

THE ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' ERRORS IN STRESS PLACEMENT IN ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

Haryani¹, Jos E. Ohoiwutun², Hastini³

Abstract

The objective of this research was to identify and to analyze the errors made by grade XI students of SMA Negeri 5 Palu in locating stress (stress placement) in English pronunciation and also to find out why the errors occurred. The research subject was XI IPA III which consisted of 29 students selected by using purposive sampling technique. The techniques of data collection were test, questionnaire and interview. In analyzing the data, the researcher used Simple Statistics Analysis. From the result of test, the researcher found that the students made an overgeneralization error which categorized as inter-lingual (mother tongue factors) and intra-lingual (target/native language) errors. The error occurred because of the effect of the students' mother tongue language and their understanding about target language was poor. The total percentage of errors both from oral test and written test are 74.75% which categorized as high error. It means that the ability of the eleventh grade students of SMA Negeri 5 Palu in locating stress in English words specifically in nouns and verbs was poor.

Keywords: Error Analysis, Stress Placement, English Pronunciation.

INTRODUCTION

In learning English, we should master both the language skills and language components. Language skill consists of two divisions that are receptive skill and productive skill. Receptive skill consists of listening and reading skill, while productive skill consists of speaking and writing skill. There are three Language components which support the language skill that are pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar.

Speaking skill as one of productive skill is really important to make communication with other people in order to convey opinions or to ask about something or to make an appointment and many more. We realize that almost every time speaking skill is used to communicate with other people. So, it is important for us to master speaking skill.

In order to master speaking skill, there are many difficulties will faced by the learners. One of the difficulties is English has certain ways to be pronounced. The spelling

of a word does not determine the way the word is pronounced. It differs from Bahasa Indonesia in which a word is pronounced as it is spelled. For example like the word *archive* in English it pronounces /a:kaiv/ while in Bahasa Indonesia the word *archive* will pronounce as /erciv/. Not only that, in English, each letter of a word can be pronounced two or more sounds (i.e letter *I* will be pronounced as [ai]). It becomes a confusing item for learners of English. That is why in order to master speaking skill, the teaching of pronunciation needs to be involved in teaching English. Regarding to this idea, Fraser (2000) states that English speakers that make grammar errors or have a lack of vocabulary are still intelligible and understood by the listeners rather than English speakers that make pronunciation errors.

As we know that pronunciation is one of three components of language that support the language skills. Teaching English pronunciation has a goal to create intelligibility in learners' speech when they are speaking. Intelligibility is needed when someone speaks a certain language. His/her speaking must be understandable so the listener will understand toward what he/she is talking about. At the time, when the speaker has a good pronunciation in his/her speaking, the communication is built between the speaker and the listener.

Pronunciation consists of segmental and suprasegmental features. Segmental refers to consonant and vowel sounds and then suprasegmental refers to stress and intonation. Segmental features are often taught in teaching pronunciation while suprasegmental features are rarely or even not at all. Stress as one of suprasegmental features is an essential part that needs to be taught in teaching pronunciation because in English, pronouncing a word with appropriate stress is needed in speaking. Not only that, stress also plays an important role in the production of spoken language especially in English. According to Roach (2009) in speaking English, incorrect stress placement is a major cause of intelligibility problems for foreign learners (for example Indonesians), and therefore stress placement become a subject that needs to be treated very seriously.

Regarding to stress placement, stress is the one of the main tools used in English to convey word and sentence meaning (Fraser, 2001). If the English speakers put the stress in the wrong syllable, then the word will not be understood by the listener, even misinterpreting. This statement shows us how important stress in giving intelligibility in English. But, in the reality there are many learners who have studied English that do not know about stress and also the function of it in giving intelligibility, to convey the word meaning and class of word in speaking so they only focus on how to pronounce the word correctly without used a correct stress placement.

The researcher also found the same problem with students when she has PPLT at Senior High School in Parigi. In English subject, especially in speaking skill when the teacher gave an instruction to pronounce some words or read some sentences in a text, the students only try to pronounce the word same as what the teacher said. In other words we can conclude that the students only try to pronounce the word correctly without care about the word stress. As the result, because the students error in locating stress, misunderstanding will appear between the students as the speaker and the teacher as the listener. But, sometimes the teacher did not aware about students' errors. Then, the students made their errors time after time.

Relating with the statement above, as a matter of fact, Jesry (2005) showed that students need to know that placing the stress correctly when they are speaking instantly and automatically improves their pronunciation, enhances listeners' comprehension and facilitates communication. Jesry (2005) added that misplaced stress, in contrast, impedes comprehension and makes speech more difficult to understand. Therefore, non-native speakers who speak English to native speakers without using word stress encounter at least two problems. First, they find it difficult to understand native speakers, especially those speaking fast. And second, the native-speakers may find it difficult to understand them. This happens very often because non-native speakers mispronounce some of the individual sounds in words.

