PHONOLOGICAL INTERFERENCE IN THE ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

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Abstract

This study is aimed to know the kinds of phonological interference happen on the English pronunciation of the students of an elementary school in Kediri, East Java. The data were collected by asking the students to read a passage, and this activity was audio-recorded. The data were analyzed by using descriptive qualitative on content analysis. The result of the analysis showed that the phonological interference on the English pronunciation of the students was influenced by their Indonesian language system. It was found nineteen types of interference on the segmental aspects which consisted of nine vowel substitutions, two vowel shortenings and four consonant substitutions, two deletions of consonants and two additions of consonants. On the suprasegmental aspect (stress) there were twenty misplaced stresses.

Keywords: phonological interference, segmental, suprasegmental.

A. Introduction

Learners of a foreign language can comprehend the language that they are listening to if they understand the pronunciation features of the language. Such an understanding can also help them produce the language more accurately, although learners do not necessarily pronounce the foreign language like its native speakers. It is well enough if other people understand what they are talking about.¹

It becomes important thing to study for people who interested in second language acquisition. When the second language learner learns English there will be two kinds of possible transfer that might occur. The first, it happen when the transfer makes learning easier, and may occur when both the native language and the target language has the same form. For example, both French and English have the word table, which can have the same meaning in both languages. Second, negative transfer, (also known as interference, linguistic interference, cross-linguistic interference), is the use of a native-language pattern or rule which leads to an error or inappropriate form in the target language. It is the effect of the learners’ first language on their production of the language they are learning. Interference (cross-linguistic interference), is the use of a native language pattern or rule which leads to an error or inappropriate form in the target language.²

¹Dosen STAIN Kediri.
Phonology is the system of contrastive relationship among the fundamental speech sounds of a language items including foreign accent such as stress, rhythm, intonation and speech sounds. Phonology is also described as the study of speech sounds in a particular language. Segmental is identified as the phoneme in form of consonant, vocal and diphthong. Superimposed on the syllable there are other features known as suprasegmental. They are called suprasegmental because they always overlaid on the segmental (vowel and consonant) since they can never occur without them. There are some kinds of suprasegmental aspect on phonology such rhyme, intonation and stress. In this research the suprasegmental aspect only considering on "stressing word".

If the second language learner has positive transfer, there will be no problems come. However if they have negative transfer, it will influence to their second language in use. This negative transfer commonly happens because of the effect of their mother tongue. The common mistakes on interference ever seen when many of javanese people said the sound of /b/, /d/, /g/ and /j/ not clearly as on the word of Bandung, Deli, Gombong and Jambi. They mispronounce it as /mbandung/, /ndeli/, /nggombong/ and /njambi/. In spite of there is no addition of /m/, /n/,/ngg/ and /j/ , the Javanese people seems to use it. That is kind of phonological interference by Javanese people. A mispronounced due to the learners’ first language becomes common phenomenon in learning second language and as the result the pronunciation of Indonesian utters English word seems incorrect.

Most of the Indonesian people who learn English as their foreign language faced several problems concerning the correct way to pronoun English as substantively. The common event which happens is that the people often transfer their mother tongue to their target language. Sometimes when language learners learn a foreign language there is interaction between the new material and transfer effects of past learned behavior, memories or thoughts that have a negative influence in comprehending the new material. The idea of interference from the first language was applied in linguistics from 1940-1960. There are several theories about interference. Regarding to Dulay et al (1982) define that Interference as the automatic transfer, due to habit, of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface of the target language.

Interference is negative transfer because the transfer is the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously acquired. The mechanism of interference may be of two types, conscious and unconscious. Consciously, the student may guess because he has not learned or has forgotten the correct usage. Unconsciously, the student may not consider that the features of the languages may differ, or he may know the correct rules but is insufficiently skilled to put them into practice, and so fall back on the example of his first language. There are two main kinds of interference. The first one is proactive interference and the second one is the retroactive interference.

The pronunciation system of a language operates with a finite number of significant elements. For English, these may conveniently divided into two categories. The segmental element (the vowel and consonant sounds) and the prosodic elements (accentual and intonation).

B. Segmental Aspect

On segmental aspect, the writer found at least 11 mistakes come from the use of 

Collins Harper, Collinc Cobuild Advanced Learner English Dictionary, (Harper Collins Publisher, 2001)  
Muslich Masnur, Garis-Garis Besar Tata Bahasa Indonesia, (Refika Aditama; Bandung, 2010), pp. 24  

Ronald Wardaugh, An Introduction To Sociolinguistics, (Basil blackwell Ltd.USA, 1986).  
A.C Gimson, A Practical Course of English Pronunciation; A Perceptual Approach, (Edward Arnold Publisher: London, 1977), pp. 2
vowel and diphthong. While in consonant pronunciation which seems interference by first language the writer found there are 8 cases in which Indonesian interference to English pronunciation. Segmental is identified as the phoneme in form of consonant, vocal, word cluster and diphthong. Segmental aspect includes of speech sounds which is divided into two category, they are consonant and vowels.

