

CHAPTER I

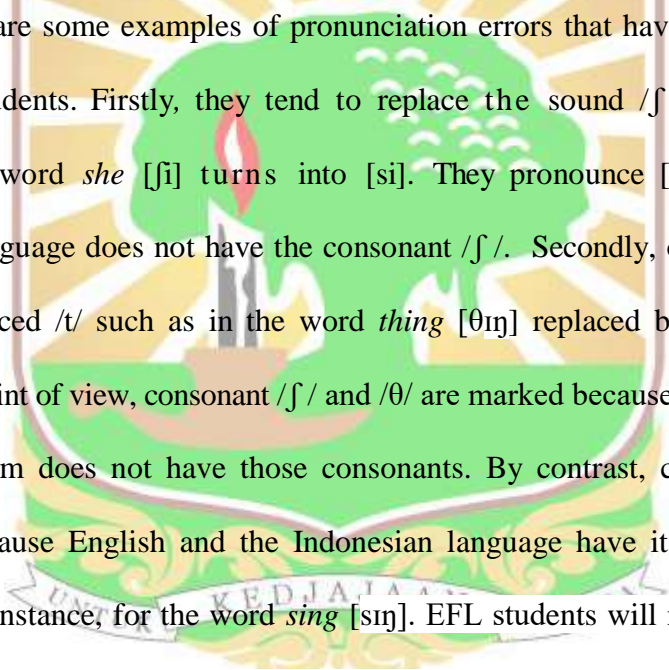
INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Pronunciation is the way in which a language or a particular word or sound is pronounced (Hornby, 2015, p. 1194). Error in pronunciation becomes a serious problem for students in the world who learn English as a foreign language, including Indonesian students. It becomes a more serious problem if the error is done by the students who learn English as their major. It is because there are so many people who expect they will have great pronunciation in English. Errors in pronunciation will make our interlocutor get confused when we are speaking. The way to avoid pronunciation errors is mastering English speech sounds themselves.

Mastering English speech sounds as a foreign language means that students have to know how to pronounce a word based on correct pronunciation. It can be found in the dictionary such as Oxford, Merriam Webster, or Collins. Usually, it is written according to International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). IPA is used as the standard of doing phonemic transcript (Setiyono, 2019, p.25). There are 44 speech sounds in British Standard English. On the other hand, English and Indonesian have a different numbers in speech sounds. Some of them are /ð/, /θ/, /ʃ/ /tʃ/, /dʒ/, /ʒ/, /ŋ/, /v/, and /z/ for consonant and /i:/, /ɪ/, /ɔ:/, /ɛ:/, /ə/, /ɪə/, /eɪ/, /u:/, /aɪ/, /əɪ/, /ɔɪ/, /æ/, etc for vowels. Students who commit pronunciation errors in English may be influenced by the different phonological systems between Indonesian and English.

English and Indonesian language have a different amounts of speech sounds in consonants and vowels. It influences them to make pronunciation errors in English as their target language. This phenomenon is affected by markedness. Markedness is classified into marked and unmarked. Rice (in Lovett, 2009, p. 6) proposed that the unmarked concepts in a language are essentially those that are more commonly found cross-linguistically. Marked elements of a language are those that are essentially less common in the world's languages (Rice in Lovett, 2009, p. 6).



There are some examples of pronunciation errors that have been done by Indonesian students. Firstly, they tend to replace the sound /ʃ / with /s/. For instance, the word *she* [ʃi] turns into [si]. They pronounce [si] because the Indonesian language does not have the consonant /ʃ /. Secondly, consonant /θ/ is often pronounced /t/ such as in the word *thing* [θɪŋ] replaced by [tɪŋ]. From a markedness point of view, consonant /ʃ / and /θ/ are marked because the Indonesian phonetic system does not have those consonants. By contrast, consonant /s/ is unmarked because English and the Indonesian language have it as an alveolar fricative. For instance, for the word *sing* [sɪŋ]. EFL students will not get difficult to pronounce it. As mentioned before, these errors occur because the Indonesian language does not have those sounds in its phonological system. This statement is strengthened by Lanteigne (as cited in Isnarani, 2017, p.2) that language learners may get difficulties in learning English because some of the English sounds do not exist in their mother tongue.

