

# SITUATING ENGLISH SEGMENTAL AND SUPRASEGMENTAL FEATURES PROPORTIONALLY: A PROFILE OF INDONESIAN EFL STUDENTS

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## Abstract

Recently, although teaching and learning English pronunciation has gained much attention from the linguists and TESOL practitioners, the students' English pronunciation at the English Education Department of Siliwangi University may still remain under-researched. This study was aimed at scrutinizing how the students' English pronunciation at the English Education Department of Siliwangi University is. Twenty six students participated in this study. The data were collected through reading aloud task. The data were analyzed with Wolcott's data analysis procedures, namely *description*, *analysis* and *interpretation* (Wolcott as cited in Gibson & Brown, 2009:5). The findings indicated that the students presumably faced difficulties in producing not only suprasegmental but also segmental features. Hence, more emphasis should be addressed on the balanced proportion of teaching and learning the English segmental and suprasegmental features to attain intelligibility as the primary goal of teaching English pronunciation currently.

Keywords: *Students' English pronunciation, English pronunciation features, intelligibility*

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## INTRODUCTION

Over the last few decades, the teaching of pronunciation has been the centre of attention among the applied linguists and TESOL practitioners (Morley, 1991; Derwing & Rossiter, 2002; Tianli et. al, 2003; Saricoban & Kuc, 2010; Baker, 2011; Reed, 2012; Demircioglu, 2013).

Such a phenomenon plausibly occurs due to the number of reasons. First, the debate about the fact that English students around the world tend to employ English, notably as a *lingua franca* (ELF) among non-native speakers rather than a communication tool to communicate with native speakers (Reed, 2012:68). Besides, the nativeness and intelligibility principles have become the opposing paradigms influencing the objectives of teaching and learning pronunciation in the EFL context (Levis, 2005). On the one hand, the nativeness principle believes that

the non-native speakers are possibly able to achieve native-like pronunciation in foreign language context. On the other hand, the intelligibility principle assumes that successful communication may be accomplished as long as the non-native speakers can produce clear and understandable foreign accents since accent and understanding are not interrelated each other (Munro & Derwing as cited in Levis, 2005:370). Thus, by noticing such reasons, the improvement of pronunciation teaching and learning could be conducted accurately.

Although pronunciation has obtained more attention in the field of language teaching currently, the pronunciation instruction in English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) might still gain inadequate investigations (Baker & Murphy, 2011:29). Therefore, the extension of research on English pronunciation is plausibly considered as an indispensable breakthrough in fostering the non-native speakers' English pronunciation since acceptable pronunciation can probably facilitate their communication and develop their intelligibility (Zakia, 2014:82).

The need of conducting empirical study on teaching and learning English pronunciation has been acknowledged in English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context (Khamkhien, 2010; Gilakjani, 2011). With the exception of a few studies having investigated teaching and learning English pronunciation in Indonesian contexts (e.g. Soewartono, 2006; Pardede, 2010), a little attention has been given to the study of the students' English pronunciation at the English Education Department (Tiono & Yostanto, 2008; Andi-Pallawa & Alam 2013). Even, there may not have been a study of such an issue conducted at the English Education Department of Siliwangi University in Tasikmalaya. For these reasons, more investigations on the students' English pronunciation at the English Education Department of Siliwangi University are presumably required to conduct. In this case, it can describe the students' English pronunciation at the English Education Department of Siliwangi University.

In response to the issues identified above, the present study aims at investigating the students' English pronunciation at the English Education Department of Siliwangi University.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The present study applied qualitative research paradigm. Specifically, case study is considered as an appropriate research method to be applied in this study since it can provide a holistic description of language learning or use within a specific population and setting (Mackey & Gass, 2005:171). To sum, case study enables the researcher to obtain rich contextualization that can possibly enlighten the complexities of the second language learning process (Mackey & Gass, 2005:171).

