

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

English teachers in Madura have more challenges in teaching English to Madurese students. Madurese students have different phonological system and accent. They often mispronounce words during the English lesson. They do not realise that they produce the errors when they read a text of English, and this happens from year to year. Considering the importance of pronunciation as a component of English, the teacher as the role model of the students' pronunciation should give more attention to the students' pronunciation. In fact the teacher do not pay much attention to their students' pronunciation. They just teach vocabulary found in the text of the material but do not follow up the errors. Unfortunately, this fact become ordinary situation among the seventh grade students in Kamal Madura. This fact motivated the researcher to do a research which focused on the students' pronunciation to find deeper information about the fact.

The problem is, the students do not realize that they make some pronunciation errors when speaking or reading aloud in English. This usually happens because not all teachers pay much attention to their students' pronunciation. They just teach the vocabulary found in the text or utterances from the materials and give the examples of how to read them but do not follow up the students' pronunciation.

Some researches revealed the importance of pronunciation. Varasarin (2007) conducted a research in Thailand that focused on students' learning behavior to achieve improved pronunciation. This study is a collaborative action research investigation to develop pronunciation training and communicative competence for Thai students studying English in Thailand. The previous study that supported this study is done by Sukamolson (1989) found

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that Thai students have problems of listening to dialogues and texts as well as problems of pronunciation. It means that pronunciation is the important role to improve students to increase their English skills. While the fact in Thai, the skills needed most are listening and speaking which have minor focus in Thai secondary English books but are not the focus skills in tertiary education in curriculum (Wiriyachita 2001).

Another research is done in the recent year by Kanellou (2011). The research stressed on pronunciation status and role, pronunciation models and targets and pronunciation teaching techniques in one major European city, Thessaloniki, Greece. This study found some factors affect on the perceived status of pronunciation. The learners' age, level of English, language learning purpose, language context and L1 are the most influential factors affecting students' pronunciation errors among EFL classroom in Greece.

Pronunciation, for many people is a hard task to accomplish presumably, due to its nature springing from neurological, cultural, social, and environmental factors (Leather,1999; Wehner, Ahlfors, and Maria Mody, 2007). Another fact is that to create a unique method to overcome pronunciation problems sometimes seems meaningless since the pronunciation errors change from one society to another and even among learners (Menel et. Al,2001).

Dell Hymes in 1996 responded to Chomsky's linguistics competence (Celik,2008). However, the debates on the status of teaching pronunciation in L2 teaching are still going on. Some linguists have argued that teaching pronunciation is redundant because learners could acquire it automatically over time as long as they are exposed to sufficient input or foreign language, perhaps due to its being sub- skill or its evolutionary and changing sense (Weeren and Theunissen,1968: 109; Suter and Purcell 1980; Ur,2006) but some others advocate the deliberate teaching pronunciation (Wong,1993; Otlowski,1998; Rajadurai,2001).

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Pronunciation is important for ESL/EFL learners' perception and production of oral discourse. Brown (1991) maintains that no one would deny the importance of pronunciation as a key element of the learning of oral skills in a second language. Revealing the importance of pronunciation, Madden and Moore (1997) stated that pronunciation is the most obvious and unavoidable marker of a language learner's proficiency. This statement is supported by MacDonald (2003) who describes pronunciation as a key element of the learning of oral skills in a second language. Finally, Gilner (2008) stressed out the place and role of pronunciation in the context of ELT as an integral aspect of communicative competence.

Kenneth (1980:57) says that pronunciation is the production of speech sound for communication, but to make the communication run well, those sound must be comprehended by another person. In fact, many students still find difficulties because there are many different systems of English as the target language related to the system of spelling the words, the speech sound and the way to pronounce the words. In some cases, the students are still influenced by their mother tongue and accent. In line with this, Lado (1991) stated that foreign language learners are familiar with interfering effects of their native language causing everything from accented speech to inappropriate non – verbal behavior.

