

**THE ABILITY OF STUDENTS OF EDUCATION PROGRAM
IN PRONOUNCING ENGLISH VOWELS
(A Case Study on the Pronunciation of /, /æ/, :/)**

THESIS

*Submitted as a partial fulfillment of the requirements to obtain Strata
One (S1) Degree*



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(A Case Study on the Pronunciation of vowel /ə/, /æ/, /ɑ:/)**

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ABSTRAK

Ilahi, Redha. 2011. "The Ability of English Students of Educational Program of English Department in Pronouncing English vowels." *Unpublished Thesis*. Padang: Fakultas Bahasa dan Seni Universitas Negeri Padang.

Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengetahui kemampuan mahasiswa tingkat III Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris tahun 2010/2011 dalam mengucapkan bunyi vokal Bahasa Inggris yaitu bunyi vokal /ə/, /æ/, dan /ɑ:/ dalam suatu wacana. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk melihat sejauh mana siswa mampu mengucapkan bunyi-bunyi vokal tersebut sesuai kebiasaan ucapan penutur Bahasa Inggris.

Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian deskriptif. Sample penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa kependidikan (TM 2008) yang berjumlah 32 orang, dari hasil penarikan sample yang dilakukan dengan menggunakan metode pemilihan acak (*Random sampling*). Instrumen yang digunakan adalah tes *pronunciation* yang digunakan untuk mengetahui kemampuan mahasiswa. Mahasiswa diminta untuk membaca beberapa teks yang didalamnya terdapat 45 kata yang mengandung bunyi vokal /ə/, /æ/, dan /ɑ:/. Penelitian sample dilakukan setelah diadakan ujicoba dan revisi terhadap instrument. Setelah itu, data dianalisis dengan menggunakan metoda analisis dari Sudjana.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa secara umum kemampuan mahasiswa dalam pengucapan bahasa inggris dikategorikan *average* yaitu dengan persentase sebanyak 64,9%. Secara spesifik, kemampuan mahasiswa dalam pengucapan bunyi vokal /ə/ baik (*good*) dengan persentase 70,6%. Disamping itu, kemampuan mahasiswa dalam pengucapan bunyi vokal /æ/ masih buruk (*poor*) dengan persentase sebanyak 48,3%. Selain itu, kemampuan mahasiswa dalam pengucapan bunyi vokal /ɑ:/ adalah baik (*good*) yaitu dengan persentase 75,8%.

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The writer

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

Pronunciation is one of the most important aspects in language. Incorrect pronunciation may cause misunderstanding in communication. According to Ager (1998), “the better your pronunciation the better people will understand you and the easier you will find it to understand them”. Based on this statement, pronunciation is needed as an important aspect in communication. A communication will be comfortable if the English speaker has good pronunciation. The speakers will understand every sentence being communicated. Brown (2001), states that pronunciation is a key to gain full communicative competence. Someone who has communicative competence will communicate in speaking. Therefore, pronunciation becomes the focus in good communication.

In learning English pronunciation, students learn about phonetics which gives them information about the study of speech sounds. Phonetics is divided into three kinds, namely Articulatory Phonetics, Acoustic Phonetics, and Auditory Phonetics. The students study articulatory phonetics as the main subfield of phonetics. Articulatory phonetics deals with speech sounds from the point of view of their ways of production by the speech organs. Articulatory phonetics is focused on suprasegmental and segmental features. Suprasegmental features, which refer to such feature as stress, pitch, length, intonation, and other features, always accompany the production of segmental. Segmental features refer to sound units arranged in a sequential order. Segmental features consist of vowels and consonants, diphthongs and their distribution.

Generally, English speakers use twelve pure vowels sounds. They are /e/, /ə/, /ɛ:/, /æ:/, /æ/, /ɔ:/, /ɑ:/, /ɒ/, /i:/, /I/, /ʊ/, and /u:/, Kelly (2000:29). Vowels are articulated when a voiced airstream is shaped using the tongue and the lips to modify the overall shape of the mouth. There are some variables in articulating these vowels. First, vowels can be differentiating from tongue position and lips position. Vowels can be separated in front, central, and back vowel, then also in high, mid, and low vowel that is based on the position of the tongue. Then, in articulating vowels, it also can be differentiated into tense-lax vowels. Vowels can be distinguished by the position of the lips; that is spread (unrounded), rounded, and neutral. Therefore, all these variables are used to produce the twelve English vowels and to differentiate them from each other.