The study was undertaken at the English Education Department of Siliwangi University in Tasikmalaya, West Java. The participants of the present study were 26 English Education Department students. More specifically, all students were the sophomores of the second year of their four-year-degree program. Then, the

selection of the students was conducted purposively with purposive sampling technique. Briefly stated, the data of this study were the students' test results (reading aloud task) and the data source were the students of English Education Department of Siliwangi University.

In collecting the data, a diagnostic reading passage was used as the instrument. It involved pronunciation reading passage designed by Celce-Murcia, *et. al.* (1996:9) consisting of three paragraphs. It was carried out due to the diagnostic reading passage has been widely used to diagnose the participants' English pronunciation related to segmental and suprasegmental features (Celce-Murcia, *et. al.*, 1996; Levis & Barriuso, 2012). Hence, the credibility, transferability and dependability of this passage might be examined well. However, to ensure that the research instrument was credible, transferable and dependable, the researcher conducted a pilot study and applied inter-rater dependability.

Technically, the participants were required to read a short passage aloud. At the same time, their reading performances were recorded by using camcorder (*Samsung HMX F-90*). This was carried out to facilitate the researcher in analyzing the data due to the participants' reading performances can be replayed and reanalyzed.

In relation to the data analysis procedures, this study adopted Wolcott's data analysis procedures (Wolcott as cited in Gibson & Brown, 2009:5), namely *description*, *analysis* and *interpretation*. In particular, the analysis of diagnostic reading aloud task was conducted by applying modified pronunciation diagnostic rubric (Celce-Murcia, *et. al.*, 1996). Specifically, such a rubric may cover the segmental (vowels and consonants) and suprasegmental features (stress and intonation) (Roach, 1991; Kelly, 2000; Burns, 2003; Skandera & Burleigh, 2005, Sujung, 2014). Therefore, the pronunciation diagnostic rubric could facilitate the researcher in analyzing the data, notably the data of reading aloud task (Sujung, 2014).

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Students' Pronunciation of English Segmental Features**

Essentially, the data interpretation in this study covers four aspects, namely errors committed by the students in *consonants*, *vowels*, *intonation*, and *stress*. The reasons why the pronunciation errors are analyzed in this study is due to EFL students may not only encounter difficulties in pronouncing suprasegmental features (*intonation* and *stress*) as assumed by some experts (Hewings, 1995; Tanner & Landon, 2009; Sardegna, 2011; Abdolmaleki & Mohebi, 2014), but also segmental features (*consonants* and *vowels*) (Saito, 2011; Ruellot, 2011; Wallen & Fox, 2011). Therefore, this study is designed to investigate the overall students' English pronunciation, both segmental and suprasegmental features.

Viewed from the segmental feature, notably consonants, the students were identified to commit errors in various consonants, including *plosives*, *fricatives*, *affricates*, *nasals* and *approximants*. These are supported by the evidence gained in the research findings section stating that the students tended to commit errors

mostly in *fricatives*, *plosives*, *affricates*, *nasals* and *approximants*. However, none of them committed errors in *lateral*.

*Fricative* /ð/ was significantly identified as the most frequent consonant mispronounced by the students with 403 occurrences of error. This confirms Saito's findings in which eight English-specific segmentals, [æ, f, v, θ, ð, w, l, ɹ], were first identified as problematic pronunciation features for NJs (Saito, 2011:372). The distinct phonological system between English and Bahasa Indonesia could affect the students in producing intelligible phonemes, including *fricatives*. Further, the absence of English phonemes in Bahasa Indonesia (e.g. /æ/, /ʌ/, /v/, /θ/ and /ð/) might hinder the Indonesian speakers to produce them correctly. Additionally, even though the similar phonemes (/b/, /d/, /g/, /z/, /s/, /tʃ/ and /dʒ/) exist in both languages, the Indonesian speakers can still mispronounce them if they emerge in different position such as the final position (Andi-Pallawa, 2009:128).