1. Vowel and Diphthong

A vowel sound produced with a relatively free flow of air and the combination of two vowel sound defined as diphthong, at least there are 20 vowels including diphthong. Regarding From the data, which are found that at least there were 11 mistakes of students’ pronunciation that seems of interference by their first language, those consist of vowel substitution and vowel shortening.

### Table 1 Vowel And Diphthong Interference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Kind of Error</th>
<th>Collins</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
<th>Word</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>ɔːl</td>
<td>ʌːl</td>
<td>ɔː</td>
<td>ʌ</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>kæmp.sət</td>
<td>æ</td>
<td>ʌ</td>
<td>campsite</td>
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<td>kæmp.sət</td>
<td>əi</td>
<td>i</td>
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<td>each</td>
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<td>e</td>
<td>prepare</td>
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<td>ˈfɒr.ɪst</td>
<td>ʌ</td>
<td>ʊ</td>
<td>forest</td>
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<td>stu</td>
<td>ʌ</td>
<td>ʌ</td>
<td>stay</td>
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<td>ʌ</td>
<td>ʊ</td>
<td>fun</td>
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<td>ɑːf.təˈnun</td>
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<td>u</td>
<td>afternoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Vowel shortening</td>
<td>ˈbɒn.fɪər / ˈbɒn.fɪər</td>
<td>ɪə</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>bonfire</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Vowel substitutions

Vowel substitution describes as the substitution of the vowel in a word to another vowel. From the data, the writer found 9 mistakes of vowel substitution which interference by the first language, they are:

a. [ʌ] substitutes [ɔː]

The first case of vowel substitution is vowel [ʌ] instead of [ɔː] to utter the [all] and [also]. There are eight students pronounced all and 14 students’ pronounced also in incorrect ways. The formal description of the manner [ʌ] is the height of the tongue should half open then the fore part of the back tongue is highest, the position of the lips spread and the opening between jaws should widely open. The students use the vowel [ʌ] to replace the vowel [ɔː] which the formal description of the vowel [ɔː] is the tongue position is low thought not quite so low, the lips position between open and close lip-rounding.

The replacement of [ʌ] to [ɔː] on the word “all” which should be pronounced by [ɑːl], they mispronounced as [ʌ:l] and [also]. This mispronounced refers to the phonological rules belong to vowel substitution. Because English is not phonetic mean that there will be wide differences between how to pronounce it and what the letters written. This mispronounced could happen because the students seems interference from their first Indonesia language where on Indonesian language introduce “a” as [ʌ] rather than [ɔː].

b. [ʌ] substitutes [æ]

They use”[ʌ] to replace the vowel [æ], the short relatively pure ”[ʌ] is articulated with a considerable separation of the jaws and with lips neutrally open; the centre of the tongue (or a part slightly in advance on the centre) is raised just above the fully open position, no contact being made between the tongue and the upper molar. While the description of the manner of [æ] was describe with articulated with the slightly mouth open more than [e] the front of

Muslich Masmur, Garis-Garis Besar Tata Bahasa Indonesia, pp. 24

M.I Indriani, English Pronunciation: The English Speech Sounds Theory & Practice, (Jakarta; Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2005), pp. 8
the tongue is raised just below the half open positions with the side rims making a very slight contact with the back upper molars while the position of the tongue is neutrally open. The students tend to use to vowel [ʌ] to replace the vowel [æ]. As proven on the word “campsite”. The correct pronunciation based on Collin co build 2006 was [kæmp.saɪt], while as many as four students mispronounced as [kæmp. saɪt]. This mispronounced could happen because there is interference from their first language to their foreign language in which the interference comes because in Indonesia there is no vowel [æ] so the students get difficulties to apply the vowel [æ]. The replacement of the vowel [ʌ] to [æ] belongs to the phonological error which called substitution because the vowel [æ] substituted by [ʌ].

