

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews relevant theories and previous studies related to sociolinguistics, regional dialects, and English pronunciation to provide the theoretical and empirical foundation for this study. It explains how regional dialect differences influence students' English pronunciation and serves as the basis for analyzing the pronunciation patterns, challenges, and solutions identified in this research.

A. Theoretical Framework

1. Sociolinguistic Theory

Sociolinguistics is a branch of linguistics that studies the relationship between language and society, where language cannot be separated from the social context in which it is used. According to Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015), language naturally experiences variations that are influenced by the social, geographical, economic, and cultural backgrounds of its speakers. One form of such variation is dialect, which is a difference in pronunciation, vocabulary, or language structure that is unique to a particular group.

In Indonesia, the diversity of local dialects is often a challenge for students, especially in learning English in the aspect of pronunciation. This happens because students tend to bring phonological features from their first language or dialect of origin into the second language being learned. Therefore, the sociolinguistic approach becomes a relevant theoretical basis to analyze how local dialects affect the process of acquiring English pronunciation in a higher education environment. Sociolinguistics explains that dialects are part of language variations that arise due to social and geographical differences. Dialects not only reflect a person's social and cultural identity, but also influence the way they learn and use other languages. Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015) explain that regional dialects reflect linguistic differences such as vocabulary, pronunciation, word forms, and sentence structure, and act as markers of regional identity and social attachment of speakers.

Wardhaugh and Fuller (2015) identify four main approaches in sociolinguistic studies that are relevant to the issues in this study, namely:

1. Language Variation

Language variation occurs naturally and reflects the social and geographical differences of speakers. Regional dialects as a form of this variation have a different phonological system from the target language (e.g. English), which can affect students' pronunciation accuracy.

2. Social Context

Language use is strongly influenced by social context, such as communication situations and social relationships. In academic settings, students are often faced with more formal or standardized pronunciation demands, which can create pressure to conform.

3. Language Attitudes (theme c)

Students' attitudes towards both home dialect and target language pronunciation greatly influence the learning process. Positive attitudes can encourage motivation and confidence in learning pronunciation, while negative attitudes can be an obstacle in the development of language acquisition.

4. Language Change

Language is always changing due to interactions across languages and cultures. Students today are exposed to various models of English, such as British English, American English, and Indonesian English, which can form diverse pronunciation patterns. This adds complexity to the pronunciation learning process and demands appropriate adjustment strategies.

2. Regional Dialect

A dialect is a variety of language used by a particular group of speakers that is usually limited by social or geographical factors. Wardhaugh and Fuller (2006), classify dialects into two main types: regional dialects refer to the variety of language used in a particular region, while social dialects refer to the variety of language used by a particular social group such as religious class, or ethnicity. Sinha et al., (2015) explains that a regional dialect is a specialized form of a language used

orally or in writing within a specific geographical area that has similar pronunciation patterns, grammar, and vocabulary. As such, dialects are not just a way of speaking, but also serve as important socio-cultural markers of a community's identity.

It is important to distinguish between 'dialect' and 'accent'. While dialect includes differences in pronunciation, vocabulary and sentence structure, accent refers to differences in pronunciation only without including variations in vocabulary or sentence structure. In other words, accent is a subset of dialect. For example, speakers of the same language may use different words to refer to the same thing, such as 'elevator' in American English and 'lift' in British English, or construct sentences in different ways. Wardhaugh and Fuller (2006) emphasize that local distinctiveness in a language, which is apparent when moving from one region to another, is an important characteristic of regional dialects. These dialects are characterized by differences in pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar that differ between regions. These differences often reflect the cultural identity and historical context of a community. In short, regional dialects are closely linked to the identity, culture and heritage of their speaking communities, and symbolize the linguistic and cultural diversity spread across different geographical areas.

Regional dialects can affect students' pronunciation skills in learning foreign languages such as English. Various studies in Indonesia report the influence of local dialects on students' English pronunciation. For example, Tsuroya (2019), found that Madurese dialect affects the pronunciation aspects of vowels, consonants, and diphthongs in English. Meanwhile, Ain (2023), showed that Makassar dialect has a negative impact on students' English syllable emphasis and intonation. Thus, it should be noted that in learning English, students' dialect variations can be an enriching factor or even complicate the pronunciation of foreign languages depending on the phonological differences between regional dialects and the target language.

