PRONUNCIATION ERRORS IN SYLLABIC CONSONANTS  
(AN INVESTIGATION OF THE STUDENT’S PHONOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING)

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Abstract

This research examined pronunciation errors in syllabic consonant sounds uttered by fourth-semester students in the English and literature departments. This study aimed to find out how fourth-semester students read the text and pronounce syllabic consonant sounds. The theories of English phonetics and phonology were proposed by Peter Roach and Corder’s theory of error analysis. The data was gathered using the descriptive qualitative method. The researcher used the phone as an instrument to record herself reading aloud text. According to the findings, the students made three errors: addition, omission, and selection. First, they began using the schwa sound with long syllabic consonant words. Second, some syllables were removed, which was most common in the final syllable. Third, they identified where a syllable in a word should go because they heard a vowel sound that should not be there or a sound in a syllable that was in the wrong location. This mistake occurs in the middle and last syllables.

Keywords: pronunciation, errors, syllabic consonant.

1. Introduction

Naturally, the first problem in studying a foreign language is pronunciation. Pronunciation is important in English because good pronunciation will make people easy to understand and respond to the meaning of conversation. On the other hand, bad pronunciation will confuse the listener and lead to a mistake. Furthermore, poor pronunciation skills lead to a loss of confidence in English-speaking persons and negatively impact their talents (Morley, 1998). Pronunciation is
the first thing people notice when they use English in conversation. As stated by Seidlhofer (1995) in Celce-Murcia (2006:117), Pronunciation is a technique of arranging to mean in conversation, anchored in specific socio-cultural and interpersonal circumstances. As a result, the study of pronunciation is important. When people study a foreign language, one of the first ways to demonstrate their proficiency is to become good speakers. According to Dincer (2017), someone can be considered good at English if they speak it fluently.

Pronunciation is related to learning to produce the sound correctly, discussed in phonetics and phonology. According to (Panevova& Hana, 2010: 1), phonology focuses on sound and how sounds are organized in a particular language. So, in phonology, the students learn about systematic sound in human language. At the same time, phonetics is a science that discusses how sound can be formed by using some parts of the body like the lip, tooth, tongue, pharynx, and lungs. Therefore, you will only be able to completely appreciate how sounds are used in English speech if you study both the phonetics and phonology of the language (Roach, 2000: 4).

One of the problems that cause pronunciation errors is because foreign words are not familiar, besides that between one language and another sometimes there are far different phonemes. Studying a language or foreign language talks about the problem of habit. When someone tries to learn a language, it means learning new habits. The old ones will interfere with the new ones. This error cause is called first language interference (Norris 1983: 19).

The researcher chose this case because many student speaks carelessly, and sometimes they do not notice the phonetic transcription or how to pronounce the word. In Nigeria, although English is used in their daily lives, it does not make them master it well (Chitulu and Njemanze, 2015). Many factors caused them to have difficulty pronouncing English correctly. The dominant factor is in the surroundings. English speakers are not paying attention to its rules. Sometimes, students’ speech is not suitable for transcription (Rusli, 2018). Based on this research, people should care about phonetics and pronunciation so that the interlocutor can understand. This is significant because people that learn a language can identify and define the sound of a language with the writer using phonetic symbols. In phonetics, pronunciation takes the most important role. A good pronunciation can be achieved if the speaker knows the place of articulation and the manner of articulation. The places of articulation consist of bilabial, labiodental, dental, alveolar, etc. While the manner of articulation consists of plosives, fricatives, affricates, etc.,

The purpose of the pronunciation study is students can pronounce or speak like a native, being able to pronounce the word accurately and can be understood by the listener, so when the language is used to communicate, then the rate of miscommunication can be minimized. Another reason is that so many students ignore and do not care about phonetics and producing sound. Caring about phonetics is necessary because people have to possess good speaking skills to understand what the speaker says. Sometimes the students speaking are not suitable enough with the phonetics transcription. Pronunciation is closely related to knowing about the IPA (International Phonetics Alphabet).