*Plosives* seem to be the second pronunciation errors committed largely by the students since they showed 592 occurrences of error. In particular, the errors were detected in *plosives* /p/ [e.g. frɒnʌnsi'esn, frɒnensi'esn, fi:fl, and sprəʊɡres], /g/ [e.g. ɪŋlɪʃ, læŋwɪdʒ, lɪŋwɪsts and ɪk'sempl], /t/ [e.g. eksən, əksən, mɒs, dɒn, wɒn, nɒtɪs, & ken], /d/ [e.g. tʃeɪndʒ, tʃen, ɒl, rɪ'pɔ:t] and /k/ [e.g. æsən and ætrɒst]. Nevertheless, the students did not commit any errors in *plosive* /b/ due to the overall words consisting plosive /b/ were pronounced correctly based on the IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet). Such a phenomenon is plausibly in line with the findings discovered by Matthew studying the errors in pronunciation of consonants by Indonesian, Gayo and Acehese learners of English as a foreign language (Matthew, 1997). In her research, Matthew found that final /d/ was mispronounced as ellipsis (devoicing) on the three productive tests and it also gained inadequate release on reading passage test and interview. In addition, final /g/ did not appear in the interview. Furthermore, final /g/ was predominantly devoiced on the repetition and reading passage tests (Matthew, 1997:53).

In the same way, *affricates* are also identified as the third most frequent consonants mispronounced by the students. As a matter of fact, 67 occurrences of error were committed by the students while pronouncing *affricates* /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ like in the words [ɪndɪ'vɪdʒʊəl, tʃentʃ, tʃen, tʃeɪ and frens]. In this case, the students inclined to substitute the *affricates* /tʃ/ & /dʒ/ with other consonants, such as [d/, /n/ /s/, /ŋ/ & /tʃ/]. This is supported by another study scrutinizing *affricates* in Indonesian context. In particular, the Indonesian L1 speakers did not differentiate the final /tʃ/ from other sounds, such as /dʒ/, /ts/, /k/ & ellipsis. Besides, the final /tʃ/ was considered as a confusing phoneme to be pronounced and they tended to substitute it with /ts/ (Matthew, 1997:36). Therefore, the *affricates* /tʃ/ & /dʒ/ might be problematic phonemes for some EFL students, particularly in Indonesia.

Furthermore, there are 8 occurrences of error committed by the students when producing *nasals* in reading aloud task. To illustrate, the *nasal* /n/ in the word [fɒrən] is pronounced as *nasal* /ŋ/ [e.g. fɒrən], *affricate* /dʒ/ [e.g. fɒrendʒ, fɒrendʒ, fɒredʒn, fɒreɪdʒn] to refer to the word 'foreign'. In this case, the erroneous *nasal* production tend to appear in the last syllable of the words as

presented above. In other words, this supports the Kluge & Baptista's findings (Undated) reporting that the lack of fully realized word-final *nasals* in Brazilian Portuguese (BP) probably affected by Brazilian students' production in *nasals*. In this sense, they often nasalized the preceding vowel and deleted the following *nasals*. In addition, the consonant clusters are deemed as one of the problems why the students mispronounced *nasal* /n/ in the word 'foreign'. Similarly, Yuliati (2014:514) assumes that Indonesian learners tend to simplify pronunciation of final consonant clusters and prefer deleting one of three consonants to devoicing. In short, the erroneous *nasal* production in this study was generally caused by the lack of fully-realized *nasals* and simplification of final consonant clusters pronunciation.

In *approximants*, the students committed some errors on *approximants* /r/, /j/ and /w/ as well. Evidently, there were 5 occurrences of error identified in these phonemes. In particular, *the student 6, 9 and 14* mispronounced the *approximant* /r/ within the word [æds], [ə'flaid] and [fɒdʒən], *the student 21* made an error in *the approximant* /w/ as in the word [lɪŋwɪstɪks] and *the student 26* produced an error in *the approximant* /j/ as in the word [ætrəst].

