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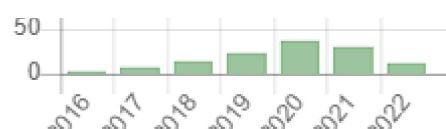M Misdi

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Academic Journal Perspective: Education, Language, and Literature

English title:
Academic Journal Perspective
ISSN:
2621-6981 (online)
GICID:
n/d
DOI:
n/d
Website:
http://jurnal.ugj.ac.id/index.php/Perspective/index (http://jurnal.ugj.ac.id/index.php/Perspective/index)
Publisher:
n/d
Country:
ID
Language of publication:
n/d

Deposited publications: 0 › Full text: 0% | Abstract: 0% | Keywords: 0% | References: 0%

Issues and contents

Journal description ()   **Details ()**   **Scientific profile ()**   **Editorial office ()**

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Academic Journal Perspective: Education, Language, and Literature (e-ISSN 2621-6981,and p-ISSN 2354-7340 is a biannual journal published by Lembaga Penelitian (The Institute of Research) University of Swadaya Gunung Jati in Cirebon and in collaboration with AsiaCall, Thailand. The journal publishes twice a year in May and November. This journal published manuscripts in the areas of English Language Teaching (ELT) and Literature. The journal publishes both conceptual and research-based articles on the areas of teaching English as a second or foreign language, English language teaching and learning, and English language teachers' training and education including English Literature.

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Vol 7, No 2 (2019)

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INACCURATE PRONUNCIATIONS OF ENGLISH VOWEL SOUNDS BY ONLINE INDONESIAN ENGLISH TEACHERS IN THREE YOUTUBE CHANNELS

Maria Dewi Rosari[1], Ouda Teda Ena[2]
Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia
mariadewirosari@gmail.com[1], ouda@usd.ac.id[2]

Abstract
Many English learners use English Teaching Channels on YouTube as an alternative source of learning. Most of those channels were organized by Indonesian teachers. However, the qualities of the teaching presentations on these channels are varied. Inappropriate use of vocabulary, inaccurate grammar, and mispronunciations are often found in these channels. This research attempts to study the inaccurate pronunciations of the English teachers. The study is necessary due to the fact that learners consider online English teachers as good language model and as an alternative to access English learning materials. The result of the study shows that there are nine types of English vowels that are pronounced inaccurately by the teachers. Ten of the inaccurately pronounced English vowels are absent in Indonesian vowel system. The finding of the research, therefore, can be cautions and suggestions for viewers of English Teaching channels on YouTube, and Indonesian English teachers when learning English and or teaching this language online.
Keywords: English vowels, Indonesian vowels, mispronunciation, online Indonesian English teachers

INTRODUCTION
Pursuing a quality English education is somehow difficult especially for students living in rural areas. Some of the barriers in obtaining a quality education in rural areas are less qualified teachers and limited learning materials such as books (Hossain, 2016; Rahmadi, Istiqamah, Adriyanto, 2010). As the results, students in rural areas fail to get adequate learning resources and thus they could end up with insufficient English language exposure. To overcome those issues, one of the attempts that has been made is the creation of online English teaching videos. Such online videos could be accessed easily from various websites in the internet, one of which is YouTube. The researchers chose YouTube rather than other websites that also become providers of online English teaching videos because this website is one of the most accessed and popular websites in the world (Alexa, 2011). Up until now, there have been an extensive number of English teaching videos uploaded to YouTube. Those videos cover a wide variety of topics and target language and

are targeted to students with various needs and backgrounds.

Some YouTube channels regularly providing online English teaching videos are *Ruang guru, Pendidikan Indonesia*, and *Kampung Inggris LC*. Those three YouTube channels are the most accessed among similar videos uploaded at the website as seen in the channels' viewers and subscribers. In those channels' online videos, there have been many topics that are presented by Indonesian English teachers and taught in two languages: English and Bahasa Indonesia. Those English teaching videos have indeed helped students living far away from quality English learning videos obtain easier access to English learning materials.

