CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents some reviews of theories and previous studies related to the difficulties in pronouncing English fricative consonant sounds, specifically as encountered by fourth semester students of the English Language Education Program at the University of Muhammadiyah Malang. The discussion includes the Pronunciation itself, the Fricative Consonant, Factors Influencing Pronouncing Difficulties, The Influence of Native Language on Pronunciation and Previous Related Findings.

2.1 Pronunciation

Cook (1996 as cited in Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2016) said that pronunciation as the production of English sounds. Pronunciation is learnt with combination of simulation, dynamic praxis, and realization of sound design. Pronunciation is an expression of a person's self-image (Seidlhofer, 1994). That is why one person to another has different expression. Based on Paulston and Burder (1976), pronunciation is a production of a sound framework which does not meddled with communication either from the speakers' or the listeners' perspective. Hereafter, pronunciation as the strategy of creating certain sounds (Richard and Schmidt, 2002).

2.1.1 Place of Articulation

Place of articulation refers to location in the mouth where the speaker produces sound. Place of articulation is important because it helps differentiate

distinguish sound and affect the way of sounds perceived. Consonants on the place of articulation are classified below:

2.1.1.1 Bilabial

Bilabial is a consonant sound produced by creating friction between both lips when they are not fully closed. The three main bilabial consonants in English are /p/ as in “police,” /b/ as in “black,” and /m/ as in “man”

2.1.1.2 Labiodental

Labiodental is sound in English when the consonants produced by touching the lower lip (*labio*) to the upper teeth (*dental*). The two primary labiodental sounds in English are /f/ as in “fun” and /v/ as in “vase”

2.1.1.3 Dental

Dental sounds in English are produced when the tongue tip contacts the upper teeth. Two examples are ‘th’ sounds: /ð/ as in “that” as voiced and /θ/ as in “thought” as voiceless.

2.1.1.4 Alveolar

Alveolar sounds produced when the tongue tip contacts the alveolar ridge which located in bony ridge behind upper teeth. When someone says den*t* or ten*t*, the tongue reaches alveolar ridge. Examples include the sounds /t/, /d/, /n/, /s/, /z/, /l/, and /r/.

2.1.1.5 Post Alveolar

Post Alveolar produced when the blade of the tongue contacts the area of the mouth just behind the alveolar ridge. Sometimes it also called palato-

alveolar. Examples of post-alveolar sounds in English include /ʃ/ as in “fish,” /ʒ/ as in “usual,” /tʃ/ as in “chat,” and /dʒ/ as in “job.”

2.1.1.6 Palatal

Palatal produced by raising the tongue towards the hard palate (the top of the mouth**).** Examples of palatal sounds in English include the ‘y’ sound in “yes” /j/, the ‘sh’ sound in “shoe” /ʃ/, and the ‘ch’ sound in “church” /tʃ/.

2.1.1.7 Velar

Velar produced by raising the back of the tongue (dorsum) towards the soft palate (velum). Velar sounds in English include /k/, /g/, and /ŋ/. Examples of words with these sounds include “key,” “gone,” and “sing.”

2.1.1.8 Glottal

Glottal produced using the glottis, the space between the vocal cords. It is a common sound in many languages, including English. They include the glottal stop /ʔ/ such as “important,” the voiceless glottal fricative /h/ such as “happy” and the voiced glottal fricative /ɦ/. It is formed at the glottis (in the throat), just like /h/, but with the vibration of the vocal cords.

2.1.2 Manner of Articulation

Manner of Articulation refers to how organ of the speech such as tongue, teeth and glottis interacts to manage the airflow and produce dissimilar consonant sounds. Manner of Articulation is the final essential refinement between consonants (Ashby and Maidment, 2012). Based on book written by Ladefoged and Johnson, (2011) there are several ways in which articulatory gestures can be done.

2.1.2.1 Stop (Plosive)

The airflow is totally obstructed for a moment and then released instantly. The example sounds including /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/, /g/. And the example words such as pay, bay, dog.

2.1.2.2 Fricative

Close approximation of two articulators so that the airstream is incompletely blocked and turbulent airflow is produced. The example sounds including /f/, /v/, /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /ʒ/, /θ/, /ð/, /h/. And the example words are fill, van, she, see, this.

2.1.2.3 Approximant

A gesture in when one articulator is close to another, but not close enough to make some resistance. The example sounds namely /w/, /j/, /r/. And the example words such as we, yes, rose.

2.1.2.4 Lateral

The air streams along the sides of the tongue, with incomplete closure between one or both sides of the tongue and the roof the mouth. The example sounds is /l/, and produces words such as love, lay, light.

