

ERROR ANALYSIS ON ENGLISH DIPHTHONGS PRONUNCIATION ON SIXTH SEMESTER ENGLISH EDUCATION STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITY OF PGRI SEMARANG

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Abstract:

Pronunciation is the important part of speaking. Pronunciation is the way in which a language or particular word or sound is spoken. Pronunciation used to make the speaker speak more fluently and easy to understand. Pronunciation is the aspect that most affects how the speaker is judged by others, and how they are formally assessed in other skills. Sometimes how to measure the people's English speaking skill is looked from their pronunciation and their fluency. One of Indonesian students' difficulties in learning English is pronouncing English sounds correctly. Indonesian language as mother tongue influences significantly to the way of Indonesian students in pronouncing English sounds. Compared to English, Indonesian language generally does not have differences between spelling the letter and pronouncing the sounds. Among all English sounds, diphthongs are assumed as one of the most difficulties pronounced by Indonesian students. This study was conducted to thirty one students of University of PGRI Semarang. This research is descriptive qualitative and uses a list of words as the main instruments. The result of the study showed that the most difficult of English diphthong was /əʊ/. This study expected can give contribution in improving Indonesian pronunciation especially the English diphthongs.

Keywords: *pronunciation, error, English diphthongs*

1. Introduction

Communication is the most important way that human needs to stay connected to each other around the world. Communication is the act or process of using words, sounds, signs, or behaviours to express or exchange information or to express ideas, thoughts, feelings, etc. to someone else. In general, communication done verbally and it can be understood by both of the communication doer. To make the communication be connected we need the component of communication. The most commonly component of communication is language.

Language is a communication tool in the form of sound system or the voice system which it produced by human's vocal organs. Each of the language's sign has the meaning. It purposed to make the communication be interactive. Language is used in a group of civilization. The language for each group is different. For example the language in Indonesia and in England are far different, but they have the same purpose even though they are in different form.

There are many kinds of subject in teaching and learning English, one of the basic language skill is speaking. Speaking is an interactive process which consist of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning. Mastering the art of speaking is the most important aspect of learning a second language. The interaction in communication will not run smoothly if the speaker doesn't have the speaking ability. Speaking ability is described as the ability to express oneself in life situation, or the ability to report acts or situation in precise words, or the ability to converse, or to express a sequence of ideas fluently. In speaking, we must give attention to how the way we speech the word. The way to speech the word is called pronunciation.

Pronunciation is the important parts of speaking. Pronunciation is the way in which a language or particular word or sound is spoken. Pronunciation used to make the speaker speaks more fluency and easy to understand. Fluency can be thought of as the ability to keep going when speaking spontaneously. There are some rules to pronounce the word in pronunciation, it also consist how the way we produced the word or the letter using our speaking organs. We can learn about it to make our speaking well. Pronunciation is the aspect that most affects how the speaker is judged by others, and how they are formally assessed in other skills. Sometimes how to measure the people's English speaking skill is looked from their pronunciation and their fluency. We have to learn pronunciation to do mastering English well.

Compared to English, Indonesian language generally does not have differences between spelling the letter and pronouncing the sounds. Among all English sounds, diphthongs are assumed as one of the most difficulties pronounced by Indonesian

students. Based on Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2005:410), diphthong is "a combination of two vowel sounds or vowel letters, for example the sound /aɪ/ in pipe /paɪ p/ or the letter 'ou' in doubt". The origin of diphthong is from the Greek word, diphthongos. Diphthongos is from two words, *di* and *phthongos*. *Di* means 'twice', and *phthongos* means 'voice, sound'. A diphthong is a kind of vowel sound with a special feature. There is a deliberate glide made from one vowel position to another vowel position, and which is produced in one syllable (Ramelan 1999:81).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definition of Pronunciation

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2005:1164), pronunciation is "the way in which the language or a particular word or sound is pronounced". The second meaning is "the way in which a particular person pronounces the words of a language". Pronunciation is one of the most important aspects in learning the language, especially in speaking skill. Slight different in pronunciation may have different meaning. That is why, pronunciation is very important in order to do spoken communication.

Based on Dalton and Seidhofer (1994:3), pronunciation is defined in general term as "the production of significant sound in two senses". For the first reason, it is used as part of code of a particular language. In this reason, pronunciation is as the production and the reception of sounds of speech. The second reason, it is used to achieve meaning in contexts of use. In this reason, pronunciation is in with reference to act of speaking.

Dalton and Seidholfer (1994:7) state that "a person's pronunciation is one expression of that person's self-image". That is why, a word can be spoken in different ways by various individuals or groups, depending on many factors, such as the area in which they grew up, the area in which they now live, whether they have speech or voice disorder, their ethnic group, their social class, and their education.

