

PRODUCTION OF THE ENGLISH DENTAL FRICATIVES
BY THE ENGLISH LEARNERS AT BALI STAR ACADEMY

ADOLFINA K. MNAO

NON-REGULAR PROGRAM, ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LETTERS AND CULTURES, UDAYANA UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan tujuan untuk menemukan dan menganalisa produksi frikatif dental pada sekelompok pelajar Indonesia di Bali Star Academy. Dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif, peneliti mengumpulkan data dari sampel yang berjumlah 13 pelajar yang telah diperkenalkan kepada fonologi Bahasa Inggris melalui pelajaran Phonics sejak Taman Kanak-Kanak. Semua sesi pengumpulan data direkam dan ditranskripsikan, lalu dianalisa. Hasil analisa dikelompokkan menjadi dua bagian yaitu total produksi dari frikatif dental yang salah dan total produksi dari frikatif dental yang benar dalam setiap kata yang diucapkan oleh masing-masing anak, kemudian dikategorikan secara sistematis dalam "Better Grade and Worse Grade". Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa 66.67% kata frikatif dental mampu diproduksi dengan benar walaupun frikatif dental [θ] dan [ð] tidak ada dalam sistem fonologi Bahasa Indonesia. Sedangkan pada beberapa kata lain, kedua fonem tersebut digantikan dengan fonem lain dalam bahasa Indonesia yang memiliki bunyi terdekat. Proses penggantian ini dianggap sebagai suatu kesalahan dalam pengucapan. Kesalahan ini terjadi sebagai akibat dari proses interlingual. Selain itu, beberapa faktor tertentu juga mempengaruhi produksi frikatif dental. Diantaranya adalah usia, bakat, motivasi, dan kepribadian. Namun demikian, penelitian ini hanyalah memaparkan sebuah fenomena yang terjadi pada sekelompok pelajar Indonesia di Bali Star Academy dalam memproduksi frikatif dental beserta faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi proses tersebut. Oleh sebab itu, penelitian selanjutnya sangat diperlukan dengan tujuan untuk menyingkapkan apakah dengan adanya kesadaran fonologi sedari dini dapat mempengaruhi produksi frikatif dental dari penutur asing yang mempelajari Bahasa Inggris.

Keywords: *fonologi Bahasa Inggris, frikatif dental, analisis kesalahan bahasa*

1. Background of the Study

In the context of speaking, one's mastery on the sound system, structure and vocabulary play an important role because a two-way communication will effectively take place if the expressions are formed using appropriate rules and pronounced using correct sound. However, in the application of communicative competence, the production of dental

fricative hardly closes that of native-like production. It is found that when pronouncing English words with dental fricatives, instead of using the proper dental fricative pronunciation, the learners tend to substitute non-existing Indonesian phoneme of English with the closest Indonesian phonemes. With reference to these backgrounds, aim of this study is afterward established; that is to analyze the production of English dental fricative by the Indonesian learners of English. In addition to the difference of production among individuals, a consideration is set upon several factors—age, aptitude (phonemic coding ability), motivation, personality, and learning strategies—that are attributable to the ability of the learners.

2. Problems of the Study

This study is conducted on the basis of this problem formulation:

1. How the production of dental fricative is applied by the English Learners at Bali Star Academy?
2. What are the factors that affect the English Learners at Bali Star Academy in the production of English dental fricative?

3. Aims of the Study

Based on the problems, there are two goals that are mainly focused as this study is conducted. Its first aim is to investigate the production of English dental fricative by English Learners at Bali Star Academy. Secondly, the study aims at analyzing the other factors that affected the ability in the production of English dental fricative between English Learners at Bali Star Academy.

4. Research Method

This study employed a qualitative research method, which, according to Seliger and Shohamy (1989: 124) is: “a useful approach whenever an investigator is concerned with discovering or describing second language acquisition in its natural state or context and where there

are no assumptions about what that activity consists of or what its role is in acquisition". Measurement for qualitative researchers occurs during the data collection process. The measurement is used to analyze the finding of this study, especially proving the finding in percentage.

a. Data Source

The population of this study included the 14 students from Grade 4 at Bali Star Academy in English learning stage. The decision for choosing these students of Bali Star Academy as the population of this study was based on the fact that Bali Star Academy is a semi-home schooling based on Christ-Centered Curriculum in which Phonics as the central subject to be taught from kindergarten, and these students have been studying Phonics since kindergarten. In addition toward the Phonics method, the dental fricatives [θ] and [ð] have been introduced as one of the consonant digraphs—two consonants that represent a new speech sound—studied in Phonics at the second semester of K4 (Kindergarten for the 4-year-old students) and the first semester of K5 (Kindergarten for 5-year-old students). In this scope, chosen to be the sample to be involved in this study consisted of 13 (thirteen) Indonesian students of Bali Star Academy. One student was excluded from the sample due to the parental background.

