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The Use of Local Language Constraint-Based in the Pronunciation of Standard English: A Study at Sasaknese Learners of West Nusa Tenggara

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Abstract: This study aims to determine the effect of a pronunciation learning model based on phonological constraints of regional languages in pronouncing standard English for Sasak speaking students in West Nusa Tenggara. This research is a quantitative-descriptive designs with an experimental method. The object of this research is the sound of the English language produced by students of Sasak speakers at the English Study Program, FKIP University of Mataram. The research data was obtained using tests (pre-test and post-test). This study used a sample of 15 students who are native Sasak speakers. The instrument used is a pronunciation test which is given before (pretest) and after (posttest) learning is carried out. The test results are then analyzed using simple statistics that can be used to explain the changes before learning and after learning. The results of the analysis are then explained formally by using symbols and pictures and informally by using narration, so that the findings of this study can be understood as well as possible. The results of this study indicate that learning pronunciation based on local language phonological constraints is effective in increasing students' awareness in anticipating the influence of local language sounds (mother tongue) in producing English.

Keywords: Local language constraint-based, English pronunciation, local language learners, West Nusa Tenggara

INTRODUCTION

Language is a very important and primary human phenomenon because language is an effective communication tool in social interaction (Chapman, 2000: 106). As a communication tool, language is a skill possessed by humans by using certain types of signs arranged in certain types of units as well. As long as language is a human phenomenon during that time, research on language has always been an interesting work. One of the interesting phenomena of language is the phonological elements of certain languages, especially how they relate to the acquisition of a second language and or a foreign language.

Several studies have proven that the influence of mother tongue phonological elements on English acquisition is quite significant. Avery & Ehrlich (1992) found that variations in English accents are strongly influenced by the speaker's native language background. This can be seen from the existence of the terms English with Spanish accent, English with Chinese accent, English with Japanese accent and so on which are passed by native English speakers to non-native speakers. This means that errors in predicting foreign language sounds are not solely caused by unsystematic efforts, but rather due to reflections on sound vocabulary, sound combining rules, as well as patterns of stress and intonation in the native language of speakers (Swan & Smith, 1987).

Sasak speaking students experience difficulties in producing certain sounds in English. This difficulty is partly caused by differences in the sound of English and the sound of Sasak as the student's mother tongue. Arafiq, Yusra, & Saputra (2019) found that S1 English Education students at FKIP Mataram University who spoke local languages in NTB had several problems in pronouncing English sounds. Sasak speaking students have difficulties in pronouncing English words that contain fricative lolo-idental sounds /f/ and /v/ which can be pronounced as bilabial stops /p/. This fact is exacerbated by the attitude of speakers who sometimes have resistance to uttering English sounds for fear of being wrong and being laughed at by other students. In this regard, Zhang (2009) said that attitudes towards the target language can affect the achievement of the correct sound pronunciation.

Ahmadi, Hanafi, Aziz, and Arafiq (2021) proposed an alternative solution to this problem by designing pronunciation learning based on local language phonological constraints with the aim of increasing students' awareness in anticipating the influence of local language sounds when speaking English. Furthermore Ahmadi et al. designing steps for learning pronunciation based on the phonological constraints of regional languages, especially Sasak as follows.

1. Make the lower lip touches with the upper teeth but not the lower lip and the upper lip.
2. Almost block the airstream and having it push the very narrow opening which causes the frictions results.

As the air pushes from the lung through the trachea to the larynx, the vocal cords should be spread apart so that it lets the air passes in between them unimpeded and give no vibration effect (voiceless) [f] and when the vocal cords are drawn together, the air pushes them through creating the vibration effect (voiced) [v] (Ahmadi, et.al., 2021).

The differences in pronunciation between labiodental fricative and constrictive bilabial sounds, can be illustrated in the following figure.

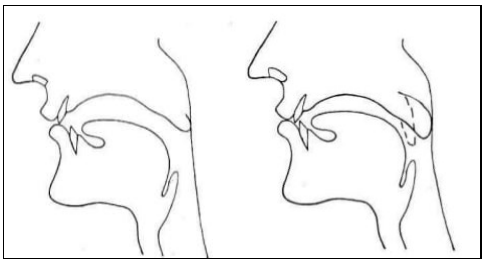

Figure 1. The difference between labiodental fricatives and bilabial stops.

Based on the above description, the research problems that can be formulated are as follows: (1) what are the suprasegmental phonological constraints of Sasak speaking students in pronouncing standard English sounds? and (2) how is the English pronunciation learning model based on local language phonological constraints for Sasak speaking students?

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Finegan (2008, p. 106) phonology is a branch of linguistics that studies the sounds of language and the extent to which phonetic differences can distinguish meaning and how the relationship between the sounds of language is spoken and how these sounds are recorded in the minds of the speakers and how the sounds are arranged to form words. -say. Meanwhile, According to Muslich (2008, p. 1), phonology is a linguistic study that studies the sounds of words. Meanwhile, according to Amril and Ermanto (2007, p. 8), phonology is a branch of linguistics that studies the sounds of language, both the language of advanced societies and primitive societies in all forms and aspects.