2.2 Definition of Diphthong

Based on Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2005:410), diphthong is "a combination of two vowel sounds or vowel letters, for example the sound /aɪ/ in pipe /paɪ p/ or the letter ou in doubt". The origin of diphthong is from the Greek word, diphthongos. Diphthongos is from two words, *di* and *phthongos*. *Di* means 'twice', and *phthongos* means 'voice, sound'. A diphthong is a kind

of vowel sound with a special feature. There is a deliberate glide made from one vowel position to another vowel position, and which is produced in one syllable (Ramelan 1999:81).

The term “glide” refers to the transitional sounds heard when the speech organs move from one position for a given sound to that for another. In such a glide, as we have in a diphthong, it is only the beginning and the end of it that have more or less definite tongue positions. In phonetic writing; therefore, a diphthong is normally represented by two symbols of vowel sounds, which have definite tongue position, such as [eɪ], [ou], and [aɪ]. In describing the articulatory movements of the speech organs in producing a diphthong, Ramelan mentioned only the starting vowel sound from which the glide is made. In practice, however, the position of the latter is never reached. Thus in talking about diphthongs, Ramelan (1999:81) made reference to the two vowel sounds or the two elements that constitute the beginning of the glide and the end of the glide. The transitional sounds heard incidentally in between are taken for granted, since they will be automatically produced when the tongue is moving from the first to the second vowel position.

Although a diphthong is normally represented in phonetic writing by two vowel symbols, this does not follow that both vowel sounds are equally syllabic. Ramelan (1999:81) writes that “a diphthong is pronounced in one syllable, or produced with one single impulse of breath. Therefore, when the sequence of two vowels is produced with two impulses of breath, it is not a diphthong, but it is said to be dissyllabic or just an ordinary sequence of two vowel sounds”. For the example, the word *tour*, the pronunciation of [uə] here is a diphthong. However, in the phrase *to an end*, the pronunciation of [uə] here is a sequence of vowels. Two vowels produced with one impulse of breath also imply that only one of those two vowel sounds is louder or more sonorous than the other. In other words, only one of the two is syllabic, while the other vowel sound is non-syllabic.

A diphthong in which the first element is louder than the second element is called a falling diphthong, and a diphthong in which the second element is syllabic is called a rising diphthong. English diphthongs such as [eɪ], [ou], [aɪ], and [au] are all falling diphthongs because in those diphthongs the first element is more sonorous than the second element. There is an example of a rising diphthong such as found in the French word [lui:] “Louis”. However, when the first sound in the sequence of sounds such as found in the words [uen]

“when”, and [ies] “yes” is considered as the rising diphthongs in English. In those sequences of vowels, it is the second element that is syllabic and not the first, thus [ue] and [ie]. The non-syllabicity of a vowel sound is indicated by the diacritic below the phonetic symbol, and such non-syllabic of a vowel sound before the syllabic ones are called semi-vowels in phonetics.

In producing a diphthong, the tongue moves from the position for one vowel sound to that for another. For the diphthong [aɪ], for instance, the tongue moves from the position for the production of [a] in the direction of /ɪ /, though this vowel sound is not necessarily reached. The vowel [a] is an open vowel, while [ɪ] is a close vowel, so that the direction of the glide is toward a vowel with a close position.

A closing diphthong is a diphthong when the movement of the tongue is carried out from the position of an open vowel to that of a closer vowel. When the movement of the tongue is carried out towards the central vowel [ə], the diphthong is called a centering diphthong. However, the phoneticians do not normally speak of opening diphthongs, since such diphthongs are not found in English. (Ramelan 1999:83).

2.3 Type of English Diphthong

English diphthong is divided into two types. Those are “English closing diphthong and English centering diphthong”. The English closing diphthong is diphthongs that the second vowel is more ‘close’ than the first vowel. The English centering diphthong is diphthongs that the second vowel is more “centre” than the first vowel (Ramelan 1999:84-98). The English closing diphthong consists of [eɪ], [oʊ], [aɪ], [aʊ], and [ɪ]. The English centering diphthong consists of [ɪə], [eə], [ʊə], and [ə].

a. Diphthong [eɪ]

Diphthong [eɪ] is a front-front closing half diphthong. First, the tongue starts from the position for the vowel [e], a front vowel which is a little lower than the half close position. Then, the tongue moves in the direction of the vowel position of [ɪ], which is a little above the half close position, though it is not necessarily. The lips are spread, and gradually closing.

b. Diphthong [oʊ]

Diphthong [oʊ] is a back-back closing half diphthong. For the beginning, some part of the tongue between the back and the centre is

raised to a point between half-close and half open position. Then, the tongue moves to a closer position in the direction of [ʊ], a back centralized vowel, which is a little above the half-close position.

