

The Influence Of Regional Dialects And Accents On The English Phonological Competence Of EFL Students

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Abstract. *The purpose of this study is to see how regional dialects and accents affect the phonological ability of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students in Indonesia. The background of this research lies in the sociolinguistic situation in Indonesia where students usually master the regional language as their first language before starting to learn English. Phonological interference, which impacts students' pronunciation abilities, can be caused by differences in phonological systems between the first language and English. The focus of this study was to find the types of phonological aberrations in students' English pronunciation. Data were obtained through observation of pronunciation, documentation of speech results, and analysis of the form of sound realization of EFL students. Data analysis was carried out by data reduction methods, phonological error classification, interpretation, and conclusion drawn. The results showed that regional accents and dialects had a significant effect on students' phonological abilities. Sound substitution (sound substitution), phonological simplification (phonological simplification), epenthesis (addition of sounds), final consonant removal (final consonant removal), and orthographic impact on pronunciation are some of the major forms of phonological error. The primary cause of these errors is first language (L1) interference, specifically the structural and phonotactic differences between the students' native regional languages and the English phonological system. According to this study, the goal of learning pronunciation is not to eliminate accents, but to improve a person's comprehension so that they can communicate well in English.*

Keywords: *Regional Dialects, Accent, Phonological Competence, EFL, First Language Interference, Pronunciation*

Abstrak. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui bagaimana dialek dan aksen daerah memengaruhi kemampuan fonologis mahasiswa EFL (*English as a Foreign Language* atau Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing) di Indonesia. Latar belakang penelitian ini berangkat dari situasi sosiolinguistik di Indonesia, di mana mahasiswa umumnya menguasai bahasa daerah sebagai bahasa pertama sebelum mulai mempelajari bahasa Inggris. Interferensi fonologis yang memengaruhi

kemampuan pelafalan mahasiswa dapat disebabkan oleh perbedaan sistem fonologi antara bahasa pertama dan bahasa Inggris. Fokus penelitian ini adalah mengidentifikasi jenis-jenis penyimpangan fonologis dalam pelafalan bahasa Inggris mahasiswa. Data diperoleh melalui observasi terhadap pelafalan, dokumentasi hasil ujaran, dan analisis bentuk realisasi bunyi pada mahasiswa EFL. Analisis data dilakukan melalui metode reduksi data, klasifikasi kesalahan fonologis, interpretasi, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa aksen dan dialek daerah memiliki pengaruh yang signifikan terhadap kemampuan fonologis mahasiswa. Beberapa bentuk utama kesalahan fonologis yang ditemukan meliputi substitusi bunyi (*sound substitution*), penyederhanaan fonologis (*phonological simplification*), epentesis atau penambahan bunyi (*epenthesis*), penghilangan konsonan akhir (*final consonant deletion*), serta pengaruh ortografi terhadap pelafalan. Penyebab utama kesalahan-kesalahan tersebut adalah interferensi bahasa pertama (L1), khususnya perbedaan struktur dan fonotaktik antara bahasa daerah yang menjadi bahasa ibu mahasiswa dengan sistem fonologi bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa tujuan pembelajaran pelafalan bukanlah menghilangkan aksen, melainkan meningkatkan keterpahaman (*intelligibility*) sehingga seseorang dapat berkomunikasi secara efektif dalam bahasa Inggris.

Kata Kunci: Dialek Daerah, Aksen, Kompetensi Fonologis, EFL (*English as a Foreign Language*), Interferensi Bahasa Pertama, Pelafalan.

1. BACKGROUND

In today's era of globalization and digital economy, mastery of English is no longer just an added value, but a crucial need. As a global *lingua franca*, English is used in various important sectors ranging from education, technology, to international communication. For *English as a Foreign Language* (EFL) students in Indonesia, the achievement of comprehensive English language competencies is the main target in higher education. This competency includes not only mastery of grammar and vocabulary, but also phonological competence, namely the ability to accurately understand and produce the sound system of the target language so that the message can be conveyed effectively.

