CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

Pronunciation is an utmost importance aspect in learning a second or foreign language. Having a good pronunciation would be very helpful in achieving good and understandable communication skills and efficiency. Native speakers could easily detect whether you are a native speaker or not. English language learners in Indonesia is faced with the problem of lacking exposure of English in the country. Moreover, Indonesia does not have many English speaking environment which resulting the lack of speaking and listening needs in learning English language.

English in Indonesia was established as a foreign language provided to teach Junior and Senior High Schools with the purpose of giving opportunities to students to access science and technology and also to strengthen international relationships. Although, the learning was emphasized upon reading ability rather than the ability in listening, speaking, and writing. In speaking English, Indonesian students also have to master English pronunciation instead of the grammar structure. English pronunciation in Indonesia has always been the problematic factor in which underestimated by native speakers. In communicating with other people, especially the native speakers, we should imitate the correct pronunciation so the listener will not be confused of what we are talking about. The main problem faced by Indonesian people who start to learn English, especially for speaking is the difficulty in pronouncing the English words due to a big difference between the sounds of *Bahasa Indonesia* and English (Simatupang, 2021).

The English language has been conquering the universal or international language title for many years. As an international language, English is no longer owned by the native

speakers, but it belongs to the larger community including English as a Second Language or as a Foreign Language. Students learning a second or foreign language often produce errors or non-native substitutions, including a foreign accent and non-native grammatical utterances (e.g., an Indonesian speaker who fails to master the English slang and grammatical structure).

In learning a second or foreign language, the influence of the first language play the most important role in acquiring a second language. It relates the learners' age, nationality, and phonetic inventory of the first language. Languages have different systems and rules to one another. Therefore, resulting the ambiguity of foreign languages' pronunciation.

Over time, the majority of English as Foreign Language (EFL) Fourth Year Students tend to ignore the phonology rules of pronunciation, therefore resulting the lack of phonological awareness. Foreign language is generally differentiated from second language in that the former refers to the learning of a nonnative language in the environment of one's native language (e.g., Indonesian speakers learning English in Indonesia). Most humans use sounds for linguistic signaling, but the structure of the human vocal organs allows a particularly wide range of sounds to be used, and they are also put together in an extraordinarily sophisticated way. There are two sub-disciplines in linguistics which deal with sound, namely phonetics and phonology.
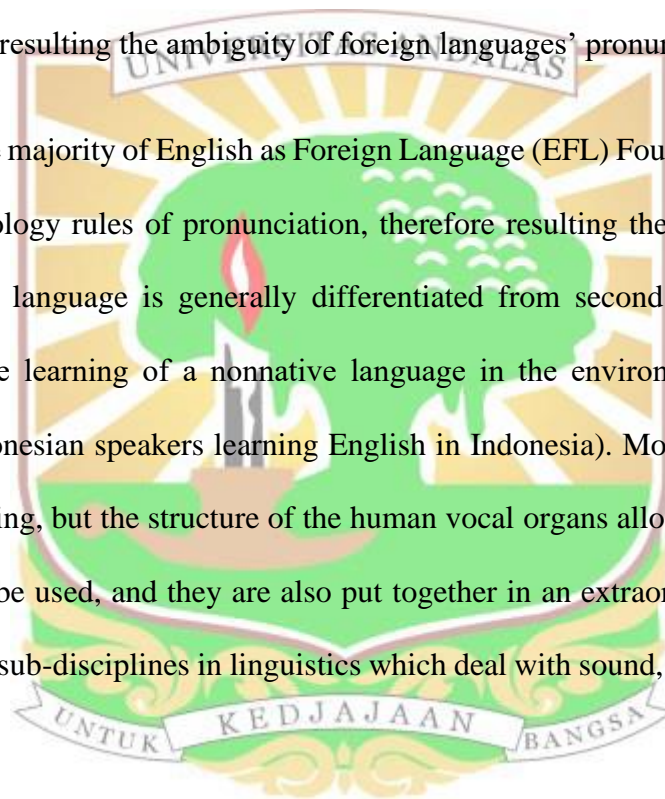
Based on the writer's observation, the majority of EFL Fourth Year Students at Andalas University prioritize the number of vocabulary in their long and short-term memory more than prioritizing the correct phonological rules. In some aspects, the determination to obtain as many vocabularies as possible is advantageous. However, on the other hand, good pronunciation is the key to establishing successful interaction with others within or beyond the classroom context, it is important that language learners attribute importance to learning second language pronunciation, more specifically second language phonology to their students. Fourth Year

