the research questions, here are the objectives of the research:

1. To figure out the common errors that EFL students make in their pronunciation.
2. To find out the accuracy of EFL students' pronunciation according to PRAAT software.

D. Research Signifcance

The results of this study are expected to provide theoretical and practical benefits.

1. Theoretically, it is very important for teachers to understand their students' pronunciation in order to develop an appropriate language learning methodology. The insights gained from this study can improve English teaching strategies. By providing valuable information about EFL students' proficiency, especially in speaking skills, this study aims to ensure that students can achieve accurate pronunciation. Furthermore, this study can add to the current knowledge of language learning and phonetics. This study can be used as a resource for future researchers interested in similar themes, contributing to scientific discussions on EFL learning and pronunciation acquisition.

2. Practically, teachers can create focused teaching materials and exercises by detecting specific areas of difficulty or common pronunciation errors, which can be assessed using PRAAT software. Further, for future research, it can deepen the research in the pronunciation aspect.

E. Research Scope

The scope of this research includes 3rd semester students of the English Language Education Department at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung who are studying English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The focus of the research is on the difficulties these students face in speaking, specifically when exposed to pronunciation. The study explores the significance of these difficulties by examining their impact on students' pronunciation and overall language proficiency.

F. Research Framework

This study seeks to reveal the accuracy of EFL students' pronunciation after learning english speaking for two semesters. This can be analyzed using PRAAT software, where a sound wave image appear to confirm it. The framework for this study is described in the following diagram:
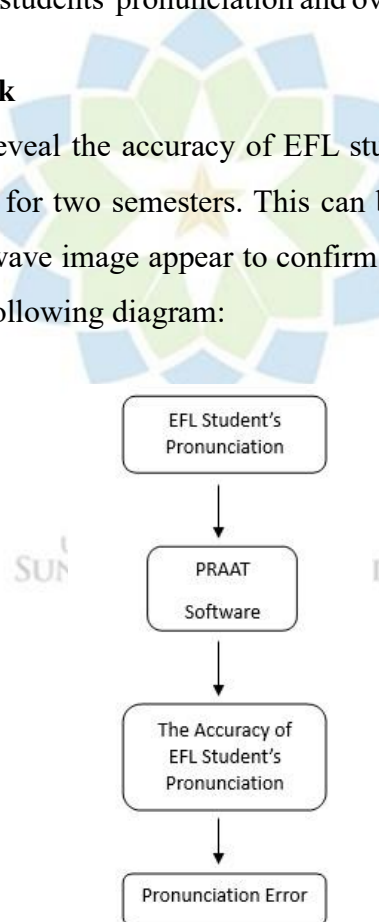

Figure 1. 1 Framework flowchart

The figure above describes how this study analyze the students' pronunciation. Murcia (2001) states that pronunciation is the language feature that most readily

identifies speakers as non-native. PRAAT software can present and quantify aspects such as vowel length variations before voiced and voiceless stops, voice onset time, intonation, and stress (Wilson, 2005). The students may understand the rules of proper word pronunciation, but it is still difficult for them to pronounce them orally because English sounds do not exist in their mother tongue (Tuan, 2010). PRAAT software can be categorized as ASR (Automatic Speech Recognition) technology that help to improve students' pronunciation and speaking skills outside of the typical classroom setting (Xodabande, 2017)

Pronunciation is the study of the sound of a word or how to pronounce the word. Pronunciation is directly related to speaking abilities in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. Confidence in speaking and listening skills often improves alongside pronunciation development, which is critical for EFL students seeking employment where spoken English is required (Nguyen, Hung, Duong, and Le, 2021). Improving pronunciation improves students' spoken language comprehension and favorably impacts their perceived language ability. Therefore, incorporating pronunciation practice within EFL courses is vital for encouraging effective.

Besides, there are several aspects of pronunciation for students called combinations of sounds (Kenworthy, 2000). The first is sound linking; when English people talk, they often do not halt between words but instead go seamlessly from one to the next. The second is word stress, which occurs when an English word has more than one syllable (a polysyllabic word), with one syllable standing out more than the rest. This is accomplished by uttering the phrase somewhat louder, holding the vowel for a bit longer, and pronouncing the consonant extremely clearly. The third is rhythm; English speech, like music, has a beat. Syllables are divided into groups, similar to music bars, and each group has strong and lower rhythms. In English, strong beats tend to fall on nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, whereas weak beats fall on prepositions, articles, and pronouns (grammatical words). The fourth is weak forms, which are words with only one unstressed syllable in a phrase. Its pronunciation is frequently very different from when it is emphasized. The last feature is intonation; speech, like music, involves

pitch variations. Speakers can adjust the tone of their voice while they talk, raising or lowering it as needed. They may quickly change tone, just like vocalists. So, speech has a melody called intonation. The two fundamental motifs are rising and falling. Therefore, mastering these aspects is crucial for effective communication and is closely linked to the overall proficiency of EFL learners.

Moreover, there were several types of error according to experts. Corder (1974) claims that there were three types of errors. First, pre-systematic errors. This error occur because the learner was ignorant of a certain rule in the target language. The error was caused by the learner's lack of knowledge of the regulation. Second, systematic errors occur when a learner finds an erroneous rule. The student cannot correct the mistakes, but they can describe the incorrect rule and type. Third, post-systematic error. Post-systematic error happens when the learner understood the correct target language rule but used it inconsistently (makes a mistake). The learner can describe the target-language rule that was generally employed. Meanwhile, types of pronunciation error can be categorized into three types (James, 1998). First, substitution is categorized as the replacement of an item in types of error. The source of error can be from intralingua, inter-lingual transfer, and others. Second, insertion referred to addition, is a type of errors which are categorized by presenting inappropriate item in the form. In this case, one or more extra sounds are added in words. Third, omission is the types of errors identified by the absence of an item that must appear in well-formed utterance. Accordingly, these type of pronunciation errors are critical for understanding the nature of mistakes made by learners and devising efficient ways for teaching and learning pronunciation.

