

THE DIFFICULTIES IN PRODUCING CERTAIN ENGLISH SOUNDS BY NATIVE SPEAKER OF MAKIAN

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini menyelidiki kesulitan dalam mengucapkan bunyi bahasa Inggris oleh penutur Makian. Mengingat fakta bahwa kesalahan pengucapan bahasa kedua sering disebabkan oleh transfer sistem bunyi bahasa pertama yang sudah mapan. Tulisan ini mengkaji beberapa karakteristik perbedaan fonologi antara bahasa Makian dan bahasa Inggris. Penelitian berdasarkan hasil wawancara terhadap 20 siswa MTs. Assyfa Hategau, Tidore, Maluku Utara. Penelitian ini juga membahas beberapa area pengucapan yang bermasalah bagi pebelajar bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dimana peneliti menganalisis dan menjelaskan data dengan cara mendeskripsikan penggunaan kata. Teknik yang digunakan dalam mengumpulkan data adalah observasi dan wawancara, dimana peneliti meminta subjek mengucapkan bunyi. Berdasarkan pada penelitian ini ditemukan bahwa ada beberapa penyebab kesulitan pengucapan bunyi bahasa Inggris oleh penutur asli Makian meliputi perbedaan karakteristik sistem vokal bahasa Inggris dan Makian, seperti Lax dan Tense Vowel, distribusi konsonan, perbedaan aspek supra-segmental seperti ritme, penekanan dan intonasi, perbedaan pada huruf vokal yang lebih banyak ditemui di bahasa Inggris, dan perbedaan aturan-aturan fonologi serta asimilasi.

Kata kunci: *Bunyi bahasa inggris, pengucapan, kesulitan pengucapan*

INTRODUCTION

Communication is one of four basic skills in English language. A good communication is what we have communicate or convey understand by the listener. In doing an effective communication depend on how to understand and produce the correct rule of combination words, especially the rules of phonology. Phonology is the study of (1) how the speech sounds of a language are used in that language to distinguish meaningful units (such as words) from each other?, and (2) how sounds are patterned in a language?. Consequently, the study of phonology requires us to take meaning into consideration, while phonetics does not. In this section we explore phonology and the basic unit of phonological analysis, the phoneme.

Phonology is different in function, phonology concerns itself with the ways in which languages make use of sounds to distinguish words from each other while phonetics, a system for describing and recording the sounds of language objectively. Phonetics provides a valuable way of opening our ears to faces of language that we tend to understand by reference to their written rather than their actual spoken forms (Charles Hall, 2017).

The important thing emphasized in communication (speaking) is grammatical and the pronunciation. Most misunderstanding happened between the speaker and listener in one communication caused by the speakers' pronunciation inappropriate. It means that the speaker do not understand the phonological rules and how to pronounce the English words with appropriate stress and intonation in communication.

Pronunciation is one important part of English learning which has biggest influence on one conversation because an understanding can be appear into our mind as a listener depend on how the speakers' pronunciation. Most pronunciation errors made by the second language learners often founded in the stress and intonation pattern. Likewise, according to Swan & Smith, (1987) the pronunciation errors made by second language learners are considered not to be just random attempts to produce unfamiliar sounds but rather reflections of the sound inventory, rules of combining sounds, and the stress and intonation patterns of their native languages.

Such observation of L2 pronunciation errors above, in turn, naturally suggests the critical need for ESL/EFL teachers to become more aware of the impact that learners' L1 backgrounds would bring to the learning of English pronunciation. In order to identify specific areas of pronunciation difficulties caused by L1 phonological transfer, teachers need to cultivate a firm understanding of the differences between English and the native language of the learners. Of course it is practically impossible for teachers working in an ESL situation as in the U.S. to understand all the phonological differences between English and the native languages of all the students, but it is also true that having such knowledge can be quite an advantage especially for teachers working in an EFL situation as in Indonesia.

Whitman & Jackson, (1972), although contrastive analysis has often been criticized for its inadequacy to predict the transfer errors that learners will make in actual learning contexts. In addition, Brown, (1994, p. 200), defines it cannot be easily denied that "such interference does exist and can explain difficulties", especially in the phonological aspects of second language learning. In this sense, the significance of contrastive analysis may not necessarily lie in the predictability of transfer errors, but rather in the explanatory potential of learner errors that teachers encounter in their daily practices (Celce Murcia & Hawkins, 1985).