Students of Andalas University are lacking of their phonological awareness. Phonological awareness refers to one's degree of sensitivity to the sound structure of oral language. Phonological awareness is the phonological processing ability most strongly related to literacy. It encompasses phoneme awareness, the ability to manipulate individual sounds or phonemes in words, and rudimentary phonological skills, such as judging whether two words rhyme. Basically, individuals who have difficulty detecting or manipulating sounds in words will struggle with learning to read. Phonological awareness is essential for reading because written words correspond to spoken words. Readers must have an awareness of the speech sounds that letters and letter combinations represent in order to move from a printed word to a spoken word (reading), or a spoken word to a written word (spelling) (Moats, 2010).

The awareness of sounds helps people segment and blend words together which aids in reading and spelling. Awareness of the sounds in spoken language is required to learn letter-sound correspondences; to blend sounds together to decode a word; and to "map" words into long-term sight vocabulary (Kilpatrick, 2015). The knowledge of these sounds helps people learn how to decode words (sounding them out, pairing sounds to segment), and this helps children read unfamiliar words. When we read, we're focused on identifying the words in front of us, but we also need to keep track of the words we just read and grab the meaning of the previous and future words we encountered. By having good phonological awareness skills, we can focus more on the comprehension of the text we read and less on struggling to decode what a word says.

1.2 Theoretical Framework

1.2.1   Phonology

In short, Phonology is the study of the sound patterns that occur within languages, such as the production and description of speech sounds, the changes and modifications of sound

systems. Phonology, the combination of phonetics and phonemics, is an important component of foreign language learning and teaching. Phonology seeks to discover those systematic properties in the domain of sound structure, and find the regularities and principles behind it both for individual languages and for language in general. In broad, phonology is a sub-discipline within linguistics concerned with 'the sound of language'. In short, phonology concerns the function, behavior, and organization of sounds as linguistic items (Lass, 1984). Phonologists are interested in the sound patterns of particular languages, and in what speakers and hearers need to know, and children need to learn, to be speakers of those languages: in that sense, it is close to psychology.

1.2.2 Phonetics

Phonetics studies the concrete, physical features of sound in language, often called speech. Phonetics provides objective ways of describing and analyzing the range of sounds humans use in their languages. More specifically, articulatory phonetics identifies precisely which speech organs and muscles are involved in producing the different sounds of the world's languages. Those sounds are then transmitted from the speaker to the hearer, and acoustic and auditory phonetics focus on the physics of speech as it travels through the air in the form of sound waves, and the effect those waves have on a hearer's ears and brain. It follows that phonetics has strong associations with anatomy, physiology, physics and neurology (McMahon, 2002). Phonetics offers the means to develop good pronunciation through enhanced awareness of relevant aspects of speech. Some languages are phonetic. That means you look at a written word and know how to pronounce it or you hear a word and know how to spell it. For this reason, there is a direct relationship between the spelling and the sound of phonetic languages.
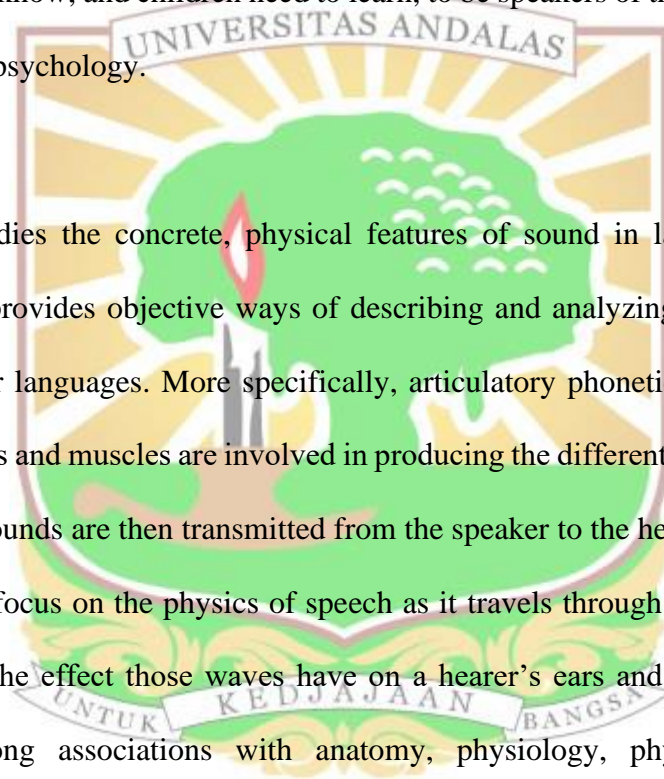
1.2.3   Interlanguage Phonology

