



ERROR ANALYSIS OF CHEFS' PRONUNCIATION OF ENGLISH CULINARY TERMS

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Abstract

This study is focused on revealing chefs' mispronunciation on English culinary terms. It is aimed at analyzing the words mostly do the chefs mispronounce, how the chefs mispronounce the English words, and the problems faced by chefs in pronouncing the English words. The sample are five experienced chefs in Mataram and Western Lombok. The data were gathered by recording the pronunciations. The method used in analyzing the data was qualitative method. In the study, the writer found that there are several English words that are mispronounced by the chefs. They mispronounced the silent letters, vowels, and consonants. The chefs are troubled in pronouncing English words correctly.

Keywords: Pronunciation, Chef & Culinary.

PENDAHULUAN

In the world of tourism, English plays crucial role. It is used to communicate to many people from all over the world both written and spoken. In order to deliver the right meaning of our words, we have to pronounce the words correctly. As a listener, we also want to hear the correct pronunciation of the interlocutors say in order to get the right meaning. Pronunciation is an important aspect and attribute of speaking L2 that is needed if someone wants to speak understandably (Gurzynski-Weiss et al., 2017; Brinton, 2019; Yoshida 2016). In tourism industry especially in hotel industry, guests come from various regions. Hotel staff are demanded to speak English fluently including chef who works in the kitchen.

As a chef, it is important to pronounce words correctly, especially those which are related to kitchen and cooking. A chef can meet the guests directly in a banquet event. In this situation, communication with guests cannot be avoided. It requires a chef to communicate with international guests or tourist from all over the world who speak English and with various accent of English.

As what I have seen, heard and experienced directly, many Indonesian chefs who's their first language is not English are often mispronouncing those words. Even though they have been working in the hotel kitchen for many years. For example, many of the chefs today pronounce word 'butcher' as /bʌtʃ.ə/ where it should be pronounced as /'bʊtʃ.ə/. This is one evidence that mispronunciation can be caused by people's background knowledge that the letter 'u' sounds or it is pronounced 'a' which often emerge in English words like 'run', 'study', 'summary', etc. Another example of mispronounced is silent letter. The word 'salmon' /'sæmən/ which is often mispronounced by /'sælmən/.

I decided to write this research in order to reveal the real chef pronunciation skill in pronouncing the English culinary terms. However, while many studies concentrated on pronunciation of general English vocabulary, I tried to go more specific to analyze the only on culinary terms and on the specific profession.

This research can be a trigger to dig deeper about chefs' English pronunciation



skill in the future. Mataram is a right place to find experienced chefs. Since it is the capital city of Lombok, many chefs pursue or continue their career in this city. West Lombok Regency is also a great place to find resort hotels where many experienced chefs work in. As a final agenda and follow-up of this research, I have a commitment to conduct a community service to give English training to the chefs as a real action and benefit to the society.

In order to find out the correct and incorrect pronunciations, I used two standard English dictionaries, they are Oxford English Dictionary and Cambridge English Dictionary. I used Oxford English Dictionary to meet the standard British English pronunciations and Cambridge dictionary to meet the standard American English pronunciations. Thus, I have the measurement tools to identify the mispronunciations of the chefs.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mispronounce means pronounce a word or words incorrectly (Soanes & Stevenson, 2003). Cobuild & GB (2003) stated that if one mispronounces a word, one pronounces it wrongly. In other words, Hornby (2005) defined the word 'mispronounce' as to pronounce a word wrongly. Similarly, Cambridge Dictionary (2008) defines the word 'mispronounce' as to pronounce a word or sound wrongly.