Regrettably, while those videos are somehow helpful for the students, they provoke another issue that should be taken into consideration: English vowel mispronounced by the online Indonesian English teachers in the teaching videos. Mispronunciation, by Krashen (1982), was defined as inattention and the lack of pronunciation knowledge of the language. This issue is indeed a big concern because pronunciation is taught through imitation. Students tend to pick up pronunciation knowledge from what they hear from teachers or recordings and do their best to approximate the model through imitation and repetition. This happens because students usually see their teachers as a role model (Lunenberg, Kothagen, & Swennen, 2007). According to Connor (1980), mispronunciations learners made are more systematic than random mispronunciations. Mispronunciation will cause misleading understanding to the listener.

Furthermore, imitating mispronunciation will cause students to produce The English vowels are divided into three main groups: short vowel, long vowel,

mispronunciation systematically. In other words, teachers with inaccurate pronunciation will affect the students because students learn from their teachers' instructions. Students will produce what they have heard. The students, therefore, will produce the mispronunciations as what their English teachers make. Correct pronunciation is indeed essential in learning a foreign language because it seems to be pointless to study the language if the learners do not intend to communicate in the language with other speakers of the language and, to this end, the learners must learn how to pronounce the language in a ways that can be understood and intelligible by various listeners (Setter, 2008; Derwing & Murno, 2005).

Of all kinds of mispronunciations, one of them is vowel confusions (Meng, Lo, Wang, and Lau, 2007) that become the focus of this study. Indonesian (here referred as L1) and English language (as L2) have some similarities and differences in terms of phonemic oppositions and phonetic features (Pallawa, 2013). Correspondingly with Pallawa, a research has been conducted by Kosasih (2017) and has listed the differences between vowels of English and Indonesia. Kosasih's (2017) research result suggested that there were 20 English vowel sounds and only 13 Indonesian vowel sounds. There are some English vowels that do not exist in Indonesian vowels. Those English vowels are [ɑ:], [ɜ:], [əʊ], [eə], [ɪə], [eɪ], [ʊə]. In the paper, Kosasih (2017) also stated that Indonesian vowels [ɪ], [ɛ], [ə], [ɔ], and [ʊ] are actually allophones of the English phonemes /i/, /e/, /o/, and /u/, meaning that those vowels actually do not have Indonesian vowels that sound exactly the same.

and diphthongs (Roach, 2003). Short vowels are only relatively short.

However, vowels can have quite different lengths in different contexts. Those short vowels covering [I], [e], [æ], [ʌ], [ɒ], [ʊ]. Then there are long vowels whose symbols consist of one vowel symbol plus a length mark made of two dots [ː]. English long vowel sounds by Roach (2013) cover [iː], [ɜː], [ɑː], [ɔː], [uː]. Lastly, there are diphthongs whose sounds consist of a movement or glide from one vowel to another. In terms of length, diphthongs are similar to the long vowels described above. Perhaps the most important thing to remember about all the diphthongs is that the first part is much longer and stronger than the second part. The list of English diphthongs elaborated by Roach (2013) are [ɪə], [eə], [ʊə], [eɪ], [aɪ], [ɔɪ], [əʊ], and [aʊ].

Most of the English and Indonesian vowel sounds are similar or even the same. However, Kosasih (2017) furtherly explained that the differences between Indonesian and English vowel sounds and also the absence of some English vowel sounds in Indonesian trigger some factors influencing English vowel sound mispronunciation made by Indonesian English learners. One of the factors is Indonesian' pronunciation habit of using a single vowel sound (Kosasih, 2017). This results in pronunciation problem faced by Indonesian English learners when pronouncing English vowels. They face some difficulties when they have to decide which should be pronounced with long or short vowels. These difficulties are similar to Riadi's (2013) research result saying that Indonesian students pronounce words longer if the word has double same vowels, even though the word is not supposed to be pronounced long. The students also tend to pronounce every word shortly if the word has only one vowel.

