

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Pronunciation is the process of saying or pronouncing a word. People can learn how to pronounce what they read and carry on a conversation by learning pronunciation. Pronunciation is essential because pronunciation problems can sometimes impede communication, especially for non-native speakers. As English becomes more widely used for international communication, students must be able to exchange meaning effectively. According to Terrell & Brown (1981), the goal of language learners is to ensure that they can effectively communicate what they have in mind; they must be understood when they utter the words. According to the statement, pronouncing words is essential for language learners to understand when communicating.

In recent years, studying English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' pronunciation error has become an essential aspect of the research. For example, many students learning a language have difficulty pronouncing simple words like 'This' /ðis/; they pronounce the word 'This' /dɪs/. Based on the EF Education First 2022 English Proficiency Index (EPI) Report, Indonesia ranks 81st out of 111 nations, down one spot from the previous year. The score for Indonesia is medium or similar to level B1 in the Common European Framework of Reference. The score is still lower than the average Asian regional score of 500, as it was the previous year. Therefore, it is interesting to conduct the current study, which aimed to discover high school students' pronunciation errors in simple vocabulary and investigate the factors that influence them.

The above-described scenario can be observed at a junior high school in Rendeh, Bandung Barat; the students learn English as a foreign language despite having Sundanese and Indonesian as their mother tongues. As a result, there are multiple pronunciation errors caused by various

factors, one of which is that Sundanese and Indonesian are more frequently used than English in their daily activities, affecting language learning. Errors and mistakes have different meanings, according to Brown (2007); errors occur when a speaker does not know what they are going to say, but mistakes are created when a speaker guesses or "slips" in the information they know. As we all know, pronunciation errors have occurred for a long time, and many pupils continue to make them without anybody noticing or justifying them. In such a situation, this research analyzes the reasons for students' pronunciation problems so that they might be understood and avoided.

The problem in junior high school in Rendeh, Bandung Barat, is that some students are still confused about vocabulary and pronouncing consonants. As a result, most students with below-average English skills become reluctant and embarrassed to speak or say a word because of fear of pronouncing the vocabulary. Before this research was conducted, the author had made preliminary observations to strengthen the reason for doing this research. The author has communicated informally with English teachers at a Junior high school in Rendeh. The result is that 70% of the students in one class face challenges pronouncing English words, and not a few of them still make errors in consonant pronunciation. Sources from previous research are needed to complete this research and increase its credibility. Therefore, to fulfill this need, the author uses various sources as references to support the theoretical basis of the research. There are so many EFL students who still make errors in pronunciation when speaking English. These errors can lead to misinterpretation, reduced comprehension, and decreased confidence in communication, negatively impacting the student's academic and social success. Despite efforts to address pronunciation instruction in language learning, there is still a lack of understanding about the reasons behind these errors and the most effective approaches for overcoming them.

Numerous earlier research on pronunciation problems using various objects and studies have been found in this instance, but the same hypothesis

has been found. Nur Inayah conducted the first prior study, analyzing “Error on English Sounds Made by The Students of SMPN 1 Minasate'ne Pangkep.” She described the different kinds of pronunciation mistakes that students in this study make when pronouncing long and short vowel sounds. The second previous research was by Anis Komariah, who analyzed “Problems in Pronouncing the English Sounds Faced by the Students of SMPN 2 Halong, Banjar”. In this research, she discusses the mispronounced words by students. The third previous research was by Yon Visonil and Leni Marlina, who analyzed “Students’ Pronunciation Errors on Vowels at Spoken English Activities (Speech) Class at English Department Universitas Negeri Padang.” In this research, they investigated pronunciation errors in speech performance.

This research aims to fill the gap from the previous research by understanding and overcoming student and teacher perspectives about learning pronunciation activities in the classroom and the reason behind consonant mispronunciation errors.

B. Research Questions

According to the preceding summary, the purpose of this study is to respond to the following two queries:

1. What are the most common pronunciation errors EFL students make when speaking English, especially in pronouncing consonants, and why?
2. How do the teacher and students attempt to overcome pronunciation errors?

C. Research Purposes

The objectives of this study are derived from the research questions above. The aims of this study are:

1. To gain a deeper understanding of the pronunciation errors commonly occurring in English language learning for EFL students, especially in pronouncing consonants.
2. To explore how teachers and students attempt to overcome pronunciation errors in EFL students to improve their communication skills.

D. Research Significance

The significance of the research indicates that the study's results will be theoretically and practically relevant. In theory, the findings of this study might aid researchers in gathering data on pronunciation error concerns.

Furthermore, this study is intended to assist teachers and lecturers in better understanding their students' issues with English pronunciation.