Clearly, a number of students substituted *the approximant* /r/ with *lateral* /l/ and *affricate* /dʒ/. Besides, they also replaced the *approximants* /w/ and /j/ by adding other sounds like /ʊ/ & /t/ into the words [lɪŋgwɪstɪks] and [ækjərət]. These occurred due to such a student might not be able to differentiate between *approximants* /j/ & /w/ with the close vowel /ʊ/. This assumption is supported by Espy-Wilson (1992:136) arguing that

Recognition of the semivowels is a challenging task since, of the consonants, the semivowels are most like the vowels and, due to phonotactic constraints, they almost always occur adjacent to a vowel. Thus, acoustic changes between semivowels and vowels are often quite subtle so that there are no clear landmarks to guide the sampling of acoustic properties.

Hence, informing the students about the differences between *approximants* (*semivowels*) and other consonants would facilitate them in pronouncing *approximants* accurately.

Other errors committed by the students are the substitution of the *approximant* /r/ with other sounds as *lateral* /l/ and *affricate* /dʒ/ as shown in the words [fɒdʒən]. *The student 14* did not only mispronounce the *approximant* /r/ but also substituted it with the *affricate* /dʒ/. In a like manner, *the student 21* not only committed an error on the word 'linguist' by substituting *the approximant* /w/ with *the close vowel* /ʊ/, but also added irrelevant sounds, such as /tɪks/. As a result, the meaning may vary from the word 'linguists' (meaning: people who know several foreign languages well) to the word 'linguistics' (meaning: the scientific study of language or of particular languages) (Hornby, 2000:281). This type of error can be considered as *overgeneralization* since it is caused by the students' attempt to use a rule in a context where it does not belong to, such as the use of /dʒ/ to substitute /r/ and /tɪks/ to /s/ (Lightbown & Spada, 1993:56).

On the other hand, *the student 26* committed an error when producing the word [ækjərət]. In particular, she omitted some sounds including /k/, /j/ and adding unnecessary sound as /s/ so that the word she produced might become an unnatural sound of word based on the IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet) like [ætrəst]. Moreover, [ætrəst] is plausibly regarded as a non-word since it does not have meaning and may not refer to any languages. Briefly stated, this type of error is identified as *overgeneralization* because of unnecessary sounds *addition* and *simplification* in which several sounds are omitted from the word. Theoretically, *simplification* takes place where the elements of a word or a sentence are left out (Lightbown & Spada, 1993:56). In other words, viewed from the students' errors in producing *approximants*, they do not only mispronounce the sounds of such words but also misspell them.

Different from the findings of other consonants, *lateral* is accurately pronounced by the entire students. Based on the data previously presented, the *lateral /l/* reveals no occurrence of error meaning that each student may not encounter any difficulties while pronouncing it. Such a result is relevant to the findings located by Andi-Pallawa & Alam (2013:117). Generally, the English *lateral /l/* emerges in the initial, medial, or final position of a word, so does the Indonesian *lateral /l/*. Presumably, the Indonesian *lateral /l/* is pronounced clearly wherever it appears in the word, but it does not occur within the *lateral /l/* in English.

In vowels, the students committed a number of errors. For instance, 843 occurrences of error were identified in *monophthongs*, 787 occurrences of error in *diphthongs* and 6 occurrences of error in *triphthongs*. Generally, the students mispronounced *monophthongs*, *diphthongs* and *triphthongs* variously.

As an example of *monophthongs* errors, *the student 9* mispronounced the words 'telephone' as [teləfɒn], 'the' as [də], 'exposure' as [ek'spɒʃʊ(r)] and 'manage' as [mænedʒ] in terms of /i:, ɪ, ʊ, u:/. She pronounced *the short vowel /ɪ/* as the schwa /ə/ in the words [teləfɒn], [də], [ek'spɒʃʊ(r)] & [mænedʒ]. In other words, she might not realize that *short /ɪ/* differs from *schwa /ə/*. Nonetheless, this result possibly differs from Pastika's notion (2012:149) stating that the words derived from consonant clusters (three or four consonants cluster) in the onset position should be simplified by inserting a vowel among such a consonant cluster. Three consonants cluster in the initial position are not allowed in Bahasa Indonesia since it applies the rule of a consonant in the initial position. To avoid the overloaded consonant cluster, a vowel should be inserted as sonority. Schwa /ə/ is mostly used in Bahasa Indonesia and Malay since it functions as a smoothing sound. This vowel is selected due to schwa /ə/ belongs to a weak form of vowel viewed from acoustic and articulatory perspectives. Consequently, such a sound is generally inserted between two consonants of Bahasa Indonesia and Malay.

