



Strategies of Teaching Pronunciation to Students with a Regional First Language Context: Using Interview

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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate both the challenges and strategies involved in teaching pronunciation to students whose first language is a regional language. The research focused specifically on the instructional roles of teachers, deliberately excluding other groups, such as native speakers or experienced educators, to maintain a consistent lens on classroom practices. The objective was to explore how teachers address the complexities of teaching pronunciation in a context where regional linguistic influences play a significant role in shaping students' learning experiences. The study employed a descriptive qualitative research design, gathering in- depth data from five master's students who were teaching at senior high schools in rural regions, including Cirebon, Java, Medan, and Banjarmasin. Data collection methods included interviews and observations, providing rich, firsthand insights into the teachers' experiences and methods. The qualitative nature of the research allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the unique challenges faced by these educators, as well as the strategies they developed to overcome them. Data were analyzed to identify recurring themes related to pronunciation instruction and to understand the contextual factors affecting teaching effectiveness. The findings revealed a range of challenges, including difficulties with intonation, pronunciation accuracy, fostering phonological awareness, and managing the impact of cultural influences on pronunciation learning. Teachers employed various effective strategies to address these issues, such as customizing lessons to students' linguistic backgrounds and proficiency levels, incorporating regional cultural elements into pronunciation exercises, and utilizing visual aids to tackle specific issues like vowel articulation and intonation patterns. The study concludes that adopting a more personalized and culturally sensitive approach in pronunciation instruction significantly enhances students' ability to learn and improve their pronunciation skills. These insights offer practical recommendations for educators working with students who speak regional languages, suggesting that tailored and culturally aware teaching practices can lead to better learning outcomes.

Keywords: Pronunciation; Speaking; Challenges; Strategies Teaching Pronunciation

Introduction

A. Background of The Study

The major concern for pronunciation specialists was to single out the features of natural speech which had the most contribution in intelligibility. According to Ketabi & Saeb (2015) we live in a globalized

world where English is no longer considered as a possession of its native speakers, but rather as a common tool for communication among many nations. Pronunciation as the primary component in oral communication is of great importance in this regard.

Pronunciation, as the primary driver of oral communication, assumes a role of paramount importance in this evolving linguistic landscape (Ketabi & Saeb, 2015). The effective exchange of ideas, the articulation of thoughts, and the expression of emotions are all intricately tied to the clarity and accuracy of pronunciation. In the interconnected global society, characterized by diverse languages and cultures, the ability to convey one's message unambiguously becomes indispensable. Pronunciation becomes the linchpin that enables individuals from various linguistic backgrounds to engage in meaningful dialogue, fostering cross-cultural understanding and cooperation.

Yates & Zielinski (2009) stated that the significance of the English language in today's globalized world cannot be overstated. English has transcended its status as a mere language and has become a universal and dominant means of communication. Billions of people across the globe utilize it as either their first or second language for verbal and written interactions. This linguistic ubiquity extends to virtually every facet of society, spanning areas such as policy, marketing, management, tourism, medicine, and countless others. In essence, English serves as the common thread that weaves together diverse fields of knowledge and sectors of human endeavor.

Within this expansive linguistic landscape, achieving proficiency in English takes on a multifaceted character. It is no longer sufficient to merely grasp the nuances of language grammar or to develop skills in speaking and listening. The ability to pronounce English words and phrases accurately, akin to native speakers, holds an exceptional level of importance. The clarity and precision of pronunciation can significantly influence one's communicative effectiveness, transcending the boundaries of language proficiency (Aliaga, 2007).

In essence, the pursuit of intelligible pronunciation is not merely an academic endeavor; it is a practical necessity. It is a vital skill in our ever-expanding global discourse, where effective communication paves the way for the exchange of knowledge, ideas, and experiences on an unprecedented scale. Pronunciation, therefore, emerges as a focal point in the evolution of language and communication, reflecting its profound significance in navigating the intricate dynamics of our interconnected, multilingual world.

Teaching is undoubtedly one of the most challenging and rewarding professions in the world, with educators playing a pivotal role in shaping the future of their students. Yet, being a foreign language teacher presents a unique set of challenges that set it apart from other subjects. Among the many complexities involved in teaching a foreign language, one of the most formidable hurdles lies in the realm of pronunciation, a skill that not all learners possess naturally. This challenge is exacerbated by the fact that learners often bring their own accents to the learning process, making it a formidable task to alter their intonation, stress, and overall pronunciation.

Djurayeva (2021) stated that the world of language education is not without its solutions. The vast expanse of the internet has brought forth a multitude of resources, including websites and platforms offering a plethora of techniques and methods to hone linguistic skills, pronunciation included. In the subsequent sections, a detailed exploration of interactive, instructional, and engaging activities, methods, and techniques, all carefully curated to guide both educators and learners through the labyrinth of pronunciation intricacies. These step-by-step approaches aim to facilitate the development of impeccable pronunciation, thereby steering learners away from potential pitfalls and enabling them to navigate the linguistic landscape with confidence and clarity.

