Conference Paper

A Phonology-based Study: English Pronunciation Inconsistency

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Abstract

English is not a one-to-one relationship between letters and pronunciation. There is mostly no correspondence between written word and spoken word. English pronunciation inconsistency made EFL learners erroneous while pronouncing. This phonology-based study discussed the English pronunciation inconsistency qualitatively. It identified the inconsistency of vowels and consonants pronounced in words and the areas of English pronunciation inconsistency. This study applied Yule, Finegan, and Kelly's theories. <a> is sounded as /eɪ/ /ə/ /æ/ /ɑ:/ / :/ /l/ /ɒ/; <e> is sounded as /i:/ /e/ /ə/ /ɑ:/ /u:/; <i> is sounded as /ʌɪ/ /l/ /ɜ:/ /ɑ:/; <o> is sounded as /əʊ/ /ɒ/ /ʌ/ /ɑ:/ /ʊ/ /l/ /ə/ / :/ /wʌ/; and <u> is sounded as /jʊ/ /ʌ/ /l/ /ə/ /e/ /ʊə/. <c, d, g, j, n, p, s, t, w, x, y, z> are pronounced inconsistently. <c> is sounded as /s/ /tʃ/ /k/ /ʃ/; <d> is sounded as /d/ /dʒ/ /t/; <g> is sounded as /g/ /dʒ/ /f/; <j> is sounded as /dʒ/ /h/ /j/; <n> is sounded as /n/ /ŋ/; <p> is sounded as /p/ /f/; <q> is sounded as /k/; <s> is sounded as /s/ /z/ /ʃ/ /ʒ/; <t> is sounded as /t/ /θ/ /ð/ /tʃ/ /ʃ/; <w> is sounded as /w/ /ʊ/; <x> is sounded as /ks/ /kʃ/ /gz/ /z/; <y> is sounded as /ə/ /i/ /ai/ /j/; and <z> is sounded as /z/ /ts/. The areas of inconstancy in English pronunciation occur in; same letter different sounds; same sound different letters; silent letters; and sound production with no letters.

Keywords: consonants, inconsistency, pronunciation, vowels

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1. Introduction

Once I spoke to my lecturers, because I mispronounced the words. They asked me, "What you said?" I became so embarrassed. I remembered my tears were on my cheeks. This experience was from the sixth semester English Department Student. Indeed, the problem in pronouncing the English words occurs for EFL learners. Fraser (as cited in Gilakjani, 2016) explained that being able to speak English includes a number of sub-skills of which pronunciation is by far the most important (other sub-skills of speaking include vocabulary, grammar, and pragmatic), and she argued that with good pronunciation, a speaker is intelligible despite other errors; with poor pronunciation, understanding a speaker will be very difficult, despite accuracy in other areas. Cognitively, five problem areas among the EFL leaners' reluctance on speaking English are

grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, structure and meaning (Ambalegin, Suhardianto, & Kaprawi, 2017, p. 123).

Poor pronunciation is one factor that makes EFL learners reluctant to speak English (Ambalegin et al., 2017, p. 125). L1 errors of pronunciation very commonly involve switching sounds between words that are separated from each other; such switches suggest that the pronunciation of words must be prepared in batches prior to pronunciation (Carter & Nunan, 2001). Hinofotis and Baily (as cited in Ahmadi & Gilakjani, 2011) stated that the fault which most severally impairs the communication process in ESL/EFL learners is pronunciation, not vocabulary or grammar. Pronunciation is one of the important elements to convey idea or information in terms of oral way. Pronunciation is the manner where someone utters a word (Ambalegin & Arianto, 2018, p. 122).

Based on the interview of the English Department Students, while they were learning English pronunciation, they learned the phonetic symbols and learned to pronounce some English words as well as in the module. They didn't learn when <a> was pronounced as /eɪ, ə, æ, ɑː, :, I, or ɒ/ because the module shows mostly the phonetic symbols and the correct pronunciation of phonetic symbols. Teaching pronunciation actually is very crucial for the EFL learners. Teaching pronunciation is usually focused on the articulation of consonants and vowels, and suprasegmental. However, many teaching materials still do not make clear that pronunciation is just one tiny piece of the whole course credits. Seidlhofer (as cited in Celce-Murcia, 2001) stated, "pronunciation is never an end in itself but a means of negotiating meaning in discourse, embedded in sociocultural and interpersonal contexts". Pronunciation instruction needs to be taught as communicative interaction along with other aspects of spoken discourse such as pragmatic meaning and nonverbal communication.