However, the sociolinguistic reality in Indonesia presents a very complex learning landscape. Indonesia is a multilingual country with more than 700 regional languages spread across various geographical areas. Before learning English, most Indonesian students have mastered their local language as the first language and Indonesian as the second language. This condition of *bilingualism* or even multilingualism indirectly shapes the cognitive and motor architecture of speakers in producing speech sounds. When EFL students attempt to produce English, phonological systems that have crystallized and are used in their daily lives tend to dominate, thus triggering the phenomenon of *language transfer* or linguistic interference.

This phonological interference manifests itself in the form of regional dialects and accents brought by students into EFL classrooms. Theoretically, there is a clear distinction between dialect and accent, although the two often overlap in public conversation. According to Chambers and Trudgill (1998) and Wardhaugh (2010), dialect is a comprehensive variety of language, including differences in syntax (grammar), lexicon (vocabulary), and phonology (pronunciation) that are influenced by geographical boundaries and social stratification. On the other hand, Roach (2009) and Yule (2010) assert that accent exclusively refers to variations in the phonological aspects or the way a language is pronounced. When a student from a particular geographical area (e.g. a region with a predominance of Javanese, Sundanese, Batak, or Malay) speaks English, they may use correct English vocabulary and grammar, but their

sound production characteristics such as intonation, rhythm, and phoneme articulation still reflect the phonological identity of their region of origin.

The impact of the survival of regional dialects and accents is very visible on students' pronunciation skills. The English phonological system has unique characteristics that are often lacked by regional languages in Indonesia. For example, English is rich in fricative phonemes such as /θ/, /ð/, /f/, and /v/, and has complex *final consonant clusters* rules like *analyzed* or *expects*. The absence of these specific phonemes in the regional language sound inventory causes students to make spontaneous phonological adaptations. They tend to replace those foreign sounds with the closest phonemes available in their L1 system (substitution), insert new vowel sounds (epentesis), or even omit sounds that are considered difficult (omissions). If left unchecked, these patterns of error will be fossilized, i.e., the persistence of language errors even though learners have reached a higher level of proficiency.

Although these phonological errors occur naturally as part of the process of second language acquisition, in the context of global communication they can pose serious challenges. Regional accents that are too strong sometimes reduce the level of *intelligibility* of students' speech, which has the potential to trigger miscommunication in cross-cultural interactions. On the other hand, the modern linguistic perspective carried by Jennifer Jenkins (2000) through the concept of *English as a Lingua Franca* (ELF) provides a more inclusive point of view. Jenkins emphasizes that the ultimate goal of learning to pronounce English in the modern era is not to imitate native *speakers* altogether or eliminate local accents entirely, but rather to achieve an optimal level of *intelligibility* where learners can understand each other in the context of international communication. Therefore, accents should not be viewed pejoratively as a linguistic defect, but rather as a legitimate form of social and cultural identity.

In Indonesian higher education institutions, the focus of teaching English so far is still dominated by strengthening grammatical aspects and *reading comprehension*, while the explicit portion of phonetics and phonology teaching is still very minimal. Students rarely get systematic *feedback* on their pronunciation performance. As a result, many students have high academic scores in language theory, but have low phonological competence when speaking.

Several previous studies have discussed a lot about *pronunciation error analysis* in general. However, research that specifically integrates the influence of certain regional dialects in Indonesia with concrete types of phonological deviations such as the process of substitution, simplification, epentesis, and *final consonant deletion* in advanced students has not been explored in depth. There is a *research gap* in mapping how geographic characteristics and local sociolinguistic background directly shape these specific phonological error patterns.

Based on this urgency, this research is crucial to be conducted. This study aims to investigate in depth how regional dialects and accents affect the phonological competence of EFL students' English, as well as identify the linguistic and nonlinguistic factors behind them. The results of this study are expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of sociolinguistics and language teaching methodologies in Indonesia. Practically, this research is expected to be a compass for English educators in designing adaptive pronunciation learning materials, technology-based, and based on students' local phonological characteristics, in order to achieve effective and inclusive English communication.

