

**STUDENTS' PROBLEM IN PRONOUNCING ENGLISH
VOWEL AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF IAIN LANGSA**

THESIS

By

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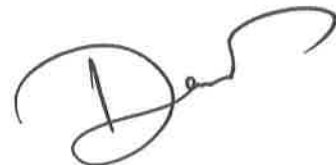
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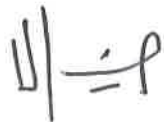
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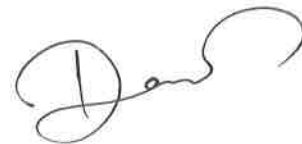
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Dengan ini menyatakan bahwa skripsi saya yang berjudul **"Students' Problem In Pronouncing English Vowel At English Department Of IAIN Langsa"** untuk memperoleh gelar sarjana adalah karya sendiri.

Apabila di kemudian hari ternyata terbukti hasil jiplakan karya orang lain, saya bersedia menerima sanksi sesuai ketentuan yang berlaku atas perbuatan saya tersebut.

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Yang membuat pernyataan


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In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious and the Most Merciful

All praise be to Allah who has given me His love and compassion to finish the last assignment in my study. Salutations and peace be upon the prophet Muhammad SAW, his companions, his family, and his followers.

Alhamdulillah by the grace of Allah, I could finish her thesis with entitled: **“STUDENTS’ PROBLEM IN PRONOUNCING ENGLISH VOWEL AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF IAIN LANGSA.”** On this occasion, I would like to express my deep gratitude to my beloved parents and lecturers who support and encourage me to finish my study and my thesis.

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The Writer

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ABSTRACT

Jihan Nadila Asri, 2022. Students' Problem In Pronouncing English Vowel At English Department Of IAIN Langsa

Supervisor (1). Shafrida Wati, MA. **(2).** Dessy Kurniasy, M. Hum.

The objective of this study was to find out students' problem in pronouncing English Vowel at English Department of IAIN Langsa. This research was qualitative research. By using a variety of natural approaches, qualitative research aims to describe phenomena in words and language that study subjects experience, such as behavior, perception, motivation, actions, and others, in a holistic manner. The instrument of this research was interview. Interview is a verbal descriptive process in which two or more people interact physically. Because people can see the faces of others and hear the sound of their own ears, interviews have proven to be effective instruments for gathering information on various forms of social data. Semi-structured interviews were the method of interviewing that was used in this study. The subjects of study in this research were six students of the sixth semester who had learnt pronunciation at English department in IAIN Langsa. This study focused on students problem in pronouncing English vowel. After collecting the data, they were analyzed, displayed, and described to find out valid results. Findings showed that the students difficulties included lack of vocabulary, difficulties in distinguish similiar sounds but have different meaning, and lack of practice.

Keywords: Students' Problem, Pronunciation, English Vowel

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

English has become a very important language in the world. Almost everyone from various countries in the world uses it to communicate. English has always been a special interest for everyone, especially students. That is why it is important to speak English in learning, so that everyone can communicate using English language. But in speaking English, we frequently difficult to find some problem in pronouncing vowels.

Pronunciation is an important form of communication, especially for students who want to master any foreign language, including English language. Pronunciation is the way of pronouncing words in English language. When using English language, we need to observe to the pronunciation of words when speaking in English language. It is related to speaking, listening, and reading. Having a bad pronunciation can make a bad effect to those skills. In this case, most of students face difficulty in speaking English, which one is in pronouncing vowel. In pronouncing English vowel, the spoken pronunciation must be clear and appropriate. However, with having a good pronunciation people can communicate with the others and they can understand something that we want try to say.

In teaching pronunciation, teacher should use their creativity to come up with practical strategies that help the students understand the subject matter¹. Reading aloud could be used as a method for practicing pronunciation. Reading aloud is an oral activity that requires a thorough comprehension of the letters in order to develop the appropriate voice that conveys meaning and context from the text². When non-native students seek to learn the pronunciation of the English language, they may experience certain problems. They must learn to detect the speech sounds that occur in the language and generate those foreign sounds with their organs of speech.

By doing this research will provide an opportunity for the writer himself to find out how the students' speaking ability in pronouncing words. Many linguists and researchers conclude that the problem of English pronunciation among speakers of other languages is the same but in accordance with the background of each language. We will look at some of the factors that influence second language learning (L2) in general and English pronunciation in particular and also try to identify the exact reasons behind these problems and finally try to find appropriate techniques and strategies that help students to improve their pronunciation skills.