Based on the interview with the English Department students, it was found that many students had difficulty in pronouncing vowels. They found difficulties to decide which sound they should use to pronounce letter “a” in English. For instance, the students got difficulties to pronounce *man* /mæn/ correctly. Some of them pronounced it with /men/ or /mən/. When students pronounced the words incorrectly, misinterpretation about the meaning of the word occurred. As the students said *man* /mæn/ meant an adult male (singular) into /men/ meant adult males (plural). The fact shows that the ability of students in English pronunciation needs improvement.

Related to the interview with the students, the researcher found several problems of the students in pronunciation. First, there were phonological differences between the first language and the target language. First language

affected someone in learning a new language. For Indonesian students, the problem occurred because of the influence of Indonesian vocal system that was different from the English one. For example, in producing vowels, some students found difficulties in pronouncing English vowels because English had more vowels than the Indonesian language. In Indonesian language, it is commonly known that there are six vowels. They are /a/ as anak, /i/ as ikan, /u/ as ukir, /e/ as ekor, /o/ as obat and /ɔ/ as tante, Lapoliwa (1981). However, it is known that English vowels have 12 vowel sounds such as /e/, /ə/, /ɛ:/, /ɔ:/, /æ/, /ɒ/, /ɑ:/, /ɪ/, /i:/, /I/, /ʊ/, and /u:/. There were sounds in English that do not exist in Indonesian language such as in vowel /I/, /æ/, /ɛ:/, and /ɒ/. For examples, when they wanted to pronounce English words like *cat* /kæt/ and *she* /ʃe/I/, they tended to say /ket/ and /si:/. Then, English vowels are separated in long vowels and short vowels that might influence the meaning. However, long or short vowels did not have any influences in Indonesian language. It made them find difficulties in pronouncing English vowels.

Second, it was hard for some students to differentiate sounds in English spelling. Most vowels could be spelled in many different ways. Learners who were used a strict sound or spelling correspondence in their language would often be misled by English spelling. For EFL learners, who often depended more on the written text than on what they heard, this could cause many pronunciation errors.

In learning English, the spelling of the word is different from the written one. It caused some problems to the students who often depended more on the written text than on what they heard. The students commonly tended to spell the

word based on the written. However in English, the spelling of words may not be the same with the written. For example, in English vowels, the letter “a” can stand for different vowel sounds such as in words *cat*, *father*, *about*, and *make*, but in Indonesian vowels, the letter “a” is just be pronounced as /a/ in “ikan”. On the other hand, same sound may have various spelling as the sound of vowel /i/ in the words *read*, *see*, *people*, *believe*, *we*, and *key*. Therefore, these differences made Indonesian speakers confuse to pronounce these vowels.

Third, lack of practice became the other causes of the student’s problem in pronunciation. Practice is needed to make the vocal system familiarize with English sounds. It was known that the lack of practicing English pronunciation caused the difficulty in creating an environment to use English in college. Mostly, practice English ended when the class ended. However, the fluent pronunciation was better through practice as more frequently as possible.

The last reason was the student’s factors in learning pronunciation in the process of teaching and learning. There are two kinds of factors which affect someone in learning; those are internal and external factors. Internal factors come from the learners themselves, such as motivation, interest, aptitude, and intelligence. Students’ had different motivation in learning pronunciation. The differences let the condition that showed some active students and passive students. Also, there were some talented students but in the other hand they were slow one. It affected them to get ability in pronunciation. While the external factors come from outside of the learners, such as situation and condition of the environment, learning materials, and the teacher’s ability in handling the English

teaching and learning program. Some students got difficulties in learning pronunciation due to environment and situation of learning process. Some of classes did not comfortable for them to study. The researcher concluded that some factors above affected students in learning pronunciation.

