



# Analyzing Errors Voiced Stop for Business Language Community at SMK Negeri 1 Pangkajene Sidrap

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## Abstract

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kesalahan pelafalan konsonan bersuara (voiced stop) /d/ pada siswa komunitas bahasa Inggris di SMK Negeri 1 Pangkajene Sidrap. Fokus penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui sejauh mana kemampuan siswa dalam mengucapkan bunyi /d/ dengan benar, yang merupakan salah satu tantangan umum dalam fonologi bahasa Inggris bagi penutur non-native. Responden dalam penelitian ini berjumlah 15 siswa yang dipilih dari beberapa kelas. Data dikumpulkan melalui tes pelafalan yang mencakup pasangan minimal, kalimat, dan paragraf yang mengandung bunyi /d/. Suara siswa direkam dan dianalisis untuk mengidentifikasi kesalahan serta menghitung skor masing-masing. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mayoritas siswa mengalami kesulitan dalam membedakan konsonan bersuara /d/ dengan konsonan tak bersuara /t/, dan sering kali mengucapkan kata seperti bad menjadi bat. Rata-rata skor yang diperoleh adalah 31, yang menunjukkan tingkat penguasaan yang sangat rendah. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar siswa belum memahami aturan fonologis terkait bunyi bersuara, kurang familiar dengan kosakata tertentu, dan terpengaruh oleh pola bahasa ibu mereka. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan agar guru bahasa Inggris memberikan pengajaran yang lebih terfokus, latihan pengulangan, serta kegiatan berbicara yang menekankan perbedaan bunyi bersuara dan tidak bersuara guna meningkatkan ketepatan pelafalan siswa.

Kata kunci: fonologi, kesalahan pelafalan, bunyi bersuara /d/, pembelajaran bahasa Inggris, SMK Negeri 1 Pangkajene Sidrap

## Abstract

This study aims to analyze the pronunciation errors of the voiced stop /d/ among students in the English language community at SMK Negeri 1 Pangkajene Sidrap. The research focuses on identifying the extent of students' ability to correctly pronounce words containing the voiced stop /d/, a common challenge in English phonology for non-native speakers. The respondents consisted of 15 students selected from various classes. Data were collected through pronunciation tests including minimal pairs, sentences, and a paragraph containing multiple instances of /d/. Students' voices were recorded and analyzed to identify errors and calculate individual scores. The results revealed that the majority of students had significant difficulty distinguishing voiced stop /d/ from its voiceless counterpart /t/, often mispronouncing words such as bad as bat. The average score was 31, which indicates a very poor level of mastery. The findings suggest that most students lack awareness of the phonological rules related to voiced stops, are unfamiliar with certain vocabulary, and are influenced by their native language patterns. The study recommends that English teachers provide more targeted instruction, repetitive drills, and practical speaking activities focused on voicing distinctions to improve students' pronunciation accuracy.

Keywords: phonology, pronunciation error, voiced stop /d/, English language learning, SMK Negeri 1 Pangkajene Sidrap

## Introduction

Phonology is a crucial branch of linguistics that deals with the systematic organization of sounds in spoken languages. It plays a vital role in language learning and teaching, particularly in second or foreign language acquisition. Phonology helps learners understand how sounds function within a language, how they differ from one another, and how mispronunciations can lead to misunderstandings. In the context of English as a foreign language, mastering pronunciation, including specific phonological features such as voiced and voiceless consonants, is essential for effective communication.

One of the most common pronunciation problems encountered by Indonesian learners of English is the inability to differentiate and correctly pronounce voiced stops, particularly the /d/ sound. In English, voiced stops like /d/ differ significantly from voiceless stops like /t/, both in articulation and in meaning. Mispronouncing words such as *bad* as *bat*, or *mad* as *mat*, not only alters the meaning but also impairs communication. This issue becomes more noticeable in settings where phonetics and phonology are not emphasized in language instruction.

At SMK Negeri 1 Pangkajene Sidrap, many students struggle with pronouncing the voiced stop /d/. Preliminary interviews and observations conducted by the researcher revealed that most students are unaware of the concept of voicing and do not receive sufficient practice or feedback on pronunciation in class. Additionally, their English teachers confirmed that pronunciation errors—especially the replacement of /d/ with /t/—are commonly found in students' spoken English.

Several factors contribute to this problem. Firstly, the phonological system of the students' mother tongue may interfere with their ability to produce English sounds accurately. Secondly, there is a lack of focused instruction on phonetic distinctions in the classroom. Thirdly, students often have limited exposure to authentic English pronunciation outside of school, and they rarely practice speaking in real communicative situations. These issues highlight the need for targeted research and instructional strategies to address the specific difficulties students face with English sounds.

