

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher presents the background of the study, formulation of the research, research objective significance of the study, key terms and scope and limitation of the research.

#### **A. Background of the Study**

Awareness of the importance of using English as the main means of communication in today's modern world is increasing. English has become a global language studied by people from various countries, both within and beyond English-speaking nations. Due to rapid globalization and widespread development, English is now essential and widely used across multiple sectors, including economics, industry, healthcare, education, and entertainment (Nurhayati, 2020). In Indonesia, students are empowered to learn and use two or three languages, where English functions as a third language (B3) or foreign language (FL), regional language as mother tongue (B1), and Indonesian as second language (B2) (Nurhayati, 2018b). In this multilingual context, learners from different linguistic backgrounds may face different challenges in acquiring English. Therefore, comparing pronunciation errors between speakers of different regional languages—such as Papuan and Javanese—becomes important in order to understand how first language influences shape English pronunciation patterns.

In Indonesia, there is linguistic diversity, such as in Javanese society, where the language used first is Javanese as a regional language (L1), followed by Indonesian as a national language (L2), and English as a second language (L3), which is studied as a foreign language. The same thing also applies to Papuan society, where the people use Papuan language according to their tribe as a regional language (L1), Indonesian as a national language (L2), and English as a third language (L3), which is studied as a foreign language.

In fact, not all countries have linguistic diversity like Indonesia. For example, the United States did not have a significant regional language; they only use English as their main language because they are the country with the largest number of immigrants from England after World War II. In this context, Indonesian people should be grateful for the richness of languages that exist, where various ethnic groups can live side by side and use Indonesian as their national language in communicating.

Along with the development of English as an international language after World War II, the importance of learning this language has increased in the 12era of globalization. Many people around the world now consider English as a vital means of communication between countries, which directly affects their daily lives. This gives rise to several strong reasons to learn English, such as improving the ability to acquire knowledge, achieving career goals, adapting to the ever-evolving global environment, and motivating oneself to learn without age restrictions or entertainment purposes (Latu, 1994). Thus, the linguistic diversity in

Indonesia and the need to understand English are interrelated, providing a significant impact on the understanding of English structure and pronunciation in a society with diverse mother tongue backgrounds.

In Indonesia, mother tongue barriers are a significant barrier to English learning. Differences between mother tongue and English can cause difficulties for students. Generally, the difficulties faced by English learners are related to significant differences in grammatical structure between mother tongue (L1) and English. According to (Beardsmore, 1986), the influence of the mother tongue can be seen in aspects of phonology, lexis, and grammar. This is reflected in the way students speak and write in English. Therefore, it is important for learners to strive to achieve an ideal balance between their first language skills and English as a second language.

The imbalance in the mastery of two languages can cause distortions known as interference. Francois explains that “there may be differences between monolinguals and bilinguals” (Grosjean, 1982). In the context of teaching English or two languages, non-native teachers often experience difficulties with their first language. However, mother tongue intervention is a significant obstacle in English language instruction. According to research, mother tongue barriers frequently impair students' ability to write and understand English, thus, mother tongue barriers can increase the accuracy of English language instruction (Noviyenty & Putri, 2021). Although technological advances have facilitated access to information and digital media in places like Papua and Kediri, language

and cultural differences still significantly hinder the English learning process. Therefore, initiatives that support mother tongue intervention and adaptive teaching strategies are crucial to effectively improve students' English proficiency.

Such as the Papuan student intervention study conducted by previous researchers, whose results showed that Papuan students had difficulty in the correct sentence stress on nouns and verbs. Of the two groups of words, the most difficult part for Papuan students is in using stress on nouns. This is influenced by the shift from their first language (Tenau, 2017). Other studies also say that Papuan students overcome difficulties in pronouncing English dental fricative sounds by replacing them with more familiar sounds from their mother tongue sound inventory. This highlights the influence of cross-language and social factors in pronunciation variation (Kafryawan, 2023). Other researchers also examined variations in the pronunciation of labiodental and palato-alveolar fricative sounds by students at the University of Papua. This study found that students had difficulty pronouncing the sounds [v], [ʃ], and [ʒ], although there were no significant problems with the sound [f]. This difficulty is caused by the absence of these sounds in the Indonesian phonological system, which causes students to replace the sounds [v] with [f], [ʃ] with [s], and [ʒ] with [s], [ʃ], or [g] (Mokoagouw et al., 2022).