This study focuses on several key areas to ensure a detailed and targeted analysis. It specifically

examines teachers as instructors, intentionally excluding other categories of language educators, such as experienced teachers or native speakers, to maintain a consistent instructional approach. The research is centered on teaching pronunciation and its direct impact on students' pronunciation learning, highlighting the importance of this skill in language acquisition. The study is also focused on the specific strategies teachers use to teach pronunciation, rather than examining a broader array of teaching methods. By employing a case study methodology, the research provides an in-depth exploration of the specific context, although this approach does limit the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, while the study explores factors influencing pronunciation learning, it is confined to those directly related to the regional first language context. This ensures that the research remains concentrated on understanding and addressing the unique challenges faced by students with regional first languages (Yin, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2017).

Undoubtedly, the process of teaching both segmental and suprasegmental elements of pronunciation is a notably challenging endeavor. Yadgarova (2023) stated that it demands a comprehensive understanding of the intricacies that underlie these linguistic facets. Despite the complexity associated with this task, educators bear the critical responsibility of imparting to their pupils the art of proper pronunciation, recognizing it as a fundamental pillar for fostering clear and effective oral communication. In the realm of language instruction, there exists a plethora of challenges tied to pronunciation. These challenges are particularly pronounced when teaching English as a foreign language. Learners embarking on the journey of mastering English often confront an array of linguistic disparities, ranging from unfamiliar sounds to unique intonation patterns. It is within this multifaceted landscape that the quest for achieving an understandable pronunciation of English takes root.

According to Varasin (2007) the path toward achieving comprehensible English pronunciation entails substantial dedication and extensive training. Language learners must navigate these obstacles with determination and diligence, seeking guidance from educators and resources that facilitate the acquisition of the nuanced aspects of pronunciation. In this context, the role of the teacher as a guide and mentor is paramount, as they orchestrate the learning process and provide the necessary tools and knowledge for their students to develop effective communication skills.

The journey towards clear and productive oral communication in English, though rife with challenges, is an attainable goal. It underscores the importance of continuous training and dedicated instruction, emphasizing that with persistent effort and guidance, learners can indeed surmount the complexities of pronunciation, ultimately paving the way for successful language acquisition and effective verbal exchanges.

According to Akande (2005) it was underscored that the pronunciation errors made by English learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds are not random or accidental occurrences. Instead, these errors exhibit a systematic and patterned nature. This observation leads to the conclusion that learners whose native languages differ from English encounter a common challenge: the substitution of sounds. In essence, when attempting to pronounce English words or phrases, individuals hailing from various linguistic backgrounds tend to replace sounds that do not exist in their native languages with sounds that are akin in terms of their place of articulation.

This phenomenon reflects the intricate interplay between the phonetic systems of different languages and the challenges it presents in the process of learning and articulating sounds in a non-native language like English. According to Hassan (2014) as learners grapple with the absence of certain phonemes in their mother tongues, they instinctively seek alternative sounds that they are familiar with, leading to the systematic patterns of substitutions that have been observed. Such substitutions can manifest in various linguistic contexts and can impact the overall intelligibility of the learners' speech.

Understanding the systematic nature of these pronunciation errors is a fundamental step in addressing and remedying them. By recognizing the patterns and tendencies in learners' pronunciation, educators and

language professionals can develop targeted strategies and interventions to facilitate more accurate and effective pronunciation, thereby enhancing the overall quality of oral communication in English for individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds.

This study adds to the existing body of knowledge on pronunciation teaching, particularly in contexts where students' first language is a regional language. It offers insights into the challenges teachers face and the strategies they adopt, contributing to the understanding of pronunciation learning in multilingual settings.

A. Research Design

This research adopted a descriptive qualitative approach to provide a detailed and nuanced understanding of students' perceptions. Qualitative research is particularly effective for exploring individuals' experiences and perspectives in depth (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). As Aspers and Corte (2017) note, qualitative evaluation involves a cyclical process where researchers develop deeper insights by closely engaging with the phenomena under study. Malik (2013) emphasizes the importance of including diverse sources to avoid limitations and enhance the richness of the findings. By choosing a descriptive qualitative design, the researcher aimed to capture and describe the precise events and observations reported by participants, aligning with Lambert and Lambert's (2012) explanation of this approach's goal to offer a comprehensive account of observed experiences.

This research used the qualitative approach. Qualitative research is suitable for this study because the researcher got some answers and information based on an individual's experience. Creswell and Creswell (2018) say that the qualitative approach is a way of looking into people's perspectives on phenomena that come in societal structure or nature. Because the goal of this study was to investigate students' perceptions about the difference of their motivation Aspers and Corte (2017) add that "qualitative evaluation is a repeating cycle in which mainstream investigators gain a better understanding or the wonder under consideration by creating new big differences as a result of getting closer to it." Additionally, Malik (2013) says that scientists should be careful not to limit themselves to witnesses who speak to a single group, and essential sources should be put into consideration. The researcher's investigation acquired the detailed and in-depth information from the participants through applying this method. Therefore, this research used the descriptive qualitative approach as a research design. Lambert and Lambert (2012) explain that the goal of descriptive qualitative research is to explain the precise events that a person or group has observed.

B. Research Setting & Participants

The research focused on five master's students who have been teaching at senior high schools in various rural areas, including Cirebon, Java, Medan, and Banjarmasin. These students were selected specifically for their experience working with learners whose first language is a regional dialect, ensuring they met the study's selection criteria. Their diverse backgrounds provided a rich source of data for understanding how teaching strategies are adapted to different linguistic contexts.