This factor, in short, is summarized by Brown (2000): L1 or mother tongue of English learners can influence the way they pronounce English vowels. The influence can happen in form of generalizing sound between how a word is said in L1 and how it said in L2 such as between the pronunciation between *national* (English) and *nasional* (Indonesian), or *institution* (English) and *institusi* (Indonesian). This could influence learners' understanding on English vowel pronunciation because they will probably pronounce the words like how they pronounce them in Indonesian (Terci & Ramadan, 2015). Another triggering factor of English vowel mispronunciation is the absence of English vowel sounds from the source language and the difference between phonetic and phoneme features (Kosasih, 2017; Pallawa, 2013). It is also discussed in previous studies in the same field, one of which is the one by Mu'in (2017) that explained how English learners from Lambung Mangkurat University and whose mother language is Banajarese found difficulties in pronouncing L2 English vowels because there are only three vowels in their L1.

That being said, English teachers should always perform the right pronunciation when teaching English so that they can be a reminder for the students that there are differences in the vowel production between those two languages. Furthermore, English teachers are expected to pronounce the English vowels accurately as the precise pronunciation determine the word meaning. Mispronouncing the vowels can deliver different ideas that can lead to misunderstanding (Kosasih, 2017; Derwing & Murno, 2005). Hence, it is important to discover the really problematic English vowel sounds produced by online Indonesian English speakers. The researchers then developed the following research questions:

1. To what extent do online Indonesian English teachers produce English vowel mispronunciations?

2. What are the factors influencing the English vowel mispronunciations?

METHOD

This research is a document analysis as this researcher systematically reviewed and evaluated documents (Bowen, 2008), which in this case is in the form of computer-based and Internet-transmitted material. Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, documents analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The research was conducted by collecting five English teaching videos taken from three channels of YouTube websites. From those three channels, the researchers chose two videos from *Kampung Inggris* Channel, another two videos from *Ruang Guru* Channel, and one video from *Pendidikan Indonesia* Channel. The three channels were selected because they were considered the most used online learning platforms and thus deemed able to represent other similar English learning channels.

To obtain the data, the researchers critically listened to each video and then listed any mispronounced English vowel produced by the online Indonesian English teachers in the research's blueprint by referring to the 12 kinds of English vowels by Roach (2003). The mispronounced English vowels were transcribed by referring to the phonetic transcription of American English. After that, the finding was given to two raters. The raters were an Indonesian English teacher who spent her childhood in the United States and the other rater is another Indonesian English teacher who spent two years pursuing master degree in the US. The raters were considered that combines class learning programs, English dormitory environment, and a continuous learning method. Its target is

having better awareness of the correct English vowels production due to their educational background in English Education and the authentic and intensive English language exposure they received when they were in the US. The raters here were involved to provide validation to the researchers' finding. This validation is used to obtain agreement and disagreement among the rater and the researchers as target-like and non-target-like (Mackey and Gass, 2005). Besides, raters are needed because rating necessarily involves human judgment and the validation requires gathering various lines of evidence that presents a sound and convincing validity argument (Wink & Gass, 2011). The ratters gave their justification using Rater's Validity table.

Once the researchers collected the inter-raters validity forms from all of the raters, the researchers calculated the agreement between the researchers' findings with the raters'. The calculation of the agreement was done by calculating the Cohen's Kappa coefficient (κ). This coefficient is a statistic measuring inter-rater agreement by taking into account the possibilities of any agreements to occur by chance (Gwet, 2010). Based on the calculation, the researchers found out that the Cohen's Kappa coefficient between the researchers' findings and rater 1's finding and between the researchers' finding and rater's 2's finding are the same, namely 0.8. Gwet (2010) posited that if $\kappa = 0.8$, the findings from both researchers and the raters are considered "almost perfect agreement".

