

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Phonological errors are still a common problem among EFL university students. They, often encounter difficulties in mastering the phonological aspects of the language. It is proven by several students who make an error of changing the sound /f/ to /p/ during English pronunciation course, this is influenced by history and archaeological conditions where in Sundanese script there is no letter /f/ or /v/, only /p/. Chairman of the Sundanese Cultural Study Group, Purnawan (2022), said that the main reason Sundanese people find it difficult to pronounce the letters F and V is because in their written and oral literacy, they do not know the letters or pronunciation of F and V. Phonological errors occur when one sound is incorrectly used in place of another sound. One example of a phonological process is a syllable structure process, where a syllable is truncated, left out, or duplicated. An example of syllable structure process is saying bok instead of book, it confirms to Nugraha (2020), the students have difficulties in adapting the phonetic system of their first language into the target language. It leads to the cause of why pronouncing words correctly in English is so difficult for non-native speakers. Every second/foreign language learner is never free from making errors. These errors are part of the learning process (Brown, 2000). Therefore, understanding the causative factors behind these errors is crucial for educators and curriculum developers to design targeted interventions that address the specific needs of EFL University students.

This research is based on researchers who saw the phenomenon of several students who often made phonological errors especially in classroom interaction. Meanwhile, learning to communicate in English and comprehend what is being said orally is the major objective of Indonesian English language programs. It is evident from this that speech sound articulation plays a role in determining students' proficiency in speaking English fluency. In order to enhance fluency, vocabulary, and production of phonological skills are badly essential (Scarpino et al., 2019). Yaniafari & Olivia, (2022) states that incorrect sentence structure

and diction selection may still convey meaning but incorrect speech sound articulation conveys nothing. Although those components of speech are required to deliver meaning, accurate English pronunciation is the primary indicator of successful spoken English mastery.

The previous study has examined English consonant pronunciation errors made by students. Masfa Maiza, (2020) examined the factors that influence phonological errors in the English Language Education Study Program at the Pakare Talino College of Education. As a result, the students' ability to pronounce English words was influenced by several factors. The first is interference. Second is phonological knowledge and the students had difficulties in the aspect of phonetic transcription. The third is motivation. Rahmatika Kayyis (2018) analyses English Phonological Errors produced by the diverse races in Lampung. It aims to find out which aspects of Phonological errors are pronounced. As the findings, this research focuses on 50% errors. Jasengnese, Javanese, Lampungnese, Palembangnese, Semendonese, and Sundanese had problems in long vowels, voiced consonants, stressing words at the first, middle, and last, and falling and rising intonation. They were influenced by age, accent, and mother language in English Phonetics and Phonology were strong enough. Ambalegin and Fasaaro Hulu (2019) investigated the mispronunciation of Putera Batam University EFL learners by adapting the standard of Received Pronunciation (RP) and the factors of English vowels and consonants mispronunciation. Cites from Carter & Nunan (2001) said that the mother tongue influences on learning L2 pronunciation, while mother tongue-like accent interferes the English pronunciation, phonology performs one's knowledge of the sound system of a language, then it concerns with competence.

Through this research, researchers the researcher wants to know the factors that come from several causative source. This research paper aims to investigate the factors that contribute to phonological errors conducted by EFL students of the English Department of Siliwangi University, Tasikmalaya Indonesia.

1.2 Formulation of the problem

Based on the background, the problem related to this research is “What are the factors contributing to phonological error conducted by EFL university students?”

1.3 Operational definitions

In this section, the researcher would like to give the operational definitions of the topic as follows:

- 1.3.1 Phonological Errors** Phonological error refers to mispronunciations, substitutions, omissions, or additions of speech sounds or intonation patterns that deviate from the standard English pronunciation.
- 1.3.2 EFL University Students** English as a Foreign Language is learning English in a non-English-speaking country. EFL university student is a student for whom English is a non-native language and studying at the university level.
- 1.3.3 Causative Factors** Causative factors refer to the elements or conditions that contribute to the occurrence of a particular phenomenon or event. These factors play a causal role, meaning they are influential in bringing about a certain outcome. Understanding causative factors involves identifying and analyzing the elements or conditions that lead to a

specific result or effect. In the context of language learning, such as investigating phonological errors, causative factors would be the underlying reasons or contributors that lead to the occurrence of those errors.

1.4 Aim of the Study

Based on the formulation of the problem, the aim of this study is to investigate the factors that contribute to phonological errors conducted by EFL university students.

1.5 Significances of the Study

It is expected that this study can be a useful contribution, as follows:

1.5.1 Theoretical Uses

The study may enhance our understanding of interlanguage development by exploring how various factors contribute to the progression of phonological skills among EFL university students and serve theoretical purposes by advancing our understanding of language acquisition.

1.5.2 Practical Uses

The findings have practical implications for educators, curriculum developers, and language instructors, guiding instructional practices and professional development. It can inform language teaching practices by identifying specific factors that significantly contribute to phonological

errors. Educators can use this information to tailor instructional approaches, materials, and activities to address the identified challenges and strategies to address specific phonological errors.

1.5.3 Empirical Uses

The empirical findings of the investigation can validate or refute hypothesis related to phonological errors in EFL contexts. This empirical evidence contributes to the robustness of the theoretical frameworks under examination and provides valuable insights into the specific challenges faced by EFL learners, serving as a foundation for evidence-based language teaching practices.