Phonology is a very important linguistic aspect in a language. This is because language is essentially a collection of sounds arranged in such a way that it forms speech from the level of words (morphemes), phrases (phrases) and sentences (sentence), and text (discourse). Therefore, when speakers of one language try to learn another language, it is important to pay attention to the sounds of the language that they want to learn. Especially if the phonological difference between the mother tongue and the language being studied is significantly different. This certainly affects someone in acquiring a foreign language. The following studies prove how the phonological elements of the mother tongue affect the acquisition of a foreign language.

Research conducted by Anjarningsih and Sarahayu (2015) on the influence of Japanese on how to pronounce English sounds. This study found that the mother tongue influences the production of foreign languages and causes differences in the pronunciation of the target language. By using the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis, Anjarningsih and Sarahayu, found that there was a change in the purchase of vowels, the addition of syllables, and a change in the location of vocal articulation on 3 songs belonging to AKB48 (a singing group originating from Japan), namely Heavy Rotation, Sugar Rush, and Namida Suprise. replacement of consonants with other consonants, and deletion of consonants occurred in all three songs.

Renaldi, Stefani, and Gulo (2016) also conducted research on the effect of mother tongue phonology on learning English, especially speaking skill competence. This research was conducted by conducting a survey on language exposure in the form of talks, speeches, and sample presentations. The data from the language exposure survey is then identified to see potential forms that are difficult for the sample. Then the results of this identification are continued by asking the sample to say and record, then deepen it again with interviews to ascertain the difficulties faced by the sample. The results of this study indicate that the phonological problems faced by objects are mostly related to consonant sound problems, such as voiced, dental fricative, *voiceless dental fricative, voiceless post-alveolar fricative,* and voiced alveolar approximant sounds. These are among the phonological characteristics found in this study.

Furthermore, the research conducted by Ryu (2002) on the problems faced by adult learners of English in Japan. Ryu thinks that apart from biological barriers (related to the speech apparatus), pronunciation learning in English needs to be improved (a paradigm shifts in pronunciation learning in the classroom) without neglecting the emphasis on acquiring speaking skills in general. Therefore, segmental sounds as a sub-component of the phonology of the second language (target language), both qualitatively and quantitatively are deemed necessary to get more attention. In addition, suprasegmental sound characteristics, such as stress, rhythm, and intonation have a very large influence on the pronunciation of the target language.

The next related research is that conducted by Keshavarz and Khamis (2017) which was conducted to identify the pronunciation barriers experienced by Hausa speakers in Nigeria in producing English sounds. There are 60 speakers of the Hausa language used as subjects in this study who are studying English from three universities in *Northern Cyprus*. The results of elicitation of English pronunciation problems conducted by means of this pronunciation test show that native speakers of Huasa Language have difficulty pronouncing vowels (/ʌ/, /ɔ:/ and /ɜ:/) and consonant sounds (/f/, / v/, /θ/ and /ð/). The results of this study also support the theory that the main nature of the negative transfer of errors is caused by the influence of the mother tongue. The results of this study have pedagogical implications for teachers and in designing syllabus and especially for speakers of the Hausa language.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is a type of quantitative descriptive research (Sugiyono, 2014) which uses a qualitative-phenomenological approach (Helaluddin, 2018). This study tries to find out whether the pronunciation learning strategy based on local language phonological constraints is effective in training Sasak speaking students in pronouncing standard English sounds. A total of 15 Sasak language-speaking students in the English Language Education Study Program at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of Mataram were taken as samples in this study. The research data are the sounds of English spoken by Sasak speakers obtained by the test method, namely pretest and posttest. The pre-test was carried out before giving treatment, namely learning pronunciation based on phonological constraints of the regional language (Sasak language) and the post-test was given after learning was carried out for 4 face-to-face

meetings plus structured independent assignments. By looking at the design of this study, the analysis used is the Comparative Analysis Hypothesis (Khansir, 2012).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Results

In this section, the results of the research will be displayed in the form of quantitative data and quantitative data originating from the pronunciation test conducted on the sample. Qualitative data in the form of sounds that become obstacles for Sasak speakers in NTB in pronouncing standard English. The following table is the word data where the problematic sounds appear.

Table 1. English consonant sounds and pronunciation by Sasak speakers

No	English consonants	Words	Sasaknese pronunciation
1	/f/	Further	/*p*əðər/
2		Confortable	/kən*p*ortebəl/
3		Half	/hʌl*p*/
4	/v/	Variation	/*p*arieiʃən/
5		Evening	/i*p*ining/
6		Wave	/wei*p*/

Based on the data in the table above, it can be explained that English consonant sounds which are problematic for Sasak speakers consist of two segmental sounds, namely fricative labiodental sounds /f/ and /v/. These two sounds appear in several English words, such as, further, comfortable, and staff.

