STUDENTS' FIRST LANGUAGE: HOW DOES IT INFLUENCE STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION?

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Abstract: This paper aims to identify how the student's first language (L1) accent influences students' pronunciation, especially in English consonants. It also investigates students' difficulties in pronouncing English consonants. This study employed descriptive qualitative. Data was collected using observation, interviews, and recordings. The data were gathered from the participants' behavior. It was taken from their written and oral performances. The participants in this study were 6th-semester students of IAIN Ponorogo who had already passed the pronunciation and phonetics subjects. In addition, the students' L1 was Javanese. The findings revealed that students L1 influenced their pronunciation. They have difficulty pronouncing consonant sounds such as /ʒ, v, θ, ð, z, ʃ, d, ʧ, ʤ].

Keywords: *English sound, first language, pronunciation*

English needs no further introduction as being used worldwide as a means of communication, not only English-speaking countries where it is the first language, but in other countries where it is considered foreign or second language, such as Indonesia. As a country with various cultural diversity, which includes languages, the Department of Education and Culture of Indonesia has designated English as a foreign language that needs to be taught and learned in schools from elementary level to universities.

In general, there are four skills that students should learn when learning English: listening, speaking, reading and writing. They are critical for students to understand (Hakim, 2012). Pronunciation is essential when speaking and listening. However, many students struggle to imitate the correct pronunciation; they also want to speak English well with a pronunciation that both their peers and English people easily understand. Pronunciation is the process by which sounds are organized into patterns and systems. Pronunciation is critical because it makes our English clearer and easier to understand (Lestari, 2017).

Kreidler (2008) claims that pronunciation is a key component of language that greatly improves English speaking. It's crucial to master this skill because clear, understandable English depends on good pronunciation. Understanding pronunciation requires more than just memorization of a few things. It has a mother tongue equivalent. It's true that proper pronunciation is crucial in someone's speaking performance and understandability, in a sense that with unclear or even wrong pronunciation, the listeners cannot correctly get what they are saying or it may interfere with others' comprehension.

As is common knowledge, English is not used in regular conversation in Indonesia. It is only commonly spoken in a few communities. It seems sense that the majority of Indonesians struggle to speak English clearly and with decent pronunciation given their lack of language proficiency. Their native language, regional dialect, accent, and environment continue to have an impact on how they pronounce English.

According to Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), students who have not been exposed to English at all previously and has exclusively been using their mother tongue (L1) are more likely to face difficulties in acquiring English as their second language (L2), especially in their speaking skills due to the different pronunciation rules. This results in them having more effort to do in learning English as their L2, specifically overcoming the natural tendency of using their L1 (Nelu et al., 2021).

Purwaningsih & Nurdiawati (2020) stated that each region in Indonesia has its language. The Javanese language is one of them. Javanese is a language that originated on the island of Java. This language originated primarily in Java's central and eastern regions. The Javanese language has dialects integrated into Javanese society as an identity in social interaction. The Javanese language has three main accents: the standard Javanese accent, the Banyumas accent, and the East Java accent (Purwaningsih & Nurdiawati, 2020).

English is not commonly used in everyday communication. Unsurprisingly, Indonesian English learners, including those who speak Javanese as their first language, struggle with English pronunciation (L1). The Javanese language has distinct accents, dialects, intonations, and diction. Unsurprisingly, the Javanese language is pronounced clearly and explicitly, with short intonation and stressing in some places (Wardani & Suwartono, 2019). When Javanese people speak English, they must learn to produce a new sound. They must drop their Javanese accent. Listeners can understand what speakers are saying if they speak with proper

pronunciation. However, when the pronunciation is wrong, it will be caused misconceptions (Purwaningsih & Nurdiawati, 2020).

The majority of the time, pronunciation is not an issue for someone learning a language as their mother tongue or native languages. For instance, a child who was born and raised in Indonesia will pick up on the language's pronunciation with ease. Similar to that, the pronunciation of Spain will come naturally to a baby who was born, raised, and learns the language in Spain. Those babies typically experience some initial difficulty vocalizing some specific sounds at the beginning. Phonological Development, as described by (Sardegna, 2011), is what happened to those infants. The difficulty in making unique sounds will automatically go away once the phonological development phases have been completed. However, someone learning English as a second or foreign language will have difficulty in mastering English pronunciation well.

