

PRONUNCIATION PROBLEM OF INDONESIAN LEARNERS IN PRONOUNCING /G/ SOUND AT BHAYANGKARI 01 SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN MEDAN

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Abstract

Pronunciation is the production of sounds that are employed to convey meaning. Pronouncing English is a little bit difficult for Indonesian students since they use their mother tongue for their communication. This study was focused on the problem of pronunciation of the /g/ sound in English. The researcher used descriptive qualitative for the research design. The subject of research was the students in grade X MIA 3 that consisted of 27 students. The researcher used the purposive technique to take the sample of the research. The data collection of research was through observation, documentation, and diary notes. The researcher obtained five (5) types of problems in pronouncing /g/ sound, such as /g/ sound before /h/ at the end of words, /g/ sound before /n/ in the middle of words, /g/ sound before /n/ at the beginning of words, /g/ sounds before /e/ at the beginning of words, and /g/ sounds before /i/ at the beginning of words. The mean of data was 14.6, which suggested that there were about 15 students who had a good pronunciation. And the rest students were still had incorrect pronunciation.

Keywords: *Pronunciation, Problem of Pronunciation, /g/ sound*

1. INTRODUCTION

Pronunciation is the essential thing in speaking English. The pronunciation is a tool for communicating properly by the speaker. The speaker who uses the incorrect pronunciation will be misunderstood by the recipient. According to Hornby (2008:352), pronunciation is how a language or a specific word or sound is uttered. Pronunciation in English is one of the most difficult skills to be mastered, and learners should devote a significant amount of effort on it (AliagaGarca, 2007; Martnez-Flor et al. 2006; PourhoseinGilakjani, 2016). One of the most basic prerequisites of learners' competency is understandable pronunciation, which is also one of the most significant elements of language training. While good pronunciation helps language acquisition, poor pronunciation creates language learning issues (PourhoseinGilakjani, 2012).

Cook (1996, referenced in PourhoseinGilakjani, 2016) described pronunciation as "the act of making English sounds." Repeating sounds and correcting them when they are produced incorrectly is how pronunciation is learned. When students begin learning to pronounce words correctly, they develop new habits and overcome challenges caused by their original language. According to Yates (2002, cited in PourhoseinGilakjani, 2016), pronunciation is the production of sounds that are employed to convey meaning.

Pronunciation is the creation of a sound system that does not obstruct communication from the speakers' or listeners' perspectives (Paulston&Burder, 1976). Pronunciation is the recognized way of pronouncing a word (Otlowski, 1998).

In Indonesia, English is as the foreign language. Learning pronunciation is a little bit difficult for Indonesian learners because it is not their mother tongue. Generally, the students will make blunders or errors during speaking exercises, particularly when pronouncing words. The students may make errors and mistakes as a result of the diverse linguistic systems. To learn English as a Foreign Language, it is necessary to analyze pupils' pronunciation errors. It is critical to distinguish between mistakes and errors. Errors are often created by people who do not yet fully command some institutionalized language system, according to Corder (1974:29); actual errors are a marker of the student's ability. A mistake is an evident grammar from a native speaker's adult grammar, demonstrating the learners' inter-language skill (Brown, 1980:165).

Error is a systematic occurrence that occurs frequently and is not acknowledged by the learner. Error, according to Ellis (1997: 17), reveals gaps in a student's knowledge; it occurs when the learner is unsure of what is correct. The following mistake classifications are highlighted by Dulay (1982: 146) as descriptive taxonomy: linguistic category, surface strategy, comparison analysis, and communicative effect. According to Djajaningrat (2011), many English language learners, particularly Indonesian learners, make errors in the articulation of sounds due to difficulty with English pronunciation. The learner's difficulty is caused by two types of faults. According to Richard (1971), Inter-language errors are produced by negative transfer or the effect of their mother tongue. Furthermore, intra-lingual error is an error that committed by pupils who do not have a good command of the target language.

One of the common errors of pronunciation toward the students is about /g/ sounds in the words. The students do not pronounce the /g/ sound properly when the letter of the word is silent. This research will focus on analyzing some mispronunciation of /g/ sound toward the Indonesian students.

