

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the research background, formulation of the problem in this research, the study's focus, the research's objective, the study's significance, the research's scope, and the definition of key terms.

### 1.1 Background of the research

English is very important for communication and mandatory knowledge in Indonesia. According to the syllabus, English is one of the subjects taught to students. And it prioritizes the mastery of four language skills: reading writing listening and speaking. Learning English in every lesson should include the learning of these skills. The four language skills should be taught in an integrated manner.

Pronunciation is the most important thing people pay attention to when speaking. According to Richards, (2010 p. 469) intelligibility is the way certain sounds or sounds are produced. People make mistakes when speaking English pronunciation can be recognized and recognized instantly by listening to the speaker's voice. Good pronunciation makes the conversation easier to understand and the speaker and the other party understand each other more easily. Good pronunciation allows students to converse more confidently with native speakers. (Ammar 2021)

Although English has been taught in Indonesia for a long time students still face many obstacles such as applying grammar and using vocabulary correctly. Some students have grammar problems due to the influence of the second language on the first language. This makes it difficult for Indonesian students to learn pronunciation. Gilakjani (2012) stated that pronunciation is an integral part of foreign language learning since it directly affects learners (Gilakjani, 2016). Communication competence will lend to better performance. Limited pronunciation skills can decrease learners' self-confidence, restrict social interactions, and negatively affect estimations of a speaker's credibility and abilities. (Gilakjani, 2012)

One solution to mastering a language is to ensure that the pronunciation is understandable to the language learner. Students find it difficult to remember new

words because their environment does not support them. Students have difficulty pronouncing English words because they confuse their first language with English as a second language.

However, pronunciation errors can be an obstacle for foreign language (FL) and second language (L2) students trying to master it. This is because these mistakes affect students' speaking fluency and prevent them from speaking English as native speakers do. Of all the mispronunciations the sounds /θ/ and // are always problematic. This sound causes serious pronunciation problems for Indonesian English students in the pronunciation process. For this reason, there is an urgent need for treatment to provide model lessons that teach the /θ/ and /ð/ contrast through the speech articulation method (AAM) developed by Demirizon (2004). (Lovenia & Jufrizal, 2021)

Some letters may not exist in Indonesian even after several words with English letters become words. In English pronunciation, we recognize two types of unstressed consonant sounds: p k t tʃ f θ sʃ h. Voice over (vibration): b g d dʒ v ð z ʒ l m n ŋ r j w. This study will specialize in the two consonants θ and ð in Indonesian. The main reason for the difficulty of this sound is that the sounds [θ] and [ð] do not exist in the Indonesian phonetic system.

Pronunciation is the way a word or language is pronounced. It can refer to a generally accepted set of sounds used to pronounce a particular word or language in a particular dialect (proper or standard pronunciation) or simply the way a particular person speaks a word or language. As asserted by Hiçmanoğlu, pronunciation is an essential part of foreign language teaching because good pronunciation is one of the most important signs of foreign language learning and teaching mastery. (Karakag & Sönmez,)

However, regardless of many techniques that have been used in teaching pronunciation, several studies suggest that Indonesian students still tend to find it burdensome to learn English pronunciation (Dardjowidjojo, 1978; Mathew, 2003; Nguyen, 2011; Pallawa and Alam, 2013). Moreover, Dardjowidjojo (1978) argues that this situation is due to several phonological distinctions, which exist between Bahasa Indonesia and English. Both languages have several different phonological systems, such as seen in some speech sounds which are evident in English, but not

in Bahasa Indonesia, and vice versa. Meanwhile, as said by Lestiono and Gusdian (2017a), despite the differences among languages in the world, these languages somehow still share quite a few likenesses; one of the resemblances is noticeable in their phonetic aspects in which different languages may share some similar speech sounds. (Gusdian & Lestiono, 2018)

Javed (2013) found that English and Arabic—which are completely different languages as they came from distinct roots—surprisingly share some similar consonants, i.e. /θ/, /ð/, and /ʃ/. Therefore, these similarities may help Arabic students to learn to pronounce English words, which contain these targeted sounds accurately. In line with the abovementioned study by Javed (2013) as well as the assumption that Indonesian EFL students are mostly Muslims and able to read the Quran, which is written in Arabic, Lestiono, and Gusdian (2017a) conducted a pilot study on whether or not. (Gusdian & Lestiono, 2018)

English and Arabic come from two different language families Germanic and Semitic. English and Arabic have many grammatical differences because they come from different language families. the grammar of the language includes its phonetic properties and there are many phonetic differences between the English and Arabic languages. (Lestiono & Gusdian, 2018)

Examining students' pronunciation errors and how they interfere with successful communication provides a useful basis for assessing why it is important to discuss pronunciation in the classroom. It's always like that when they talk. Because of this, the teacher doesn't know how to continue with the material or correct the mistake. Mistakes are part of the learning process and correction is part of teaching.

Mistakes are an essential part of learning a foreign language and should not be ignored. The reason why students make mistakes is usually the difference between the mother tongue and the target language which is the difference in comprehension motivation. In this case, teachers need a strategy to overcome this problem as the strategy is a way of presenting the learning material in a way that the students can easily understand. The authors of this study were interested in examining students' errors in pronouncing English consonants.

