CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents background of the study that explains the reason of conducting this research. Besides, it contains the research questions that come up from some cases, objectives of the study that explain the aims of conducting this research, significances of the study containing theoretical and practical benefits. Scope and limitation of the study are also presented in this chapter. Furthermore, definition of key terms defining the variables used in this research is also provided in this chapter. The last, this chapter contains the research report writing organization in which it presents the outlines of research report.

A. Background of the Study

Pronunciation is the production of sound used to make meaning. This sound is significant in two senses; because of used as part of a code of a particular language and to achieve meaning in context.¹ Pronunciation is one of the parts of language which is very essential. Nobody could understand the people with poor pronunciation even their word and grammar are good. In addition, the broken-

down communication can be caused by the use of incorrect pronunciation.\(^2\) Moreover, being aware of pronunciation will give the advantage not only in production, but also the understanding of spoken language.\(^3\) Therefore, learning pronunciation is very necessary.

Based on the reasons above, pronunciation is one of the important aspects to be taught in language class. Therefore, pronunciation is also learnt in PBI in which it is an English Education Department in IAIN SunanAmpel. Even though it is not directly taught in pronunciation class, the concept of pronunciation can be obtained in phonology class, while it can be practiced orally in speaking class. PBI is one of the departments in IAIN SunanAmpel Surabaya in which the researcher has been studying. As an English prospective teacher, the researcher conducted a research about the English pronunciation of the students of PBI IAIN SunanAmpel. The reason for conducting this research was that when joining a class held by one of the lecturers of PBI IAIN SunanAmpel, the lecturer often corrected the pronunciation of most of the students joining the lecturer’s class, and the correction was often in segmental feature. Besides that, there is no pronunciation class at PBI IAIN SunanAmpel. Although there was speaking class from one up to four, but it never stresses in pronunciation. Even in phonology class, despite of being taught about vowels, consonants, and the phonetic symbols,

it studies how the sounds are produced in a language. Therefore, it makes the researcher thinks how the students of PBI IAIN SunanAmpel perform in pronouncing English in segmental feature.

Meanwhile, there are many problems faced by a teacher when teaching their students such as; the classroom management, the teaching material and media, or even the methods used. It is not much different from an English teacher. Practically, there are many problems faced by an English teacher, whether it is about English language skill, incorrect pronunciation, the material and media used for teaching, language policy, or the effective methods and approaches used when teaching the students.

Those problems above are also faced by the researcher. However the most crucial problem that needs to discuss is about the incorrect pronunciation. When the researcher was in PPL 2, teaching practice in SMANISDA, there were some cases about the difficulty of the students in pronouncing some words. One of the cases was when one of the students asked about how to pronounce a word. Then the researcher asked the student to look up a dictionary. Just in case, the student brought an oxford dictionary, a British style dictionary. The word had been found, but the student still did not understand how to pronounce it just because of using phonetic symbols. As a teacher at that time, of course the researcher helped the student to read the phonetic symbols and pronounce it.

The other case was when the researcher asked the students to play a game about whispering. The sentences used to whisper were the sentences used for
teaching pronunciation technique called “tongue twister” (e.g. she sells seashells by the seashore, the black bad bat will go to my bed after from my bathroom). It was very difficult for the students to differentiate the pronunciation of the words, especially the pronunciation of bad, bat, and bed. Then the researcher gave the example how to pronounce those words. But as a teacher, the researcher realized that the learning style of every student is different. Some of the students may be audio learners, visual learners, or even audio visual learners. Because of the various kinds of the learning style, then the researcher realizes that it is very important for a teacher to learn about pronunciation, not only how to pronounce the words, but how to transcribe as well, from the very basic point of view including vowel and consonant called as segmental feature.

Furthermore, most of the people learn pronunciation without learning phonemic transcription first. They acquire pronunciation directly by hearing the language spoken continuously. Yet, it makes them not to be able to transcribe into the phonetic symbol. Therefore, the people who have good English pronunciation are not necessarily able to transcribe into the phonetic symbol. Still, dictionary formerly has major contribution in acquiring pronunciation since there is still rarely the sources orally that can be used to learn pronunciation. However, are the people who have good ability in transcribing into the phonetic symbol have good English pronunciation? So, is there any correlation between the ability of phonemic transcription mastery and the English pronunciation?
B. Statement of the Problems

The research problems of this research are:

1. How is the English pronunciation of the students of PBI IAIN SunanAmpel from the point of view of segmental feature?
2. How is the ability of the students of PBI IAIN SunanAmpel in mastering the phonemic transcription?
3. Is there any correlation between the ability of phonemic transcription mastery and the English pronunciation?

C. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are:

1. To describe the level of the students’ competencies of PBI IAIN SunanAmpel in pronouncing English, in segmental feature.
2. To describe the level of the students’ competencies of PBI IAIN SunanAmpel in mastering phonemic transcription.
3. To find out whether there is correlation between the ability of phonemic transcription mastery and the English pronunciation.
D. Significance of the Study

The researcher hopes that this study has some benefits:

1. Theoretical Benefits
   a. The researcher hopes that the result of this research can be used as the reference to help the students of PBI IAIN SunanAmpel to improve their pronunciation, in segmental feature.
   b. The result of this study can be used as the reference for those who want to conduct a study about another case of pronunciation of the students in PBI IAIN SunanAmpel, or even implementing an approach to improve their pronunciation.

2. Practical Benefits
   a. The result of this study can give an input for the students of PBI IAIN SunanAmpel to further study about English pronunciation to make their pronunciation more intelligible and be able to differentiate among the words whose spellings are almost the same. Besides, they should further study the phonemic symbols. This is very useful when they become an English teacher in which they can teach their students about the phonemic symbols in order that they can study how to pronounce English words from the dictionary independently. Besides, it can help to clarify the speech sound of a word in written form when it is pronounced orally. Moreover, the better the students
master the phonemic transcription, the better they are in English pronunciation.

b. The readers, especially for the lecturers of PBI IAIN SunanAmpel get the information about the competence level of the students of PBI IAIN SunanAmpel in English pronunciation, in segmental feature and phonemic transcription mastery. Thus, the curriculum for the students of PBI, IAIN SunanAmpel will be redesigned or there will be pronunciation class to improve the students’ pronunciation.

E. Scope and Limitation of the Study

There are two features of pronunciation; segmental and suprasegmental feature. In this study, the researcher focuses on segmental feature in which it is concerned with phonemes; consonants and vowels, and the phonemic transcription as well. Meanwhile, the pronunciation test used is focused on its competence. Those are especially concerned with the English pronunciation of the students of PBI IAIN SunanAmpel.

F. Definition of Key Terms

1. Phonemic transcription mastery is the mastery of a student in transcribing the speech sounds of English words into the phonemic symbols. This transcription containing only phonemes consisting of vowel and consonants and called as broad transcription. The other kind of transcription is narrow transcription containing amount of phonetics detail and called as phonetics transcription.
Phonemic transcription is written between slants, while phonetics transcription is written between square brackets. The concept used in this research is that the students master the phonemic symbols used to transcribe the speech sound of a word represented by the underlined letters.

Eg. Cat /æ /

Since the students of semester 4, as the sample of this research, are taught British style which is represented by Received Pronunciation, so Received Pronunciation is used with International Phonetic Alphabet used as the system for the transcription of speech sound.

2. Pronunciation is the competence of someone in producing sound used to make meaning. There are two aspects of pronunciation; segmental and supersegmental. The segmental one focuses on phonemes; vowel and consonants, while the supersegmental focuses on stressing and intonation. In this research, the researcher focuses on the segmental feature which consists of phonemes; vowel and consonants only. Ideally, the way of testing English pronunciation is asking the learner to produce the English words. It means that testing them orally. However, it is not always possible and suitable. This is caused by one of the greatest problem that is administration. Even managing the large number of the students to be tested is not often possible. Beside, testing equipment used to test pronunciation is scarce. Therefore, it will be used the

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5 Gerald Kelly, How to Teach Pronunciation (Harlow: Longman, 2000), 1.
alternative way to test the English pronunciation from the point of view of segmental feature, such as; finding the word which is different from the others.

E.g. a. How     b. cow     c. low     d. now

In this example, the answer is c. low.

The consonants that will be tested consist of simple consonant, silent consonant, consonant with different flavors, double consonant and consonant diagraphs/ other combinations; while the vowels consist of the basic menu of vowel letters and Vowel diagraphs/other combinations.

G. Research Report Writing Organization

Chapter I is introduction. It consists of background of the study, statement of the problem, objective and significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study, and definition of key terms.

Chapter II is review of related literature. It includes the theories underlying the topic and the previous study.

Chapter II is research method. In this part, the researcher provides the design used in this study, data and source of data including population and sample, data collection technique and the instrument used, and the technique of analyzing data.

Chapter IV is research finding and discussion. It discusses and analyses the data and finding obtained from the research.

Chapter V is Conclusion and suggestion. This is the most important part in which it concludes the research done and gives the suggestion to the reader.