As a teacher in the future, the students of educational program in the English department of State University of Padang should straighten out these problems. Although mistakes are allowed as long as they do not change the meaning, but for the English educational program students who are being prepared as teacher, mispronunciation became a problem to them. Mispronunciations were very awkward because a teacher was expected to be a model to the students. It was clearly described that the teacher had to have accurate and standard pronunciation in order that the students would not imitate the incorrect model. That was why as the candidate of the future teacher ought to have good pronunciation ability.

Therefore, it was important to analyze students' ability of English education program in pronunciation. The researcher wanted to know how good they are in pronunciation that helped them to guide their students in learning pronunciation.

B. Identification of the Problem

In learning English pronunciation, the students got some problems. There were some problems that the students found in learning English pronunciation.

The first one was phonological differences between the first language and the target language. A number of Indonesian vowels were different from English one. It was known that English had more vowels than Indonesian. English has 12 vowels such as /e/, /ə/, /i:/, /ɪ:/, /æ/, /ɑ:/, /ɔ:/, /o:/, /i:/, /I/, /ʊ/, and /u:/ and Indonesian has 6 vowels; /a/, /i/, /u/, /e/, /o/ and /ɔ/. English caused problems for Indonesian learners since there were sounds in English that did not exist in their native language such as /I/, /æ/, /ɔ:/, and /ɔ/. For examples, when they wanted to pronounce English words like “she” / I/ and “thin”/ɔIn/, they tended to say /si:/ and /tin/. It was clear that pronunciation problems faced by foreign language learners were caused by the differences found between the learners’ language and the target language.

The second was the difficulties in difference sounds in English spelling. In ordinary English spelling, it was not always easy to know what sounds the letters stand for. For Indonesian students, they often pronounced words based on the written. In fact, one letter may have different pronunciation, and one sound may relate to some letters. For example, in English vowels, the letter “a” can stand for different vowel sounds such as in words *cat*, *father*, *about*, *many*, and *make*, but in Indonesian vowels, the letter “a” is just be pronounced as /a/ in “ikan”. Moreover, in the word *city*, *busy*, *women*, *pretty*, and *village*, the letters ‘i’, /y/, /u/, /o/, /e/, and /a/ all stand for the same vowel sound, the one which occurs in *sit* /sit/. Therefore, the pronunciations of the English words which are not consistent with its spelling make a problem in students’ pronunciation.

The lack of practice in pronunciation also became another problem. Students found difficulties of how to practice and the environment seemed not supporting in practicing their English. The last was students' factors in learning process that was naturally different in every student. Some students had less ability in hearing, producing sounds and also different motivation with the other friends.

C. Limitation of the Problem

There are several problems that can be researched in pronouncing vowels. In this research, the researcher limited her focus in pronouncing vowels: /ɪ:/, /æ/, and /ə/. The reason for limiting the scope of the problem was because English letters have different pronunciation and the letter 'a' has more variation in pronunciation than the other vowels. That was made students hard to predict which sounds should occur for the letter 'a' in English words. The students were still confused to pronounce those vowels.

Also, this research was limited to the ability of third year students of English Department of State University of Padang who are in taking education program. The researcher chose third year English students because they have already learned about pronunciation. Then, the researcher chose students of English educational program because they are going to be teachers. They had to teach English to their students including the English pronunciation. Their good pronunciation would help them teach their students well. In this case, the

researcher wanted to know how well their mastery and ability in pronouncing English vowels.

D. Formulation of the Problem

The problem of this research was formulated into the following question:

“What was the ability of the third year of English Department students in pronouncing English vowels?”

E. Research Questions

From the formulation of the problem above, there were questions that would be answered after doing the research:

1. How was the ability of the third year students of English Department in pronouncing vowel /ə/
2. How was the ability of the third year students of English Department in pronouncing vowel /æ/
3. How was the ability of the third year students of English Department in pronouncing vowel /ɔ:/

F. Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research was to find out the answer of the research questions and to had appropriate description and explanation about students' ability in pronouncing English vowels /ə/, /æ/, and /ɔ:/.

G. Significance of the Research

It was expected that the finding of this research might contribute to the lecturers and the students. By knowing the student's ability, the researcher hoped that this study could give information to the lecturers as a guidance to do some improvement in teaching pronunciation. Furthermore, this research was also expected to give information to the English educational students, who are going to be teachers, and paid more attention in pronouncing English words. By reading this thesis, the students would get information about English vowels, how vowels were produced, and also how was the ability of the English Department students in pronouncing English vowels in order to improve their English pronunciation.

