

English Pronunciation Error Analysis of Eleventh Grade Students

Ni Luh Made Nindya Hermawati¹, Prof. Dr. Drs. I Wayan Pastika², Prof. Dr. I Nyoman Suparwa³

¹S.S Udayana University

²MS Udayana University

³M.Hum Udayana University

ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze English pronunciation errors made by eleventh-grade students based on S.P. Corder's Error Analysis Theory. The research employed a mixed-method approach combining quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data were obtained by calculating the frequency of pronunciation errors, while qualitative data were used to describe the types and characteristics of the errors. The analysis focused on four categories of English sounds: monophthongs, diphthongs, triphthongs, and consonants. The findings revealed that students experienced difficulties in pronouncing various English phonemes. A total of 87 errors were identified in monophthongs, 89 errors in diphthongs, 47 errors in triphthongs, and 100 errors in consonants. Substitution errors were the most dominant type of error across all sound categories. These findings indicate that differences between English and Indonesian phonological systems significantly influence students' pronunciation performance. Therefore, more intensive pronunciation instruction and practice are needed to improve students' English speaking abilities.

KEYWORDS: pronunciation errors, error analysis, S.P Corder, English phonology, eleventh-grade students

ARTICLE DETAILS

Published On:
30 June 2026

Available on:
<https://ijmir.com>

1. INTRODUCTION

The introductions of this research are presented as follows.

1.1 Background of the Study

English has become an international language used in various fields, including education, business, science, and technology. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language and is expected to help students communicate effectively in both spoken and written forms. To achieve communicative competence, learners must master several language components, including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. Among these components, pronunciation plays a significant role because it directly affects the intelligibility of speech.

According to Gerald Kelly (2000), pronunciation is an essential aspect of language learning because inaccurate pronunciation may lead to misunderstandings even when the speaker uses correct grammar and vocabulary. Similarly, Peter Roach (2009) states that pronunciation involves the production of speech sounds, including vowels and consonants, which distinguish meaning in spoken communication. Therefore, learners need to develop accurate pronunciation to communicate effectively in English.

However, pronunciation is often considered one of the most difficult aspects of learning English as a foreign language. Indonesian learners frequently encounter difficulties because many English sounds do not exist in the Indonesian phonological system. As a result, students tend to pronounce English words based on the sound patterns of their native language. This phenomenon often leads to pronunciation errors, particularly in the production of vowels and consonants.

Pronunciation errors are a natural part of the language-learning process. In the field of second language acquisition, errors are not viewed merely as failures but as evidence of learning development. S. P. Corder (1967) argues that learner errors are significant because they provide insights into the processes learners use while acquiring a second language. Errors reveal learners' current knowledge of the target language and help teachers identify areas that require further instruction.

Furthermore, Corder (1974) introduced Error Analysis as a systematic procedure for identifying, describing, and explaining learner errors. He classified errors into several categories, including substitution, addition, omission, and misordering. Through error analysis, researchers can understand the sources of learners' difficulties and evaluate the effectiveness of language instruction.

In addition, Jack C. Richards (1974) explains that language errors may arise from two major sources: interlingual factors and intralingual factors. Interlingual errors occur due to the influence of the learners' first language, whereas intralingual errors result from incomplete mastery of the target language itself. In pronunciation learning, both factors may contribute to the occurrence of pronunciation errors.

English pronunciation consists of various sound categories, including monophthongs, diphthongs, triphthongs, and consonants. These sound categories often present challenges for Indonesian learners because they require articulatory patterns that differ from those found in Indonesian. For example, English diphthongs and triphthongs involve vowel glides that are relatively uncommon in Indonesian, while certain consonants such as /θ/, /ð/, /v/, and /z/ have no direct equivalents in the Indonesian sound system. Consequently, students frequently substitute, omit, add, or reorder sounds when pronouncing English words.