The hardest aspect of learning a non-native language is pronunciation. The majority of people who are fluent in a non-native language do so with an accent from that language. The age at which the non-native language was learnt is the most significant factor in predicting the degree to which the accent will be audible (or strong). According to the critical period theory, someone is unlikely to develop a native-like accent if learning occurs after the critical period, which is typically thought to be around puberty. However, there is a lot of debate over this theory among scientists. Despite many people leaning more towards some variations of a child's critical development period, it is seen more as something preceding their puberty or is regarded a development "window," which may differ from one person to another and that it depends as well on other factors (i.e. not just age), such as how long they have stayed in one area, similarities between their native language and the foreign one they are trying to learn, and how often they use the languages these said languages.

Even though they learnt their non-native language as adults, there are a few people who can pass for native speakers in unusual cases. However, biological limitations brought on by brain development appear to prevent most non-native speakers from sounding like native speakers. The majority of academics concur that it is nearly impossible for individuals to pick up a natural accent in a language they do not speak (Kreidler, 2008).

Each area in Indonesia has its own regional tongue. The language of Java is one of them. The Javanese language has its roots on that island. Most speakers of this language originated in Java's central and eastern regions. The Javanese language has dialects that are ingrained in the Javanese community and serve as a source of identity in social interactions. The normal Javanese accent, the Banyumas accent, and the East Java accent are the three main accents of the language (Wedhawati et al., 2001, p. 13).

The dialect of the Javanese people has a distinctive accent. Because they virtually always create a heavy plosive sound in their speech, they are immediately recognized. Most of them are immediately recognizable by their speech patterns when they speak English. This is partially caused by the fact that some English phonemes are absent from the Javanese language.

When the distinctions between the English and Java accents are explicitly explained, it is discovered that some terms are different and are said with a pronounced Java accent. Like a British or American accent, they are challenging to learn and alter because of how strongly their dialect influences how people pronounce words when speaking English. In this instance, the researcher was unable to uncover a particular idea regarding the Java accent. However, mother tongue has a significant impact on how someone who practices English in oral communication pronounces words.

Javanese speakers of English must learn to make a new sound in order to communicate. They must not speak with a Javanese accent. The listeners can grasp what the speakers are saying if they speak with the correct pronunciation. When speaking English, Javanese individuals frequently pronounce some consonants incorrectly. For instance, when they say "together," they should pronounce it like /t'g/. However, Javanese speakers say "tu'geder" instead. They discover problems, particularly with some consonants. The majority of Javanese struggle with pronunciation. It's because their native language, regional dialect, and accent still have an impact on how they pronounce words in English.

Most English department students at Institut Agama Islam Negeri (IAIN) Ponorogo are from Java. Therefore, the researcher is interested in studying how their L1 (Javanese) accent influences their pronunciation. Based on the interview, English department students have some pronunciation difficulties. The students who speak Javanese as their first language struggle with English pronunciation, particularly with English consonant pronunciation. It was difficult for them to remove their emphasis accent.

Based on the background of the study, the researcher formulated two research problems. The first deals with the English consonants that the Javanese accent influences. The second is how the students solve the pronunciation problems, especially in pronouncing English consonants. This study analyzes how the Javanese accent influences students' pronunciation at IAIN Ponorogo. It also finds out how the students overcome their problems in pronunciation. This study focused on students' Javanese accents used by students. Thus, it portrays the influence of students' Javanese accents on their pronunciation and how they solve their pronunciation problems.

METHOD

The researcher employed the descriptive qualitative method in this study. The researcher believes using qualitative research will allow the writer to answer the research questions. It happened because the data collection assisted the writer in gathering information for this research.

