

Silent Letter Pronunciation Errors Made by English Major Students of Raden Intan State Islamic University

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Abstract. *The purposes of this research were to classify the types of error made by the students in pronouncing silent letter, to count the total of errors that students made, and to know the source of errors. The subjects of the research were the students at the second semester of English Education Raden Intan State Islamic University of Lampung. The H class of the aforementioned students were the sample and purposive sampling technique was used to sample that class of 29 students. The result of the research showed that there were 4 types of errors; omission, addition, misformation, and misordering. The total of errors were 343 error's items which made by the students. Addition was the most common errors made by the students, which was 211 items or 61,51%. Second most common was misformation with 84 items or 24,48%. It then followed by omission with 46 items or 13,41%. At the end of the errors' classification based on surface strategy taxonomy was misordering with 2 items or 0,58%.*

Key words: errors, pronunciation, silent letter

A. INTRODUCTION

Language is a set rules used by human as tools of their communication (Ayumi, 2018). It is used to communicate ideas, feelings, beliefs, loves, knowledge, culture, etc. Language is very important when people want to express their ideas. It is a system of communications through which consist of a set of sounds and written symbols which are used by the people of a particular country for talking or writing. Brown (2014) said that language is more than a system of communication. It involves whole person, culture, educational, development communicative process.

Out of all languages spoken in the world, English is undoubtedly the most spoken one. It serves as hub or bridge between nations when they do not know how to communicate between one another (Ayumi, 2018). In the other word, English serves as the *lingua franca*, a universal means of communication not only between native speakers of English and speakers of English as second language, but also between people with different native languages (Smokotin, Alexseyenko, & Petrova, 2014). For this reason, English's language learning deemed to be vital in Indonesian schools in order for Indonesian to be able to communicate not only with native English speaker but also able to communicate with people around the world.

Pronunciation

In language learning, there are four skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. One of the most vital and the most difficult skill to master is speaking (Vijayan & Singh, 2020). As learning is a process of acquiring knowledge and skill (Gilbert & Siddique, 2020), in learning a language, students should learn about speaking. However, one of many components in speaking is pronunciation (Sayekti, Hardiah, & Lubis, 2021). According to Pufarani, Mukhrizal, & Puspita (2021), pronunciation is the way of someone pronounce or speak out the words that accepted or understood in a particular language.

Pronunciation is one of the most difficult skills to acquire (Gilakjani A. P., 2016; Haghghi & Rahimy, 2017; Sadeghi & Heidar, 2016). However, pronunciation is an integral part of foreign language learning since it directly affects learners' communicative competence and performance (Gilakjani A. P., 2012). Most of learners feel difficult to speak because they are shy, nervous, afraid to make mistake with their pronunciation, and unconfident to say something in English (Ramasari, 2017). However, as mentioned before, this problem is due to the fact that most of English sounds do not exist in the Indonesian language (Pallawa, 2013). This is universal problem however, which not only occurs in Indonesian language, Al

Hosni (2018) stated the main speaking difficulties encountered by students are linguistical difficulties, mother tongue, and inhibiton.

With the realization of the importance of English as a language, learning pronunciation is a vital part that students need to master. Without good pronunciation, the meaning of a spoken word could not only be not transfered, it could also be misinterpreted and creating misunderstanding (Pusfarani, Mukhrizal, & Puspita, 2021). It is a key role in speech recognition, speech perception, and speaker identify (Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2017). Pronunciation typically is not being taught independently, rather it is usually taught in speaking or English lesson class. Which means, to improve students' speaking ability is to improve students' oral production (Ramasari, 2017).

To analyze an individual's pronunciation, there is study called phonology. According to McMahon (2020) the language specific selection and organization of sounds is to signal meanings. Then, Odden (2013) also states that phonology is the study of sound structure in language, which is different from the study of sentence structure (syntax) or word structure (morphology), or how languages change over time (historical linguistics). Phonology concerns the rules of spoken language in a particular language. Those rules are different from one language to another.

