THE SECOND SEMESTER STUDENTS' ERRORS IN PRONOUNCING THE WORDS CONTAINING SILENT LETTERS

THESIS

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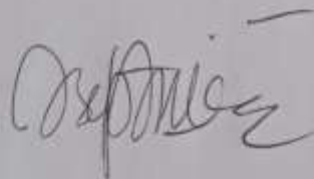
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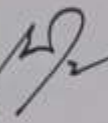
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Menyatakan bahwa skripsi berjudul :

The Second Semester Students' Error ini Pronouncing the Words Containing Silent Letters beserta seluruh isinya adalah benar merupakan hasil karya sendiri dan saya tidak melakukan penjiplakan atau pengutipan dengan cara-cara yang tidak sesuai dengan etika keilmuan dalam masyarakat ilmiah.

Atas pernyataan ini, saya siap menerima segala sanksi yang berlaku atau yang ditetapkan untuk itu, apabila dikemudian hari ternyata pernyataan saya tidak benar atau ada klaim dari pihak lain terhadap keaslian skripsi saya.

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Yang menyatakan,

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Motto and Dedication

Motto:

"There is always hope for people who always pray, there is always way for people who always endeavor"

Dedication:

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1. My beloved parents, Mr. Huzairin and Mrs. Rita. Thank you so much for everything. I love you so much.

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ABSTRACT

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This study was conducted to analyze of students' pronunciation error toward English silent letters. The problems which should be answered in this study were silent letter errors which were made by students, and the factors that caused the errors. The objectives of this study were to find out silent letter errors made by the students and to know the factors that caused the error. The subject of this study was thirty-two students of the second semester of *Universitas PGRI Palembang.* The technique of choosing the subjects was using purposive sampling. The method of this study was qualitative method. The data source of this study was student's video recorder. The result of this study showed that there were eight silent letter errors made by students such as 'B', 'C', 'H', 'L', 'P', 'T', 'U', 'W'. The dominant silent letters error made by the students were the letter 'W" and 'P' with the highest percentage 100%. There were some factors that caused the error. Firstly, the students were lack of knowledge toward silent letters and phonetic transcription. The last, the students were accustomed to pronounce the wrong sound of the word.

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The researcher realizes that this thesis is far from being perfect. There are still many weaknesses that need to be improved in this thesis. The researcher accepts any kind of criticism, comments, suggestion, and advice.

Last but not least, the researcher hopes that this thesis will be useful for the university and also the next researcher in the future.

Palembang, 18 August 2022
The researcher,

Anta Alaka

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the study, formulation of the study, objectives of the study and significance of the study.

A. Background of the Study

The learners of English as a second language find difficulties in their learning. Learning English sometimes is affected by their mother tongue (Indonesian language). It causes error for the learners in learning and using English. Muriungi (2011) states that "learners make many errors in the process of acquiring English as a second language" (p.88). The learners do not realize language rules. They use second language rules (English rules) as they use their first language rules (Indonesian language rules). It is essential to know that English and Indonesian language have many diversifications such as in structure, spelling, pronunciation, etc. The learners should be concerned about language rules in order to avoid language interference.

According the report launched by English First Proficiency Index (EF EPI) in 2021, Indonesia was ranked 14th of 24 countries in Asia and ranked 80th of 112 countries in the world. This number shows that Indonesia still has low rank for English skill. One of the low skills is speaking especially in English pronunciation. This happens probably due to low interest and motivation of Indonesian people in learning English. They think English is not important for them, particularly in English Pronunciation.

Pronunciation is the main aspect of learning a second language. It influences the learners' communicative competence in using the target language. According to Pourhosein (2012), "pronunciation is an integral part of foreign language learning since it directly affects learners' communicative competence as pronunciation properly in order to be understandable" (p.119). Pronunciation in language learning cannot be belittled because pronunciation is how a word or a language be spoken. Pronunciation is the

significant sound production of words that are used to communicate with others in an effort to implement a meaning. Correct pronunciation will give the advantages not only in production but also the understanding of spoken language.