2.1.2.5 Nasal

The airflow is stopped in the mouth but flows through the nose. The example sounds are /m/, /n/, /ŋ/ and produces words such as may, no, running.

2.1.2.6 Affricate

A mixture of a plosive + fricative, commence with a full stop and then lets out with friction. The example sounds are /tʃ/ (voiceless post alveolar), /dʒ/

(voiced post alveolar). And the words which produced such as watch, teacher, judge, bridge.

2.2 Fricative Consonant Sounds

A fricative consonant is a sound delivered by forcing air through a limit channel within the vocal tract, making capable of being heard as a friction. This varies with plosives, which include a total closure and discharge of air. Fricatives are characterized by the persistent airflow and the friction produced as the air passes through the limit channel. Fricative consonants are happened when two vocal organs come so close for movement of air to be listened between them (Kelly, 2003).

However, Fricatives are consonants with the characteristic that when they are delivered, air escapes through a little section and makes murmuring sound (Roach, 1983). Roach classified:

	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Palato Alveolar	Glottal
Voiceless	F	Θ	S	ʃ	ʔ/ h
Voiced	V	Ð	Z	ʒ	ɦ

2.3 The Influence of Native Language on Pronunciation

The students' native language (L1) influence on how they pronouncing on second language (L2). According to Kenworthy (1987), L1 interference often results difficulty in pronunciation when the phonetic system of the first language

differs from the target language. In line with what was said by Yule (2016), students' transfer phonological patterns from their L1 to L2, which can lead to difficulties, especially when the target sounds do not exist in their native language. Same as stated by Yavas (2011), when specific fricative sounds such as /θ/, /ð/, or /ʒ/ are absent from the students' first language (L1), they tend to replace these sounds with similar, more familiar sounds from their L1 phonetic system.

In the context of Indonesian students, certain English fricative sounds like theta /θ/ or dental /ð/, are not present in Bahasa Indonesia and most local accent. This absence leads to misarticulation, where students replace unfamiliar sounds with those that exist in their L1. For example, the /θ/ sound in think is often pronounced as /t/, and /ð/ in this becomes /d/.

2.4 Common Difficulties in Pronouncing Fricative Sounds

Pronouncing fricative consonant sounds in English exhibits significant challenges for many non-native speakers. Fricative sounds are produced by forcing air through a narrow passage between two articulators, such as the tongue and teeth or the lips and teeth, which creates a continuous friction sound. These sounds include /f/, /v/, / θ/, / ð/, /s/, /z/, / ʃ/, / ʒ/. Celce-Murcia et al. (2010) stated several difficulties in pronouncing English fricative consonants:

2.4.1 Lack of Phonetic Awareness

A notable component to the difficulties in pronouncing English fricative sounds among English language students is the lack of phonetic awareness. Phonetic awareness refers to how students understand in speech or produce some sounds. It includes the capability to identify specific sounds and reproduce the

sounds accurately. Many students who their native language (L1) has a limited of fricative sounds such as Bahasa Indonesia, are involuntarily aware of English fricative sounds should be produced.

Students may not understand the correct articulatory positions needed to produce fricative sounds, such as placing the upper teeth against the lower lip for /f/ and /v/, or positioning the tongue between the teeth for /θ/ or /ð/. For example, students might substitute /θ/ with /t/ (think pronounced as tink), or /ð/ with /d/ (this pronounced as dis). without realizing that these substitutions considerably change the purposed meaning of the word.

2.4.2 L1 Interference

The influence of a students' native language (L1) is one of the most significant aspect providing to the difficulties in pronouncing English fricative sounds. As stated by Yavas (2011), the phonological system of an individual's first language figures how they perceive and produce sounds in a second language (L2). If spesific English fricative sounds, such as /θ/, /ð/, or /ʒ/, do not exist in the students' native language, they are possible to struggle with articulation of these sounds. The difference between the native language and English in terms of the sounds made has a direct effect on how hard it is for students to pronounce words correctly. As said by Roach (2009), these negative transfers from the first language, often referred to as "interference," can obstruct accurate pronunciation and become a persistent obstacle in mastering English sounds.

The way people speak their first language from a young age can make it hard to adjust to the different ways of positioning the tongue, controlling airflow,

and distinguishing between sounds in English fricatives. In the absence of enough advice and enhanced phonological awareness, first language interference may continue in students' speech over time, potentially decreasing their intelligibility and communicative competence.