Purwaningsih & Nurdiawati (2020) defines data source as the subject from which the data is obtained. It means that the data source is the research subject or object from which it is derived. The researcher obtained the information from the participants at IAIN Ponorogo. They were the 6th-semester students in the English department. The participants were Javanese.

The researcher collected the data using observation, interviews, and documentation. The researcher used a record player to record the students' pronunciation during the observation. Besides, the researcher conducted a semi-structured interview. Qualitative research frequently employs semi-structured interviews. In this interview, the researcher found specific information that could be compared to the information obtained in previous interviews (Gilakjani, 2012). To accomplish it, the researcher asked several questions during each interview. To complete the data, the researcher took documentation on students' performance reports in the previous course. They were gathered from the other lecturers who taught pronunciation classes. The interview was also conducted with some Javanese English department students.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the analysis information is based on the pronunciation of consonants in the previous parts. The analysis concentrates on American English accent. The information source from the pronunciation test of 6th-semester students in the English department of IAIN Ponorogo. The researcher interviewed the students about how the Javanese accent influences their English pronunciation. Then, the researcher gave several paragraphs containing current consonant mistakes and recorded them with their best pronunciation when the students read them.

Based on the findings, the researcher found that students' Javanese accents influenced several English consonants. There are nine English consonants that students get difficulty pronouncing, such as v+, θ+, [ð], [d], [z], [ʃ], [ʒ], [tʃ], [dʒ]. The detailed consonants are as follows in the table below.

Table 1 Consonants Mistakes

Consonants	Sound Words	American English Accent	Javanese Accent
V	Vain	/veɪn/	/**f**ain/
V	Vase	/**v**eɪz, veɪs/	/**f**eis/
V	Veep	/**v**iːp/	/**f**ip/
Th (θ)	Thank	/**θ**æŋk/	/**t**eŋk/
Th (θ)	Thinking	/**θ**ɪŋkɪŋ/	/**t**iŋkiŋ/
Th (ð)	This	/**ð**ɪs/	/**d**is/
Th (ð)	There	/**ð**er/	/**d**er/
D	Done	/**d**ʌn/	/**ḍ**on/
D	Dad	/**d**æd/	/**ḍ**ed/
Z	Dose	/deʊ**z**/	/do**s**/
Z	Whose	/huː**z**/	/ /hu**s**/
Sh (ʃ)	Ship	/**ʃ**ɪp/	/**s**ip/
Sh (ʃ)	Shop	/**ʃ**aːp/	/**s**op/
Sh (ʒ)	Measure	/me**ʒ**ə(r)/	/mi**z**ər/
Sh (ʒ)	Television	/ˈtelɪvɪ**ʒ**n/	/telivi**z**en/
Ch (tʃ)	Chair	/**tʃ**eə(r)/	/**c**eir/
Ch (tʃ)	Chop	/**tʃ**aːp/	/**c**op/
Ch (tʃ)	Cheap	/**tʃ**iːp/	/**c**ip/
Jn	June	/**dʒ**uːn/	/**j**un/
Jn	Jump	/**dʒ**ʌmp/	/**j**amp/
Jn	Join	/**dʒ**ɔɪn/	/**j**oin/

From the result in the table above, for the first example, the word 'vain' should be pronounced /veɪn/ according to the standard transcription. Still, the respondents pronounced it /fain/. They pronounced the [v] sound by replacing it with [f] because the sound [f] has the same place and manner of articulation as the [v] sound, labiodental fricatives. The distinction between those sounds is that [v] is a voiced sound, whereas [f] is a voiceless sound.

Second, they made a mistake by replacing *θ+ with *t+. The results showed that Java students made *θ+ errors in all the positions provided (initial, middle, and final). According to standard transcription, the word "thinking" should be pronounced /θɪŋkɪŋ/, but respondents pronounced /tiŋkiŋ/. They pronounced [theta] by changing [theta] to [t] because the two sounds are unvoiced or voiceless.