Odisho (2003) states that "pronunciation is the production of speech sound for communication, but to make the communication run well, those sound should be comprehended by another person" (p.57). It is noticed that pronunciation is the main thing a person acknowledge in conversation. Grammar and vocabulary are avowed as the important aspect of language, but it is useless if the speaker cannot utter it properly. Furthermore, the listeners more likely to comprehend the speaker if the speaker uses proper pronunciation, even though the grammar is error. Hereby, pronunciation becomes an important thing in the communication process.

Learning English pronunciation becomes a challenge for the learners. The learners are difficult to comprehend English pronunciation because the words that they hear are often different from the written form. It causes the errors in their learning process and using English. One of the common errors that learners make is in silent letters. Silent letter is the condition where a letter exists in spelling but it does not exist in pronunciation. According to Carney (2012), "the term 'silent letter' is an extension of a metaphor commonly used in the teaching of reading, where letters are often supposed to 'speak' to the reader" (p.40). For instance, letter "b" in Climb, letter "c" in Scene, letter "d" in handkerchief, letter "h" in choir, letter "i" in business, letter "k" in knee, letter "t" in soft, letter "g/gh" in alright, letter "a" in musically and etc. The silent letters above are unpronounced in English rule.

Silent letters do not exist in Indonesian language. In Indonesian language rule, all letters in a word are pronounced while in English rule, there are some silent letters which should not be pronounced. The learners do not realize this rule. They interfere Indonesian language rules to English. Muriungi (2011) states that "the first language has rules that the learners have learnt and understood and they therefore tend to use the rules of the first language on the second language and end up creating errors" (p.90).

Fanani and Fitria (2014) affirms that "it is clear that learners use L1 sound system for help them pronounce the words in L2, which indicates the presence of direct interference from L1 on L2" (p.36). The learners pronounce all the English words as they pronounce all words in Indonesian language and it creates the error.

The previous research committed by Fanani and Fitriana (2014) entitle "Identification Common Error in Pronouncing Silent Letters by Second Semester of UNIPDU". In their research, the participants were asked to pronounce word containing silent letters, they were still pronouncing the letter that must be silent in some words. Some participants still pronounced the words as the formation of the letters. In some letters (/b/,/d/,/g/,/gh/,/h/,/k/,/i/,/m/,/n/,/p/,/s/,/t/,/th/,/w/), they did not know it must be silent when they pronounced those words. They read and pronounced what have written in the text. And also in the result of their research, it proved that participants interference their first language to the second language. It can be seen from the data analysis. The participants utilized sound system of first language to help them pronounced English words.

These errors commonly appear in learning English as a second language. Sometimes, the errors that occurred are not exclusively intended done by learners. According to Siregar and Hasibuan (2020),

> "There are several reasons why students incorrect to pronounced the words. The first one is lack of exposure to English Listening Vocabulary, the second is lack of knowledge of English phonemic transcription, The third is habit to producing the wrong sound of the given words. The fourth is lack to interest in learning English pronunciation. The fifth is lack of motivation by the teachers to give stress on listening skills, then, lack of requisite time hour to practice English vocabulary and pronunciation and the last is lack of appropriate knowledge by the teachers to train the students in English" (p.84).

For the reason above, the researcher realized that conducting research of pronunciation specially about silent letters was very crucial. As known, in English there are many words contain silent letters. Dubosarsky (2009) states that "there are 60 percent of words in English have silent letter

(p.17). Where if it is pronounced, it will bother listener's comprehension. By knowing the errors in pronouncing silent letters, English teachers could notice which silent letters are errors and which is the dominant so they are able to map them in order to give more exercises in English teaching and learning.

The researcher decided to choose a research entitled "The Second Semester Students' Errors in Pronouncing the Words Containing Silent letters".

B. Formulation of the Study

The researcher formulated the problem as follows:
1. What were silent letter errors made by students?
2. What were the factors that caused the errors?