However, the researcher will focus on syllabic consonant material. A syllabic consonant is an element of phonetics usually used as a consonant but can also fill a slot volcanically in a syllable. In other words, a syllable consonant is a consonant that can form an entire syllable without any vocalization. A syllabic consonant can be named a vocalic consonant, consisting of nasal and liquid. Nasal sounds in syllabic consonants are m, n, and, and liquid sounds in syllables are l, and r. So in this syllabic consonant, there are five letters: r, l, m, n, and. In semi-formal registers, syllabic consonants are frequently described as obligatory because it is considered a
mispronunciation to say (pi: pl) rather than (pi: pl) for "people". However, the researcher will focus on syllabic consonant material. A syllabic consonant is an element of phonetics that is usually used as a consonant but can also fill a slot vocally in a syllable. In other words, a syllable consonant is a consonant that can form an entire syllabic without any vocalization. A syllabic consonant can be named a vocalic consonant, consisting of nasal and liquid. Nasal sounds in syllabic consonants are m, n, and, and liquid sounds in syllables are l, r. So in this syllabic consonant, there are five letters: r, l, m, n, and. In semi-formal registers, syllabic consonants are frequently described as obligatory, because it is considered a mispronunciation to say (pi: pl) rather than (pi: pl) for "people".

In learning language significantly, studying vocabulary, pronunciation, sound system, grammar, and other aspects of language are different from daily language or mother tongue. Studying language will be difficult or rare to find out that people do not make mistakes, especially in pronouncing or formulating sentence. Therefore, in learning a language, repetition and practice is needed. Richard in Jaya (2009: 6) explains that elements like vocabulary, pronunciation, structure, and sound system which resemble with native language will be easy to study, whereas for those areas that are different will be difficult. The difficulty will make the learner make mistakes in learning the second language. This error commonly happens to some students that study the language. Mostly, the students make errors at spelling, vocabulary, pronunciation, and structure, known as components of language. The learners, especially in second language learning, are naturally faced by the people and cannot avoid them. Mostly the students are not aware of their errors.

Dullay et al (1993 :138) in (Jeklin, 2016) explain errors as the flawed side of learners when speaking and writing. It means that there is no wrong in norms of language performance, and error from the learners of the target language is an unavoidable process. Besides, making errors is one part of learning, and there are no people who can learn without making errors. When people talk about errors, some learners think about mistakes. Error and mistake are different, and many people are confused about them. It is crucial to know the difference between them.

Furthermore, Ellis (1994:700) in (Ulfa et al., 2014) states that error is a deviation that makes by students or learners of the language that is out of the rules of the language. The learners make errors because there are language rules, but sometimes they don't know it. Mostly, the target language learners make mistakes because they are not focused but they know. Another explanation by Richards et.al (1992: 26) in (Supeno, 2019) explains mistakes made by learners of the target language are writing and speaking because of lack of fatigue, attention, carelessness, and another aspect. So, in general, distinctions made between errors and mistakes are not the same. From the both definitions, it can be concluded that site distinction between mistakes and errors are systematic and non-systematic deviation. According to Gass and Selinker (2008:102) mention that errors are systematic that happen repeatedly and cannot be aware by the learners. Mistakes also had explained by Norrish (1983 : 17) in (Ulfa et al., 2014) that a mistake is a deviation that is inconsistent because sometimes they get it right but sometimes is wrong. Second language learners frequently make mistakes of these kinds and sometimes made by native speakers. However, native speakers generally can correct themselves quickly, including slips of their tongue and random ungrammatical formations.

The researcher will use the object from the fourth semester of the English and literature department to analyze the syllabic consonant. The reason for this Research chose this object. After all, the researcher wants to see the pronunciation skill and see the alteration in English study after learning about phonology especially from syllabic consonant material, because this constitutes the basics of pronunciation. Good pronunciation is important when we will speak in
order there is no miscommunication between them. This research has similarities and differences from the previous researches that mentioned earlier. The similarities of the researches are studied about pronunciation problems. Then, the differences between three previous findings with this research are; 1) previously found by Rusli explain about an error in English fricative of sound, and the researcher analysis about an error in syllabic consonant sound. 2) Algifari is about pronunciation skills used Miles and Huberman model to analyze data, but here the researcher used Coder's theory to analyze the errors. 3) Relating pronunciation errors in reading a text and the researcher focused on pronunciation errors of the syllabic consonant sound produced by the fourth semester students of English Literature. Therefore, the research question that will be addressed in this research is how is the analysis of pronunciation errors in syllabic consonant sounds uttered by the fourth semester of English students English and literature department?

2. Method

2.1 Research Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative method to look at the students' pronouncing errors while reading a book. According to Gregory et al (2005:2), qualitative research is defined as research that employs procedures that necessitate the utilization of a sample or participant. Following that, the researcher observes utilizing a descriptive account. Qualitative methods are an observation process of understanding based on real methodological traditions in society and exploring human problems, as Creswell (2014:183) explains.