In addition, Teachers should be knowledgeable about the phonetics and phonology of English because (1) the sound system is primary and the basis for the spelling system; (2) they may have to teach English pronunciation to students who are not native speakers of English; (3) they may have to teach poetry, which requires that they teach about rhyme, alliteration, assonance, and other poetic devices that manipulate sound; (4) it is important to understand accents and language variation and to react appropriately to them and to teach appropriate language attitudes about them to students; (5) we are so literate that we tend to "hear" the sounds of our language through its spelling system, and phonetics/phonology provides a corrective to that; and (6) phonetics and phonology provide systematic and well-founded understandings of the sound patterns of English.

This paper, thus, examines some of the characteristic phonological differences between Makian (North Maluku) and English by focusing on segmental and supra segmental aspects of both languages, and through comparison between the two languages, this study also points out several problematic areas of pronunciation for Makian learners of English.

METHOD

Method is a way to conducting a research which depend on the problem. It also can be stated as a style or way which it used by a researcher in a research to analyze result of the research. This research is designed as case study, it means that the writer do a learning toward a case. This research applied qualitative method where the data analyzed describe consist of words. Meanwhile, qualitative research as an inquiry process to find out a social or human problem based on building a complex, holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in natural setting. Boere (2005) stated that Qualitative method, as the name indicates are methods that do not involve measurement or statistics. Likewise, according to Bodgan et al, (1996) Qualitative as a research procedure which it is produce the descriptive data consist of words or written from people and the behavior that capable of control. The writer identified and classified the cause of errors made by the native speaker of Makian in producing English sounds.

The population of this research is the native speaker of Makian. Technique used in this research is speaking test and observation, which is a direct technique applied to the few students which they are as samples. Then, the tool used of this research in collecting data is speaking test and tape recorder. Later, in analyzing data, the writer uses content analysis technique which analyzed by using words.

DISCUSSION

The data was collected revealed several points in English language which the native speaker of Makian did not have and the problematic areas that make English learner of Makian not be able to produce English sounds properly as like shown on the vowel charts and classification of consonants below:

Vowels

Vowels include the sounds we ordinarily represent as the letters <a, e, i, o, u>, as well as a number of other sounds for which the ordinary alphabet has no unique symbols. Vowels are distinguished from consonants in several ways. As we have seen, consonants are produced by constricting the airstream to various degrees as it flows through the oral tract.

Vowels are produced with a smooth, unobstructed airflow through the oral tract. The differences in vowel quality are produced by different shapes of the oral cavity. Characteristic vowel qualities are determined by (a) the height of the tongue in the mouth; (b) the part of the tongue raised (front, middle, or back); (c) the configuration of the lips; and (d) the tension of the muscles of the oral tract. An articulatory description of a vowel must include all of these features.

Comparing the vowel of Makian system with English reveals some significant differences in several areas, the one is the number of vowels. In the English vowel system, there are 15 different vowels identified, which include several diphthongs such as *aw*, *ay*, and *oy*. On the other hand, Makian, North Maluku has only 5 vowels which as vowel inventory. A system quite common among many natural languages in the world (Kenworthy, 1987). Although the number of vowels that can be identified in English and Makian can differ depending on different analysis of linguists, particularly in phonological system. It is obvious that there are considerably more vowels in English than in Makian (See Table 1).

Table 1. Vowel Charts

English

	Front	Central	Back
High	i I		u U
Mid	e ɛ	Λ Ə	o ɔ
Low	æ	A	

Makian

	Front	Central	Back
High	I		u
Mid	e		o
Low		A	

Then, another difference of characteristics system in English vowel from the Makian vowel system is there exists the distinction between lax and tense vowels of the two systems. The difference between tense and lax vowels is made according to how much muscle tension or movement in the mouth is involved in producing vowels (Ladefoged, 1982). Thus, the pronouncing of vowel with extra muscle tension are called tense, and the vowels which produced without that are called lax vowels. For example,

/i/ as in English /it/ “eat” is categorized as a tense vowel as the lips are spread (muscular tension in the mouth) and the tongue moves toward the root of the mouth.

In other words, vowel /I/ as like in English “it” is considered to be a lax vowel because the movement of the tongue or muscular tension of the lips involved in production is little, compared to the manner in which the tense vowel /i/ as in ”eat” is produced. In addition, as shown in Table 1 and 2, the tense/lax vowels pairs of English such as /i/ vs. /I/, /e/ vs. /ɛ /, /u/ vs. /U/, do not exist in the five-vowel system of Makian which as one of differentiation.

Consonants

As like the differences in the vowel systems, there are also visible differences in consonantal distributions between Makian and English. The table 3, which shows the consonant system of each language, clearly illustrates the fact that there are more consonants in English than in Makian (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992; Kenworthy, 1987). In the vertical column of manner of articulation, we can find that there is no *affricate* found in Makian vowel system. Then, at the horizontal column of place of articulation, can be found that there are variety of *fricatives* and *affricates* which widely distributed in English than in Makian: /f/, /v/, /θ /, /ð/, /ʃ /, /ʒ /, /tʃ/, and /dʒ/ does not exist in the Makian consonantal system.