H. Definition of Key Terms

- Pronunciation is the act of manner of pronouncing syllables, words, phrases, and sentences with regard to the production of sounds and placing of stress, intonation, etc.
- Vowel /ə/ is a sound which is produced when lips completely relaxed and open only a little, the tongue rests in the center of the mouth.
- Vowels /æ/ is a sound which is produced when mouth is open and spread (unrounded) the lips; the tip of the tongue is behind the lower teeth, pushing down and slightly forward.
- Vowels /ɑ:/ is a sound which is produced when mouth is open, the tip of the tongue rests in the bottom of the mouth, and lips are not rounded.

- English educational program students are those who take English Department program majoring in educational program that will get strata one degree after graduating, and they are going to be the teacher in the future.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A. The Concept of English Pronunciation

Pronunciation is the way utter word, phrase, and sentence. Hornby (1987) defines pronunciation as a way in which the language is spoken, or a key in which word is spoken, or a way in which word is pronounced. Richards in Harmer (2006:121) states that the definition of pronunciation is the way sounds are perceived by the hearer. Moreover, when talking about pronunciation in language learning we mean the production and perception of the significant sounds of a particular language in order to achieve meaning in context of language use, Carter and Nunan (2001: 56). Relation to the statements above, The American Heritage Dictionary (2009) concludes some definition of pronunciation that is the act of manner of pronouncing words, utterances of speech; a way of speaking a word, especially a way that is accepted or generally understood; and a graphic representation of the way a word is spoken using phonetic symbol.

The definition of the pronunciation is not only about the way people produce the sounds but it also the way of communication. Longman (2001), states that pronunciation is the key in which a language or particular word is pronounced. In other words, he also said that it is a particular person's way of pronouncing a word or words in communication. Relation to this, Ur (1996) states that pronunciation makes communication to be easily and comfortably comprehensible to another. Brown (2001) also says that pronunciation is the key

to gain full communicative competence; stress, rhythm, and intonation are the features of pronunciation. Based on those definitions, the researcher assumed that pronunciation was the way people produce the sounds and the way of communication, also the one important aspect to support one's speaking ability in order to make the communication become understandable to others.

Moreover, Richards and Willy (2008:175) also explains about the features of pronunciation. The study of pronunciation consists of phonetics and phonology. In pronunciation, students learn about phonetics which gives them information about the study of speech sounds. Phonetics is divided into three kinds; Articulatory Phonetics; the actions and movements of the speech organs in producing sounds, Acoustic Phonetics; the nature and acoustics of the sound waves which transmit speech, and Auditory Phonetics; how speech is received by the hearer.

Articulatory phonetics is focused on suprasegmental and segmental features. According to Kelly (2000:2), Suprasegmental features which refer to such features as stress, pitch, length, intonation, and other features, always accompany the production of segmental. Then, Segmental features refer to sound units arranged in a sequential order or the different sounds within a language. Sounds may be voiced or voiceless. Voiced sounds occur when the vocal cords in the larynx are vibrated. It was easy to tell whether a sound is voiced or not by placing one or two fingers on Adam's apple. If it was producing a voiced sound, it would feel a vibration; if it was producing a voiceless sound, it would not.

The set of Segmental features consists of two categories: vowel sounds and consonant sounds. Kelly (2000:4) states that consonant sounds may be voiced or unvoiced. It is possible to identify many pairs of consonants which are essentially the same except for the element of voicing, for example /f/, as in *fan*, and /v/, as in *van*. On the other hand, vowel sounds are all voiced. Vowel sounds are separated as combination vowels (diphthongs) and single vowels. In English, there eight diphthongs such as /ei/, /eɪ/, /aɪ/, /aʊ/, /ɔɪ/, /oʊ/, /eə/, /ɪə/, and single vowels has twelve vowels such as /e/, /ə/, /ɛ:/, /ɔ:/, /æ/, /ɒ/, /ɔ:/, /ɔ/, /i:/, /I/, /v/, and /u:/.

Therefore, it can be concluded that pronunciation is study about phonology and phonetics which focused on suprasegmental and segmental features which is study about consonants and vowels.