The term 'Interlanguage' was first introduced by Larry Selinker who referred it to as a linguistic system that is used by the second language learners and it is influenced by the first language (mother tongue). When the learners learn the target language, the learners build their own system of language which is different from their first language. According to Richards et al. (1996), Interlanguage is the type of language which can be produced by foreign langauge/second language learners who are in the process of acquiring or learning a new language.

Interlanguage, which evolved from the theories of Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis, is compatible with second language acquisition. It is about understanding the type of student's internal language production. Learners who are not producers of the target language are imperfect, full of mistakes. But as intelligent and creative beings, they proceed through stages of logical, systematic, and creative acquisition of adapting to their linguistic environment as they encounter their form and function in a meaningful context (Brown, 1987). It seems that this intermediate language theory is more acceptable because it focuses on the cognitive and social processes of learners.

Saville-Troike named interlanguage as 'transfer', meaning a transition of prior knowledge from first language to second language, as one of the processes that are involved in interlanguage development. Further, she identifies two types of transfer: positive transfer and negative transfer. Positive transfer occurs when a first language structure or rule is used in a second language utterance and that use is appropriate or "correct" in the second language. Meanwhile, the negative transfer occurs when a first language structure or rule is used in a second language utterance and that use is inappropriate and considered an "error." In this process of transfer, the aspects of language involved are vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and all other aspects of language structure and use (Amalia et al., 2012). Interlanguage involves

a stylistic continuum that learners develop a capability for using the second language which is based on all regular language behavior and produces an abstract linguistic system. During the language learning process, the learner naturally builds up a new language which does not refer either to his/her first language or second language. It is a separate language having its own linguistic system.

1.2.4 Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness is an umbrella term which covers basic awareness of speech sounds (knowledge that sounds make up onset-rimes, onset-rimes make up syllables, syllables make up words) and the advanced skills such as manipulation (substituting, deleting, reversing) of words. Phonological awareness can be considered the ability to listen inside a word. It is the skill of having a sensitivity or explicit awareness of and ability to manipulate the phonological structures within words. Phonological awareness can be organized based on the structural level (i.e. word level, syllable level, phoneme level) as well as the process by which a child can manipulate the word, syllable, or phoneme (e.g. rhyming, segmentation, isolation, deletion, substitution, blending). Phonological awareness can be thought of as being made up of a variety of skills. A person can recognize words that rhyme, count the number of syllables in a name, recognize alliteration, categorize a sentence into words, and identify the syllables in a word by doing so.

Phonological awareness indicates a person's degree of sensitivity to the sound structure of oral language (Anthony & Francis, 2005). Moreover, phonological awareness is described as the ability to attend to, identify and utilize a range of sounds within the speech stream (Gillon, 2004; Schuele & Boudreau, 2008). Phonological awareness can be defined as the combination of phonetic awareness and phonemic awareness. Phonetic awareness indicates an EFL learner's ability to identify English consonants in terms of points and manner of articulation, English vowels in terms of tongue height, tongue position, and lip rounding,

diphthongs and triphthongs in English words, specific cases of English consonants and vowels. Unlike phonetic awareness, phonemic awareness comprises an EFL learner's ability to blend phonemes into syllables and syllables into words, add, delete, substitute, or rearrange phonemes or groups of phonemes within a word or a phrase, decompose a word into phonemes and syllables, identify the position of a specified phoneme or a sequence of phonemes within a word, identify rhyming and alliterating words and produce rhyming and alliterating words (Venkatagiri & Levis, 2009). Phonological awareness plays a crucial role to cope with phonetics and phonemic. It is the ability to attend the sound structure of language as distinct from its meaning. Students are exposed to the sound structure of the language and teach them to recognize, identify and manipulate in three stages as syllables; building blocks of words, prosody; rhythm, stress, and intonation of sound, phoneme; smallest unit of sound.