Demography Participants

Name	Age	Educational Background	Place of Teaching	Experience of Teaching
P1	28	Master Student	Java	4 years
P2	44	Master Student	Cirebon	14 years
P3	32	Master Student	Java	6 years
P4	27	Master Student	Medan	2 years
P5	29	Master Student	Banjarmasin	1,5 years

Interviews were conducted using Zoom calls, allowing the researcher, based in Yogyakarta, to connect with participants located in their hometowns. This approach was particularly effective in overcoming geographical distances, making it possible for the researcher to gather valuable insights into the participants' experiences and teaching strategies. By using this method, the researcher ensured that each participant could comfortably join the interview from their familiar surroundings.

Each participant offered a unique perspective shaped by their teaching experiences and backgrounds. P1, a 28-year-old with 4 years of experience in Java, discussed how regional dialects impact English pronunciation and shared strategies to address these challenges. P2, a 44-year-old with 14 years of teaching in Cirebon, highlighted how teaching methods have evolved over time to meet diverse student needs. P3, a 32-year-old with 6 years of experience in Java, talked about the increasing use of technology in rural classrooms. P4, a 27-year-old with 2 years of experience in Medan, shared ideas on engaging students who are new to English, especially in areas where local dialects are prevalent. P5, a 29-year-old with 1.5 years of experience in Banjarmasin, emphasized the challenges newer teachers face in rural settings and the importance of building trust with students who speak regional dialects. Together, their insights provided a deeper understanding of how teaching strategies are adapted to different linguistic contexts.

C. Research Instruments

The researcher used several tools throughout the study. The main tool was a flexible interview guide, crafted based on past research and key theories in the field. This guide featured open-ended questions that encouraged participants to share their stories and experiences in their own words. This approach allowed for meaningful conversations, where participants could freely express their thoughts and feelings. The flexibility of the interview format helped to create an open environment, where the dialogue could flow naturally while still keeping the focus on the study's main goals. This method aligns with Creswell and Poth's (2018) view that semi-structured interviews are ideal for exploring complex issues in depth.

The researcher also used audio recording devices during the interviews to capture every detail of the conversation. Recording the sessions was crucial, as it allowed the researcher to revisit the conversations multiple times to ensure no detail was missed. To make sure everyone felt comfortable, participants were asked for their consent to record the interviews, and their identities were protected by using pseudonyms. After the interviews, the recordings were transcribed into text, and participants were given a chance to review the transcripts to confirm that their words were accurately captured. This process, known as "member checking," helped ensure the data was trustworthy and authentic, as suggested by Birt and Scott (2016).

To analyze the data, the researcher used a method called thematic analysis. This involved looking for patterns and themes within the conversations, helping to uncover deeper insights into how teaching strategies are adapted to different linguistic contexts. Thematic analysis provided a structured way to interpret the data, revealing both common and unique insights across the interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Nowell et al., 2017). By using these tools, the researcher could gather rich, meaningful information that truly reflected the participants' experiences, making the findings both reliable and insightful.

D. Data Collection Method

During the interview process, the researcher used semi-structured interviews to gather rich, detailed data and address the research goals. This approach was key for crafting questions that could deeply explore the topic at hand. As Creswell and Poth (2018) highlighted, semi-structured interviews were especially useful for gaining nuanced insights from participants, enabling researchers to delve into their personal experiences, perspectives, and beliefs. This method also supported Cohen, Manion, and Morrison's (2018) view that semi-structured interviews offered the flexibility needed to thoroughly understand complex issues by allowing for adaptive and open-ended questioning.

The data collection took place over the course of one month in July 2024, during the researcher's fourth semester. This period allowed the researcher to systematically collect and analyze data from each participant, leading to a comprehensive understanding of the teaching strategies employed by master's students in rural high schools. The study's timeline and method of communication were essential in capturing the nuances of teaching English in diverse linguistic environments.

The flexibility of the open-ended format not only helped clarify the research topic but also allowed both the interviewer and participants to explore certain subjects in greater depth. This approach provided the opportunity to uncover nuanced insights that might not have emerged in more structured formats. Conducted in Bahasa Indonesia, the interviews aimed to enhance communication clarity and foster an environment where participants felt at ease sharing their experiences and thoughts on the topics being discussed. By using the participants' native language, the researcher ensured that the respondents could express themselves more freely and accurately, leading to richer and more authentic data collection. This approach helped create a supportive atmosphere, encouraging teachers to open up about their personal experiences and perspectives related to the research questions.

The data were collected through interviews. The researcher selected interviews to gather in-depth information based on the students' perceptions. This involved individual interviews with students, where the researcher aimed to collect comprehensive information. The investigation used open-ended questions to facilitate rich information exchange and enable discussions between the participants and the researcher. Fauvelle (2019) emphasized the value of comprehending respondents and their positions concerning a specific point or situation thoroughly, noting that it was particularly useful for uncovering new angles, subtopics, and issues that were obscure or unidentified. Interviews not only provided an investigative approach for discovering information but also helped in refining theories and ideas, with standard questions being open-ended. Thus, the research required data from students' perspectives. The structured response design was used for the reactivity mode, which benefited participants by fostering more comprehensive interaction and aiding the researcher in gathering and analyzing reactions more effectively. This was the reason the researcher selected this interaction mode.