Kampung Inggris was invented and joined YouTube on August 25th, 2016. Their best program is a learning method called Complete Package for better learning. This package is an approach learning English in fast way. They invented a new program called Teaching Tutorial or "TeaTu". It focuses on

structure, grammar, speaking, and pronunciation. *Ruang Guru* is the biggest and most completed company that focuses on education. The YouTube channel of *Ruang Guru* has over 6 million viewers and 50,000 teachers that offer around one hundred teaching subjects. *Ruang guru* was invented in 2014 by Bela Delvara and Iman Usman. It has operated in 32 provinces and more than 326 cities all over Indonesia. Meanwhile, *Pendidikan Indonesia* joined YouTube in January 21st, 2017. It has a main goal of increasing education in Indonesia. The channel wants to give educational videos that are cheap and easy to access. However, *Pendidikan Indonesia* still guarantees the high quality

of its education. It has more than 10,000 subscribers.

All the videos were chosen randomly amongst other similar online English teaching videos. The researchers were unable to find the online English teaching videos with 100% use of English. The researchers, therefore, chose the videos whose speakers used two languages namely Bahasa Indonesia and English.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Listening to five videos from the three different YouTube channels and referring to the English vowel sound theory by Roach (2013), the researcher could come up with the following figure:
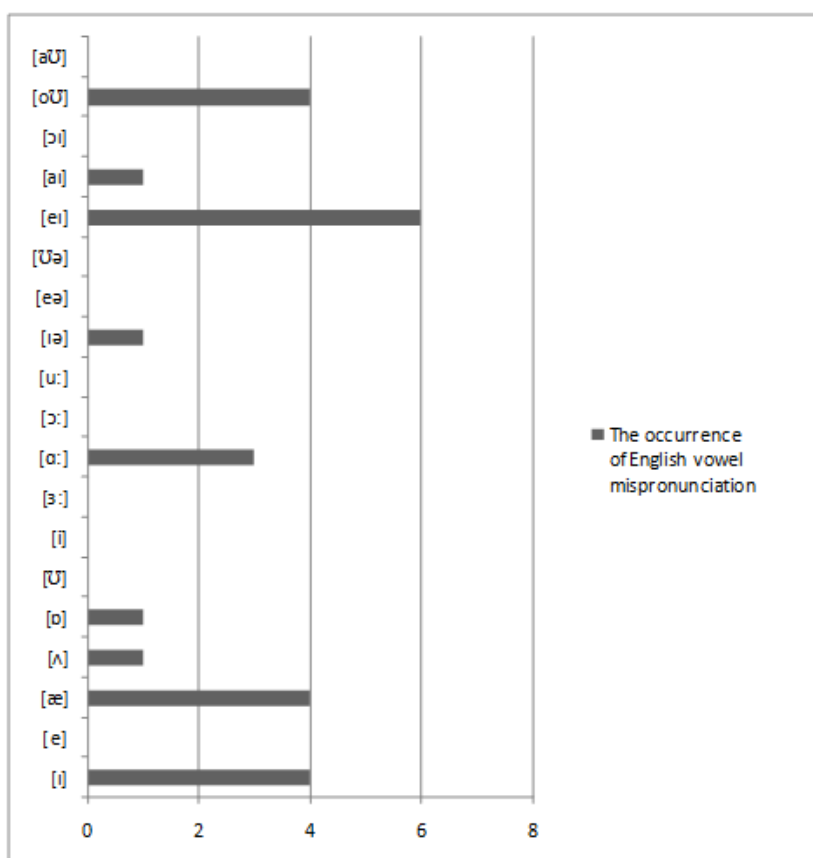
X Axis is the number of the mispronunciation occurrence
Y Axis is the English vowels

The occurrence number of English vowel sound mispronunciation found in the five selected English teaching videos