C. Objective of the Study

The objectives of this study were to find out silent letter errors and the factors that causes the errors.

D. Significance of the Study

The are some significance of this study. They are for the writer: the researcher be able to enhance his knowledge and has good experiences about error in pronouncing silent letter. For the teacher, this study would expect to be able to give a valuable source of information for the teacher of English about error in pronouncing silent letter. For students, this study would be stimulus for the students to be more interested in learning pronunciation. For other researcher, other researcher will get a source addition for their similar topic about pronunciation error in silent letter.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discusses pronunciation, silent letter, error, the differences between error and mistake, error analysis, classification of errors and previous related study.

A. Pronunciation

Pronunciation is a production of speech sound that we used in language to communicate with other. Pronunciation is the way a word or language is usually spoken. According to Wehmeier (2000), "pronunciation is the way in which a language or a particular word or sound is pronounced" (p.1057). Additional, Richards and Schmidt (2010) state that "pronunciation is the way a certain sounds or sounds are produced" (p.469). Manser (1991) states that "pronunciation is the way in which language or words are spoken" (p.330). Therefore, pronunciation is the part of language that cannot be separated.

Pronunciation is the main aspect of learning language as a foreign language. It influences the learners' communicative competence in using the target language. According to Pourhosein (2012), "pronunciation is an integral part of foreign language learning since it directly affects learners' communicative competence as pronunciation properly in order to be understandable" (p.119). Szynalski (2005) states that there are three levels of English pronunciation as follows:

1.Level 3: If the listeners can understand what the speaker wants to say, so the speaker's pronunciation is clear.

2. Level 2: The listener can understand what someone's saying, but they have to concentrate to understand it, and;

3. Level 1: Someone pronunciation is wrong, so it makes the listeners cannot understand what the speaker saying (p.1).

In conclusion pronunciation should be one of first component that must be learnt in English especially for oral skill such as

speaking and reading aloud. If the speaker does not have a good pronunciation, the listener will not understand speakers' intentions. Also, the listener cannot interpret the speaker

B. Silent letter

Silent letter is the condition where a letter is existed in spelling but it does not exist in pronunciation. Shakoor, Sarwat, & Shahzad (2021) defines "silent letter is a letter which presents in spelling but is omitted while pronouncing the words" (p.5455). Silent letters are letters that in certain words do not have any sound in the pronunciation of the word. According to Carney (2012), "the term 'silent letter' is an extension of a metaphor commonly used in the teaching of reading, where letters are often supposed to 'speak' to the reader" (p.40). Podhaizer (2010) states that "silent letters are letters that are not heard making their 'usual' sound in a word as silent" (p.88). Silent letters are letters that are not pronounced or reduced to make them more acceptable in spoken English.

According to Finegan (2008), "the learner hearing the words de*b*t, clim*b*, mus*c*le, We*d*nesday and s*w*ord for the first time will probably be surprised to see how they are written because the letters in italics in the words are silent letters" (p.55). Silent letter makes the problems for non-native speakers of a language because the letter exists in spelling but does not exist in pronunciation. For example, the letter 'u' in a word 'build'/bɪld is unpronounced. The letter 'g' in a word "assignmet'/əˈsʌɪnm(ə)nt is unpronounced. The letter 'b' in the word 'de*b*t' is unpronounced. It is called silent letter so it should be pronounced as /det/. The letter 'c' in the word 'mus*c*le' is silent letter so the pronunciation of word 'muscle' should be / mʌsəl/. If non-native speakers do not notice the silent letter in those words, they will pronounce it. To know the silent letters in a word, non-native language must look at dictionary to see transcript sound, particularly English. Sometime it is more difficult to guess the spellings of spoken words. Dubosarsky (2009) states that "silent letter is the one that creepy sneakily into words at the beginning, middle or end when its' not expecting them"

(p.17). Additionally. Dubosarsky (2009) mentions that "there are 60 percent of words in English have silent letter (p.17). This problem makes the teachers and students give more attention about this case.

