

A B S T R A C T

DIFFERENCES IN ENGLISH  
CONSONANT AND CONSONANT CLUSTER PRODUCTION  
BETWEEN THE MIDDLE AND LOWER SOCIO-ECONOMIC CLASS  
STUDENTS OF THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN SURAKARTA

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In every society, there are varieties of social differentiation, for instance, by social class, age, sex, race and religion. This situation, inevitably, also occurs in Indonesia. Those differences seem to influence their second languages, whether Bahasa Indonesia or a foreign language, namely English. The most salient influence appears in the English Pronunciation. The Lower Socio-economic class (LEC) students are influenced very much by Javanese compared with the Middle Socio-economic Class (MEC) students. For example, many students coming from LEC pronounce /ndə/ for the English word 'the'; students coming from MEC pronounce it as /də/, while the correct English pronunciation is /ðə/.

This kind of situation occurs quite often; therefore, the writer was interested to do research on it in order to investigate the differences in the consonant and cluster production made by the Middle and Lower Socio-economic Class students.

It was hypothesized that the MEC students will show better results than the LEC students in pronouncing the English consonants and English clusters.

Based on the data taken from the results of the MEC and LEC students' pronunciation, the t-ratio could be calculated. And based on the analysis, there was a sig-

nificant difference between the performance of the MEC students and that of the LEC ones.

As the hypothesis is accepted, several notable conclusions can be drawn. It is concluded that the MEC students were better than the LEC ones, the social environment and the facilities they had at home seem to be the cause of the MEC's proficiency compared with that of the LEC, and the errors that the students made can be categorized as errors coming from: (a) Interference from bahasa Indonesia, Javanese and Arabic, (b) Devoicing process, (c) Spelling pronunciation, (d) Failure to detect the subtle differences.

Last but not least, there are several notable suggestions presented.

- (1). The teachers should pay attention to the students as individuals with their own problems.
- (2). The teachers should be trained to recognize the differences, especially existing between English sounds and their corresponding the Indonesian sounds.
- (3). The teachers should spend some time training the students to pronounce English sounds correctly, if possible not in isolation.
- (4). One of the interesting and helpful methods in practicing pronunciation, is the use of songs.