

An Analysis on the Lecturers' Mispronunciation of Common Words Used at the English Language Program

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Abstract

This research aimed at knowing the lecturers' mispronunciation of common words used in the English Language Education Program of Hamzanwadi University and to analyze the factors cause them do mispronunciation. The research questions were formulated as: (1) What are the mispronunciation of the lecturers at the English Language Education Program in Hamzanwadi University?, (2) What are the factors of the mispronunciation made by the lecturers at the English Language Education Program in Hamzanwadi University? To achieve the purpose of the research and answer the research problem, the present researcher interview 6 out of 18 lecturers and gave them an oral test. The collected data were submitted to descriptive analysis. The result of the study discovered that all of the participants do mispronunciation in most common words proposed. The finding of the study implies that the factors of this mispronunciation are; (1) mother tongue influence, (2) effect of personality, (3) different accent, (4) word stress position. In short, the all factors that cause mispronunciation refer to the different language between the L1 and the target language.

Keywords: lecturers' mispronunciation, common words used, factors of mispronunciation

1. Introduction

Speaking is the active way to express people's thoughts and give oral information to other people. It is similar to the definition of speaking stated by Tarigan (1985, p.17). He states that speaking is one of the language skills in oral form to express the speaker's ideas to everybody. He also defined that speaking is the informal interchange of thought and information by spoken words. In other chance, Tarigan (1981, p. 3) also states that "speaking is one of language skill that develop in children's life begin from listening, in the same time where speaking is learnt". This statement proves that speaking is a process that closely related to listening process.

Speaking is also a productive skill that produces utterances that is observable, as what Brown (2004, p. 140) notes that "speaking is a productive skill that can be directly and empirically observed; those observation are invariably collared by the accuracy and fluency". In other words, he also gives the definition of speaking as the product of creative construction of linguistic strings, the speakers choose of lexicon, structure, and discourse.

Chaney (1998, p.13) states that “speaking referred to the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non- verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts”. Based on the theories above speaking is an active activities uses of language to express thought by involving grammar, pronunciation, accuracy and fluency.

Pronunciation is one of the important abilities in speaking. It refers to how to produce a word clearly to make people understand about the information that will be sent. Fachrurrozy (2011) states that “pronunciation can be defined as the way a certain sound or sounds are produced”. Pronunciation refers to students’ ability to produce comprehensible utterances to fulfill the task requirement. Pronunciation becomes important because it gives meaning to what is being said. Wrong pronunciation may cause misunderstanding or people involve in a conversation are affected (Thornbury, 2005, p. 128-129).

According to Oxford Dictionary (2008, p. 352), pronunciation is the way in which a language or a particular word or sound is spoken. It means that the way to say something and the word spoken will make the effect to the listeners. In this case, it is similar to what Thornbury stated above that mispronunciation can make misunderstanding or another perception of the listeners, for example, the word “parking” and “fucking”. It will be very danger if someone means to say parking but gives the wrong way in produce that word.

According to Gerald Kelly (2000, p. 1) pronunciation includes both Phonemes (segmental) and suprasegmental features. Dealing with the title of this research, the research will focus on the discussion about phonemes (suprasegmental features) to analyze about misspronunciation while consonants (/b, d, g, v, ð, z, ʒ, l, r, j, w, dʒ, m, n, ŋ, p, t, k, f, θ, s, ʃ, h, tʃ/) and vowels (/i:/, /ɪ/, /æ/, /ə/, /ʌ/, /ɒ/, /ʊ/, /ɑ:/, /e/, /u:/, /ɜ:/, /ɔ:/, /eɪ/, /aɪ/, /ɪə/, /aʊ/, /ɔɪ/, /eə/, /əʊ/, /ʊə/) are spoken.

In teaching-learning process, pronunciation is important for both teacher and students to communicate and share the correct information. In fact, the problem mostly faced by non-native speakers in learning English is pronunciation. It occurs because the different pronunciation between one and other languages. The difference of pronunciation sometimes makes the error pronunciation or mispronunciation in the way of pronouncing the word. This problem is faced not only by the English learners but also by the English teachers.

Focus on the problems above, the title of this study is “An Analysis on the Lecturers’ Mispronunciation of Common Words Used at the English Language Education Program of Hamzanwadi University”. In addition, Cambridge Dictionary is taken as the reference for pronunciation of the common words.

