

## **PRONUNCIATION PROBLEMS OF ENGLISH STOP SOUND MADE BY THE SECOND GRADERS OF SMA PANJURA MALANG**

*Ferdinanda Itu Meo, Yokie Prasetya Dharma*

*STKIP Persada Khatulistiwa Sintang*

[nandaazee@gmail.com](mailto:nandaazee@gmail.com), [12yokieprasetya@gmail.com](mailto:12yokieprasetya@gmail.com)

---

**Abstract:** Pronunciation is the most important part in English. As we know students are always marked by different activities, such as learning activities, private lessons, and course, students can learn better from these activities. This study is aimed to know the pronunciation problems of certain significant English stop sound among the second graders of SMA Panjura Malang and in what position of words the problems occur. This research was a qualitative descriptive design. The instruments were 50 words, containing voiceless stop of /p/, /t/, /k/ in initial, medial, and final position; each contains five or six intended sounds in different position of words to test the students, and a cell phone to record the pronunciation of the students. The results showed that the most problematic sounds for the students were the aspirated consonants /p/, /t/, /k/ which appeared in initial, medial, and final positions of words. The comparison of both Indonesian and English for the most problematic words showed that one factor that might cause the pronunciation problems of English stop sounds are: (1) there are sounds in English which are phonemic, but they are not phonemic in Indonesian, (2) there are some sounds which do not exist in Indonesian, but they exist in English, (3) there are sounds which are voiced in English but they are voiceless in Indonesian, (4) these are sounds pronounced with aspiration in English, but not in Indonesian. Another indication of the cause is the unfamiliarity of the students toward the words. The results are hoped to be the feedback for the teachers to give model in minimal pairs to the students and be able to improve the pronunciation problems of their students.

---

**Keywords;** pronunciation, segmental sounds, voiceless stop, consonants.

---

### **INTRODUCTION**

Pronunciation is the choice of sounds used in forming words (Carrel and Tiffany, 1960:4). Pronunciation is one of the most important aspects one has to master when learning English. Pronunciation is important because learning a language means that we need to be able to communicate. As stated by Wardhaugh (1977:3) language is system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communication. Being able to communicate in English, we need to master pronunciation. As Soemardono (1991:1) state, pronunciation is one of the basic skills one must possess when learning a language either actively or passively.

The pronunciation system of English words is unique. That is the reason why many people say that the pronunciation of English language is difficult (Roring, 2008:1). The pronunciation system which is unique is in the way of pronouncing the words. The pronunciation depends on how the words are heard in the ears. Two words which are different in meaning can be pronounced the same. For example: hour and our.

English pronunciation has two components. They are segmental and supra segmental sounds. The segmental sounds of English include consonants and vowels. The supra segmental sounds include stress, intonation and pitch, pause and rhythm. Both segmental and supra segmental sounds of English are important because they differentiate the meaning of the English words. Usually, the consonant sounds of English are grouped according to the their manner of articulation and place of articulation.

#### 1. Manner of Articulation

Manner of articulation is the type of closure made by the articulators and the degree of the obstruction of the airstream by those articulators. The way how the sound is articulated in which the airstream is usually from the lungs is interfered with in order to produce a speech sound. Largely independent of the place where a consonant's constriction is formed, the manner in which the constriction is formed can be manipulated in various ways. If a construction is formed which completely block the flow of air, the resulting sound, such as /t/, is called a stop.

#### 2. Place of Articulation

The place of articulation simply means the active and passive articulators involved in the production of a particular consonant. Place of articulation describes how the tongue, lips, jaw, and another speech organs are involved inmaking a sound make contact.

In this case, for the Indonesian students, good pronunciation can be hard to achieve because English does not have straight forward relationship between spelling and pronunciation. The students had difficulties pronouncing many English words. Many students can not pronounce English words accurately.

Pronunciation is one of the most important aspects in learning. English which has to be mastered by the students. Knowing the problems of pronunciation faced by the students of SMA Panjura Malang is important for the teachers in order to get solutions for the problems.

Based on the topic, the researcher is interested to investigate the pronunciation problems faced by the students of SMA Panjura Malang, focusing on their pronouncing segmental sounds. Referring to Syafei (1988), the researcher will investigate whether the pronunciation problems occur in initial, medial, or final position of words.

Pronunciation is the use of the sound system of the language being learned (Soemardono, 1991: 1). Pronunciation system of English has two main components. They are segmental and supra segmental sounds. Based on Ramelan (1988: 22), segmental sounds are sound units arranged in sequential order; supra segmental sounds are features as stress, pitch, length intonation, and other features that always accompany the production of segmentals.