The researcher explains several consonant letters in English, the researcher explains the procedure for how to pronounce consonants  $\theta/$  and  $/\delta$  which is good and correct, the researcher also invites students to imitate the words spoken in the video, and researcher tries to find out what the problem is students in pronouncing the word  $\theta/$  and  $/\delta$ . Some students have difficulty pronouncing the words  $\theta/$  and  $/\delta$  because students at school are taught several second languages besides English such as Indonesian and Javanese which do not have pronunciations such as  $\theta/$  and  $/\delta$ . Most of the students can do the pronunciation of  $\theta/$  and  $/\delta$  because the pronunciation of the word  $\theta/$  and  $/\delta$  resembles  $\text{ث}$  and  $\text{ذ}$  in Arabic. Most of the students who can pronounce the words  $\text{ث}$  and  $\text{ذ}$  students living in boarding schools.

The pronunciation of the English consonants  $/\theta/$  and  $/\delta/$  which sound similar to  $\text{ذ}$  and  $\text{ث}$ . Many students have difficulty pronouncing words in English. The cause of students' difficulties is that English is not the student's mother tongue because most of the students are adults and the student environment does not support students to use English frequently. In addition, the English teacher only focuses on students' vocabulary and also lacks facilities in the teaching and learning process. This causes students not to be able to produce words in English.

The research will be carried out at a private school in Bojonegoro, an ideal setting for this study due to the unique challenges faced by some of its students in terms of pronunciation. It has been observed that several students at this school struggle with proper pronunciation, resulting in the frequent use of incorrect phonetic sounds when reading English paragraphs. Effective communication in English relies heavily on accurate pronunciation, as it ensures that the message is conveyed clearly to the listener. In light of these challenges, the authors have undertaken the research initiative titled "Exploring Indonesian EFL Learners' Problems in Pronouncing  $\theta$  and  $\delta$  Consonants." This study aims to delve deeper into these issues, seeking to identify the specific difficulties encountered by learners in mastering these particular consonant sounds, ultimately contributing valuable insights to the field of English language education.

## 1.2 Research Question

In this research, the formulation of the problems formulated:

1. What are Indonesian ESL Learners' Problems in pronouncing  $\theta$  and  $\delta$  consonants?
2. What factors contribute to ESL learners' Fluency in pronouncing  $\theta$  and  $\delta$  consonants?

## 1.3 The Objective of the Research

1. To find out Indonesian EFL Learners' problems in Pronouncing  $\theta$  and  $\delta$  consonant
2. To find out the factor that contributes to EFL Learners' Fluency in Pronouncing  $\theta$  and  $\delta$  consonant

## 1.4 Significance of the Research

The results of this study are expected to be useful information or contribution for the students in general, especially the students at one of the private schools in Bojonegoro in understanding the pronunciation of English consonants, it also has something as a purpose to improve students' interest in studying pronunciation, especially English consonant.

### 1.4.1 Theoretically

This Research Can Give a Contribution to Giving Valuable Information About Speaking Analysis Especially About This subject in the study is limited to knowing the process of teaching and Exploring Indonesian EFL learners's Problems in Pronouncing  $\theta$  and  $\delta$  Consonants.

### 1.4.2 Practically

The students by studying pronunciation will know how to pronounce a word correctly. this is intended to make students understand how to pronounce words in a foreign language to avoid mistakes in speaking or reading. if a teacher does not have good pronunciation, it will be difficult for students to understand what is being said. For another researcher, The research may deliver and give practice in developing his knowledge or creating information in evaluation on English consonant pronunciation:  $\delta$  and  $\theta$ .

## 1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Research

### 1.5.1 Scope

The scope of this study is to analyze teaching English Consonant Pronunciation in classes of Islamic Bojonegoro Private School in the academic year 2022-2023. It consists of two classes. The researcher takes one class, namely VIIA. The sum of the population is about 30 students. The researcher conducted observations and interviews.

### 1.5.2 Limitation

This subject in the study is limited to knowing the process of teaching and exploring Indonesian EFL Learners' Problems in Pronouncing  $\theta$  and  $\delta$  Consonants.

## 1.6 Definition of Key Terms

### 1. ESL Learners

English as a Second Language is learning English in a country where English is dominantly spoken or the official language. For example, students from non-native English-speaking countries who come to the U.S. and Canada for an extended time learn English as a Second Language. They acquire English to communicate in the dominant language spoken in the community where they reside.

### 2. Pronunciation

Pronunciation is how a word or a language is spoken. This may refer to generally agreed-upon sequences of sounds used in speaking a given word or language in a specific dialect ("correct" or "standard" pronunciation) or simply the way a particular individual speaks a word or language.

### 3. English consonant

A consonant is a speech sound produced by obstructing or restricting the airflow through the vocal tract. In contrast to vowels, consonants are characterized by the presence of constriction or closure at certain points in the mouth or throat.

Consonants play a crucial role in forming the structure and rhythm of words in the language. They can be classified based on various articulatory features such as place of articulation, manner of articulation, and voicing.