

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is the beginning of this research. There are several points that will be discussed in this chapter; they are the background which explains the reason of the choosing of the topic, the research questions, the research purposes, the significances of the study, the rationale and research methodology which consists of six parts that describe the general design of this research.

A. Background

English pronunciation is not an easy thing to learn by those whose mother tongue is not English. There are several journals that study pronunciation errors made by students who learn English as the second language. It means that L2 learners still have some problems with pronunciation even though they often speak English (Lin, 2014). Therefore, the EFL students are more likely to have pronunciation problems due to the lack of practice (Hayati, 2010). The errors are predicted to happen because of the differences of sound systems between the languages and the inconsistency of English sounds (Swan & Smith, 1987; Brown, 1994; Hassan, 2014).

For Indonesian students, English is a foreign language. Therefore, there must be a lot of pronunciation errors concerning the different sound system of Indonesian and English made by them. It does not matter if the error committed is minor in which people still get the meaning of what being said. However, if the error is major, people will not understand even though the grammar is correct (AMEP,

2012). Regarding the problems mentioned, the intent of this study is to analyze pronunciation errors committed by EFL university students.

In order to know pronunciation errors committed by Indonesian EFL learners, an observation was conducted in a speaking class activities of English Education Department. The result of the observation showed that there were at least 45 words which were commonly mispronounced by the learners. The mispronunciation of those words indicates that English Education Department learners have some difficulty in English pronunciation. Thus, the pronunciation errors and the factors of pronunciation errors need to be analyzed.

Aktug (2015) states that research on pronunciation problems have not begun until 1980. Afterwards, researchers began to have an interest in the study of pronunciation. There are various studies of it, for example, the study of pronunciation errors conducted by Hassan (2014) about pronunciation problem in English Language Students of Sudan University of Science and Technology whose first language is Sudanese spoken Arabic.

This study has several similarities with the research done by Hassan (2014). The similarities are the analysis of vowel and consonant problems in English pronunciation, and the analysis of the factors which cause pronunciation errors. However, there is also a difference between this study and the previous study. Hassan (2014) used quantitative method and elaborated the findings descriptively and statistically, while this study uses qualitative method to elaborate the pronunciation errors and the factors.

Thus, this study intends to further analyze the pronunciation errors committed by English Education Department students of Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati, and investigate the factors which cause those errors. So it is decided that the title of this study is “The Analysis of Pronunciation Errors Committed by Undergraduate University Students of English Education Department at Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung”.

B. Research Questions

Based on the background, the following research questions are explored in this study:

1. What sounds do students of English Education Department commonly mispronounce in speaking English?
2. What are the factors of pronunciation errors committed by the English Education Department students?

C. Research Purposes

Based on the research questions, the purposes of this study are to achieve the following goals:

1. To investigate the sounds often mispronounced by The students of English Education Department in speaking English.
2. To know the factors of pronunciation errors committed by the English Education Department students.

D. Significances of the Study

Theoretically, this study is expected to give information to the lecturers about students' errors in pronunciation and the factors that make them so. The information can also be used by the students to introspect their own pronunciations. This study, which still has its weakness and gap, can be a reference for other researchers to study more about this topic.

Practically, the information from this study is expected to be beneficial for the lecturers to make strategies to teach pronunciation so that the students' pronunciation errors can be minimalized. Through this study, students can also use the information to practice their pronunciation in order to make it better.

E. Rationale

People who live in different areas pronounce English words differently since their native languages have a different sound system. It is hard for them to learn the pronunciation of other languages especially English (Kreidler, 2004). However, it is important to learn English pronunciation because learning English means learning to communicate by using that language which is necessary to speak. People, especially native speakers, will not understand the words spoken if the pronunciation is not correct (Setter, 2008). They are lack of patience when communicating with non-native speakers whose pronunciation are poor (Mulac, Harley, & Prigge, 1974; Kalin & Rayko, 1978; Callan, Gallois, & Forbes, 1983; Munro & Derwing, 1995).

Generally, pronunciation is the way a word is spoken. Phan & Vo (2012) and Gilakjani (2012) define that there are two aspects of pronunciation: segmental and suprasegmental. Segmental relates to phonetic terms such as consonants and vowels. In English, there are many words that have clusters, for example ‘statement’, ‘lord’, ‘slip’, etc., and diphthong and triphthong in vowels which do not exist in several other languages. Meanwhile suprasegmental is about linking, intonation, and stress. This suprasegmental aspect is important because the listeners will detect the meaning of the speaker whether it is asking, commanding, or stating and recognize the implied meaning of the words spoken.

If the listeners do not understand what the speakers say, it means that an error occurs. Dullay (1982) as cited in Sugiarto (2013) defined that “errors are the flawed side of learner speech”. The non-native learners, however, will not be able to speak English perfectly. There must be some flawed side, whether it is the consonants, vowels, intonation, or word stress. There are many factors that make the learners commit pronunciation errors (Doan, 2013).