This fact happens to the seventh grade students of a junior high school in Kamal, Madura. The school is in a village that most of the students are Madurese. Some other students are Javanese that are influenced by the Javanese language and the culture of Gresik. The area of Tajungan where the influence of Gresik is very close. The language is not really Javanese as East or West Javanese language, but they have they own language pronunciation that sound different from other Javanese. They live near the coast and near with Gresik. The similar language of Tajungan is also found in the area near the western of coast Kamal, they are Kejawan. Kejawan and Tajungan have the same inherited, language and culture but they spread in the western and eastern of the coast. From the preliminary observation among those

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students in the school, the researcher found many pronunciation errors and it seems that the problem always happens from year to year.

These are the words that are often mispronounced by the students of the seventh graders.

<i>stop</i>	/ sta:p	/ pronounced as	/ settop	/
<i>about</i>	/ ə'baʊt	/ pronounced as	/ abot	/ /
<i>busy</i>	/ 'bɪz.i	/ pronounced as	/ basi	/ or busi
<i>coffee</i>	/ 'kɒf.i	/ pronounced as	/ 'kɑ:.fe	/
<i>face</i>	/ feɪs	/ pronounced as	/ fis	/
<i>man</i>	/ mæn	/ pronounced as	/ man	/
<i>book</i>	/ bʊk	/ pronounced as	/ bʊks	/
<i>apple</i>	/ 'æp.l	/ pronounced as	/ apel	/

From those examples, it can be said that the students still keep the Indonesian way of pronouncing words, which is the same as the spelling. Their pronunciation are also influenced by Madurese pronunciation. They do not realize that there are different pronunciation systems of English and Indonesian. In Indonesian there is no difference between the spellings of the words with their pronunciation. However, in English there is a difference between the spellings of the words with the pronunciation. Instead of / mæn/ for *man*, they pronounced as / man / Or / bʊk/ for *book*, they pronounced as /bʊks / and / 'bɪz.i/ for *busy*, they pronounced as / basi / or / busi/. From these examples, it can be seen that the students are still influenced by their L1 because they pronounce the words the same way as the spellings. Other examples are the word *about* and *apple*. They pronounce *about* as / ə'baʊt / or / 'æp.l/ and *apple* pronounced as / apel/. These words are the most commonly mispronounced by the students that may happen because of their lack of knowledge regarding the English word stress. Another case of those students pronunciation

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errors also happen to the words *snake* and *coffee*. Most of the students pronounce *stop* as /settop/ and *coffee* as /'kɑ:.fe/. It seems that the English pronunciation system is more difficult than Indonesian pronunciation for many of them.

The ability of speaking English embodies the correctness of pronunciation and intonation and directly affects the appropriate communication in conversation. The students in Indonesia, especially Madurese seem shy to speak English, but they talk actively in their L1 or mother tongue, in this case Madurese. (Brown, 2000) found that a second language learner meets some difficulties, because his L1 affects his L2 especially in adulthood, and this effect is the result of L1 transfer; so it is a significant source of making errors for second language learners. (Ladefoged, 2001; Carter & Nunan, 2001) showed that mother tongue has clear influence on learning L2 pronunciation. Where L1 and L2 rules are in conflict, errors are expected to be committed by foreign learners. All that can be linked to what is known as the interference between L1 and L2. Many students find difficulty to make distinction between the sound and the spelling in English.

The phenomenon dealing this fact was stated by Ehrlich (2008) who said that the mispronunciation of the students often relates to the vowel sound is pronounced the same, although it is written differently. The letters 'wo', 'oo', 'ough', 'ew' 'æ', and 'oe' are all pronounced as /u:/, and hence may mislead the student who does not master pronunciation features. This phenomenon can also be found in English consonant which can be pronounced in three different ways as /s/, /ʃ/, and /z/ in the words 'safe', 'vision' and 'design'.

Many Indonesian students are afraid of making mistakes in pronouncing English words. It might be happen because of some factors that relate to the weaknesses of the students knowledge of phonology and phonetics systems in English language. In line with this statement, (Ronald Carter and David Nunan, 2001) (O'Connor, 2003) noted that the errors of pronunciation that learners of English from different language backgrounds make are

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systematic and not accidental. So they concluded that the main problem of the speakers of other languages who speak English, is substitution of sounds i.e. they substitute the sounds that they don't have in their native language, with other sounds which are close to them in the place of articulation e.g. they replace /p/ with /b/, /θ/ with /s/ etc.