Native Language Interference in Learning Second Language

A lot of research has been done in the field of second language acquisition and the possible interference of one's first language in that process. Axelsson (1994) states about foreign sounds that "if a similar phoneme does not exist in your own language, it is often difficult to even hear it in another", and Best & Strange (1992) similarly claim that when encountering the sounds of a second language, we tend to assimilate them into the familiar phonemic categories of our first language, even when no suitable category exists. This

means that even when we hear a sound for the very first time, we already have some preconceived notion of it, since our listening is tuned in to the sounds of our first language. A study by MacKain, Best, & Strange (1981) showed that Japanese learners of English had problems in differentiating between /l/ and /r/, and /w/ and /r/ in English. The reason for this in the first case is Japanese lacks a distinction between the /l/ and /r/ categories; instead, they have a sound that is somewhere in between these two English phonemes, and they have difficulties perceiving a difference between /l/ and /r/ in English. Due to the lack in Japanese of a distinct /r/, the English variant of /r/ more closely resembles the Japanese /w/ than the Japanese /l-r/ category. When hearing English /r/, the test subjects tended to perceive it as a bad allophone of Japanese /w/ instead of as an example of /r/. Flege (1995) on Speech Learning Model (SLM) similarly suggests that we have different ways of categorizing foreign phonemes: if the phoneme is identical to a sound of our first language, no modification has to be made in terms of phonemic categories and we can go on using our first language phoneme. If the phoneme on the other hand is completely unfamiliar to us, we will create a new category to suit it and, with practice, reach native-like pronunciation. However, if the phoneme is similar to a phoneme of our first language, it will be assimilated into an already existing phonemic category and we will probably never learn to pronounce it with native-like accuracy. Support for this theory was found by Bohn & Flege (1992) who showed that German second language English learners' production of [i] and [ɪ], phonemes that are similar to these phonemes of German, did not differ between inexperienced and experienced speakers, while pronunciation of the completely new phoneme [æ] was greatly improved with increased second language experience. This shows that [i] and [ɪ] were integrated into the already existing, similar German categories while for [æ] a new



category was created, resulting in the achievement of native-like pronunciation.

General Problems in Pronunciation

In the case of internal factors, we believed that the younger learners start to learn second language, the better they can master the language, and this also relates to the brain development, ear perception and innate phonetic ability. Many researchers suggest that, positive attitudes and opened-mind will promote learner's pronunciation development and let them accurate and have a native-like accent. Also, if the learner has highly motivation to have a better pronunciation, and set up an appropriate goal for pronunciation, they will master the target language pronunciation much better. For external factors, native language plays a central role in the precise acquisition of pronunciation in a new language. The learner will easily learn if their native language as the similar sounds with the target language. Exposure is another important affecting factor that includes the attitude that the learner responds to opportunities using the target language. Having a good pronunciation can help in the communication, particularly intelligibility (DerwIng & Munro, 2005). Generally, pronunciation plays an important role in helping the learner become an intelligible speaker (Morley, 1998). As for learners, they wish they could speak English fluently but most of them think that English is too challenging for them to be competent because of interference from the mother tongue particularly in pronunciation and being too shy to speak English. Confidence influences students to speak out (Morley, 1998). They will not be afraid of making mistakes or being blamed. The necessity of confidence in articulation is that when teaching pronunciation, working through a list of sounds and practice are important. The better we pronounce the better people understand us. It is unquestionable that these affecting factors have different influences in pronunciation. Some of these factors are unchangeable, for example, it is impossible for us to change the age and

phonetic ability of the learners. The influence of age is undeniable in language learning process. However, some factors are changeable, such as, some educational factors. For education factors, teachers play a crucial role for students' learning. Pronunciation is one of the significant aspects of foreign language teaching; also, it is a very serious task. It must be borne in mind that teachers are the models for their students. So, first, they should have good pronunciation; otherwise, they can mislead their students. Therefore, the teacher should spend some time on teaching pronunciation. In the process of pronunciation teaching, it is difficult to teach without practice, but students may be boring and depressing for drilling an individual sound for more than a few minutes one time. Therefore, it is important to combine practice pronunciation exercise with more meaningful exercises. Teachers should help students set up an appropriate goal of pronunciation and try to improve their learning motivation, and this will be an important part in language teaching.