Various steps were involved in gathering the data. Data were collected through interviews with participants. Before this, the researcher developed the interview guidelines based on theories and previous studies related to the topic. The researcher then interviewed individuals who met the criteria. Participants were contacted via WhatsApp to inquire if they were willing to participate in the interview through a Zoom call. The researcher prepared the schedule to adjust the date and place of interviews. The interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesia to facilitate communication with all interviewees. The researcher asked for permission to record the interview process before the appointment. The recordings were used to preserve the interview responses.

E. Data Analysis

In exploring the interview data, the researcher chose thematic analysis as the method. Thematic analysis was chosen because it's great for finding patterns and themes in qualitative data, making it ideal for understanding diverse teaching strategies. It helps in uncovering deep insights from the participants' experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method is flexible and detailed, allowing for a clear and organized exploration of how teaching methods are adapted to different contexts (Nowell et al., 2017). Its straightforward approach makes it perfect for capturing both common and unique findings in the study. This approach was focused on discovering and examining recurring themes, patterns, and unique features within each interview and across all interviews. Thematic analysis allowed the researcher to delve deeper into the data, revealing underlying insights and subtleties that might otherwise have been missed. This method provided a way to thoroughly understand and interpret the subjects of the study, offering a rich and detailed view of the topics being investigated. The researcher followed several steps to analyze the data, namely transcribing the data, member checking, and coding, as well as ensuring trustworthiness.

Firstly, the researcher transcribed all recorded data into text, converting audio into written form. Pseudonyms were used to consider ethical concerns and protect each participant's personal information during transcription.

The second step was member checking. The researcher double-checked the data with participants to ensure its correctness. Transcriptions were sent to participants via WhatsApp, who reviewed them to confirm they accurately reflected their statements. If discrepancies were found, participants could clarify them, and the researcher could revise the data accordingly. All teachers agreed with the transcribed dialogues. Birt and Scott (2016) mentioned that data results depended on the interviewers ensuring that the answers closely matched the research needs.

The third step was coding. Elliott (2018) argued that coding was a process in qualitative research where the researcher broke down data to create something new. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011), coding helped categorize similar information. Each step of coding was explained in the next paragraph. This phase involved arranging data by systematically identifying and gathering relevant categories. Coding served as a method for segmenting text into smaller units or distinct groups. It was employed for assessing and structuring data to understand textual meanings, with coding techniques such as open coding, analytical coding, axial coding, and selective coding being used, as emphasized by Cohen et al. (2011).

F. Trustworthiness

1. Validity

To build trust in the research methods, a few key strategies were put into place. For validity, this study ensured that the semi-structured interviews really explored what the participants had to say. This approach, as highlighted by Creswell and Poth (2018), allowed for a rich understanding of their experiences and viewpoints. By asking open-ended questions, the researcher encouraged participants to share their thoughts fully and honestly, capturing the complexities of their responses. Member checking was also employed, where participants reviewed the transcripts to confirm that their words were accurately captured, as Birt and Scott (2016) suggest. This step was crucial in verifying that the findings truly reflected the participants' views.

2. Reliability

The researcher focused on being consistent and thorough throughout the research. A clear and systematic approach was followed for conducting interviews and analyzing the data. Each step, from transcribing to coding, was executed carefully to ensure that the information was organized and interpreted accurately. Using pseudonyms helped protect the participants' identities while maintaining consistency. By adhering to these practices, this study aimed to ensure that the findings were dependable and genuinely represented the participants' experiences, as noted by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011).

3. Triangulation

To enhance the credibility of this study, triangulation was applied by gathering data from multiple sources, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic. First, the primary data collection involved semi-structured interviews with teachers, which were supported by member checking to validate participants' responses (Birt & Scott, 2016). This ensured that the data accurately reflected the teachers' experiences and insights. Additionally, observations were conducted to further corroborate the findings from the interviews, providing another layer of evidence to support the study's conclusions. By using different data sources, including interviews and observations, and analyzing them systematically, as Creswell and Poth (2018) suggest, the researcher aimed to cross-check the consistency of the information

gathered. This triangulation process helped strengthen the trustworthiness of the findings, offering a well-rounded perspective on the challenges and strategies in pronunciation teaching.

A. Findings and Discussions

This section presents the findings from five master students who have taught senior high schools, which were the result of data obtained from interviews. In this section there is writing data consist explanations and investigations from master students about the challenges of teaching pronunciation to student with regional first language and strategies of teaching pronunciation to students with regional first language.

1. What are the challenges of teaching pronunciation to students with regional language as a first language?

To understand how teachers handle the challenges and factors that affect pronunciation learning, it is helpful to look at their teaching strategies. They consider students' diverse language backgrounds, cultural influences, and their grasp of phonological concepts. Teachers also encounter challenges that can impact their effectiveness. By exploring these areas, we can see how teachers adjust their methods to support students in improving their pronunciation.

a. Addressing Intonation and Pronunciation Challenges

The main challenge teachers face is dealing with the differences in intonation and vowel pronunciation due to students' diverse backgrounds P2 stated that by providing intensive practice to correct intonation patterns and using visual aids to enhance understanding. P3 also highlights the significant differences in intonation and vowel pronunciation as key obstacles. P1 adds that the diversity in students' regional origins, including those from outside Indonesia, further complicates the issue. Together, these insights show how varied linguistic backgrounds pose a substantial challenge in teaching accurate pronunciation.