2. Method

2.1 Participants

The population of this research is the lecturers in English Department of Hamzanwadi University consisted of 18 lecturers. In this case, the present researcher took 6 lecturers as the sample of the research which sampling technique used in this study was purposive sampling.

2.2 Data Collection

2.2.1 Instrument of Study

Instrument is a tool which is used for collecting the data. The present researcher uses the list of common words, recorder, and the text to read by the lectures as the instrument in this study. The text is contain of the common words in form of pharagraph. Meanwhile, the recorder is used to record the text read by the lecturers.

2.2.2 Techniques for Collecting Data

a. Oral Test Performance

The data collected from the observation used in doing the research. In this case, the present researcher made a simple text related to the result of observation and used recorder to record the text read by the sample. The oral test conducted on 13th-18th of June 2017 by asking the lecturers to do oral test after their class end.

b. Interview

The present researcher uses interview to get the infomation from the sample to know the condition of the sample that cause the mispronunciation made by the sample of the study.

2.3 Data Analysis

In this part, the present researcher explains how to analyze the data. Data analysis was done by making the trascription of the pronunciation of words spoken by the lecturers to phonetic symbols. After that, the present researcher put the phonetic symbols of each word based on Cambridge Dictionary beside. By the comparison of pronunciation between the sampling lecturers and Cambridge Dictionary, the present researcher can conclude that the lecturers make the mispronunciation. In the other side, the present researcher also finds out the factors that cause mispronunciation made by the lecturers by doing the interview to the lecturers.

2.3 Trustworthiness

Triangulation is one method to develop the trustworthiness of a qualitative inquiry. William Wiersma (1986) states that triangulation is qualitative cross-validation. It accesses the sufficiency of the data according to the convergence of multiple data sources of multiple data collection procedures. In short, triangulation can be defined as the data cross-check taken by multiple data collection. Triangulation of the data can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Triangulation by Three Techniques of Data Collection

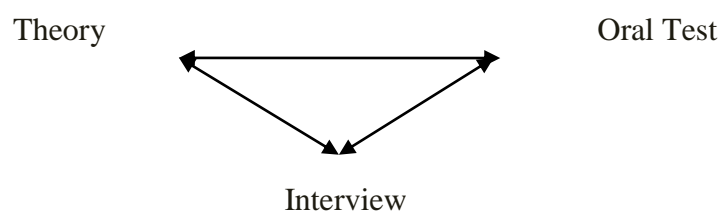


Figure 4 shows the correlation between the theory of the factors of mispronunciation, oral test, and interview. To check the trustworthiness of the data, the present researcher did the three steps based on the triangulation stated previously. First, interpreted the record of oral test. Second, checked the result of interpretation to the result of interview. Third, compared the result of oral test and interview to the exist theory. If the result of three of them are same, it can be concluded that the data is valid.

3. Findings

To conduct the research, the present researcher take some words as the instrument. These words are usually used by the lecturers in some lesson at the classroom. The list of words and their pronunciation on Cambridge Dictionary can be seen in Table 01.

Table 01. *The Words and Pronunciation on Cambridge Dictionary*

No	Words	Pronunciation on Cambridge Dictionary	
		British	American
1.	English	/ ' ɪŋ.ɡlɪʃ/	/ ' ɪŋ.ɡlɪʃ/
2.	Language	/ ' læŋ.ɡwɪdʒ/	/ ' læŋ.ɡwɪdʒ/
3.	Education	/ , ed.jʊ' keɪ.ʃ ə n/	/ , ed.jʊ' keɪ.ʃ ə n/
4.	Program	/ ' prəʊ.ɡræm/	/ ' prəʊ.ɡræm /
5.	Data	/ ' deɪ.tə/	/ ' deɪ.tə/
6.	Student	/ ' stju: .d ə nt/	/ ' stu: d ə nt /
7.	Lecturer	/ ' lek.tʃ ə r. ə r /	/ ' lek.tʃ ə . ə /
8.	Qualitative	/ ' kwɒl.ɪ.tə.tɪv/	/ ' kwɑ: .lɪ.teɪ.t ɪ v/
9.	Quantitative	/ ' kwɒn.tɪ.tə.tɪv/	/ ' kwɑ: n.t ə .teɪ.t ɪ v/
10.	Example	/ ɪɡ' zɑ: m.p /	/ ɪɡ' zæm-/
11.	Answer	/ ' ɑ: n t.sə' /	/ ' æn t.sə/
12.	Question	/ ' kwe-s.tʃən/	/ ' kwe-s.tʃən/
13.	Theory	/ ' θɪə.ri/ or / ' θɪr.i/	/ ' θɪə.ri/ or / ' θɪr.i/
14.	Observation	/ , ɒb.zə' veɪ.ʃ ə n/	/ , ɒb.zə' veɪ.ʃ ə n/
15.	Pronunciation	/prə , nʌn t.si' eɪ.ʃ ə n/	/prə , nʌn t.si' eɪ.ʃ ə n/

