

## CHAPTER IV

### Findings and Discussion

This chapter presents the research findings and data analysis of the research. In this chapter the researcher would like to describe the problematic sounds encountered by Korean students. These are the problematic sounds that are usually encountered by Korean students. In consonants, these contrastive sounds appeared problematic: **1) /b/: /p/. 2) /f/: /p/. 3) /b/: /v/ 4) /j, ch/: /z, z/. 5) /s/ 6) /l/: /r/. 7) /s/: /th/. 8) /th/: /s, or z/. And in vowels, these contrastive sounds appeared problematic: **1) short “i”:** long “e”, **2) extra “eu” and “ee” sounds,** **3) long “o”:** short “o”, **4) short “a”:** short “e”**

#### 4.1 Similarities and Differences

The sound system of English is so different from the sound system of Korean that native Koreans learning English encounter a multitude of phonological snares. English has a number of sounds that do not exist in Korean. The following table shows the availability of English and Korean consonants.

## Consonants

Phoneme	English	Korean	S	D
/p/	Initial: pin Medial: report Final: tip	Initial: pal Medial: saeparan Final: ip		
/t/	Initial: tin Medial: canteen Final: cat	Initial: taja Medial: chutae Final: jat		
/k/	Initial: kin Medial: hockey Final: kick	Initial: kol Medial: sike Final: sok		
/b/	Initial: bust Medial: baby Final: cab	Initial: babo Medial: obalsago Final: gab		
/d/	Initial: dust Medial: ending Final: card	Initial: darami Medial: makdaegi Final: kard		
/g/	Initial: gust Medial: tiger Final: gag	Initial: gasu Medial: koguma Final: chag		

/f/	Initial: fin Medial: cafe Final: chef	Initial: - Medial: - Final: -		
/θ/	Initial: thin Medial: authority Final: death	Initial: - Medial: - Final: -		
/s/	Initial: sin Medial: chest Final: horse	Initial: sal Medial: - Final: -		
/ʃ/	Initial: shin Medial: machine Final: crash	Initial: - Medial: - Final: -		
/h/	Initial: hat Medial: cahoots Final: -	Initial: hobak Medial: kunhobak Final: -		
/v/	Initial: vase Medial: cavalry Final: cave	Initial: - Medial: - Final: -		
/ð/	Initial: the Medial: - Final: -	Initial: - Medial: - Final: -		

/z/	Initial: zoo Medial: hazard Final: jazz	Initial: zoomal Medial: chozasik Final: sonja		
/ʒ/	Initial: - Medial: treasure Final: bridge	Initial: - Medial: husure Final: sangdge		
/tʃ/	Initial: cheap Medial: unchain Final: catch	Initial: cha Medial: haechida Final: mangch		
/dʒ/	Initial: gym Medial: gorgeous Final: -	Initial: jim Medial: sonjim Final: -		
/m/	Initial: mother Medial: camera Final: mom	Initial: mal Medial: maemi Final: mam		
/n/	Initial: nail Medial: onion Final: scene	Initial: nara Medial: sinbal Final: sin		
/ŋ/	Initial: - Medial: kingdom Final: sing	Initial: ingk Medial: kongsatang Final: kong		

/l/	Initial: late Medial: calling Final: call	Initial: lala Medial: kalguksu Final: kal		
/r/	Initial: really Medial: doremi Final: ruler	Initial: reil Medial: - Final: -		
/w/	Initial: well Medial: - Final: -	Initial: won Medial: - Final: -		
/y/	Initial: yellow Medial: - Final: -	Initial: ye Medial: - Final: -		

## Vowels

The following table shows the similarities and differences of English and Korean vowels..

Phoneme	English	Korean	S	D
/i/	see	kimchi		

/ɪ/	hit	-		
/u/	blue	-		
/ʊ/	put	usan		
/e/	say	keik		
/ɛ/	bed	-		
/ə/	away	-		
/ɜ/	turn	jurn		
/o/	go	koguma		
/ɔ/	four	-		
/ʌ/	cup	zanggap		
/æ/	cat	kae		
/ɑ/	now	-		
/ɒ/	law	jou		

/ɑ/	arm	arm		
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Based on the studies of the two tables, the following sounds are different in English and Korean: /f/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /z/, /ʒ/, /r/, /l/, / /, /ə/, /ɑ/, /u/, /ɔ/. The rest of the sounds are similar.

## 4.2 Problematic sounds encountered by Korean Students

### 4.2.1 Consonants

The result of the problematic sounds in consonants is shown in the table <1> below.