B. Vowels

Vowel can be defined as sounds in which there is continual vibration of the vocal cords and the airstream is allowed to escape from the mouth in an unobstructed manner, without any interruption, Murcia (1991:93). Then, Kelly (2000: 29) says that vowels are articulated when a voiced air stream is shaped using the tongue and the lips to modify the overall shape of the mouth. After that, according to Connor (1999: 79) states that vowels are made by voiced air passing through different mouth- shapes; the differences in the shape of the mouth are caused by different positions of the tongue and of the lips.

According to Murcia (1991:111), the variable in articulating vowels are depend on the height and position of the tongue, the volume of the oral cavity as determined by jaw movement, and the rounded or spread position of the lips. This statement is supported by Underhill (1994), who says that the distinguishing quality of each vowel is produced by the shape and size of the resonant space in the mouth. This is controlled by the position and shape of the tongue, lips, and jaw. Therefore, it can be concluded that the articulation of vowels depend on the position of the tongue, the position of the lips, and also the jaw movement.

Moreover, there are some primary characteristics of vowels. First, vowels are classified as high, mid, or low, referring to the level of the tongue within the oral cavity and the accompanying raised or lowered position of the jaw. Murcia (1991: 102), states that high, mid, and low vowels can be differentiate by the successive opening of the jaw and the lowering of the tongue. The high vowel occurs when the tongue is quite high in the mouth; the mid vowels can be recognized when the tongue is neither high nor low in the mouth; and in producing low vowel, the position of the tongue is low in the mouth. Then, vowels are also classified as front, central, or back depending on how far forward or back the tongue is positioned within the oral cavity during articulation and which part of the tongue is involved.

Another very visible factor that characterizes the production of vowel sounds is lip position. Vowels can be distinguished by the degree of lip rounding or spreading that occurs during their articulation. Kelly (2000:30) classified the lips position into rounded, spread, and neutral. Rounded occurs when the lips are

push forward into the shape of the circle, as when produce sound /u/. And the spread lips occur when the concerns of the lips are move away from each other, as when smiling sound /i/. When the positions of the lips are not noticeably rounded or spread that is called neutral.

The last characteristic of vowel is that vowels can be either tense or lax. These terms refer to the amount of muscle tension used to produce the vowel, the tendency of the vowels to glide, its distribution in closed or open syllables, and its relative place of articulation. Fromkin (2007: 239) explains that when the position of the tongue is slightly higher and often little longer in duration called tense, however; lax vowels is shorter and less than tense vowels.

Based on these statements, it can be summarized that the characteristic of vowels depends on which part of the tongue is involved (front, central, back); and how high the tongue is when the sound is produced (high, mid, low); the position of the lips (rounded, spread, neutral); also lax and tense vowels.

C. English Vowels

English vowels are divided into two major classes, simple vowels (also called pure vowels or monophthongs) and diphthongs (William, 1997: 36). Simple vowels do not show a noticeable change in quality, the vowels of *pit*, *cat*, *dog*, *set*, *but*, *put*, and the first vowel of *suppose* are all simple vowels. Diphthongs are vowels that exhibit a change in quality within single syllable.

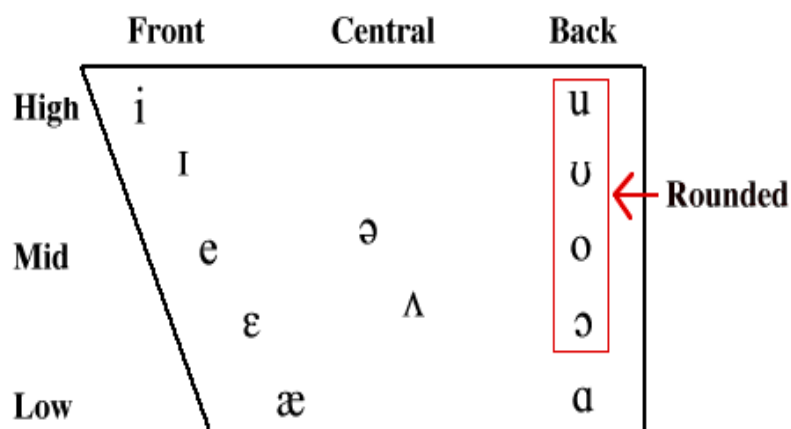
Generally, there are twelve vowels that commonly known in English. According to Kelly (2000: 29) English speakers generally use twelve pure vowels.