Third, the findings revealed that Javanese students made mistakes when producing [ð] in two positions, initial and medial. Notably, Javanese students made four types of pronunciation errors when pronouncing [ð]. They were the substitution of [ð] for [d], the substitution of [ð] for [t], and the insertion of [n] before [ð]. As a result, a Javanese accent is substituted for the original speakers' in the sound that is being muted. When people speak in phonetic English, it demonstrates how much of an influence Java has on accents.

Fourth, they mispronounced the [d] sound. The majority of the errors occurred in two positions: initial and medial. The word 'done' is pronounced as /dn/ in standard transcription, but respondents pronounced it as /ḍon/. The results show that Javanese students substituted [ḍ] for [d] because the two sounds have similar characteristics. They are both voiced sounds with the same articulation and stops. The distinction is based solely on the articulation location in producing those sounds.

Fifth is how to pronounce [z]. Doze is pronounced as /dos/ by Javanese students. The standard transcription, however, is /deʊz/. The results show that Javanese students made mistakes by mistaking the [z] sound for the [s] sound because they have similar characteristics. They articulate in the same place and manner, but their voicing differs. [z] represents a voiced sound, whereas [s] represents a voiceless sound.

Sixth, they made mistakes when pronouncing the [ʃ] sound. According to the findings, Javanese students made errors in pronouncing [ʃ] in two positions: initial and final. The word 'ship' was pronounced /sip/ by Javanese students.

The standard transcription, however, is /ʃɪp/. Because the two sounds are voiceless, they pronounced [ʃ] by replacing [ʃ] with [s]. They also use the same articulation method, fricatives.

They pronounced [ʒ] incorrectly on the seventh occasion. The results show that Javanese students made mistakes by replacing [ʒ] with the [z] sound. For example, when pronouncing the word "measure," Javanese students pronounced it as /mizər/. The standard transcription, however, is /meʒə(r)/. In articulating [ʒ], [ʒ] was replaced with [z], which is listed as a voiced alveolar fricative. Because they have similar characteristics, Javanese students replaced the sound [ʒ] with [z]. They are both voiced sounds with the same articulation. The distinction is only in the articulation location where those sounds are produced; [ʒ] is palatal, while [z] is alveolar.

Eighth, students mispronounced the letter [tʃ]. They replaced voiceless palatal affricates with voiceless medio-palatal stops in this case. It means that Javanese students substituted [c] for [tʃ]. Javanese students, for example, pronounced the word 'chair' as /ceir/. The standard transcription, however, is /tʃeə(r)/. The only difference between the two sounds is in their voicing. They differ in terms of articulation, location, and style.

Finally, they mispronounced the [dʒ] sound. According to the results, Javanese students made errors in pronouncing the [dʒ] sound in medial and final positions. Notably, Javanese students made two types of mistakes when pronouncing [dʒ]. They were the substitution [dʒ] for [j] and the substitution [dʒ] for [g]. One of these errors is rather understandable since both [dʒ] and [j] are fricative with only one difference being [dʒ] is voiced, while [j] is voiceless. The [g] sound, meanwhile, is not a fricative like [dʒ], but close enough in place of articulation, that easily confuses the learner when producing one sound over the other.

According to Fromkin et al. (2013: 244) theory of phonological rules, substitution is the process of replacing one sound with another. It happens because some problematic sounds are unfamiliar to Javanese students. Then, they tend to pronounce the unfamiliar sounds by transforming them into familiar sounds from their mother tongue (Laila & Leliana, 2022). Furthermore, when pronouncing those sounds, Javanese students made not only one type of substitution but also more than one. The alternatives are as follows:

○ [v] -> [f] [ʒ] -> [z] [ð] -> [d], [ḍ], [t]
○ *θ+ -> [t] [tʃ] -> [c]
○ [ʃ] -> [s] [dʒ] -> [j], [g]

Javanese students used substitution and insertion, the process of inserting a consonant or vowel when pronouncing words (Fromkin et al., 2013:250). Javanese students made mistakes when pronouncing [ð] sounds that do not exist in the Javanese sound system, inserting [n] and replacing [ð] with [d].