The figure above shows that out of 19 English vowels sounds from Roach (2013) (long vowel, short vowel, and diphthongs), there were only 9 vowels

that were mispronounced by the online Indonesian English teachers. Those vowels are [ɪ], [æ], [ʌ], [ɒ], [ɑː], [ɪə], [eɪ], [aɪ], and [oʊ]. In details, of all the mispronounced vowels, the vowel [eɪ] was the most frequently mispronounced vowel sound as shown by the highest number of mispronounced words above (i.e. 6 words). This vowel was founded to be incorrectly mispronounced in the following words: *change*, *lazy*, *nowadays*, *main*, *celebrate*, and *say*. From those six words, the researchers found out that most of the [eɪ] mispronunciations occurred because the online Indonesian English teachers replaced the vowel sound with [e], as seen in the pronunciation of the words *change*, *lazy*, *nowadays*, and *main*. For instance, one of the teachers pronounced the word *change* as /tʃens/ instead of /tʃeɪndʒ/, as suggested by the American English pronunciation by Cambridge Dictionary. Meanwhile, what happened to the other two words (i.e. *celebrate* and *say*) was the vowel sound [eɪ] was mispronounced as [aɪ]. For example, instead of pronouncing the word *celebrate* as /ˈseləbreɪt/, the teacher pronounced it as /ˈseləbraɪt/ instead.

Next, the second most frequently mispronounced English vowels are [ɪ], [æ], and [oʊ]. Each of those English vowels was found to be incorrectly mispronounced in 4 words: [ɪ] in *zero*, *exam*, *employer*, and *credential*; [æ] in *exam*, *application*, *candidate*, and *paragraph*; and [oʊ] in *zero*, *modal*, *motorcycle*, and *closing*. Looking at the mispronounced vowel sound [ɪ], the researchers found out that out of 4 words, the vowel sound [ɪ] in 3 words (*zero*, *exam*, and *employer*).was pronounced as [e]. For instance, instead of pronouncing *exam* as /ɪgˈzæm/, the teacher pronounced the word as /egˈzəm/. Meanwhile, the other word, *credential*, was pronounced as /krəˈden.ʃəl/ instead

of as /krɪˈden.ʃəl/. This means that the [ɪ] vowel in this word was sounded as [ə]. Further, in the mispronounced vowel sound [æ], the researchers found out that this English vowel sound was mistakenly pronounced as either [ɑː] as found in *paragraph*, or [ʌ] as found in *candidate* and *application*, or [ə] as found in *exam*. Besides, in the mispronunciation of [oʊ], the teachers mistakenly pronounced the vowel as [o] as found in *zero*, as [ɔː] as found in *modal* and *motorcycle*, or as [ɒ] as found in *closing*.

Furthermore, the third most frequently mispronounced English vowel is [ɑː] that was found in three (3) words namely *yard*, *taught*, and *clause*. The vowel [ɑː] was mispronounced as either [ʌ] or [aʊ]. As found in the words of *yard* and *taught,* instead of pronouncing [ɑː], the teachers made the sound of [ʌ]. Meanwhile, in the word *clause*, the teacher mistakenly pronounced the vowel as [aʊ]. Finally, the next English vowel sounds that were mispronounced by the online Indonesian English teachers involve five (5) vowels sounds, each of which was only found in one word. The vowel [ʌ] was mispronounced in *plus*, vowel [ɒ] in *wash*, diphthong [ɪə] in *meal*, and diphthong [aɪ] in *dining*. The vowel [ʌ] was mispronounced as /ə/, vowel [ɒ] as /ə/, vowel [ɪə] as [ɪ], and vowel [aɪ] as [iː]. That being said, there were 10 English vowel sounds that were pronounced correctly by the online Indonesian English teachers namely [e], [ʊ], [iː], [ɜː], [ɔː], [uː], [eə], [ʊə], [ɔɪ], and [aʊ].

The researchers found 25 English vowel sound mispronunciations in this research, all of which can then be grouped into two groups based on the factors influencing the mispronunciations: the interference of Indonesian pronunciation habit and the absence of English vowel in Indonesian.

The Interference of Indonesian Pronunciation Habit

Kosasih (2017) and Riadi (2013) explained that there is a habit of using one kind of vowels for Indonesian English learners. This habit provokes difficulties for Indonesian English learners when it comes to differentiating which English words require long vowels and which ones do not. This habit can be clearly seen in the mispronunciations of [eɪ], [oʊ], [ɪə], and [aɪ]. In other words, the interference of Indonesian pronunciation habit can be clearly seen in how the online Indonesian English teachers sounded diphthongs or gliding vowels in pronouncing some English words. Those mispronounced English vowels, which consist of two vowels, were mistakenly pronounced as a single vowel only.