2.2 Object of the Research

The researcher chose the fourth semester students at the English and literature department. There are three classes in this semester and the researcher took 5 students per each class with random sampling. Further, the researcher used a text for students to read one by one. The researcher took a sample from the fourth semester because they had learnt phonetics and phonology in the third semester.

2.3 Instrument of the Research

The researcher used text for reading as an instrument, which contains syllable consonant words, and continue to analyze errors in students pronouncing with recording their sound a using mobile phone. The object of this Research was the students of the fourth semester at English Literature department.

2.5 Techniques of Analyzing Data

In analyzing data, the researcher used Coder's theory in (Richard : 2015) He explains kinds of error, there are 4 kinds error those are the error of addition, error of omission, error of selection, and error of ordering. It is supported by Jose's (2014: 1) that explained three positions of errors: initial, middle, and final position. Result

2.1 Finding

Syllabic consonant that is explained in this part was syllabic consonant sound mispronunciation that made in some students. This study revealed that the informants produced errors from the syllabic consonant sound, namely the l, r, m, n, ŋ sounds. This study only focused on the mispronunciation of syllabic consonants. They mispronounced the syllabic consonant by addition, omission and selection.

a. Mispronunciation of Addition
The explanation below is the syllabic consonant sound that was mispronounced by the students. The syllabic consonant that was explained in detail was a sound mispronunciation that occurred in certain students. The informants in this study made errors with the syllabic consonant sounds, specifically the l, r, m, and n sounds. This study solely looked at syllabic consonant mispronunciation. By adding, omitting, and selecting, the students mispronounced the syllabic consonant. In this addition, the students gave some elements that should not be present.

(1) Mispronunciation by addition in the medial position

The table below showed the students problem in syllabic consonant sounds, which are l, r, m, n, ñ sound.

| Student's pronunciation | Crippled /ˈkʌpld/ | Penalty /ˈpɛnəli/ | History /ˈhɪstəri/ | Perhaps /ˈpɜːrɛps/ |
|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| S1                       | /ˈhɪstəri/       |                    |                    |                    |
| S2                       | /ˈhɪstəri/       |                    |                    |                    |
| S3                       | /ˈpɛnəli/        |                    |                    |                    |
| S4                       | /ˈhɪstəri/       |                    |                    |                    |
| S5                       |                  |                    |                    |                    |
| S6                       |                  |                    |                    |                    |
| S7                       |                  |                    |                    |                    |
| S8                       |                  |                    |                    |                    |
| S9                       | /ˈpɛnəli/        |                    |                    |                    |
| S10                      | /ˈpɛnəli/        |                    |                    |                    |
| S11                      |                  | /ˈpɜːrɛps/         |                    |                    |
| S12                      |                  | /ˈpɜːrɛps/         |                    |                    |
| S13                      |                  | /ˈpɜːrɛps/         |                    |                    |
| S14                      |                  | /ˈhɪstəri/         |                    |                    |
| S15                      | /ˈkʌpld/         |                    |                    |                    |

The problem of the students' pronunciation such as crippled, penalty, history, perhaps, /ˈkʌpld/, /ˈpɛnəli/, /ˈhɪstəri/, /ˈpɜːrɛps/. The students changing the pronunciation of the word crippled /ˈpɪld/ to /ˈpɔl/, penalty /ˈnɛli/ to /ˈnɔli/, history /ˈhɪəri/ to /ˈhɔrɪ/, /ˈpɜːrɛ/ to /ˈpɔrɛ/. There are errors syllabic consonant here because they pronounce the word in the wrong way in general and with extended way or too long the schwa sound (ə).
(2) Misspronunciation by addition in the final position

The table below showed the students problem in syllabic consonant sounds. Those are \( l, r, m, n, \) sound which error in their pronunciation in the final position.