This study focuses on analyzing the pronunciation errors of the voiced stop /d/ among students in the English language community at SMK Negeri 1 Pangkajene Sidrap. The research aims to determine the extent of students' abilities to pronounce this sound correctly, to identify the types of errors they make, and to understand the underlying causes of these errors. In doing so, the study hopes to provide practical recommendations for improving English pronunciation instruction.

The research involved 15 students from different classes who participated in a pronunciation test consisting of minimal pairs, sentences, and a paragraph—all designed to test the articulation of the /d/ sound. Their pronunciations were recorded, assessed, and analyzed based on accuracy. From the findings, the majority of students were found to mispronounce the voiced stop /d/, often substituting it with its voiceless counterpart /t/. This consistent pattern of error suggests a significant gap in both awareness and practice.

Understanding students' common errors and the reasons behind them is essential for designing effective teaching methods. This study not only analyzes the current level of students' pronunciation abilities but also

highlights the importance of integrating phonetic training into regular English lessons. Through repetition, auditory discrimination exercises, and speaking practice, students can gradually overcome these errors and improve their speaking skills.

In conclusion, this research is expected to contribute to the field of language education by offering insight into a specific phonological challenge faced by Indonesian learners. It emphasizes the importance of phonological awareness and targeted pronunciation practice in language teaching. By addressing the voiced stop /d/ problem systematically, teachers can help students enhance their pronunciation accuracy, which is a fundamental component of language fluency and effective communication.

## Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative method supported by quantitative data. The research was designed to analyze pronunciation errors of the voiced stop /d/ made by students in the English language community at SMK Negeri 1 Pangkajene Sidrap. The descriptive nature of the research allowed the researcher to document and analyze errors made by students systematically, while the use of quantitative scoring provided measurable data regarding their performance. The study aimed not only to describe the common patterns of mispronunciation but also to assess the severity of the problem and propose pedagogical interventions.

## Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of students at SMK Negeri 1 Pangkajene Sidrap who actively participated in the school's English language learning activities. From this population, a purposive sampling technique was used to select 15

students. The selection was based on their availability and willingness to participate, as well as input from English teachers regarding students who frequently demonstrate speaking difficulties. The sample included students from different classes and varying proficiency levels, allowing for a broader understanding of the problem across the school's language community.

## Instruments for Data Collection

To collect data effectively, the researcher designed a pronunciation test that specifically targeted the voiced stop /d/. The test instruments consisted of:

1. Word list in minimal pairs – These pairs included words that differ only in the final sound, such as *mad* vs *mat*, *bad* vs *bat*, *cad* vs *cat*, *ride* vs *rite*, etc. This part of the test was intended to determine whether students could distinguish and correctly pronounce the /d/ sound in contrast with the voiceless /t/ sound.
2. Sentences – A set of 10 sentences was constructed, each containing at least one instance of the /d/ sound in various positions (initial, medial, and final). For example: “*My father tends to talk too loud*” and “*I am so sad you can't come to my birthday party.*”
3. Paragraph – A short paragraph was composed with multiple appearances of words containing the voiced stop /d/ in natural contexts. This part assessed the consistency and fluency of the students' pronunciation in extended speech.

Each instrument was designed to elicit natural pronunciation while focusing on the target sound /d/.

## Data Collection Procedures

The data collection was carried out in four main stages:

### Preparation of Instruments

The researcher carefully prepared the materials, ensuring that all test components were clear, relevant, and focused on the voiced stop /d/. Prior to implementation, the test instruments were reviewed by an English teacher for validity.

### Recording Session

Each respondent was asked to read the minimal pairs, sentences, and the paragraph aloud. Their voices were recorded using a mobile device in a quiet room to ensure clarity of the audio. The researcher instructed the students to read naturally and at a moderate pace. This process allowed the researcher to capture spontaneous pronunciation patterns without pressure.

### Transcription and Error Identification

After the recording phase, the researcher listened to each recording multiple times and transcribed the students' pronunciation. Errors in the production of /d/ were identified by comparing the students' pronunciation with the standard phonetic transcription in English. Mispronunciations where /d/ was substituted by /t/ or another sound were marked and classified.