Based on that phenomenon, this thesis tries to analyze pronunciation errors in the English Department at Andalas University, the year 2017. These students are

chosen because they have taken some subjects that deal with pronunciation such as introduction to general linguistics, pronunciation, dictation and reproduction, and phonology class. This research focused on analyzing markedness in the EFL students' pronunciation errors. The data is limited in English fricative consonants, mid-central vowel [ə], and low vowel [æ] sound. This study also discusses which segments are marked and unmarked in the students' pronunciation. The researcher hopes this research can be an evaluation for English Department to create some methods in some classes that have a correlation with pronunciation.

1.2. Research Questions

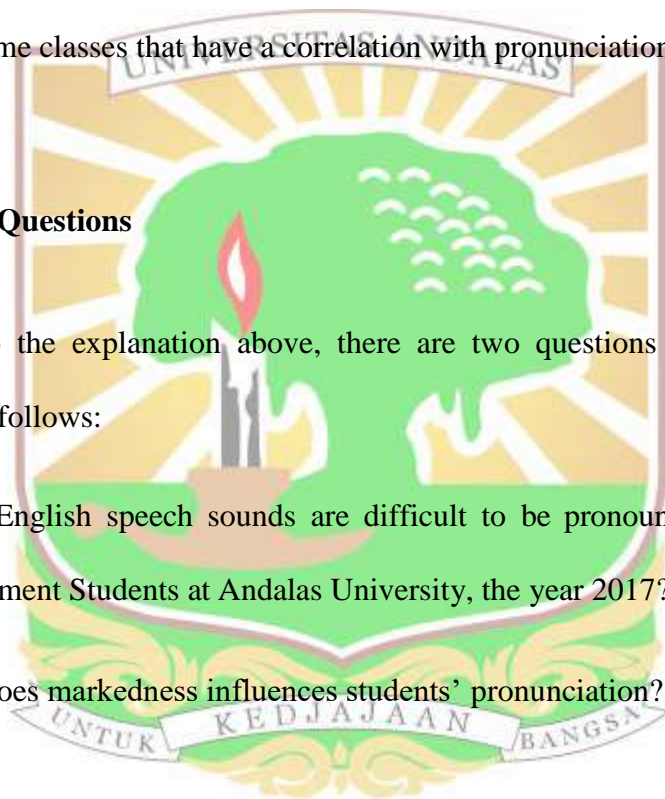
Related to the explanation above, there are two questions that have been formulated as follows:

1. What English speech sounds are difficult to be pronounced by English Department Students at Andalas University, the year 2017?
2. How does markedness influences students' pronunciation?

1.3. The objective of the Study

The objective of the research is related to the research questions. So, the aims of this research are:

1. To identify the difficult English speech sounds to be pronounced by English Department Students at Andalas University year 2017.



2. To determine the influences of markedness in the students' pronunciation.

1.4.Scope of the Study

This study is part of applied linguistics. It focuses on inter-language phonology, especially psycholinguistics and second language acquisition (SLA). This research only analyses segmental phoneme includes English fricative consonants and two vowels. Those fricative consonants are [s], [z], [f], [v], [ð], [θ], [ʃ], and [ʒ]. However, those two vowels are /æ/ and /ə/. They are chosen because they are problematic speech sounds. It is also a common error done by the students. This statement is strengthened by Situmeang & Lubis's acknowledgments (2020, p. 40) that language learners get confused when pronouncing English speech sounds and they obtain many problems, especially in English fricative sounds. On the other hand, many language learners face difficulties in articulating vowel sounds of English in the domain of English as a foreign language (Al-Hamzi, Al-Shrgabi, Al-Haidari, Faraj, & Al-Housali, 2021, p.41). This research does not analyze supra-segmental phonemes and semi-vowels. This is due to the fact that they are not common for the students. Furthermore, supra-segmental phonemes are very general to be discussed. It is hard to draw a conclusion from a general problem.