Silent Letter

A silent letter is a letter that is unpronounced. Vocabularies create problems for both native and non-native speakers of English, because they make it more difficult to guess the spelling of many spoken words or the pronunciation of many written words. Carney (2012) argued that "the term 'vocabularies' is an extension of a metaphor commonly used in the teaching of reading, where letters are often supposed to 'speak' to the reader. When a simple vowel letter, as the *a* in latent has its long value [ei], 'the vowel says its name'. A commonly-used classroom rule for reading vowel digraphs, such as *oa*, *ea*, is: "when two vowels go walking, I it is the first that does the talking – a comment on the greater phonetic transparency of the first element in a complex graphic unit". Edward Carney (2012), distinguishes different kinds of silent letter, which present differing degrees of difficulty to readers and writers. They are in the following below: Auxiliary letters are part of a group of



letters that spell a sound that does not have a usual single letter to present it. Auxiliary letters which, with another letter, constitute digraphs, i.e. two letters combined which represent a single phoneme. These may further be categorized as:

a. “exocentric” digraphs, where the sound of the digraph is different from that of either of its constituent letters. These are rarely considered silent. There are examples:

+ where the phoneme has no standard single-letter representation, as with consonants *ng* for /ŋ/ as in *sing*, *th* for /θ/ as in *thin* or /ð/ as in *then*, and *sh* for /ʃ/ as in *show*, and diphthongs *ou* in *out* or *oi* in *point*. These are the default spellings for the relevant sounds and present no special difficulty for readers or writers. + where standard single-letter representation uses another letter, as with *gh* in *enough* or *ph* in *physical* instead of /f/. These are irregular for writers but may be less difficult for readers.

b. “endocentric” digraphs, where the sound of the digraph is the same as that of one of its constituent letters. These include:

+ most doubled consonants, as *bb* in *clubbed*; though not geminate consonants, as *ss* in *misspell*. Doubling due to suffixation or inflection is regular; otherwise, it may present difficulty to writers (e.g. *accommodate* is often misspelt) but not to readers.

+ the discontinuous digraphs whose second element is magic e, e.g. *a_e* in *rate* (cf. *rat*), *i_e* in *fine* (cf. *fin*). This is the regular way to represent long vowels in the last syllable of a morpheme.

+ others such as *ck* (which is in effect the “doubled” form of *k*), *gu* as in *guard*, *vogue*; *ea* as in *bread*, *heavy*, etc. These are difficult for writers and sometimes for readers.

Dummy letters do not have the same kind of function that auxiliary does. Dummy letters which bear no relation to neighboring letters and have no correspondence in pronunciation. There are two different subgroups of dummy letters. Some letters are inert letters, where the letter is sounded in a

cognate word: e.g. *n* in *damn* (cf. *damnation*); *g* in *phlegm* (cf. *phlegmatic*); *a* in *practically* (cf. *practical*). If the cognate is obvious, it may aid writers in spelling, but mislead readers in pronunciation. The rest are empty letters which never have a sound, e.g. *w* in *answer*, *h* in *honest*, *s* in *island*, *b* in *subtle*.

RESEACH METHODS

In this study, I used qualitative method to determine the chefs’ ability in recognizing the vocabularies based on how they pronounce the words. The qualitative method describes the chefs’ problems that exist, mispronouncing the vocabularies. A standard that I used to examine the chefs’ pronunciation is Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, the American English style.

Respondents of The Study

The respondents of this study are experienced chefs who work at the hotels in Mataram and West Lombok Regency. There are about 5 chefs in total. The chefs had the same pronunciation test regardless their position and English background knowledge.

The Method of Collecting Data

In this pandemic situation, natural communication between chefs and guests in banquet event was rarely took place. Therefore, I decided to give oral test to get the data. This method is time efficient and right on target. There are three stages that I conducted in collecting data:

1. Pronunciation test. I gave 40 words which related to culinary to the chefs.
2. Recording. I record the chefs’ pronunciation of the vocabularies in isolated words. I asked the chefs to read the vocabularies by the heart to avoid them from uneasily reading the real pronunciation when being recorded. The chefs are not allowed to ask other chefs or have a look at dictionary to check the way those words are pronounced.