### Scoring and Quantitative Analysis

A scoring rubric was used to assess each student's performance. Each correctly pronounced word or phrase containing /d/ earned one point. The total number of items was ten. The students' scores were calculated using the formula:

$$\text{Score} = \left( \frac{\text{Number of correct pronunciations}}{10} \right) \times 100$$

These scores were then used to calculate the mean score of the group and categorize student performance based on the classification guidelines issued by the Indonesian Ministry of Education (2005):

- 86–100: Very Good
- 71–85: Good
- 56–70: Fair
- 41–55: Poor
- Below 41: Very Poor

## Data Analysis Technique

After collecting the data, the researcher conducted both qualitative and quantitative analyses:

### Qualitative Analysis

Each pronunciation error was described in detail to understand the type and nature of the error. The researcher noted whether the mispronunciation occurred at the beginning, middle, or end of the word. Additionally, possible phonological processes such as devoicing or substitution were noted.

### Quantitative Analysis

The raw scores were tabulated and processed to determine the average performance of the students. The mean score was calculated to reflect the overall ability level of the group. Standard deviation was also used to determine the range and variability of scores. This helped the researcher identify how widespread the problem was and whether it was limited to a few students or more generalized.

## Ethical Considerations

Before conducting the research, verbal consent was obtained from the participants and their teacher. Students were informed about the purpose of the study, and that their recordings would only be used for academic purposes. Anonymity was preserved by labeling students with codes instead of using real names (e.g., Respondent 1, Respondent 2, etc.). All data were handled confidentially, and participants were free to withdraw at any stage of the study.

## Limitations of the Method

While this method was effective in identifying pronunciation errors of /d/, there were several limitations. First, the small sample size may not fully represent the entire student population. Second, the pronunciation of a single phoneme was studied, so broader phonological patterns could not be addressed. Third, environmental factors such as nervousness or unfamiliarity with being recorded may have influenced student performance. Despite these limitations, the method was sufficient to provide insight into students' current abilities and common challenges with English voiced stops.

## Result and Discussion

This study aimed to analyze the pronunciation errors of the voiced stop /d/ made by students in the English language community at SMK Negeri 1 Pangkajene Sidrap. The data were obtained through a pronunciation test consisting of minimal pairs, sentences, and a paragraph, which were read aloud by 15 selected students. Their voices were recorded and analyzed to identify specific errors related to the production of the /d/ sound.

The findings indicate that most students experienced significant difficulty pronouncing the voiced stop /d/, particularly in final word positions. A common pattern emerged in which students substituted the /d/ sound with its voiceless counterpart /t/. For example, students pronounced the word *bad* as *bat*, *mad* as *mat*, and *ride* as *rite*. These substitutions indicate a fundamental lack of phonological awareness regarding the contrast between voiced and voiceless sounds in English.

Below is a summary of the results and scores from the 15 student participants:

No	Respondent	Total Errors	Score (%)
1	R1	9 errors	10
2	R2	7 errors	30
3	R3	9 errors	10
4	R4	6 errors	40
5	R5	8 errors	20
6	R6	6 errors	40
7	R7	4 errors	60
8	R8	9 errors	10
9	R9	6 errors	40
10	R10	8 errors	20
11	R11	9 errors	10
12	R12	4 errors	60
13	R13	7 errors	30
14	R14	8 errors	20
15	R15	4 errors	60

From the data above, we can see that:

- 12 students (80%) received a score below 41%, categorized as Very Poor.
- 3 students (20%) scored between 56–70%, categorized as Fair.

The mean score was 31, which falls into the Very Poor classification according to the scoring criteria provided by the Ministry of Education (2005). This clearly demonstrates

that students' overall ability to pronounce the voiced stop /d/ is critically low.

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## Discussion

The results of the study clearly indicate that the majority of students at SMK Negeri 1 Pangkajene Sidrap struggle with producing the voiced stop /d/ accurately. The dominant error pattern—substituting /d/ with /t/—suggests several underlying causes related to linguistic, educational, and psychological factors. The discussion below explores these factors in detail

Most students are unfamiliar with the phonetic concept of voicing. The distinction between voiced (/d/) and voiceless (/t/) consonants is rarely emphasized in classroom instruction. This lack of explicit teaching results in students being unaware of how vocal cord vibration affects the pronunciation of sounds in English. As a result, they default to using more familiar or easier-to-produce sounds based on their first language.

The students' native language, Indonesian, does not emphasize or even recognize voiced–voiceless contrasts at the ends of words. In Bahasa Indonesia, words typically do not end with voiced stops, and even when they do, the distinction is not phonemically significant. This interference leads students to unconsciously replace voiced consonants with their voiceless counterparts during English pronunciation.