2. THEORETICAL REVIEW

a. Phonological Competence in EFL Learning

Phonological competence is one of the essential components of communicative competence in second and foreign language learning. It refers to learners' ability to perceive, distinguish, and accurately produce the sound system of the target language, including phonemes, stress patterns, rhythm, intonation, and connected speech features. According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), phonological competence enables speakers to communicate intelligibly and effectively in various communicative contexts.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), phonological competence plays a crucial role because pronunciation directly affects intelligibility and comprehensibility. Learners who possess strong grammatical and lexical knowledge may still experience communication breakdowns if their pronunciation is unclear or heavily influenced by their first language (L1). Roach (2009) argues that effective communication depends not only on what speakers say but also on how accurately they produce speech sounds. Similarly, Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (2010) emphasize that pronunciation instruction should be integrated into language learning because phonological competence contributes significantly to successful oral communication.

Moreover, phonological competence encompasses both segmental and suprasegmental features. Segmental features involve individual vowels and consonants, whereas suprasegmental features include stress, rhythm, intonation, and connected speech. Research indicates that difficulties in mastering these features often stem from learners' linguistic backgrounds and exposure to different phonological systems (Derwing & Munro, 2015).

b. Regional Dialects and Language Variation

Dialect is a systematic variety of language distinguished by differences in pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. Dialects emerge due to geographical separation, social stratification, cultural identity, and historical development. Chambers and Trudgill (1998) define dialect as a language variety characterized by systematic linguistic differences that distinguish one speech community from another. Likewise, Wardhaugh and Fuller (2021) explain that dialects represent legitimate forms of language that reflect the social and cultural identities of their speakers.

Indonesia is one of the most linguistically diverse countries in the world, with more than 700 regional languages spoken across the archipelago. Consequently, Indonesian EFL learners often acquire a regional language as their first language before learning Bahasa Indonesia and English. This multilingual environment creates diverse phonological backgrounds that influence English language acquisition.

Regional dialects contribute significantly to speech production because they shape the phonological patterns learners internalize from childhood. These patterns become deeply embedded in speakers' linguistic systems and continue to influence the acquisition of additional languages. Therefore, learners from different dialectal backgrounds may demonstrate distinct pronunciation patterns even when learning the same target language (Trudgill, 2000).

c. Accent and Pronunciation

Accent refers specifically to variations in pronunciation that indicate a speaker's geographical, social, or linguistic background. Unlike dialects, which encompass grammar and vocabulary, accents are limited to phonological realization (Roach, 2009).

Yule (2010) states that accent reflects how speech sounds are produced and often serves as an indicator of a speaker's regional identity.

In second language acquisition, accents emerge because learners transfer the phonological characteristics of their native language to the target language. Such transfer often results in non-native pronunciation patterns that may differ from standard forms of the language. However, modern linguistic perspectives reject the notion that accents are deficiencies. Instead, accents are viewed as natural manifestations of linguistic diversity and social identity (Jenkins, 2000).

Research has demonstrated that accents influence both speech production and speech perception. Learners tend to interpret unfamiliar sounds through the phonological categories available in their first language, which may result in pronunciation deviations. Consequently, accent-related variations become one of the most visible indicators of language transfer in EFL contexts (Derwing & Munro, 2015).

d. First Language Interference and Cross-Linguistic Transfer

One of the most influential theories in second language acquisition is language transfer theory. Language transfer occurs when learners apply linguistic knowledge from their first language to the target language. Odlin (1989) defines transfer as the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and previously acquired languages.

Phonological transfer is particularly evident in pronunciation learning. When learners encounter sounds that do not exist in their native language, they often substitute those sounds with the closest equivalents available in their L1 phonological inventory. For example, Indonesian learners frequently replace the English dental fricative /θ/ with /t/ because the /θ/ sound is absent from most Indonesian regional languages (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010).