Based on preliminary observations, many eleventh-grade students still experience difficulties in pronouncing English words accurately. These difficulties are reflected in the frequent occurrence of pronunciation errors involving vowels and consonants. Since pronunciation is an important component of communicative competence, it is necessary to investigate the types of errors produced by students and identify the sounds that cause the greatest difficulty.

Therefore, this study employs Corder's Error Analysis Theory to analyze pronunciation errors made by eleventh-grade students. The analysis focuses on four categories of English sounds: monophthongs, diphthongs, triphthongs, and consonants. By identifying and classifying the errors, this study is expected to provide useful information for English teachers and contribute to the improvement of pronunciation teaching and learning. Hence, this study is entitled "English Pronunciation Errors Analysis of Eleventh Grade Students."

1.2 Research Questions

1. What pronunciation errors are made by eleventh-grade students in producing English monophthongs?
2. What pronunciation errors are made by eleventh-grade students in producing English diphthongs?
3. What pronunciation errors are made by eleventh-grade students in producing English triphthongs?
4. What pronunciation errors are made by eleventh-grade students in producing English consonants based on S.P. Corder's Error Analysis Theory?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To identify pronunciation errors in English monophthongs.
2. To identify pronunciation errors in English diphthongs.
3. To identify pronunciation errors in English triphthongs.
4. To analyze pronunciation errors in English consonants based on S.P. Corder's Error Analysis Theory.

2. METHODOLOGY

The methodologies of this research are presented as follows.

2.1 Literature Review

Pronunciation

Pronunciation is a fundamental component of oral communication that determines how speech sounds are produced and perceived. Accurate pronunciation contributes significantly to intelligibility and communicative effectiveness. According to Kelly (2000), pronunciation is not merely the production of individual sounds but also involves stress, rhythm, and intonation. Learners who possess adequate grammatical and lexical knowledge may still experience communication difficulties if their pronunciation is inaccurate.

Similarly, Roach (2009) defines pronunciation as the systematic production of speech sounds in a language. He emphasizes that English pronunciation consists of vowels and consonants organized within a phonological system that distinguishes meaning. Therefore, mastering pronunciation is essential for second-language learners to communicate effectively and avoid misunderstandings.

English Phonology

Phonology is the study of how speech sounds function within a language system. According to Roach (2009), English phonology consists of vowel and consonant phonemes that serve to differentiate meaning. English vowels are generally classified into monophthongs, diphthongs, and triphthongs.

a. Monophthongs

Monophthongs are vowel sounds produced with a relatively stable tongue position throughout their articulation. Roach (2009) identifies twelve monophthongs in British English: /i:/, /ɪ/, /e/, /æ/, /ɑ:/, /ʌ/, /ɒ/, /ɔ:/, /ʊ/, /u:/, /ɜ:/, and /ə/. Since several of these sounds do not exist in Indonesian, learners often encounter difficulties in producing them accurately.

b. Diphthongs

A diphthong is a vowel sound that involves a glide from one vowel position to another within a single syllable. According to Roach (2009), English contains eight primary diphthongs: /eɪ/, /aɪ/, /ɔɪ/, /aʊ/, /əʊ/, /ɪə/, /eə/, and /ʊə/. The movement required in diphthong production often presents challenges for foreign language learners.

c. Triphthongs

Triphthongs are combinations of three vowel elements produced within one syllable. Roach (2009) explains that triphthongs can be viewed as diphthongs followed by a schwa sound /ə/. Examples include /aɪə/ in *tire*, /aʊə/ in *flower*, and /eɪə/ in *player*. Due to their articulatory complexity, triphthongs are among the most difficult sounds for second-language learners to produce accurately.

d. Consonants

Consonants are speech sounds produced with some degree of obstruction in the vocal tract. Roach (2009) classifies English consonants according to their manner and place of articulation. English consonants include plosives, fricatives, affricates, nasals, approximants, and glottal sounds. Certain consonants such as /θ/, /ð/, /v/, and /z/ are particularly difficult for Indonesian learners because they do not have direct equivalents in Indonesian phonology.