However, although the words [də] and [ek'spɒʃʊ(r)] comprise one consonant cluster, the student still committed an error by producing schwa /ə/ to substitute short /ɪ/.

In the case of *diphthongs* pronounced by the students, there were 369 occurrences of error in *closing diphthong /əʊ/*, 252 occurrences of error in *closing*

*diphthong* /eɪ/ and 75 occurrences of error in *centering diphthong* /ɪə/. The most striking findings to emerge from the data is that the student 12 mispronounced the words ‘only’ as [ɒnli], ‘most’ as [mɒs], ‘also’ as [ɔ:lso], etc. Likewise, the student 17 mispronounced the words ‘won’t’ as [wɒn], ‘telephone’ as [teləfɒn], ‘spoken’ as [spɒkən] and the like. Shortly, the *closing diphthong* /əʊ/ may be the most difficult phoneme to produce by the English Education Department students of Siliwangi University. Sumbayak (2009), investigating the difficulties of Indonesian speakers of English in producing *diphthongs* /eɪ/ & /oʊ/, similarly advocates that *diphthongs* /oʊ/ was relatively more problematic than *diphthong* /eɪ/ and she claims that the students produced more *diphthongs* accurately than the spouses (Sumbayak, 2009:107). For these reasons, the Indonesian speakers might not only face obstacles in pronouncing *closing diphthongs ending in /ʊ/* (particularly, /əʊ/) but also *closing diphthongs ending in /i/* (notably, /eɪ/ & /aɪ/) and *centering diphthongs* (e.g. /ɪə/).

Different from *monophthongs* and *diphthongs*, *triphthongs* examined in this study only reveal 6 occurrences of error. As a matter of fact, the student 9 mispronounced the word ‘desire’ [dɪ'zaɪə(r)] as [dɪ'zai(r)]. It can be assumed that her pronunciation on the word ‘desire’ is lack of *triphthong* /aɪə/. In other words, she produced a *closing diphthong ending in /i/* (/aɪ/) to substitute *triphthong* /aɪə/. Similarly, Febrianto (2014) argues that errors on *triphthongs* produced by the elementary school teachers in Yogyakarta mostly occurred in the sounds of /ʊ/ and /i/. Specifically, they occurred in the middle of the *triphthongs* and were pronounced as *glides* /w/ and /j/. Moreover, the application of highly clear bisyllabic articulation of the *triphthongs*, frequently with the interference of /j/ & /w/, is also discovered in the English used throughout the ASEAN region (Deterding, 2010:367). For these reasons, the sounds /j/ & /w/ are commonly inserted into English *triphthongs* by the Indonesian speakers.

### **The Students’ Pronunciation of English Suprasegmental Features**

Another important aspect analyzed in this study is suprasegmental features. In this case, intonation and stress are the focuses of investigation. Basically, there are plausibly three types of suprasegmental features in English, namely linking (connected speech), intonation and stress (Kelly, 2000; Burns, 2003). However, the present study only focuses on intonation and stress as the objects of investigation.