Jones (1995) approves that the differences arise from the variety of causes, such as locality, early influences and social surrounding. In regard with this statement, the limited pronunciation skills can undermine learner's self-confidence, restrict social interaction, and negatively influence estimations of a speaker's credibility and abilities are not new (Morley, 1998). Still Jones (1995), added that good speech may be defined as a way of speaking which is clearly intelligible to all ordinary people. While bad speech is a way of talking which is difficult for most people to understand. It is caused by mumbling or lacks of definiteness of utterance. Furthermore, it can be easily understood that the spelling words and attention are more outstanding divergences commonly heard in various localities and to differences of style employed by individual speakers (Imam, 2004).

Regarding the students' pronunciation, some researchers have claimed that working on pronunciation should need to be tied in with the individual's value set, attitudes and socio-schemata (Pennington, 1994). Similarly, Acton (1984) sees preparing students' psychologically as a necessary strategy to improve their pronunciation. In addition to the past works, O'Connor (2003) and Yule (2003) studied pronunciation problems and the influence of LI. So many sounds such as /p/ and /b/, /s/ and /θ/, /z/ and /ð/, /tʃ/ and /f/, /v/ and /b/ are confused e.g. (pit / bit), (thin / sin), (question / action), (very / berry). The mispronunciation of the above sounds is the result of the over practice of the first language, a process of fossilization.

The adults' vocal musculature is set to pronounce foreign sounds with an accent. This statement supported by Yule; O'Connor (2003). The study reported that the main problem of

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English pronunciation is to build a new set of sounds corresponding to the sounds of English, and to break down the arrangement of sounds which the habits and the systems of our LI have strongly built up.

In contrast with those researches, O'Connor (2003), claimed some students' mispronouncing English words as the inconsistency of the students' knowledge that may lead then to encounter the wrong pronunciation. It is supported by Yule (2001) that noted the sounds of spoken English do not match up with the letters or written English. So if we cannot use the letters of the alphabet in a consistent way to represent the sounds we make, it is difficult to describe the sounds of a language like English. In English, there are twenty-four consonants and twenty vowels; if we give to each of these forty- four units a special letter, in that way undoubtedly we can show what the student should say. If the learner knows that each letter represents a certain sound (e.g. equal number of sounds to the letters), he can simply avoid the difficulty of spelling on pronunciation (Hassan, 2014).

A study on the effect of sound system on learning pronunciation was done by Alkhuli(1983) who showed that the main problem in teaching and learning English pronunciation result from the differences in the sound system of English and the native language, so a speaker of Madurese is not accustomed to pronounce, for instance, θ -sound and ð-sound, because they do not find them in his native language. This means those sounds are unfamiliar to the organs of speech of the learner because they are not trained to produce such sound systems because they are unfamiliar to them. Because of that, they use the nearest sounds such as /s/ and /z/ (Cruttenden, 1994).

Another research was conducted by Zhang (2009). The research aimed at investigating pronunciation problems of English learners in China. As the result of the research, he found some factors leading to these problems. They are interference of Chinese, learners' age, attitude, and their insufficient knowledge of phonology and phonetics systems of the English

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language. Another research was in Indonesian context. Fadilah (2012) reported some problematic English vowel, consonant and diphthong sounds in reading the News Items text. Similar with this research done by Imam (2004) described the eighth graders students ability in pronouncing English words beginning with nouns, verbs and adjectives bilabial consonants. He suggested that the students' ability in pronouncing English words should be improved since it is essential to be used as a means of developing speaking and reading skills.

For different participants in the research, Hago (2015) conducted a study on pronunciation problems faced by Saudi EFL learners of secondary students. The study that investigated the difficulties of English pronunciation by Saudi secondary school students resulted that the participants had difficulties to pronounce eleven consonant sounds. This study provides some useful pedagogical implications to prevent and cure English pronunciation problems.

