CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Peter and George are very common name in English. However, they are commonly mispronounced by Indonesian. Peter is often pronounced as /pɛtər/. Indonesian pronounces it as what it seems in alphabet while the correct pronunciation is /ˈpiːtə(r)/. Indonesian pronounces George as /jos/, /jors/, even /george/. For those who have heard that name, they pronounce it as similar as what is heard so they say /jos/ or /jors/ and those who never heard that name, pronounce it like what is written which is /george/. In fact, the correct pronunciation of George is /dʒɔːdʒ/ in which the <e> is not pronounced.

Not only in English name,Z but mispronunciations also occur in common English words used in daily life. For instance, *knowledge* is commonly pronounced by Indonesian as /knowledʒ/ and *hour* is pronounced as /hour/. However, the correct pronunciation are /ˈnɒlɪdʒ/ and /ˈaʊər/ which <k> and <h> are not pronounced. This problem can be found either at class when the students are asked to read English words or give a presentation in English or in actual speaking of English conversation. These problems indicate that English is different in spelling and pronunciation.

English is lack of correspondence between spelling and pronunciation. English orthography or spelling is quite different from phonetic transcription (Rogers, 2002, p. 16). People can easily find letters in English words

pronounced differently or vice versa. For example the <c> and <g> in English can be pronounced more than one sound. The <c> can represent three different sounds as in *can* /k/, in *cinema* /s/ or in *chocolate* /tʃ/ and <g> can represent two different sounds. It is pronounced as /dʒ/ in *giraffe* and /g/ as in *good*.

A combination of letters in English words can also make English learners confused. We can see in the words *tough*, *though*, *trough*, *through*, and *thorough*. All these words have <ough> in them but each word is pronounced in a distinct way. This proves that English is somehow complicated concerning the variation of how the words are written and pronounced.

The different spelling and pronunciation in English also can be seen in silent letters. Silent letters are the letters that are not pronounced (Huber, 2009, p. 67). Kelly (2001, p. 123) stated that some letters can be silent in certain words when they are proceeded or followed by another consonant. For instance, <p> in *psychology,* <b> in *lamb,* <e> in *time*. They are not pronounced as in *knowledge* and *hour* that <k> and <h> are also silent.

However, there is one-to-one relationship between spelling and pronunciation in Indonesia. It means that what is spoken is exactly what is written. As a result, all Indonesian words have the same pronunciation as their spelling. For example, <c> in Indonesian is pronounced as /tʃ/ as in *cinta* and *macan* and <g> is pronounced as /g/ as in *gajah*, and *gugur*. Therefore, when reading English words, Indonesian as the foreign language learners can make errors because they are confused between the sounds and the letters.

Basically, sounds are not letters. A sound which is represented graphically by letters is different from a letter (Dardjowidjojo, 2009, p. 16). There are 44 different sounds used when speaking English are written down by 26 letters (Kelly, 2001, p. 122). It means that one sound may be represented by one letter or a combination of letters. For example, the sound /i/ can be represented by three different letters as in *see* <ee>*, sea* <ea>, and *brief* <ie>, while a combination of letters can produce different sounds as <th> in *this* /ð/, and in *think* /θ/. Thus, English learners often get difficulties both in reading and writing English words. They have to know what exactly the spelling and pronunciation.

Pronunciation is one of key skills to speak English. Together with grammar and vocabulary, pronunciation plays an important role in term of speaking. Pronunciation is defined as the way in which languages or words are spoken (Manser, 1991, p. 330). It is also dealing with the way in which someone speaks of foreign language. Pronunciation is important in English because mispronunciation can cause misunderstanding between the speaker and the hearer.

One of the factors that can cause errors in pronunciation is the different phonological system between English and Indonesian. For instance, both in Indonesian and in English have sounds /l/ and /p/. Based on the rule of sound arrangement known as phonotactics of Indonesian, these two sounds are not allowed to occur together in one syllable, while in English they can occur together at the end of the word. Since /lp/ does not exist in Indonesian, the

English word *help* is often pronounced as /hɛləp/ and *film* is pronounced as /filəm/ or even /piləm/ (Dardjowidjojo, 2009, p.15).

Yates (2005, p. v) mentioned the goal of 'perfect pronunciation' is to speak so that people listen to what we say not how we say it. It is to be understood by the first time you say something and to be confident and proud of the way you speak. The lack of pronunciation skill can decrease the confidence in speaking English, restrict social interaction, and be underestimated by people who actually do not know the speaker's abilities, so he will feel uncomfortable at his speech and afraid of laughter and ridicule. Therefore, it is clearly that mastering pronunciation is necessary.

In Indonesia, English has become necessary than any other foreign languages. It is used in various aspects of life such as business, government, and social communication. It is the tool to keep in touch with the world. Therefore, English is taught formally from elementary school. Moreover, in some kindergartens, English has been introduced to their students. Furthermore, some English words are used in daily stuff such as food products, households, public services, etc.

However, Indonesians rarely speak English in daily conversation. They only learn it at school where specific English material which is pronunciation is not taught by the teacher. English learners in Indonesia mostly learn about grammatical rules rather than pronunciation while in the actual speaking they have to understand what English speaker says. The main purpose of language

is to communicate so the language to communicate which involves pronunciation should be central in the classroom.