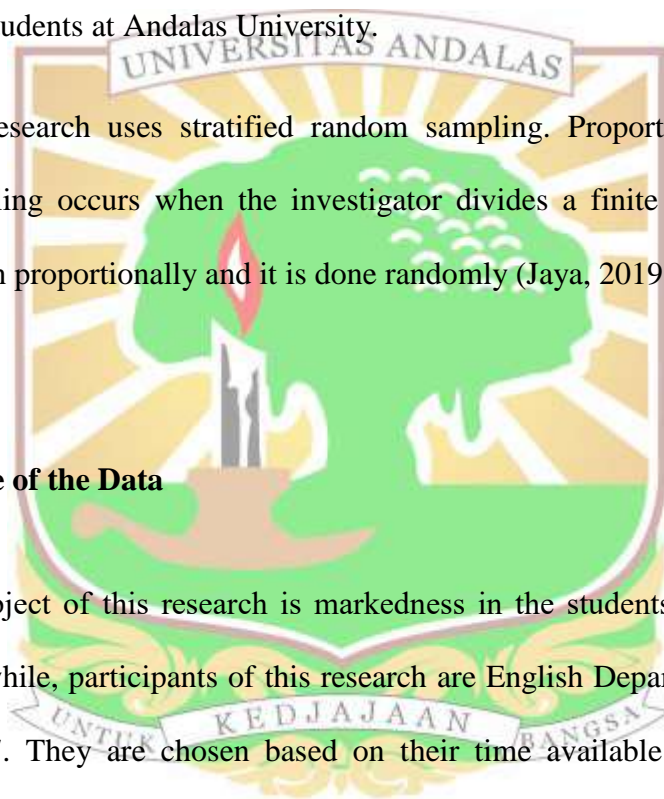
1.5.Method of the Research

The population in this research is English Department Students, the year 2017. The type of this population is finite population. The finite population is a collection of objects or individuals that are objects of research that occupy a certain area (Huang, 2019, p.1). English Department Students, the class of 2017 are categorized as finite population. They are part of the sample of English Department Students at Andalas University.

This research uses stratified random sampling. Proportionate stratified random sampling occurs when the investigator divides a finite population into sub-population proportionally and it is done randomly (Jaya, 2019, p. 40).

1.5.1. Source of the Data

The object of this research is markedness in the students' pronunciation errors. Meanwhile, participants of this research are English Department Students, the year 2017. They are chosen based on their time available to conduct the research. These students are also chosen because they have learned and taken *Introduction to General Linguistics Class, Pronunciation Class, dictation and reproduction class, and Phonology Class*. The total population of English Department Students, the year 2017 is 82 students. It consists of 61 females and 21 males. Meanwhile, there are only 14 students who are selected to participate in this research as the sample. It consists of 7 females and 7 males. The amounts of



these participants are obtained from Tuckman's formula, which is described as follow:

$$n = \frac{z^2 p q}{e}$$

$$pf = 61/82 = 0,74$$

$$qf = 1 - 0.74 = 0.26$$

$$nf = z^2 p q / e = (1.96)^2 \cdot 0.74 \cdot 0.26 / 0.1 = 7.39 = 7$$

$$pm = 21/82 = 0.25$$

$$qm = 1 - 0.25 = 0.75$$

$$nl = z^2 p q / e = (1.96)^2 \cdot 0.25 \cdot 0.75 / 0.1 = 7.20 = 7$$

Explanation:

n: sample size

nf: sample size of female

nl: sample size male

z: the abscissa of the normal curve that cuts an area at the tails (1-equals the desired confident level)

p: the estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population

q: 1-p

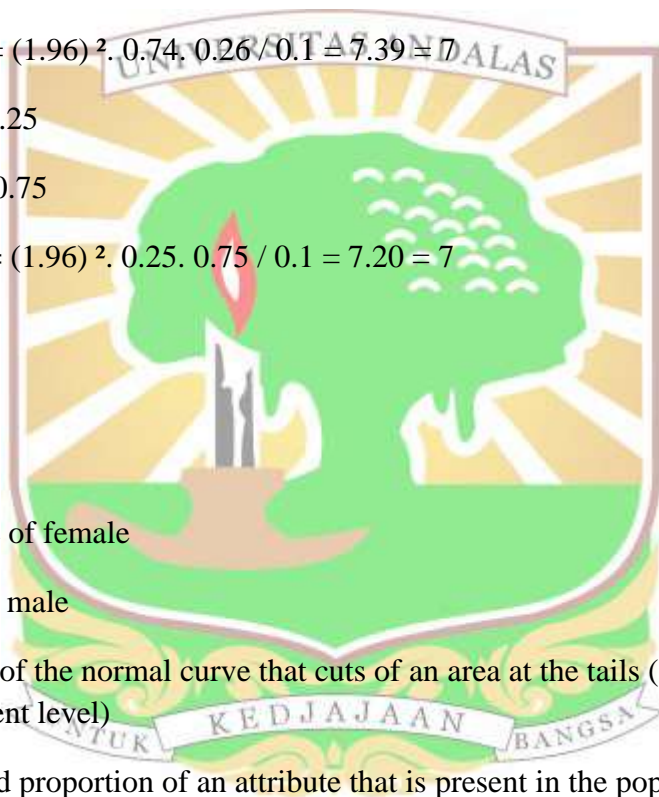
e: the desire level of precision (e= 10%)