Of 6 words whose [eɪ] vowel was mispronounced, 4 of them were mistakenly sounded as [e]. Those four words are *change*, *lazy*, *nowadays*, and *main*. It means that the diphthong here was understood as a single vowel only. Likewise, the mispronunciations that deal with the vowel of [oʊ] show similar phenomenon. Of all mispronounced words involving [oʊ], all of them were mistakenly pronounced as single vowel. The [oʊ] vowel in *modal* and *motorcycle* were pronounced as [ɔ:], the [oʊ] vowel in *zero* was pronounced as [o], and the [oʊ] in *closing* was pronounced as [ɒ]. In the same way, that is also what happened in the mispronunciations of the diphthongs [ɪə] and [aɪ]. [ɪə] in the word *meal* was mistakenly pronounced as [ɪ], [aɪ] in the word of *dining* was mistakenly pronounced as [i:].

The interference of Indonesian pronunciation habit can also be seen when the online Indonesian English teachers pronounced the English vowel sounds of [ɪ], [ʌ], and [ɒ]. The mispronounced [ɪ] occurred in the words *zero*, *exam*, *employer,* and *credential.* [ɪ] in those four words was replaced with the vowel sound [e] while [ɪ] in *credential* was mistakenly sounded as [ə]. For instance, instead of pronouncing *zero* as /zɪ'roʊ/, the teacher pronounced the word as /ze'ro/. This shows that the online Indonesian English teachers could not get rid of the habit of pronouncing Indonesian vowel [e] as [e] (both the spelling and the pronunciation are the same) when they encountered the same vowel in English which, in some words, should be pronounced as [ɪ]. This is supported by the Indonesian vowel theory by Kosasih (2017) saying that Indonesian only has three kinds of sounds for the letter 'e' namely [e], [ɛ], and [ə]. The letter of [e] in Indonesian will never be sounded as [ɪ].

Furthermore, this factor also influences the occurrence of mispronunciation of the vowel [ʌ] and [ɒ]. The vowel [ʌ] in *plus* and the vowel [ɒ] in *wash* were mistakenly pronounced as [ə]. The mispronunciation of [ʌ] in *plus* occurred because Indonesians also often use this word in Indonesian conversation. When Indonesians use this word in their pronunciation, they will pronounce it as [pləs]. This word, although is an English word, has no exact translation in Indonesian and therefore Indonesian people use this English word right away in talking in Indonesian. This habit then occurred when the online Indonesian English teacher occupied the word *plus* in one of their spoken English sentences. Then for the mispronunciation of the vowel [ɒ] in *wash*, the researchers are unfortunately unable to categorize the factor influencing the mispronunciation into one of those two big factors as the occurrence of this mispronunciation doesn't suit any of them.

In total, there are 19 findings that are caused by the interference of Indonesian pronunciation habit. This number of finding is more than the half of the total finding (i.e. 25 mispronunciations) in this research. This then becomes a clear sign that the online Indonesian English

teachers are still struggling a lot with the pronunciation habit of their mother tongue when talking in English. That habit brings them confusion in differentiating long vowels and short vowels in English and thus in occupying the right English vowel sounds in speaking the language (Kosasih, 2017; Riadi, 2013).

Furthermore, another interference of Indonesian pronunciation habits comes in a form of sound generalization, as stated by Brown (2000). This also becomes one of the major factors influencing the English vowel mispronunciations produced by the online Indonesian English teachers. This generalization, as explained by Brown (2000), influences L2 learners to generalize the pronunciation of words in L2 that are spelt and sounded similarly in L1. Of all the 25 findings, there are three words whose spelling and pronunciation are similar both in English and Indonesian. Those three English words along with the Indonesian versions can be presented as follow:

English	Pronunciation
Paragraph	/'pær.ə.græf/
Candidate	/'kæn.dɪ.dət/
Application	/æp.lə'keɪ.ʃn/

Indonesian	Pronunciation
Paragraph	/pʌ.rʌ.grʌf/
Kandidat	/kʌn.di:.dʌt/
aplikasi	/ʌ.pli:kʌsi:/

Both the spelling and the pronunciation of those three words in English and Indonesian are very similar. The similarity seems to confuse the online Indonesian English teachers in occupying the right English pronunciation. As the result, they failed to get rid of the sound generalization when it comes to pronouncing those words correctly in English.