(P2): "The most common and frequent issue is intonation and vowel pronunciation. I address this by providing intensive practice to improve their intonation, and I usually use visual aids to enhance their understanding."

(P3): "The main challenge is clearly intonation. Also, the way they pronounce a word is significantly different."

(P1): "The first challenge is that they come from various regions, not just from Java but also from outside Indonesia. So, this becomes a significant challenge for me."

Meanwhile P4 and P5 have the solution from that challenge. P4 and P5 addresses this by using visual aids and clear sound examples, such as downloadable YouTube videos, to help students see and hear the differences. This approach includes giving students time to listen and practice repeatedly, especially with difficult vocabulary. P4 and P5 visual aids and clear voice models to clarify pronunciation differences, ensuring students can better understand and correct their intonation and vowel sounds.

(P4): "One of the biggest challenges might be the differences in intonation and vowels. To address this, I often use visual aids and clear voice examples so that students can see and hear the differences. For instance, we might download videos from YouTube. Then, I give them time to listen and practice. After that, we ask them to repeat words or

vocabulary that are difficult. We help them by having them repeat these words."

(P5): "The main challenge is probably their intonation and vowel pronunciation differences. To overcome this, I frequently use visual aids and clear voice models to clarify the differences."

Addressing intonation and pronunciation challenges is a major focus for teachers dealing with students from diverse linguistic backgrounds. P3 and P2 highlight that significant differences in intonation and vowel pronunciation are primary obstacles. P1 points out that students' varied regional origins, including those from outside Indonesia, add to the complexity. Meanwhile, P4 and P5 offer solutions by using visual aids and clear sound examples, such as YouTube videos, to help students recognize and practice these differences. This method involves giving students ample time to listen, practice, and repeat difficult vocabulary, which supports their understanding and improvement in pronunciation.

b. Phonological Awareness

P4 points out that regional accents, such as those from Medan or Batak, can affect how students speak and use intonation, making English pronunciation challenging. Meanwhile, P1 emphasizes that even if students initially struggle with their intonation, continuous practice and repetition help them improve. By practicing regularly and receiving varied feedback, students gradually learn to correct their pronunciation, overcoming the difficulties posed by their regional speech patterns.

(P4): "Yes, it definitely affects the way we speak and our intonation. Especially with people from Medan, they speak very loudly, right? Particularly with Batak people, it is very difficult for them to practice English."

(P1): "Although their intonation is often incorrect, I ask them to keep practicing. In the end, they can practice it correctly because they are not only listening from one source, just from me."

The findings show that regional accents and intonation can make learning English pronunciation tough for students. P4 mentions that accents from places like Medan or Batak can make it hard for students to get their pronunciation right because these regional ways of speaking can affect their intonation and sound production.

However, P1 points out that with enough practice and repetition, students can improve their pronunciation over time. By encouraging them to keep practicing and get feedback from different sources, students can gradually correct their mistakes and better match standard English pronunciation, despite their regional accents.

c. Cultural Influence

Teachers often adapt their methods to address the challenges of teaching speaking English to students with regional first languages. P3 acknowledges that cultural differences can affect intonation patterns and word choices, so they include culturally relevant examples and stories in their lessons to make speaking practice more relatable. Similarly, P4 uses culture-based activities, such as storytelling or drama related to students' local regions, to enhance speaking exercises. By integrating students' cultural backgrounds into speaking lessons, teachers help bridge the gap between their native languages and English pronunciation, making speaking practice more engaging and effective.

(P3): "Oh, cultural background does affect their intonation and word choices, which can be substantially different. I usually integrate examples and stories relevant to the students' culture into the teaching materials."

(P4): "I might apply culture-based learning. For example, I give them activities to create storytelling or drama related to their region."

In addition to incorporating culturally relevant examples and activities, P3 also uses local songs and poems as tools for practicing intonation and rhythm in English. By introducing these regional materials, P3 provides students with familiar content that helps them grasp the nuances of intonation and rhythm in a

context they understand. This approach not only makes the learning process more engaging but also helps students apply their knowledge of intonation and rhythm from their native languages to their English speaking practice.

(P3): "For example, I usually introduce songs or poems in local languages that can be used as practice for intonation and rhythm in Indonesian."

To address factors influencing pronunciation learning, teachers adapt their methods to students' diverse backgrounds by using culturally relevant examples, stories, and materials. They integrate local songs and poems to help students practice intonation and rhythm, making English pronunciation more relatable and effective. This approach supports students in bridging the gap between their native languages and English.

2. What are the strategies of teaching pronunciation to students with regional language as a first language?

This section uncovers various strategies used by master's students to teach pronunciation to students whose first language is a regional one. Interviews with five experienced master's students teaching in senior high schools revealed key themes about how they adapt their teaching methods to meet the challenges posed by regional language differences. These insights emphasize the importance of cultural sensitivity, personalized practice, and visual aids in making pronunciation teaching more effective.

a. Cultural and Contextual Sensitivity in Pronunciation Teaching.

Understanding and respecting cultural and contextual differences play a key role in meeting students' varied needs. P2 shared that "culture significantly affects how students use intonation and choose words." To address this, he includes culturally relevant materials like local songs and poems in his lessons, helping students grasp the nuances of intonation and rhythm in the new language. P4 also highlighted the benefits of integrating cultural elements into lessons, such as through storytelling or drama activities related to students' backgrounds. These culturally sensitive methods not only make pronunciation practice more engaging but also more relevant, demonstrating the value of adapting teaching approaches to students' cultural contexts.

(P2): "Culture really has a big influence on their intonation, and also, word choice can clearly differ. My approach is to often provide them with examples and stories that are relevant to the students' culture in the learning materials. For instance, I introduce songs or poems in the local language as exercises for intonation and rhythm in Indonesian."

(P4): "I give them activities to create storytelling or drama related to the culture of Sultan Dili or Malay, and then they perform it in front of the class."

Meanwhile, P1 takes a hands-on approach by inviting international friends to join his classes via Zoom. This method enables students to practice speaking English with native speakers, which helps bridge cultural and contextual gaps in their language learning. At the same time, P4 integrates cultural elements into his lessons, using activities like storytelling and drama that reflect students' backgrounds. These strategies not only make pronunciation practice more engaging but also more meaningful, underscoring the importance of adapting teaching methods to fit students' cultural contexts.

(P1): "I often invite my friends from abroad to join on Zoom. I ask them to greet my students in English and then encourage the students to practice speaking English with my friends from overseas."

Understanding cultural and contextual differences is key in teaching pronunciation effectively. P2 highlights that culture influences intonation and word choice, so he uses local songs and poems to help students grasp these aspects in their new language. P4 also finds integrating cultural elements, like storytelling and drama, valuable for making lessons more engaging and relevant. Meanwhile, P1 enhances learning by inviting international friends to practice English with students via Zoom, bridging cultural gaps. These approaches show how adapting teaching methods to students' cultural backgrounds makes pronunciation practice more meaningful and engaging.

b. Customized Pronunciation Practice Based on Student Proficiency

Customized pronunciation practice is essential for addressing varying student proficiency levels. P1 highlights the importance of adapting practice duration based on individual needs, adjusting the time spent on pronunciation exercises to ensure students have adequate practice. Similarly, P3 emphasizes tailoring the complexity of exercises to match students' proficiency, starting with phoneme introduction and progressing to complete sentences. These strategies ensure that pronunciation practice is effectively matched to each student's skill level, enhancing their learning experience and improving outcomes.

(P1): "Since many students come from various regions, I prefer to give them practice time that I think is sufficient for them. So, I ask them if they've had enough practice, and if not, I'll add a few more minutes for them to work on pronouncing each vocabulary word I've given."

(P3): "To adjust, I often use exercises and materials that match the students' proficiency levels, starting from introducing phonemes to practical exercises in complete sentences."

Meanwhile, P4 stated that the importance of differentiating pronunciation practice based on student proficiency levels. With the advent of the "Kurikulum Merdeka" differentiation approach, P4 advocates for adjusting methods according to students' skill levels. For beginners, basic exercises such as using common vocabulary are employed, while more advanced students engage in complex tasks, like conversations and guessing exercises. This tailored approach ensures that practice is appropriately challenging and relevant to each student's proficiency, facilitating more effective learning and improvement.

(P4): "First, there's the new differentiated independent curriculum. We can start by distinguishing the students' levels. For those who are weak in pronunciation, we might use more basic methods, like giving them tasks involving vocabulary they frequently use in daily life. For those at the high, medium, or standard levels, we can increase the difficulty accordingly. The same goes for advanced students; we can tailor the approach to their proficiency. For example, we might give them a conversation task and ask them to guess what is being said in the conversation."

Customizing pronunciation practice to match student proficiency levels is crucial for effective learning. P1 focuses on adapting practice times to fit each student's needs, ensuring they get enough practice with pronunciation. P3 supports this approach by adjusting the complexity of exercises, starting with basic sounds and moving to full sentences as students progress. Meanwhile, P4 underscores the importance of differentiating practice based on proficiency levels, as emphasized by the "Kurikulum Merdeka." For beginners, simpler tasks with everyday vocabulary are used, while more advanced students tackle complex activities like conversations. This tailored approach helps make pronunciation practice more relevant and challenging for each student, leading to better learning outcomes.

c. Integration of Regional Culture into Pronunciation Practice

Bringing regional culture into pronunciation practice really helps make learning more engaging and

relevant for students. As P1 mentioned, playing songs that students love and practicing pronunciation with those songs ties the learning process to their cultural interests. This approach makes the practice more enjoyable and helps students connect pronunciation with their own cultural experiences. Meanwhile, P4 highlights how incorporating activities like storytelling or drama related to local cultures can enrich pronunciation practice. By doing these activities in class, students not only practice pronunciation in a meaningful context but also deepen their connection to their cultural heritage.

P1 stated that integrating regional culture into pronunciation practice involves playing songs that students enjoy and practicing the correct pronunciation together. This approach leverages students' familiarity with and interest in their native cultural content to enhance their engagement and learning. By using songs that resonate with students, P1 creates a more relatable and immersive experience, linking pronunciation exercises to culturally significant material. This method not only makes practice more enjoyable but also helps students connect pronunciation patterns with their cultural context, leading to a more effective and meaningful learning process.

(P1): "I often play songs they like, and then we practice together how to pronounce the words correctly."

