

AN ANALYSIS OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS' ABILITY IN LISTENING TO THE MINIMAL PAIRS AT ENGLISH DEPARTMENT OF BUNG HATTA UNIVERSITY

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesian government offers English as one of subject in educational curriculum for almost every level of education, from junior high school to university [1]. Listening is one of four important skills of English which comes to be the first skill that we get before understanding the language. It plays an important role in learning English as a second or foreign language [2]. Having a good listening will support our communication using English. It will bring effectiveness and quality in communication [3].

The difference pronunciation of vowels and consonants in Indonesian and English cause difficulties for the students in learning English. The common error which is found by the researchers is the difficulties to pronounce the words which have similar in sounds [4]. The students faced problems to pronounce sounds like /i:/ as in "seat" and /i/ in "sit" [5]. In some cases, some of Indonesians do not realize that they have made mistakes in pronouncing Indonesia words such as "pas" with "vas", "parfum" becomes "farpum" or even "parpum".

In English, pair of words which have similar in sound with distinct meaning are called minimal pair. If students do not clearly understand what they listen in language classroom, it will be difficult for them to learn other communicative skills like speaking, reading and writing [6].

Based the explanation above, the researcher was interested to find out the students' ability in listening to minimal pairs by conducting a research entitled "An Analysis of The Second Year Students' Ability in Listening to the Minimal Pairs at

English Department of Bung Hatta University".

METHOD

To do this research, the researcher used descriptive method. The population of this research was 37 students of English Department of Bung Hatta University. The researcher used simple random sampling technique in selecting the sample. The total numbers of samples of this research were 19 students. The researcher used a listening test in form of checkbox as the research instrument. The researcher used content validity, and the researcher used split half method to know the reliability of the instrument. The data were collected through google form and analyzed by using the ability criteria used at Bung Hatta University.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The result of this research showed that the students' had low ability in listening to the minimal pairs. It was proved by the fact that 57.89% students had low ability in listening to the minimal pairs.

Table 1. The Students' Ability in Listening to the Minimal Pairs.

Ability	Number of Students	Percentage
Very Good	0	0%
Good	2	10,53%
Moderate	6	31,58%
Low	11	57.89%
Total	19	100%

In line with the finding above, the students also had low ability in identifying the vowels

sound in minimal pairs. It was proved by the percentage of students in identifying vowels sound was 63.16% which was categorized as low ability.

Table 2. The Students' Ability in Identifying Vowels Sound in Minimal Pairs.

Ability	Number of Students	Percentage
Very Good	1	5.26%
Good	1	5.26%
Moderate	5	26.32%
Low	12	63.16%
Total	19	100%

On the other hand, the students had very good ability in identifying consonants sound in minimal pairs. It was supported by the fact that 42.10% students had very good ability.

Table 3. The Students' Ability in Identifying Consonants Sound in Minimal Pairs.

Ability	Number of Students	Percentage
Very Good	8	42.10%
Good	4	21.05%
Moderate	2	10.53%
Low	5	26.32%
Total	19	100%

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSIONS

The finding of this research leads to the conclusion that the second year students of English Department of Bung Hatta University had low ability in listening to minimal pairs. Dealing with the conclusion, for the lecturers, they are suggested to give more exercises about listening to several words which have similar in sounds. For the students, they are suggested to improve their listening and pronunciation ability since there are words which have similar in sound but different in meaning. For getting more improvement, they are suggested to practice their listening more often to increase and to enrich their knowledge in minimal pairs.

The further researchers are suggested to find out the students' ability to pronounce minimal pairs.

Keywords: Listening, Minimal Pairs, Vowels Sound, Consonants Sounds

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