

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter elaborates the background, statement of the problem, research objective, research significance, and definition of key terms.

### 1.1. Background

Humans use language for communication in daily activities. They gather and speak about something to express their feeling. Human and language cannot be separated, because language is tool for human's communication. As cited in *Cambridge Advance Learner's Dictionary* (2008) language is a system of communication consisting of sounds, words and grammar, or the system of communication used by the people of particular country or profession. Language plays a great role in expressing minds, feeling, and desires. In short, language is so essential that people should pay more attention.

English is the official language of education and government in many countries. As cited in *Cambridge Advance Learner's Dictionary* (2008) English is the language that is spoken in the UK, the US, and in many other countries. America and British are two widest countries of English user. They are two different countries which use English as the main language. Although both countries use the same language, but the English is different between American and British. As cited in *Webster New World College Dictionary* (2016) American

English is the language spoken and written in the United States of America. Meanwhile, British English is the language spoken and written in England.

People thought that British and American English are similar, in fact there are differences within. There are similarities and differences between both languages. One of the similarities and differences between British and American English is vowel and consonant symbols of phonetic transcription. It belongs to linguistics especially phonology.

Birjandi and Salmani-Nodoushan (2005, p. 6) said that phonology is the study of all aspects of the sounds and sound system of a language. It includes two major sub-branches: phonetics, and phonemics. Lacy (2007) stated that phonology – the study of how the sounds of speech are represented in our minds – is one of the core areas of linguistic theory, and is central to the study of humans language. Based on the opinion, the study of sound and sound system of a language is called phonology. It has two major sub-branches, phonetics and phonemic. Phonetics has been selected as specifics material to be discussed in this research.

McMahon (2002, p. 1) states that phonetics provides objective ways of describing and analyzing the range of sounds humans use in their languages. More specifically, articulatory phonetics identifies precisely which speech organs and muscles are involved in producing the different sounds of the world's languages. Those sounds are then transmitted from the speaker to the hearer, and acoustic and auditory phonetics focus on the physics of speech as it travels through the air in the form of sound waves, and the effect those waves have on a hearer's ears and

brain. It follows that phonetics has strong associations with anatomy, physiology, physics and neurology.

Birjandi and Salmani-Nodoushan (2005, p. 1) defined about phonetic, a branch of linguistics which is concerned with the production, physical nature, and perception of speech sounds. According to *Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2008) special signs is used for phonetic to represent the different sounds. The person who highly competent about phonetic is called phonetician. Contemporary phoneticians generally take their symbols from the International Phonetic Alphabet, but other symbols are also in use (McArthur, 1998). The International Phonetic Alphabet was proposed in 1888; it has been under constant review ever since by the International Phonetic Association (McMahon, 2002, p. 6).

As cited in International Phonetic Association's website (IPA Home) International Phonetic Association (IPA) is the major as well as the oldest representative organization for phoneticians. It was established in 1886 in Paris. The aim of the IPA is to promote the scientific study of phonetics and the various practical applications of that science. In furtherance of this aim, the IPA provides the academic community world-wide with a notational standard for the phonetic representation of all language. This research, furthermore, analyzes the similarities and differences of phonetic transcription between British and American English in terms of its vowels (including long and short vowels, monophthongs, diphthongs and triphthongs) and consonants. The data of this research are taken from poems by Robert Frost.

A journal entitled *British and American Phonetic Varieties* (2015) about the phonetic differences between British and American English written by Hosseinzadeh, Kambuziya, and Shariati has chosen as previous study to aid the process of writing in this research. Comparative analysis used to analyze the similarities and differences of phonetic transcription between British and American English in terms of vowels (including long and short vowels, monophthongs, diphthongs and triphthongs) and consonants. Therefore, the writer decides this research entitled ***The Comparison of Phonetic Transcription between British and American English in Robert Frost's Poems.***

## **1.2. Statement of Problem**

Based on the background of problems, can be formulated the statement of problems into the research questions as follows:

1. What are the phonetic transcription similarities between British and American English in Robert Frost's poems?
2. What are the phonetic transcription differences between British and American English in Robert Frost's poems?

## **1.3. Research Objective**

Based on the statement of the problem above, the purposes of this research are:

1. To know about the phonetic transcription similarities between British and American English in Robert Frost's poems.

2. To know about the phonetic transcription differences between British and American English in Robert Frost's poems.

#### **1.4. Research Significance**

This research gives significant information about the similarities and differences of phonetic transcription between British and American English which are found in Robert Frost's poems. The writer hopes this information give significance for:

1. Enriching understanding about vowels and consonants of phonetic transcription in British and American English.
2. Introducing the similarities and differences of phonetic transcription between British and American English in Robert Frost's poems.
3. Giving the benefit for the next research in doing further research about comparison of phonetic transcription between British and American English.



#### **1.5. Definition of Key Terms**

To make the readers understand the terms used in this research, the writer presents several definitions of key terms as follow:

- Comparative linguistics is concerned with comparing from one or more points of view, two or more different languages, and more generally, with the theory and techniques applicable to such comparison.

- British English is the English language as spoken and written in England and as distinguished especially from American English.
- American English is the English language as spoken and written in the United States of America.
- Phonetic transcription is a written or printed representation of speech using a phonetic alphabet.
- Vowels are sounds in which there is no obstruction to the flow of air as it passes from the larynx to the lips.
- Consonant is a speech sound that is articulated with complete or partial closure of the vocal tract.
- Robert Frost is the most celebrated poet in America in 19<sup>th</sup> century.