| Student's pronunciation | Words and Phonetic Translation |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
|                         | Brother          | Even      | Aggression | Wouldn ’ t | Didn ’ t | Problem |
|                         | /ˈbrʌðər/       | /ɪvən/    | /əɡʁeʃən/ | /ˈwʊdn/ | /diˈn/ | /ˈpɔːbləm/ |
| S1                      | /ɪfən/          |           |            |          |        |          |
| S2                      | /ɪfən/          |           |            |          |        | /ˈpɔːbləm/ |
| S3                      |               | /əɡʁeʃən/ |            |          |        | /ˈpɔːbləm/ |
| S4                      |               | /əɡʁeʃən/ |            |          |        | /ˈpɔːbləm/ |
| S5                      |               |           | /ˈwɔldən/  |          |        | /ˈpɔːbləm/ |
| S6                      | /ɪvən/          |           | /ˈwɔldən/  | /diˈn/  |        |          |
| S7                      | /ɪvən/          |           |            | /diˈn/  |        |          |
| S8                      |               |           |            |          |        |          |
| S9                      |               |           | /ˈwɔldən/  |          |        | /ˈpɔːbləm/ |
| S10                     | /əɡʁeʃən/      |           |            |          |        |          |
| S11                     | /ˈbrʌdər/       | /ɪvən/    |            | /diˈn/  |        | /ˈpɔːbləm/ |
| S12                     | /ˈbrʌdər/       | /ɪvən/    |            |          |        | /ˈpɔːbləm/ |
| S13                     | /ɪvən/          | /əɡʁeʃən/ |            |          |        | /ˈpɔːbləm/ |
| S14                     | /ɪfən/          |           |            |          |        | /ˈpɔːbləm/ |
The mispronouncing of syllabic consonant sound (l, r, m, n, and η) also happened in final position for example in the words brother, even, aggression, wouldn”t, didn”t, problem, /ˈbrʌðər/, /ˈɛvən/, /əɡˈrɛʃən/, /ˈprɑːbləm/. The student”s changing on the final of word with changing sound consonant and adding schwa sound in any syllable for example /ˈdrəf/ to /ˈdrəf/, /ˈvʌn/ to /ˈvʌn/, /ˈfʌn/ to /ˈfʌn/, /ˈdʌn/ to /ˈdʌn/ and syllable /lm/ to /ʌm/ with extended way or too long

b. Mispronunciation of Omission

The explanation below is the syllabic consonant sound that was mispronounced by omission sound in the words. Omission happens when the linguistics item that is required in the sentence is omitted or where some elements is omitting that should be present.

(1) Mispronunciation in the medial position

The table below showed the students problem in syllabic consonant sound those are l, r, m, n, η sound which error in their pronunciation in the medial position.

| Student's pronunciation | Words and Phonetic |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
|                         | Translation        |
|                         | Crippled           |
|                         | /ˈkʌpled/          |
| S1                      |                    |
|                         | /ˈkʌp/            |
| S2                      |                    |

Based on the table above. The pupils' pronunciation issues with words like crippled, punishment, history, perhaps, /ˈkʌpled/, /ˈpmlɪ/, /ˈhɪstə/, /ˈprps/. The students changed the word crippled from /ˈkʌpled/ to /ˈpml/, penalty from /ˈnlɪ/ to /ˈnl/, histori from /ˈtrɪ/ to /ˈtrə/, and /ˈprps/ to /ˈprps/. There are syllabic consonant errors here because they pronounce the word incorrectly in general and with a prolonged or excessively long schwa sound.

| Student's pronunciation | Words and Phonetic |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
|                         | Crippled           |
|                         | /ˈkʌpled/          |
| S1                      |                    |
|                         | /ˈkʌp/            |
| S2                      |                    |
Based on the table above, mispronunciation also happens in students omitting the word. The student changing with omission crippled, /kəpled/ the students do omission with their pronunciation for example /kəpld/ to /krip/ syllabic /pl/ was not clearly.

(2) Mispronunciation in the final position
The table below showed the students problem in syllabic consonant sounds. Those are l, r, m, n, η sound which error in their pronunciation in the final position.

| Student's pronunciation | Words and Phonetic Translation |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
|                         | Didn't 't /dɪdn/              |
|                         | Wouldn't 't /wʊdn/            |
| S1                      |                                |
| S2                      |                                |
| S3                      |                                |
| S4                      | /dɪd/ /wʊl/                  |

The able explain that in final position there is mispronunciation with omission the word in final position. The students changing the word such as didn’t, wouldn’t, /dɪdn/, /wʊdn/ become /dɪd/, /wʊl/.

c. Mispronunciation of Selection
(1) Mispronunciation in the middle position
The table below showed the students problem in syllabic consonant sounds. Those are l, r, m, n, η sound which error in their pronunciation in the medial position.