Incorrectness of English pronunciation occurred on local TV advertisement. There were advertisements advertising the local orchid plant and hotel. The female informants pronounced orchid as /ɒrtʃIt/ and comfortable as /kɒnfɒrtebəl/. There were many English words which are pronounced incorrectly. The common English words that people nowadays pronounced incorrectly are finger as /fInjer/, orchid as /ɒrtʃIt/, examine as /ekzemʌIn/, invite as /InpIt/, paste as /pʌste/, entrepreneur as /enterprenər/, mild as /mIl/, paradise as /pʌrʌdIs/, etc. Seidlhofer (Carter & Nunan, 2001, p. 61) noted that the errors of pronunciation that learners of English from different language backgrounds make are systematic and not accidental. Kenworthy (1987, pp. 4-7) mentioned the more differences of sound characteristics of the native language from English, the more difficulties L1 speakers will find to pronounce English.

The phenomenon of English word mispronunciation in society is not a mistake for Indonesians. Ideally, the spelling system should closely reflect pronunciation and in many languages that indeed is the case. Each sound of English language is represented by more than one written letter or by sequences of letters; and any letter of English represents more than one sound, or it may not represent any sound at all. There is lack of consistencies. Commenting on these inconsistencies, English forcefully and uncompromisingly expresses the opinion that the spelling of English is so far as its relation to the spoken word. English pronunciation on the other hand has undergone many far-reaching changes since Caxton's time which is one of the obvious reasons why there is no correspondence between the written word and the spoken word.

English shows the inconsistency in pronouncing the word because one single letter of the English alphabet can be pronounced differently in different words. Lagefoged (2006, p. 35) stated that most of the sound symbols are the same letters used in spelling the English words, but there are a few different. English is defective. One single letter of the alphabet cannot stand with one single phonetic symbol. Mostly the pronunciation textbooks showed the phonetic symbols but did not show one letter in the alphabet for one phonetic symbol in words. This study conducted the research neither the mispronunciation of EFL learners nor the reason why the EFL learners' mispronunciation. This study focused on the inconsistency mapping of English word pronunciation in term of the different sounds of each letter in the alphabet in words.

It is very important to know how each letter acts in English words. This study identified different sounds for each letter. By mapping the sound representing the letter, it could be easy to detect the sound produced in words. Failure to represent pronunciation accurately and consistently is the English learners' intrusion. Pronunciation plays a central role in both our personal and our social lives: as individuals, we project our identity through the way we speak, and also indicate our membership of particular communities (Seidlhofer as cited in Carter & Nunan, 2001, p. 56). At the same time, and sometimes also in conflict with this identity function, our pronunciation is responsible for intelligibility: whether or not we can convey our meaning (Seidlhofer as cited in Carter & Nunan, 2001, p. 56).

2. Literature Review

2.1. Vowels, Diphthongs, and Triphthongs

2.1.1. Vowel

Air passes through different shapes of the mouth, and different positions of the tongue and the lips, and the air streams relatively unblocked to narrow passages except at the glottis; it is the vowels produced (Finegan as cited in Ambalegin & Suryani, 2018). Lagefoged & Disner (2012) described that vowels are a production of sounds with relatively little obstruction in the vocal tract. Based on the characteristics of the articulation, there are three categories vowel sounds; closed vowel sounds /iː, ɪ, ʊ, uː/, mid vowel sounds /e, ə, ɜː, :/, and open vowel sounds /æ, ʌ, ɑː, ɒ/.

Vowel Length

The long and short vowels are important in English to distinct feature in the language. Ship as /ʃɪp/ and sheep as /ʃiːp/ have different meaning because of different vowel sound length. The long vowel is shown by a colon (McMahon, 2002).

Reduced Vowel

There are some letters which are not pronounced in English words. Also vowels often tend to be omitted in English. For instance, fruit is pronounced as /fruːt/ that there is no <i> pronounced. Vowels are omitted in some contexts because some extended following syllabic consonants /l, m, n/ in the syllable will absorb the vowel sound such as gaggle as /gægl/, bottom as /bɒtm/, and important as /imp :tnt/.

Nasalization

All vowels are nasalized when air passes through the nose and through the mouth. Nasalized vowels are indicated by a tilde (~) that is marked above the vowels.