Flege's Speech Learning Model suggests that adult learners perceive foreign-language sounds through the filter of existing phonological categories developed in childhood (Flege, 1995). As a result, unfamiliar sounds are often assimilated into familiar categories, making accurate pronunciation difficult to achieve. This phenomenon explains why pronunciation errors can persist even among advanced learners.

Furthermore, phonotactic differences between languages also contribute to pronunciation difficulties. English allows complex consonant clusters in both initial and final positions, whereas many Indonesian regional languages favor simpler syllable structures. Consequently, learners frequently simplify English words through deletion, insertion, or substitution processes (Major, 2001).

e. Common Phonological Errors among EFL Learners

Phonological errors are systematic deviations from the target language pronunciation norms. These errors often reflect the influence of learners' first language and can be categorized into several types.

1) Sound Substitution

Sound substitution occurs when learners replace unfamiliar target-language sounds with more familiar sounds from their native language. For instance, English fricatives such as /θ/, /ð/, and /v/ are frequently replaced by /t/, /d/, and /f/, respectively. Such substitutions arise because equivalent sounds may not exist in learners' L1 phonological systems (Roach, 2009).

2) Phonological Simplification

Phonological simplification involves reducing complex sound structures to facilitate pronunciation. Learners may omit syllables, simplify consonant clusters, or alter stress patterns. According to Major (2001), simplification strategies are common among second language learners because they reduce articulatory difficulty.

3) Epenthesis

Epenthesis refers to the insertion of additional sounds, usually vowels, into words. Learners often insert vowels to break up consonant clusters that are unfamiliar in their native language. This process reflects the influence of L1 phonotactic constraints and has been widely documented in EFL pronunciation studies (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010).

4) Final Consonant Deletion

Final consonant deletion occurs when learners omit consonants at the ends of words. This phenomenon is particularly common among speakers whose first languages do not permit complex final consonant structures. Such omissions may reduce intelligibility and lead to misunderstandings in communication (Major, 2001).

5) Orthographic Influence

Orthographic influence occurs when learners rely on spelling rather than phonological rules to pronounce words. English spelling inconsistencies often create confusion for EFL learners, resulting in pronunciation forms that reflect written rather than spoken language patterns (Cook, 2016).

f. English as a Lingua Franca and Intelligibility

Traditional pronunciation teaching often emphasized achieving native-like pronunciation. However, the emergence of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) has shifted attention toward intelligibility rather than native-speaker imitation. Jenkins (2000) argues that the primary goal of pronunciation learning should be mutual understanding among speakers from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Intelligibility refers to the extent to which speech is understood by listeners. Derwing and Munro (2015) emphasize that a strong regional accent does not necessarily impede communication if the speaker remains intelligible. Therefore, contemporary pronunciation pedagogy encourages learners to develop clear and understandable speech rather than eliminate their linguistic identities.

From this perspective, regional accents should be viewed as natural representations of cultural and social identity. The objective of pronunciation instruction is not accent eradication but communicative effectiveness. Consequently, English language teaching should focus on helping learners achieve intelligibility while respecting linguistic diversity and multicultural identities.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to investigate the influence of regional dialects and accents on the English phonological competence of EFL students in Indonesia. The participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their diverse first-language (L1) backgrounds, including Malay, Acehnese, Javanese, Batak, and Mandailing, to ensure a representative range of regional linguistic influences. Data were collected through classroom observation, audio recordings of students' pronunciation performances, and documentation of speech transcripts containing English words and sentences with complex phonological features. All recorded speech data were transcribed using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) to facilitate accurate identification of phonological deviations. The collected data were analyzed through a systematic process consisting of data reduction, phonological error

classification, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. The analysis focused on identifying recurring pronunciation errors, including sound substitution, phonological simplification, epenthesis, final consonant deletion, and orthographic influence, as well as examining their relationship to first-language interference and regional accent characteristics. To enhance the credibility and validity of the findings, the results were compared with established theories in phonology, sociolinguistics, and second language acquisition, while ethical considerations were maintained by ensuring participant confidentiality and using all collected data solely for academic purposes.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Dialects and Accent

