

The Students' Proficiency on English Pronunciation

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ABSTRACT

Having clear pronouciation is very important in order to build good communication. In English language teaching, the students frequently face some challanges and thus the teacher need to monitor the progress. This study aims to describe the pronunciation proficiency of the eleventh-grade students at MA Ibrahimy Kalipuro. Descriptive quantitative was used as the design and the respondents were taken through purposive sampling technique. The sample was 26 students. The data were collected through performance test. The students' voices during performance test were recorded and then were scored. The data were presented in a percentage. The result of this study indicated that the avarage score of voiced consonants was 72 (fair) while voiceless consonants was 69 (poor). Thus. It can be concluded that the teaching of pronunciation still need further research in order to improve the students' pronunciation proficiency. The teachers should be actively incorporate various startegies and media to assist the students practice English pronunciation regularly.

Keywords: *Pronunciation Proficiency, Segmental*

A. Introduction

Speaking is one of the most important parts of learning English. Speaking is always used by everyone when they want to convey their goal directly. Speaking is an utterance conveyed by the speaker so that the meaning can be understood by the listener (Richkeit, 2008). Brown (2004) states that speaking is part of a productive skill, which can be understood as direct communicative skill. It can be understood here that speaking is an oral skills activity for transferring meaning directly to the intended person. To develop speaking skills people have to have a good pronunciation proficiency (Nafisa,2022). Proper pronunciation can be defined as a reproduction of language sounds in such a way that the intended message is sent clearly (Xalikova, 2025).

Therefore, pronunciation proficiency is one aspect in speaking that must be mastered by students. It is an important part of learning foreign language speaking skills

(Yong, 2004). Pronunciation is a sub-skill of speaking, which needs to be learned to understand and create a sound in speaking English. Pronunciation is a process of creating speech sounds, such as rhythm, intonation, and stress. This language component is quite important for students to learn, so that their speaking skills can be well understood by the listeners. Clear English pronunciation is crucial for effective communication (Yuzawa, 2007). Students with good pronunciation, even though they are not an expert in speaker, can still understand the meaning and purpose of their speech, compared to students with poor pronunciation. If the students cannot speak with a clear pronunciation, they often get anxiety, or lose their self-confidence in speaking.

The disability of having clear pronounciation among students in Indonesia context is due to several factors (AbdAlgane & Idris, 2020). First is mother tongue interference. The disimilar structure between English and Indonesia often yield negative transfer or interference. Second is the limited exposure to target language. The complexity of the target language structure required students to be frequently exposed to the language input. Those who lack exposure to the input from either face to face interaction or a variety multimedia resources may not have a clear pronunciation. The next factor is the different sound sytem between Indonesia and English. Some English sounds are not available in Indonesia and thus it confuses students. Inconsistency of english vowels and the spelling of english words also contribute to mispronouciation among students. English vowels have more than one pronunciation and it makes students confused. Further, the different between spelling and the pronunciation make English words difficult to pronounce. For example, the different spelt words have the same pronunciation. This incosistency often yield mispronunciation and frequently demotivate students to practice pronunciation.

In the recent years, research on the English pronunciation were frequently done. They mostly focused on the trend of teaching English pronunciation such as integrating MALL in the teaching of pronunciation, investigating the students' perception, and exploring the pronunciation teaching strategy (Pawlak & Szyszka, 2018); Metruk, 2024; Suseno, 2023). The research on the students pronuncitioan proficiency also frequently done with differrent context and circumtances. Somehow, the regular research results on the students pronunciation proficiency is important as a valuaable input for the

educators regarding the problem identification and how to overcome it. Also, it is undeniable that English pronunciation is one of language components that students still need more coaching and practice.

Considering aforementioned situation, the researchers are intended to analyze the pronunciation proficiency on the segmental element namely English consonant features of MA Ibrahimy Kalipuro students. This reasearch is limited on the voiced and voicedless consonant discussion in order to contribute clear input for the English teacher and students. The results are expected to inspire the teacher to build student motivation and find effective strategy for teaching pronunciation. In short, the problem of the research can be formulated as “How is the pronunciation proficiency of the eleventh grade students at MA Ibrahimy Kalipuro?”