2.4.3 Psychological Barriers

Psychological Barriers is one of the main common difficulties in pronouncing English fricative sounds. It refers to internal emotional that obstruct students' capability to speak English fricative effectively. One of the most common psychological barriers in pronouncing English fricative sounds is *fear of making mistakes*. Especially when students already know of their pronunciation weaknesses but lack of confidence in amending them. According to Celce-Murcia, Brinton and Goodwin (2010), difficulties in pronouncing uncommon sounds such as /θ/, /ð/, or /ʒ/, can lead to feeling embarrassment or anxiety of being corrected by their lecturer of classmates. Therefore, students abstain from speaking completely to avoid words that they thought is difficult.

A lack of self-confidence is one of challenges in psychological barriers, as some students assume that their accent or way of speaking is impossible to improve. This negative conviction, if left unaddressed, can strengthen incorrect pronunciation patterns and reduce the students' motivation to engage in practice or seek feedback.

The final one, lack of motivation, frustration from repeated correction, and fear of being misunderstood can all act as psychological barriers, discouraging students from actively taking part in pronunciation practice. To conclude, students'

difficulties in pronouncing English fricative consonants are influenced by both linguistic and psychological factors. The lack of specific fricative sounds in their native language, limited phonetic awareness and practice, also contributes to continuing pronunciation difficulties.

2.5 Factors Affecting Pronunciation

Pronunciation is a fundamental component of speaking skills and plays a crucial role in effective communication. However, many students struggle to acquire accurate pronunciation, especially when learning a second or foreign language. According to Celce-Murcia et al. (2010), several interrelated factors influence students' pronunciation abilities. These factors range from:

2.5.1 Native Language Interference

Students tend to transfer sound patterns from their first language, which may not include fricatives like /θ/ and /ð/, causing mispronunciations.

2.5.2 Age of Acquisition

Students who begin studying English at an older age may struggle more with pronunciation due to reduced neuroplasticity and fossilized L1 habits.

2.5.3 Amount and Quality of Exposure to English

Limited exposure to native or fluent English models results in weak auditory discrimination and poor imitation skills.

2.5.4 Aptitude and Phonetic Ability

Some students naturally have a better ear for sounds, while others may require extensive training to hear and reproduce subtle phonetic differences.

2.5.5 Motivation and Attitude

Highly motivated students often achieve better pronunciation because they are more likely to practice and seek feedback.

2.5.6 Instruction and Feedback

Students who receive explicit instruction and correction in pronunciation, especially regarding place and manner of articulation tend to improve more significantly.

Each of these variables contributes uniquely to how well a learner can perceive and produce English sounds, including challenging fricatives like /θ/ and /ð/. Understanding these aspects is essential for both educators and students, as it helps identify the root causes of pronunciation difficulties and informs more effective teaching strategies.

2.6 Previous Related Findings

In this chapter, the researcher discusses previous studies as follows:

Adhani, Ismiyati, and Silfia (2021) *An Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Pronouncing English Fricative Consonant at the Eleventh Grade of SMA Negeri 1 Kota Jambi*. In their research, the factors of students' difficulties in pronouncing English fricative consonant are; the influence of students' mother language, the lack of students' knowledge about English sound system and the unsuccessful in using borrowed English words.

Armelia, Sada, and Ikhsanudin (2024) *Students' Pronunciation Problems in Pronouncing English Fricative Consonants*. In their research, pronunciation

problems encountered by the students are assumed to be the differences between the student's first language and the target language. Hence, the students influence the English fricative consonant sounds with their L1. The absence of fricative consonant sounds in Indonesia as well as Ketapang, Malay, somehow becomes a problem for the students. Furthermore, the influence of spelling or pronunciation between the L1 and L2 also becomes a cause for the students to keep making errors. Other aspects such as lack of practice in using fricative consonants in their daily life, and the role of previous English language teaching influenced how their pronunciation skill and their pronunciation knowledge.

As said by Situmeang and Lubis (2020) *Students' Difficulties in Pronouncing Fricative Consonant*; In their research, the students' difficulties in pronouncing fricative consonant are producing sound (/θ/, /ð/, /ʃ/, /f/, /v/, /ʒ/, /z/, /s/ and /h/). The reasons for these difficulties are: different elements between native language and the target language and the same phonetic feature in both language but differ in their distributions. The students' dominant difficulties in pronouncing fricative consonant are producing sound /θ/ and sound /ð/ in various position sound in the word (initial, medial and final word position). The kinds of students' difficulties in pronouncing fricative consonant are; the influence of students' mother language, the lack of students' knowledge about English sound system, unsuccessful in using borrowed English words, prefer to speak Batakness rather than English and less of pronunciation practice.