Dialects often arise due to geographical separation, social class differences, education levels, and contact with other languages, and continue to evolve as society changes. One of the important characteristics of a dialect is its grammar, which refers to the rules that govern sentence structure, verb forms, tenses, and pronouns. For example, expressions like "She don't like it" follow a consistent grammatical pattern in certain dialects, where the adjective "don't" is used for all subjects, in contrast to the standard form of "She doesn't like it." This shows that grammar in dialects is not something random or wrong, but is systematically arranged according to the rules that apply in that dialect.

Dialect is a variation of a language spoken by a specific group of speakers and shaped by geographical, social, cultural, and historical factors. Dialect is a complete and systematic form of language, not just a distinct way of speaking, as it includes variations in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. According to Chambers and Trudgill (1998), dialect is a systematically different form of language in all three aspects, while Wardhaugh (2010) explains that dialect is a linguistic system that can be identified and related to a particular community. From this point of view, dialects should not be considered as a wrong or inferior form of language, but rather as a natural and legitimate variation of language that evolves over time as the language adapts to the needs, experiences, and environment of its speakers.

Pronunciation is also an important characteristic of the dialect and is often the most recognizable aspect. These differences include vowel and consonant sounds, word emphasis patterns, rhythm, and intonation. For example, the word "bath" is pronounced /bɑ:θ/ in British English and /bæθ/ in American English (Jassem & Gibbon, 2009).

Accent is a variation in the way a language is pronounced, which is specifically related to its phonological features. In the study of linguistics, accents are understood as part of a sound system that reflects how speech sounds are produced by speakers based on their geographical, social, and first language backgrounds. In contrast to dialects that include grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, accents focus only on differences in pronunciation or sound realization, without affecting grammatical structure or vocabulary choice.

According to Peter Roach (2009), an accent is a typical way a person pronounces a language that is determined by the sound system used by the speaker. Similarly, George Yule (2010) explains that accents indicate a speaker's geographical or social identity through pronunciation differences, not through differences in grammar or vocabulary. This means that two speakers can use the same grammar and vocabulary, but still sound different because of the accent they have.

Accent is also greatly influenced by the speaker's first language (first language

interference). When learning a second or foreign language, speakers often transfer sound patterns from their native language to the target language. This is one of the main reasons why various accents develop (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010). For example, an English learner from Indonesia might pronounce the word "think" to "tink" because the /θ/ sound is not present in the Indonesian phonological system.

Accents involve several key phonological aspects. The first aspect is segmental features, which are individual speech sounds such as vowels and consonants. For example, the vowel sound in the word "bath" differs between British English (/bɑ:θ/) and American English (/bæθ/). In addition, the sound of the consonant /r/ also varies: in many British English (non-rhotic) accents, the /r/ sound at the end of the word is not pronounced, while in American (rhotic) accents, it is pronounced clearly.

In the context of English as a Lingua Franca, Jennifer Jenkins (2000) emphasizes that the main goal is not to eliminate accents completely, but to achieve intelligibility, which is the ability to speak clearly so that it is easy to understand by the interlocutor who comes from various different language backgrounds.

Factors That Affect Pronunciation

Pronunciation is a complex skill in language learning that is influenced by various interrelated factors. These factors together shape the learner's ability to produce accurate and easy-to-understand speech in a second language or foreign language.

1. Geographical Environment

Geographic environment plays an important role in shaping pronunciation as languages develop differently in different regions. Each region has a distinctive linguistic exposure, which includes local dialects, accents, as well as patterns of interaction used by local communities. Individuals who live in areas with limited exposure to standard or international language variations tend to develop stronger pronunciation patterns influenced by the characteristics of their region. In contrast, individuals living in urban areas or more global environments generally gain exposure to more diverse languages through media, education, and intercultural communication, thus helping them develop pronunciation that is closer to the standard form.