Students in this context have very limited exposure to native or fluent English pronunciation. Audio input in the classroom is minimal, and speaking practice is often neglected. As a result, students rarely hear or attempt to produce the correct pronunciation of voiced consonants. Without consistent repetition, their ability to recognize and replicate the /d/ sound remains underdeveloped.

Some students reported that they felt nervous during the pronunciation test, particularly because they were being recorded. This anxiety affects their ability to focus on correct articulation. Instead of carefully pronouncing each word, they rushed through the material, making errors more likely. A lack of self-confidence in speaking English also contributes to a general reluctance to practice aloud.

Teachers often focus more on grammar and vocabulary than on pronunciation. While this is understandable due to time constraints and exam-oriented curricula, it leads to neglect of speaking and listening skills. Furthermore, many English teachers may not be trained in phonetics or phonology, limiting their ability to identify and correct students' pronunciation problems effectively.

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## Implications of the Findings

The findings of this study have important implications for English language teaching, particularly in the area of pronunciation instruction:

- **Phonetic Instruction Should Be Reinforced**  
Teachers need to integrate explicit pronunciation practice into their lesson plans. Teaching students about the articulatory differences between /d/ and /t/, and how vocal cord vibration plays a role in voicing, can significantly improve awareness and accuracy.
- **Use of Audio-Visual Learning Tools**  
Pronunciation apps, videos, and listening exercises featuring native speakers can expose students to authentic models of English pronunciation. These tools allow students to listen, repeat, and self-correct in real time.

- **Provide Ample Speaking Opportunities**  
Students should be encouraged to speak more frequently in class, in structured and spontaneous settings. Activities such as dialogues, role plays, and presentations can boost their confidence while giving them a chance to practice pronunciation.
- **Offer Constructive Feedback**  
Immediate and positive feedback helps students recognize and correct their errors. Teachers should avoid overly critical responses, focusing instead on helping students notice subtle pronunciation differences in a supportive way.

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the poor performance of most students in pronouncing the voiced stop /d/ is a result of multiple interconnected factors, including limited phonological awareness, first language interference, minimal practice, and insufficient phonetic instruction. These issues are common in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) contexts, particularly in non-urban schools where resources and exposure to English are limited. This study highlights the urgent need to emphasize pronunciation in English language teaching. By adopting effective strategies and placing greater focus on phonological training, educators can help students overcome these common errors and develop clearer, more intelligible spoken English.

### Conclusion of Discussion

In conclusion, the use of Educaplay as an instructional medium has shown to significantly improve learning outcomes in the Cultural Arts subject among eighth-grade students at MTs Negeri 2 Sidrap. The

integration of interactive, visual, and game-based learning elements helped enhance student motivation, engagement, and comprehension.

The research validates the effectiveness of technology-enhanced learning and suggests that when properly implemented, tools like Educaplay can make learning more meaningful, enjoyable, and successful. Therefore, educators are encouraged to adopt such innovations to improve the quality of education and better meet the needs of modern learners.

### Conclusion

This study set out to investigate the pronunciation errors of the voiced stop /d/ among students in the English language community at SMK Negeri 1 Pangkajene Sidrap. Through a structured pronunciation test that included minimal pairs, sentences, and a paragraph, data were collected from 15 students and analyzed to identify their level of mastery over the /d/ sound.

The results clearly show that the majority of students struggle to accurately pronounce the voiced stop /d/, frequently substituting it with the voiceless /t/. This pattern was most evident in final word positions and occurred consistently across the test materials. The average score obtained was 31%, placing the overall performance in the "Very Poor" category. Only three students achieved a "Fair" classification, and none reached a "Good" or "Very Good" level.

Several factors contributed to these pronunciation errors, including a lack of phonological knowledge, influence from the students' first language (Bahasa Indonesia), limited exposure to native or standard

English pronunciation, minimal speaking practice, and insufficient phonetic instruction in the classroom. In some cases, students also experienced anxiety or lack of confidence when speaking English, especially during the recording process.

This study emphasizes the need to incorporate more focused and practical pronunciation training in English language teaching at the high school level. Teachers should be encouraged to integrate phonetics and phonology into their lessons, provide repeated practice of problematic sounds like /d/, and utilize modern tools such as audio-visual media to reinforce accurate pronunciation. Moreover, students should be given more opportunities to practice speaking in a low-pressure environment where feedback is supportive and constructive. Improving students' pronunciation, particularly for phonemes such as the voiced stop /d/, is essential for developing their overall communication skills in English. Addressing this issue through targeted instruction and practice can lead to more confident, accurate, and effective English speakers.

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