2.1.2. Diphthongs

Finegan (2008) stated that in case the tongue starts in one place and glides to another when a vowel sound is produced called diphthong. Kelly (2004) also mentioned that diphthong is the combination of two vowels where tongue glides from one vowel articulation to another vowel position. Based on the characteristics of the articulation,

three categories diphthong sounds; centering diphthongs /ɪə, ʊə, eə/, closing diphthong ending in /ɪ/ (/eɪ, ɪ, aɪ/), and closing diphthong ending in /ʊ/ (/əʊ, aʊ/).

2.1.3. Triphthongs

English does not really have triphthong because no phonemic sequence of three vowel sounds occupies the same syllable in English. All components of a triphthong must occur in the same syllable. Roach (2012) stated that English triphthongs have the most complicated vowel sounds as they are difficult to be pronounced, and recognized. A triphthong is the combination of three vowel sounds where tongue rapidly and uninterruptedly moves away from first vowel articulation to another vowel position, then to a third vowel. Roach (2012) listed the triphthongs with five close diphthongs with schwa /ə/ eɪə (as in mayor, crayon), aɪə (as in choir, buyer), ɔɪə (as in loyal, royal), əʊə (as in lower, mower), and aʊə (as in flower, coward).

2.2. Consonants

English consonants have 24 phonemes. Consonants are sounds produced with a lot of tightness in the mouth as air comes up from the lungs and gets squashed. The consonants in English pronunciation is included in segmental phonemes (Low, 2015).

A consonant is pronounced by a partial or complete close of vocal tract (Finegan, 2015). Speech sound is able to be characterized based on the articulatory properties. The consonants are described in three characteristics: voicing, place of articulation, and manner of articulation (Low, 2015). Completely, Low (2015) described three term labels describing the main characteristic.

2.2.1. Voicing

It can be seen by distinguishing between /s/ and /z/. When /z/ and /s/ are pronounced, the position of tongue within the mouth remains the same, but these sounds are definitely different from the vibration in the larynx when pronounces /z/. It is called voicing (Low, 2015).

2.2.2. Place of Articulation

Place of articulation shows the different sound because of the airstream in the lips, oral cavity, nasal, pharynx and glottis (Low, 2015). Places of articulation; **bilabials**, **labiodentals**, **dentals**, **alveolar**, **palatal**, **velar**, and **glottal** can be seen the detail below (Yule, 2014).

Bilabials

The sound is produced using upper (bi) and lower lips (labia) such as symbol [p] *put* (voiceless /p/), symbol [b] *but* (voiced /b/), and symbol [m] *may* (voiced /m/). Symbol [w] is bilabial in *way*, *walk*, *world*.

Labiodentals

The sound is produced using upper teeth and the lower lip such as symbol [f] *fat*, symbols [p] *photo* (voiceless /f/), and symbol [v] *vat* (voiced /v/) and *safe*, *cough* and *save* (the final sounds /f/ and /v/).

Dentals

The tongue tip behind upper front teeth pronounces dental sound. Think and teeth are voiceless dentals symbolized with theta /θ/. The, there, then, feather are voiced dental symbolized with /ð/, usually called "eth."

Alveolar

The sound is produced using front tongue on the alveolar ridge such as *tip*, *deep*, *say*, *zoo* and *not*. /t, s/ are voiceless whereas /z, n, d/ are voiced. /l/ in *like* and *light* and /r/ in *right* and *run* is other alveolar.

Palatals

Hard palate is behind the alveolar ridge, a hard part in the mouth roof. Front tongue and hard palate produces palatals or alveo-palatals. She and church are voiceless palatals. <sh> is symbolized as /ʃ/ and <ch> is symbolized as / /. Measure is voiced symbolized

as / ʒ/ . Judge i s also voiced palatals symbolized as / /. / j/ i s t he other voiced palatal such as you and yet.

Velars

Soft palate or velum is back in the mouth roof; beyond the hard palate. Back of the tongue against the velum produces velars. A voiceless velar is symbolized as /k/ such as **k**ind, **c**ome, and **q**ueen. A voiced velar is heard in *good*, *game*, and *ghost* symbolized as /g/. *Ang*ry is represented by /ŋ/. /ŋ/ is nasal voiced velar because the air flows through nasal cavity.