Error Analysis

Error Analysis is a branch of applied linguistics that investigates learner errors in second-language acquisition. Corder (1967) argues that learner errors are significant because they provide evidence of the learning process and reveal how learners construct knowledge of the target language. Rather than viewing errors as failures, Corder considers them valuable indicators of language development. According to Corder (1974), Error Analysis involves several procedures:

1. Collection of learner language samples.
2. Identification of errors.
3. Description of errors.
4. Explanation of errors.
5. Evaluation of errors.

These procedures enable researchers to identify patterns of learner difficulties and understand the underlying causes of errors.

Types of Error

Corder (1974) classifies learner errors into several categories. In pronunciation studies, four error types are commonly identified:

a. Substitution

Substitution occurs when a learner replaces a target sound with another sound. For example, the English sound /v/ may be pronounced as /f/ because /f/ is more familiar to Indonesian learners.

b. Addition

Addition refers to the insertion of unnecessary sounds into a word. This error occurs when learners add phonological elements that are not present in the target pronunciation.

c. Omission

Omission occurs when learners delete a sound that should be pronounced. This type of error is common in complex phonological structures such as diphthongs and consonant clusters.

d. Ordering (Misordering)

Ordering or misordering refers to the incorrect arrangement of sounds within a word. This error often occurs when learners have difficulty producing unfamiliar sound sequences.

Sources of Errors

Richards (1974) identifies two major sources of learner errors: interlingual and intralingual factors.

a. Interlingual Errors
Interlingual errors result from the influence of the learner's first language. Learners often transfer phonological patterns from their native language to the target language, causing pronunciation deviations.

b. Intralingual Errors
Intralingual errors occur due to incomplete knowledge of the target language. Such errors are associated with overgeneralization, incomplete rule application, and misunderstanding of language rules.

In pronunciation learning, both interlingual and intralingual factors contribute to the occurrence of pronunciation errors. The interaction of these factors often leads learners to simplify unfamiliar English phonological structures.

Research Design

This study employed a mixed-method research design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative approach was used to calculate the frequency and percentage of pronunciation errors, while the qualitative approach was used to describe the error patterns and explain the possible causes of the errors.

Data Collection

The data were collected through pronunciation tests in which students were asked to pronounce selected English words representing monophthongs, diphthongs, triphthongs, and consonants.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using the procedures of Error Analysis proposed by S.P. Corder:

1. Identifying errors.
2. Classifying errors into substitution, addition, omission, and ordering.
3. Calculating frequencies.
4. Interpreting and explaining the findings.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Finding of the research

Based on the pronunciation test administered to the eleventh-grade students, a total of 323 pronunciation errors were identified. Following Corder's (1974) classification, the errors were categorized into four types: substitution, addition, omission, and ordering. The errors occurred in four phonological categories, namely monophthongs, diphthongs, triphthongs, and consonants.

Table 3. 1 Total Errors

<i>Sound Category</i>	<i>Substitution</i>	<i>Addition</i>	<i>Omission</i>	<i>Ordering</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Monophthongs</i>	70	3	0	14	87
<i>Diphthongs</i>	62	2	24	1	89
<i>Triphthongs</i>	35	0	5	7	47
<i>Consonants</i>	96	0	4	0	100
<i>Total</i>	263	5	33	22	323

The data demonstrate that substitution errors were overwhelmingly dominant, accounting for 263 instances (81.42%) of the total errors. This indicates that students tended to replace unfamiliar English sounds with phonologically similar sounds that exist in their first language.

A. Errors in Monophthongs

The analysis identified 87 errors in monophthong pronunciation.