c. [i] substitutes [ai]
The students is the use of [i] to replace [ai] as happen on the word [campsite], [kæmp. saɪt] and [fraɪ. dei] As many as 6 students pronounced campsite incorrectly and 10 students pronounced Friday incorrectly. The students intended to use the vowel [i] rather than [ai] . Whereas the vowel [i] pronounced with a part of the nearer to the centre tongue then the front raised just above the half-close position; the lips are loosely spread; the tongue is lax with the side rims making a light contact with the upper molars. Whereas the diphthong [ai] articulated at a point slightly behind the front open position and moves in the direction of the position associated with relatively pure [i]. The diphthong [ai] actually exists on Indonesian vowel but to apply and read the diphthong [ai], it’s usually transcript on the grapheme, so the Indonesia’s students get easy to pronounce. While in English as not phonetic language has so many rule how to pronounce correctly which has wide different with Indonesian language as phonetic language.

d. [o] substitution of [ou]
The fourth vowel change is the substitution from vowel [ou] to [o] the substitution occurs on word middle position of the word home pronounced as [hoʊm] instead of [hoom]. The central half closing diphthong [ou] substitute by [o], short vowel articulated with wide open jaws and slight, open lip rounding and the back of the tongue is in the fully position. The same as the previous cases, the diphthong [ou] never exist and Indonesian language, so that the students get difficulty to pronounce the word [hoom].

e. [e] substitutes [i:]
The fifth cases of vowel substitution happen on the word each which should be pronounced as [ɪtʃ]. The vowel [i:] substituted by the vowel [e]. The formal description of [i:] is the height of the tongue is nearly closed, the centre of front tongue is highest, spread lips and the jaws open medial; it’s substituted with [e] half close front position, spread lips and there is a slight closing movement of lower jaw. As many as 18 students pronounced each incorrectly.

f. [e] substitutes [i:]
The sixth cases of phonological errors which seems interference from the first language is the use of vowel [e] to substitute vowel [i:]. The short nearly half close tongue, hinder part the front tongue is highest, while position of the lips was spread or neutral than the jaws are open medially. The short half close-half open tongue, the front tongue raised, spread lips and medium opening of the jaws of vowel [e] to [i:] happen on the word prepare and forest. Two of the sentences should pronounce as [priˈpɛər] and [fɔr.ɪst]. As many as 3 students incorrect to -pronounced [priˈpɛər] as [prepeər] and most of the whole students of 5th grader get difficulty when they pronounced [fɔr.ɪst] as [fɔrst]. This mispronunciation happen because there is interference from
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Indonesian vowel [e] which is usually read as [ɛ] on Indonesian written, then because the English is not phonetically language so, the students adapted their habit to apply [e] as [ɛ] rather than [e] as [i].

g. [i] substitutes [ɪə]
The seventh mispronunciation of the English vowel is the substitution of diphthong [ɪə] to substitute the vowel [i]. The glide relatively pure [ɪə] begins with centralized front half close and moves in the direction of the more open variety of [ɛ] substituted by [i] the height of the tongue is nearly closed, the centre of front tongue becomes the highest part, the position of the lips was neutral/spread while the jaws open from narrow to medium, this mispronunciation of diphthong [ɪə] substituted by vowel [i] happen on the word bonfire should be pronounced as [bɒn.fər] rather than [bɒn.fɪr], the data from the field said that half of the students pronounced incorrectly.

h. [ʌ] substitutes [eɪ]
The eight mispronunciation of vowel and diphthong substitution happen on the word stay which should be pronounced as [steɪ], several students get difficulties when they pronounced that word, the Collin said that the correct pronunciation of stay was [steɪ] but the students tend to use the vowel [ʌ] to substituted diphthong [eɪ] half close position, spread lips and there is a slight closing movement of lower jaw [eɪ] substituted by [ʌ] the height of the tongue should half open then the fore part of the back tongue is highest, the position of the lips spread and the opening between jaws should widely open.

i. [ʊ] substitutes [ʌ]
The 9th mispronunciation of the vowel substitution is the use of the vowel [ʌ] to replace the vowel [ʊ] as happen on the word fun which should be pronounced as [fʌn]. The students tend to use the vowel [ʊ] to replace the vowel [ʌ] where the formal description of [ʊ] is short-just above half close tongue – the fore part of the back is highest-the positions of the lips is fairly close rounding and have medium opening between the jaws.