Glottal

Glottal is pronounced with no tongue and other parts of the mouth actively. /h/ occurs in *hand, hit, whose, who.* /h/ is voiceless glottal. Glottis is between vocal folds in larynx. When the glottis opens and the air passes out of the mouth freely, /h/ is produced.

2.2.3. Manner of Articulation

Manner of articulation is the way English consonants pronounced. According to Yule (as cited in Maiza, 2014), manner of articulation in consonants are consists of stops, affricative, nasal, liquid, fricative and glides which stated below.

Stops

Stop or plosive experiences from blocking or stopping effect of the air stream Phonemes /b, d, g, k, p, and t/ are pronounced by some stopping of the air stream and letting it go unexpectedly.

Affricative

The combination of stopping and some friction produces voiceless affricates /ʧ/ and voiced affricates /ʤ/.

Nasal

The position of velum is lowered and the air streams, and then finally flows out through the nose to produce voiced nasals /m, n and ŋ/.

Liquid

The air stream flows around the sides of the tongue as the tongue tip touches the alveolar ridge. It is described as voiced liquids in /r/ and lateral voiced liquid /l/.

Fricative

/f, v, θ, ð, s, z, ʃ, and ʒ/ are pronounced when the air stream is almost blocked and air is pushed through the very narrow opening. Fricatives occur when there is a friction as the air is pushed through.

Glides

The voiced glides are /w/ and /j/. They are also semi-vowels because they can act as vowel /i/ and /ʊ/. Tongue glides to or from the vowels' position when glide is pronounced.

3. Research Method

This study adapted the qualitative-descriptive method (Creswell, 2012). The object of the research is the inconsistent sound patterns of the words. The English words represented by phonetic symbols were the data to identify the pronunciation inconsistency. The data were collected by applying the competence in identity method and non-participatory technique (Sudaryanto, 2015). This study designed the adaptation of a referential identity method (Sudaryanto, 2015) in conducting the analysis. This method was applied to identify the relationship between letters and sounds which are produced inconsistently.

4. Discussion and Finding

4.1. Discussion

4.1.1. Pronunciation Inconsistency of Vowels

1. The sound of letter <**a**>

  • /eɪ/ is pronounced in the words such as bake, cake, hate, lady, able, day, say, Quaker (not for share, hare, daddy, warm).

  • /**ə**/ is pronounced in words such as *about*, *abundant*, *alone*, *adult*, *among*, *another*, *abandon* (not for *asset*, *ass*, *aspiration*) .

  • /**æ**/ is pronounced in words such as *hat*, *cat*, *bad, bat, man, hand, as* (not for *gain, pain, nail, care, dare hair, share, warehouse*).

  • /ɑ:/ is pronounced in words such as far, car, are, bar (not for war).

  • **/ɔ:/ is pronounced in words such as call, ball, wall, hall, war, salt, also, water, warm, war.**

  • /**I**/ is pronounced in word such as *spinach, luggage, baggage, passage, cabbage, village, bandage, language.*

  • /**I**/ is pronounced in word such as *was, want, wash, watch.*

2. The sound of letter <**e**>

  • /**e**/ is pronounced in words such as *get, let, left, ten, then, belt, education, enter, economy, emancipation.*

  • /**i:**/ is pronounced in words such as *eve, evening, enough, email, echo.*

  • /**ə**/ is pronounced in words such as letter, later, father, mother, enter, center

  • /ɑ:/ **is pronounced in word such as entrepreneur.**

  • /**u:**/ is pronounced in words such as *jewel, ewe, Jew, Jewish, Hebrew, hew, blew, chew.*

3. The sound of letter <**i**>

  • /aɪ/ is pronounced in words such as light, high, bicycle, glide, spider, iconic, item, I, lime, shine, wine (not for wing, wind).

  • /ɪ/ is pronounced in words such as hit, pig, sin, italic, it, lick, idiom, think, blink, thing, wing, sing.

  • /is pronounced in words such as *girl, shirt, bird, whirl.*

  • /is pronounced in words such as *Illinois, reservoir, noir, chamois.*

4. The sound of letter <**o**>

  • /is pronounced in words such as *go, so, no, bowl, vocal, hole, Rome, follow, low, buffalo, vogue, tone* (not for *do*) .

- /is pronounced in words such as *got, bot, rod, god, dot, honest, hot, gone, doll, solemn.*

- /is pronounced in words such as *honey, money, mother, won, son, done,does, tongue, ton* (not for *tone*).