Due to these problems, it cannot be neglected that the teacher also takes an important role on the students' pronunciation errors. In fact, some teachers in public school did not give sufficient attention to their students' pronunciation. It can be said students' mispronunciation happen because some teachers more focus on the target to finish the materials from the syllabus on time. In other words, the English curriculum does not provide sufficient information about the information of pronunciation practice in teaching and learning activities. These statements were supported by Ambarwati (2000) who stated the English teachers in public schools give less attention the pronunciation, especially stress. Furthermore, she makes a line to this condition as the factor that causes the students' pronunciation errors.

Pronunciation errors have become a problematic phenomenon not only in Indonesia or in some studies that have already been mentioned before, but it also happens in Sudan. Moreover, the English language students at colleges in Sudan, has Arabic language

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background. They had the same difficulty in pronouncing English words. Another study was conducted by Hassan (2014). The study was conducted among fifty college students from University of Sudan of Science and Technology (SUST) and thirty university teachers of English language from the same university. The findings of this study revealed that Sudanese Students majoring in English whose language background is Sudanese Spoken Arabic, had problems with the pronunciation of English vowels that have more than one way of pronunciation in addition to the consonant sound contrasts e.g. /z/ and /ð/, /s/ and /θ/, /b/ and /p/, /j/ and /tʃ/. Based on the findings, the study concluded that factors such as interference, the differences in the sound system in the two languages, inconsistency of English sounds and spelling militate against Sudanese Students of English' (SSEs) competence in pronunciation.

Zimmermann (2004, p.29) stated that "Pronunciation is crucially important, as it is usually the first thing people notice about a language learner's English". This study attempts to investigate the pronunciation errors of the native Arabic learners, who are learning English as a second language. This study focuses on the pronunciation errors that result from the impact of the vernacular dialects of the native speakers of Arabic. These errors are investigated through contrastive and error analysis studies shedding the light on the Arabic linguistic input that causes this first language transfer and the repair strategies that the learners attempt to implement to overcome these pronunciation problems. It means that, the pronunciation errors among Arabic students have already been corrected by their teacher until they learn the second language that will affect the process of second language acquisition and learning (Zarka, 2013).

There are some possible mispronouncing English words of the students' pronunciation errors that revealed some features such as word stress, vowel and consonant sounds, diphthongs, bilabial, etc. some researchers focused their studies on those cases. A research

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conducted by Otoum (2010) that stressed out the majority of pronunciation errors made by the Spanish students at the university of Jordan in the academic year of 2008/2009 and 2009 and 2010 revealed to errors taking place in vowels which include diphthongs, triphthongs, and hiatuses. While errors revealed to consonant which were categorized on the basis of manner place of articulations.

Ambrozova (2014) critically argued that it was a consequence why the students of English did not consider pronunciation to be something that matters. She continues her argumentation, however, when it comes to the point of checking for an appropriate level of English pronunciation, the teachers as the role model of pronunciation should be more aware to the students' pronunciation errors. The study resulted the facts that only very few of advanced students are aware of the specifics of English pronunciation. It can be said that the rest of the students are disobeyed of their English pronunciation errors.

Another study was conducted by Binturki (2008) as a qualitative investigation to determine the difficulty of /p v I/ to Saudi ESL speakers. More specifically, this study investigated what word environments were most difficult for Saudi speakers. Subjects were specifically selected to represent Najdi dialect because it is the closest dialect to Classical Arabic and also for the lack of previous research regarding this dialect. In his study, he chose five native speakers of Saudi Arabian Najdi dialect studying in the U.S. The test given through word list and a reading passage were used to elicit the target sounds in order to generate data for both context and isolation. The results of this study demonstrate that Saudi ESL speakers do have difficulty with the voiced interdental fricative /v/ and to lesser extent, with /p/ and /I/. The study also found that difficulty was closely related to certain word positions. The findings of this study are important to teachers of English as a second language especially those who deal with Saudi speakers.