3. English Pronunciation

The pronouncing of words is an essential aspect of language that affects how daily communication sounds and how others understand the interaction with each other. More precisely, pronunciation refers to how to say words — sounds, stress, and intonation that come with them. As Gilakjani (2016) emphasises, it needs a procedure of repeated practice and feedback for foreign language pronunciation to become a skill. This implies that language learners have to constantly practice the phonetics of the language they are learning consistently until it becomes familiar. Furthermore, corrective measures are essential for identifying and rectifying any errors that arise in this learning process. A speaker's pronunciation is deemed acceptable when it allows for easy comprehension by others and when their English is enjoyable and beneficial to listen to (Gilakjani, 2016). In summary, achieving proficiency in pronunciation is crucial for effective communication in a foreign language, as it provides clarity and enhances overall fluency and comprehensibility. Learning to pronounce English accurately is very important for understanding speech better and communicating well between native and non-native speakers. Abdalla et al., (2020) highlight the significance of speaking clearly in English communication. Done poorly, the articulation of words becomes difficult to understand and hinders smooth communication. On the other hand, according to Seyedabadi et al. (2015), Says pronunciation allows language learners to communicate their thoughts more accurately and increases confidence when speaking in a language outside of their native tongue.

Moreover, the pronunciation norms presented to foreign language learners may differ from those that native speakers utilise, further complicating accuracy achievement for learners. In summary, the role of pronunciation in ESL is fundamental to both successful communication and overcoming the obstacles of our linguistically diverse world, ultimately enhancing learners' speaking skills and confidence in voice when using English. Nevertheless, Abdalla et al. also identify English as a Foreign Language learners' challenge in learning pronunciation. One significant challenge lies in the differences between the phonetic structures of learners' native languages and English. For example, some sounds found in English

may not exist in the learners' first languages, making it more difficult for them to pronounce these sounds accurately.

As noted by Lasi (2020), English phonetics has two separate components regarding sound resemblance. Segmental features involve the articulatory properties of individual phonemes, the unique sounds that compose a word. This encompasses vowels, diphthongs, and consonants articulated through tongue movement and various mouthparts. This has supported learners to tackle the challenges that come with sounds that are adjacent or vacuum in words. A solid comprehension of these sounds can assist learners in navigating challenges related to sound combinations or the positioning of sounds within words. Roach (2009), classifies pronunciation in Received Pronunciation (RP) into three main categories: consonants, vowels, and diphthongs. Consonants include sounds such as /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /m/, /n/, /ŋ/, /f/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /h/, /r/, /j/, /w/, and /l/. Vowels consist of /ɪ/, /æ/, /e/, /ə/, /ʌ/, /i/, /u/, /ɔ/, /ɑ:/, /ɔ:/, /ɜ:/, /i:/, and /u:/. Meanwhile, diphthongs include /eɪ/, /aɪ/, /ɔɪ/, /ɪə/, /eə/, /ʊə/, /əʊ/, and /aʊ/. Apart from segmentals, Roach also emphasizes the importance of suprasegmental aspects in RP, such as stress, rhythm, and intonation, which play an important role in spoken language comprehension and production. Mastering the English sound system and the correct production of these phonemes is a crucial initial step toward effective spoken communication.

On the other hand, suprasegmental factors cover different aspects, such as stress, intonation, rhythm, and quality of voice. Stress at the word and sentence levels highlights keywords, whereas intonation denotes pitch changes that reflect the speaker's feelings or attitude towards the concepts. These components are needed to work together for teaching pronunciation, part of knowing your phonemes and working with stress and intonation, which will help learners be adept in speaking and listening in English. In summary, both segmental and suprasegmental features are essential for achieving proficiency in English pronunciation, as they collaboratively contribute to improved communication and comprehension.

