Pronunciation Errors of Fricative Sounds Made by English Students

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Abstract

This research aims to identify pronunciation errors position made by students in the English Education Study Program University of Bengkulu and the sound that had the highest error percentage. This research was a descriptive quantitative research. To collect data, the researcher took 19 students from 94 students of the 7th semester in the academic year 2020/2021. The pronunciation test used in this study consisted of 35 words, each of which had one of the seven fricative sounds tested. To analyze the data obtained, researcher used the Audacity application with the help of Google Translate application. Audacity is used to see the amplitude generated from students. Meanwhile, Google Translate is a tool for comparing received pronunciation and pronunciation produced by students. The results of this study revealed that the most pronunciation errors that made by students occurred in the final position when compared the initial and medial. In addition, among seven fricative sounds, / ʒ / was the highest percentage of errors with 78%. Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the students' pronunciation ability of fricative sounds not affected on the level of the semester is taken but it depends on the position and the fricative sound.

Keywords: Fricative sounds, Pronunciation, Error

Introduction

Pronunciation consists of organized sounds produced by air passing through the articulation organs (Tussa'adah, 2018). It can also be said that pronunciation is a way of producing words that are generally accepted or understood. Rafael (2019) revealed that some of the features that need to be

considered in pronunciation include stress, rhythm and intonation. On the other hand, Irianto (2018) stated that pronunciation is used to make a meaning.

According to Dalton and Seildhofer in Giantari (2020) pronunciation is the production and reception of sound. Every language has different segments and speakers learning the language must also learn the source of the speech sounds. Fauzi (2014) argued that when someone learns a foreign language (English), usually most aspects of their first language's phonological system are carried over to the second pronunciation. When there is a mixture of L1 and L2, it is common to find pronunciation errors that are often found.

In contrast to mistakes, pronunciation errors occur because of the interference from first language acquisition to the target language with a different structure. Meanwhile, mistakes occur because of the speaker's circumstances that involve and affect the speaker's performance by causing errors. In other words, mistakes only occur at certain times. In addition, Corder in Making (2017) stated that mistakes are not important in the language learning process.

According to Hasyim in Putra (2019) error analysis is a technique for identifying, classifying and systematically interpreting mistakes made by someone learning a foreign language by using one of the linguistic principles and procedures. James (2013) revealed four procedures for analyzing data in error analysis. There are consist of identification of errors, describing the error, explanation of errors and evaluation of errors.

Pronunciation errors made by students from the English Department Study Program occur for several reasons (Hartoto, 2010). First, because English is not the first language of students so sometimes students will find it strange to say the English word. Second, students have limited time and scope to practice pronouncing English sounds in class and do not practice at home. Third, there is a difference in the sound system between English and their language making it difficult for students to pronounce English. This makes students less motivated to learn English, especially pronunciation.

Surgiarto (2013) mentioned two factors that cause errors. First, the first language disorder and the target language being studied. Errors that are caused by distraction or reflecting the structure of the original language are called interlingual errors. While the second factor is caused by the target language which does not reflect the structure of the first language but is usually caused by overgeneralization due to the lack of competence of the target language. It is called intralingual errors.

There are two types of sounds in English that have their respective symbols and pronunciation, vowels and consonants. Abdel-Lateef in Irianto (2018) consonants are speech sounds produced by a kind of constrictions in the vowel channel. Consonants have several transcriptions which are pronounced in voice and voiceless. Rustipa (2009) in general, consonants are classified based on the place of obstruction where two lips or at the end of the upper tooth descent the place of obstruction (air is partially or completely obstructed by the larynx or speech organs or obstructed in the mouth) so that it makes it voiceless or voiceless.

Arini (2009) some of consonants which is not exist in Indonesia are /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /ʒ/, and /ʃ/. All of these are included in the fricative sounds. Beside the five sounds, there are /f/ and /z/ that will be discussed in this study. Fricatives are one of the consonants kinds that produced by forcing air through a narrow channel made by placing two articulators close together (Imanola, 2019). The error that the students make on fricative sounds is divided into three sound positions. These three are initial, medial, and final.

English Education Study Program students who will become teachers are required to be able to pronounce English words correctly. This is because the teacher's pronunciation in the classroom is very influential in the language teaching process. Students will assume what the teacher said in school is the right thing so that they subconsciously follow what the teacher has done before. Schools are generally the first place for students to learn foreign languages, especially English. English lessons in schools usually use American English principles. The noun vocabulary and how to pronounce it certainly

conforms to the American English accent and rules. The knowledge and pronunciation that they learn in school will be brought to them to college. When students pronounce the words in the wrong way, an error occurs. This error is called pronunciation errors of words.