Phonological awareness plays an important role in literacy acquisition. Phonological awareness is the phonological processing ability most strongly related to literacy. It encompasses phoneme awareness, the ability to manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in words, and rudimentary phonological skills, such as judging whether two words rhyme. Basically, individuals who have difficulty detecting or manipulating sounds in words will struggle with learning to read. Phonological awareness is a single, unified ability during the preschool and early elementary school years that manifests itself in different skills throughout a person's development. Thus, there is consensus that phonological awareness refers to one's ability to recognize, discriminate, and manipulate the sounds in one's language, regardless of the size of the word unit that is the focus (Anthony & Francis, 2005). Phonological awareness includes phonemic awareness. Phonemic awareness is a major factor to learning to read in an alphabetic writing system, because letters represent sounds or phonemes. Without phonemic awareness, phonics makes little sense. Lacking of phonemic awareness could cause the inability to take advantage of the alphabetic principle. Even though, learners know the letters
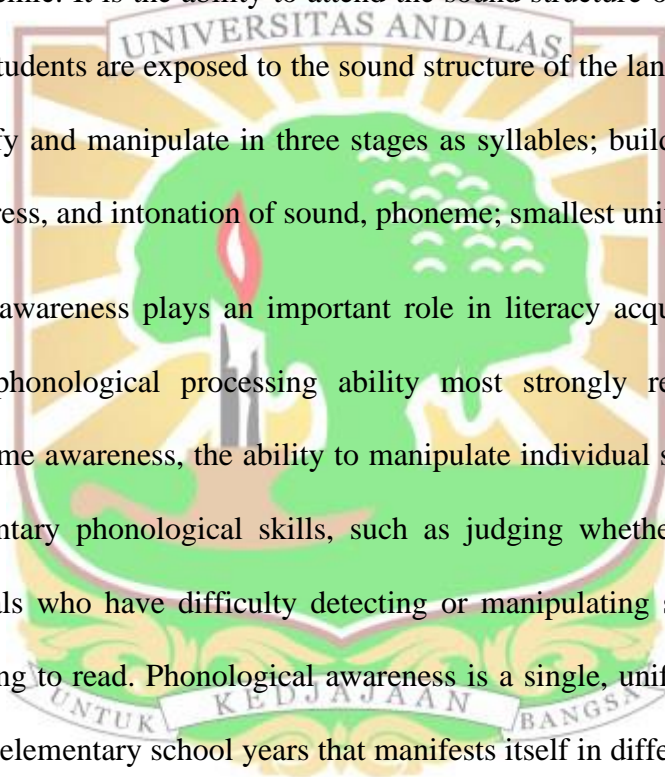
somehow connected to the spoken word, but without phonemic awareness, learners will be bewildered by what that relationship might be.

1.2.5 Syllables

All languages have syllables composed of consonants and vowels. Many languages can also have syllables of only vowels, (e.g., English owe) but only a very few languages can have syllables and even whole words composed exclusively of consonants (e.g., Berber trkst "hide"). Second language learners typically modify syllable structures to fit their first language structures. Loan words (a rudimentary form of second language acquisition) are often incorporated into the first language by modifying the syllable structures. For example, Japanese syllables have to end with vowels, thus words like "McDonald's" and "Big Mac" are modified to "makudonarodo" and "bigumaku".

Words are syllabified individually and then put together into phrases and sentences. In a single word, syllabic segment is referred as the peak of the sonority curve as the peak of the syllable. The peak is preceded by one or more consonants which then called as the onset. After the peak, more consonants may follow and referred to as the coda. The peak and the coda combined togethers, shall result the rhyme of the syllable. These actions are set for recognizing such a phonological unit will become clearer. The main objective is to portray that this part of syllable plays an important role in the rhyming conventions of poetry (Giegerich, 2005).