Based on the instruments of data collection, the description of the results are described below.

1. Oral Performance

After conducting the research through oral test performance to 6 lecturers at English Language Education Program of Hamzanwadi University, from the result of oral test performance, the data collection shown that lecturer A did mispronunciation in English /'eŋ.lɪʃ/, language /'læŋ.wɪdʒ/, education /,ed.ʊ'keɪ.ʃ ən/, data /'dætə /, qualitative /'kwɑ:.lɪ.tə.tɪv/, quantitative /'kwɑ:.n.tɪ.tə.tɪv/, example /æŋ'sæmpl/, question /'kwe.ʃən/, theory /'θɪ:.ri/, and observation /,ɒb.sə'r'veɪ.ʃ ə n/.

Lecturer B did mispronunciation in English /'ɪŋ.lɪʃ/, language /'læŋ.wɪdʒ/, education /,ed.ʊ'keɪ.ʃ ən/, data /'dæ.tə /, qualitative /'kwɑ:.lɪ.tə.tɪv/, quantitative /'kwɑ:.n.tɪ.tə.tɪv/, example /æŋ'zæmpl/, question /'kwe.ʃən/, and observation /,ɒb.sə'r'veɪ.ʃ ə n/. Meanwhile, lecturer C did mispronunciation in English /'eŋ.lɪʃ/, language /'lɪŋ.wɪdʒ/, education /,edju:.keɪ.ʃ ən/, data /'dætə: /, qualitative /'kwɑ:.lɪ.tə.tɪv/, quantitative /'kwɑ:.n.tɪ.tə.tɪv/, example /æŋ'zæmpl/, question /'kwe.ʃən/, theory /'θɪ:.ri/, and observation /,ɒb.sə'r'veɪ.ʃ ə n/. Lecturer D did mispronunciation in English /'eŋ.lɪʃ/, language /'læŋ.wɪdʒ/, education /,edu:'keɪ.ʃ ən/, program /'prɒ:.grɑ:m/, data /'dætə: /, qualitative /'kwɑ:.lɪ.tə.tɪv/, quantitative /'kwɑ:.n.tɪ.tə.tɪv/, question /'kwe.ʃən/, theory /'teɪ:.ri/, observation /,ɔ:b.sə'r'veɪ.ʃ ə n/, and pronunciation /frɔ: nɔ:n.sɪ'eɪ.ʃ ə n/.

Lecturer E did mispronunciation in English /'æŋ.lɪʃ/, language /'læŋ.wɪdʒ/, education /,edu:'keɪ.ʃən/, data /'dætə /, question /'kwe.ʃən/, theory /'θeɪ:.ri/, and observation /,ɒb.sə'r'veɪ.ʃ ə n/. Furthermore, the lecturer F did mispronunciation in English /'eŋ.lɪʃ/, language /'læŋ.wɪdʒ/, data /'dætə /, qualitative /'kwɑ:.lɪ.tə.tɪv/, quantitative /'kwɑ:.n.tɪ.tə.tɪv/, example /æŋ'zæmpl/, theory /'θɪ:.ri/, and observation /,ɒb.sə'peɪ.ʃ ə n/.

From the data of oral performance, can be seen that the most participants did mispronunciation when they pronounced vowel /ɪ/, /æ/, and /e/. For example the word English /'ɪŋ.glɪʃ/ and Example which was commonly pronounced by /'eŋ.lɪʃ/ and /æŋ'sæmpl/. However, vowel always be the difficult phonetic to produce or differentiate, such as /æ/ and /eɪ/ or /ɑ:/ and /ʌ/ in word data /'deɪ.tə/ which commonly pronounced as /'dæ.tə / or /'dætə: /.