Moreover, there are several software that can be used to practice pronunciation, one of them is PRAAT software. Computer technology can assist second language learners in better recognizing and generating prosodic qualities (Pennington, 2002). PRAAT software is a speaking program called Anayliss that provides an acoustic analysis of speech signals. PRAAT may show different language maps as necessary after the audio is received and get data such as pitch, duration, formant frequency, etc., through computation, which has objective and intuitive qualities (Yang and Zhao, 2021). PRAAT enables users to analyze speech data and create waveforms,

spectrograms, pitch tracks, and other features, making it an invaluable tool for phonetic study and pronunciation practice. While Praat is not intended as a speaking application, it is used to improve English pronunciation by providing visual feedback and analyzing prosodic variables such as stress, pitch, intensity, and vowel duration. PRAAT's characteristics make it an effective tool for English language learners looking to improve their pronunciation skills.

G. Previous Study

There have been several previous studies regarding the EFL students' pronunciation and using software. The first previous study is conducted by EL-Garawany (2021). This study investigates the effect of using PRAAT software on developing the EFL intonation production of English majors whose inefficiency in such a skill constituted the rationale for the present study. The study use a quantitative method with an experimental design. The participants (N = 40) are third-year students during the first semester of the 2020-2021 academic year in the English Department, Faculty of Education, University of Sadat City, Egypt. The results reveal that the experimental group students achieve significant improvement in EFL intonation production. Thus, using PRAAT has a positive effect on developing English majors' EFL intonation production. The current research uses qualitative rather than quantitative methods and is carried out in different locations.

Adam, Hidayat, and Kholid (2023) explore the production of English word stress using PRAAT software that is utilized to analyze the recordings, including measuring the pitch, intensity, and duration as indicators. This study use a qualitative approach, and the data were recorded by giving a task to pronounce 15 words. the participants are 23 students of the sixth semester at state islamic University Raden Intan Bandar Lampung. The result illustrates that the students' word stress pronunciation is average. Almost all the students are able to distinguish the placement of stress correctly, with a percentage of 82% on two syllables, 51% on three syllables, and 67% on four syllables. Mother tongue influence, local accent, and lack of exposure to utilized word stress also contribute to the problem. This previous study is very identical to the current study, with the exception that it

focuses just on word stress, whereas the study looked at all elements of pronunciation.

Plailek (2021) investigates the EFL students' English pronunciation problems and to find out the factors affecting their English pronunciation. The participants of this study are 208 students who use English as a foreign language in the Faculty of Education, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Thailand. The research instruments applies for data collection are an English pronunciation test, a questionnaire, and a semi-structured interview. The finding reveals that English phonemes at the initial syllable position that create trouble for students include the /ð/, /θ/, /dʒ/, /ʒ/, /v/ and /z/ sound respectively and the /ð/, /θ/, /v/, /f/, /s/, and /l/ sound at the final syllable position. According to this study, the strongest factor that contributed to this problem are the students' basic knowledge of English pronunciation. Next are the instruction of teachers and the frequency of English pronunciation, respectively. The findings of this study are beneficial for educators and administrators in the expansion of results through the development of teaching and training EFL students' English pronunciation. The difference with the current study is the focuses not just on how students speak or pronounce but also on the factors that contribute to it.

AbdAlgane and Idris (2020) investigate the challenges that EFL learners face in proper and correct pronunciation in spoken English at Saudi Arabia. This study follows the analytical methodology by exploiting the questionnaire for data collection. The data presentation, analysis via Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), and discussion, supported with tables and graphs, are all included in the paper to reach appropriate findings and recommendations that could possibly contribute to the language learning problem-solving research attempts. Correction of pronunciation mistakes made by EFL learners is almost a daily matter that both researchers deal with on a regular basis, so it has been mutually decided that the roots of the problem be investigated in order to find helpful and appropriate solutions. The research focuses only on the issues encountered by students, gathering data using questionnaires and evaluating it using SPSS. This is what created a gap in the current research.

Jahara and Abdelrady (2021) focus on pronunciation problems encountered by Arab undergraduate EFL learners. Part of the methodology of this study use questionnaires, recorded speech samples, and pronunciation to analyze learners' performance orally through repetition drills to help participants articulate the sounds of English through the Blackboard Collaborate Ultra Learning Management System. This study's goal is to teach students with pronunciation exams and phonemic inventory through repetition and imitation in order to overcome pronunciation miscues and fossilized miscues and improve their pronunciation. One of the primary outcomes of this study is Arab EFL undergraduates improve their pronunciation through consistent desire and readiness to engage in the specified exams via Blackboard. The different between this study and the current study is this study focuses on treating pronunciation difficulties encountered by Arab undergraduate EFL students and assessing them without using software.

However, this study analyzes EFL students' pronunciation using PRAAT software, where the software can display the sound's pitch, intensity, and performance. This study focuses on the students' pronunciation problems. As a consequence, this study provides field-specific information regarding the pronunciation presented in the PRAAT software's wave findings. This study uses interview and document analysis as an instrument to collect the data. The participants are 3rd semester students of the English Language Education Department at UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung.