

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This introduction chapter covers five sub-chapters: background of the study, statement of research problems, objectives of the study, significance of the study, and the scope and limitations of the study. The writer will give detail information in every subchapter.

1.1 Background of the Study

The most effective tool in daily life is language. Language is always used by humans in daily life as a communication tool. It can help people to interact. Every human being has their own way of expressing their communication needs. Finocchiaro (1974, p. 3) states that language is a vocal symbol, an arbitrary system, which permits all people or other people in a given culture have learned the system of that culture to interact. Therefore, humans are called as social creatures who will always need others to interact.

In Pamekasan, many people speak Indonesian as a second language to interact with anyone. Actually, whatever the second language used, when fellow Madurese people especially Pamekasan meet each other, they use the Madurese language to communicate easily. For example, when Madurese people work outside and meet each other, they will consider as *tarètan* (brothers and sisters). Therefore,

Madurese is used as a medium to strengthen the solidarity between Madurese people wherever they are.

Around 7.8 million Madurese speakers who use the language to interact at home (Ananta et al., 2015). These speakers come from young and old generations. When communicating, younger speakers of Madurese often mix Madurese with other languages. However, older speakers especially those in their 40-50s years old mostly speak Madurese without mixing it with any other languages. Thus, older speakers aged 40-50s years old are chosen as participants of this study.

When we communicate with others, we also need correct pronunciation to understand what the speakers say. When the words are pronounced, it means that we produce a sound. A kind of linguistics study which relates to sound is phonology and phonetics (McMahon, 2002, p. 1-2). Phonology is concerned with the study of the sound patterns of language. It is a kind of language-specific selection and organization of sounds to signal meanings. While phonetics focuses on the sound of human speech like how they are produced, perceived, and acoustic properties. The writer is interested in doing research about phonetics, especially in acoustic vowels. Acoustic vowels can be seen by vowel quality with the relative value of the formants and resonances of the vocal tract. From acoustic vowels, we can also know the characteristics of vowels sound.

The sound made is an important role because the sound difference can change the meaning of the word. The Madurese language uses symbols in order to distinguish sounds, especially the sound of vowels. For example, the vowel /a/ in

Madurese consists of two allophones, i.e., [a] in a word *pakoh* 'nail' and [ɤ] in a word *dâpor* 'kitchen'. It also happens with the sound vowel /e/, i.e., [i] in a word *bessèh* 'iron', [ə] in a word *pegghâ* 'break' and [ɛ] in a word *pèlak* 'kind'. The pronunciation of the vowel [i] is similar to the pronunciation of the vowel [ɤ]. For example in a word *sabâ* 'rice field'. The listeners hear the pronunciation of *bâ* is same with [i] and [ɤ], but the differences can be analyzed scientifically through phonetics study by looking at the formant value of the sound. The formant value can also show the differences between male and female sounds. Thus, the writer interest in analyzing that issue. Not only focused on two vowels [i] and [ɤ], but also all possible vowels in Madura.

According to Cohn and Lockwood (1994), Madurese language has eight surface vowels although it is still being debated. They are [i], [ɪ], [ɤ], [u], [ɛ], [ə], [a], [ɔ]. The sound of vowels can be explained by looking at the way the tongue affects the shape in which the airflow is passed. The position of the tongue in producing words consists of high-low vowels and front-back vowels (Ladefoged & Johnson, 2011). Therefore, Madurese vowels divided into two groups, such as high vowels and non-high vowels. High vowels consist of [i, ɪ, ɤ, u] and non-high vowels consist of [ɛ, ə, a, ɔ].

The high and low of the vowel in the articulatory processes produce resonant frequencies that are called the formants of the vowel. The formants are the first formant (F1) and the second formant (F2). The formants are a part of vowel acoustic study. The formant value not only distinguish male and female sounds, but also it

can identify the characteristics of the vowels. Thus, the writer will focus on the characteristics of Madurese vowels and whether there are significant differences between males and females in the first formant (F1) and the second formant (F2) values produced by the old speaker in Pamekasan. The formant frequencies can be known by one of the software, named *Praat*.

A lot of research dealing with vowels has been conducted. One of them is Misnadin (2020). He discusses Madurese vowels which focus on the young speakers in Madura. While this study will be focused on the old speakers in Pamekasan.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problems

Based on the background of the study, the statement of the research problem is formulated as follow:

1. What are the acoustic characteristics of Madurese vowels produced by old speakers of Pamekasan?
2. Are there significant differences between males and females in the first formant (F1) and the second formant (F2) values?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to explain the Madurese vowels pronounced by old speakers in Pamekasan. There are two aims of this study based on the statements of the research problems:

1. To find out the acoustic characteristics of Madurese vowels produced by old speakers of Pamekasan.
2. To explain the significant differences between males and females in the first formant (F1) and the second formant (F2) values.

1.4 Significances of the Study

This study is expected to give both theoretical and practical contributions.

a) Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this study is expected to give a contribution to phonology and phonetics study, especially as references for further study about Madurese vowels. It also becomes language documentation related to the acoustical of Madurese vowels and means to preserve the language spoken by old speakers in Pamekasan. For this department, this study can enrich students' knowledge about the use of *Praat* applications to measure the vowels sound.

b) Practical Significance

Practically, this study increases the understanding of Madurese vowels. This study can inform the readers about the pronunciation of Madurese vowels between males and females by looking at the first formant (F1) and the second formant (F2) values. So the readers will get additional information about Madurese vowels in a different way. By looking at the first formant (F1) and the second formant (F2) values, the readers know whether the correctness and the clearness pronunciation. However, if there is someone expert about the correct pronunciation phenomenon

and agree with the phenomenon that occurred of Madurese vowels, it is be a unique characteristic one of the Madurese language.

1.5 The Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study focused on phonetics study, especially the acoustic of Madurese vowels. It also attended to explain the characteristics of the Madurese vowel and whether there are significant differences between males and females old speakers in the first formant (F1) and the second formant (F2) values. In order to avoid broad research, the writer focused on vowels produced by old speakers in Pamekasan. The writer took twelve older speakers (six males and six females). Those aged were 40 to 50s years old. They were recruited in this study and produce a word list that contain all possible vowels, such as [i], [ɪ], [ɨ], [u], [ɛ], [ə], [a], and [ɔ].