Table 3. 2 Errors in Monophthongs

<i>Error Type</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
<i>Substitution</i>	70
<i>Addition</i>	3
<i>Omission</i>	0
<i>Ordering</i>	14
<i>Total</i>	87

The highest error frequencies occurred in:

- /u:/ in *goose* (13 substitutions)
- /ɑ:/ in *heart* (12 substitutions)
- /ʊ/ in *could* (10 substitutions and 8 ordering errors)

The findings show that substitution was the dominant error type. Students often replaced unfamiliar English vowel sounds with similar sounds from Indonesian. The absence of equivalent vowel distinctions in Indonesian contributed to these errors.

B. Errors in Diphthongs

The analysis identified 89 errors in diphthong pronunciation.

Table 3. 3 Errors in Diphthongs

<i>Error Type</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
<i>Substitution</i>	62
<i>Addition</i>	2
<i>Omission</i>	24

<i>Ordering</i>	1
Total	89

The highest error frequencies occurred in:

- /eə/ in *air* (15 substitutions)
- /ɪə/ in *ear* (14 substitutions)
- /aʊ/ in *loud* (12 substitutions and 2 additions)

Many students simplified diphthongs into single vowel sounds. Omission errors were particularly common in /əʊ/ and /ʊə/, indicating difficulty maintaining the glide movement characteristic of diphthongs.

C. Errors in Triphthongs

The analysis identified 47 errors in triphthong pronunciation.

Table 3. 4 Errors in Triphthongs

<i>Error Type</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
<i>Substitution</i>	35
<i>Addition</i>	0
<i>Omission</i>	5
<i>Ordering</i>	7
Total	47

The highest errors frequencies occurred in:

- /aʊə/ in *flower* (14 substitutions)
- /eɪə/ in *player* (11 substitutions)
- /ɔɪə/ in *lawyer* (8 substitutions)

Triphthongs were difficult because they contain three vowel elements produced in a single syllable. Students frequently reduced the complexity of these sounds through substitution or omission.

D. Errors in Consonants

The analysis identified 100 errors in consonant pronunciation.

Table 3. 5 Errors in Consonants

<i>Error Type</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
<i>Substitution</i>	96
<i>Addition</i>	0
<i>Omission</i>	4
<i>Ordering</i>	0
Total	100

The highest errors frequencies occurred in:

- /v/ in *van* (18 substitutions)
- /f/ in *laugh* (16 substitutions)
- /θ/ in *think* (14 substitutions)
- /ʃ/ in *ship* (12 substitutions)
- /ʒ/ in *measure* (10 substitutions)

The consonants /v/, /θ/, and /ʒ/ posed significant difficulties because these sounds do not commonly occur in Indonesian. Students often substituted them with familiar sounds such as /f/, /t/, /s/, or /z/.

3.2 Discussion of the research

A. Analysis of Monophthong Errors

The findings revealed that students produced a total of 87 monophthong errors, consisting of 70 substitutions, 3 additions, and 14 ordering errors. According to Corder (1974), substitution errors occur when learners replace a target linguistic item with another item that they perceive as equivalent. In this study, the monophthongs /u:/, /ɑ:/, and /ʊ/ were the most problematic sounds.

The sound /u:/ in *goose* generated 13 substitution errors. Many students shortened the long vowel and pronounced it similarly to the Indonesian vowel /u/. This phenomenon can be explained by the fact that Indonesian does not distinguish vowel length phonemically. Consequently, learners tend to neutralize the contrast between long and short vowels.

Similarly, the vowel /a:/ in *heart* resulted in 12 substitution errors. Students frequently pronounced it as /a/, reflecting direct transfer from Indonesian phonology. This finding supports the concept of interlingual transfer, where features of the first language influence second-language production.

Another significant finding was the occurrence of ordering errors in the pronunciation of /ʊ/ in *could*. The presence of eight ordering errors suggests that students experienced difficulty coordinating the articulatory sequence necessary for producing the target sound accurately. From Corder's perspective, these errors are systematic rather than random. They reflect learners' current hypotheses regarding English vowel production and indicate developmental stages in acquiring English phonological competence.