3. Vowel Shortening

Vowel shortening describes as the shortening of long vowel. Based on the data the writer found that there are 2 vowel shortening word, [uː] as [u] and [iː] as [i].

a. [uː] as [u]
The vowel [ uː] on the word afternoon & food should be pronounced as [aːf.təˈnuːn] and [fuːd] , the fact on the field says that as many as eight students of Elementary SchoolRahmat Kota Kediri tend to shorten the vowel [uː] becomes [u] where the description [uː] is just above half close tongue, the fore part of the tongue is higher, the position of the lips is fairly close rounding and has medium opening between the jaws with the vowel [uː] where the formal description of [uː] is the back of the tongue is highest, close lips rounding and the opening between the jaws between narrow to medium.

b. [iː] as [ɪ]
The second vowel shortening happen when [iː] pronounced as [i], as many as 14 students mispronounced the word [wiːk] as [wik] and 27 students pronounced [biː] as [bi]

4. Consonant

From the research there were seventh consonant phonological error which interferences from the first language that happen on the students of Elementary SchoolRahmat Kota Kediri, they are;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2 Consonant interference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

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5. Consonant Substitution

Substitution is type of articulation in which more sound of one sound is substitute for another, it also mean that the vowel replace by improper vowel to make easier the pronunciation. They are:

a. [k] with [tʃ]
   The first substitution is for the sound [k] for the word *campsite* to consonant [tʃ]. The correct pronunciation of campsite was [kæmp.sai.t]. The voiceless velar plosive [k] substituted by voiceless palato alveolar affricate [tʃ]. This happen because of the phonological interference from their native language whereas as the effect of the use of Indonesian language as the phonetic language rather than English which not phonetic language, in Indonesia the consonant [tʃ] also pronounced as [tʃ] rather than [k], thus the pronunciation of *campsite* is still utter by the students as [tʃampsait] instead of [kæmp.sai.t].

b. [θ] with [t]
   The second consonant substitution happen on the word *three* which should pronounced as [θriː]. The word *three* pronounced by the students as [triː]. Most of the students substituted the voiceless dental fricative [θ] with alveolar plosive [t], this happen because in Indonesian consonant system there are never exist the sound of [θ] therefore; the Indonesian students get difficulty to pronounce the sound [θ] correctly. This reason also explains why the students intended to substitute the consonant [θ] to the closest sound [t] by the reason both two sounds are voiceless and close in the place of articulation.

c. [ɲ] with [n]
   The third substitution is for the sound [ɲ] which is substituted by [n] by several students. The word *camping*, often pronounced as [kæm.pɪŋ] rather than [kæm.pɛŋ]. one students substituted the voiced velar nasal [ɲ] to the voiced alveolar nasal. Below is the brief description of consonant phonological error which is interferenced by first language.

6. Deletion/omission

Deletion is the removal of a sound from a word in order to make easier the pronunciation. Based on the data there were several consonant pronunciation error belong to deletion rule. They are;

a. Deletion of consonant [s] to indicate the plural form
   The word final initial [s] voiceless alveolar fricative is omitted to make pronunciation easier. The consonant [s] should pronounce to indicate the plural form. This mispronounced of plural form utters by some of the students on the word *students, foods, groups, members*. As many as 9 students pronounced [stjuː.dənts] as [students], 7 students pronounced [graders] as [grader], 7 students pronounced [gruːps] as [gruːp], 5 students pronounced [mem.bərs] as [mem.bərs] and 4 students pronounced [deɪs] as [deɪ]

b. Deletion of consonant “t”
   The third omission happens to the word *night* which should be pronounced as [nait]. From the data the writer found if there was omission on that word. The voiced dental fricative [t] is omitted. The students somehow get difficulty for pronouncing the word *night* correctly, because there are 3 consonant which occurs after the vowel. In Indonesia the structure of more than 2 consonant after vowel is very uncommon, so the students omit the last consonant to make easier pronunciation.

7. Epenthesis/addition

Epenthesis is the addition of one or more sounds to a word, especially to the interior of a word. While epenthesis itself divided into two kinds. The first one is *excrecence*, the sound
added is consonant and anaptyxis when the sound added is vowel. Based on the data the writer found there were several epenthesis based on the students pronunciation.

a. The addition of consonant [s] into forest

The word forest should be pronounced as [for.ist] is pronounced [for.ist]. The students add voiceless alveolar fricative [s] into [for.est]. So the addition belongs to excescence.

b. The addition of consonant [r] to word afternoon

The word afternoon should be pronounced as [a:f.ta’n:u:n] without [r] is pronounced as [a:f.tarnu:n], here the addition of vowel [r] is happen. This excescence happen because the students might interfere with their first language which lead all the consonant should pronounced on the correct rule rather than English which include on non phonetic language.

C. Suprasegmental Aspect

Superimposed on the syllable there are other features known as suprasegmental. They are called suprasegmental because they always overlaid on the segmental (vowel and consonant) since they can never occur without them. Suprasegmental is element of sound system which give a language characteristic quality, so that the listener can identify the language even though he/she cannot distinguish individual word. The writer found there were several epenthesis based on the students pronunciation.

