

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As introduction, this chapter presents the introduction of the study that explain the reasons of conducting this research. Besides, it has the background of study, statement of problem that come up from some cases, purpose of the study that explain the aims of conducting this research, significance of study containing theoretical and practical benefits are also presented in this chapter, scope and limitation. Furthermore, definition of key terms defining the variable used in this research is also provided in this chapter.

1.1 Background of Study

In Indonesia, English roles as a compulsory foreign language that must be learned by students from elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, even in college. It can be seen that English has become a part of the curriculum, especially in senior high school. It is even made by the national government as one of the national final exams. In school, English is taught in order to the students are able to write, speak, read, and listen well.

Hosni (2016, p. 97) said that English as a foreign language (EFL) learners, no matter how much they know about the English language, still face many speaking difficulties. English has always been familiar since it is taught in most of the educational level. English is also a natural language for those who take English majors where English is always used in every lesson.

Therefore, the students of English Department should possess the skills of language when learning English. The language skill enables the students to comprehend and produce the language, whether spoken and written. There are four basic language skills that should be learned and possessed by the students. These skills are Listening, Speaking, Reading, and Writing. Listening and Reading are known as a receptive skill or passive skill. Meanwhile Speaking and Writing is known as a productive skill or active skill.

One of the language skills that have to be mastered by students in learning English is speaking. Speaking is the productive skill in the oral mode. Most learners feel difficult to speak because they are shy, nervous, afraid to make mistake with their pronunciation, and unconfident to say something in English.

Having good pronunciation is important for learners. It will facilitate them in improving their ability to speak. The students should be able to pronounce the sounds easily understood by others. However, pronouncing English sounds is not easy. This problem is due to the fact that most English sounds do not exist in the Indonesia language. Moreover, the mother tongue also affected their English pronunciation. Therefore, the pronunciation of English should be practiced by the students.

Yates & Beth (2009, p. 11), state that pronunciation refers to how we produce the sounds that we used to make meaning when we speak. It includes the particular consonants and vowels of a language (segments), aspect of speech beyond the level of individual segments, such as stress, timing, rhythm, intonation, phrasing (suprasegmental aspects) and how the voice is projected (voice quality).

Pronunciation of word stress refers to the production of sounds. It refers to the prominence given to certain syllables within words and to certain syllables or words within an utterance. It is signaled by volume, pitch change, and syllable length.

Word stress is the magic key to understand speaking English. Native speakers of English use word stress naturally. Word stress is so natural for them that they do not even know they use it. Non-native speakers who speak English to native speakers without using word stress, encounter two problems, they find it difficult to understand native speakers, especially those speaking fast. The native speakers may find it difficult to understand them. To understand word stress, it helps to understand syllables.

Therefore, every word is made from syllables. Each word has one, two, three or more syllables. In many languages such as in English, all the syllables in multisyllabic words are not equally stressed (spoken with some kind of a force or strength) when they are pronounced. Word-Stress is also sometimes referred to as word accent.

In English, native speakers do not say each syllable with the same force or strength. This means that one part of a certain word is said louder and longer than other parts of the same word. In one-word, native speakers accentuate one syllable. They say one syllable very loudly (big, strong, important) and all the other syllables very quietly. The syllable which is pronounced with greater force is called the stressed syllable.

Ladefoged (2001, p. 93) states that a stressed syllable is produced by pushing more air out of the lungs in one syllable relative to others. A stressed

syllable thus has greater respiratory energy than neighboring unstressed syllables. It may also have an increase in laryngeal activity. Stress can always be defined in terms of something a speaker does in one part of an utterance relative to another. You can also call it the accented syllable. "Accent" in this case means "emphasis". It is something that is completely natural for English speakers, but something English department students can learn from practicing their conversational skills and by learning the rules for using the word stress. When speaking, it is important to put the stress on the correct syllable. Otherwise, it would sound unnatural, and might even be difficult to understand.

Indonesian university students had difficulties in identifying the stress for three to seven syllable words, because the students have already learned a specific stress pattern for the individual words, and they often misstress words with suffixes because they tend to retain the stress for the stem which had been learned earlier.

Based on the preliminary research, in Ponorogo especially at Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo, most of English education department students feel unconfident or shy to make mistakes with their pronunciation of word stress and afraid to say something in English.

Therefore, word stress is an important part of speech. Mistakes in word stress are a common case of misunderstanding in English because stressing the wrong syllable in a word can make the word very difficult to hear and understand. Even if the speaker can be understood, mistakes with word stress can make the listener feel irritated, or perhaps even amused.

In this research, the researcher analyzes the word stress from students of English language education who must have one another with different pronunciation. So, they are increasingly able to say the word stress. Then they can repeat the sound several times until they can pronounce word of stress correctly.

1.2. Research Question

Based on the background of the study in the previous part, in this research the researcher stated the problem as follow:

1. How are the word stresses of the students in English Education Department at the Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo?

1.3. Purpose of the Study

Focusing on the statement of the problem above, the researcher stated the purpose of the study is:

1. To investigate the word stresses of the students in English Education Department at the Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo.

1.4. Significant of the Study

After this research has been conducted, this research is expected to give advantage for:

1. The students

The students will know what pronunciation of word stress they can and they will know how to improve their speaking pronunciation

2. The collage

Based on this research the collage will know how does the pronunciation of the student

3. The next researcher

The next researcher can take this research as references and develop it more detailed

4. The writer

This study is expected to the writer to increase her ability to conducting research and also develop her pronunciation ability.

1.5. Scope and Limitation

To make this research clear and specific, the researcher limits this research into analyzing the pronunciation of word stress. For the subjects, the researcher chooses the students of the English Education Department. For the place, the researcher conducted at the Muhammadiyah University of Ponorogo.

1.6. Definition of Key Terms

In order to know further about this research also to avoid any misunderstanding on the reader, the researcher would like to present an explanation of definition terms below:

Pronunciation of word stress: pronunciation of word stress refers to the production of sounds. It refers to the prominence given to certain syllables within words and to certain syllables or words within an utterance. It is signaled by volume,

pitch change, and syllable length. Yates & Zielinski (2009, p. 36). Examples of words with stress, (fact: O), (washing: Oo), (validity: oOoo), (communication: oooOo), (education: ooOo), (before: oO), (syllable: Ooo), (pronounce: oO), (career: oO), (explanation: ooOo), (ability: oOoo).