B. Analysis of Diphthong Errors

The results showed 89 diphthong errors, making diphthongs the second most problematic vowel category. The errors consisted of 62 substitutions, 2 additions, 24 omissions, and 1 ordering error. The highest frequencies occurred in /eə/ (*air*) and /ɪə/ (*ear*), with 15 and 14 substitution errors respectively.

Diphthongs require a smooth glide from one vowel position to another. However, Indonesian vowels are generally stable monophthongs and do not involve extensive vowel movement. As a result, students frequently simplified English diphthongs into monophthongs. For example, the diphthong /ɪə/ in *ear* was often realized as /ɪr/, while /eə/ in *air* was simplified to /er/. Such substitutions indicate that learners attempted to approximate unfamiliar sounds using phonological patterns available in their native language.

A notable feature of the diphthong data is the relatively high number of omission errors (24 occurrences). Most omissions occurred in /əʊ/ (*go*) and /ʊə/ (*pure*). Students tended to delete one element of the diphthong and retain only the dominant vowel. According to Corder's theory, omission errors frequently occur when learners perceive certain linguistic elements as unnecessary or difficult to produce. In this case, the omitted glides reduced the articulatory complexity of the target sounds.

These findings suggest that the dynamic nature of diphthongs presents a substantial challenge for Indonesian learners because it requires precise tongue movement and vowel transitions that are absent in Indonesian phonology.

C. Analysis of Triphthong Errors

The analysis identified 47 triphthong errors consisting of 35 substitutions, 5 omissions, and 7 ordering errors. Although triphthongs occurred less frequently than other categories, they remain particularly difficult due to their articulatory complexity. Triphthongs involve a sequence of three vowel elements produced within a single syllable.

The triphthong /aʊə/ in *flower* generated the highest number of errors (14 substitutions), followed by /eɪə/ in *player* (11 substitutions). Students frequently reduced triphthongs into diphthongs or monophthongs. For example, *flower* was often pronounced as /flaʊ/ rather than /flaʊə/. This simplification process reflects learners' tendency to minimize articulatory effort when confronted with unfamiliar phonological structures.

The seven ordering errors found in /aɪə/ (*tire*) indicate that students struggled to maintain the correct sequence of vowel transitions. Such errors demonstrate that learners had not fully mastered the phonological organization of English triphthongs.

From a developmental perspective, triphthong errors illustrate learners' incomplete understanding of English vowel combinations. These errors support Corder's assertion that learner language is governed by its own systematic rules rather than being merely a collection of mistakes.

D. Analysis of Consonant Errors

Consonants produced the highest number of errors, with 100 occurrences. Among these, 96 were substitutions and 4 were omissions. The most problematic consonants were:

- /v/ in *van* (18 substitutions)
- /f/ in *laugh* (16 substitutions)
- /θ/ in *think* (14 substitutions)
- /ʃ/ in *ship* (12 substitutions)
- /ʒ/ in *measure* (10 substitutions)

The sound /v/ was frequently replaced by /f/. This substitution can be attributed to the absence of a strong phonemic distinction between voiced and voiceless labiodental fricatives in many Indonesian learners' speech patterns. Similarly, the dental fricative /θ/ was commonly replaced with /t/, while /ʒ/ was often substituted with /z/ or /s/. These substitutions occurred because the target sounds do not exist in standard Indonesian phonology.

According to Corder (1974), substitution errors often reveal learners' attempts to utilize existing linguistic knowledge to produce unfamiliar forms. Therefore, students relied on the closest equivalent sounds available in their phonological inventory. The high frequency of consonant substitution errors indicates that articulatory unfamiliarity constitutes a major obstacle in English pronunciation learning. It also suggests that students require explicit instruction regarding place and manner of articulation.