Geographically isolated communities also often maintain traditional speech patterns over a longer period of time. This condition causes the characteristics of regional accents to persist and strengthen over time.

2. First Language Interference (L1 Interference)

The first language is one of the strongest factors that influence pronunciation patterns in the second language. This phenomenon is known as language transfer, which is when learners apply phonological rules from their native language to the target language. When a sound system in a first language does not have a specific phoneme found in the second language, learners tend to replace it with sounds that are closest to their native language, resulting in a foreign accent.

For example, the /θ/ sound in the word "think" is often replaced by the /t/ sound, so it is pronounced as "tink." In addition, the intonation of sentences in English can sound flat because the intonation pattern of Indonesian is transferred into English. Research in the field of second language acquisition has consistently shown that first language interference is one of the main causes of persistent pronunciation errors, even at higher levels of language proficiency (Park et al., 2024).

3. Social and Cultural Factors

The social and cultural environment has a strong influence on the development of pronunciation because language is essentially a social behavior. Learners who actively

participate in conversations, discussions, or language communities tend to develop more natural pronunciation through continuous practice and feedback.

Cultural attitudes towards language also play an important role. In some societies, certain accents are considered more prestigious or more desirable than others. This view can affect learners' motivation in improving their pronunciation skills. Additionally, anxiety and fear of making mistakes in social situations can limit opportunities for speech. As a result, the frequency of practice is reduced and the development of pronunciation skills becomes stunted.

Thus, geographical factors, interference with the first language, and the social and cultural environment are important factors that affect a person's pronunciation ability in learning a second language or foreign language. These factors interact with each other in forming accents and determining the level of intelligibility in communication.

4. Education

Education is a structured factor and has a significant influence on pronunciation skills. The effectiveness of pronunciation learning depends on various aspects, such as teaching methods, teacher competence, learning materials, and practices carried out in the classroom. Modern pronunciation teaching emphasizes a communicative and interactive approach, in which learners actively practice speaking skills, rather than just memorizing the rules of language.

In addition, technology also plays an important role in supporting pronunciation learning through the use of pronunciation applications, speech recognition tools, and various online learning platforms. Research shows that teaching explicit pronunciation accompanied by feedback can significantly improve the intelligibility and fluency of second language learners (Alghazo et al., 2023).

5. The Impact of Dialects and Accents in Communication and Its Solutions

Dialects and accents are natural variations in language that arise due to geographical, social, and cultural factors. The existence of dialects and accents enriches language diversity and reflects the identity of a community group. However, in everyday communication practice, differences in dialect and accent can also pose various challenges.

Differences in pronunciation, vocabulary, and language structure in certain dialects can lead to misunderstandings between speakers who come from different language backgrounds. In addition, a very strong accent can sometimes make it difficult for the interlocutor to understand the message being conveyed, especially in cross-cultural communication situations or when using a second language.

On the other hand, dialects and accents also have a positive impact because they can reinforce a person's social, cultural, and regional identity. Through dialects and accents, individuals can show their origins, community membership, and cultural heritage. Therefore, dialects and accents should not be seen as a poor form of language, but rather as part of linguistic diversity.

In practice, students tend to adjust their English pronunciation based on the sound system of their mother tongue. This phenomenon occurs naturally because the phonological system of the first language has been firmly embedded and used continuously in everyday communication. As a result, English sounds that are not present in the student's first language are often replaced with sounds that are more

familiar or easier to pronounce.