b. Method and Technique of Collecting Data

The methods of collecting data used in this study were method of documentation and method of questionnaire. The techniques used to collect the data were audio recording and questionnaire. This technique was used along side other information and data collection method to give more context and depth written description.

c. Method and Technique of Analyzing Data

Method used in analyzing the data is qualitative description. Techniques used in analyzing data were qualitative and quantitative

analysis. Qualitative analysis was used to obtain a particular description of the dental fricatives produces by each respondent. The recorded sound production by the participants was subsequently transcribed in the phonemic realization. The symbol used in the process of the transcribing was based on IPA or the International Phonetic Alphabet (revised to 2005) in Ogden (2009). Then the transcription was identified to support the analysis. Quantitative analysis was used to obtain precise picture of the frequency and rarity of particular phenomena, in this case, the production of dental fricative by the English learners at Bali Star Academy. The quantitative analysis was merely used to carry out the finding in percentage before it was also descriptively explained and analyzed.

5. Analysis of the English Dental Fricatives by the English Learners at Bali Star Academy

a. The Analysis of the English Dental Fricative Consonants Produced by the English Learners at Bali Star Academy

The findings were obtained from 13 primary students of Bali Star Academy who are Indonesian. The students were requested to pronounce the rooster of words that contains English dental fricative consonants. The English dental fricative is divided based on the voicing—fortis (voiceless) and lenis (voiced). Both of the fricatives [θ] and [ð] could by far be placed either in initial, medial, or final position of English words. The following table shows what obtains in the production/perception of the dental fricatives by this category of speakers of English as a second language:

	English word	Pronounced as
[θ]	thank [θæŋk]	[tæŋk]
	pathetic [pə'θetik]	[pə'fetik]
	moth [mʊθ]	[mʊs]
[ð]	those [ðəʊz]	[zəʊs]
	father ['fɑ:ðə]	['fɑ:də]
	bathe [beɪð]	[beɪd]

Table 1 The Production of Dental Fricative

The results of this study as what was profoundly analyzed in previous investigation significantly indicated several evidences about dental fricative [θ] and [ð]. First, dental fricatives [θ] and [ð] which do not appear in Indonesian phonological system have been exposed as a part of Phonics method studied by the English learner at Bali Star Academy. The absence of these two phonemes [θ] and [ð] resulted in the substitution those phoneme with the closest phoneme in Indonesian phonological system as follows: [d], [f], [s], [t], or [z].

The following finding below displays the percentage of error and also correctness of each dental fricative:

No.	Dental Fricative	Result	
		Correctness	Error
1.	[θ]	76.92%	23.08%
2.	[ð]	56.41%	43.59%
Total		133.33%	66.67%
Mean		66.67%	33.33%

Table 2. The Percentage of Error and Correctness of the Dental Fricative

From the total percentage obtained through the calculation process as described above, it can be inferred that the error in producing English dental fricative by the English Learners at Bali Star Academy was still found which was also dominated by the pronunciation of the learners at Bali Star Academy. However, the finding stated that only 66.67% of the words could be produced by the respondents. The other words, however, tended to be substituted with the closest phonemes that were chosen to be compatible in substituting the absence of English dental fricative.

b. The Analysis of the Other Factors That Affect the English Learners at Bali Star Academy in the Production of English Dental Fricative

Certain factors beside the absence of dental fricative in Indonesian phonological system have affected their production of dental fricative. Those factors are age, aptitude, motivation, and personality. Regarding to the age, it is inferred that the error in producing English dental fricative by

the English Learners at Bali Star Academy was still found in the pronunciation. However, it is quite promising to see the result of the correctness for the respondents have been begun kindergarten with well-developed phonological awareness as a result of being introduced earlier through the Phonics Method. Next, Factor of aptitude as postulation that there is a talent that is specific to language learning, and phonemic coding ability is used as base to measure it. Students with a good understanding of phonological awareness have the underlying framework in place not only for reading but also speaking. Another factor determining the success of learning process is motivation, which lead the learners to learn the particular language and to try to achieve a correct pronunciation. Some of the respondents have shown that the best achievement is not only able to speak English but also to speak it with the correct pronunciation. As the aftermath of the mispronunciation, certain actions are taken to lessen the error made. Finally the factor of personality, where the anxiety—low or high—might affect the learners in acquiring the proper pronunciation during the process of learning. Based on the finding, the Better Grade respondents with lower anxiety level might find themselves were very well facilitated during the language learning, and thus be more self-confident.

6. Conclusion

This study has shown that it is true that dental fricatives [θ] and [ð] do not appear in Indonesian phonological system; however, they do appear in English phonological system. The finding that the Better student is more than 50% is quite impressive due to the earliest introduction of the phonological awareness. However, this study was merely intended to display the production of the English learner at Bali Star Academy and describe the factors that affect the production itself. Therefore, the substance of the content discussed in this study as the basic knowledge is open for further investigation.

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