1.2.6 Interference

Interference is a language interactions and the influence of old habits when there is a new language being learned and the two languages are in contact (Dulay, 1982). Interference occurs when the sounds of the first language affect the production of sounds in the second or other language. For instance, an Indonesian speaker learning English may be troubled producing the English sound "th" or /θ/. This is caused by the Indonesian language does not have such sound.

Interference, or also known as language transfer is a common phenomenon in multilingual society. It is a phenomenon in which the speakers applying their first language knowledge to a second language they are studying. Language interference mostly happens in language learning where two or three languages often intersect each other. Interference is sometimes called negative language transfer because it uses the rules of native language to the target language that results in language mistakes.

Phonological interference may take form in approximately three categories of interference as suggested by Crystal (2003). These categories are as such (Mahendra & Marantika, 2020):

1.2.6.1 Sound Addition

This category occurs when L2 learner adds another sound or phoneme to the supposed phonetic. What is common in Indonesian learners are adding the phoneme /k/ when pronouncing the word 'know'. So, instead of saying /nəʊ/, learners say /knəʊ/. This phenomenon might be caused by the lack of exposures to the target language and lack of understanding of the target language's phonological rules (Wardani & Suwartono, 2019). Moreover, Indonesian words are mostly pronounced as they are written, therefore it is not easy to adapt to the new feature of phonology in the target language.

1.2.6.2 Sound Omission

In this category, L2 learner tends to omit phonemes where they are supposed to be pronounced. It usually occurs in pronunciation of diphtongs which are simplified to short vowels, such as out /aʊt/ pronounced as /ɒt/ or home /həʊm/ pronounced as /hɒm/.

1.2.6.3 Sounds Replacement

This category is identified by replacing the standard phoneme with another phoneme. The replacement is like in phoneme /æ/ in word dad /dæd/ replaced by /e/ so /ded/ or like in dead.

1.2.7 Sonority Hierarchy

Sonority hierarchy or sonority scale is a hierarchical ranking of speech sounds. Sonority is defined as the loudness of speech sounds and is often related to rank the amplitude of speech sounds. For instance, a vowel will produce a louder sound than a stop, therefore the vowel would have a higher rank in the sonority hierarchy.

The hierarchy is constructed from the top to bottom as follows (Clements, 1990; Kenstowicz, 1994; Smolensky 1995):

1.2.7.1 Vowels

A vowel is a syllabic speech sound pronounced without any stricture in the vocal tract. Vowels are one of the two principal classes of speech sounds, the other being the consonant. Vowels vary in loudness and also in length. Vowel are usually voiced and are closely involved in prosodic variation such as tone, intonation and stress. For instance, in English, the vowels consist of /a/, /i/, /u/, /e/, /o/, /ə/, /ɪ/, and many more.
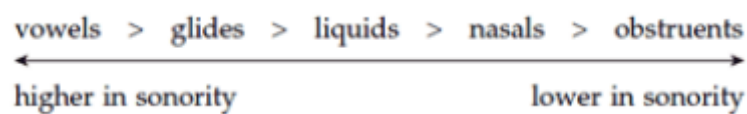
1.2.7.2 Approximants; Glides and Liquids

Glides or semivowels are sounds that function as the syllable boundary. For instance, in English, the consonants y and w are considered as glides or semivowels. Liquids are a class of consonants consisting of voiced lateral approximants like /l/ and /r/.

1.2.7.3 Nasals

Nasals are occlusive consonant produced with a lowered soft palate of our mouth, which allows air to escape through our nose. For instance, in English, the consonants /n/, /ŋ/, and /m/ are considered as nasals.

1.2.7.4 Obstruents; Fricatives, Affricates and Stops

Fricatives are consonants with the characteristic that air escapes through a narrow passage and makes a hissing sound. For instance, in English, [s], [z], [ʃ], and [ʒ] are considered as fricatives. Affricates are consonants that begins as a stop and releases as a fricative with the same place of articulation. For instance, in English, /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ are considered as affricates. Stops are the sounds made by completely blocking the flow of air and then releasing it. Also known as a plosive. For instance, in English, the consonants /p/, /t/, /k/, /b/, /d/, and /g/ are considered as stops or plosives.

vowels > glides > liquids > nasals > obstruents

←————————————————————————————→

higher in sonority   lower in sonority

According to Geigerich (2005), The sonority of a sound is its relative loudness compared to other sounds, everything else (pitch etc.) being equal. Speech sounds can be ranked in terms of their relative sonority: voiceless oral stops are of minimal sonority while low vowels have the highest degree of sonority of all speech sounds. With the help of this sonority scale, our theory that syllables are associated with peaks of sonority is able to predict the right number of syllables for a great majority of English words.