¹ Giljani, A. P. *The Significance of Pronunciation in English Language Teaching*. *Journal of English Language Teaching*. Canada: Canadian Center of Science and Education, (2012) 96-107

² Afifah, L. *An Analysis of Students Pronunciation Errors in Reading Texts the Sixth Grade students of SDN Cisaueun Bandung Barat*, English Education Study Program Language and Arts Department of Sekolah Tinggi Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan (STKIP) Siliwangi Bandung (Bandung: STKIP Siliwangi), (2015) 2

The differences in language elements between Bahasa Indonesia and English may make studying this foreign language challenging for Indonesian students, but it will also help them generate better pronunciation³. For example, English has twelve vowels, while Indonesian has only six. There are no vowels α :, ae , ϵ :, i :, o :, and u in Indonesian pronunciation. Because the concept of short and long vowels does not exist in Indonesian, these sounds will most likely be treated similarly by Indonesian students. Vowels were used to understand how the sound came out of the mouth so that they could produce English correctly. By studying vowels, students will be able to speak English properly in daily conversation.

As students, especially in the English department, many students face difficulties when taking pronunciation classes. What happened was the lack of knowledge as a new student about the spelling and pronunciation of a word using a phonetic symbol. Problems usually occur in the learning process, and it is a natural part that often happens. The learning process can function as a tool and process used to analyze a problem. In the English Foreign Language (EFL) course, teachers can use student problems to help them forecast and understand the pronunciation difficulties their students are experiencing. Meanwhile, students must be made aware of the differences between their mother tongue and second language during the learning process.

³ Nurul Frijuniarsi, Syntactical error analysis on students' translations from Indonesian into English text, *Journal of English Language Teaching*, Jakarta Selatan: Universitas Indraprasta PGRI, Vol.08(3) (Sep.), (2016) 289-301

Based on the above reasons, the researcher was interested in discussing **“STUDENTS’ PROBLEM IN PRONOUNCING ENGLISH VOWEL AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF IAIN LANGSA”**. The researcher chose English Department of IAIN Langsa, because most of the students in English department still had many problems in pronouncing English Vowels correctly, even though they got English lessons in the English department. Many of them did not master English with good pronunciation.

B. Research Question

The researcher formulated a research question, namely:

What were the students’ problems in pronouncing English Vowel at English Department Of IAIN Langsa?

C. Purpose of Study

Based on the research question above, the purpose of this study was to find out what are the students’ problems in pronouncing English vowel at English department of IAIN Langsa.

D. Significance of Study

The researcher hopes that the results of this study can help students improve their English vowel pronunciation skills. This research not only provides information but can also be used as a reference for other related researchers.

1. Theoretical

The results of this research can provide an explanation of the problem that arise and the causes behind the problems with English vowel pronunciation at English Department of The Ministry Of Religious Affairs State Institute For Islamic Studies Langsa.

2. Practical

Researcher hope that the results of this study can be useful for students. The advantage that can be obtained is that students are able to develop an understanding of pronunciation and help students to improve their speaking skills in the future. And the findings of this research can be useful to other researchers, because it may help them in identifying references for further studies.

CHAPTER IV

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

A. Research Finding

The researcher delivered the research findings based on the findings of the investigation into the research issue. Based on the research interview phase, the statistics were presented. The interview took place with sixth semester English Department students at IAIN Langsa.

The researcher conducted interviews with students in the English department of IAIN Langsa to learn more about their pronunciation issues with English vowels. The researcher can determine the students vowel pronunciation issues with this tool.

- a. The importance of pronouncing English properly.

All of the participants said it was important for English students to pronounce English properly. One of the students stated that:

“It is important for an English student to have the proper pronunciation. With proper pronunciation, the possibility of misunderstanding between the information giver and the recipient of the information can be minimized, the intent or purpose to be conveyed by the information provider can be conveyed properly if it is done with correct and good pronunciation in English to those who receive the information”.

- b. The pronunciation of English is a challenge for students.

The majority of students have trouble pronouncing words in English. These included lack of vocabulary, they could not identify sounds as some similar sounds but different meaning, and lack of practice. DS stated that:

“The problem I face , there are vocabulary in English that have the same sound, but the writing and meaning are not the same. This causes she difficulty for me in pronouncing a vocabulary correctly.”

While other participant stated problem she faced that:

”Lack of direct practical theory. This is because, at that time I was following that class via online. At the time of attending the class, I was only given a theory without any direct practice. Which makes it difficult for me to pronounce a word according to the rules of sound.”

- c. Students’ understanding on the definition of vowel sounds.

Most of the students said that, vowel sound was a vocal which contained a,i,u,e,o. IF stated that:

“I honestly not know what vowel sounds because the vowel sound is taught when students take pronunciation classes, unfortunately in that class she only get a theoretical understanding. So when I wanted to know the correct sound and pronunciation of a word looks like, then I will open google translate and listen to what the sound or pronunciation conveyed by google translate”.