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When we talk about error, we may also think about mistake. Error and mistake are not the same; it is crucial to make distinction between error and mistake and most people still misunderstand the definition of both. To differentiate between error and mistake, Harmer (in Khodijah 2006: 8) said that mistake is less serious since it is the retrieval that is faulty not the knowledge. In other words the students know the rule, but they make a slip when producing it. Meanwhile Brown (in Khodijah 2006: 8) gave different meaning; a mistake refers to a performance error that is either a random guess or a slip. In that meaning it is a failure to utilize a known system correctly. Everyone make mistakes in both native and second language situations. Hubbard (in Khodijah2006: 8)) states that errors are caused by lack of knowledge about the target language (English) or by incorrect hypotheses about it; and mistakes are caused by temporary lapses of memory, confusion, slips of the tongue and so on. Another way to differentiate between error and mistake is if the learners can correct themselves, it is probably mistake, but if they cannot, it is an error (Sugiarto, 2013).

Dealing with the errors itself, there are some definitions of errors and the distinction between errors and mistakes. We must also consider the difference between errors and mistakes, as it will help, define, categorize, analyze and finally correct the errors made by learners. Green and Tanner (1998, p. 93) state that a mistake is characterized as “a slip of the tongue”; that is, “the learner knows the correct form but has temporarily forgotten it”. They also added that “There are several reasons why learners may make mistakes; for example, they may be tired, or not concentrating. Learners can often catch and correct their own mistakes”. While Gass and Selinker (2008) give a contrasting definition of both errors and mistakes clarifying that “A mistake can be self-corrected, but an error cannot. Errors are “systematic,” i.e. likely to occur repeatedly and not recognized by the learner. Hence, the teacher or researcher should be aware of what errors or mistakes produced by their students.

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Dealing with those phenomena and the initial observation to the seventh graders of a junior high school in Kamal, the researcher found that many students found difficulties in pronouncing some English words. Although such kinds of words are commonly found in the materials, they still make pronunciation errors. By studying their difficulties with English words pronunciation, the researcher expects to find the different causes, which are the students' difficulties to pronounce some English words that are often taught in the learning process.

The fact that the students mispronounce those words might be because of the lack of their knowledge. Unfortunately, it does not only happen to a student but many students cannot pronounce the English words.

Harmer (1998) stated that teacher is the stake holder in the class to facilitate learning. Having taught English at SMP Kamal, Madura for nine years, the researcher found that usually more than half of the class have difficulty in pronunciation. In a certain class which consisted of 33 students, only 3 of them who could pronounce English words correctly. By knowing the students' difficulties in pronouncing English words, the researcher expects to be able to find the solution for their problems dealing with English words pronunciation.

Many linguists and researchers on foreign language acquisition concluded that the English pronunciation problems among speakers of other languages are the same but it is according to each language background. Indonesian language is among them, the researcher is going to see some of the factors that influence second language (L2) learning. In the context of Indonesian students, English as foreign language has become problematic for many students, especially related to pronunciation. In this case English as in general and English pronunciation in particular and also try to identify the exact reasons behind such errors and finally try to find the suitable techniques and strategies that help the students improve their English pronunciation.

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The fact that teaching pronunciation and teacher's ability to pronounce correctly is important can be manifested on the way the information is conveyed. Since most of the instructions, explanations, comments and also teacher-student discussions are held orally, the pronunciation has become a key element of pedagogical interaction (Ondráček, 2011). Dealing with this fact, teaching pronunciation involves a variety of challenges. Since the students need to know many elements of English such as sound, stress and intonation, meaning such as affixes, roots, the silent letters, voiced and voiceless consonant and the minimal pairs. Memorizing these can be boring unless the teachers can deliver them in a fun way. Teachers often find that they do not have enough time in class to give proper attention to this aspect of English instruction. As a result, when teachers give sound drilling they do not force the students to pronounce sound exactly the same as what the native speakers do. As long as the produced sound can be recognized and can be accepted, it is considered that the students are able to pronounce the sound (Astuti, 2014).