Hassan (2014) divided the factors that affect pronunciation into four; they are mother tongue interferences, sound system differences, the inconsistency of some sounds in English, and the influence of spelling on pronunciation. According to Swan & Smith (1987), pronunciation errors occur when the ESL and EFL learners do negative transfer in which they reflect their first language sound system to the target language. This negative transfer is called mother tongue interference that is affected by the sound system differences of every language. One example of sound system differences is that English has more complex vowel system and

inconsistent sounds than other languages (Cruttenden & Gimson, 2014). It will confuse the learners and lead them to pronounce English words based on the spelling (Yule, 2010).

From the theories above, it is known that pronunciation for non-native speakers or learners cannot be separated from the errors. The learners whose second language is English still commit pronunciation errors (Centerman & Krausz, 2011), so the errors must be committed by those who learn English as a foreign language. There are five overall aspects of pronunciation errors but this study only analyzes two aspects which are commonly committed by EFL learners, they are consonants and vowels. This study also analyzes the factors that affect students' English pronunciation, whether it is affected by all four factors as Hassan has mentioned in his journal or not.

F. Limitation of the Study

Based on the research rationale, there are two major elements of pronunciation. They are segmental which consists of consonant and vowel, and suprasegmental which consists of linking, intonation, and stress. Meanwhile, Doan (2013) stated that there are many factors that cause the learners commit pronunciation errors. Therefore, this study is limited to:

1. Analyze the consonant and vowel errors committed by the participants in pronouncing the words of the given text.

2. Focus on four factors of pronunciation errors. They are mother tongue interference, sound system difference, the inconsistency of English sounds, and the influence of spelling on pronunciation.



G. Research Methodology

1. Research Design

This research uses qualitative method. The data are collected and analyzed in order to answer the research questions. This method enables a researcher to elaborate the pronunciation errors, both vowels and consonants, committed by the first semester students of English Education Department in Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, and the linguistic factors of it. Since this research is an analysis, it has no variables x and y . According to Creswell (2012) *'qualitative research is best suited to address a research problem in which you do not know the variables and need to explore'*.

2. Data Collection

In this study, there are four steps of collecting the data to answer two research questions. The four steps are adapted from the previous studies by Hassan (2014) and Sugiarto (2013). Hassan (2014) used observation, recording test, and questionnaire to collect the data he needed, while Sugiarto (2013) used recording test, transcription, and analysis. The first step of this study is observing the speaking activity of English Education Department students in a class which is adapted from Hassan's (2014) study. The second step is recording the participants which is adapted from both Hassan's (2014) and Sugiarto's (2013) study. The third step is interviewing the participants which is adapted from Hassan's (2014) questionnaire. The interview is used instead of questionnaire in order to collect more detail information from the participants. The last step is transcribing the result of audio recorder and interview which is adapted from Sugiarto's (2013) study.