This study was supported by Irianto (2018) as the previous study which conducted in the same place, English Education Study Program University of Bengkulu. The difference is that previous research took the subject of the 5th semester of the 2015/2016 academic year. Furthermore, Irianto's study only focused on two of the English consonant fricative sounds, / θ / and / ð /. However, the results found remain in the conclusion that English students have not been able to get a good predicate and still have high errors in certain sounds.

To find out the position of pronunciation errors on fricative sounds and sounds that had the highest error percentage made by 7th semester students of English Education at the University of Bengkulu, the researchers considered that the current research was feasible to do. The questions from this study are as follows: 1. What pronunciation errors do English students at the University of Bengkulu produce in fricative sounds? 2. What fricative sound had the most error percentage for English students at the University of Bengkulu? The researcher hope that this research can be useful for students, teachers, lecturers, and the English Department Study Program.

Research Methodology

A descriptive quantitative method was used in this research. Aggarwal (2008) descriptive quantitative research is devoted to the gathering of information about prevailing conditions or situations for description and interpretation. The research was conducted at the English Education Study Program of Bengkulu University with a population of 94 seventh semester students consisting of 3 classes. The researcher then took 20% of the students from each class to become a sample. The total sample in this study were 19 students consisting of 6 students in class A, 7 students in class B and 6 students

in class C. The pronunciation test used as an instrument contains 35 words consisting of 3 positions and 7 fricative sounds. This test was adapted from Maulidiana (2020).

Instructions:

Please read through the following list consonant fricatives sounds of words one time silently, then read them aloud at a comfortable and natural pace.

Sounds	Initial	Medial	Final
/f/	Food Phone	Emphasis Nephew	Laugh Enough
/v/	Vain Very	Over Prevent	Survive Alive
/ʃ/	Sugar Shadow	Machine Ocean	Smash Accomplish
/ʒ/	Genre	Measure Disclosure	Beige Massage
/θ/	Thin Through	Method Birthday	Both Cloth
/ð/	They Those	Father Bother	
/z/	Zone Zero		

The research data then were analyzed using Audacity application with help Google Translate as a reference for accepted pronunciation. Audacity is an application that supports researcher to be able to combine pronunciation of native speakers or received pronunciation and students' pronunciation. The resulting difference in amplitude between the two will then be further analyzed by paying attention to the position of the fricative sounds in the word.

Meanwhile, the difference in amplitude between received pronunciation and students' pronunciation then be used to analyzed the percentage of errors made by students. To calculated the errors that occur using the following formula:

$$P = \frac{F \times 100}{N}$$

Where;

P : Percentage

F : Frequency of students' pronunciation in wrong/right way

N : Number of Questions

   (Arikunto, 2003)

After getting the number of percentages of the students' errors pronounciation, the researcher would classify it into criteria. The criteria proposed by Depdikbud in Irianto (2018) as follows:

| Percentage	Classifications
66 % - 100 %	High error
36 % - 65 %	Moderate error
0 % - 35 %	Low error

Results and Discussion

Results

**Students in Pronouncing Fricative Sounds**

The recorded data were transcribed into phonetic symbols to compare the students' pronunciation with the pronunciation accepted as the standard of pronunciation. Three categories of student error positions will be found; initial, medial, and final. Below were three examples of data analysis by using Audacity.

SP (Students' Pronunciation)

RP (Received Pronunciation)
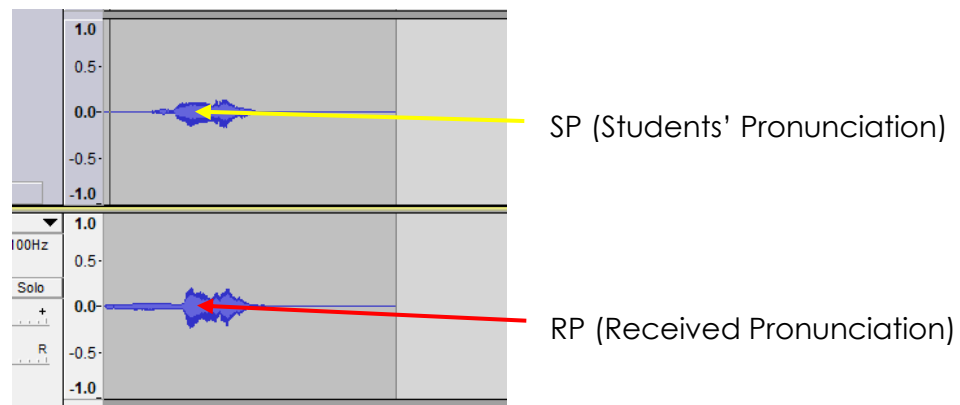
This figure is a comparison of pronunciation of the word "They" between RP and SP (Initial). There is a comparison between native speakers and students who pronounce the consonant / ð / at the beginning of the word "they". The student pronounces the word / dā /, not / T̲H̲ā /. Substitution of sounds made by students from / T̲H̲ / to / d / causes not accepted pronunciation.

