CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents: (1) background, (2) problems of the research, (3) objectives of the research, and (4) significance of the research.

1.1 Background

English, a global language, is used in all aspects of life in every country in the world. English is used in education, science, and social sciences. It also used in arts, humanities, travel, trade, media trade and pop culture. In conclusion, English is very useful in education and other fields. Harmer (2001) refers English is a worldwide language used in all parts of life such as in the arts, sciences, humanities, travel and the social sciences (as cited in Astrid, 2011, p. 176). Continuously, Abrar, Mukminin, Habibi, Asyrafi, Makmur, and Marzulina (2018) assert that in Indonesia, an incredibly diverse and multicultural country, English is regarded as one of the most popular foreign languages. It is in line to Richard (2007) stated that English is the language of globalization, international communication, commerce and trade media, pop culture, different motivation for learning, it comes in to play language (as cited in Herlina and Holandiyah, 2015, p. 107-108). Moreover, Herizal (2018) states that as one of the international languages, English is studied mostly in all countries of the world. Therefore, English becomes very important to communicate when we have some interactions with others. Then, Lauder (2008) states that English is widely recognized that English is important for Indonesia and the reason

most frequently put forward for this is that English is a global international language. In Indonesia, teaching of English has become increasingly important as a foreign language. It is taught in schools, from junior high school to senior high school (as cited in Saputra & Marzulina, 2015, p. 1).

The use of language must be accompanied by an increase in pronunciation because pronunciation should be mastered by every student. The main branch of basic speaking is pronunciation which enhance instrumental in communicating. Before English is mastered by students, their pronunciation should be mastered first. It is held by Sembiring and Ginting (2016). They explain that the primary purpose of language is communication, so that using language to communicate which involves pronunciation should be central in all classroom language instruction. Dalilan (2010) said in our daily communication with other people, we use a language (as cited in Putra and Marzulina, 2016, p. 186).

In pronunciation, there are forty-four phonemes in English which students should master first. The student must be able to pronounce 24 consonants and 20 vowels perfectly even though they have different background of language. The statement above is supported by O'Connor (1980) explains in English have twenty-four consonants and twenty vowels; that means there are forty-four phonemes in English that learners should be able to produce them as they learn English.

Burrow (1993) states learning is a process of creating an environment that enables the process of learning. Learning in terms is the

activity of students to interact with the environment that produces behavioral changes that are relatively constant (as cited in Purwowidodo, 2016, p. 145). Pronunciation is one of the best skill in learning English. It should be understood completely by learners. Further, the understanding of language must be considered. It is underpinned by Jam, Domakani, and Kasegari (2014) pronunciation is a key element in learning a language without which comprehension would be hindered. Moreover, Sembiring and Ginting (2016) explain in learning English, pronunciation is one of the skills that should be mastered by the English language learners.

Pronunciation is the real problem faced by learners. It is not overlooked by many people. In particularly, some errors are made by them. Learners realize error in pronunciation after as listener, they interact and communicate in English. This is what must be changed and improved. Otherwise, they will become graduates with poor skill in pronunciation that the company takes most into work activities. According to Smith (1973), Bahloul (2007) and Jayousi (2011) many studies agreed on the fact that the first main cause of spelling errors was irregularities of the English spelling system (as cited in Habibi, Wachyuni, Husni, 2017, p. 98). It is supported by Shak, Lee, and Stephen (2016) graduates are often unfairly judged when they fail to convince others of their capabilities due to poor pronunciation and not having the language to express themselves well. In order to present confidently to impress potential employers or enhance mobility, it is important to improve students' pronunciation, especially

those with low oral proficiency level. Moreover, it is held by Sajavaara and Dufva (2001) explain that pronunciation errors become a real problem when they have an impact on the comprehensibility of the message or when they irritate the listener. It is also supported by Erbay, Kayaoğlu and Önay (2016) assert that pronunciation is a neglected area in English language education throughout the world, and thus the area needs to be investigated so that informed decisions regarding pronunciation teaching could be taken.

