

FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENTS' IN LEARNING ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

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ABSTRAK

Pengucapan merupakan aspek penting dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris karena memungkinkan siswa berkomunikasi secara efektif dan menghindari kesalahpahaman. Namun, banyak pelajar masih mengalami kesulitan dalam menguasai pengucapan bahasa Inggris karena berbagai faktor internal dan eksternal. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi siswa dalam mempelajari pengucapan bahasa Inggris, terutama persepsi pendengaran, sikap dan motivasi, kepribadian, usaha individu, penetapan tujuan, serta pengaruh bahasa pertama. Penelitian ini dilakukan pada Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di Universitas Pakuan dengan menggunakan teknik purposive sampling. Metode yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif, dengan kuesioner dan wawancara semi-terstruktur sebagai instrumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa faktor internal berpengaruh signifikan terhadap pembelajaran pengucapan. Persepsi pendengaran yang baik membantu siswa membedakan dan menirukan bunyi dengan tepat. Sikap positif dan motivasi yang kuat mendorong ketekunan dan kepercayaan diri dalam berlatih. Kepribadian, seperti kepercayaan diri dan partisipasi aktif, juga mendukung peningkatan kemampuan pengucapan. Selain itu, usaha individu dan tujuan belajar yang jelas membantu siswa mencapai kemajuan yang stabil. Faktor eksternal yang memengaruhi pembelajaran pengucapan adalah pengaruh bahasa pertama. Perbedaan sistem bunyi antara bahasa ibu dan bahasa Inggris sering menyebabkan kesalahan pengucapan dan interferensi aksen. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa faktor internal dan eksternal saling berinteraksi dalam membentuk keterampilan pengucapan siswa. Pemahaman terhadap faktor-faktor tersebut penting bagi siswa dan pendidik untuk meningkatkan hasil pembelajaran pengucapan.

Kata kunci: EFL, Pronunciation, Factors, Learning English.

ABSTRACT

Pronunciation is an essential aspect of English learning because it enables students to communicate effectively and avoid misunderstandings. However, many learners still face difficulties in mastering English pronunciation due to various internal and external factors. This study aims to identify the factors affecting students in learning English pronunciation, focusing on ear perception, attitude and motivation, personality, individual effort and goal setting, and first language influence. The research was conducted in the English Language Education Study Program at Pakuan University selected through purposive sampling. A descriptive qualitative method was applied, using questionnaires and semi-structured interviews as instruments. The findings reveal that several internal factors significantly influence pronunciation learning. Good ear perception helps students distinguish and imitate sounds accurately. Positive attitudes and strong motivation encourage persistence and confidence during practice. Personality traits such as self-confidence and active participation also support better improvement. Additionally, individual effort and clear learning goals contribute to steady progress in mastering pronunciation. The external factor identified in this study is first language influence. Differences between the students' mother tongue sound system and English pronunciation often lead to mispronunciations and accent interference, making certain English sounds more difficult to produce accurately. This study concludes that these internal and external factors interact to shape students' pronunciation skills. Understanding how these factors affect learning is essential for both students and educators in order to enhance pronunciation learning outcomes.

Keyword: EFL, Pronunciation, Factors, Learning English.

INTRODUCTION

Pronunciation is an important aspect of language learning, as it makes effective communication and comprehension possible. (Kurnia et al., 2023) said Pronunciation is one of the most important elements associated with the focus is on language learning. For English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, mastering pronunciation can be a challenge because they have to struggle with the complexity of English sounds, which are very different from their native language. Learning the correct pronunciation of words and sounds is considered one of the most difficult aspects of learning English as a second or foreign language, as pronunciation requires learners to perceive, produce, and distinguish unfamiliar sounds that do not exist in their native language (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010; Gilakjani, 2012). Effective English communication requires learners not only to understand what other speakers say but also to produce accurate pronunciation, since inadequate pronunciation often leads to misunderstandings and communication breakdowns. Pronunciation is a crucial element of communicative competence and greatly impacts successful communication (Pourhosein Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016).

However, in the realm of English education, Many non-native English learners face challenges such as mispronouncing words, placing stress incorrectly on syllables and words, and using inappropriate intonation patterns in English sentences (Celce-Murcia, Brinton, & Goodwin, 2010; Hewings, 2012). Previous research indicates that EFL learners often experience pronunciation problems related to sounds, stress, and intonation (Hewings, 2012). Another perspective is offered by Clark et al. (as cited in Tanjung 2021), who explain that pronunciation issues can also appear as slips of the tongue, occurring when speakers' actual utterances differ from their intended speech. In the issue of pronunciation ability, obstacles were identified in a preliminary study conducted by the researcher at the English department of

FKIP Universitas Pakuan. It was found that students' English pronunciation was often influenced by their mother tongue accent, leading to problematic phonemic sounds. Many students found it challenging to adjust vocabulary sounds to standard English pronunciation. In addition, students experienced pronunciation problems in producing certain English phonemes, particularly vowels and consonants that do not exist in their first language, which often resulted in inaccurate repetition of English words during spoken communication.