There are three types of silent letters by Carney (2012):

1. Auxiliary letters

Carney (2012) states that auxiliary letters are letters which help to make up complex graphic unit, it is necessary to keep units distinct from others unit (p.40). in other word, Auxiliary letters are two letters combined which represent a single phoneme. They may be classified as:

a. Exocentric diagraph: where the sound of the digraph is different from that of either of its constituent letters. Example: letter [gh] in laugh /laːf/.

b. Endocentric diagraph: where the sound of the diagraph is the same as that of one of its constituent letters. Example: the letters [wr]in write /rʌɪt/, letter [ea] in bread /brɛd/.

2. Inert letters

According to Carney (2012), Inert letters are letters which occur in all of the spelling of the word but in some forms they are pronounced and in other forms they are not pronounced (p.41). It can be seen in word signature and sign. The letter "g" in signature is pronounced (sɪgnətʃə) while the letter "g" in sign is not pronounced (sʌɪn).

3. Empty letters

Carney (2012) says empty letters are a second kind of dummy letter. They are have no distinctive function (as do auxiliary letters) and not even a latent distinctive function (as do inert letters) (p.42). Empty letters are letters which is unpronounced and they do not have special function like auxiliary and inert letters. Example of empty letters can be seen in word "honest" the letter "h" is unpronounced (ɒnɪst), word 'dumb" the letter "b" is unpronounced (dʌm).

C. Error

According to Richard (2013), "error is the use of linguistic item (e.g. a word, grammatical item, a speech act, etc.) in a way which a fluent or native speaker of the language regards as showing faulty or incomplete learning" (p.95). Errors are classified according to vocabulary (lexical error), pronunciation (phonological error), grammar (syntactic error), misunderstanding of speakers " intention or meaning (interpretative error), production of the wrong communicative effect. In the study of second and foreign language, errors have been studied to discover the processes of learning and using a language.

The term error is presented by many experts and researcher. In this study, the definitions of error are uttered by some experts: (1) according to Norish (2014), "error is a systematic deviation, when a learner has not learnt something and consistently gets it wrong" (p.7). (2) and also Cunningwort (2012), "errors are systematic deviation from the norm of the language being learned" (p.87). The phrase "systematic deviation" from statements above can be interpreted as the deviation which happens repeatedly. It seems that the phrase 'systematic deviation' in these definitions is a key word which can be interpreted as the deviation which happens repeatedly.

D. The differences between error and mistake

In analyzing the error in pronouncing silent letters, it is necessary to know the distinctions between error and mistake. According to Eliss (2012),"error reflects gaps in a learners' knowledge; they occur because the learner does not know what is correct. While mistake reflects occasional in performance; they occur because particular instance, the learner is unable to perform what he or she knows" (p.17). it relates to statement by Brown (2006), "a mistake refers to a performance error that is either a random guess or a "slip" in that is a failure to utilize a known system correctly (p.226). To distinguish between error and mistake, it can be known by checking the consistency of learners' performance. If she/he sometimes uses

the correct form and sometimes the incorrect one, it is a mistake. Whereas, if he/she always uses incorrect one, it is an error.

E. Error Analysis

Error analysis is an activity to uncover error in learning language as second language or as a foreign language. Hasyim (2016) defines "error analysis is an activity to reveal errors found in writing and speaking" (p.43). Error analysis is the process to observe, analyze, and classify the deviation of the rules of the second language and then to reveal the system operated by the learner. Error analysis has a purpose to measure the students' ability in learning target language. According to Corder (2014) "the purpose of error analysis is, in fact, to find "what the learner knows and does not know" (p.170). Crystal (2012) mentions "error analysis is a technique for identifying, classifying and systematically interpreting the unacceptable forms produced by someone learning a foreign language, using any of the principles and procedures provided by linguistics". Error analysis can help teacher to know student difficulties in learning target language.