Meanwhile, Javanese students have various dialects and have an impact on learning English, such as the results of research showing how phonological and orthographic differences in the mother tongue can affect

learning and pronunciation of a foreign language (Dewi et al., 2019). In addition, other researchers have also shown that Javanese students have difficulty pronouncing several English phonemes such as  $\theta$ , r,  $\int$ ,  $t\int$ ,  $u$ ,  $\delta$ , t,  $u\theta^r$ , d, and  $d\int$ . This difficulty is caused by the influence of their mother tongue, which is still strong when they try to master English vocabulary. Furthermore, using Javanese for everyday communication makes it difficult for them to understand the language when speaking English (Khusniyah et al., 2021). Further research has shown that students often struggle to pronounce words not found in their native language, such as "f" and "v," and they readily adopt words consistent with English usage. This shows that there are challenges in learning English that are influenced by phonological interference from their regional language (Nirwana & Suhono, 2023).

Based on previous studies, it is concluded that in Indonesia, especially in the provinces of Papua and Java, students learning English often face challenges related to pronunciation due to significant phonological differences between their mother tongue and English. The Papuan language family, which consists of various regional languages, and Javanese, the dominant language in Kediri, have different phonetic inventories and are very different from English. In the study of (Arrum et al., 2022), the challenges that occur in students with the Javanese language family occur due to phonological problems and longwinded spelling. The linguistic structures of Javanese and Papuan present challenges for learners

as they encounter barriers to English that do not exist in their native phonetic systems, particularly in the area of fricatives and affricates.

English fricatives and affricates, such as /θ/, /ð/, and /tʃ/, are quite difficulted for non-native speakers to learn. These sounds are often compared to more familiar sounds from the speakers' native languages. Unlike Papuan learners, who are hesitant to compare English fricatives and affricates with their native plosives, Kediri learners are more willing to compare these sounds with their Javanese counterparts, resulting in different pronunciation patterns between the two groups. Furthermore, this interference is more prevalent between sounds that do not have silent sounds in their native languages, complicating the learning process.

Against this backdrop, the purpose of this study is to further investigate and compare the phenomenon of mother tongue interference in English communication between Papuan and Javanese speakers. Through comparison analysis, this study will identify similarities and differences in pronunciation, classify the types of phonological problems faced by each group, and identify factors specific to their respective language systems. It is hoped that this will provide insight into how language barriers in the region affect students' ability to produce accurate English, especially in non-native languages.

## **B. Formulation of Research Problem**

Based on these problems, the researchers try to answer the problem.

1. What are the similarities and differences in English pronunciation errors between Papuan and Javanese speakers?

2. What are the types of phonological errors made by Papuan and Javanese speakers when pronouncing English phonemes as a foreigner?
3. What factors contribute to phonological interference in the English pronunciation by Papuan and Javanese speakers?

### **C. Purpose of the Research**

The purposes of the research are:

1. To compare and analyze the similarities and differences in English pronunciation errors related to specific sound groups between Papuan and Javanese speakers.
2. To categorize the types of phonological errors made by Papuan and Javanese speakers in their English pronunciation.
3. To investigate the various factors that influence phonological interference in English pronunciation among Papuan and Javanese speakers.

### **D. Significance of the Research**

It is hoped that this research will be able to make a contribution in the context of theory and practice, which will be explained as follows:

#### **1. Theoretical Significance**

This study examines the similarities and differences in the influence of the geographical and linguistic backgrounds of two regional languages—Papuan and Javanese—on the use of English as a foreign language. The results are expected to enrich studies in

linguistics and language education, particularly in understanding the patterns of pronunciation and stress errors that are unique to each group. Thus, this study aims to deepen understanding of language interference, interlanguage, and phonological change that occur in the process of second language learning.