The other possible condition causing the existence of the above problems pertains to the issue of their psychological state. For example, students may feel a lack of confidence and experience high levels of stress. However, overcoming these psychological issues can be done through careful preparation, such as consistent practice. Improving pronunciation involves developing a routine for producing English sounds and managing them effectively. Therefore, by maintaining this learning habit, confidence levels can be improved. Thus, in simple terms, having clear pronunciation is crucial for effective English communication along with proper grammar. Clear pronunciation is key to avoiding misunderstandings and ensuring smooth interactions in English. Exploring the factors that impact students' pronunciation abilities is vital for English teachers to address the highlighted issues effectively.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to investigate the factors affecting students' learning of English pronunciation. Descriptive qualitative research is appropriate for exploring participants' perceptions and experiences in detail (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Two research instruments were used to collect the data: a questionnaire and in-depth interviews. The questionnaire was administered to students to obtain initial information regarding factors influencing their English

pronunciation learning. Questionnaires are considered effective tools for collecting systematic data from participants (Afolayan & Oniyinde, 2019).

Based on the questionnaire results, in-depth interviews were conducted with eight students to gain deeper insights into the identified factors. Interviews were used to explore students' experiences and perceptions more thoroughly and to clarify the questionnaire findings, as recommended in qualitative research (Creswell, 2018). The data were collected in sequential stages, beginning with questionnaire distribution, followed by data review and participant selection for interviews. The data obtained from both instruments were then analyzed descriptively to identify the factors affecting students in learning English pronunciation

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the questionnaires and in-depth interviews, this study identified five main factors affecting students' learning of English pronunciation, namely ear perception, attitude and motivation, personality, individual effort, and first language influence. The questionnaire results revealed that most students perceived ear perception as an important factor, as clear hearing ability helped them distinguish similar English sounds and imitate pronunciation more accurately. Students also generally did not consider age as a barrier, believing that pronunciation improvement could be achieved through continuous exposure and practice. These findings were further supported by interview data, which showed that students with good listening skills were more sensitive to stress, intonation, and pronunciation patterns in spoken English. This supports previous studies emphasizing the role of ear perception in successful pronunciation learning (Gilakjani, 2012; Saito, 2023).

The questionnaire data also indicated that students demonstrated positive

attitudes and strong motivation toward learning English pronunciation. Most respondents agreed that motivation encouraged them to practice regularly and focus on accurate pronunciation, while fear of making mistakes was not perceived as a major obstacle. The interview findings reinforced this result, revealing that students' motivation primarily stemmed from internal factors such as the desire to speak clearly and confidently, although encouragement from lecturers and peers also played a supportive role. This finding aligns with Dörnyei's (2009) theory, which highlights motivation and positive attitudes as key contributors to success in second and foreign language learning. In terms of personality, the questionnaire results showed that many students viewed themselves as confident and willing to participate actively in pronunciation related activities. The interview data further revealed that self-confidence enabled students to practice more freely, accept feedback positively, and engage in classroom activities such as pronunciation drills and reading aloud. These findings are consistent with Zhang (2009), who emphasizes that personality traits, particularly self-confidence, significantly influence learners' pronunciation development.

Furthermore, the questionnaire responses indicated that individual effort and goal setting played a significant role in pronunciation improvement. Most students believed that their progress resulted from persistence and consistent practice, as well as from setting clear personal goals. Interview data supported this finding, showing that students practiced independently through listening to audio materials, imitating pronunciation from films or songs, recording their voices, and reviewing their pronunciation. These practices reflect the importance of learner autonomy and consistent practice in pronunciation learning, as suggested by Morley (1991) and Hewings (2012).

Finally, the questionnaire results revealed that more than half of the students perceived their first or regional language as affecting their English pronunciation, particularly due to differences in sound systems. Interview findings confirmed that students, especially those whose first language was Sundanese, experienced difficulties in producing certain English vowels, consonants, and stress patterns. However, several students reported that increased exposure to English and regular practice helped them reduce these difficulties. This finding supports theories of first language interference, which suggest that differences between learners' native language and the target language can affect pronunciation accuracy, although such effects can be minimized through consistent practice (Gilakjani, 2012; Melyann & Irwandi, 2018).

CONCLUSION

This study explored the factors affecting students' learning of English pronunciation. The results show that students' pronunciation development is influenced by both internal and external factors. The internal factors include ear perception, attitude and motivation, personality, and individual effort, while first language influence is the main external factor. Students who have good listening ability, positive attitudes, strong motivation, and practice regularly tend to achieve better pronunciation. Although differences between the students' first language and English may cause pronunciation difficulties, these problems can be reduced through consistent practice and increased exposure to English. Overall, learning pronunciation is a complex process that requires support from teachers and active effort from students. Future studies are encouraged to involve larger samples learning or use technology-based tools to further examine pronunciation.

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