2. METHOD

The method of research is descriptive qualitative method. According to Bogdan and Biklen (1982), qualitative research is descriptive where the data is acquired using words or pictures rather than numbers. The subject of research was students in grade X-MIA 3 at SMA Bhayangkari 01 of Medan. There were 27 students as the population of research and the researcher took the sample by using a purposive sample. The researcher observed the students by analyzing their utterances to the /g/ sounds of words. The researcher gave the students a list of words and videos related to the sound of /g/. The data were collected by observation, documentation, and diary notes to write some activity during the process in the class.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

After the researcher analyzed the data, the researcher found some error pronunciations of /g/ sounds to the students. From 27 students in grade X MIA 3 at Bhayangkari 01 Senior High School Medan, some students still could not pronounce the

/g/ sound properly. During the observation, the researcher found many mistakes that were undergone by the students. The finding of the research is described as follow:

- a. The error pronunciation of the/g/ sound before /h/ at the end of words.

Table 1 list of words (i)

Pronunciation	Error Pronunciation
tough /tʌf/	/təʊg/
laugh /lɑ:f/	/lʌʊgh/
rough/rʌf/	/rəʊg/
cough/kɒf/	/cəʊgh/
enough /ɪˈnʌf/	/enəʊgh/
high /haɪ/	/haɪg/

Diagram 1 Percentage of /g/ sound before /h/ at the end of words.

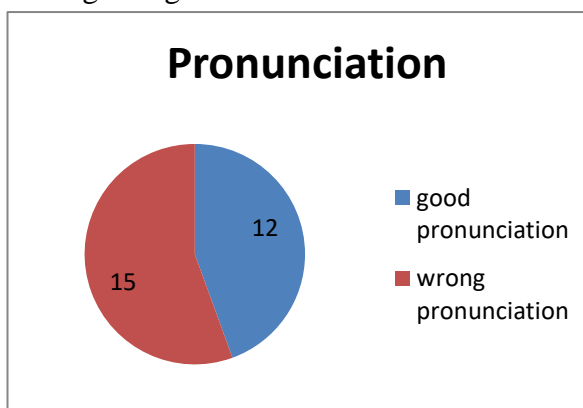


Table 1. It shows that there are 6 lists of words that the researcher gave to the students and how to pronounce the words. The common mistakes of pronunciation is when the phoneme of /g/ before /h/ was at end of the word. The students still pronounce /g/ sound clearly; but the phoneme must be pronounced /f/ in the words of “Tough”, “laugh”, “rough”, “cough”, and “enough”. And in the word of high, /g/ sounds must be pronounced as diphthongs /ai/. The amount of students who have pronunciation problem can be seen in **Diagram 1**. There are twelve (12) students who pronounce the words correctly and fifteen (15) students who still pronounce the words incorrectly.

b. The error pronunciation of /g/ sound before /n/ in the middle of words.

Table 2 list of words (ii)

Pronunciation	Error Pronunciation
foreigner /'fɔɪnə(r)/	/'fɔɪgnə(r)/
assignment /ə'saɪnmənt/	/ə'saɪgmənt/
designing /dɪ'zaɪnɪŋ/	/dɪ'saɪnɪŋ/
undersigning /əndər'saɪnɪŋ/	/əndər'sɪgnɪŋ/

Diagram 2 Percentage of /g/ sound before /n/ in the middle of words.

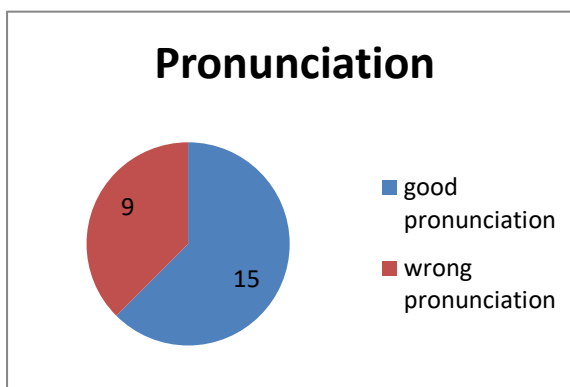


Table 2 shows there are 4 words of /g/ sound before /n/ in the middle of words. Those words are very common to pronounce incorrectly by some students. They pronounce those words by pronouncing /g/ sounds after the phoneme of /n/. The correct pronunciation of /g/ must be silent and it must be pronounced like the /n/ sounds. **Diagram 2** describes that there are fifteen (15) students who pronounce the words correctly as /'fɔɪnə(r)/, /ə'saɪnmənt/, /dɪ'zaɪnɪŋ/, /əndər'saɪnɪŋ/ and nine (9) students pronounce incorrectly as /'fɔɪgnə(r)/, /ə'saɪgmənt/, /dɪ'saɪnɪŋ/, /əndər'sɪgnɪŋ/.

c. The error pronunciation of the /g/ sound before /n/ at the beginning of words.