Table <1>

No	Phoneme	Sentence	Percentage of errors
1	/b/	My mother got on the <u>bus</u> .	30%
2	/d/	Let's go to the <u>dance</u> party.	30%
3	/g/	Please turn off the <u>gas</u> lighter.	20%
4	/f/	How did you get my <u>coffee</u> ?	50%

5	/v/	My mother got a beautiful <u>v</u> ase.	80%
6	/l/	The <u>l</u> ass on the grass was shining.	70%
7	/r/	Turn off the light on the <u>r</u> ight.	90%
8	/z/	<u>P</u> lease pass me the salt.	80%
9	/ʃ/	She showed me her washing <u>m</u> achine.	70%
10	/θ/	<u>T</u> hank you for your kindness.	50%
11	/ð/	Put your <u>l</u> ather away.	90%
12	/ʒ/	He is playing as <u>u</u> sual.	80%
13	/dʒ/	Is John in the <u>g</u> arage?	90%
14	/tʃ/	We bought a <u>c</u> heap jeep.	90%

### 1) B : P

This is a very important distinction in English. While native speakers are used to hearing many accents, the interchange of these letters by Korean speakers is very



confusing. For example, if a Korean student says “I’m allergic to peas,” her friend might take her on a mountain trail near some bee hives, not realizing that she had really meant “I’m allergic to bees.” Perhaps she will get stung and die, all because she didn’t rattle her voicebox!

## **2) F : P**

This is another crucial distinction in English. There are many English words where the only difference is the initial sound, for example, “for” & “pour,” “feel,” and “peel” etc.

## **3) B : V**

As above. I could have put this into the lesser mistakes category, but it does inhibit understanding.

## **4) J or Ch : Z and Z Sounds**

This problem occurs when Korean speakers pronounce the letter “z” like a “j” or “ch.” The same problem applies to “tz” and “ts” sounds. A word like “pizza” ends up pronounced as “peach-eu,” for example. Again, if one has an allergy to peaches, he will be in serious trouble! Another example: “result” often gets pronounced as “rezhert” [where “zh” indicates a voiced “sh” sound] by Koreans learning English. In this case, the word sounds more like “dessert” than anything else. The u vowel’s

metamorphosis into a short e can often be a problem for English learners; here I suspect it has to do with the following letter l, which is often confused by Koreans with the letter r.

### **5) The Letter “S”**

Many Koreans have a tendency to simply skip this letter. This is unfortunate, as “s” carries a lot of meaning in English. While one can probably get away with saying “He eat broccoli, not ham,” the speaker will confuse people if she is talking about nouns. For example, “peas” are vegetables, while “pee” is urine!

Another example is the “s” that separates “he” from “she.” An acquaintance of mine, who is a nurse in Jakarta, says that many Asian immigrant nurses (Koreans aren’t the only ones) regularly confuse the gender of the third person singular pronoun. One can imagine how this could lead to some very dramatic problems!

The problem of mispronouncing “s” as “sh” is also widespread. Usually this happens with an i-class vowel following the s. An innocent Korean learner of English will often make mistakes like this: “He shit on the bed.” The act of sitting, unfortunately, has suddenly morphed into that of defecating, and to make things worse, a word associated with profanity was used to describe the act!

### **6) L : R**

“I want lice, please.” A Korean student has just asked for a notorious blood-sucking little animal that lives in the skin at the top of one’s head, when all he wanted was a simple dish of rice. The letter “R” in English can be quite difficult to say, but students should be encouraged to try anyway. Also, students should remember to pronounce “L” always as the “L” in “La-la.” The position of “L” in a word doesn’t usually affect its pronunciation. Of course, if there are two “L”s side by side, one may need to pronounce it twice. Examples: “feel” (one sound) “holler” (the sound is repeated).

#### **7) Th (unvoiced) : S**

English speakers are used to hearing this mistake, and can usually understand what is being said. However, when combined with all the other pronunciation errors common to the Korean community, this error can contribute to making understanding difficult. To make this sound, stick your tongue between your teeth, and breath out quickly. When one is unwell, she wants to say “I’m sick,” not “I’m thick” (which could mean either fat or stupid!).

#### **8) Th (voiced) : S or Z**

As above. There is a voiced “th” in the word “this.”

### 4.2.2 Vowels

The result of the problematic sounds in vowels is shown in the table <2> below.