- /ː/ is pronounced in words such as **O***ttawa*, **o***tter*, **o***x*, **o***xygen*, **O***xford*, **o***xidant*, **o***steo-.*

- / is pronounced in words such as *do, to, who, whose, whom, tomb* (not for *whole*).

- /I/ is pronounced in a word such as *wo*men.

- /is pronounced in words such as *zealot, zealous, jealous, glorious*

- /is pronounced in a word such as *f or, sore, more, nor, or.*

- /**w**is pronounced in words such as **o***ne,* **o***nce.*

5. The sound of letter <**u**>

- /**jʊ**/ is pronounced in a word such as **u***niversity,* **u***nion,* **u***nited,* **u***nique,* **u**/**u***late* (not for prefix un- and **u***mbrella, ultra*).

- /**ʌ**/ is pronounced in a word such as *r**u**n, c**u**t, s**u**n, b**u**n, h**u**nt,* **u***p,* **u***mbrella,* **u***n-* , **u***s.*

- /I/ is pronounced in a word such as *b**u**sy, b**u**siness, lettu**c**e.*

- /**ə**/ is pronounced in a word such as, *b**u**rn,* **u***rn, s**u**stain, n**u**rse, m**u**rm**u**r, p**u**rpose.*

- /**e**/ is pronounced in a word such as *b**u**ry.*

- /**u**is pronounced in *j**u**ry, r**u**ral*

4.1.2. Pronunciation Inconsistency of Consonants

1. The sound of letter <**b**>

- /**b**/ is pronounced in words such as **b***ig, cra**b**, **b**eautiful.*

2. The sound of letter <**c**>

- /**s**/ is pronounced in words such as **c***enter,* **c***ycle,* **c***innamon,* **c***entennial,* **c***ivil, suc**c**ess, ac**c**ess, ac**c**ent, suc**c**inct.*

- /**tʃ**/ is pronounced in words such as **c***hur**c**h,* **c***herish,* **c***hair,* **c***hange,* **c***hallenge* (not for **c***hoir, s**c**hool*).

- /**k**/ is pronounced in a word such as **c**up, **c**an, **c**ould, **c**rab, **c**o**c**onut, or**c**hid, **c**hara**c**ter, s**c**hool, su**cc**ess, a**cc**ess, a**cc**ent, su**cc**inct (not for *chocolate / t*chalet /
- /ʃ/ is pronounced in words such as **c**halet, ma**c**hine.

3. The sound of letter <**d**>

- /**d**/ is pronounced in a word such as **d**o, **d**oll, me**d**al, **d**ay.
- /**d**is pronounced in a word such as *e**d**ucation, re**d**uce, **d**uring, **d**uration*.
- /**t**/ is pronounced in verbs added by –**ed** such as *talke**d**, face**d**, aske**d**.*

4. The sound of letter <**f**>

- /**f**/ is pronounced in words such as **f**oot, pu**ff**, **f**ace.

5. The sound of letter <**g**>

- /**dʒ**/ is pronounced in the words such as **g**iraffe, **g**in**g**er, **g**iant, **g**i**g**olo, **g**i**g**ot, gi**g**antic, ed**g**e, jud**g**e, massa**g**e.
- /**g**/ is pronounced in the words such as **g**o, **g**ive, **g**ulf, **g**et, **g**oal, **g**uide, gi**g**antic, gi**g**olo, **g**ood, fin**g**er.
- /**f**/ is pronounced in words such as *tou**g**h, enou**g**h, cou**g**h,*

6. The sound of letter <**h**>

- /**h**/ is pronounced in words such as **h**ear, **h**e, **h**orn, **h**elmet.

7. The sound of letter <**j**>

- /**dʒ**/ is pronounced in words such as **j**oin, **j**ar, **J**uly, **j**udge.
- /**h**/ is pronounced in the words such as **j**o**j**oba, Guadala**j**ara. **J**ose.
- /**j**/ is pronounced in the words such as *hallelu**j**ah, f **j**ord.*
- /**ʒ**/ is pronounced in a word such as *bi**j**ou.*

8. The sound of letter <**k**>

- /**k**/ is pronounced in words such as **k**ey, mon**k**ey, **k**arma, **k**ernel.