2. Interview

After doing the interview, the present researcher presents the answer of the participants about their difficulties in pronunciation that affect their mispronunciation. The first reason is mother tongue influence. 5 from 6 participants stated this reason as the biggest factors to make pronunciation error. It is because English is not our common language, so there are many words of English that do not exist in our mother tongue.

The second one, the reason comes from personality. Almost all of the participants agree that pronunciation is important. They also agree that without accurate pronunciation, their students could get misunderstanding of what they are explaining about. Nevertheless, they did not really focus on pronunciation. Because they believe that they learn English as foreign language, so it will not make sense if they do mispronunciation as long as their students

understand their explanation in front of the classroom. This is the basic reason of the low motivation in using accurate English pronunciation.

The next factor is accent. The findings of the interview and questionnaire show that accent is one of big reasons why accurate pronunciation is difficult to reach. Especially for the country who has diversity of ethnics and language as like Indonesia.

The last difficulties is stress. Stress contributes an important reason to make people understand or misunderstand about someones' talk. Because the different stress location in different part of syllable often change the meaning of that word. Besides, stress also makes someone's talk become more interesting to hear.

4. Discussion

From the conducted research, based on Cambridge Dictionary, the present researcher found that from 15 words proposed: lecturer A mispronounced 10 words; lecturer B mispronounced 9 words; lecture C mispronounced 10 words; lecturer D mispronounced 11 words; lecturer E mispronounced 7 words; and lecturer F mispronounced 8 words.

Abbas Pourhossein Gilakjani & Mohammad Reza Ahmadi (2011) mention 8 factors of error pronunciation, those are; (1) accent; (2) stress, intonation, and rhythm; (3) motivation and exposure; (4) attitude; (5) instruction; (6) age; (7) personality; and (8) mother tongue language. Present researcher found the similar case as mentioned by Abbas and Reza after conducting the research. From the result of interview, the common factors of mispronunciation did by the lecturers are described as follows.

First factor is about mother tongue influence. Avery and Ehrlich (1992) claim that the sound pattern of the learner's first language is transferred into the second language and is likely to cause foreign accents. The mispronunciations of words by nonnative speakers reflect the influence of the sounds, rules, stress, and intonation of their native language. The second factor is about accent. An accent is "the cumulative auditory effect of those features of pronunciation that identify where a person is from, regionally or socially" (Crystal, 2003, p. 3). From this statement, it can be concluded that a place where someone is from has important rule in the someone pronounce the words.

The next is personality. Non-linguistic factors related to an individual's personality and learning goals, attitude towards the target language, culture, native speakers, and type of motivation which are beyond the teacher's control (Miller, 2003). The decrease of motivation in learning pronunciation closely related to the principle of many people about speaking, that is "you understand, I understand, that's all". It is appropriate to the argument states by Bc. Petra Solcova (2011) that speaking is an interactive process in which individuals alternate in their roles as speakers and listeners and employ both verbal and non-verbal means to reach their communication goals. This principle unconsciously makes a big contribution to the decrease of motivation in learning pronunciation. Some of lecturers also have this kind of principle, so that even though they know how important pronunciation is, they will not focus on accurate pronunciation, as long as their students still understand about their explanation.

The last factor is stressing. Munro and Derwing (1999) observed that even heavily accented speech is sometimes intelligible and that prosodic errors (i.e., errors in stress, intonation, and rhythm) appear to affect intelligibility more than do phonetic errors (i.e.,

errors in single sounds). The present researcher found the lecturers that feel difficult in stress position in each word. The change of stress position could change the meaning of the words. For example, the word record will have different meaning if the stress position is changed.

4. Conclusions

Based on the explanation on the result and discussion, the present researcher concludes that the lecturers at English Language Education Program of Hamzanwadi University did mispronunciation in common words used in classroom; those are; English, language, education, program, data, qualitative, quantitative, example, question, theory, observation, and pronunciation. There are four biggest factors that make the lecturers do the mispronunciation, those are; mother tongue influence, the effect of personality, different accent, and word stress position.

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