Table <2>

No	Phoneme	Sentence	Percentage of errors
1	/i/	Don't sit on the wet seat.	80%
2	/I/	Sick persons seek good doctors.	80%
3	/e/	The animal had a very big head.	60%
4	/æ/	That's a bad bed.	70%
5	/u/	This room is full of fools.	90%
6	/ʊ/	Pull him out of the pool.	80%
7	/o/	We bought a boat.	60%
8	/ɔ/	He caught me by the coat.	80%
9	/ʌ/	She continued to take her umbrella.	70%
10	/ʌ/	What is it all about?	70%

	/ə/		
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### 1) Short /i/ : Long /e/

About 80% of students were appeared to pronounce this vowel wrong. This error on its own is usually not a serious one. The problem occurs when this error is combined with others, as it frequently is by Korean learners of English. A word like “city” can be quite problematic for Korean learners of English. First, they turn the soft “s” sound of the “c” into “sh.” Then, they sometimes turn the short “i” vowel into the long “e” vowel. The result is a “word” sounding like “Sheedy.” English speakers are left wondering whether that means “CD,” “shitty” (a rude adjective pertaining to fecal material), or “shady.” None of these is right, but educators can hopefully see the problem that English speakers have when listening to people who have most of the class of errors described here.

### 2) Extra “eu” and “ee” Sounds

While I was doing research, I found I had more trouble understanding Koreans than any other English Department students, largely because of very strange errors like this one. Particularly with the “ee” sound, an English speaker might think the Korean learner of English is trying to make an adjective, and consequently will still be

listening for some other information that is not coming. For example, the native speaker hears “church,” mispronounced as “churchy,” and thinks the noun is an adjective.

### **3) Long “o”: Short “o”**

I’ve noticed that Korean learners of English often have difficulty with vowel length and quality, and the two sounds associated with the single letter “o” are no exception. For example, my friend who studies at Gandhi Memorial international school, often talked about “novels,” but he pronounced the short “o” as a long one, and then he turned the “v” into a “b.” The result was a completely different English word: nobles. This and other problems in this section are still in evidence among many of my Korean friends.

### **4) Short “a”: Short “e”**

An excellent example is the English word “fax,” which commonly gets pronounced by Korean learners as “pekseu.” In this case, only one sound in the original English word is left, the “ks” or “x” sound. Not only has the “f” been turned into a “p,” but the short “a” vowel has been turned into a short “e” vowel. One should expect that English speakers will fail to understand this short word when only one sound remains correct.

### **4.3 Reasons of the problems**

The first reason is because of the difference of two languages. There are some consonants and vowels that do not exist in Korean. Also there are some sounds which sounds are seemed to be similar but there's a slight difference. That's why Korean students tend to pronounce those sounds like Korean.

The second reason is because of practice lacking. If they found out which sounds are difficult for them to pronounce, they should practice hard to overcome those problems.

## CHAPTER V

### Conclusion and Suggestion

This chapter reveals the conclusions and suggestions of this study. The explanation are presented below :

#### 5.1 Conclusion

There are large categories of the difficulties to learn English which all or many of the Korean students face in common. This can be used with profit by Korean students who have studied English before but have had little or no systematic training in pronunciation English.

This study will go at least toward filling the problems on mastering pronunciation. The first task is to discover as accurately and objectively as we could what these areas of common problems are. It is set up in accordance with the phonetic and phonemic systems of both English and Korean. However, it does not involve the problems of supra-segmental phonemes.

This study conducts problematic English sounds test for 10 Korean students from age 18-23 who are learning English in Jakarta. Each respondent's pronunciation is recorded by recorder player. In this study, it was found that there were many differences between English and Korean sounds. In contrast with the English sounds, the following sounds do not exist in Korean: /f/, /v/, /θ/, /ð/, /z/, /ʒ/,



/r/, /l/, / /, /ə/, /ɑ/, /u/, /ɔ/. Due to the difference between English and Korean sound systems, Korean students tend to transfer neighboring sounds of Korean to English in pronouncing English. Therefore they tend to make mistakes pronouncing English. In this study, students were found to make 80-90% of errors in pronouncing the selected consonants of 1) /b/: /p/. 2) /f/: /p/. 3) /b/: /v/ 4) /j, ch/: /z, z/. 5) /s/ 6) /l/: /r/. 7) /s/: /th/ . 8) /th /: /s, or z/ and the selected vowels of 1) short “i”: long “e”, 2) extra “eu” and “ee” sounds, 3) long “o”: short “o”, 4) short “a”: short “e”.

To minimize these English pronunciation problems made by Korean students, special effort should be exerted either at the university level or at the government level. At the university level, English teachers should teach their students the differences between English and Korean sound systems. While teaching English pronunciation in class, teachers might use facial diagrams, tape recorders, and hand mirrors, etc. They should also develop various kinds of minimal pairs, sentences and dialogues to practice English pronunciation. At the government level, the ministry of education should also provide universities with such facilities as language laboratories, audio systems, phonological analysis machines for Korean students to practice English pronunciation.

## **5.2 Suggestion**

Considering the result of the study. It will be useful for students of English Department (ED) who are interested in conducting research on problematic sounds encountered by Korean students and also some other topics that are potential to be investigated. This may lead to the enrichment in the research on the field because there were only few studies that focus on it.

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