9. The sound of letter <**l**>

- /**l**/ is pronounced in words such as *cal**l**, ma**l**e, **l**eopard, **l**amb, kernel.*

10. The sound of letter <**m**>

- /**m**/ is pronounced in words such as **m**otor, **m**ale, **m**o**m**, **m**y, fe**m**ale.

11. The sound of letter <**n**>

- /**n**/ is pronounced in words such as **n**ight, **n**o, **n**eglect, **n**u**n**, ma**n**, mo**n**o.
- /**ŋ**/ is pronounced in words such as thi**n**k, si**n**k, ho**n**k, ba**n**k, tha**n**k, wi**n**k, succi**n**ct. /**ŋ**/ is also pronounced as in thi**n**g, si**n**g, ba**n**g, to**n**gue, ri**n**g, wi**n**g (not for gi**n**ger, gru**n**ge, cha**n**ge, challe**n**ge). /**ŋ**/ is then pronounced as in sy**n**chronize, sy**n**c, sy**n**cretism, u**n**cle.

12. The sound of letter <**p**>

- /**p**/ is pronounced in words such as **p**in, **p**ut, **p**ower, gallo**p**, ca**p**able.
- /**f**/ is pronounced in words such as **p**hysic, **p**harmacy, **p**hoto, **p**henomena.

13. The sound of letter <**q**>

- /**k**/ is pronounced in words such as **q**uay, **Q**atar, pla**q**ue, mos**q**ue, **q**uestion

14. The sound of letter <**r**>

- /**r**/ is pronounced in words such as **r**un, **r**abbit, **r**oom, **r**ay, **r**oar, ma**rr**iage, ma**rr**y, ve**r**y.
- /is pronounced in words such as ca**r**, powe**r**, marke**r**, ma**r**ble, boa**r**d, co**r**k, corne**r**.

15. The sound of letter <**s**>

- /**s**/ is pronounced in words such as **s**un, **s**i**s**ter, **s**ing, hi**s**, ki**ss**.
- /is pronounced in words such as **s**he, **s**hare, **s**hould.
- /**z**/ is pronounced in words such as de**s**ire, de**s**ist, di**s**ease, de**s**ert.
- /**ʁ**/ is pronounced when words end with suffix –sion, -sual, -sure such as U**s**ual, Vi**s**ual, Mea**s**ure, Expo**s**ure, Vi**s**ion, Deci**s**ion.

16. The sound of letter <**t**>

- /**t**/ is pronounced in words such as **t**alk, **t**ea, con**t**emporary, pu**t**, cu**t**.
- /**θ**/ is pronounced in words such as **t**hink, **t**hank, **t**hrow, **t**hree.
- /**ð**/ is pronounced in words such as **t**he, **t**hey, **t**hem, **t**hus, **t**horough.
- /**tʃ**/ is pronounced in words such as ques**t**ion, sugges**t**ion, ac**t**ual, tem-pera**t**ure, acupunc**t**ure, litera**t**ure.
- /**ʃ**/ is pronounced when letter [t] is followed by suffix -ion such as commu-nica**t**ion, men**t**ion, sec**t**ion

17. The sound of letter <**v**>

- **/v/** is pronounced in words such as **v**ictory, **v**ow, **v**irgin, fi**v**e, se**v**en.

18. The sound of letter **<w>**

    - **/w/** is pronounced in words such as **w**ood, **w**ith, **w**hen
    - **/ʊ/** is pronounced when the position of the letter [w] is after the first syllable sound such as kno**w**n, de**w**y, de**w**drop, se**w**, no**w**, bo**w**

19. The sound of letter **<x>**

    - **/ks/** is pronounced in words such as bo**x**. fo**x**, e**x**it, se**x**.
    - **/kʃ/** is pronounced in words such as se**x**ual. ase**x**ual, coa**x**ial.
    - **/gz/** is pronounced in words such as e**x**hibit. e**x**hale, e**x**haust.
    - **/z/** is pronounced in words such as **x**ylophone. **X**enophobe, **x**ylem, **X**erox.

20. The sound of letter **<y>**

    - **/ə/** is pronounced in words such as p**y**jamas, zeph**y**r.
    - **/j/** is pronounced in words such as **y**es, **y**ell, **y**olk, **y**um.
    - **/i/** is pronounced in words such as pla**y**, bo**y**, **Y**vonne, happ**y**, lad**y**, d**y**slexia, d**y**sfunction, **Y**ves.
    - **/ai/** is pronounced in the words such as t**y**pe, t**y**re, wh**y**, d**y**namic, t**y**phoon, d**y**ing.