Some studies have done studies dealing with Madurese. Madurese is a member of the Malayo-Sumbawan branch of the Austronesian language family. It is spoken by about 14 million people in Madura Island and eastern Java in Indonesia, and also on the Kangean and Sapudi Islands by migrants in other parts in Indonesia. Madurese was traditionally written with the Javanese alphabet but is now more commonly written with the Latin alphabet.

A study by Stevens (1994) about Madurese Reduplication. He started to look at general aspects of Madurese phonology. The Madurese system of consonants is rich. Madurese has three consonant system: voiceless unaspirated, voiceless aspirated and voiced. Madurese has only four underlying vowels –a front unrounded vowel which ranges in pronunciation from [i] to [ɛ], a back rounded vowel which ranges in pronunciation from [u] to [ɔ]; a lower back unrounded vowel which ranges in pronunciation from [ɤ] to [a] and a higher back unrounded vowel which ranges from [ɨ] to [ə].

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Another study has already done by Davies (2003) that investigates the apparently three types of wh- questions in Madurese and the relation between the wh- element and its operator obeys extreme locality. He speculates, many other languages may be open to the same analysis as proposed for Madurese.

Research Questions

In line with the background of the study, the research questions are formulated as follows:

- a. What pronunciation errors do the seventh grade students in Kamal produce?
- b. What factors cause of the seventh grade students?

Purpose of the Study

Based on the statement of the problem, the purpose of this research are as follows:

- a. To find out the pronunciation problems produced by the seventh grade students in Kamal.
- b. To find out in the causes of the pronunciation errors produced by the seventh grade students in a junior high school in Kamal.

Delimitation

This research was focused on the seven graders' students' pronunciation errors in English. The subjects of this research are the seventh graders of a school in Kamal, Madura. This research is a single-case study, in which the participants were limited to one junior high school in Kamal. The school is located quite far from the town. It consists of 544 students and eighteen classes. Since three years ago, the classes have been separated between the female and male students. The classes of A until C are the female students while the D until F are the male students. The research conducted only in two classes, which are, class 7 A and the 7 D. Class 7A represents female students while 7D represents the male classes.

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The study investigated the pronunciation errors and the causes. A pronunciation test containing 30 minimal pairs taken from the topics that are covered in the syllabus was administered to get the data.

Significance of Study

The results of this study are expected to be meaningful contributions for teachers of English who deal with Madurese students. Specifically, it will give information what pronunciation errors are commonly made by students in the area and what practical strategies should be done to teach pronunciation especially how to improve the students' pronunciation.

Theoretical Framework

The most influential theory underlying this research is Madurese Pronunciation, The Distinction Between Madurese and English Phonological System, The Factors Influencing Pronunciation for the Madurese Students and Madurese Students' Pronunciation Errors might be come from the influences of their mother tongue that build their own articulation to pronounced their own language, age is also one of the factors of pronunciation errors because not only students can encountered pronunciation errors but also adults who have more knowledge to pronounce the English words also encountered errors., the lack of the students' self motivation who claimed that English pronunciation can be the cause of frustration can be bored for the students.the other base factor that influence the students pronunciation errors is the Distinction Between L1 and L2 Phonological System. Madurese and English have different phonological system that cause the pronunciation errors. The different transcription and the different articulation of vowel and consonant may support the pronunciation errors.

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The Definition of Key Terms

In order to answer and clarify what are the variables that involved in this research, the definitions of key terms are put forwards:

- Pronunciation** Pronunciation refers to the production of sounds that we use to make meaning. It includes attention to the particular sounds of a language (segments), aspects of speech beyond the level of the individual sound, such as intonation, phrasing, stress, timing, rhythm (suprasegmental aspects), how the voice is projected (voice quality) and, in its broadest definition, attention to gestures and expressions that are closely related to the way we speak a language.
- Target Language** Any language that learners are trying to learn apart from their native language. In second-language pedagogy, the target language is regarded as second language. The target language in this study is English.
- Madurese** A vernacular belonging to the Austronesian language family which is spoken by Madurese who live in Madura near east Java as well as those living in east Java and has its unique language feature. The language has its speech levels engaged to the social dialects.