4. Regional Dialect Challenges in Learning Pronunciation

1. Regional Dialect

Regional dialects, particularly pronunciation, can pose significant challenges for learners when acquiring a new language. These challenges arise due to the influence of the learners' native dialect on their speech patterns in the target language. According to Zhang (2023), regional dialects can result in negative transfer, which includes errors such as mispronunciation of nasal consonants, sound substitution, inaccurate articulation of English vowels and consonants, and recurring pronunciation mistakes.

a. Error In Nasal Pronunciation

Nasal consonants in English, such as /m/, /n/, and the syllabic consonant /ŋ/, have a distinctive feature of airflow passing through the nasal cavity (Alwasila, 2022). These sounds also influence surrounding vowels, particularly in closed syllables. However, learners often need help pronouncing these nasal sounds correctly due to differences in how they are used in their regional dialects. This frequently leads to substitution or distortion of nasal sounds, resulting in clearer pronunciation. Furthermore, dialectal variations can impact both the production and perception of nasal consonants, affecting how these sounds are articulated and understood across different linguistic communities.

b. Sound Substitution

Research indicates that regional dialects influence the pronunciation of sounds in Indonesian, leading to imperfections (Jayanti, 2024). This phenomenon can be explained through the concept of sound substitution in pronunciation, where foreign language (FL) learners replace target sounds with those from their first language (L1) phonemic inventory (Archibald, 2023). The influence of regional dialects often plays a significant role in this process, as established pronunciation habits within a local dialect can affect how students pronounce sounds in Indonesian or foreign languages. For example, university students in Indonesia frequently replace the voiced post-alveolar fricative /ʒ/ with /z/, /s/, and /ʃ/ due to interference from their native language and the absence of the sound in their first language's phonetic system (Luthfianda et al., 2024). Sound substitution occurs when learners replace

English phonemes with sounds from their native language or dialect, typically due to the absence of an equivalent sound in their first language (L1) or the influence of established articulation habits within their original phonological system. For instance, the English phoneme /θ/ in *think* is often replaced with /t/ or /s/, as /θ/ is uncommon in many languages, prompting learners to use sounds that are more familiar or easier to produce. This phenomenon demonstrates how first language interference, including regional dialect influences, can affect foreign language pronunciation, leading to less accurate pronunciation and the development of a distinct accent.

c. Inaccurate Articulation of English Vowels and Consonants

Research into students' pronunciation errors has indicated that many learners struggle to articulate English vowels and consonants, even after receiving formal English education (Hutapea et al., 2024). Inaccurate pronunciation frequently stems from discrepancies between the sound systems associated with learners' regional dialects and the English language. Each language or dialect possesses its unique phonetic system, comprising specific sounds that may be absent in English or pronounced differently. Ambalegin and Arianto, (2019) highlight that inconsistencies in English pronunciation, including incorrect consonant articulation, are affected by elements like silent letters, differing sounds for the same letter, and regional dialect variations, posing major challenges for EFL learners in attaining precise pronunciation. For instance, in Indonesia, numerous English learners struggle to distinguish between the consonant sounds /p/ and /b/, as these sounds are articulated more similarly within the Indonesian language.

Moreover, the differentiation between /s/ and /ʃ/ (as in the "sh" in she) often proves challenging, given that many regional dialects in Indonesia do not make this distinction. This phenomenon is attributed to the phonetic habits developed in their first language (L1), which affect their production of consonant sounds in English (L2). Similarly, errors in vowel pronunciation may arise when regional dialects lack certain English vowel sounds, prompting learners to substitute them with sounds they find more familiar from their first language or dialect. For instance, the English vowel /æ/ in the word *cat* is frequently substituted with /e/ or an analogous vowel

in their dialect. These factors culminate in inaccurate pronunciation, complicating Indonesian learners' ability to adjust to more standardised or internationally recognised English pronunciation.