3. Transcribing. I played and listened to the chefs' pronunciation recordings and transcribe it.

Data Analysis

In data analysis, I firstly identified the incorrect pronunciation from the recording and transcription. I selected the mispronounced words. Having done with the identification and selection, I finally drew conclusion from it. I described the chefs' pronunciation recordings and compared with English pronouncing dictionary. Ultimately, I was able to make the difference between chefs' deviated pronunciation with the standard one from the Oxford English dictionary.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Words Mostly the Chefs Mispronounced

These recordings were mostly taken place at the chefs' house and one at the hotel. The chefs live in Gunung Sari, Kekalik Swasembada Mataram, Karang Baru Rembiga, and the hotel is at Sheraton Hotel. From all the chefs I had recorded and interviewed, I found that the chefs had mispronunciation on some different words and some mispronunciation on the common words.

Table 1. Table of Commonly mispronounced words by the chefs

List of words	Correct pronunciations	Mispronunciations by the chefs
Salmon	/ˈsæm.ən/	/ˈsʌlm.on/
Event	/ɪˈvent/	/ɪˈvənt/
Chef	/ʃef/	/sef/
Spinach	/ˈspɪn.ɪtʃ/	/ˈspɪn.ʌtʃ/
Shrimp	/ʃrɪmp/	/srɪmp/
Banquet	/ˈbæŋ.kwɪt/	/ˈbæŋ.kət/
Biscuit	/ˈbɪs.kɪt/	/ˈbɪs.koɪt/

Thick	/θɪk/	/tɪk/
Scent	/sent/	/skən/
Steak	/steɪk/	/stɪk/
Sausage	/ˈsɔs.ɪdʒ/	/ˈsosis/
Cabbage	/ˈkæb.ɪdʒ/	/ˈkæb.ɪt/, /ˈgæb.ɪdʒ/, /ˈkæb.ɪd/
Whole	/hoʊl/	/wɒl/, /woʊl/
Champagne	/ʃæmˈpeɪn/	/sæmˈpeɪn/, /sæmˈpɪn/
Wrap	/ræp/	/wɒp/
Shake	/ʃeɪk/	/seɪk/
Machine	/məˈʃiːn/	/məˈsiːn/
Chocolate	/ˈtʃɒk.lət/	/ˈtʃɒk.lʌt/
Vegetable	/ˈvedʒ.tə.bl/	/ˈveʒte.bəl/, /ˈvegete.bəl/
Stir	/stɜːr/	/stɪr/, /strɪ/
Mug	/mʌg/	/moʊg/
Wheat	/wiːt/	/weːt/

From the table above there are words that certain chefs mispronounced the words. If we analyze closely, the words mispronounced by the chefs, they all are fail to recognize the silent letters as in /l/ in “salmon”, /c/ in “scent”, /e/ in “vegetable”, /i/ in “biscuit”, and /w/ in “whole, and “wrap”.

According to (Meng et al., 2007), pronunciation errors may be due to a diversity of factors, such as an imperfect understanding of semantics, syntax, morphology, phonology, coarticulatory effects and letter-to-sound rules. Fanani (2011) also mentioned that, the



existence L1 interference on L2 acquisitions like that shown in the pronunciation analysis respondents. It is clear that the respondents use the L1 sound system for help them pronounce the words in L2, which indicates it is direct interference from L1 to L2 (Most respondents say clearly certain silent letters in English). The respondents in this study has received the input of the mother tongue (*Bahasa Indonesia*) from their respective environments and positive corrections in form correct imitation and repetition. That is why, a habit has been formed which is has influenced the L2 learning process. As a result, the respondents started learning L2 with language habits those associated with L1. Customs this is what interferes L2 learning process, and new habits was formed. The mistakes were made in the acquisition of L2 accordingly can be seen as L1 interfering acquisition of L2. This theory is also emphasized the idea that where there are similarities between L1 and L2, learners will easily be using the L2 sound system; while when there is a difference, the learners having trouble like that demonstrated in the findings of this study. The five respondents have built rules interim L2 on their own with use their L1 knowledge to help them pronounce the words In Language English, so that resulting in various error pronunciation L2.

Dechert in Fanani (2011) also stated that the further away L1 and L2 apart structurally, the higher it is possible mistakes made in L2. Identify student mistakes no means assessing or labeling competence they. On the contrary, mistakes can help teachers find the right way to improve the process student learning. Certain mistakes need a problem-solving method well designed. Therefore, these mistakes must anticipate by a teacher in teaching English to student's beginner level.