In contrast to supra segmental sounds, segmental sounds can be studied in isolation, whereas supra segmental cannot. For example /k/ can be studied from the point of its

mechanism of production, without considering other features of sounds, such as pitch, etc. The sounds /k/ is voiceless velar plosive.

The supra segmental sounds should be related to other supra segmental sounds. For example: the comparison of stresses. There are strong and weak stresses. When we say that the stress is strong, we have to compare it to the weak one. That is why, when we study supra segmental sounds, they have to be related to other supra segmental sounds.

Segmental sounds include two main parts. Vowels and consonants can be thought of as the segments of which the speech is composed (Sahulata, 1988: 19). Vowels are these segments of speech produced without any interruption or stoppage of the airstream (Sahulata, 1988: 29). In addition to this Wardhaugh (1977: 239) stated that consonant is a unit in the sound system of a language characterized in pronunciation by lack constriction of the airstream in the vocal tract, e.g. /i/, /u/.

Consonants are segments mark by interruption of the airstream (Sahulata, 1988: 19). In addition to this, Wardhaugh (1977: 239) stated that consonant is a unit in the sound system of a language characterized in pronunciation by constriction of the airstream in the vocal tract. If the tongue is held very close to the roof of the mouth and a voiced airstream of ordinary forced is emitted, a frictional noise is heard in addition to the voice. The sound is consonant (Jones, 1956: 12). For example: /t/, /k/, /g/, etc.

## **METHOD**

This study was a descriptive research. According to Ary, et al. (2006: 31), descriptive research seeks to understand a phenomenon by focusing on the total picture rather than breaking it down into variables. The goal is a holistic picture and depth of understanding, rather than a numeric analysis of data.

The statement above means that the qualitative research design functions to give more detailed description of a phenomenon and less on numeric data. The detailed description of a phenomenon leads the reader to get a better and deep understanding of it. The qualitative research shows the result of doing research, so there is analysis of data after getting the result, but the whole description of the phenomenon is the main aim of doing qualitative research rather than seeing the analysis of the data only.

This study will conducted in SMA Panjura Malang at Jalan Kelud No.9 Malang. The population of this study is the second grade of SMA Panjura Malang. When the study was conducted, there were four classes in the second grade. There are XI IPA, XI IPS I, XI IPS II, and XI IPS III. Five students were randomly selected from each class to become the sample of

this study. The sampling was conducted using random sampling technique. In other words, there were twenty students as the subjects of this study.

This study was intended to find the pronunciation error of English among the second grade students of SMA Panjura Malang. Based on the suggestion of Syafei's book (1988), the researcher used 50 words of voiceless stop to test the pronunciation of the students.

The source of the data was pronunciation of twenty students of the second grade of SMA Panjura Malang. The researcher used a cell phone to record the pronunciation of the subjects. The researcher used 1 room in order to take the data and used to record their pronunciation. The instruments used in this study were test of pronunciation and a recorder. The test of pronunciation consists of 11 most likely difficult segmental sounds based on Syafei's book. The consonants sounds are (/p/, /t/, /k/) in initial position, medial, and final position.

The sounds was put in 50 words, the researcher only check is it true or false. For example, the words which contained sounds tested in initial, medial, and final position were put in the word. There were two scripts to make the data collection run well. The first script for the subjects to pronounce. The second script for the researcher for the purpose of analysis.

In this study, the data was analyzed in four ways. They were: (1) Listening the pronunciation of the students and doing transcriptions of the sounds. In listening the pronunciation, the researcher used OXFORD Advanced Learner's Dictionary by A.S. Homby. (2) Analyzing the sounds which were mispronounced by most students. Analyzing will done by counting the mispronounced sounds in the words done by most of the students. In order to know one of the reasons of the mispronounced sounds by most students, the research compared the charts of vowels and consonants of English and Indonesia pronunciation. The chart of vowels and consonants of English pronunciation was taken from Ramelan's book (1988), titled English Phonetics. The chart of vowels and consonants of Indonesian pronunciation was taken from *Tata Bahasa Baku Indonesia* by Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan (1993). It was to know the difference of sounds between Indonesian and English. (3) Analyzing the position of the mispronounced sounds in the words. The purpose is to find that the mispronounced sounds appear in initial, medial, or final position of words. It was done by counting the position of mispronounced sounds in the words. Then the researcher conclude the position of mispronounced sounds in the words. (4) Summarizing the finding and drawing conclusion.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

In presenting the results, first, the researcher gave the correct pronunciation of the consonants, second, the researcher gave the transcription of the students' pronunciation in Appendix, third,

the researcher compared them and counted the mispronunciation done by the students. The researcher used percentage to show the number of mispronunciation done by the students. Before giving the transcription of the students' pronunciation, the researcher first presents the correct pronunciation of the script tested to the students.