					letter /t/ and change the fricative
NO	Target Words	Standar Transcription (IPA)	Student Sound Realization	Types of Phonological Errors	Description & Causative Factors (L1 Interference)
	Often	/ˈɒf.ən/	[ˈɒp.ən]	Substitusi Bunyi (Sound Substitution)	Failure to recognize the silent
	Environment	/ɪnˈvaɪ.rən.mənt/	[ɪnviˈrɒt.mən]	Penyederhanaan (Simplification)	nasal-plosive cluster and syllable trimming to simplify articulation load on long words
	Like	/laɪk/	[la-ik]	Pengaruh Ortografi (Spelling Influence)	The separation of the diphthongs /aɪ/ into two pure vowels that stand alone due to reliance on

					written spelling
	Europe	/ˈjʊə.rəp/	[eˈjʊə.rə p]	Epentesis (<i>Sound Insertion</i>)	The insertion of vowels [e] at the beginning of words (onset) to align the phonotactic structure of the learner's mother language
	Analyz ed	/ˈæ.n.əl.aɪ zd/	[ˈæ.n.əl.a is]	Penghilan Konsonan Akhir (<i>Final Consonant Deletion</i>)	Occur ance of devotionaliz ation (/z/→ w./s/) and total elimination of the final cluster /d/ due to the phonotactic limitation of L1.

Based on the findings of this study, pronunciation errors made by EFL (*English as a Foreign Language*) students mainly occur due to differences between the phonological system of their regional language as a first language (L1) and English as a foreign language. A summary of the classification data of the fault findings can be seen in the table below:

The word "often" is sometimes pronounced as "open." This error indicates a sound substitution process, especially in the consonant /f/ that is not produced correctly or replaced by another sound. This type of error reflects the influence of the phonological system of the regional language that students have.

In the word "environment," pronouncements such as "envirotmen" or "enviromen" are found. This phenomenon shows the existence of a phonological simplification process, which is when certain phonemes are eliminated or reduced to make pronunciation easier. The complexity of the word structure encourages students to simplify their phonological forms.

Similarly, the word "like" is pronounced as "la-ik," indicating the presence of an orthographic or spelling influence on pronunciation. Students tend to rely on spell-based pronunciation rather than applying the actual phonological rules of English.

In the word "Europe," the pronunciation of "eyurop" indicates the insertion of vowel sounds at the beginning of the word. This process is known as epenthesis, which is the addition of certain sounds to make the word easier to pronounce according to the phonological pattern of the student's first language.

Meanwhile, the word "analyzed" is often pronounced as "analys," in which the sound of the final consonant is omitted. This shows a tendency to eliminate final consonant deletion, which is generally influenced by phonotactic constraints in students' first language.

Overall, the pronunciation errors found in this study can be categorized into several types, namely sound substitution, sound omission, sound insertion, and phonological simplification. These patterns of errors clearly show the existence of first language interference in the pronunciation of English by EFL students.

In addition to individual phoneme differences, the findings indicate that these pronunciation errors are heavily governed by the phonotactic constraints of the students' native languages. In many Indonesian regional languages, complex final consonant clusters and specific fricative sounds (such as /θ/ and /ð/) do not exist. Consequently, students naturally apply their L1 phonological rules to ease the articulation load when producing English words, leading to persistent substitution and simplification processes.

5. KESIMPULAN DAN SARAN

This study concludes that regional dialects and accents significantly influence the phonological competence of Indonesian EFL students, primarily through first language (L1) interference. The findings reveal that differences between the phonological and phonotactic systems of students' native regional languages and English lead to recurring pronunciation errors, including sound substitution, phonological simplification, epenthesis, final consonant deletion, and orthographic influence. These errors occur because learners tend to transfer familiar sound patterns and articulation habits from their first language when producing English speech. The study also demonstrates that pronunciation difficulties are not merely individual learning problems but are closely related to the multilingual and multicultural linguistic environment in which Indonesian learners acquire English. Nevertheless, regional accents should not be regarded as linguistic deficiencies; rather, they represent legitimate markers of cultural and social identity. In line with the perspective of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), the ultimate goal of pronunciation instruction should be to enhance intelligibility and communicative effectiveness rather than to achieve native-like pronunciation. Therefore, English language teaching in higher education should incorporate more systematic phonetics and pronunciation training, provide continuous corrective feedback, and utilize technology-assisted learning tools to help students develop clearer and more comprehensible English speech while preserving their linguistic identity.

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