Phonology is different from phonetics. Phonetic deals with the production, properties and the perception of the speech sound of human languages, while phonology deals with how to speech sounds form a pattern in particular language. One of main problems in Indonesia is the pronunciation of several English letters. A sound is produced varies from language to language. Some English word sounds that present in Indonesian language are produced and pronounced in different way. It means that every individual has different way in pronouncing words.

Silent Letter

Silent letter is a letter that in a particular word does not correspond to any sound in the pronunciation of words. According to Elizabeth (2011), letters that are not heard making their usual sound in a word as silent. Silent letter creates a problem for both native and non-native speakers of a language, as they make it more difficult to guess the spellings of spoken words. Ursula (2017) also states that silent letter is the one that creepily sneaky into words at the beginning, middle, or end. There are 60 percent of words in English have silent letter. The researchers conclude that silent letter is letter that cannot be heard when someone say the word but the letter is written and generally the letter that do not correspond to the other sound in a word.

Preliminary Research

Before doing the research, preliminary study was done. Some students of the second semester of English Education of RadenIntan State Islamic University of Lampung were chosen to be observed. It was found that there were many incorrect pronunciation of silent letter in English words. They said that they have difficulties about pronunciation especially for silent letter. The reason for this is that they were accustomed to read what is written in words, and they didn't have deep knowledge about pronunciation for silent letter. As we know, Indonesian language does not have silent letter even if a word has two consonant cluster. Non-native speaker always makes mistakes to pronounced it and make the natural phenomenon.

When the researchers asked them to say words with silent letter, they were still pronouncing the letter that's supposed to be silent in some words. Some students still pronounced the word exactly as they spelled. For example "debt, plumber, receipt, empty, biscuit, disguise" is pronounced as /det/, /pələmer/, /rəsit/, /empti/, /bɪzkit/, /disgais/, because the letter [b], [p] and [u] in those word must be silent. But they didn't pronounced it correctly, and still pronounced the letters as /deb/, /pələmber/, /riseip/, /empəti/, /biskuit/, /disguis/.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This research used descriptive qualitative method. The use of descriptive qualitative method in this research was to describe what silent letter were being mispronounced by the second semester students of English Education RadenIntan State Islamic University of Lampung. According to Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun (2012), qualitative descriptive research is a research studies that investigate the quality of relationships, activities, situations, or materials are frequently referred to as qualitative research.

Source of Data

The data of this research was taken from a transcription recording of the second semester students of English Education at RadenIntan State Islamic University of Lampung in Academic Year 2019/2020, using purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique is a common procedure used in qualitative research that identifies key informants or person who have specific knowledge about the topic being study (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtler, 2010). The types of purposive sampling may decide to use depends on the purpose of the study. It means, the researchers chose the subject based on need and purpose of the research these are:

- a. The students have taken pronunciation practice and still makes error pronounced in silent letter.
- b. To find out about how many percentage error pronunciations make by students in silent letter.
- c. To find out the source of errors.

This examination required the participants to read 9 words silent letters while the researchers recording them. After that the researchers listening the recording repeatedly to get transcript of the recording then used to analyze.

Instrument of Research

In qualitative research, the researcher is human instrument which determines the focus, chooses the informant as source of data, does collecting of the data, analyze the data and makes the conclusion of their finding (Sugiyono, 2016). In order to get the data, the researchers used audio documentation and questionnaire as a technique in collecting the data. The said document was pronunciation task, by giving 9 words in 3 letters (b, p and u) to be read and pronounced by students. The researchers asked them to record their voice by using voice note WhatsApp online messenger. Then, the researchers made the transcription of their silent letter pronunciation to be analyzed. Later, the questionnaire was used to determine the source of error by using G-form (Google form) and share the link via WhatsApp.

Validity of Data

In qualitative research, the researchers has to reveal the data as the real life of the subject. This qualitative research uses some methodologies to keep the validity of the data in order to have more accurate conclusion. To make the data valid, triangulation is employed. Triangulation involves the use of different methods and sources to check the integrity of, or extend, inferences drawn from the data.

Technique of Data Analysis

After collecting the data, the researchers analyzed it by using descriptive analysis. After classifying the data, then, the researchers calculated the students' errors and made the total for each error by counting the errors to get the total of each error.