## **2. Practical Significance**

### **a. For English Teachers**

The findings of this study provide important information regarding the results of the similarities and differences, types of errors, and causal factors in Papuan and Javanese students in terms of phoneme pronunciation. And the results of this information can be a guide for teachers in determining teaching methods, learning materials, and strategies that are more effective and appropriate to overcome students' phonological difficulties so that the English learning process runs more smoothly.

### **b. For Students**

By understanding common problems and their causes, students in Papua and Java can better understand how their mother tongue affects their ability to communicate in English and how to minimize these problems.

### **c. For Curriculum Development**

This research can be used to increase the number of language courses, especially in areas where English is taught to students in

multiple regional languages. This will enable more inclusive and linguistically informed language teaching.

d. For Future Researchers

This research serves as a reference for those who wish to conduct further in-depth research on phonological, interlingual, or compare linguistic issues in other ethnic and geographical contexts.

### **E. Scope and Limitation of the Research**

In this study, the phonological problems of Papuan and Javanese speakers in English pronunciation were examined in relation to the influence of their mother tongue. Segmental (consonant) and suprasegmental (intonation and stress) phonological challenges were the primary focus of this study to identify common patterns of pronunciation problems in English phonemes. Furthermore, this study aims to identify the intralingual and interlingual processes underlying these errors, as well as the linguistic and non-linguistic factors that influence them. Qualitative techniques such as phonetic transcription, pronunciation tests, and semi-structured interviews were used to gather in-depth data. This study was limited to Javanese students from Kediri and Papuan students temporarily residing in Kediri to continue their studies and focused on phonological characteristics rather than broader language acquisition issues. While this affected the scope and number of participants, this study strives to offer a more focused and comprehensive research scope.

The fact is that Javanese and Papuan speakers have distinct languages and dialects that they use in daily communication. Therefore,

the individuals selected for this study represent specific groups within each ethnic group. The Javanese speakers in this study were students from Kediri, East Java, who were born and raised in the region and spoke the Kediri Javanese dialect as their mother tongue. Meanwhile, the Papuan speakers were students from West Papua, the Papuan Highlands, or Central Papua—who were temporarily residing in Kediri and previously spoke one of the Papuan regional languages, such as Mpur, Wallak, or Abun, as their mother tongue. Given these limitations, this study does not aim to represent the full range of dialectal variations across the Javanese and Papuan ethnic groups but rather focuses on more specific groups to allow for a more in-depth phonological analysis. Nevertheless, the results of this study are expected to make a significant contribution to understanding forms of phonological interference in English language learning and their implications for more adaptive and contextual teaching strategies.

## **F. Definition of Key Terms**

### **1. Phonological Errors**

(Hannahs et al., 1997) describe phonological errors as patterns of sound mistakes that typically developing children use to simplify their speech while learning to communicate. These errors occur because children have not yet developed the ability to coordinate their lips, tongue, teeth, palate, and jaw effectively for clear articulation.

### **2. Pronunciation**

(Daniel Jones, 1996) define pronunciation as the process of producing the correct sounds of letters in words, as well as accurately articulating

the stress and length of syllables. Pronunciation involves the manner in which specific words and syllables are enunciated. The term "accent" refers to the emphasis placed on particular syllables or, more broadly, the tone or vocal expression used when delivering sentences.

### 3. Linguistic interference

Linguistic interference, also referred to as language transfer, is the phenomenon where features of a speaker's first language (L1) influence their use of a second language (L2), manifesting in areas such as phonology, syntax, and vocabulary. This interference often leads to errors as learners depend on their native language structures, resulting in deviations from standard norms (Derakhshan & Karimi, 2015). The impact of linguistic interference can be both beneficial and detrimental; positive transfer occurs when similarities between languages aid learning, while negative transfer causes errors due to differences (Cristina Silvia Vâlcea, 2020). Understanding this dynamic is crucial for developing effective language teaching strategies, as learners frequently interpret new language data through the lens of their previous linguistic experiences.