

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

Language has many functions in human life. Language is a tool of communication. Without language, people cannot communicate to each other to express their hopes, aspirations and through. Moreover, it is very useful and flexible which can serve human needs in their communication in any situation. Nasr (1985, p.1) said that language is an acquired habit of systematic vocal activity representing meanings coming from human experience, and it also an acquired vocal system for communicating meanings. Language itself is a God's gift for human. It is one of the signs of his power. The importance of language is also mentioned in the Holy Quran *surat Al-Hujurat* verse 13 as follows:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ

لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

This verse means that Allah SWT has created us in pairs. There are men and women; he has created us in different tribes, nations, and regions. So that, humans are able to know each other and also able to communicate with each other, and for this

verse human need language to communicate each other because without language human cannot communicate.

In this world, there are many languages used, one of them is English. English can unite people in this world because English is universal language. Harmer (2007, p.13) said that English is commonly used in exchanges between Japanese and Argentinean business people, or between Singaporeans and their Vietnamese counterparts. People use English as the first, second or as foreign language. In Indonesia, English is foreign language and has been taught as a compulsory subject in educational system since 1967, after Indonesian independent day. It is taught not only as a subject in elementary school, junior and senior high school, but also as a subject in the university level.

In English there are four skills which have to be mastered by the students in learning English. Those basic skills have the same positions in language learning. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Beside the four skill mentioned above, there are also three components of English. They are pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and spelling. (Fauziati, 2002, p.110)

Pronunciation is one of the important of learning English. Thurnbury (2006, cited in fahriah's thesis p.2) states that Pronunciation is the general term for the part of language classes and course that deals with aspect of the phonology of English. This includes the individual sounds (phonem) of English, sounds in connected

speech, word and sentence stress, rhythm and intonation. Pronunciation also can be the biggest trouble in communication, because if we pronounce something with the wrong pronunciation it can be wrong meaning. This is appropriate with the holy Qur'an *surah* Al Baqarah: 31

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ
 أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَٰؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ ﴿٣١﴾

The verse describe that there is a command from Allah The Almighty to pronounce the name of things.

Pronunciation is definitely the biggest thing that people notice when they are speaking English, pronunciation also makes someone's first impression in speaking English (Szynalski's article (<http://www.antimoon.com/how/pronuncwhy.htm>)). According to Joan (1994, p.6) that pronunciation is important for students because the competency of pronunciation is one aspect that determines the level of someone speaking ability. When people speaking with incorrect pronunciation, it can be a big problem in communication, they cannot understand what they are talking about, then they may be confused, because sometime in English vocabulary, different pronunciation also has different meaning. Therefore, when communicating with other people we have to be good in pronunciation, so they can understand what we say.

Many students of English Department have problem in pronouncing words, especially in minimal pairs, there are some words that have similar sound and it is difficult to be pronounced. When two words such as 'pat' and 'bat' are identical in form except for a contrast in one phoneme, occurring in the same position, the two words are described as a minimal pair (Yule, 2006, p.46). Here is one simple meaning; minimal pairs consist of two words which have different meaning and its difference is in only one sound occurring in the same environment. Minimal pairs consist of two categories, they are vowel and consonant. Minimal pairs are difficult to be pronounced because they have similar sound. Especially in the consonant sound because of that, many students are confused of getting accidentally exchanged in pronouncing minimal pairs words. According to Ladefoged (1982, p.47) in consonant contrast there are only minor differences in the consonant of the principal in dialects English, nevertheless, consonant minimal pairs are difficult to be pronounced because the sounds between *f*, *v* and *p* are different but many people produce those sounds incorrectly because among sound *f*, *v* and *p* has minor differences sounds. English has twenty four consonants and they divided into voiced and voiceless. Voiceless is when the vocal cords are spread apart, the air from the lungs between them unimpeded. "p, k, f, s, ʃ, t, θ, h, tʃ" and Voiced is when the vocal cords are drawn together, the air from the lungs repeatedly pushes them apart as it passes through, creating a vibration effect." b, d, g, dʒ, l, n, m, r, v, w, j, z, ʒ, ŋ, ð "(Yule, 2006, p.30). Examples of consonant minimal pairs are *pan fan*, *cup cup*.