The main cause of the error in having a good pronunciation is the imperfect consonants not because the vowel. It is clarified by O'Connor (1980). If the vowels you use are imperfect it will not prevent you from being understood, but if the consonants are imperfect there will be a great risk of misunderstanding.

There are 5 types of consonant. One of them is stop (plosive) consonant which are /p/, /t/, /k/, /b/, /d/, /g/. These consonants have different places of articulation. Clearly, O'Connor (1980) explains that some types of consonant are: friction consonant, stop (plosive) consonant, nasal consonant, lateral consonant, gliding consonant. The place of articulation of consonants are /p/ and /b/ are bilabial, /t/ and /d/ are alveolar and /k/ and /g/ are velar.

Plosive consonants means stopping the air flow completely. It is can be voiceless. It is held by Jiang, Chen, and Alwan (2000). They clearly

explain that plosive consonants are produced by first forming a complete closure in the vocal tract via a constriction at the place of articulation, during which there is either silence or a low-frequency hum.

Usually, errors occur in pronunciation which are the first step towards using the correct language. Errors in pronunciation are done by tertiary students when they present their results of task in front of their friend. It is underpinned by Bustamante and Vidal (2011) states learning a language is difficult to achieve plausible pronunciation because error is normal step in mastery a foreign language. Shak, Lee, and Stephen (2016) assert that for tertiary students, making pronunciation errors can be embarrassing especially when they are often required to make presentations and oral reports in various subjects in the higher education classroom.

Actually, pronunciation had a small portion in the whole courses of undergraduate English students of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang. The fact was only 2 credits for pronunciation courses which were pronunciation and phonology. So, the students had a big problem to increase their pronunciation.

Based on my preliminary research in UIN Raden Fatah Palembang, I knew some errors in pronouncing English plosive consonant by asking some students of English education study program about English plosive consonant sounds [p], [t], [k], [b], [d], and [g]. Moreover, they had difficulties in pronouncing [p], [t], and [k] sounds. It happened because they did not

know how to pronounce [p], [t], and [k] sounds with aspiration in English. I found that pronunciation errors were serious problem in English as foreign language. It became serious problem because of English sound system was different from Indonesian.

Pronunciation is vital element for mastering English to complete their speaking skill especially for bachelor's graduate who want to find a job as well as for student who want to get a better English skill. However, there were still a lot of mispronouncing words and they should have been able solving problems in learning English. It encouraged me to make a research on it. Based on this fact, I am interested in finding out the errors of English plosive consonant [p, t, k, b, d, g] in pronunciation made by the fifth semester students of English education study program UIN Raden Fatah Palembang.

1.2 Problems of the Research

Based on the background, the research problems were formulated in the following questions:

1. What were English plosive consonant errors made by the fifth semester students of English education study program UIN Raden Fatah Palembang?

2. Which was the most frequent type of English plosive consonant errors made by the fifth semester students of English education study program UIN Raden Fatah Palembang?

3. What were difficulties encountered by the fifth semester students of English education study program UIN Raden Fatah Palembang in pronouncing English plosive consonants?

1.3 Objectives of the Research

In accordance with the problems above, the objectives of this research were in finding out:

1. English plosive consonant errors made by the fifth semester students of English education study program UIN Raden Fatah Palembang.

2. The most frequent type of English plosive consonant errors made by the fifth semester students of English education study program UIN Raden Fatah Palembang.

3. The difficulties in pronouncing English plosive consonants encountered by the fifth semester students of English education study program UIN Raden Fatah Palembang.

1.4 Significance of the Research

It hopes that this research will give some information to the development of language teaching and learning. Learners know about the problems of pronunciation especially in pronouncing plosive sounds. The benefits of this research will be completed for students. Mastering and practicing how to pronounce will be used for students in their real life. Therefore, these research hopefully will be beneficial for lecturers, because English plosive consonants have so many positive effects to achieve good pronunciation. As well as, students' errors in pronouncing English plosive consonants could be predicted.