- d. The students' ability in distinguishing between /u:/ and /ʊ/.

Students had difficulties when they had to distinguish between the two phonetic symbols above, but there were some students who understood the symbols above. One of the participant stated that:

“The way of pronouncing the symbol /u:/ is by emphasizing the symbol so that it causes a long pronunciation sound, while the way of pronouncing the symbol /ʊ/ there is no emphasis in the phonetic symbol where this phonetic symbol is often found in words that have the letter double o.”

While other participants stated problem when she made a difference between those phonetic symbols. She stated that she did not know how to pronounce the phonetic symbols above because of the lack of explanation she received on how to pronounce the phonetic symbols. But she learned these symbols while she took pronunciation class.

- e. The students difficulties in pronounce those words.

All of the participants found difficulties in pronouncing those words. These included the lack of understanding of the phonetic symbols. One of the participants stated when the researcher gave an example of a word that did not have a phonetic symbol, it was very easy for her to pronounce the word. However when the words have phonetic symbols on it, she found difficulties to pronounce those word forms contained in the phonetic symbols. It was difficult for her to pronounce the words above, especially

for words that have phonetic symbols. Lack of knowledge of how to pronounce phonetic symbols properly makes it difficult for her to pronounce the words above.

B. DISCUSSION

According on the interview findings, the researcher discovered the students' problem in pronouncing English vowel at English department of IAIN Langsa. The result of the research showed that some of the students in six semester found difficulties in pronouncing words. The problems that faced by the students in pronouncing English vowel were lack of vocabulary, difficulties in distinguishing similiar sounds but have different meanings, and lack of practice.

In this study, most of the students said that, vowels were vowel sounds that contained a, i, u, e, o from here, there was a problem with students where they did not understand the division of English vowels themselves. Students also had difficulty when the researcher gave the basic form of phonetic symbols which according to the researcher phonetic symbols were very easy to understand but very difficult for students to understand. They did not know the meaning and they could not read phonetic symbols. The lack of practical theory in pronunciation was also experienced by students. The last student who had participated in this study answered clearly the questions posed by the researcher. From this, the researcher obtained results that can be presented in further explanations which are expected to be useful for other researchers.

The other research found similar findings that the major problem in pronouncing English was related to sound. A research by Ika showed that, The research issues were brought about by grammatical and auditory interference that affected student pronunciation of English vowels. She came to the conclusion that the students' pronunciation of English front vowels was affected by the Portuguese pronunciation system as a result of the findings of the research..²⁸ According to Jonathan Harrington and associates, there has been a significant shift in the phonetic quality of many Queen's vowels over a forty-year period, as evidenced by variations in the first two formant frequency values. These changes have mainly occurred between the mid-1950s and the early-1970s, with minimal change observed between the mid-1970s and the mid-late 1980s. These changes are consistent with those observed in Standard Southern British vowels.²⁹

²⁸ Ika Nurhayani, Kesalahan Pengucapan Vokal Depan Bahasa Inggris Oleh Mahasiswa Semester I Universitas Nasional, *Journal of English language Teaching*, Vol.11(2), (2015)

²⁹ Jonathsn Harrington, Sallyanne Palethorpe, and Catherine Watson, Monophthongal Vowel Changes in Received Pronunciation: An Acoustic Analysis of The Queen's Christmas Broadcast, *Journal of the International Phonetic Association*, Vol.30(1/2), (2000)

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

Based on the result of the research that have been done. The findings showed that students difficulties in pronouncing vowel words included lack of vocabulary, difficulties in distinguishing similiar sounds but have different meanings, and lack of practice. The researcher concluded that the students awareness of the importance of independent learning was lacking. Learning was not always helped us to understand a lesson easily but it needs practice. Therefore finding out information becomes a very important thing for students to do in learning. They did not only need to complete a course, but also understand it in more detail and improve their English skills.

B. Suggestion

The suggestions were given to the university and the future researcher.

- a. For the university
 1. The university should pay more attention to the problems students face in the learning process. Especially the quality of lecturers who are responsible for teaching students in the classroom.

2. The university should conduct a study related to how a learning difficulty can arise based on the recognition of students studying on campus.
 3. The university should provide a clear rule regarding the placement or assignment of a lecturer's assignments in one subject.
- b. For the future researcher

Since this research was a study of student problem in pronouncing English vowel, it was advisable that the future researchers follow up the study by conducting research on students' problem based on English pronunciation levels and other English courses to increase and enrich knowledge in learning English.