1. Misplaced of word stress on the word [faɪv] into [faɪv]( do not put stress anywhere)
2. Misplaced of word stress on the word [wiːk] becomes longer and slow pitches of [iː]
3. Misplaced of word stress on the word [kæmp|sɔːt] becomes [kæmp|sɔːt]
4. Misplaced of word stress on the word [θrɪː] becomes short [ɔrɪ]
5. Misplaced of word stress on the word [hʊm] becomes longer [hʊm]
6. Misplaced of the stressing word [frɛɪ|dɛi] becomes [frɛɪ|dɛi]
7. Misplaced of the stressing word [sæn|dɛi] becomes [sæn|dɛi]
8. Misplaced of the stressing word [stju|dæ nt] becomes [stju|dæ nt]
9. Misplaced of the stressing word on [mem|bɑːr] becomes [mem|bɑːr]
10. Misplaced of the stressing word on [pri|pɑːr] becomes [pri|pɑːr]
11. Misplaced of the stressing word on [ɑːf.ta’n:uːn] becomes [ɑːf.ta’n:uːn]
12. Misplaced of the stressing word on [bɑːn|fɑːɪr] becomes [bɑːn|fɑːɪr]
13. Misplaced of the stressing word on [goʊ] becomes short, slow pitch of [goʊ]
14. Misplaced of the stressing word on [ŋkst] becomes unclear and short [e]
15. Misplaced of the stressing word on Stay [steɪ] becomes longer [e] after omitting the sound of [i].
16. Misplaced of the stressing word on Leave [liːv] becomes short [i].
17. Misplaced of the stressing word on Eight [eɪt] becomes lengthen the vowel of [eɪ]
18. Misplaced of the stressing word on March [mɑːr|tʃ]. Shorten the sound of [ɑː] becomes [martʃ].
19. Misplaced of the stressing word on Track [træk] lengthen [æ] sound. becomes [træk]
20. Misplaced of the stressing word on Fun [fʌn] longer than what it should be. So the pronunciation of fun becomes [fæn] rather than [fʌn]

Stress describes as the degree of force with which a sound or syllables is uttered. This is what we mean when we speak of accenting sound. A stressed syllable is produced by pushing more all out the lungs. A stressed syllable thus has increase a respiratory activity. There are three important factors which combine to signal stress. First, the vowels of stressed syllables are produced with higher fundamental frequency; that is, the


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vocal folds vibrate more quickly, and this is heard as higher pitch. Secondly, the duration of stressed syllables is greater, and they are perceived as longer. Thirdly, stressed syllables are produced with greater intensity, and are thus heard as louder than adjacent unstressed syllables.

The writer chose twenty words from the passage that have read by them to analyze stress that they use. From the data found there are several students incorrect to put stress on noun. They are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Collins</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Low pitch of aɪ</td>
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<td>[wɪk]</td>
<td>[wɪk]</td>
<td>Longer and low pitch of [ɪ]</td>
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<td>sait</td>
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<td>[bɒn</td>
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<td>[ɡo]</td>
<td>[ɡo]</td>
<td>Short, slow pitch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Next</td>
<td>[ŋɡkst]</td>
<td>[ŋɡkst]</td>
<td>Unclear, short [e]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Stay</td>
<td>[steɪ]</td>
<td>[steɪ]</td>
<td>Longer [e]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Leave</td>
<td>[li:v]</td>
<td>[li:v]</td>
<td>Short [i]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Eight</td>
<td>[eɪt]</td>
<td>[eɪt]</td>
<td>Lengthen vowel [e]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>March</td>
<td>[mɑːrtʃ]</td>
<td>[mɑːrtʃ]</td>
<td>Shorten vowel ə</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Track</td>
<td>[træk]</td>
<td>[træk]</td>
<td>Lengthen vowel ə</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>fun</td>
<td>[fʌn]</td>
<td>[fʌn]</td>
<td>Lengthen vowel ə</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D. Conclusion

The objective in this study was to know what kind of phonological interference playing in the English pronunciation of the students of Elementary School Rahmat Kota Kediri. To gain the description of the research problem, the writer conducts research and finally gets description of the interference which comes from Indonesian language system on segmental and suprasegmental aspect.

By knowing the result of this study, the researcher hope that the result of the study will be useful for the teacher to take aware of phonological interference that caused by the use of their first language. By knowing kind of phonological interference that utters by the students, the researcher does hope it will encourage them to find the easy way to accomplish their teaching objective furthermore the teacher will able to select appropriate technique in teaching speaking so that the pronunciation of the students is understandable.

This study about phonological interference is still incomplete because the other part of suprasegmental aspects such as of intonation and rhyme were not included on this research. So the researcher hopes to the next researcher to continue it.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