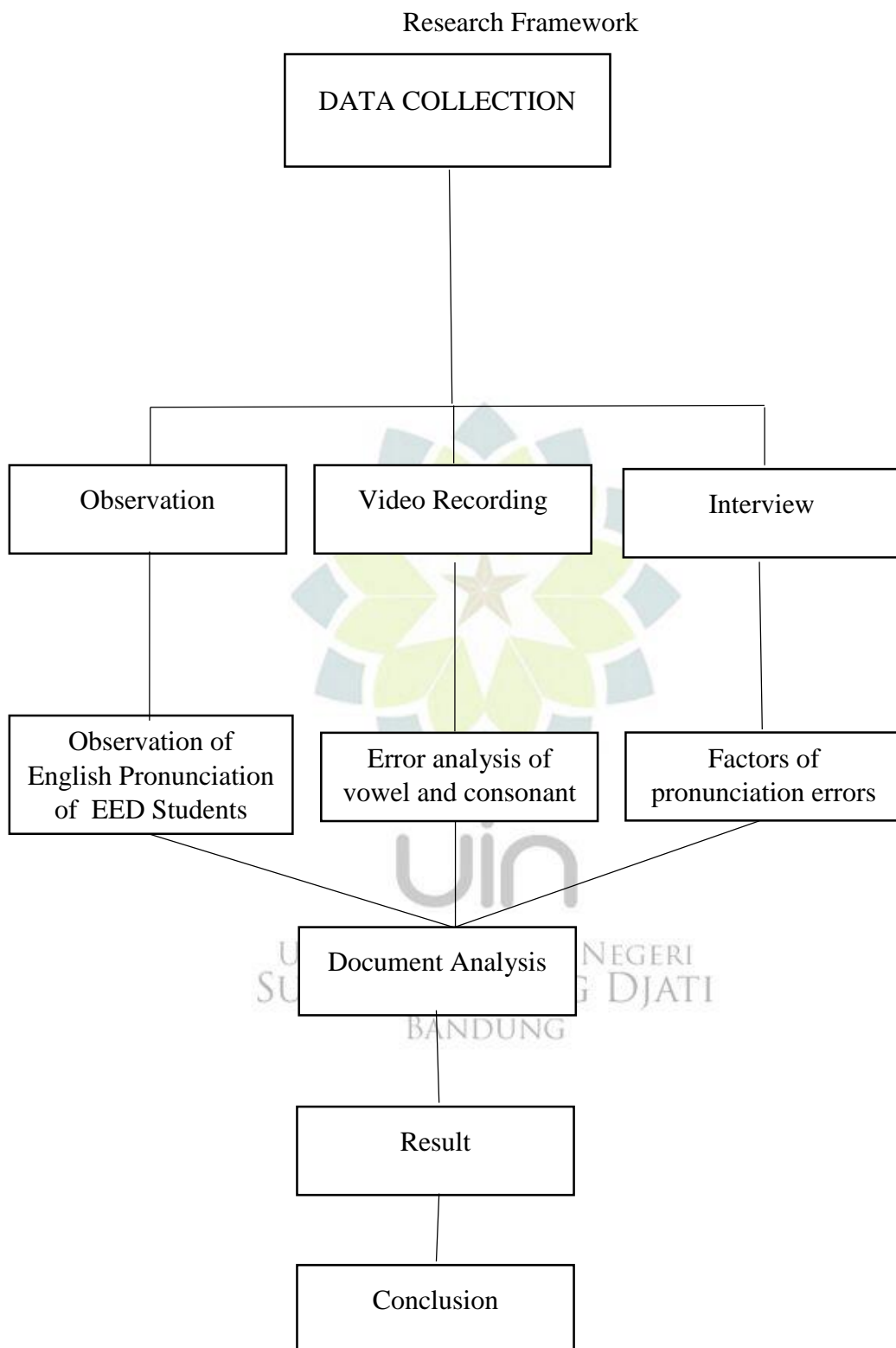


Figure 1.1 frame of research

Firstly, an observation is carried out in order to know the pronunciation of English Education Department (EED) students when they are speaking in a class. The speaking activity is recorded to be observed furthermore. In addition, a note-taking is used during the activity in case there is a sound problem in the recorder.

Secondly, a text is provided for the selected students to read aloud. The students are recorded when they are reading the text. The audio recorder is a proper instrument for analyzing pronunciation because it can be listened to as many times as it is needed.

In the next step, the students are asked to read a text while their speaking is recorded. then to answer the research question number two, there is an interview with them. The questions of the interview lead them to answer the factors of their pronunciation errors. There are four factors that will be investigated in this research; they are mother tongue interference, sound system differences, the inconsistency of English words, and the influence of the spelling on pronunciation.

After the data have been collected from the observation, the audio recorder and the interview, those data are transcribed into written text. The result of the observation is in the form of observation sheet, meanwhile, the audio recorder is in the form of phonetic transcription, and the result of the interview is typed in the form of a dialogue. Those written data then will be analyzed to get the result and answer the research questions.

3. Research Site

The data are collected in Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati, Bandung, particularly in English Education Department. Concerning the other research about pronunciation in universities, it is possible that most students of English Language in every university in Indonesia have some difficulties in pronouncing English words because Indonesian and English has a different sound system (Brown, 1994; Hassan, 2014; Swan & Smith, 1987). There are a lot of universities which provide English Language major, and one of them is Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Gunung Djati in Bandung. This site is chosen because students' pronunciation problems are found in a subject presentation in class, even though the students are in the seventh semester. In addition, the Institution gives a space to conduct a research.

4. Participants

In choosing the participants, the purposive sampling method is used. Creswell (2012) stated that purposive sampling can help a qualitative researcher to understand the central phenomenon and detailed information about the people or site. In this case, three students who commit pronunciation errors are chosen. If there is no error committed by them, then the data cannot be analyzed.

Concerning the statement which said that every language has a different sound system (Swan & Smith, 1987; Brown, 1994; Hassan, 2014), it is considered that Indonesian sound system is different from English, and it might cause the Indonesian students mispronounce of English words. After it is known that it is

possible for the students to make some pronunciation errors, three students are selected at the research site to be the participants of the present research.