Furthermore, Consonants include the sounds we represent as <p, b, t, d, m, n, f, v, s, z, l, r, h> in the ordinary alphabet. All **consonants** are produced by entirely or almost entirely stopping the airstream coming from the lungs. When we almost entirely stop the airstream we force it through such a narrow opening that the airflow at that point is turbulent and noisy. We classify consonants according to the following characteristics: (a) whether or not the vocal folds are vibrating (**voicing**); (b) whether the sound is made with a fully stopped or merely constricted airstream (its **manner of articulation**); (c) where in the mouth the stoppage or constriction is made (its **place of articulation**); (d) whether or not air is flowing through the nasal cavity (**nasality**); and (e) whether or not the lips are pursed (**lip-rounding**).

Table 3: Classification of consonants according to place and manner of articulation

Makian

Place of Articulation		Bilabial	Alveolar	Alveopalatal	Velar	Glottal
Manner of Articulation						
Stops	Voiceless	p	T		k	
	Voiced	b	D		g	
Fricatives	Voiceless		S			
	Voiced		J			
Nasals		m	N			

English

Place of Articulation		Bilabial	Alveolar	Labio-dental	Inter-dental	Alveo-palatal	Velar	Glottal
Manner of Articulation								
Stops	Voiceless	p	T				k	
	Voiced	b	D				g	
Fricatives			S	F	θ	ʃ		h

	Voiced	Z	V	ð	ʒ
Affricates	Voiceless				tʃ
	Voiced				dʒ
Nasals		m	N		
Retroflex Liquid			R		
Lateral Liquid			l		

Therefore, the difference of characteristic between Makian and English consonantal systems lies not in the number of consonants found in each of the two languages but mostly founded in the unique distribution patterns of consonants in both languages. In other words, refer to the table above shown the differences in suprasegmental aspects between English language and Makian. Supra-segmental aspects of the English sound system such as rhythm, stress, and intonation are often distinguished from the segmental aspects such as consonants and vowels discussed earlier. These supra-segmental aspects of English are also considered to be different from those of Makian in many respects.

Supra-segmental Aspects of English and Japanese

Supra-segmental aspects of the English sound system such as rhythm, stress, and intonation are often distinguished from the segmental aspects such as consonants and vowels discussed earlier. These supra-segmental aspects of English are also considered to be different from those of Japanese in many respects.

Rhythm: Stress Timed/Syllable Timed

According to Ladefoged (1982), the term “stress-timed/ syllable-timed” is used to characterize the pronunciation of languages that display a particular type of rhythm. In stress-timed languages, there is a tendency that stressed syllables recur at regular intervals, regardless of the number of unstressed syllables that intervene in a sentence. In other words, the amount of time it takes to say a sentence in stress-timed language depends on the number of syllables that receive stress, either minor or major, not on the total number of syllables (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992).

Stress: Pitch Accent Language/ Stress Accent Language

In English, stressed syllables are marked primarily by making vowels longer and louder, while in Makian syllable stress always tend to vowels at a higher pitch. The notion of stress accent indicates that quite relevant to the existence of reduced or unstressed vowel called “shwa” (ə) in English. In addition, it can be said that this way of making stress greatly contributes to creating a stress-timed rhythmic pattern of English.

Intonation

There are some characteristics between English and Makian such as rising intonation pattern as used in yes-no question or final rising-falling, used in statements, commands, and wh-questions, but the difference between the two languages is the degree of pitch changes utilized in creating rising or falling intonation contours. For example, in English language the intonation is always rising in central and sometimes in front of word, while the intonation of Makian language is always placed in the final syllable and high pitch.

Pronunciation Problems: Segmental

Segmental differences between Makian and English sound system reveal several potentially problematic areas that Makian learner of English encounter in their production of English consonants and vowels.

Vowel

Vowels as like has remarked previously of English and Makian vowel system, there are apparently more vowels present in English than in Makian. The fact that the Makian vowel inventory is characterized as a typical five-vowel system, then Makian learners would have difficulty producing English vowels that do not exist in the Makian vowel system. Furthermore In English, there are five front vowels, /i/ /I/ /e/ /ε/ /æ/ and five back vowels /u/ /U/ /o/ /O/ /a/, while in Makian there are only two vowels /i/ /e/ in the front, one vowel a/ in central and two vowels /U/ /o/ in the back. In addition, the English central vowels /Λ/ /Θ/ does not exist in the Makian vowel system.