pf: the estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population of female

qf: 1-pf

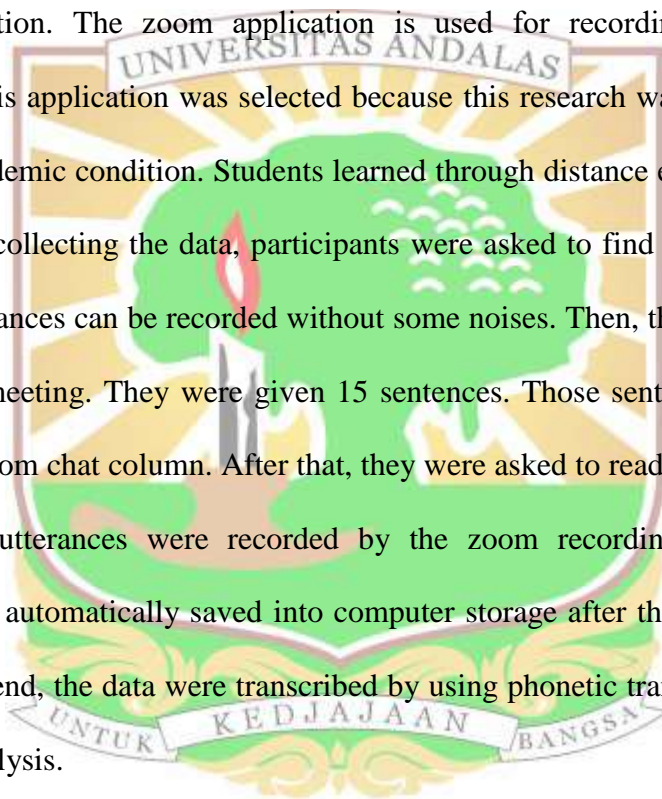
pm: the estimated proportion of an attribute that is present in the population for male

qm: 1-pm



1.5.2. Methods of collecting data

This research was aimed to obtain lingual data from 14 participants. They are chosen based on their time availability to participate in this research. The data was collected from June, 19th 2019 up to June, 24th 2019. There are some instruments used in this research such as a computer, a list of sentences, and a zoom application. The zoom application is used for recording participants' utterances. This application was selected because this research was carried out in Covid-19 pandemic condition. Students learned through distance education in this pandemic. In collecting the data, participants were asked to find a quiet room so that their utterances can be recorded without some noises. Then, they were invited to the zoom meeting. They were given 15 sentences. Those sentences were sent through the zoom chat column. After that, they were asked to read those sentences aloud. Their utterances were recorded by the zoom recording feature. This recording was automatically saved into computer storage after the zoom meeting ended. In the end, the data were transcribed by using phonetic transcription (IPA) for further analysis.



1.5.3. Method of Data Analysis

The data are performed and classified in the form of several tables. The first column is the words containing English fricative consonants and vowels. The second column consisted of participants' pronunciation. The last column included correct pronunciation. Those data are described with descriptive analysis. The markedness phenomenon is related to Tuckman's Markedness Differential

Hypothesis (MDH). It is also connected with other theories that have been mentioned in the theoretical framework. In the method of data analysis, participants' pronunciation is compared with native English pronunciation based on the Meriam Webster dictionary.

1.5.4. Method of Presenting the Result

The results of the analysis were listed in a table. The first column was English fricative consonants and vowels substitution. The second column included the total of words. The third column was the percentage of the participants' errors. On the other hand, there is one table that shows the markedness of the English fricative consonants and vowels. This table consists of English fricative consonants and vowels segments and markedness [marked and unmarked].