Vowels are sounds in which no such constriction is made; the air flows out of the mouth relatively freely and the sound is relatively loud and strong, Fromkin (2007:706). Vowels are articulated when a voiced airstream is shaped using the tongue and the lips to modify the overall shape of the mouth. Then, the distinguishing quality of each vowel is produced by the shape and size of the resonant space in the mouth. This is controlled by the position and shape of the tongue, lips, and jaw, Underhill (1994).

Articulatory classification of vowels draws on three aspects of vowel production: vertical adjustments of the tongue (high, mid, low), horizontal (front, central, back) adjustments of the tongue, and lips position. Vowels are characterized by the positions of the tongue and the relative rounding of the lips. Partly on the basis of auditory perception, that refers to vowels as being high or low, front or back, and rounded or non rounded, Finegan (2004:94). The position of the tongue is described by the chart below:

Vowels chart

Tongue positions of the vowels of English

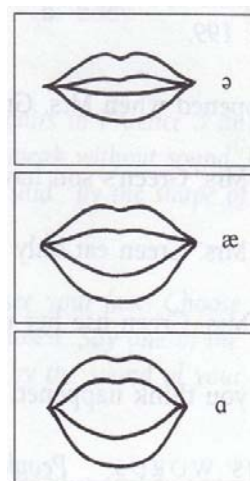


Adapted from University of Texas, 2000

Based on the chart above, it is shown that the columns in the vowel chart show whether the tongue is toward the front, central, or back of the mouth that refer to the part of the tongue. Then, the rows show whether the tongue is high, mid, or low in the mouth which refer to the distance between the tongue and the roof of the mouth. Based on the chart, it was clearly described that vowel /ə/ belongs to mid-central vowel which the tongue rests in the centre of the mouth. The position of vowel /æ/ is in low-front vowel which the tip of tongue down behind the lower teeth, pushing slightly forward and the vowel. For the vowel /ɑ:/ is in low back vowel which the tongue rests down in the bottom of the mouth (farther back than just behind your teeth).

Moreover, in lips position, vowels are separated into rounded, spread (unrounded), and neutral. The lips are rounded when they pushed forward into the shape of a circle, as when someone produces sound /u/. While spread (unrounded) happens when the corners of the lips are move away from each other, as sound /i/. Then neutral vowel occurs when the position of the lips is not spread nor rounded, Kelly (2000:30). The lips position of vowel /ə/, /æ/, and /ɑ:/ is described below:

Based on this chart, it was known that the vowel /ə/ and /ɑ:/ is produced when lips position are neutral. It's clearly described that the position of the lips when produced these sounds there were no movement of the lips position like spread (unrounded) or rounded. All is produced with the neutral lips position. However, in



Taken from Lane. 1993, p 34

pronouncing vowel /æ/, the concerns of the lips are move away from each other. Therefore, it can be categorized that vowel /ə/ and /ɜ:/ is neutral vowels, and vowel /æ/ belongs to spread (unrounded) vowel.

The final distinction is described in tense or lax vowels. Murcia (1991: 96) states that the tense vowels /i:, u:, ɔ:, ɒ:, ɛ, e / are articulated with more muscle tension than lax vowels /ɪ, æ, ʊ, ʌ, ə/. This added muscle tension serves to stretch the articulation of tense vowel sounds to more extreme peripheral position in the mouth. Then, it couldn be known that vowel /ə/ and /æ/ are lax vowel, however the vowel /ɜ:/ is belong to tense vowels.

Based on those explanations above, the characteristics of each vowel could be summarized as follow:

a. Vowel /ɜ/

Articulatory definition:

/ɜ/ is a mid central lax neutral vowel

Articulatory description:

- a. In producing /ɜ/ the central part of the tongue is raised.
- b. It is raised to the half position, or even lower.
- c. The opening between the jaws is medium.
- d. The lips position is neutral.