E. Interpretation of Errors Based on Corder's Theory

Corder (1974) argued that learner errors provide evidence of the language-learning process. The pronunciation errors identified in this study are not random failures but systematic manifestations of learners' developing interlanguage. The predominance of substitution errors (81.42%) indicates that students actively attempted to map English sounds onto their existing phonological system. This finding supports Corder's claim that errors reflect learners' hypotheses about the target language.

Furthermore, the occurrence of omission and ordering errors demonstrates that students experienced difficulties processing phonological structures that are absent from Indonesian. Complex vowel combinations such as diphthongs and triphthongs were particularly susceptible to simplification.

The findings also reveal the influence of both interlingual factors (transfer from Indonesian phonology) and intralingual factors (incomplete mastery of English phonological rules). Consequently, pronunciation errors emerge as a natural stage in secondlanguage acquisition rather than merely evidence of failure.

Overall, the results confirm Corder's view that error analysis serves as a valuable tool for understanding learner development and identifying areas requiring pedagogical intervention. The findings suggest that pronunciation instruction should emphasize problematic phonemes, vowel length distinctions, diphthong and triphthong production, and articulatory training for unfamiliar consonants.

4. CONCLUSION

This study examined the English pronunciation errors produced by eleventh-grade students based on Corder's Error Analysis Theory. The findings revealed that students made errors in all categories of English sounds, including monophthongs, diphthongs, triphthongs, and consonants. Among the four error types proposed by Corder—substitution, addition, omission, and ordering—substitution was the most frequently occurring error. This indicates that students tended to replace unfamiliar English phonemes with sounds that were more familiar within their native language system.

The findings further demonstrate that English phonemes that do not have direct equivalents in Indonesian, particularly certain vowels and fricative consonants, pose significant challenges for learners. The predominance of substitution errors suggests a strong influence of first-language transfer on students' pronunciation performance. In addition, omission and ordering errors found in diphthongs and triphthongs indicate difficulties in producing complex vowel sequences that require greater articulatory control and phonological awareness.

From the perspective of Corder's Error Analysis Theory, these errors should be viewed as evidence of learners' developing interlanguage rather than as mere failures in language learning. The results confirm that pronunciation errors provide valuable insights into learners' linguistic development and areas of difficulty. Therefore, the study highlights the importance of integrating explicit pronunciation instruction, phonetic awareness activities, and focused practice on problematic English sounds to enhance students' pronunciation competence and overall communicative effectiveness.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of this study, several suggestions are proposed. First, English teachers should provide more focused pronunciation instruction, particularly on English sounds that are frequently mispronounced by students, such as long vowels, diphthongs, triphthongs, and fricative consonants. Incorporating phonetic transcription, listening exercises, and pronunciation drills into classroom activities may help students develop greater phonological awareness and improve their pronunciation accuracy.

Second, students are encouraged to engage in regular pronunciation practice through exposure to authentic English materials, such as podcasts, videos, and conversations with proficient speakers. Continuous practice can help learners become more familiar with English sound patterns and reduce the influence of their first language on pronunciation.

Finally, future researchers are recommended to investigate the factors underlying pronunciation errors in greater depth, including the influence of first-language transfer, phonological awareness, and learning strategies. Further studies involving larger samples or different educational levels may provide a broader understanding of English pronunciation difficulties among Indonesian learners.

REFERENCES

- 1) Corder, S. P. (1967). *The significance of learners' errors*. *International Review of Applied Linguistics*, 5(4), 161–170. <https://doi.org/10.1515/iral.1967.5.1-4.161>
- 2) Corder, S. P. (1974). *Error analysis*. In J. P. B. Allen & S. P. Corder (Eds.), *Techniques in applied linguistics* (pp. 122–154). Oxford University Press.
- 3) Kelly, G. (2000). *How to teach pronunciation*. Pearson Education Limited.
- 4) Richards, J. C. (1974). *Error analysis: Perspectives on second language acquisition*. Longman.
- 5) Roach, P. (2009). *English phonetics and phonology: A practical course* (4th ed.). Cambridge University Press.