At the other times, words are not easily recognized because the speaker has stressed the wrong part of the word. To give an example of word stress and its significances, many people have a problem hearing the difference between the "forty" and "fourteen" if stress is not placed properly. Hence, it is important for students to learn how a word is stressed at the same time as they learn how to pronounce it. Thus, it is clear that stress importance appears in both: its grammatical function in speech; and its emphatic role in communication.

Looking at this reality, the researcher was interested to analyze the students' errors in locating stress (stress placement) in English pronunciation specifically in verbs and nouns at the eleventh grade of SMA Negeri 5 Palu.

METHODOLOGY

The researcher employed Descriptive research method. Hadi and Haryono (1998) stated that descriptive method is used to get information about situation of indication directed to determine the natural of situation. This research is used to find out the errors made by the grade XI student(s) of SMA Negeri 5 Palu in locating stress.

The researcher chose 29 out of 233 students of the eleventh grade of SMA Negeri 5 Palu as the subject of the research by using purposive sampling technique. She applied that sampling technique because it is appropriate to the design of the research. Furthermore, the teacher of English at SMA Negeri 5 Palu recommended to conducting the research in XI IPA III because they have a basic knowledge about English Pronunciation.

In conducting the research, the researcher used three kinds of instruments. They were tests, questionnaire and interview. The researcher used test as the main instruments of this research. Test was used to measure the knowledge of students. The researcher used test to find out the students' errors in locating stress and the percentage of it. The test were oral test and written test. The oral test consisted 10 items, which every item contains one word (noun or verb) that the students have to pronounce with a correct pronunciation and correct stress placement. The researcher used cell phone to record the students answer in oral test. To compute the students score in oral test, the researcher focused in four items. The first item, if the student have a correct pronunciation and correct stress placement, he/she get 2 points. The second item, if the student has a correct pronunciation but he/she put the stress at incorrect place, then he/she will get 1 point. The third item, if the student has an incorrect pronunciation but he/she put the stress in a correct place, then he/she will get 1 point. The fourth item is if the student has an incorrect pronunciation and incorrect stress placement, he/she will get 0 point.

For example, the first word is *present*, if a student pronounces the word and placing the stress correctly he/she got 2 point while if he/she pronounce the word correctly, but have an incorrect stress placement then he/she got 1 point, and so on. In other words, if a student got 10 point this is called raw score. If the researcher divided the raw score with the maximum score and timed 100 ($10/20 \times 100$) the students got 50 as a standard score.

The written test consisted 5 items, which every item contains one sentence which have an underlined words and the students have to put a stress mark “ ’ ” in this word. For example, “Send this letter to my address”. So it will be like this “Send this letter to my ádress” or “Send this letter to my addréss”. But in this condition, the students have to put the stress mark in a correct place. They have to be thorough and careful in locating the stress mark in the word. Because the word *address* have two word categories, as a noun (ádress) and as a verb (addréss). To compute the students score in written test, the researcher focused in two items. The first item is if the student put the stress mark in correct place, he/she will get 1 point. The second item, if the student put the stress mark in incorrect place, he/she will get 0 point.

For example, the sentence “Send this letter to my address”. The word address in this sentence categorized as a noun. So the correct answer is “Send this letter to my address”. If a student put the stress mark at the first syllable address so he/she got 1 point, and if the students put the stress mark at the second syllable then the students got 0 point. In other words, if a student got 2 point this is called raw score. If the researcher divided the raw score with the maximum score and times 100 ($\frac{2}{5} \times 100$) the students got 40 as a standard score.

The second instrument was questionnaire. The researcher used the questionnaire to get support information to the data. It consisted of seven (7) questions that related to English Stress Placement. The result of questionnaire was analyzed by using the formula proposed by Sutomo (1985:123) as follow:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100 \%$$

Where:

P = percentage
F = frequency
N = number of students

FINDINGS

The researcher had given oral test to find out the students' error in locating stress in English pronunciation. The oral test consisted 10 items, which every item contains one word (noun or verb) that the students have to pronounce with a correct pronunciation and correct stress placement. The researcher used cell phone to record the students answer in oral test.

Furthermore, the researcher gave written test in order to find out the students' errors. The written test consisted 5 items, which every item contains one sentence which have an underlined words and the students have to put a stress mark “ ’ ” in this word.