d. Recurring Pronunciation Mistakes

Recurring Pronunciation Errors denote the propensity of learners to repetitively make the same pronunciation mistakes, largely influenced by the phonetic habits established in their first language (L1). These habits develop at an early stage and are often carried into second language (L2) acquisition, such as English. Such errors are attributable to learners substituting English sounds with the nearest phonemes from their first language, shaped by regional dialects and varying levels of English proficiency (Jaya, 2016). Indonesian students frequently mispronounce English consonants that are not present in Bahasa Indonesia, such as the voiceless stop consonants /p/, /t/, /k/, as well as voiced consonants /v/, /z/, and fricative sounds like /ʃ/ and affricative sounds such as /tʃ/, leading to unintended interpretations (Thamrin et al., 2022). Furthermore, recurring pronunciation errors are often evident in words like "magazine" and "opposite," commonly arising from interlingual errors rooted in Bahasa Indonesia phonetics. Mistakes like pronouncing /æ/ as /e/ or /ɪ/ in "magazine" and replacing /oo/ with /ɔ/ in "opposite" emerge from phonetic habits cultivated in Bahasa Indonesia (Gozali, 2017).

According to Octaviani et al. (2024), numerous students face significant obstacles in mastering English pronunciation, a crucial component of language acquisition. These challenges are frequently shaped by the regional dialects spoken by the learners. The research highlights two primary issues:

a. Difficulty in Speaking English with an Accent Closer to International Standards

Students often need help to articulate English with pronunciation that aligns more closely with international standards, primarily due to the influence of their regional accents or dialects. These regional dialects impact their pronunciation, causing it to resemble that of their native languages closely. This signifies a struggle to modify speech patterns in English, commonly hindered by phonetic habits cemented within their first language (L1). For

instance, in the Java region, English words are frequently pronounced using a phonetic structure that resonates more with Indonesian speakers, affecting their English pronunciation despite occasional discrepancies with international standards (Octaviani et al., 2024).

b. Difficulty in Pronouncing Consonants and Vowels Correctly

A further pronunciation challenge arises from the difficulty distinguishing and articulating English consonants and vowels absent in the students' dialects or native tongues. Several regional dialects do not include particular phonemes present in English. Consequently, students often substitute these missing sounds with those from their languages, resulting in incorrect pronunciation. For example, a student from Java may mispronounce the vowel /ə/ in the term "oxygen." While the vowel should be articulated as /ə/, the student pronounces it as /ε/, which aligns more with Indonesian phonetic tendencies. Such errors typically occur due to entrenched phonetic habits established early in their native language (Octaviani et al., 2024).

2. First Language Interference

First Language Interference, or L1 interference, is the influence of a person's native language (L1) habits on their use of a second or target language. L1 is typically acquired from an early age in a natural and effortless way (Derakhshan & Karimi, 2015). Consequently, it becomes an integral part of daily life and shapes the way individuals speak. Syafutri and Saputra (2021), explain that the habitual transfer of patterns from the first language to the second forms the foundation of interference. Therefore, established L1 habits can strongly affect second language performance, especially when these patterns are deeply rooted in everyday communication.

According to Suadiyatno (2020), language interference can create several challenges for learners, as explained in Weinreich's theory. These challenges are commonly divided into three main types: lexical, grammatical, and phonological interference.

Lexical interference occurs when a learner's first language (L1) vocabulary affects their use of the second language (L2) (Syafutri & Saputra, 2021). (Utami &

Putra, 2023). Learners often include words or phrases from their native language in writing or speech because they are more familiar with L1 vocabulary and structure (Zuhro & Budi, 2023). As a result, students may unintentionally transfer linguistic patterns from L1 to L2, which can affect sentence construction and expression in the target language (Aditia, 2024). Common examples of lexical interference include borrowing L1 words directly into L2 sentences, translating phrases literally from L1 to L2 (calque), choosing incorrect words based on similarity to L1 (misselection), or using words that have similar meanings to L1 words but are contextually inappropriate (semantic confusion). For instance, an Indonesian learner might translate *rumah sakit* literally as *house sick* instead of *hospital*, or use *nice* to mean *enak* rather than *delicious*.