B. Research Method

This research used descriptive quantitative design. The researcher carried out the process of collecting data, analyzing data, making written reports regarding the results of the research conducted. In the elenth class, there were 54 students which are divided into two major namely science class cosisting 26 students and social class consisting 28 students. Then, all students of science class were take as respondent through porpusive sample technique. To collect the data, the researcher used performance test in the form of oral test. Here the respondents were asked to read a text consisting of 48 sentences which contains english consonants which are measured. Then the data was analyzed statistically by using percentage formula and categorized based on four score level taken from the English Teacher’s Lesson Plan at MA Ibrahimy Kalipuro namely very good (91-100) , good (81-90), fair (71-80), and poor (<70).

C. Research Finding and Discussion

1) The Research Findings

The researcher conducted research from February 02nd to February 18th 2023. The data obtained by asking students to read 48 sentences made by the researcher using texts proposed by the English teacher at MA Ibrahimy Kalipuro, the researcher asked them to read in turn and aloud so that the researcher could listen clearly how their pronunciation was produced. This data collection comes from the results of tests conducted on students in the eleventh science class, with a total of 26 students. Based on the test, students get an average score of 71. Therefore, students in eleventh science class at MA Ibrahimy Kalipuro mostly got the "Fair category". Fair category shows a score between 71-80. The score was obtained from the results of an oral test conducted on students using the reading aloud technique. The following is an explanation regarding the students' pronunciation proficiency in Voiced and Voiceless Consonants, as well as errors made by students when they carried out the test.

The Students' Pronunciation Proficiency in Voiced consonants

The average result of reading aloud test on voiced consonants was 72. It means that the students' pronunciation proficiency in Voiced consonants fell in "Fair" Category. The voiced consonants consist of (d, b, j, l, m, n, r, v, g, z, dʒ, ð, ʒ, ŋ, w). Most of the students could pronounce almost all the consonant items well. In these several consonants, students have no difficulties, and they carried out the place of articulation and manner of articulation smoothly, such as the consonant (d, b, l, m, n, r, v, g, dʒ, ð, ŋ, w). However, for the consonant (j, z, ʒ) most of the students have difficulties pronouncing because they did not do the place of articulation and manner of articulation correctly. So that, the total of students who could not pronounce the consonant /z/ (**Disease**) was 25 students (96.2%), then the total of students who could not pronounce the consonant /j/ (**Reduce**) was 26 students (100%), and for the last, the total of students who could not pronounce the consonant /ʒ/ (**Conclusion**) was 26 students (100%). Based on the result above, it could be seen from the total of 15 consonant items that most of the students could be pronounce 12 items correctly, and could not pronounce 3 items correctly.

The Students' Pronunciation Proficiency in Voiceless Consonants

The average result of reading aloud test on Voiceless Consonants was 69. It means that the students' pronunciation proficiency in Voiceless Consonants fell in "Poor" category. The Voiceless Consonants consists of (f, p, t, k, s, h, ʃ, θ, ʒ). The students could pronounce several of the consonant items well and correctly. However, students also got difficulties in several consonant items. In these several consonants, students have no difficulties, and they carried out the place of articulation and manner of articulation smoothly, such as the consonant (f, p, t, k, s, h). However, for the consonant (ʃ, ʒ, θ). Most of the students faced difficulties pronouncing because they did not do the place of articulation and manner of articulation correctly. So that, the total of students who could not pronounce the consonant /ʃ/ (**Chance**) was 22 students (84.6%), then the total of students who could not pronounce the consonant /ʒ/ (**Social**) was 25 students (96.2%), and for the last, the total of students who could not pronounce the consonant /θ/ (**Healthier**) were 22 students (84.6%). Based on the result above, it could be seen that out of a total of 9 consonant items that most of the students could pronounce 6 items correctly, and could not pronounce 3 items correctly.