Consonants

The consonants in Makian language are not same over all with English language which contain a wide variety of consonants as its English counterpart. English consonants except p/, b/, t/, d/, k/ and g/, is not found in the Makian consonantal system. Then, one consonant such j/ in Makian language, not in english consonantal system. Such voiceless or voiced pairs of fricatives and affricates in English as /f//z/, and /tʃ/ /dʒ/ usually do not occur as distinct phonemes in Makian.

Syllable Types

Comparing several words from English and Makian can tell us some of the characteristic differences in the way that each language utilizes syllables for forming a word. Some of the examples that illustrate English syllable types are:

Word	Transcription	Syllable type
see	[siy]	CV
man	[sIt]	CVC
spit	[spIt]	CCVC
tith	[tIt]	CVCC
mull	[mUll]	CVCC

From these examples, we can say that English allows a wide variety of syllable types including both open and closed syllables: CV (open syllable), CVC CCVC, CCVCC, CCCVCC (closed syllable). On the other hand, the syllable types that Japanese allows seem to be restricted to open syllables only.

Word	Meaning	Syllable
lak	me	CVC
man	a boy	CVC
jok	mattress	CVC
tit	us	CVC
mul	go home	CVC

Phonological rules

Charles Hall, (2017) state that phonology is the study of (1) how the speech sounds of a language are used in that language to distinguish meaningful units (such as words) from each other, and (2) how sounds are patterned in a language. Phonological rule is a general statement about the distribution of a phoneme's allophones, e.g., those of /t/. There are several types of phonological rules to represent the several patterns of distribution of sounds in a language. The rule for the [th] allophone of /t/ can be seen as adding extra breathiness after the release of a voiceless stop. This rule adds the aspiration feature to the consonant. Such rules are referred to as feature addition rules.

Feature changing rules change the value of a component feature of a sound, for instance, from non-nasal to nasal or from short to long. The nasal pronunciation of the vowel of *can* is due, as we've seen, to the influence of the nasal consonant /n/ that comes immediately after it. In this case, the rule changes an oral (non-nasal) sound to a nasal one.

Segment deletion rules remove sound segments. For instance, in informal speech, a segment deletion rule removes the second of a pair of consonants at the end of one word when the next word begins with a consonant. Thus words such as *frost* and *ask* are pronounced as [fras] and [æs] when they occur before consonants (e.g., *Ask Katie*). This effect is especially likely when the last consonant of the first word is phonetically similar to the first consonant of the next word, as in *used to* [jus tæ], instead of [just tæ], (which leads to the incorrect spelling *use to*). French adjectives which end in consonants routinely lose those consonants if the following word begins with a consonant: 'small friend' *petit ami* [pətit ami] vs. 'small book' *petit livre* [pəti livr].

Phonological rules may also reverse the order of segments in words. In some dialects of English the verb *asks* is pronounced as [æks], reversing [s] and [k]. Several hundred years ago, the word *bird* now pronounced as [bɜrd] was pronounced [brɪd]. The vowel and the [r] switched places. Rules that reverse a sequence of segments are called **metathesis rules**. Some rules, such as the vowel nasalization rule, make a segment and its neighbor more alike. Such rules are called **Assimilation rules**.

Assimilation can be so thoroughgoing that two sounds can merge into one. For example, [t,d,s,z] are palatalized—i.e., pronounced [tʃ, dʒ, ʃ, ʒ] re-spectively—when they occur at the ends of words and the next word begins with the palatal glide [j]. For example, *Did you?* Is typically pronounced as [dɪdʒʒə] or even [dʒə]; the [dʒ] results from the coalescence of [dj].

CONCLUSION

Based on the data above, it could be assumed that the Makians' learner difficult in producing English Sounds caused there are several differences in language systems amongst English and Makian. Refers to the finding, the differences comprise of difference of characteristics system in English and Makian Vowel such as distinction between lax and tense vowels of the two systems, **Consonants distribution**, where there are more consonants in English than in Makian, **Supra-segmental Aspects of English and Makian** such as rhythm, stress, and intonation which often distinguished from the segmental aspects such as consonants and vowels, **Pronunciation Problems: Segmental** that Makian learner of English encounter in their production of English consonants and vowels, **Vowel**, there are apparently more vowels present in English than in Makian. **Consonants**, wherein the consonants in Makian language are not same over all with English language which is contain a wide variety of consonants as its English counterpart. English consonants except p/, b/, t/, d/, k/ and g/, is not found in the Makian consonantal system. Then, one consonant such j/ in Makian language, not in english consonantal system. Such voiceless or voiced pairs of fricatives and affricates in English as /f//z/, and /tʃ/ /dʒ/ usually do not occur as distinct phonemes in Makian. **Syllable Types, Phonological rules, Assimilation rules.**

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