SP (Students' Pronunciation)

RP (Received Pronunciation)
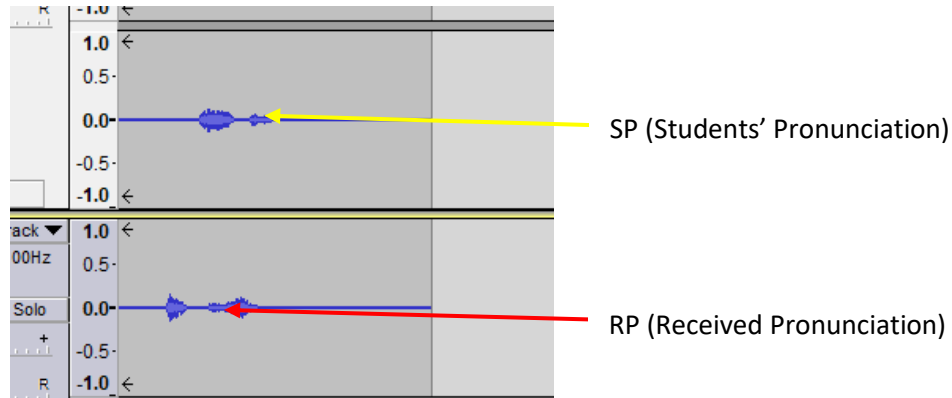
The picture above is A comparison of pronunciation of the word "Nephew" between RP and SP (Medial). Supposedly in saying the word "nephew", the tongue is slightly flat so it becomes / ˈnefyo͞o /. However, students have difficulty pronouncing the sound and replacing it with / nipyo͞o /.

RP (Received Pronunciation)

SP (Students' Pronunciation)
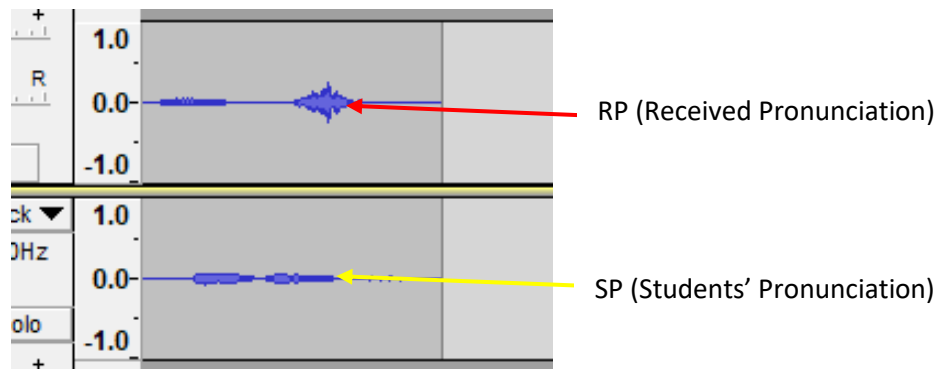
As seen in the figure, there is a comparison between native speakers and students pronouncing the consonant / ʒ / at the final of the word "beige". The results of the figure conclude that students substitute the sound / ZH / in the consonant / ʒ / with / CH /.
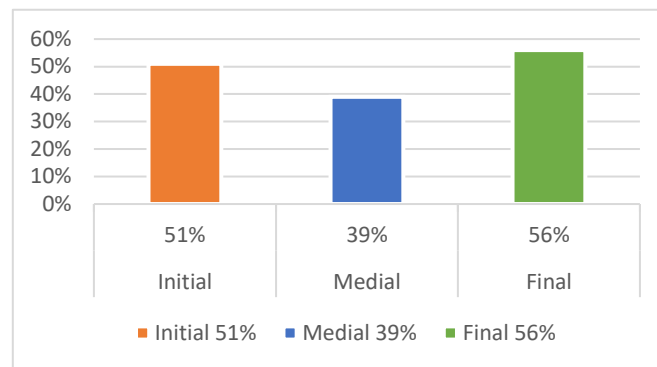
From the graph above, the number of pronunciation errors made by students is different for each sound position. 51% for early positions drops significantly to 39% if placed in the middle. On the other hand, if you put it at the end of the word, the error increases quite high at 56%. This percentage shows that students have difficulty pronouncing fricative sounds when the sound location changes. In conclusion, the total of students' average in this pronunciation error test was 49,7.

The Percentage of Students' Pronunciation Errors of Fricative Sounds

The table below is the overall result of the 7th semester students of English Education Study Program errors in fricative pronunciation. The data from the table then be used to find a higher pronunciation error percentage than the other sounds.