In intonation, the students committed 66 errors in falling intonation and 45 errors in *rising intonation*. On the one hand, based on the *falling intonation*, the errors mostly occur in the following extracts:

- (1) //They may also be able to **IDENTify SPANish** or **ARABic SPEAKers** over the **TELEphone**//,
- (2) //When they **SPEAK** a **SECond LANguage**//

17 of 26 students produced a *rising tone* in the aforementioned sentences. In particular, nine students were identified to commit errors in the first sentence and eight students were detected to commit it in the second sentence. Indeed, since

those sentences are categorized as *statements*, they should have a *falling tone* based on *the intonation patterns* (Kelly, 2000:89). Nevertheless, this plausibly differs from one of Hewings' findings stating that the Indonesian students selected *falling tones* in contexts where native speakers selected *rising tones* (Hewings, 1995:27). On the other hand, 20 of 26 students committed errors while producing *rising intonation*. More specifically, they mispronounced the following extracts by virtue of *rising intonation*:

- (1) //Will you **MAN**age to **MAKE PRO**gress?//
- (2) //Will you just **GIVE UP**?//.

In this case, those sentences were pronounced in *falling intonation*. In fact, they should be pronounced in *rising intonation* since they are classified into *the yes/no question* (Kelly, 2000:89).

Interestingly, several students mispronounced a number of sentences by putting *level intonation* to the following extracts:

- (1) //Why do **PEOPLE USU**ally **HAVE** an **Acc**ent?//
- (2) //Most **NATIVE SPEAK**ers of **EN**glish can, for ex**AM**PLE, **REC**ognize **PEOPLE** from **FRANCE** by their **FRENCH ACC**ents.//
- (3) //You also **NEED ACC**urate **INFORM**ation about the **EN**glish **SOUND SYS**tem//

Referring to the sentences above, the error occurred due to one of the students gave a *level intonation* into the first sentence. Nonetheless, it is categorized into *the information question* so that it should be pronounced with the *falling intonation* (Kelly, 2000:89). Again, other students mispronounced both the second and third sentences which should be pronounced with the *falling intonation* because they belong to the *statements* (Kelly, 2000). Consequently, The students did not only commit errors in the *falling* and *rising intonations*, but also they produced the *level* one.

Empirically, this discrepancy may be caused by various factors, such as the relatively lower ability of the Indonesian students to plan their English speech before delivery, their tendency to separate interactive intonation choices, and their inadequate familiarity with the relationships between tone choice and social conventions. For these reasons, teaching English intonation should cover such factors in order to have clear implications to Indonesian students (Hewings, 1995:39).

In addition to *intonation*, *stress* is the suprasegmental aspect examined in this study as well. Basically, there are two types of *stress* in this study, namely *word stress* and *sentence stress*.

Viewed from *the word stress analysis*, the results show that most of the students committed errors in the first syllable (N=272), middle syllable (N=54) and last syllable (N=28). The words **noTICED**, **YOUR**, **seCOND**, **OF**, **HAVE**, **acCENT** & **YOU** are a few examples of errors occurring in the first syllable. More examples occur in the middle syllable, such as **infoRMATION**, **EX**posure,



**WITH**out, **EX**ample, iden**TIF**Y, de**SIRE** & ap**PEARS**. In the last syllable, the words **PRONUN**ciation & combi**NATION** are recurrently mispronounced by the students. It seems to be the case that the students might find difficulties in determining where the *stress* should be applied. To describe, they put the last syllable stress into some words having the first syllable stress, such as the words no**TICED** (it should be **NO**ticed) and ac**CENT** (it should be **AC**cent ). Also, they put the first syllable stress on the words having middle syllable like in the words **EX**posure (it should be ex**PO**SURE) and with**OUT** (it should be **WITH**out). Similarly, they put the middle syllable stress on the word **PRONUN**ciation containing last syllable stress. In fact, they should be pronounced as **PRONunCI**ation. To sum up, the students might encounter any difficulties when putting the stress into the words based on their initial, middle and last syllables.

In pointing out the concerns presented previously, the errors typically occur in various places within the sentence stress. Generally, they appear because of word stresses misplacement in the sentences. A few typical examples of errors are portrayed as follows:

- (1) **PEOPLE** may **HAVE** noticed that you **COME** from another **COUN**try because of your “**FOR**eign **AC**cent.
- (2) Why do **PEOPLE** usually **HAVE** an **AC**cent when they **SPEAK** A second **LAN**guage?
- (3) **MOST** **N**ative **SPEAK**ers of **EN**glish **CAN**, for ex**AM**PLE, **REC**ognize **PEOPLE** from **FRANCE** by their **FRENCH** **AC**cents.