1. English teachers: This finding will benefit English Teachers. The study can be a benchmark for school teachers to improve learning strategies and approaches and identify deficiencies that must be addressed in the teaching and learning process.
2. Future researcher: The findings will be helpful to future researchers. The outcomes of this study will help future English instructors and future researchers in the English Education Department understand and overcome some of the obstacles their students confront while speaking and pronouncing English.

E. Research Scope

The study looks into pronunciation errors in students' consonants and how to understand and overcome them. As a result, the research scope involves third-grade junior high school students. In addition, the research focuses on the consonant pronunciation errors experienced by students. Furthermore, a junior high school in Rendeh, Bandung Barat, has been chosen as the research site for this study.

F. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework represents the anticipated relationship between the variables in writing or visually. A variable is just a characteristic or attribute that is being studied. The conceptual framework is developed by reviewing existing studies and theories. As a result, several supporting theories were employed to carry out this study.

Pronunciation is the most critical aspect of learning a language. Every language has its pronunciation, and the pronunciation of this language will be difficult because it differs from the pronunciation of other languages. Pronunciation generates sounds that convey meaning. According to Hariri (2012), Foreign language teachers must prioritize teaching pronunciation because sound is essential in communication. The two main reasons for teaching pronunciation are the significance of pronunciation in communicating and the need to teach it. As a result, before they can say anything, pupils must first comprehend what they wish to convey. Second, what they hear must be understood. If they cannot comprehend English, their language will be broken, except in writing form.

According to Brown (2007), mistakes are expected to be made while learning. Many people are unaware that there is a distinction between errors and mistakes. Mistakes are made unintentionally, and in that case, the perpetrator is usually so that this vocabulary can be justified and based on actions that have been done; mistakes are usually widely used in everyday life because they are less formal than errors. Errors are mistakes that occur due to a lack of knowledge about the subject; the term error is more formal than a mistake and is rarely used in everyday life; the term error is typically used in formal matters such as reports and others. (Brown, 2007). Dulay et al. (1982) defined four types of error. Each is divided into numerous errors: 1) Linguistics category taxonomy, 2) Surface strategy taxonomy, 3) Comparative category taxonomy, and 4) Communicative effect category taxonomy.

There are always mistakes made by students when learning a language because errors are a phenomenon in the learning process, but in this case, the error needs to be corrected, so a teacher needs to pay attention and understand the errors in his students' learning process, which is done by knowing or observation, analyzing, and classifying it. Error analysis is a branch of linguistics that studies how students make errors in a foreign or second language. The purpose of studying and analyzing student errors is twofold: first, to provide and analyze data on the learning process, and second, to develop teachers and curricula to produce solutions to reduce errors and improve communication (Roach, 1991).

Kelly (2000) describes that consonants are formed by stopping, restricting, or diverting airflow in various ways. He claimed that consonant sounds may be described by three characteristics: location of articulation, technique of articulation, and voicing. The point of articulation is where two speech organs combine to make a sound. The manner of articulation describes how the articulators interact with the airflow. Regarding voicing, sounds produced while the vocal folds vibrate are voiced, whereas those produced without such vibration are voiceless or unvoiced. These are the characteristics that aid in the identification and differentiation of consonant sounds in a given language.