21. The sound of letter **<z>**

    - **/z/** is pronounced in words such as **z**oo, **z**ebra, ba**z**aar,
    - **/ts/** is pronounced in words such mo**zz**arella, pi**zz**a, pi**zz**eria, pi**zz**icato, pala**zz**o (not for gi**zz**ard, bli**zz**ard).
    - **/s/** is pronounced in words such put**z**, blit**z**, glit**z**

4.1.3. Unproduced Sound of Letters

1. Letters **<r, e>**

   The English words that end **<r>** or **<e>** produce silent **<r>** and **<e>** such as daughte**r**, winte**r**, swimme**r**, summe**r**, rid**e**, prid**e**, win**e**, queu**e**, Februa**r**y.

2. Letters **<g, h>**

   The English words which have syllable sound ended by **<g>** and **<h>** produce the silent letter **<g>** and **<h>** such as in the words dau**gh**ter, dou**gh**nut, dou**gh**,

bough, doughty, plough, wrought, bought, caught, fighting (not for enou**gh**, tou**gh**, cou**gh**)

3. Letter <**c**>

   Letter <**c**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**s**> meets letter <**c**> such as in the words *s**c**ene, cres**c**ent, dis**c**iple, mus**c**le.*

4. Letter <**h**>

   Letter <**h**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**c**> meets letter <**h**> such as in the words *tec**h**, C**h**ristian, ec**h**o, sc**h**ool.*

5. Letter <**t**>

   Letter <**t**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**s**> or letter <**f**> meets letter <**t**> such as in the words *cas**t**le, bris**t**le, hus**t**le, lis**t**en,* of**t**en, sof**t**en, (not for the *balle**t**, as**t**hma*)

6. Letter <**n**>

   Letter <**n**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**m**> meets letter <**n**> such as in the words *autum**n**, colum**n**, condem**n**, hym**n**.*

7. Letter <**g**>

   Letter <**g**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**g**> meets letter <**n**> such as in the words **g***naw, champa**g**ne, **g**nome, **g**nash, colo**g**ne, desi**g**n, rei**g**n* and *si**g**n.*

8. Letter <**b**>

   Letter <**b**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**b**> meets letter <**t**> such as in the words *dou**b**t, de**b**t, su**b**tle.*

9. Letter <**l**>

   Letter <**l**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**l**> meets letter <**k**> such as in the words *fo**l**k, yo**l**k, ta**l**k, wa**l**k.*

10. Letter <**s**>

    Letter <**s**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**l**> meets letter <**s**> such as in the words *i**s**land, i**s**le, ai**s**le,* and *debri**s**, bourgeoi**s**, rendezvou**s**.*

11. Letter <**h**>

    Letter <**h**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**h**> meets letter <**o**> such as in the words **h***our,* **h***onor,* **h***onest,* and **h***eir.*

12. Letter <**d**>

Letter <**d**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**n**> meets letter <**d**> such as in the words *han**d**some, han**d**kerchief, win**d**, fin**d**, We**d**nesday.*

13. Letter <**k**>

Letter <**k**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**k**> meets letter <**n**> such as in the words **k***nee,* **k***nock,* **k***nife,* **k***now,* **k***not,*

14. Letter <**w**>

Letter <**w**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**w**> meets letter <**o**> such as in the words, *s**w**ord, t**w**o,* **w***ho,* **w***hose,* **w***hom,* **w***hole* and *ans**w**er.* Letter <**w**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**w**> meets letter <**r**> such as in the words **w***rist,* **w***rite,* **w***rong,* **w***rought,* **w***riggle.*

15. Letter <**b**>

Letter <**b**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**m**> meets letter <**b**> such as in the words *plum**b**er, bom**b**, com**b**, thum**b*** (not for *slum**b**er, som**b**er*)

16. Letter <**o, l**>

Letter <**o**> and <**l**> will not be produced as a sound in a word such as *co**l**o**nel.*

17. Letter <**m**>

Letter <**m**> will not be produced as a sound in a word **m***nemonic.*

18. Letter <**p**>

Letter <**p**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**p**> meets any consonants, such as in **p***sychology,* **p***seudo,* **p***neumonia, recei**p**t, cou**p**,* Cam**p***bell.*

19. Letter <**u**>

Letter <**u**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**u**> meets letter <**i**>, such as in *bisc**u**it, b**u**ild, circ**u**it, g**u**ilt,* (not for the *s**u**it, s**u**ite*).