The distribution of the pronunciation of the problematic sounds which was carried out before giving the treatment (pretest) is shown in the following table.

Table 2. Pretest distribution of the sound pronunciation of Sasak speakers

Pronunciation of [v]	***[p]***	***[w]***	***[v]***
Word level	14	0	1
Phrases level	13	0	2
Sentence level	13	0	2
Pronunciation of [f]	*[p]*		*[f]*
Word level	14	0	1
Phrases level	13	0	2
Sentence level	13	0	2

Based on the pretest results table above, it can be explained that the four English consonant sounds are pronounced differently from standard English pronunciation with quite a large percentage deviation, that is, from 14 Sasak speaking students who do not pronounce labiodental fricative sounds according to standard English sounds for word level, and 13 students for phrase and clause level. This proves that fricative labiodental sounds are indeed sounds that do not appear in the phonological vocabulary of the Sasak language and have a significant effect on English pronunciation at all lingual levels.

After being given lectures using pronunciation strategies based on local language phonological constraints which were carried out in 4 meetings, which are equivalent to 400 minutes face-to-face (offline) and virtual (online) through learning media in the University of Mataram network, a post-test was given to see the effectiveness of the strategy/the method. The post-test results are the same as the pre-test and are presented in the following table.

Table 3. Posttest distribution of the sound pronunciation of Sasak speakers

Pronunciation of [v]	***[p]***	***[w]***	***[v]***
Word level	3	0	12
Phrases level	5	0	10
Sentence level	5	0	10
Pronunciation of [f]	*[p]*		*[f]*
Word level	2	0	13
Phrases level	3	0	12
Sentence level	3	0	12

The posttest data above shows that there has been an improvement in the way of pronunciation of words, phrases, and clauses where problematic sounds appear. There are 3 Sasak speaking students who still have difficulty pronouncing the voiceless fricative labiodental sound /f/ at the word level, 3 at the phrase level, and 3 at the clause level. Almost the same thing happened to the pronunciation of the labiodental fricative sound /v/, where there were 3 Sasak speakers who could not pronounce the sound correctly, 5 at the phrase level, and 5 at the clause level.

Discussions

In this section, we discuss the significance of the results of tests conducted on samples using chi square analysis. This is in accordance with the existing data, namely non-parametric data. The results of calculating statistical data using chi square obtained a distribution which shows that the pretest value is lower than the posttest value at the frequency of observations with an interval of 11 points.

Table 4. Chi square table

Observed Frequencies							
	[e]	[E]	[t]	[d]	[f]	[v]	Total
Pretest	15	15	15	15	4	5	69
Posttest	15	15	15	15	10	10	80
Total	30	30	30	30	14	15	149
Expected Frequencies							
	[e]	[E]	[t]	[d]	[f]	[v]	Total
Pretest	13.8	13.8	13.8	13.8	6.4	6.9	69
Posttest	16.1	16.1	16.1	16.1	7.5	8.0	80
Total	30	30	30	30	14	15	149
Differences							
	[e]	[E]	[t]	[d]	[f]	[v]	
Pretest	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.95	0.545	
Posttest	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.82	0.470	
Statistics							
Df		5					
Chi-square		3.44					
Significance		0.63	highly significant at $p < 0.001$				
Cramér's V		0.15	small effect				

Based on the chi square results above, it can be explained that the distribution of posttest scores at observation frequencies and expected frequencies is 80 higher than the pretest value of 69 with a difference in values (interval) of 11. This shows that what happened to the posttest as expected. However, to ensure that the distribution of pronunciation scores between pre-test and post-test is significantly planned (by design), it is necessary to look at the results of statistical tests. Based on statistical tests, a significance level of 0.63 was obtained which was greater than 0.001 (highly significant at $p < 0.001$). This proves that the difference in pre-test and post-test scores both at the observation frequency and at the expected frequency with a difference of 11 is not a coincidence. That is, these differences are caused by the use of phonological English pronunciation strategies/methods based on local language phonological constraints after the pre-test. In addition, the results of the Craner's V calculation have a very low effect of 0.152051 (small effect) on the significance of chi square.

CONCLUSIONS

There are 2 segmental sounds, namely fricative labiodental sounds /f/ and /v/ which were found to be problematic for Sasak speaking students. The application of pronunciation learning based on local language phonological constraints to students who speak Sasak shows a positive effect. This is evidenced by the distribution of the chi square scores of the posttests which are higher than the posttests both in the frequency of observation and the frequency of expectations in the sample.

As a strategy and at the same time a method of learning English pronunciation, learning pronunciation based on local language phonological constraints can be used as an alternative, especially when dealing with English learners who have dominant regional language barriers that affect their learning achievement. Besides that, this method must be carried out systematically and intensively to build cognitive awareness in anticipating the influence of regional languages into English speech.

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