Table 3 list of words (iii)

Pronunciation	Error Pronunciation
gnaw /nɔ:/	/gnaw/
gnarly /nɑ:(r)li/	/gnarly/

Diagram 3 Percentage of /g/ sound before /n/ at the beginning of words.

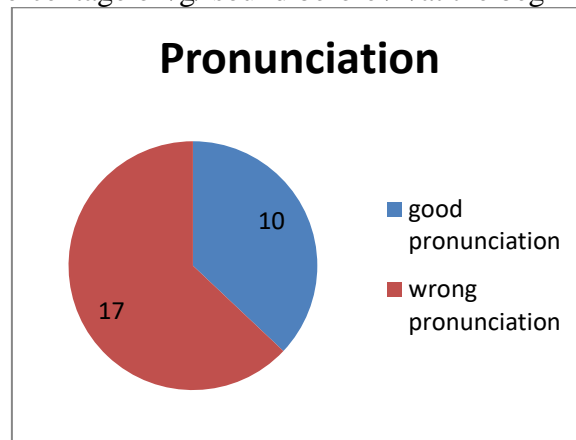


Table 3 shows another error pronunciation that underwent to the students in pronouncing the two words above incorrectly. The students pronounce the phoneme of /g/ before /n/ at the beginning of the words. In the phonological context, the phoneme of /g/ must be silent if it came before /n/. **Diagram 3** describes more detail of the percentage of the students' error pronunciation. 10 students pronounce /g/ sound correctly and 17 students pronounce it incorrectly.

- d. The error pronunciation of /g/ sounds before /e/ at the beginning of words.

Table 4 list of words (iv)

Pronunciation	Error Pronunciation
generation/ dʒenə'reɪʃ(ə)n/	/,genə'reɪʃ(ə)n/
generative/'dʒen(ə)rətɪv/	/'gen(ə)rətɪv/
genre/'ʒɒnrə/	/'genre/
genius/'dʒi:niəs/	/'geniəs/

Diagram 4 Percentage of /g/ sound before /e/ at the beginning of words.

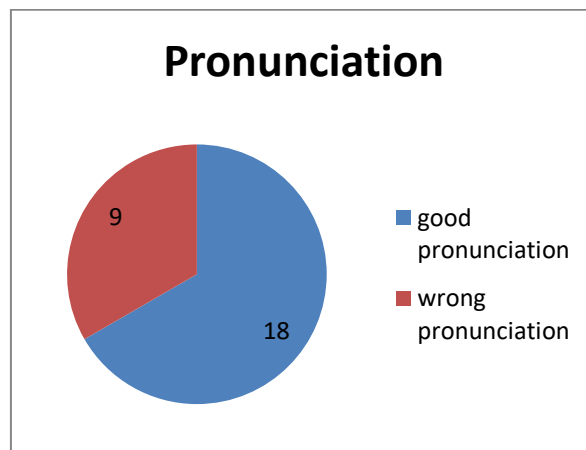


Table 4 shows some words of /g/ sound before /e/ at the beginning of words. The researcher finds that some students still pronounce those words incorrectly. Based on the phonological structure, the sound of /g/ must be pronounced as /dʒ/ if the context of the word was /g/ before /e/. **Diagram 4** describes the detail of the percentage of students in pronunciation. 18 students pronounce the words correctly and 9 students pronounce it incorrectly.

- e. The error pronunciation of /g/ sounds before /i/ at the beginning of words.

Table 5 list of words (v)

Pronunciation	Error Pronunciation
giant/'dʒaɪənt/	/'gaɪənt/
ginger/'dʒɪndʒə(r)/	/'gɪŋə(r)/
gist/dʒɪst/	/gɪst/

Diagram 5 Percentage of /g/ sound before /i/ at the beginning of words.