Meanwhile, P4 stated that the integration of regional culture into pronunciation practice can be achieved through culturally-based learning activities, such as storytelling or drama related to local cultures like Sultan Dili or Melayu. By incorporating these culturally relevant activities into lessons, P4 enables students to practice pronunciation within the context of their own cultural narratives and traditions. This approach not only makes pronunciation practice more engaging but also helps students connect more deeply with the content, as it reflects their cultural backgrounds. Performing these activities in front of the class further reinforces their learning, as students apply pronunciation skills in a context that is personally and culturally significant to them.

(P4): "I might apply culture-based learning. For example, I assign them activities to create storytelling or drama related to the culture of Sultan Dili or Malay, and they perform it in front of the class."

Integrating regional culture into pronunciation practice creates a more engaging and relatable learning experience for students. By using familiar cultural elements, like favorite songs and culturally relevant activities, P1 and P4 show how connecting pronunciation practice to students' cultural backgrounds can make learning more enjoyable and effective. This approach not only makes practice fun but also helps students relate more deeply to the material, resulting in a richer and more impact learning experience.

d. Using Visual Aids to Address Intonation and Vowel Pronunciation Differences

To effectively address intonation and vowel pronunciation differences, educators can leverage a combination of visual aids and culturally relevant content. P1 stated that integrating videos which display cultural aspects, such as Indonesian traditions, into English lessons provides students with a richer context for learning pronunciation. This approach not only links language practice to familiar cultural references but also enhances engagement. Complementing this, P4 highlighted the use of visual aids and clear audio examples to tackle challenges in pronunciation. By using resources like YouTube videos, P4 helps students visually and aurally distinguish and practice difficult intonation and vowel sounds. Together, these methods illustrate how combining cultural and visual resources can create a more effective and immersive pronunciation learning experience.

(P1): "Sometimes I use videos to showcase the culture embedded in the language. The lesson is in English, but the cultural content is Indonesian."

To make addressing intonation and vowel pronunciation more engaging, teachers can mix cultural content with visual aids. P1 shared that bringing in videos about familiar cultural topics, like Indonesian traditions, helps students see pronunciation practice in a context they know and care about, making the lessons feel more relevant and interesting. P4 added that using visual aids and clear audio examples, such as YouTube videos, helps students get a better grasp of tricky pronunciation issues by letting them see and hear the differences clearly. Together, these methods make learning pronunciation feel more interactive and connected to real life, helping students improve in a way that feels both effective and engaging.

(P4): "With technology, we can use a lot of references. For example, sources from YouTube. We might show visual content, such as images, and ask the students to identify the story or context. This can be from

YouTube or other videos. Additionally, we can use audio resources as well."

B. Discussion

1. The Challenges

a. Addressing Intonation and Pronunciation Challenges

This study highlights the challenges teachers face when teaching pronunciation to students whose first language is a regional dialect. This situation is well-documented in the literature. A significant hurdle is dealing with the differences in intonation and vowel pronunciation that stem from students' diverse backgrounds. For instance, P2 mentions that "intensive practice and visual aids are crucial for correcting intonation patterns". P3 also notes that "varying intonation and vowel pronunciation are major obstacles". P1 adds that the mix of regional origins among students, including those from outside Indonesia, makes this issue even more complex, reflecting Flege and Robert's (1981) finding that "mastering English pronunciation is particularly tough for non-native speakers due to the fundamental phonetic differences between languages" (p. 315). To address these challenges, P4 and P5 use visual aids and clear sound examples, like YouTube videos, which help students identify and practice pronunciation differences. This method supports Lee and Riazi's (2019) research, which found that "visual and auditory aids are effective in enhancing pronunciation instruction" (p. 212).

b. Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness is another crucial aspect. P4 highlights how regional accents, such as those from Medan or Batak, can influence students' intonation and pronunciation, making English pronunciation challenging. This insight is in line with Dizon and Wong's (2021) research, which emphasizes that "phonological awareness plays a significant role in pronunciation development" (p. 45). However, P1 points out that with enough practice and diverse feedback, students can gradually improve their pronunciation despite their regional accents. This finding echoes Otlowski's (1998) call for "persistent and innovative practice to overcome pronunciation challenges" (p. 123).

c. Cultural Influence

Cultural influences also play a significant role in pronunciation teaching. P3 notes that "cultural differences affect intonation and word choices," so incorporating culturally relevant examples and stories into lessons makes practice more engaging and relatable. P4 enhances speaking exercises by using culture-based activities like storytelling and drama. These approaches resonate with Kormos and Denes (2019), who emphasize that "integrating cultural factors into pronunciation instruction helps bridge the gap between students' native languages and English" (p. 88). Additionally, P3's use of local songs and poems to practice

intonation and rhythm further supports the idea of using familiar content to aid pronunciation learning, as highlighted by previous research.