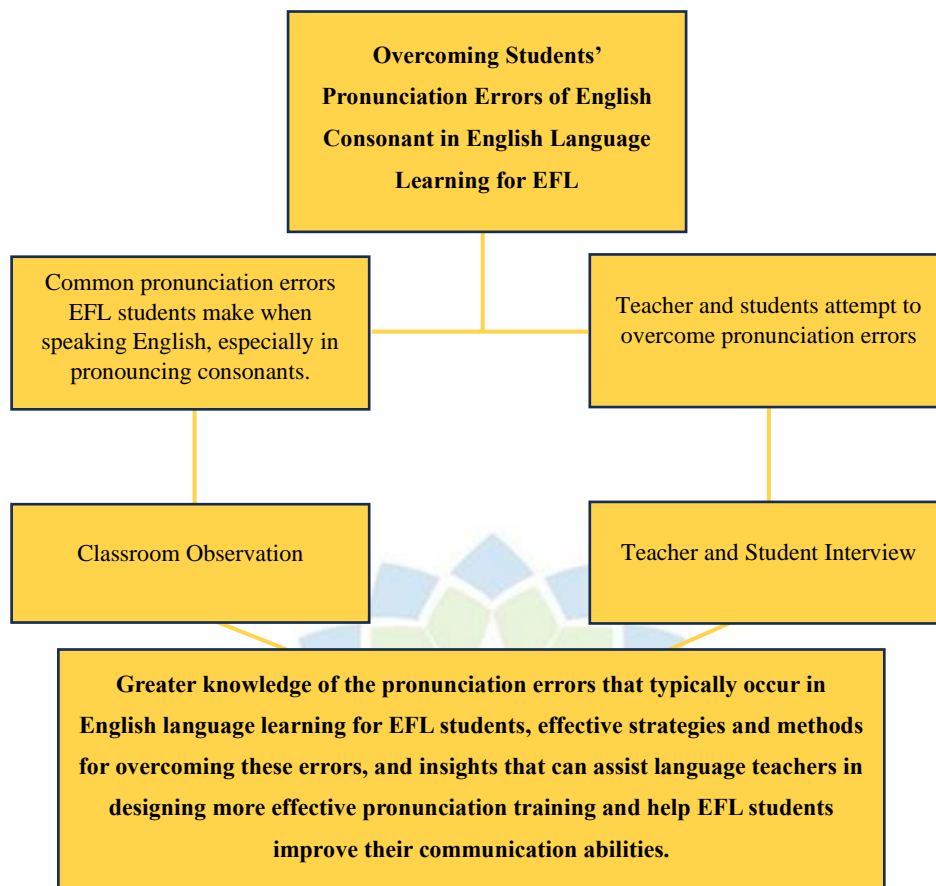


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

G. Previous Studies

Numerous earlier research on pronunciation problems using various objects and studies have been found in this instance, but the same hypothesis has been found. Nguyen Thi Phuong Nhung conducted the first prior study, analyzing “English Consonant Pronunciation Errors of First-Year Students at Posts and Telecommunications Institute of Technology.” This study aimed to discover pronunciation errors in English consonant sounds produced by first-year students at Vietnam's Posts and Telecommunications Institute of Technology. The flaws were discovered by utilizing 120 audio recordings of 120 students doing English Course 1. The data show that students struggled with both single and consonant cluster pronunciation. Their mistakes included replacing difficult foreign English sounds with familiar Vietnamese sounds, omitting clustered sounds, and including

duplicate sounds. These findings will surely help teachers and students obtain a better understanding of pronunciation errors, allowing them to develop strategies to improve learners' English pronunciation.

The second prior study was by Nur Inayah, analyzing “Error on English Sounds Made by The Students of SMPN 1 Minasate'ne Pangkep.” She described the different kinds of pronunciation mistakes that students made concerning long and short vowel sounds in this study. The results of this study show that grade 8 students at SMPN Minasate'ne create two kinds of vowel sound errors: long and short. Depending on the results, most students mispronounced the long vowel // . It has been demonstrated that approximately 61% of students pronounce /'lwaz/ for /'lwez/ in the word "always." Meanwhile, the student spelled the short vowel // incorrectly. It has been demonstrated that approximately 88% of students pronounce /'lv/ for /'lv/ in the word "love.”

The third previous research was by Anis Komariah, who analyzed “Problems in Pronouncing the English Sounds Faced by the Students of SMPN 2 Halong, Banjar”. In this research, she discusses the mispronounced words by students. According to the findings of this study, it is found out that the students had problems pronouncing the English sounds of consonants (/t/, /θ/, /ʃ/, /-t/, /f, /ʒ /, /-d/), vowel (/ɒ/, /e/, /oʊ/) and diphthong (/eɪ/, /oʊ/, /ə r /). The sounds /θ/ are pronounced as [t], /ʃ/ is as [s], /ɒ / as [u], /oʊ/ as [aw], /ʒ/ as [s], while /t/, /eɪ /, /-t/, /-d/ and /ə r/ are pronounced they are written. The error can be caused by the absence of sound in their mother tongue.

The last previous research was by Yon Visonil and Leni Marlina, who analyzed “Students’ Pronunciation Errors on Vowels at Spoken English Activities (Speech) Class at English Department Universitas Negeri Padang.” In this research, they investigated pronunciation errors in speech performance. According to the findings of this study, this study has shown that [æ], [i:], [əʊ], [ə], and [eɪ] were the sounds that the participants erroneously mispronounced. The percentage of errors on these sounds

comprised 70% of the total errors. The errors in the remaining sounds were relatively low. Therefore, generally, [æ], [i:], [əʊ], [ə], and [eɪ] were the problematic sounds for the students.

The difference between the previous and present research is that the previous research discussed pronunciation errors but did not discuss specific perspectives. In contrast, this research aims to fill the gap in that research by understanding and overcoming teachers' and students' perspectives about learning pronunciation activities in the classroom and the reason behind pronunciation errors.