2. Discussion

Based on the research finding, the researcher found a lot of things about errors of students' pronunciation proficiency. The Researcher would like to discuss it, which focuses on students' pronunciation proficiency in consonant features.

Students have difficulties when learning English, and they face a problem if they cannot master an important lesson in English. In this case, students are still having difficulties learning about speaking, especially the pronunciation aspect. Students still have several problems learning to speak English, although they have already gotten used to speaking it every day (Raharjo, 2015). Pronunciation is an aspect of speaking that students need to master so that they can form language patterns that suit native speakers, or at least make their abilities in speaking equal.

The researcher focuses on students' pronunciation proficiency in segmental elements. In this research the researcher especially focuses on consonant features. From the result of the research, students of MA Ibrahimy Kalipuro faced several problems, where students lack of knowledge about how to pronounce a word correctly. Students

pronouncing word based on what they have heard, and for some consonants that are still foreign for them, students just pronounce words in a random way without knowing the characteristics of correct pronunciation. Nunan (1989) argues that one of the standards of achievement in spoken conversation is the ability to apply language (Shumin, 2002). In this case, the eleventh science class students could not achieve a position in the "Good" even "Very Good" category. Students can pronounce English sentences based on what they often hear, but there is very little progress in their pronunciation. From 48 words taken from several texts given from English teacher at MA Ibrahimy Kalipuro. There are 2 types of consonant test questions, the first type is voiced consonants and the second one is Voiceless Consonants.

From the research that has been carried out, the results of the research showed that students have several pronunciation problems. The problems happened because students did not master English, especially pronunciation. This was due to lack exposure of English. Most of the students made the mistake of not pronouncing consonants or skipping consonants so that, the consonants were not read. Based on the results of the test, there are two categories that have been obtained by students, several students received the "Fair category" and others received the "Poor category". The total students who got the "Fair category" were 17 students (65.4%), while the total students who got the "Poor category" were 9 students (34.6%), then the students who got the "Good category" and "Very Good category" are nothing.

From the results of the test, it could have been known that the pronunciation proficiency in segmental element that is consonant feature of students at MA Ibrahimy Kalipuro was still in the "Fair" category, because there are several consonant items that are very easy to pronounce, and there are also several consonant items that was so difficult to pronounce. The following are examples of consonants that are both difficult and easy to pronounce:

A. Consonant Easy to Pronounce:

1. Voiced consonants: [/v/]: Improve, [/dʒ/]: Enjoy, [/w/]: We
2. Voiceless Consonants: [/h/]: Hobbies, [/s/]: Saving, [/f/]: Faster

B. Consonant Difficult to Pronounce:

1. Voiced consonants: [/z/]: Disease, [/j/]: Reduce, [/ʒ/]: Conclusion

2. Voiceless Consonants: [tʃ]: Chance, [ʃ]: Social, [θ]: Healthier

The results of this study confirm the results of previous studies (Hayati, 2021) and (Rosalin, 2021) where they also found that most of the students lacked pronunciation and had difficulty pronouncing English words. Most students did not understand how to do the correct pronunciation so that they could make their English speech understandable. In this study, the researcher found a lot of mistakes when students pronounced consonants. Students sometimes skipped and made mistakes when pronouncing consonant words, which made their language and utterances difficult to understand.

D. Conclusion

This research was conducted to know the pronunciation proficiency of the eleventh-grade science students at MA Ibrahimy Kalipuro. The results of tests conducted on students at MA Ibrahimy Kalipuro showed that the pronunciation proficiency of The Eleventh-Grade Students at MA Ibrahimy Kalipuro was “Fair”, with an average score of 71, “Fair” category that shows a score between 70-79. The students who got “Fair” category need to maintain or even have to increase their scores on pronunciation in reading aloud. There are 2 categories that students get after taking the test. The first category is “Fair” category, there are 17 students (65.4%) who got that category. Then, the second category is “Poor” category, there are 9 students (34.6%) got this category. “Poor” category that shows a score under 70. Based on the results of the test, it can be concluded that students of MA Ibrahimy Kalipuro still have fair proficiency in pronunciation.

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