The Formula of Percentage of the Types of Errors

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

P = The presentation of errors

F = The frequency of error occurred

N = Number of cases (total frequent / total individual).

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Types of errors and percentage

The researchers identified the words on transcriptions which produced errors in silent letter /b/, /p/, and /u/. The researchers describing the mispronounced by using data reduction and data display.

Table 1. the Table of Type of Errors

No.	Types of Error	Frequency	Percentage
1	Addition	211	61,51%
2	Omission	46	13,41%
3	Misformation	84	24,48%
4	Misordering	2	0,58%
	TOTAL	343	100%

From the table, it can be inferred that the highest errors based on surface strategy taxonomy was *addition* that were 211 items or 61.51% this errors were committed by the students almost in added letter /b/, /p/ and /u/ that should be silent for the words (doubt, subtle, plumber, receipt, cupboard, corps, guilty, disguise, vague). The second most common error was *misformation* that were 84 items or 24.48%. These errors were made by students for the words (doubt, subtle, plumber, receipt, guilty, disguise, vague). The third error was *omission* that were 46 items or 13.41%. These errors were made by students for the words (doubt, receipt, disguise, vague) because they were missing letter /t/ that should be pronounced. And the lowest error was *misordering* that were 2 items or 0.58% for word (corps and guilty). In conclusion, the writer found all kind of errors in 9 words.

Source of errors

This research analyzed the data by presenting the sources of student's errors. By analyzing the source of error, based on Brown's (2014) category, the problems faced by students would be known. It would be explained as followed.

- Interlingual Transfer

Interlingual transfer is significant source of error for all learners. The beginning stages of learning a second language are especially vulnerable to interlingual transfer from the native language, or interference. Interlingual transfer was the highest common source of error made by the students which the total result was 56 or 37.08%

- Intralingual Transfer

Intralingual transfer within the target language itself is a major factor in second language learning. Intralingual interference is the negative transfer or item within the target language which the total result was 40 or 26.49%.

- Context of Learning

Context of learning refers to the classroom with its teacher and its materials in the case of school learning or the social situation in the case of untutored second language learning. Students often make errors because of a misleading explanation from the teacher, faulty presentation of a structure or word in a textbook, or even because of a pattern that was rote memorized in a drill but improperly contextualized, which the total result was 55 or 36,42%.

Table 2. the Table of the Source of Errors

No.	Types the source of error	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Interlingual Transfer	56	37,08%
2.	Intralingual Transfer	40	26,49%
3.	Context of Learning	55	36,42%
	TOTAL	151	100%

Discussion

Based on the research that had been conducted, there was silent letter pronunciation errors of the students at the second semester of English Education RadenIntan State Islamic of Lampung. The purpose of this research was to describe the types of errors that students made in pronouncing silent letter (/b/, /p/ and /u/) based on surface strategy taxonomy on Dulay's (1982) theory, to know how many

percentage errors that students made and to know the source of errors based on Brown's (2014) theory. In this research, the researchers did their research to get the basic source and to choose the good sample which represent all the population.

The researchers used surface strategy taxonomy that consist of addition, omission, misformation and misordering. It was found that addition was occurring for 211 times or 61.51% of the times. Then omission was occurring 46 times or 13.41%, misformation was occurring 84 times or 24.48% and misordering was occurring twice or 0.58%. The researchers also found that the most of source of error is interlingual transfer, or the influence of mother tongue for it occurred 56 times or 37.08%.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based on the explanation and the description in the previous chapter, this research would like to draw a conclusion that the second semester students of English Education RadenIntan State Islamic University of Lampung still made many errors in pronouncing English words which consist of silent letter (/b/, /p/, and /u/).

- The types of errors made by the students are addition, omission, misordering and misformation. Addition was occurring for 211 times or 61.51% of the times. Then omission was occurring 46 times or 13.41%, misformation was occurring 84 times or 24.48% and misordering was occurring twice or 0.58%.
- The total of errors were 343 items of error which show that student most made erroneous in addition the letter that must be silent.
- For source of error, the researcher found that the most of source of error is in the interlingual transfer, or the influence of mother tongue has big impact for the result was 56 or 37.08% because as we know that Indonesian language does not have silent letter.

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