Example: Sofa /sɒfɜ/, About /əbʌt/, Carier /kəriə(r)/, and Central /sentrəl/

b. Vowel /æ/

Articulatory definition:

/æ/ is a low front lax unrounded vowel.

Articulatory description:

- a. In producing /æ/ the front of the tongue is raised;
- b. The front of the tongue is raised a little bit to a point midway between the open and the half open position.
- c. The low and the back parts of the tongue are low in the mouth
- d. The jaws are rather widely opened.
- e. The lips positions are widely open (spread).

Example: Band /bænd/, Man /mæn/, Cat /cæt/, and Marry /mæri/.

c. Vowel /ɑ:/

Articulatory definition:

/ɑ:/ is a low back tense unrounded vowel

Articulatory description:

- a. In producing /ɑ:/ the back of the tongue is raised;
- b. The back of the tongue is in the fully open position
- c. The tip of the tongue rests down in the bottom of the mouth (farther back than just behind your teeth)
- d. The jaws are fairly wide apart.
- e. The positions of the lips are neutral.

Example: Market /mɑ:kɪt/, Part /pɑ:t/, Harm /hɑ:m/, and Target /tɑ:git/

D. Related Findings

A previous research done by Skilder (2005), she discussed about pronouncing the –es, -s, and –ed, -d suffixes of English words. She did the research to English department students' educational program who are considered become a teacher in the future. After she gets the data, the result in pronouncing –es, -s suffixes was classified as poor, and –ed, -d suffixes was good. She concluded that there were many or almost all students of English educational students of UNP still made mistakes in pronunciation, especially in pronouncing suffixes –s, -es, and –d, -ed. She suggested that it is important to improve students' ability in pronunciation.

Then, a previous research done by Yolana (2006) had analyzed students' ability in pronouncing the English sounds that are not available in Indonesian language such as /I/, /U/, /□:/, /æ/, /□:/, /□/ for the vowels and /p/, /t/, /k/, /θ/, /□/, /□/, /□/, /v/ for the consonants. She did the research for English Education Program in State University of Padang. The result of her research is the ability of the students of education program study was very good in pronouncing some vowels and consonants which not available in Indonesian Language.

Next, Anwar (2006), she investigated about English pronunciation of the 4th year students at English department-Andalas University. Based on her research, she found that English Department students of Andalas University have problem in recognizing their pronunciation in English. The students have mixed

some varieties of pronunciation of British, American, and Australian. Most of them mixed British and American in using English.

After that, Puspita (2007) also did a research about an analysis of Students' error in pronouncing English vowels. She did a research for some Senior high school students' in Semarang. The result of her research is the ability of the students of education program study was very good which the percentage was 23.33%. She also stated that there were five major pronunciation errors made by students. They are vowels /ɜ:/, /æ/, /i:/, /ʊ/, and /ɔ/.