The Way Chefs Mispronounce the English Words

After compiling 5 transcription from 5 chefs, I concluded that there were words from

the list that all the 5 chefs mispronounced. The list of the words is shown below: 2. Salmon

12. Almond
13. Banquet
1. Sausage
32. Chocolate
37. Stir

From the words list above, we can identify that all chefs mispronounced the word which contain silent "l" as in "salmon" and silent "t" as in "banquet". The chefs mispronounced the rest of the words by mispronounced the vowel letter "o" into /o/ which should be pronounced /ə/ in "almond". The word "chocolate", they pronounced the first "o" into /o/ which should be pronounced /ɑ/, and "i" in "stir" into /i/ which should be pronounced /ɜ:/. The other mispronunciation is when all the chef mispronounced the reflective sound "g" as in "sausage". They tend to pronounce the "g" by /s/ instead of /dʒ/. They mispronounced the word

"chocolate" by saying /'tʃo:k.lət/ instead of /'tʃɑ:k.lət/. The other word is "stir" where they mispronounced it as well as /strɪ:/ and /stɪr/ instead of /stɜ:/. These are the words that 4 chefs mispronounced:

These are the words that 4 chefs mispronounced:

3. Butcher
4. Event
5. Spinach
14. biscuit
15. Scissors
21. Sauce
25. Steak
26. Cabbage
27. Flour

When I analyzed the pronunciation of the chefs, it showed that they mispronounced the /o/ sound into the /ʌ/ sound as in "butcher", /i/ sound into /ui/ sound s in "biscuit", they sound the /c/ where it should be silent /c/ and pronounced the last "s" in scissors as /s/ instead of /z/. The 4 chefs mispronounced the word "sauce" where they mispronounced the /o/ sound into the /ʌʊ/ sound. For the word "steak",



the chefs mispronounced it by saying /stik/ instead of /steik/.

When the chefs pronounced the 'word "cabbage" they tend to pronounced it /'kæb.ɪt/ instead of /'kæb.ɪdʒ/. The chefs are weak in pronouncing reflective sound. The other word that has been mispronounced is "flour". They pronounced it /'fləʊ/ instead of /'flaʊ.ə/. They mistook the vowel "o" as /o/ sound.

Words that mispronounced by 3 chefs:

- 17. Shake
- 23. Scent
- 24. Fish
- 2. Shell

From the transcript that I have analyzed, it shows that these words are mispronounced by only 3 out of 5 chefs. The 3 chefs mispronounced the word

"scent" where they say /skən/ and /sɪnt/ instead of /sent/. The second word is

"fish". All the 3 chefs mispronounced the word by saying /fɪs/ instead of /fɪʃ/.

The last word is "shell". This have been mispronounced by the 3 chefs. The chef pronounced it /sel/ and /ʃɪl/ instead of /ʃel/.

The Problem Faced by Chefs in Pronouncing the English Words

Almost all the chef has mispronunciation on the words given, although not all chefs have the same mispronunciation. Sometimes they mispronounce the same words and sometimes they differ. When we analyzed the mispronunciation of the chefs, we can figure out that their problem in pronouncing the word is when they think that letter "u" is pronounced /ʌ/ as in "butcher". This can be caused by the lack of knowledge from the chefs in terms of English pronunciation. All chefs having problem in pronouncing the word which contain silent "l" as in "salmon" and silent "t" as in "banquet". The vowel letter "o" into /o/ which should be pronounced /ə/ in "almond". The word "chocolate", they pronounced the first "o" into /o/ which should be pronounced /ɑ/, and "i" in "stir" into /i/ which should be pronounced /ɜː/. The other mispronunciation is when all the chef mispronounced the reflective

sound "g" as in "sausage". They tend to pronounce the "g" by /s/ instead of /dʒ/. Another possible cause of the chefs' mispronunciation is the lack of knowledge of the new words. Thus, it trigs them to picture the sound in their mind, tempting them to create new phoneme category to suit the unfamiliar correct words pronunciation that were accustomed to them. Therefore, subconsciously, it becomes a habit for them.