Grammatical interference happens when elements of L1 affect the structure of L2, often resulting in errors in speaking and writing (Fujiyanti et al., 2022). This occurs when learners apply grammatical rules or morphemes from their first language to L2 (Syafutri & Saputra, 2021). Such interference can affect word order, pronouns, conjunctions, subject-predicate agreement, verb forms, singular-plural forms, and prepositions (Manafe et al., 2023). Grammatical interference can be further categorized into syntactic and morphological interference. Syntactic interference includes errors in word usage, prepositions, redundant words, or word omissions, such as *Most of people* instead of *Most people*. Morphological interference involves mistakes in determiners, verb forms, tenses, subject-verb agreement, or singular-plural forms, for example, *I got a news* instead of *I got news* (Munandar, 2023). These errors may hinder learners' ability to communicate effectively in L2.

Phonological interference occurs when L1 sound patterns influence L2 pronunciation, often leading to mispronunciations (Ambalegin & Hulu, 2019). Learners tend to apply phonological rules from their native language when pronouncing L2 words, which can significantly affect pronunciation accuracy. Among the three types of interference, phonological interference is the most common, especially among Indonesian English learners (Manafe et al., 2023). Wardani and Suwartono (2019) explain that L1 can influence English pronunciation

in three main ways: through sounds that exist in L2 but not in L1, shared sounds used differently in L2, and identical sounds with different articulatory patterns. These factors can create challenges for learners and often result in pronunciation errors, affecting overall intelligibility in English.

B. Study of the Relevant Research

The researcher reviewed and studied relevant studies before deciding to conduct this study. Most of the studies investigated the challenges EFL students face with regional dialects. The research undertaken by Falahuddin and Fitriati (2019), reveals the influence of the Mid-East Sundanese dialect on English pronunciation among 18 English Education students at Universitas Majalengka. Some sounds, such as /æ/, /θ/, /ð/, and /ʃ/, were negatively influenced by the transfer of the Mid-East Sundanese dialect, with students replacing them with more common sounds in Sundanese, such as /ʌ/, /e/, and /t/. However, most students could pronounce sounds well, especially clusters, certain vowels, and diphthongs. The study emphasises the importance of improving pronunciation skills, with further practice and targeted training recommended to address these challenges.

Utami and Putra (2023) examined The Effect of the Brebes Javanese Dialect on Students' Pronunciation of English Sounds. They discovered that the Brebes Javanese dialect greatly influences English pronunciation in students at SMAN 1 Brebes. The study indicated that the vowel [ɪ] and the diphthongs [eɪ], [aɪ], [ɔɪ], and [ɪə] were adversely impacted by the dialect. Conversely, the terminal consonants [b], [d], and [g] exhibited a beneficial effect. Although students could pronounce consonant clusters accurately, their success was primarily linked to their practice and personal abilities rather than the impact of the dialect. The research found that focused pronunciation exercises are vital in reducing the effects of the first language (L1) on English pronunciation.

Siregar (2017), examines how dialect influences students' pronunciation in their English speaking skills. The researcher examines the impact of dialect on pronunciation, particularly highlighting the challenges encountered by Indonesian students from various regional backgrounds. The article explores the concept of

dialect, its varieties (regional and social), and its connection with language. It also addresses the significance of pronunciation in English communication, emphasising the possible interference from one's native language. The article highlights the importance of recognising dialectal impacts on pronunciation in language education.

Octaviani et al., (2024), examines how the native language influences mistakes in English pronunciation. The research examines five students from different areas in Indonesia (Sunda, Batak, Jakarta, and Java) who are learning English as a second language. The researchers gathered data through pronunciation tests and interviews, subsequently analysed according to contrastive analysis principles. The results showed that students from various areas demonstrated unique pronunciation mistakes, especially in vowels, consonants, word emphasis, and intonation. The article addresses the challenges students encounter in removing the effects of their native language on English pronunciation. It emphasises the significance of recognising the role of dialect in the process of learning pronunciation. The authors determine that although the native language greatly affects English pronunciation, effective methods and strategies can address these issues and enhance learners' pronunciation abilities. Drawing from earlier research, it can be inferred that regional dialects significantly influence English pronunciation, especially regarding vowel and consonant articulation and word stress patterns. The challenges resulting from the shift of regional dialect characteristics can be managed through focused pronunciation exercises and suitable instructional strategies. Hence, educators need to grasp how dialects affect pronunciation learning to assist students in overcoming these challenges and enhancing their spoken English abilities.