In the university where this research is conducted, pronunciation is taught in the first semester which aims to enable students to master English pronunciation to avoid misunderstanding in communication, whereas phonetics is taught in the second semester which aims to makes students understand how to read phonemic transcription in the dictionary to pronounce the words correctly. However, some of the students still mispronounce the words especially the words containing silent letters.

Many English words have silent letters in them which can cause all sorts of problems, for instance, spelling the word, pronouncing the word or looking for the word in a dictionary. Therefore, it is important to pay special attention to this phenomenon in order to avoid misunderstanding in speaking. Unfortunately, teachers or lecturers do not teach it to their students particularly.

English department students are expected to be proficient in English, not only in writing aspect but also in reading, listening and more importantly in speaking. After graduation, they will be professional in working as employees in a company or English teachers. They will be the role model of their colleagues or students so making errors when pronouncing English words will be embarrassing.

Based on the explanation above, the writer conducts a paper which focuses on the pronunciation of English silent letters entitled "Error Analysis

of Silent Letters Pronunciation Made by the Fourth Semester Students of English Department STBA-JIA".

B. Question & Scope of the Research

1. Question of the Research

This research is conducted to describe why students of STBA JIA who have studied English Pronunciation still mispronounce silent letters in English words and what factors causing the errors are. Those main problems can be concluded into three questions below:

a. What types of errors in pronouncing English silent letters made by the fourth semester students of English department STBA JIA?

b. What factor causing the errors in pronouncing English silent letters made by the students?

c. What types of error that mostly exist in this case?

2. Scope of the Research

In this research, the analysis focuses on the letters that are written in spelling but disappeared in pronunciation which is called silent letters. Silent letters used in this reseacch is empty letters which are one of the types of silent lettters revelaed by Carney. They can be in the beginning, medial, and final position of the word. The total of the words are 30 words. They are taken randomly from the book *Pronunciation Practice* that the students used to learn pronunciation in the first semester. The writer applies the steps of error analysis of Corder (1967). To describe the error the students made, the writer conducts a comparative study of phonotactic constraints of English and Indonesia using the theory of Brinton (2010) and Alwi *et al* (2017).

C. Objective & Significance of the Research

1. **Objective of the Research**

Those statements of the problems above are the base of reaching the objective of the study as follow:

a. To describe the types of errors in pronouncing words containing silent letters made by the fourth semester students of English department STBA-JIA;

b. To analyze the factors causing the errors in pronouncing words containing silent letters made by the fourth semester students of English department STBA-JIA.

2. **Significance of the Research**

a. Theoretically

The writer does hope that this research can give a contribution in giving information about what is silent letters and how to pronounce them. This study is expected to give some advantages especially for the writer herself, the respondents, and all university students toward their pronunciation. The result of this research can help other researchers who conduct research at the same subject and can be the reference for other researchers as well.

b. Practically

The writer expects that this research can give some benefits for the lecturer of English pronunciation, the English department students, and the writer. The first is to the lecturer. This research is expected to help the lecturer to design appropriate materials and approaches to

decrease the errors and improve student's pronunciation in pronouncing English Silent Letters.

The second is to the English department students. The students are able to know what errors they made when they are pronouncing silent letters. They also will be able to know what silent letters most frequently mispronounced so they will focus on it and improve their pronunciation after realizing the errors they have made.

The last is to the writer. This research will give valuable experiences for the writer. By conducting the research, the writer will develop her understanding in language aspect in term of pronunciation and error analysis. Therefore, the writer will get more awareness in pronouncing English Silent Letters and in teaching English especially in term of pronunciation.

D. Operational Definition

After having read and understood some theories that exist in the title elements, the writer tries to explain the operational definitions as the theories received from some books as follow:

1. Phonetics and Phonology

Phonetics and phonology are the study of pronunciation where phonetics is the scientific study of speech sounds used in human languages which deals with how they are made, how they are perceived and the physic involved, while phonology talks about how these speech sounds are

organized into system of each language, For instance, how the sounds arranged in relation between them and how they affect each other.

2. Pronunciation

Pronunciation is the act of how speech sound is spoken. The goals of pronunciation are to speak properly so that people listen to what we speak not how we speak and to be understood.

3. Silent Letters

Silent letters are the letters that exist in spelling but disappear in pronunciation. Some letters can be silent when they are immediately followed by another consonant.

4. Error Analysis

Error analysis is a technique of observing, analyzing, classifying the errors into categories. After that, those errors can be identified what factors caused them.

E. Systematization of the Research

This paper is arranged systematically in order to make the reader understand easily. This paper is divided into five parts in the form of chapters. The description of each chapter will be described below:

Chapter I : Introduction explains about the background of the research, question of the research, scope of the research, objective of the research, significance of the research, operational definitions and systematization of the research.

Chapter II : Theoretical Description consists of definition of language, definition of phonetics and phonology, definition of pronunciation, error analysis, errors and mistakes, silent letters, and research of the relevance. This section describes the theory used on this research. The terms of the theory are also explained more detail including the related references.

Chapter III : Research Methodology contains the method of the research which consists of Time and Place of the Research, Kind of the Research, Procedure of the Research, Technique of Data Collection, Technique of Data Analysis, and Source of Primary and Secondary Data.

Chapter IV : Analysis Data shows data description, data analysis, data interpretation and the discussion.

Chapter V : Conclusion and Suggestion give the summary from all chapters and suggestion which relate to the research.