Table 1
The Students' Test Score

NO	Initials	Standard Scores	
		Oral Test	Written Test
1	ABG	5	20
2	AHP	5	80
3	ADS	20	60
4	AMB	50	40
5	DRA	25	20
6	EKS	10	40
7	WWK	25	40
8	MGW	25	20
9	RKA	5	20
10	RHS	20	60
11	LTY	20	60
12	MRRD	5	40
13	MHN	20	20
14	RDA	35	20
15	EVW	20	40
16	YAZ	25	40
17	KWP	10	60
18	TWS	25	60
19	RJR	20	40
20	AAS	10	20
21	IFAP	35	40
22	SDR	40	60
23	MAF	25	40
24	ZFK	20	60
25	MMS	5	40
26	UVA	15	60
27	MIU	25	40
28	OLT	60	40
29	YLD	20	40
Total		625	1220

In order to find out the total percentage of students' error in locating stress, the researcher used the following formula as proposed by Sudjana (2004):

$$P = \frac{f}{t} \times 100\%$$

$$P = \frac{542}{725} \times 100\%$$

$$P = 74.75\%$$

So, the percentage of the students' errors was 74.75%. After the researcher got the percentage of students' errors, she would like to classify the percentage of errors. It would be classified based on the criteria proposed by Depdikbud (1994) as follows:

Table 2
Classification of Errors Percentage

No	Percentage	Classification
1	66 – 100 %	High error
2	36 – 65 %	Moderate error
3	0 – 35 %	Low error

If we look at the table above, it showed that the students' errors in locating stress in English words categorized as High error. High error means the ability of the students in locating stress in English words specifically in noun and verb was poor

After that, the researcher gave questionnaires which consisted of 7 (seven) items to the students. It was used by the researcher to get students' opinions or comments about teaching and learning process which they had done in the class. The results of the questionnaire were used by the researcher as supporting data to support the result of the test. This instrument also used to know the reasons why the error occurred. For the last step, the researcher interviewed both the teacher and the students in order to get additional information about the reasons why the error occurred.

DISCUSSION

Looking at the result of the test, questionnaire and interview, there were many factors affected to the students in making errors in locating stress in English words. Factor like teacher, students, and the material influenced the students' ability in locating stress in English words. The teacher is considered to be the most important factor. First of all, his or her personality matters a lot. The students who have no books depend much on their teacher to transfer their knowledge to them. So, if the teacher does not explain about Stress Placement with some examples and exercises, they will face problems especially how to locate the stress in English words. The second factor is the students themselves. The students were relied too much on the teacher to give them information about English. So, if the teacher did not explain about Stress Placement at the end the students will never know about how important stress placement in English. The third factor is material. Material is

also important since the students and teacher use it in teaching learning activity. The teacher should be given more materials to help the students to understand the topic.

The result of students' errors in locating stress in English words both in oral test and written test showed that they made one kind of error in locating stress in English word that is Overgeneralization. Overgeneralization errors arise when the students apply a structure that they already experience in another new situation. There were 29(100%) students who made this error both in oral test and also written test. While the percentage of the total errors both from oral test and written test was 74.75%. This is categorized as High error. High error means the ability of the students in locating stress in English words specifically in noun and verb was poor. The researcher find out that both in oral test and written test, all the students just try to pronounce the word correctly and did not realize that they locating the stress in wrong place.

In line with the errors the students did, the researcher indicates that the most difficult problem of the students is how to differentiate nouns and verbs in a sentence. The students did not know well which one noun and which one verb. This error named as *overgeneralization*. The number of this error produced is 74.75%. This statement is highly supported by Ashour (2010), he stated that there are many learners made overgeneralization errors, because he/she is not able to distinguish some words with have two word categories, that is as a noun and as a verb. After conducting this research, the researcher found out why the students made errors in locating stress in English words. The reasons are as follows:

- a. The differences between the language systems both of English and Bahasa Indonesia (mother tongue and second/native language).
- b. The learners do not take care with stressing the words correctly because they do not know how important it is in English.
- c. English stress placement varies according to grammatical categories while Indonesian not. So, if the learners do not able to distinguish between various word classes: noun, verb, adjective, adverb it will causes they make errors.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

From the oral test and written test, the researcher found out on type of error were made by the students of SMA Negeri 5 Palu in locating stress in English words that is *Overgeneralization*. This error occurred both from mother tongue influence (inter-lingual errors) and target language causes (intra-lingual errors). The inter-lingual errors are caused

by the native language or mother tongue. The students thought the way to pronounce an English word is as same as the way to pronounce their mother tongue language. While intra-lingual errors are caused by the target language itself. There were 29(100%) students who made this error both in oral test and also written test. While the percentage of the total errors both from oral test and written test was 74.75%. This is categorized as High error. High error means the ability of the students in locating stress in English words specifically in noun and verb was poor. The researcher find out that both in oral test and written test, all the students just try to pronounce the word correctly and did not realize that they locating the stress in wrong place.

Some suggestions need to be addressed to the students and the teacher in order to make a better improvement in the future. Firstly, students should study harder. Even though their teacher did not explain about English Stress Placement, they have to find it by their self. The students oral test and written test result is poor, they still need to learn more about English Stress Placement. Teacher should give more explanation about Stress Placement related to Pronunciation in English lesson. They also should motivate, stimulate and give more chances to the students in teaching learning process in order to make the students get significant improvement in mastering English Stress Placement.

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