| Student's pronunciation | Words and Phonetic Translation |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
|                         | Crippled /kəpld/               |
|                         | Criminals /kəmnl/              |
|                         | Totally /tʊtli/               |
|                         | History /hɪstə/               |
|                         | Complaints /kəmpleɪnts/        |
|                         | Penalty /pɛnˈlɛri/             |
| S1                      |                                |
| S2                      | /kɪpɛl/ /kəmnl/               |
| S3                      |                                |
| S4                      | /tʊtəli/                      |
| S5                      | /kəpled/ /hɪstər/ /kəmpleɪnts/ |
The table mention that some students had done errors when produced the sound that is selection in medial position. Where the word crippled, criminals, totally, history, complaints, Penalty, /kripIed/, /kɪmʃnɪl/, /ˈtʊəlɪ/, /ˈhɪstrɪ/, /ˈkɒmplɛnts/, /ˈpɛnəltɪ/ changed into /kripIed/ sound, must syllable /pl/ changed to the /pled/ or /pel/, syllabic /nl/ to /nɑːl/ to /nɑːl/ to /nl/ to /nɑːl/ to /nɑːl/. So this is selection because where the wrong item has been chosen in a place.

(2) Mispronunciation in the final position

The table below showed the students problem in syllabic consonant sounds. Those are l, r, m, n, ŋ sound which error in their pronunciation in the final positive

| Student's pronunciation | Words and Phonetic Translation |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| /prɪtʃəl/                | /ˈbrædər/                      |
| /prɪtʃəl/                | /ˈbrædər/                      |
| /prɪtʃəl/                | /ˈbrædər/                      |
| /prɪtʃəl/                | /ˈbrædər/                      |
| /prɪtʃəl/                | /ˈbrædər/                      |
| /prɪtʃəl/                | /ˈbrædər/                      |
| /prɪtʃəl/                | /ˈbrædər/                      |
| /prɪtʃəl/                | /ˈbrædər/                      |
| /prɪtʃəl/                | /ˈbrædər/                      |
| /prɪtʃəl/                | /ˈbrædər/                      |
| /prɪtʃəl/                | /ˈbrædər/                      |

Jle: Journal of Literate English Education Study Program
Vol. 02 Nomor 02 Desember 2021
The table mentions that one person had made an error in producing the sound selection in the final position. Where the word particular, brother, /prtikjɔːl/, /ˈbrʌðə/ students change syllable /lɔːr/ to /lɔː/ and /ɔːr/ to /ər/. So this is an error in selection because the students wrong in select the vocal sound, where the vowel present that should not be there.

3.2 Discussion

In this point, the researcher explained the data analysis that had been got from the findings of kinds of pronunciation error in reading text by the fourth semester students based on Corder theory (1981). There are 15 participants as data in this research which were used. In this the researcher used pseudonym in the analysis description: where the participants are symbolized by "S" means that student. So S1 refers to student 1, S2 for student 2, and S3 to student 3, etc.

After the researcher transcribe the syllabic consonant word to the phonetic symbol, the data was then analyzed carefully by listening to the audio repeteadly. The big problem is that when the students produced addition where the syllable consonant has a schwa (ə) sound but the students mention with a long way. In addition that many sound problems happened, those are sound 1, r, n, and m. The students frequently produced the word with the same errors an addition example even the syllable (vɔn ) change to the (vɔn), and didn’t syllable (dɔn) to the (dɔn) with the (ə) long way. Then omission the syllable in a word like didn’t change (did) the problem here is omission at the end syllable must add sound after d sound become syllable (dɔn). Only two people that do omission problem. Furthermore, many problems happen with this kinds of errors. Some students mispronunciation with the selection for example Penalty the syllable (nɪl) changed (nal) and the word complaints the syllable (kɔm) changed (kom). Where the wrong item has been chosen in a place of the right one example the word crippled /ˈkrɪpəld/ so here error in selection because put the 'e' sound after 'l' sound. Error of ordering did not appear for this problem. While syllabic consonant is also mentioned as a sound that replaced the vocal sound. Following the sound being problem, the syllabic consonant sound 1, r, m, n, ɣ. There is only one sound in the syllabic consonant that students did not make an error, that was the ɣ sound because the ɣ sound is so familiar.

3. Conclusion

The conclusions are based on the analysis of the pronunciation problems in terms of syllabic consonant sounds committed by the fourth semesters students at Adab and Humanities Faculty in their reading the text. The conclusions are as follows: the are three syllabic consonant pronunciation problems. First, they adopted the schwa (ə) sound with the long way in syllabic consonant words. Second, they omitted some syllables in a word and often happened in a final syllable. Third, they selected where a syllable in a word is selected because the vowel sound was presented that should not be there, or sound in a syllable is a wrong place.
This error happens in the medial and final syllables. Finally, the students read that was not with the transcription so they were wrong in selecting exactly the vocal sound.

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