Here is the table showed the correct pronunciation of the script tested to the students.  
(see table 1)

**Table 1 Consonants Table**

No	Consonants	Words	Appears initial/ medial/final position	Transcription
1	/p/	Pain	Initial	/peɪn/
2	/p/	Peace	Initial	/pi:s/
3	/p/	Pose	Initial	/pəʊz/
4	/p/	Part	Initial	/pʰɑ:t/
5	/p/	Pack	Initial	/pæk/
6	/p/	Points	Initial	/pʰɔɪnts/
7	/p/	Happen	Medial	/hæpən/
8	/p/	compare	Medial	/kəm'peə(r)/
9	/p/	Appear	Medial	/ə'piə(r)/
10	/p/	appoint	Medial	/ə'pɔɪnt/
11	/p/	company	Medial	/'kʌmpəni/
12	/p/	Soup	Final	/su:p/
13	/p/	Soap	Final	/səʊp/
14	/p/	Stop	Final	/stɒp/
15	/p/	Lip	Final	/lɪp/
16	/t/	Top	Final	/tɒp/
17	/t/	Table	Initial	/'teɪbl/
18	/t/	Tall	Initial	/tʰɔ:l/
19	/t/	Take	Initial	/teɪk/
20	/t/	Tie	Initial	/tʰaɪ/
21	/t/	Time	Initial	/taɪm/
22	/t/	Cotton	Medial	/'kɒtn/

23	/t/	Letter	Medial	/ˈletə(r)/
24	/t/	contact	Medial	/ˈkɒntækt/
25	/t/	Attic	Medial	/ˈætɪk/
26	/t/	After	Medial	/ˈɑːftə(r)/
27	/t/	Met	Final	/met/
28	/t/	Flat	Final	/flætʰ/
29	/t/	Float	Final	/fləʊt/
30	/t/	Great	Final	/greɪt/
31	/t/	Gift	Final	/ɡɪft/
32	/t/	Meet	Final	/miːt/
33	/k/	King	Initial	/kɪŋ/
34	/k/	Kind	Initial	/kaɪnd/
35	/k/	Key	Initial	/kiː/
36	/k/	Kill	Initial	/kɪl/
37	/k/	Counts	Initial	/kˈaʊnts/
38	/k/	Kept	Initial	/kept/
39	/k/	Pocket	Medial	/ˈpɒkɪt/
40	/k/	package	Medial	/ˈpækɪdʒ/
41	/k/	Locket	Medial	/ˈlɒkɪt/
42	/k/	Jacket	Medial	/ˈdʒækɪt/
43	/k/	Uncle	Medial	/ˈʌŋkl/
44	/k/	Black	Final	/blæk/
45	/k/	Peak	Final	/piːk/
46	/k/	Look	Final	/lʊkʰ/
47	/k/	Break	Final	/breɪkʰ/
48	/k/	Shock	Final	/ʃɒk/
49	/k/	Talk	Final	/tɔːk/
50	/k/	Walk	Final	/wɔːk/

Consonant /pʰ/ in initial, medial, and final position are mispronounced as /p/

= 100%

Consonant /tʰ/ in initial, medial, and final position are mispronounced as /t/

= 100%

Consonant /kʰ/ in initial, medial, and final position are mispronounced as /k/

= 100%

So, it can be said that all of the students mispronounced the consonant /p<sup>h</sup>/, /t<sup>h</sup>/, /k<sup>h</sup>/ in initial, medial, final position. The discussion based on the results of the students' pronunciation to know of their pronunciation. The researcher tried to find the indicator of the problems by the chart of consonants of English pronunciation. The chart of consonants of English pronunciation was taken from Ramelan's book (1988), titled English phonetics. The researcher discussed the result of the study for each sound. This sound is appeared in initial, medial, and final position of words. Most of the students mispronounced this sounds. They pronounced it /p<sup>h</sup>/ instead of /p/.

One indication that cause the problem is the difference between English and Indonesian. In Indonesian there is no sound /p<sup>h</sup>/ . There is only sound /p/. So, one indication of the cause is the existence of the sound /p<sup>h</sup>/ which is not exist in Indonesian.