5. Instruments

There are three kinds of instrument that are used in this study; they are observation, audio recorder, and interview.

a. Observation

Observation is a method that is used to collect qualitative data from the lecturer and the learners which is intended to observe the phenomenon of methodology of teaching English that was experienced by them. Instead of generalizing to a population, observation is used to develop an in-depth exploration of a central phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). Therefore, in this study, observation is used to observe English pronunciation of English Education Department (EED) students in speaking activity. Furthermore, the data from the observation are used to validate the data which are taken from audio recorder and interview.

b. Audio Recorder

Creswell (2012) stated that audiovisual materials are the types of data in the form of audios or videos which help a researcher to understand the central phenomenon under the study. In this study, the audiovisual material that will be taken is audio recorder which records the three selected students when they are reading an English text aloud.

c. Interview

Interview data collection occurs when a researcher asks one or more participants orally, then the results are transcribed and typed into the computer (Creswell, 2012). A qualitative interview uses semi-structured questions to get the detailed information from the participants that will serve the data and answer the research questions. In the present research, the purpose of the interview is to know the factors that cause the students commit pronunciation errors.

6. Data Analysis

There are six steps of analyzing the data based on Creswell (2012). They are preparing and organizing the data for analysis, exploring and coding the data, using codes to build description and themes, representing and reporting findings, interpreting findings, and validating the accuracy of the findings.

a. Prepare and organize the data for analysis

The data from three instruments are organized. The three instruments are observation, audio recorders, and interview. The first instrument is observation which is used to observe English pronunciation of EED students in speaking activity. The second instrument is the audio recorder of three selected students reading an English text aloud. From those recorders, their pronunciation will be analyzed based on the aspect of consonant and vowel quality. The third instrument is an interview with the students concerning the causal factor of their pronunciation errors. Then the audio recorders and the interview will be transcribed and analyzed in order to answer the research questions.

b. Explore and code the data

After preparing and organizing the data, the data are explored. It is done by listening to the recorders several times and reading the result of the interview. Listening to the recorders cannot be done just once because there might be some missed and unclear words, it should be, at least, done five to ten times.

The next step is coding the data. To answer research question number one, pronunciation error is categorized into two aspects, they are consonant and vowel quality. In order to avoid unnecessary repetition of those words, two codes are used to replace the two aspects; “CE” for Consonant Error and “VE” for Vowel Error. Whereas to answer research question number two, the result of the interview is categorized into five codes. They are Mother Tongue Interference, Sound System Difference, Inconsistency of English Sounds, Influence of Spelling, and Other Possible Reasons.

c. Use codes to build description and themes

The further step is using the codes to build description and themes. The codes “VE” and “CE” are used to classify pronunciation errors committed by the participants. After determining the types of errors of each word, the codes are explained in detail. Meanwhile, the codes Mother Tongue Interference, Sound System Difference, Inconsistency of English Sounds, Influence of Spelling, and Other Possible Reasons are used to classify the factors of pronunciation errors.

d. Represent and report findings

After coding and building description and themes, the findings will be represented. The findings are represented by showing the tables which consist of

two kinds of pronunciation errors, consonant and vowel, committed by the students in reading a given English text, and the description of the result of the interview.

e. Interpret findings

In this step, the findings are discussed based on the theoretical framework, and the result will be concluded.

f. Validate the accuracy of the findings

From the interpretation of the findings, the data are validated by using triangulation. Triangulation is the process of confirming the evidence of a research that uses more than one individuals, types of data, or methods of data collection in order to strengthen the findings (Creswell, 2012). In this study, the triangulation that is used is triangulation methods of data collection. It has been mentioned that three instruments are used in this study, they are observation, audio recorder, and interview. The audio recorder is used to answer research question number one, the interview is used to answer research question number two, while the observation is used to validate the data which are taken from the audio recorder and the interview.

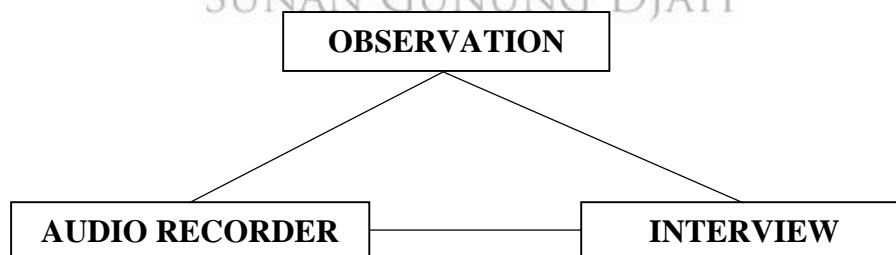


Figure 1.2 Triangulation

The audio recorder is used to know the sounds that the students of English Education Department commonly mispronounce. The data from this instrument can be validated by the data taken from observation. For example, from the audio recorder, the sound that the participant commonly mispronounce is the consonant 'v'. Instead of pronouncing /v/, they pronounce it as /f/. If the data from the observation show that the students often replace the sound /v/ with /f/, then the data from the audio recorder are valid.

The observation is also used to validate the data from interview. For example, from the interview, it is known that one of the factors of pronunciation errors committed by the participant is mother tongue interference. If the data from the observation show that when speaking English, the students switch the language to Indonesian, then the data from the interview are valid.





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