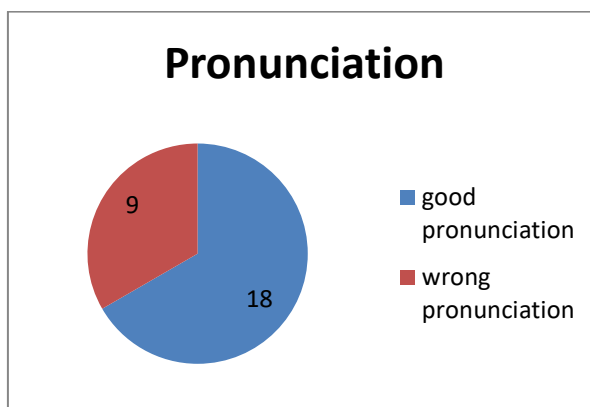


Table 5 shows some words of /g/ sound before /i/ at the beginning of words. The researcher found that some students still pronounced those words incorrectly. Based on the phonological structure, the sound of /g/ must be pronounced as /dʒ/ if the context of the word was /g/ before /i/. **Diagram 5** describes the detail of the percentage of students in pronunciation. 18 students pronounced the words correctly and 9 students pronounced it incorrectly.

From the data above, the researcher found 5 problems of students' pronunciation. The researcher calculates the mean of students by dividing the total of students who have correct pronunciation and the total of students who have incorrect pronunciation. The calculation can be shown as follow :

$$\text{The mean} = \frac{\text{Correct pronunciation}}{\text{Total pronunciation}}$$

$$\text{The mean} = \frac{73}{5} = 14.6$$

From the calculation above, the researcher obtained the data of students who pronounced in correct ways are 73 students and the total of pronunciation was 5. Therefore, the mean of students was 14.6, or about 15 students who have correct pronunciation. And the rest students still have incorrect pronunciation.

Based on the finding of the research, it shows that some students still have error pronunciations to the words of /g/ sounds. One of the factors of students' error is because they do not have the subject about pronunciation at the school. The teacher does not have any attention toward the students' pronunciation skill because they do not speak English as their communication during the process of teaching in the class. The findings are related with Harmer (2001) that the students' errors can be attributed to a variety of factors. For instance, student gets used to have deficient English conversation in the class. Second, other students who like to speak English tend to have similar pronunciation patterns and make similar errors; however, it makes them to be convenient to communicate with one another. Third, the classroom English conversation is not related to the daily English conversation; it only occurs in the classroom, and students never be facilitated with English native speakers interaction to practice their conversation.

These findings are also related with Kenworthy (1987) opinion that there are various elements enable some pupils to learn acceptable pronunciation without relying on their lecturers. Phonetic talents, integrative motivation, and self efficacy or confident are the three main factors for improving of English speaking interaction for foreign language learner; only some students aware that proper pronunciation is necessary for good English conversation. Teachers must urge their students to study pronunciation thoroughly and assist them in learning to pronounce English properly. Teachers have to teach pupils that the first English lesson is the ability of pronunciation. Students may do incorrect utterances if they do not practice appropriate pronunciation at the beginning of their learning process. As a result, English vocabulary should be taught in terms of improving pronunciation skill. Otherwise, learners' overall achievement especially on English subject may be jeopardized.

From the discussion above, we have known that there are some factors of students in pronouncing English. The students need more practice to pronounce English and make English as their habitual communication. The teacher's role is very essential to make them obtain the correct sounds while they have English conversation activity in the class. Another way to solve students' error pronunciation is to encourage themselves to have great effort in learning pronunciation through video or other sources. As the researcher has explained before, pronunciation is a tool of communication with other people.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion of the research, the researcher concludes that there are differences in students' mastery levels in the dimension of /g/ sound pronunciation, as well as the problems that students may face in pronouncing /g/ sound, such as the differences in sound systems between their native language (Indonesian) and their foreign language (English), as well as their motivation. Some dimension of pronunciations that is undergone by the students such as: /g/ sounds before /i/ at the beginning of words, /g/ sound before /n/ in the middle of words, /g/ sound before /n/ at the beginning of words, g/ sounds before /e/ at the beginning of words, /g/ sounds before /i/ at the beginning of words. From this research, the researcher expected this research could inspire other researchers to conduct the same problem of pronunciation and could be as a reference to other research.

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