Oral stops		Fricatives		Nasals	Liquids		Semivowels	Vowels	
Voiceless	Voiced	Voiceless	Voiced					High	Low
p	b	f	v	m					
t	d	θ	ð	n			j	i	a
k	g	s	z	ŋ	l	r	w	u	ɑ

s o n o r i t y ⟶

Table 1. Giegerich's Sonority Hierarchy

1.2.8 Sonority Sequencing Principle

A major function of sonority is to organize segments within syllables, such as vowels, semi-vowels, approximants, nasals, fricatives, affricates and stops. Specifically, more sonorous sounds, such as vowels, tend to occur in the nucleus, while less sonorous sounds normally appear in the marginal (non-peak) positions – onsets and codas. Carnie (1994) asserts that 'sonority' is derived from the markedness relations in the feature geometry and that the calculation of sonority is determined not by an arbitrary ranking but rather upon a simple calculation of feature content. Jespersen (1904) defined 'sonority' as a general combination of factors to qualify the total impression of a sounds. As opposed to his subjective definition, Jones (1957) gave a definition that 'sonority' is the degree of the greatest distance of audibility of a sound when pronounced with the same length, stress, and pitch. Ladefoged (1975) says that the sonority of a sound is its loudness relative to that of other sounds with the same length, stress and pitch, and the loudness of a sound mainly depends on its acoustic intensity (Fujisaki, 1995).

1.3 Review on Previous Studies

In this section, the writer will be providing brief reviews on previous studies related to the topic of this research paper. The following studies are as such:

The first study is entitled *"English Pronunciation Errors by Jordanian University Students"* written by Raya Kalaldeh which presents some of the major English pronunciation

errors made by Jordanian students at the University of Jordan. The corpus is designed to investigate the production of English consonants, vowels, consonant clusters, and word stress by informants. The tested consonants are /p - v - ʧ - ʤ - ŋ - ɹ - ɫ/. The tested vowels are /ɪ - ɛ - ɑ - ɔ: - oʊ - ə /. Words containing consonant clusters; square - explain or across words; best friend - ride and swim are tested for epenthetic vowels. The stress pattern is investigated in words such as isn't- unfortunately. It is found that informants frequently confuse the following phonemes /p - ŋ - ɹ - ɫ/ with /b - ng - ɾ - l/ respectively. Moreover, informants frequently insert an epenthetic /ɛ/or /ɪ/ in consonant clusters whether within words; /sɪkɾi:m/ for /skɹi:m/ or across words; /bɛst ɪ frɛnd/ for /bɛst fɹɛnd/. Regarding vowels, informants commonly confuse the KIT-DRESS vowels producing both as /e/. The realization of the schwa /ə/ is greatly influenced by spelling. The LOT vowel is produced similar to its RP /ɒ/ realization as [ɐ]even though most informants adopt a General American accent and should therefore produce the vowel as /ɑ/.

This study aims to characterize the two types of English pronunciation errors; segmental and stress-related, by a single group of Arabic speakers; Jordanian university students. The segments under study were chosen based on the researcher's experience of teaching English pronunciation and speech courses to university level Jordanian students for the past three years. Six male students at the University of Jordan were chosen for the study. The average age range is 23 (20 – 26). The informants come from a fairly homogenous group. All informants are originally from the same city of Madaba (30 Kilometers south-west of the capital city of Amman). In conducting the research, the researcher instructed informants to read 158 words twice (words for: consonants =54, vowel =50, consonant clusters = 36, stress = 18, see appendix). In total, the produced tokens were (158x2) x 6 informants = 1896 (70 tokens were discarded for mispronunciation); therefore, the total analyzed tokens were 1826. Each word was placed in the carrier sentence 'say _ _ _ _ again.' and was presented on a Powerpoint slide.