20. Letter <**o**>

Letter <**o**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**o**> meets letter <**e**> or letter <**u**> such as in *le**o**pard, pe**o**ple, b**o**utique.*

21. Letter <**u**>

Letter <**u**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**u**> meets letter <**e**}> such as *colleag**u**e, dialog**u**e, leag**u**e, tong**u**e, boutiq**u**e, bo**u**rge**o**is, vog**u**e, q**u**ay,* and *l**i**e**u**tenant* (not for *d**u**e*).

22. Letter <**i**>

Letter <**i**> will not be produced as a sound in words such as *croissant, bourgeois, lieutenant.*

23. Letter <**z**>

Letter <**z**> will not be produced as a sound in word such as *rendezvous*

24. Letter <**a**>

Letter <**a**> will not be produced as a sound when letter <**a**> meets letter <**e**>, especially in one syllable sound word. There are found in words such as *tea, pea, sea, seal, teal, steal, meal.*

4.2. Finding

The tables show the sounds production represented by the letters in English words. One letter can be produced by more than one sound, and one sound produced in English words can be represented by more than one letter.

Table 1: Sound Production of Vowels.

a	i	u	e	o
ei	ai	jʊ	e	əʊ
ə	ɪ	ʌ	iː	ɒ
æ	ɜː	ɪ	ə	ʌ
ɑː	ɑː	ə	ɑː	ɑː
ɔː		e	uː	ʊ
ɪ		uə		ɪ
ɒ				ə
				ɔː
				wʌ

The areas of English pronunciation inconsistency are as follows.

1. The same letter of English alphabet does not always produce the same sound;

2. The same sound is not always produced by the same letter of English alphabet;

3. Some letters of English alphabet indicated in words are not produced as sounds;

<r, e, gh, c, h, g, t, b, l, s, h, d, k, w, b, lo, g, m, p, u, o, l, z, a>;

Table 2: Sound Production of Consonants.

b	c	d	f	g	h	j	k	l	m	n	p	q	r	s	t	v	w	x	y	Z
b	s	d	f	g	h	dʒ	k	l	m	n	p	k	r	s	t	v	w	ks	ə	Z
	tʃ	dʒ		dʒ		h				ŋ	f			ʃ	θ		ʊ	kʃ	j	ts
	k	t		f		j								z	ð			gz	i	s
	ʃ					ʒ								ʒ	tʃ			z	ai	
														ʃ						

4. The sound is produced where there is no letter of English alphabet; /j, w/.

5. Conclusion

Letters in English alphabet experience the inconsistencies in their pronunciation. Almost every single letter pronounced in the alphabet experiences difference sounds in words. The pronunciation inconsistency mostly occurs in the vowels and some in the consonants. In the pronunciation of English words, there are some letters pronounced silently, there is a letter pronounced differently, there is a sound represented by different letters, and there is a sound with no letter presented. The English pronunciation phenomenon makes the EFL learners experience the difficulty in pronouncing the English words.

There are some letters in the English words pronounced silently. They experience as in such words as *cupboard*, *fighting*, *plough*, *listen*, **w**rite. The letters in words do not give contribution to the sound production. The letters are not meant to be pronounced. There is no pattern or formula when to omit the sounds from the letters written in English words.

A letter can support as many as two or more different sounds in a word or different words. /k/ for cup, /tʃ/ for church, or /s/ for center is one of the phenomena for a letter with different sounds pronounced in different words. Contrarily, there is a sound represented by different letters such as /dʒ/ for education, /dʒ/ for gigolo, and /dʒ/ for judge.

Finally, there is the intrusion of sound where there is no letter to indicate the sound. The sound is produced while pronouncing the word meanwhile there is no letter representing the sound. /j, t, f, or w/ are sounds produced without any letters representing them such as /j/ for *Europe*, /w/ for *choir*, /f/ for *lieutenant*, or /t/ for *bachelorette*. Moreover, Italian, Spanish, Indonesian and Japanese are examples of 'phonetic' languages where there is essentially a one-to-one relationship between spelling and pronunciation (Kelly, 2004). The letter-pronounced inconsistency makes an obstacle for learners of English to pronounce English words correctly.

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