No.	Sounds	Errors	Total
1	/f/ (N=6)	67 (59%)	114 (100%)
2	/v/ (N=6)	61 (53,5%)	114 (100%)
3	/ ∫ / (N=6)	39 (34%)	114 (100%)
4	/ʒ/ (N=5)	74 (78%)	95 (100%)
5	/θ/ (N=6)	59 (52%)	114 (100%)
6	/ð/ (N=4)	24 (32%)	76 (100%)
7	/z/ (N=2)	6 (16%)	38 (100%)

Based on the number of percentages in the table above, it can be concluded that the percentage value of the seven fricative sounds in the correct answer and the wrong answer for each sound is different. According to table 9, students of the 7th semester 2020/2021 academic year of the English Education Study Program received the highest percentage of error is in the / ʒ / sound with 78%. Then / f / with 59%, / v / with 53,5%, / θ / with 52%, / ∫ / with 34%, / ð / with 32%, and last is / z / sound with 16%.

Discussion

Students in Pronouncing Fricative Sounds

In this study, students were given 35 words consisting of 7 fricative sounds. 5 of them are / ʒ / sounds; genre, beige, measure, massage, and disclosure. After analyzing the data that had been obtained, the researcher found that at least 3 out of 5 words that contained the / ʒ / sound were pronounced incorrectly by students. For example, / ʒ / sound in the word "Beige", most students pronounce it like / bēCH / and / bāt / rather than / bāZH /. Then in the word "Massage", students tend to say / ˈmesij / compare / məˈsäZH /.

In addition, the sounds that are placed in a different place in each word can affect the difficulty level of students. This is evidenced by the results of data analysis which show the level of error of the students in the three sound positions (initial, medial, and final) are different. Students tend to make a higher error if the fricative sound is put at the end of a word. Meanwhile, it decreases if the sound is in the middle of a word.

The results of the students' errors in this study can be caused by various factors. Maulidiana (2020) argued that the difficulty most students face is when articulating words that contain fricative sounds, such as / f /, / v /, / θ /, / ð /, / ʃ /, and / ʒ /. Arini (2009) revealed that some consonants that do not exist in Indonesian are / v /, / θ /, / ð /, / ʒ /, and / ʃ /. Fauzi (2014) believed that the unavailability of this sound is one of the factors causing difficulties for students. This makes students feel strange when they hear or say fricative sounds.

The Percentage of Students' Pronunciation Errors of Fricative Sounds

The error criteria according to the Depdikbud in Irianto (2018) were divided into; High error (66% -100%), moderate error (36% -65%) and low error (0% -35%). The data shown by the results in Table 9 show that the students' ability to pronounce / ʒ / sound is classified as a high error with an accumulative percentage of 78%. This makes / ʒ / votes the highest percentage of errors by 7th semester students. Besides that, all the errors made by 7th semester students, which reached 49,7 were included in the moderate error category.

Another factor that can affect the percentage of results is the absence of specific courses on pronunciation that will be studied by students in the English Department (Giantari, 2020). The accuracy of pronunciation by students is very important for their future life as prospective teachers. Someone who gets information will increase the level of knowledge about something (Nursalam & Pariani, 2010). Therefore, to avoid and overcome the many pronunciation errors in fricative sounds, it is very important to deepen and practice the fricative pronunciation material for students.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Conclusion

Based on the research results, the researcher can be concluded that the students' pronunciation ability of fricative sounds not affected on the level

of the semester taken. This is proven by the fact that even though the data was taken from the 7th semester students, the results stated that the percentage of errors that occurred was still high. In addition, the errors made by students depends on the position of the fricative sound. From the data obtained, students tend to make more errors in the final than the initial and medial with 56%. Lastly, the highest percentage among the seven fricative sounds tested was / ʒ /. This sound reached 78% and it makes into the high error category.

Suggestion

There are some recommendations of this research. First, for students in the English Language Education Program, it is very important to learn and acquire mastery of pronunciation. Students are advised to learn more and practice fricative sounds because the percentage of pronunciation errors is still very high.

Second, for teachers, lecturers, and the English Education Study Program are expected to be able to design material to equip students' pronunciation skills. This is because so far teaching in the classroom has focused more on structural grammar, not on speaking skills, especially pronunciation. It is even better if a specific course is made in this field so that students get the same pronunciation learning time as what they get for the other skill field.

Third, for other researchers it is suggested to more focus on aspects or factors that affect the pronunciation of English students' consonants. In the future, it is hoped that other researchers can improve the deficiencies that exist in this study. Then in choosing the subject, other researchers should take more from the existing population and from the entire semester to get more accurate data.

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