The list of words was randomized twice and read from a computer screen. Each informant clicked for the next sentence at their own pace. The recordings took place at the University of Jordan's Radio station (49.9FM) recording studio. The present study investigates problems in English pronunciation by Jordanian speakers in four aspects: consonants, consonant clusters, vowels and word stress. The chosen consonants and vowels include the main challenging English speech sounds Arabic speakers have. The result of this study have important implications for teachers of English to Arabic speakers which is highlighting the problematic issues in English pronunciation and understanding the origins of such errors can be very conducive to learners and teachers of English alike. Also, errors in the intonational aspects of English speech represent one of the most challenging problems for learners. The strength of this study is that it provides highly detailed information by conveying graphs and charts to represent the Arabic's phonology. However, the weakness of this study is that it does not portrays many literary reviews, instead the researcher portrays many of his/her observation-based information.

The second research was conducted by Syahrul Ramadhan (2019) for his thesis entitled "*Pronunciation Errors Committed by Ten Students of Class 2015 at the English Department of Andalas University*". The researcher applied linguistics, psycholinguistics, contrastive analysis, error analysis and phonology as his theories in conducting the research. The researcher collected the data from 10 English Department students of the year of 2015. In collecting the data, the researcher prepared a number of vocabularies as his instrument. The participants were asked to read the vocabularies aloud and the researcher analyzed their pronunciations with Dulay, Burt, and Krashen (1982) theory.

The result of this research showed that there are 65 pronunciation errors committed by the students. The writer provided a list of words and a voice recorder in collecting the data. The strength of this research is that the researcher portrayed his analysis in several tables to

compare English phonological system and Indonesian phonological system. However, this research has a weakness. The researcher only provided 5 questions for asking the participants. In my personal opinion, the researcher should add more questions in order to obtain a more valid data to support his research.

The third study is entitled "*Markedness in the Pronunciation Errors Committed by the English Department Students of Class of 2017 at Andalas University*" published by Mita Handayani which points out students' pronunciation errors in English fricative consonants [z], [v], [ʃ], [ʒ], [θ], [ð] and vowels [ə] and [æ]. In collecting the data, the participants of this research are English Department Students, Faculty of Humanities, Andalas University, the year of 2017. They are selected by using stratified random sampling with gender as the criteria of the strata. Based on that method, there are 14 selected students. They consist of 7 men and 7 women. Fifteen sentences are used to collect the data. After that, students' pronunciation errors are connected with Markedness theories.

The result of this study reveals that most of the students do pronunciation errors in fricative consonants [z]. They substitute [z] into [s], 77.14%. After that, from two vowel sounds [ə] and [æ], [æ] is frequently pronounced in error way by the students, 29.87%. They substitute [æ] into [a] and [e]. Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that English fricative consonants [z], [v], [ʃ], [ʒ], [θ], [ð] and vowels [ə] and [æ] are treated as marked sounds by the students. They tend to change marked sounds in the target language into their native language sounds. It occurs because those sounds are not found in the Indonesian language. The strength of this study is portraying excellent samples in the form of tables to help achieving understanding towards readers. However, the weakness of this study is that the writer only collected the data from 14 participants or students. If she collected more data, her research would be more broad and possess a more concrete results.

1.4 Research Questions

In this research, the research questions are:

1. How aware are the EFL Fourth Year Students in Andalas University of phonological rules?

2. What are the causes and effects of the lack of phonological awareness for EFL Fourth Year Students in Andalas University?

1.5 Objective of the Research

The research objective accordingly to the research questions are:

1. To discuss the awareness of phonological rules from EFL Fourth Year Students in Andalas University.

2. To discover the causes and effects of the lack of phonological awareness in English conversations to the pronunciation skill of EFL Fourth Year Students in Andalas University.

1.6 Scope of the Research

The scope of this research is phonology which focuses on the phonological awareness on pronunciation. The writer will focus on discussing the phonological awareness of EFL Fourth Year Students in Andalas University. The result of the research will reveal the reasons for inability of phonological awareness and motivate EFL Fourth Year Students to enhance their phonological awareness. This research is limited to the ability of phonological awareness from EFL Fourth Year Students in Andalas University.