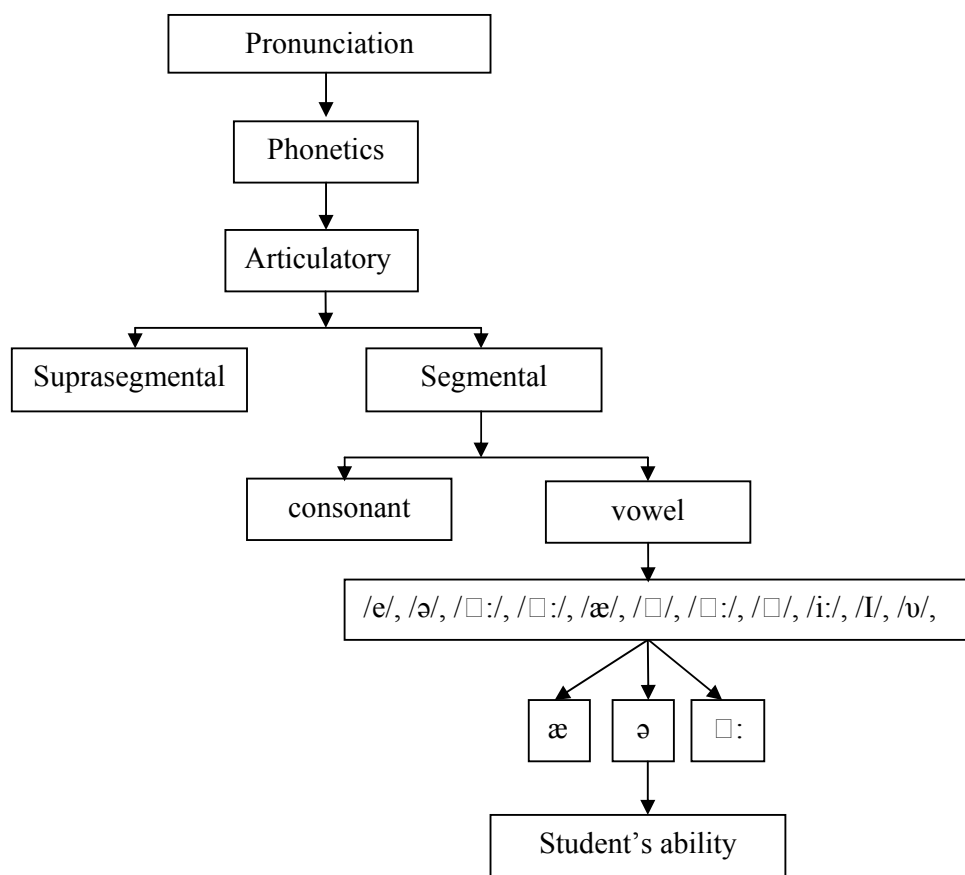
Finally, the previous research was done by Mery (2007), she researched about students' ability in pronouncing voiced /ð/ and voiceless /θ/. She did the research in SMAN 1 Sicincin Kecamatan 2X11 6 Lingkung. She concluded that the ability of the students in that Senior High School is poor in pronouncing voiced /ð/ and voiceless /θ/. She also concluded that the teacher should be more aware in teaching pronunciation to their students.

Based on these researches, the researcher was interested in doing research of students' ability in pronouncing English vowels for the English students' educational program of state university of Padang who are going to be the teacher later.

E. Conceptual Framework

Teaching pronunciation includes several materials, one of them is phonetics which gives information about the study of speech sounds. In studying Phonetics, it is also learnt about articulatory phonetics as the main subfield of

phonetics. Articulatory phonetics studies speech sounds from the point of view of their ways of production by the speech organs which are focused on segmental and suprasegmental features. In segmental features learns about consonants and vowels. The vowels are /ə/, /æ/, and /ɑ:/. This study is conceptualized as follows:



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusions

Based on the result of analysis in research findings, it could be concluded that the English Department students of educational program ability in pronouncing vowel /ə/, /æ/, and /ɔ: / was average. In addition, the students' ability in pronouncing vowel /ə/ was good. More than half of the students had a good ability in pronouncing this vowel with percentage 70, 6%.

Moreover, the students' ability in pronouncing vowel /ɔ: / was also good. It was known that just few students had difficulties in pronouncing this vowel. The ability of the students in pronouncing vowel /ɔ: / was 75,8% based on the data analysis. However, the ability of English department students in pronouncing vowel /æ/ was considered poor. The data showed that the percentage of the students' ability in pronouncing vowel /æ/ was just 48, 3%. The students failed pronouncing this vowel into several words. Overall, English department students of educational program had average ability in pronouncing these vowels.

B. Suggestions

The result of the analysis of this study showed that the English department students of educational program have an 'Average' level in pronouncing English vowels. It was found that there were some students who mispronounced vowel /ə/, /æ/, and /ɔ: /. From the findings of the research, the researcher would like to

propose some suggestions. First, the researcher suggests the students to learn more and practice a lot in pronouncing English vowels. It is because the students are prepared to be an English teacher and their pronunciation will be a model their students should aspire to. In improving student's pronunciation, the researcher suggests that the students to pay more attention in listening English song and English movie. It would help them to rehearse their ear to listen English pronunciation. It is because in learning foreign language is started with listening activity and then it continues with imitating or practicing what they have listened to.

Next, it is suggested that the English lecturers should give the students more information and explanation about pronunciation English vowels to build their ability in pronunciation, and the lectures should give them motivation to increase their awareness in pronunciation. Finally, it is expected that other researchers will continue the research to figure out the students' problem in pronunciation.

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