Erdogan (2005) affirms "error analysis enables teacher to find out the sources of errors and take pedagogical precaution towards them"(p.226). And also, error analysis has a gold to increase quality of teaching and learning process. According to Hasyim (2016), "error analysis may be carried out in order to (a) find out how well someone knows language, (b) find out how a person learns a language, and (c) obtain information on common difficulties in language learning, as an aid in teaching or in the preparation of teaching materials" (p.43). hence, error analysis is an activity to identify, classify and interpret or describe the error made by language learners.

F. Classification of Errors

1. Error in pronunciation

Some experts give their idea about kinds of error. They classify it into several types. Corder (2014) categories three types of errors according to their systematic:

a. Presystematic errors occur when the learner is unaware of the existence of a particular rule in the target language.

b. Systematic errors occur when the learner has discovered a rule but it is the wrong one.

c. Postsystematic errors when the learner knows the correct target language rule but uses it inconsistently (i.e. makes a mistake).

2. Error in sentence

Surface Strategy Taxonomy in analysis error made by Dulay (1982) cited in Bara (2019). The learners may omit necessary items or add unnecessary ones; they may misform items or disorder them. This taxonomy classified error in four types, those are omissions, additions, misformation, and misordering.

a. Omission

Omission errors are characterized by the absence of an item that must appear in a well-formed utterance.

b. Addition

Addition errors are the opposite of omissions. They are characterized by the presence of an item which must not appear in awell-formed utterance.

c. Misformation

Misformation errors are characterized by the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure while in omission errors the item is not supplied at all, in misformation errors the learner supplies something, although it is incorrect.

d. Misordering

Misordering errors are characterized by the incorrect placement of a morpheme or group of morphemes in an utterance.

G. Previous Related Studies

To support this research, there are three previous related studies which relate to this present study.

The first study comes from Agisnadea (2021) entitles "An Error Analysis of Students' Pronunciation Silent Letter at The Second Semester of

English Education Raden Intan State Islamic University of Lampung in Academic Year of 2019/2020". The similarities between Agisnadea's thesis and the researcher's study are both of studies analyzed pronunciation error in silent letter, these two of studies used qualitative research and these studies used student of university as the participants.

The differences between Agisnadea thesis and the writer's study are Agisnadea thesis chose Lampung University as the place of the study while the researcher chose Universitas PGRI as the place of the study. Dhea only analyzed English silent letters /b/, /p/ and /u/ while the researcher analyzed English silent letters of /b/, /c/, /d/, /h/, /l/, /p/, /t/, /u/, /w/ . Both have difference in technique of analysis data. Dhea used 4 steps which are data reduction, data display, drawing the conclusion, evaluating student's errors while the researcher used 4 steps which are transcript, coding, tabulating and data analysis.

The second related study is from Ayumi (2018) entitles "The pronunciation of English Words Containing Silent Letter "G" by the Elementary and Advanced Level Students of English Made Easy (EME) English Course "The similarities between Ayumi's study and the researcher's study are both of studies analyzed pronunciation error in silent letter, these two of studies used qualitative research.

The differences between Ayumi's study and the researcher's study are Putri's study chose students of English Made Easy (EME) as the participants of the study while researcher's chose second semester student at universitas PGRI Palembang as the participant of the study, Ayumi's study had 10 participants while the researcher had 32 participants. The difference is only technique in analyzed the data. Putri's study used 3 steps for analyzing the data which are transcript, numbering, tabulating while researcher used 4 steps they are transcript, coding, tabulating and data analysis.

The third related study is from Sekarsarimurti (2019) entitles "Javanese Student's Mispronunciation of English Word with the Silent Letter "B". The similarities between Sekarsarimuti's study and the researcher's study are both analyzed silent letter, both used qualitative research. The

difference is in technique of analyzing the data. Sekarsarimurti used some steps, which are transcript, tabulating and analyze while researcher used 4 steps, which are transcript, coding, tabulating data analysis.

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