c. Diphthong [aɪ]

Diphthong [aɪ] is a front-front closing full diphthong. First, the front of the tongue is very slightly raised for the first element of the diphthong [aɪ], which is a front vowel with a position in between [æ] and [a:]. Then, the tongue moves to a closer position as if to produce [ɪ] vowel sound, though this position is normally not reached (aɪ become æ). The lips are apart and gradually closing.

d. Diphthong [aʊ]

Diphthong [aʊ] is a front-back closing full diphthong. First, the front part of the back (central part) of the tongue is slightly raised for the first element of the diphthong [aʊ]. This vowel is more backed than the first element of the diphthong [aɪ]. Then, the tongue moves in a direction of [ʊ], though it never reaches it ([aʊ] become [aʊ]). The lips start at the neutral position, and gradually rounded.

e. Diphthong [ɔɪ]

Diphthong [ɔɪ] is a back-front closing full diphthong. First, the back of the tongue is raised to a point midway between [ɔ] and [ɔ:]. Then the front tongue is gradually raised in the direction of [ɪ], though in practice, it is never reached; [ɔɪ] sounds more or less like [ɔe]. The lips are rounded for the first element of the diphthong and gradually spread.

f. Diphthong [ɪə]

Diphthong [ɪə] is a high-front-centering diphthong. The tongue starts from the vowel [ɪ], as found in the word “bill” or the second from the word “sikił” (Javanese), and not from the closer [i] vowel sound; then it glides away in the direction of the central vowel [ə]. The two lips are in neutral position during the vowel glide. (Ramelan, 1999:95)

g. Diphthong [eə]

Diphthong [eə] is a low front-centering diphthong. The tongue starts from an open vowel position, slightly higher than the position for the English [æ] vowel sound as found in the word ‘man’; then it glides away in the direction of the central vowel [ə]. The lips are either spread or neutral during the glide. The lower jaw is clearly felt to be slightly moving upward.

h. Diphthong [ʊə]

Diphthong [ʊə] is a high back centering diphthong. The tongue starts from the English vowel [ʊ] position such as found in the word ‘good’, and not from the closer [u:]; then, it glides away in the direction of the central vowel [ə]. The lips are rounded for the first element, and are then drawn back to neutral position during the glide.

i. Diphthong [ɔə]

Diphthong [ɔə] is a low back centering diphthong. The tongue starts from the English vowel [ɔ] such as found in the word ‘call’, and then moves in the direction of the central vowel [ə]. The lips are slightly rounded for the first element and are then drawn back to neutral position. The jaws are slightly moving towards each other.

3. Research Methodology

This research belongs to descriptive qualitative design. The descriptive qualitative research is one kind of research included in the qualitative research. This study was conducted to thirty one students of University of PGRI Semarang. This research is aimed to find out the most problematic diphthong sound for students of University of PGRI Semarang.

This research uses descriptive qualitative method to search the answer of the objective of the study that is to describe what most problematic English diphthongs for the students, by collecting, analysing the data, and drawing conclusion based on the data analysis. They cannot be expressed in number, but in sentences.

Qualitative research is a research that produces a procedure of analysis. It doesn't use a statistical procedure of analysis or the other quantitative method (Moleong, 2010: 6). Basically, the purpose of descriptive research is to record exactly what happened, whether the researcher is describing an experimental treatment or something occurring in the natural habitat of study participants (LeCompte et al., 1993: 39).

3.1 Participants / Subject / Population and Sample

This research is a study of errors in colloquial language aspect that related with pronunciation. The data of this study were taken from the English Education students' of University of PGRI Semarang. The total number of the student was 31.

3.2 Instruments

To get the data, the researcher used test as the main instrument. The researcher gave 16 words that consist of English diphthong and asked them to pronounce the words individually. Each diphthong was represented by 2 words. Thus, there will be 62 pronunciations for each diphthong. Next, he recorded the participants' pronunciation. The next step, the researcher transforms the recorded pronunciation of the participants into phonetic transcription.