The effect of age on language development and pronunciation can make adults find pronunciation more difficult than kids do, and they are likely not going to achieve native-like pronunciation. There is a biological or neurological period that ends around the age of 12; it will become extremely difficult after this period to achieve the complete mastery of a second Language, particularly pronunciation.

On the other hand, Bongaerts et al., (1997) assumed, among other adult learners have been shown to be able to achieve native-like achievement in an L2. However, the degree of the accuracy of pronunciation varies considerably from one person to another. According to Avery & Ehrlich (1992), discrepancy between adult learners in pronunciation means that ESL classroom time can be profitable devoted to improve the pronunciation of students.

Non-linguistic variables related to an individual's identity and learning objectives, state of mind towards the target language, culture, local speakers, and sort of inspiration which are past the teacher's control (Miller, 2003), all have their share within the improvement of articulation aptitudes. In expansion, the degree of presentation to and utilize of the target language can bolster or block articulation abilities improvement. For illustration, learners who are active and confident and get included in intelligent with local speakers are at risk to hone their remote language pronunciation (Avery & Ehrlich, 1992). On the other hand, a few learners feel awkward attempting out modern speech rhythm and song designs Miller (2003), whereas others



feel inept articulating “weird” sounds, and with time, they choose that it is futile and incomprehensible to memorize English articulation (Laroy, 1995). In this regard, Miller (2003) believes that changing – and not changing – discourse designs is influenced by how much obligation the understudy takes, how much the understudy hones exterior of lesson, and how prepared the understudy is.

Avery & Ehrlich (1992) explained that the sound pattern of the learner’s first language is transferred into the second language and it is likely to cause foreign accents. The mispronunciations of words by non-native speakers reflect the influence of the sounds, rules, stress, and intonation of their native language. For example, non-native speakers’ utterances of English rhythm have been investigated in several studies (Wenk, 1985), (Mochizuki-Sudo & Kiritani, 1991). These researchers concluded that the transfer from the learners’ native language influenced their production of English-like stress alternation on a phrase. In this respect, Avery and Ehrlich mentioned that the sound system of the native language can influence the learners’ pronunciation of a target language at least in three ways. First, when there is a sound in the target language which is absent from the learners’ native sound inventory, or vice versa, learners may not be able to produce or even perceive the sound(s).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

- a. The words that are mispronounced by the chefs are *salmon, scent, machine, event, steak, chocolate, chef, sausage, vegetable, spinach, cabbage, stir, doughnut, whole, mug, banquet, champagne, wheat, biscuit, wrap, thick, shake*.
- b. The way chefs mispronounce the English words are mostly the word which contain silent “l” as in “salmon” and silent “t” as in “banquet”. The vowel letter “o” into / o/ which should be pronounced /ə/ in

“almond”. The word “chocolate”, they pronounced the first “o” into /o/ which should be pronounced /ɑ/, and “i” in “stir” into /i/ which should be pronounced /ɜ:/. The reflective sound “g” as in “sausage”. They tend to pronounce the “g” by /s/ instead of /dʒ/.

- c. The problem faced by the chefs are caused by the lack of knowledge from the chefs in terms of English pronunciation. Another possible cause of the chefs’ mispronunciation is the lack of knowledge of the new words. Thus, it trigs them to picture the sound in their mind, tempting them to create new phoneme category to suit the unfamiliar correct words pronunciation that were accustomed to them. Therefore, subconsciously, it becomes a habit for them.

Suggestion

The chefs are recommended to follow short English for Specific Purposes training to train them pronounce and use the English words correctly. Refer to a complete English Dictionary which provides the phonetically transcription, punctuation and the way of pronunciation in order to assist them to pronounce English words easily and to achieve good pronunciation. Seize each opportunity to talk to native speakers of English. Listen intensively and extensively to native speakers of English via many media. Record their pronunciations, compare them to these of native speakers, identify the problematic areas, and practice the correct pronunciation.

Further Research

Considering the results and recommendations of the study, I make some suggestions for further research to do a study which analyzes mispronunciations of vowels among the Indonesian chefs. Do a study which analyzes mispronunciations among Indonesian chefs of English. Suggest specialized and practical English programs for overcoming mispronunciations among Chefs. Apply a



similar study to younger chefs in order to detect such mispronunciations in an early stage.

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