The students of English Department have to be good in pronouncing words, especially in pronouncing vowel and consonant minimal pairs because they will be a teacher of English in the future. The researcher is interested in conducting research in this field because consonant minimal pairs have minor sound differences. It causes consonant minimal pairs sometimes difficult to be pronounced by many students, especially English students who will be an English teacher in next future. In this research, the researcher choose fourth semester as the subject because the researcher wants to know why do the fourth semester students are still wrong in pronouncing consonant minimal pairs, whereas they have taken pronunciation subject in second semester, if they have taken pronunciation class, they should know how the correct pronunciation of consonant minimal pairs.

Regarding to this research, there are two previous researches. The researcher found out that the one is a research conducted by Ernawati (2014) entitled *English Department Students' Mistakes in Pronouncing Noun Inflectional Ending*. There are similarities between this thesis and the previous research. The previous research conducted the same subject such as English department students and their pronunciation skill. The difference is in the object of study. The previous research conducted about mistakes in pronouncing noun inflectional ending while this research is about minimal pairs. The findings of the previous study based on first statements of problems, the students' ability in pronouncing noun inflectional ending for plural noun can be categorized into fair category, the common mistakes which found in

pronouncing noun inflectional ending for plural noun pronunciation occur in words that end with voiced sounds that should be pronounced as /z/. The second previous research by Norol Hidayah entitled *English Educational Department Students' Mastery in Pronouncing Vowel Minimal Pairs*. The similarities are in the subject, they are English department students and pronouncing minimal pairs. The difference is in the object, while the previous research focused on the mastery in vowel minimal pairs, while this thesis will conduct about error analysis in consonant minimal pairs. The findings of the previous study based on first statements of problems, English education department students' mastery in pronouncing vowel minimal pairs based on 26 students as the data which are categorized into fair category and English students' problems in pronouncing vowel minimal pairs based on they are often error in pronouncing vowel minimal pairs types (/æ/,/e/,/ɒ/,/aʊ/ and /æ/,/ʌ/).

From the description above, it can be concluded that the researcher is interested to analyze students' error in pronouncing minimal pairs especially for 4th semester of English department students of Antasari State Institute for Islamic Studies who have taken pronunciation subject in second semester. Based on this fact, the researcher is interested in conducting research entitled STUDENTS' ERROR IN PRONOUNCING CONSONANT MINIMAL PAIRS. By conducting this research, the researcher hopes that it can give many benefits to English department students who are being investigated and to all the readers who need information related to this research.

B. Problem Statements

Based on the background of study which has been stated above, the researcher investigates these following statements of problem:

1. How is the students' ability in pronouncing consonant minimal pairs ?
2. What are the common errors found in students' pronunciation consonant minimal pairs?
3. What are the factors that caused the students' error in pronouncing consonant minimal pairs?

C. Objectives of the Study

1. To know students' ability in pronouncing consonant minimal pairs.
2. To know what are the common errors found in students' pronunciation consonant minimal pairs.
3. To know what are the factors that caused students' error in pronouncing consonant minimal pairs.

D. Significances of Study

1. As information for the students to know their ability and common errors in pronouncing consonant minimal pairs, then they can improve their ability in pronunciation, especially pronouncing consonant minimal pairs.
2. As an input for the writer to enrich knowledge and experience in scientific research, especially in pronunciation of consonant minimal pairs.

3. As a consideration for the next research in the same object, but different point of view.
4. As an enrichment of Antasari State Institute for Islamic Studies Banjarmasin library literature.

E. Definition of Key Terms

1. Students' error is regarded as everything that wrongly pronounced by the fourth semester students of English department in pronouncing consonant minimal pairs.
2. Pronouncing Minimal Pairs is pronouncing two words which are only have difference in one tiny sound (Advanced Teacher Training 2008). Minimal pairs consist of two categories; vowel and consonant, but the researcher just focuses on consonant minimal pairs. There are 12 types of minimal pair in consonant which the researcher takes, they are (p/b), (f/v), (f/p), (v,b), (θ/s), (θ/t), (s/z), (t/d), (s/f), (dʒ/ tʃ), (n/ŋ), (l,r)