The sound which appeared in initial, medial, and final position of English word , it should be pronounced with aspiration , but all of the students pronounced it without aspiration. They mispronounced this sound. Like the words in initial position, as in word *part*, the students mostly pronounce /pa:t/ not /p<sup>h</sup>a:t/ and *points*, the students mostly pronounce /points/ not /p<sup>h</sup>ɔɪnts/, in medial position, *compare* they also pronounce /kompe(r)/ not /kəm'peə(r)/ and *appoint* the students mostly pronounce /əpɔɪn/ not /ə'pɔɪnt/, and in the final position are, *soup* the students mostly pronounce /sop/ not /su:p/, and *soap* the students mostly pronounce /sop/ not /səup/. Both Indonesian and English have this consonant, but in Indonesian there is no aspiration. This is one indicated that causes the problem.

The sound /t/ which appeared in initial, medial, and final position of English word should be pronounced with aspiration. But all the students mispronounced it. They pronounced it without aspiration. They pronounced it /t<sup>h</sup>/ instead of /t/. It can be seen in the initial position, *table* the students mostly pronounce /tebl/ not /teɪbl/ and *tie* the students mostly pronounce /tai/ not /t<sup>h</sup>aɪ/. In the medial position the words are, *contact* they pronounce /kontek/ not /'kantækt/ and *attic* the students pronounce /etik/ not /'ætɪk/ and in the final position the words are, *flat* the students pronounce /flet/ not /flæt<sup>h</sup>/ and *great* the students mostly pronounce /gret/, /grɪt/ not /greɪt/. One indication that cause the problem is the difference between English and Indonesian. In Indonesian there is no sound /t<sup>h</sup>/ . There is only sound /t/. In English the sound /t<sup>h</sup>/ is alveolar, plosive, and voiceless. The sound /t/ which appears in initial, medial, and final position has no aspiration, but in English it has aspiration.

This sound which appears in initial, medial, and final position of English word should be pronounced with aspiration. But no students pronounced it accurately. They pronounced it without aspiration.



One indication of the cause is that in Indonesian, the sound /k/ which appears in initial, medial, and final position has no aspiration, but in English it has aspiration. It can be seen in the initial position, *king* they pronounce the word /king/ not /k<sup>h</sup>ɪŋ/ and *counts* the students mostly pronounce /kaunts/ not /k<sup>h</sup>aʊnts/, and in medial position in words, *pocket* the students mostly pronounce /poket/ not /pɒk<sup>h</sup>ɪt/ and *package* the students mostly pronounce /pekedʒ/ not /pæk<sup>h</sup>ɪdʒ/, and in the final position there are, *black* they pronounce it word /blek/ not /blæk/ and *walk* they pronounce the word /wolɪk/ not /wɔ:k/. Another indication of the cause is that the students are not familiar with the words.

## REFERENCES

- Ary, D., Jacobs, L.C., Razavieh, A., Sorensen, Chris. 2006. *Introduction to Research in Education*. Canada: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Carrel, J., and Tiffany, W.R. 1960. *Phonetics: Theory and Application to Speech Improvement*. New York: Mc Graw-Hill Book Company.
- Dardjowidjojo, Soenjono, dkk. 1993. *Tata Bahasa Baku Bahasa Indonesia*. Jakarta: Balai Pustaka.
- Jones, Daniel. 1986. *The Pronunciation of English*. Great Britain: University Press, Cambridge.
- Prasasti, D.J. 2008. *The Problems of Javanese Students to Produce Dental Fricative Sound*. Unpublished Thesis. Malang: graduate program institute of teacher and education budi utomo of malang.
- Ramelan. 1988. *English Ponetics*. Semarang: IKIP Semarang Press.
- Roring, Charles. 2008. *How to Improve Your English Pronunciation Skill*. <http://www.englishland.or.id/learning/04-reading/036-english-pronunciation.html>(Online). accessed on October 21st 2009.
- Sahulata, Daniel. 1988. *An Introduction to Sounds Systems of English*. Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Direktorat Jendral Pendidikan Tinggi Proyek Pengembangan Lembaga Pendidikan Tenaga Kependidikan.
- Soemardono. 1991. *Practices in Pronunciation*. Malang: Proyek Operasi dan Perawatan Fasilitas Universitas Negeri Malang.
- Syafei, Anas. 1988. *English Pronunciation: Theory and Practice*. Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Direktorat Jendral Pendidikan Tinggi Proyek Pengembangan Lembaga Pendidikan Tenaga Kependidikan.



Wardhaugh, Ronald. 1977. *Introduction to Linguistics*. USA: Mc Graw Hill Book Company.