The Absence of English Vowel in Indonesian

Another big factor that influences the English vowel mispronunciations in this study is the absence of some English vowels in Indonesian pronunciation. Referring to the vowel comparison in between English and Indonesian by Kosasih (2017), it can be seen that there are some English vowels that do not exist in Indonesian: [eɪ], [ɪə], and [ɑ:].

From the five selected English teaching videos, the absence of those three English vowels in Indonesian resulted in 10 mispronunciations. Six out of the ten mispronunciations occurred because of the absence of English vowel of [eɪ] in Indonesian. This English vowel was mistakenly pronounced as [e] in *change*, *lazy*, *nowadays*, and *main* and as [aɪ] in *celebrate* and *say*. This English vowel seems to be the most difficult vowel to be pronounced by the online Indonesian English teachers as it even does not have any allophones in Indonesian (Kosasih, 2017). Meanwhile, three out of the ten mispronunciations happened because of the absence of the English vowel of [ɑ:] in Indonesian. This English vowel was mistakenly pronounced as [ʌ] in *yard* and *taught* and as [aʊ] in *clause*. This English vowel also does not have any allophone in Indonesian, making it a difficult English vowel to pronounce (Kosasih, 2017). Lastly, one out of the ten mispronunciations involved the pronunciation of [ɪə] in *meal*. This vowel is also another English vowel that does not exist in Indonesian vowel and does not have any allophone in the language. These factors influencing the English vowel mispronunciation were also found in the same number of findings, i.e. 10 words. This number is surely almost the half of the total mispronunciations found by the researchers, making it one of the biggest factors causing the English vowel mispronunciation.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the researchers discovered nine (9) vowels that were inaccurately pronounced by the online Indonesian English teachers from the total of 19 English vowel sounds (Roach, 2013). Those vowels are [ɪ], [æ], [ʌ], [ɒ], [ɑ:], [ɪə], [eɪ], [aɪ], and [oʊ] with the diphthongs as the most frequently mispronounced English vowels. The inaccurate pronunciations occurred because of two major factors. The first factor is the interference of Indonesian pronunciation habit as found in 19 out of 25 findings, such as in the mispronunciation of English diphthongs of [eɪ], [oʊ], and non-diphthongs of [ɪ], [ʌ], and [ɒ].

. This factor covers the Indonesian learners' difficulties in differentiating long and short English vowels and the tendency of using sound generalization. The teachers tend to pronounce some words in Indonesian if the words were similar or identical with Indonesian words. Following this factor another factor comes from the absence of English vowel in Indonesian that was found in 10 out of 25. Based on the findings, researchers recommend that teaching of pronunciation as part of language teaching aspects should be taken into a serious consideration.

English teachers must really spend time to learn and teach pronunciation, regardless of the type of teaching approaches they use. Before teaching, teachers must make sure that they consult dictionary for correct pronunciation, especially for new words that they are not sure of in order to promote knowledge-based teaching as well as to avoid teaching based on belief. Following to that, teachers need to increase their awareness toward the English vowel sounds that were mispronounced in the findings. Moreover, teachers not only need to focus on the vowel mispronunciation but also need to pay more attention to factors that caused the mispronunciations. Equally important, L2 learners who use English teaching videos on YouTube as an alternative to learn English should be aware of the aforementioned factors influencing Indonesians L2 learners in pronouncing English vowels and therefore make any necessary double checking in dictionary when discovering any English words whose pronunciations are deemed difficult.

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