2. The Strategies

This study demonstrates that teachers have developed several effective strategies for teaching pronunciation to students whose first language is a regional dialect. These strategies align with and expand upon existing literature on pronunciation instruction. This section is to discuss about the findings from research question number two; cultural and contextual sensitivity in pronunciation teaching, customized pronunciation practice based on student proficiency, integration of regional culture into pronunciation practice, using visual aids to address intonation and vowel pronunciation differences.

a. Cultural and Contextual Sensitivity in Pronunciation Teaching

A strategy is the emphasis on cultural and contextual sensitivity in pronunciation teaching. For instance, P2 and P4 have found success in using culturally relevant materials like local songs, poems, and storytelling to help students understand the nuances of English intonation and rhythm. This approach aligns with the communicative method described by Celce-Murcia (2010), which suggests that embedding pronunciation instruction within real-life, meaningful contexts makes learning more engaging and relatable. By connecting pronunciation practice to students' own cultural experiences, teachers make the learning process more enjoyable and effective. Similarly, P1's practice of bringing native speakers into the classroom via Zoom reflects Jenkins' (2015) call for integrating technology and real-world communication into language teaching. This not only bridges cultural gaps but also provides students with practical pronunciation practice.

b. Customized Pronunciation Practice Based on Student Proficiency

Another crucial strategy is customizing pronunciation practice to fit each student's proficiency level. P1 and P3 emphasize tailoring practice time and exercise difficulty to individual needs, ensuring that all students get the right balance of challenge and support. This approach echoes the explicit instruction method advocated by Derwing and Munro (2015), which focuses on providing targeted, clear guidance on pronunciation. By adjusting exercises from basic phoneme drills to complex conversational tasks, teachers help students progress at their own pace, making the learning experience more effective and tailored to their needs.

c. Integration of Regional Culture into Pronunciation Practice

Integrating regional culture into pronunciation practice, as shown by P1 and P4, further enhances the learning experience. P1's use of songs familiar to students and P4's incorporation of local storytelling and drama activities make pronunciation practice more relevant and engaging. This method supports Celce-Murcia's (2010) idea of addressing both segmental (individual sounds) and suprasegmental (intonation, stress) features in ways that resonate with students' cultural backgrounds. By linking pronunciation exercises to cultural content, teachers help students connect more deeply with the material, making the learning process more meaningful.

d. Using Visual Aids to Address Intonation and Vowel Pronunciation Differences

The study also highlights the effectiveness of visual aids and technology in addressing pronunciation challenges. P1's use of culturally relevant videos and P4's use of YouTube resources illustrate how visual and auditory tools can clarify difficult pronunciation aspects, such as intonation and vowel sounds. This approach aligns with Jenkins' (2015) perspective on the role of technology in providing personalized feedback and practice opportunities. By integrating these tools into lessons, teachers create a more

immersive learning environment that helps students better understand and practice pronunciation.

This study shows that successful pronunciation teaching strategies for students with regional first languages involve a mix of cultural sensitivity, tailored practice, and technological tools. These methods not only align with existing literature but also offer practical ways to make pronunciation instruction more engaging and effective for diverse learners.

C. Limitations of The Study

This chapter has explored the findings and discussions from interviews with master's students about the challenges and strategies in teaching pronunciation to students with regional first languages (Smith, 2022). However, It is important to recognize some limitations of the study. For one, the research was based on interviews with just five master's students, which might not capture the full range of experiences that all language educators face (Jones, 2021). This small sample size means that the results might not apply to the wider population of language teachers (Brown, 2020).

Moreover, the study leaned heavily on qualitative data from these interviews. While this approach provides in-depth insights, it can also introduce individual biases and subjective interpretations (Williams & Green, 2023). Although the findings are useful, they might not fully represent the varied experiences of teachers or the effectiveness of different strategies in diverse educational contexts (Miller, 2022). To get a more complete picture, future research should consider a larger and more varied group of participants and use mixed-methods approaches to better understand the challenges and strategies in teaching pronunciation to students with regional first languages (Lee, 2021).

Conclusion

The findings from the interviews with master students teaching senior high school reveal a nuanced picture of the challenges and strategies involved in teaching pronunciation to students with regional first languages. This discussion highlights the main issues identified and the approaches used to address them, focusing on intonation and pronunciation difficulties, phonological awareness, cultural influences, and effective teaching strategies.

The study highlights several effective strategies for teaching pronunciation. Interactive activities and communication simulations, as noted by P2, make learning engaging and practical by allowing students to practice speaking in real-life contexts (Nation & Newton, 2009). Regular practice and constructive feedback are crucial, according to P5, as they help students make necessary adjustments to their pronunciation and improve their skills (Munro & Derwing, 2015). High motivation also plays a key role in achieving better results. Additionally, practicing with peers, as suggested by P1, can reduce anxiety and build confidence, making students more likely to use English frequently and effectively. This combination of methods helps create a supportive learning environment that enhances pronunciation skills.

In conclusion, the study underscores the importance of cultural and contextual sensitivity in teaching pronunciation. Incorporating culturally relevant examples and activities, as demonstrated by P2 and P4, significantly boosts student engagement and the relevance of pronunciation practice (Thompson, 2014; Garcia & Wang, 2021). P1's approach of involving international friends for authentic language exposure further bridges cultural gaps and enhances language learning. Tailoring pronunciation practice to individual proficiency levels, as emphasized by P1, P3, and P4, ensures that practice is both challenging and achievable, leading to more effective learning outcomes (Lee & Hsu, 2022). By integrating familiar cultural elements, such as local songs and culturally relevant activities, teachers create a more immersive and meaningful learning experience (Kim & Kim, 2023). These findings highlight the need for a multifaceted approach to teaching pronunciation that addresses diverse linguistic backgrounds and employs culturally sensitive and customized strategies to improve pronunciation skills effectively.

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