3.2 Data Analysis Procedures

After getting the data, the researcher compared the participants' pronunciation transcription with the dictionary transcription. The data was analyzed by using formula as stated by Sudjono (1989: 79):

$$P = \frac{Fq}{N} \times 100$$

Where:

P = % of participants' error

Fq = frequency of error

N = number of participants

4. Findings

This research is aimed to find out the most problematic diphthong sound for students of University of PGRI Semarang. The table below is the result of data analyzed.

a. Diphthong /ɪə/

Table 4.1

Diphthong /ɪə/ in word 'beer' and 'here'

Item No	Word	Frequency		Percentage	
		Correct	Incorrect	Correct	Incorrect
1.	beer	10	21	32.3%	67.7%
2.	here	26	5	83.9%	16.1%

b. Diphthong /eə/

Table 4.2

Diphthong /eə/ in word 'bear' and 'hair'

	Word	Frequency		Percentage	
		Correct	Incorrect	Correct	Incorrect
1.	bear	12	19	38.7%	61.3%
2.	hair	15	16	48.4%	51.6%

c. Diphthong /ʊə/

Table 4.3

Diphthong /ʊə/ in word 'tour' and 'sure'

Item No	Word	Frequency		Percentage	
		Correct	Incorrect	Correct	Incorrect
1.	tour	8	23	25.8%	74.2%
2.	sure	16	15	51.6%	48.4%

d. Diphthong /eɪ/

Table 4.4

Diphthong /eɪ/ in word 'face' and 'wait'

Item No	Word	Frequency		Percentage	
		Correct	Incorrect	Correct	Incorrect
1.	face	17	14	54.8%	45.2%
2.	wait	21	10	67.7%	32.3%

e. Diphthong /aɪ/

Table 4.5

Diphthong /aɪ/ in word 'fine' and 'nice'

Item No	Word	Frequency		Percentage	
		Correct	Incorrect	Correct	Incorrect
1.	fine	30	1	96.8%	3.2%
2.	nice	31	0	100%	0%

f. **Diphthong /ɔɪ/**

Table 4.6

Diphthong /ɔɪ/ in word 'toy' and 'boil'

Item No	Word	Frequency		Percentage	
		Correct	Incorrect	Correct	Incorrect
1.	toy	31	0	100%	0%
2.	boil	28	3	90.3%	9.7%

g. **Diphthong /əʊ/**

Table 4.7

Diphthong /əʊ/ in word 'home' and 'phone'

Item No	Word	Frequency		Percentage	
		Correct	Incorrect	Correct	Incorrect
1.	home	5	26	16.1%	83.9%
2.	phone	0	31	0%	100%

h. **Diphthong /aʊ/**

Table 4.8

Diphthong /aʊ/ in word 'house' and 'cow'

Item No	Word	Frequency		Percentage	
		Correct	Incorrect	Correct	Incorrect
1.	house	30	1	96.8%	3.2%
2.	cow	26	5	83.9%	16.1%

i. **Total of Participants' Errors**

Table 4.9

Total of Participants' Errors

Item No	Diphthong	Errors		Total Errors	Percentage
		1 st word	2 nd word		
1	/ɪə/	21	5	26	41.9%
2	/eə/	19	16	35	56.4%
3	/ʊə/	23	15	38	61.3%

4	/eɪ/	14	10	24	38.7%
5	/aɪ/	1	0	1	1.6%
6	/ɔɪ/	0	3	3	4.8%
7	/əʊ/	26	31	57	91.9%
8	/aʊ/	1	5	6	9.7%

5. Discussion

The table above shows that diphthong /əʊ/ has the most number of errors among other diphthongs for the participants. Most of the participants could not pronounce the diphthong correctly. The total of participants' errors in pronouncing the diphthong was 57. They pronounced the word 'home' as /hɒm/ and the word 'phone' as /fɒn/.

In relation to the production of sound /əʊ/, the tongue starts from the vowel /e/, after that the tongue moves to a closer position of /ʊ/ (Roach, 1998). In producing word *home* and *phone*, most of the participants pronounced /hɒm/ and /fɒn/. In other word, the participants pronounce the diphthong /əʊ/ to pure vowel /ɔ/. Instead of producing the diphthong /əʊ/, the participants substitute the diphthong to vowel which is common in Indonesian. It seems that the participants ignore the rules in pronouncing an English diphthong.

Based on result and discussion above, it was clear that English diphthong sounds are difficult for the Indonesian students. As previous researcher, Donal (2016) found that among eight English diphthong, Indonesian students tend to have difficulties in pronouncing diphthong /aʊ/ and rather easier in pronouncing diphthong /ɔɪ/, but in this study, the researcher found that diphthong /əʊ/ was the most problematic English diphthong sound.

6. Conclusion

The sound of diphthong /əʊ/ was the most problematic diphthong for them. It is clear on table 4.10 which showed that the participants' errors in pronouncing the diphthong /əʊ/ was 91.9% (classified as high). The researcher gave two words to find out the difficulties in pronouncing the diphthong /əʊ/, they are 'home' and 'phone'. In the word 'home', there were 26 participants from the total of 31 participants who could not pronounce the word correctly. Meanwhile, none of the participants could pronounce the word 'phone' correctly. Thus, in 62 pronunciations for diphthong /əʊ/, the total of participants' errors was 57 for both of the word 'home' and 'phone'.

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