Furthermore, errors are caused by the negative transfer of mother tongue influence. Mother tongue influence is included as an interlingual factor in Al-Khresheh (2016) theory of error cause, as cited in (Heydari & Bagheri (2012). The results show that Javanese students made mistakes when pronouncing sounds in their mother tongue. These are the letters [d] and [z]. Javanese students typically pronounce English sounds by replacing them with Javanese sounds. The alternatives are as follows:

○ [d] -> [ḍ] [z] -> [s]

This phonetic is present on laminaveolar consonants, which are produced when the tongue's tip is forced against the gums of the upper teeth. In pronouncing this phonetic, they produced more air from their

lungs. After that, they involve the middle of their tongue when they exhale and press the tip of their tongue against the gums on their upper teeth.

When it is spoken, we only use a tiny amount of air, and when the air is held until the tongue is forced on the upper teeth gums, it is only held for one second and only includes the tip of the tongue. Java students find it challenging to complete this task.

From the interviews it was apparent that the teacher did give trainings, examples and corrections to the students' pronunciations in class by means of repetitions after her and listening to pronunciation examples in the dictionary to ensure they pronunciation English words correctly. Her pronunciation teaching model is to show how a word is correctly pronounced in English, make her students repeat what she said, and give corrections when necessary.

In teaching speaking specifically, the teacher's role is to show how a word (or a set of words) is correctly spoken while at the same time help and assists the students to do exactly that (Kenworthy, 1988). However, pronunciation still seem to be a rather difficult problem for students to overcome due to factors such as the overall lack of exposure to the foreign language which leads to the lack of their familiarity to the pronunciation rules, to the fact that the pronunciation rules between students' L1 (mostly Indonesian) and L2 (English) are very different. As stated by the teacher in the interview, a promising method to take in this case is for the teacher to stay aware of the students' struggle and in turn help them resolve these issues with relaxed and creative ways (Nelu et al., 2021), albeit that would require quite a bit of time.

According to Silfiani et al. (2017) and Hidayatullah (2018), using techniques/strategies/methods such as drilling techniques, having the students watch English-speaking movies or videos, short stories told in English, and English songs in teaching English pronunciation can help mitigate their struggles in learning spoken English. Furthermore, (Kenworthy, 1988) stated that when students cannot imitate words correctly, the teacher must provide additional hints or clues to assist them in producing the correct sounds for said words. Simarmata & Pardede (2019) discovered that when students were "enough" at pronouncing English sounds, particularly consonants.

Therefore, it is safer to say that more drills and practices are better to be employed by the teachers in whichever level of English proficiency their students are in. That way, the students can acquire the habit of correctly pronouncing English words containing English sounds. It is possible to conclude that the teacher and students should support one another. According to Broughton et al. (2003), the logically best approach to teaching ESL in general is through a two-way feedback between the teacher and the students so that both sides can develop their collective knowledge and experience on the language.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

According to the findings, it finds out that Javanese students have difficulty pronouncing English consonant sounds. There are nine sounds that students pronounced incorrectly. The Javanese sound system's non-existent consonant sounds are [v], *θ+, *ð+, *d+, *z+, *ʃ, [ʒ], [tʃ], [dʒ]. They use substitution and insertion to pronounce those sounds. In this case, the intralingual factor, which refers to the nature of the target language, becomes the source of errors.

The number of consonants with different members from one another is one of the variations between English and Javanese. Twenty-four consonants make up the English consonant. In addition, Javanese has twenty-three consonants. The categories of place of articulation for English and Javanese consonants are similar, including bilabial, labiodental, and glottal.

The Javanese students told the researcher that removing their Javanese accent "method" was difficult, which caused misunderstandings between the speakers. When the Javanese students pronounce English consonants, they always produce more air from their lungs. When they spoke with other people, they sometimes misunderstood because their English pronunciation was not good enough. They couldn't pronounce new words they'd never heard before when they read a text. Their pronunciation remained influenced by the Javanese accent. As English education students, they should overcome their difficulties by practicing a lot with their friends. They may listen to English songs and then imitate them. They also can watch English movies, read some English books, and then attempt to pronounce the words they read.

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