Reviewing the extracts above, some errors are obviously identified. In the sentence (1) the error occurs due to the word **HAVE** is stressed, but the word ‘noticed’ is unstressed. In fact, the word **HAVE** functions as *a function word* in which the unstressed syllable should be applied and the word ‘noticed’ belongs to *the content word* where the stressed word ought to be utilized. Likewise, this error takes place in the sentence (2) where the article ‘A’ is stressed though it is categorized as *the function word*. On the contrary, the word ‘second’ is unstressed even though it is *a content word*. Such a phenomenon also takes place in the sentence (3) in which the words **MOST** and **CAN** are classified to *the function words* that should be unstressed. In short, the students may have not understood what *function* and *content words* are and how the stress is placed on such words in a sentence.

In response to the research question posed in the earlier chapter, one of the purposes of the present study is aimed at investigating how the students’ English pronunciation at the English Education Department of Siliwangi University is. The findings showed that the majority of students apparently face some difficulties in producing segmental and suprasegmental features of English. In other words, the students’ difficulties are possibly represented by the amount of errors they committed when participating in diagnostic reading task.

Nonetheless, the use of diagnostic reading task as the instrument to collect the data in this study had not represented the students’ spontaneous speech. In other words, the data obtained could not demonstrate the natural speech context

since the students were only tested to read a short reading passage loudly. Also, such a short reading passage may not encompass the entire sounds existing in segmental and suprasegmental features of English. Therefore, the use of free speech to investigate the students' English pronunciation is highly recommended since it could generate more natural occurring data and it enables the teacher to gain a more spontaneous sample of spoken English from the entire students (Celce-Murcia, et. al. 1996:346).

## CONCLUSION

The findings (reading aloud task) showed that most of the students at the English Education Department of Siliwangi University seemingly encountered any difficulties during producing both segmental and suprasegmental features of English. In segmental features, *fricatives* became the most consonants mispronounced, particularly *fricative* /ð/ (e.g. the words 'another' [ə'nʌðə(r)], 'they' [deɪ], 'this' [dɪs], 'that' [det], 'without' [wɪ'daʊt], etc). In vowels, the students tended to mispronounce *schwa* /ə/ more frequently than the other *monophthongs*. They generally employed *schwa* /ə/ to substitute other sounds (e.g. /ɪ/ or /e/ within the words 'telephone' [tələfəʊn], 'accent' [æksənt] and so forth). Also, they erroneously pronounced *close diphthong* /əʊ/ as *open vowel* /o/ (e.g. the words 'only' [ɒnli], 'older' [ɔldə(r)], 'most' [mɒs], 'also' [ɔ:lso], 'over' [ɒvə(r)], etc). This might be caused by the different phonological system between English and Bahasa Indonesia. In this case, there are some English sounds which presumably do not exist in Bahasa Indonesia, such as /æ/, /ʌ/, /v/, /θ/ and /ð/ or they that exist in Bahasa Indonesia but emerge in different position normally Indonesian speakers use, such as the phonemes /b/, /d/, /g/, /z/, /s/, /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ appearing in final position (Andi-Pallawa, 2009:128). Regarding the suprasegmental features, particularly *intonation* and *stress*, the students tended to misuse the *rising* and *falling intonation*. Some of them put *the rising intonation* into *the statements* that should be given *the falling one* and use *the falling intonation* in *yes/no question forms*. Moreover, they committed errors by misplacing *the stress* on *the function words* rather than *content words*.

For these reasons, focusing on the aforementioned problematic pronunciation features either segmental or suprasegmental features in teaching and learning English pronunciation may help the students perceive and produce English sounds intelligibly.

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