



## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

English is a foreign language in Indonesia which in its education system it is used as a compulsory language taught from elementary school to tertiary levels. In education, the goal of learning English is able to communicate in English well. To communicate properly, a correct and appropriate pronunciation is needed, as it affects very much on the understanding of the meaning of a word or utterance, especially in uttering English words. Even a single sound will lead into misconceptions. Moreover, English is supposed to be one of some languages that have a quite complicated and confusing pronunciation for learners in Indonesia because the phonological features of both languages are definitely different. In order to reach the goal of the learners in learning English, pronunciation should be noticed as the crucial aspect that cannot be abandoned because a wrong pronunciation will cause big problems, such as misconception.

Pronunciation will be a vital key to enabling students to communicate in English, in the move towards communicative goals (Matthew, 1997). In this case, many Indonesian learners are having their pronunciation difficulties, especially for Junior High School students which are beginners in English. The English pronunciation is complicated and confusing for learners, because the system of vowels and consonants have a lot of different sounds. However, there is no graphical accent to show these differences from one sound to another (Cassimiro, 2011, p. 50). This is the reason why it is so hard for non-native speakers to deal with the English pronunciation. Most Indonesian speakers decide English

pronunciation based on the phonological pattern in first language or mothertongue. Hence, it is very difficult for them to acquire English while their mother tongue is still being a focus in communicating. Additionally, a particular sound which does not exist in the native language can therefore pose a difficulty for the second language learners to produce or some times to try to substitute those sounds with similar ones in their mother tongue (Zhang & Yin, 2009). Those students' pronunciation difficulties may be caused by a lot of factors which in this research it would be observed.

The students of spoken English language or any other spoken Language face the problems in the pronunciation of the particular language. As SMKN 4 students, the researcher also faces some problems in order to pronounce the English words. Based on researcher's experience about students difficulties in English pronunciation when learn English in the class at SMKN 4 KOTA JAMBI, the researcher also find that almost all of her students face the difficulties in uttering English words, especially pronouncing the words existed diphthong sounds, such as the english centering diphthong consists of [aɪ], [eɪ], [ɔɪ], [aʊ], and [əʊ]. By looking at the problem above, the pronunciation of English sounds should be noticed as an important subject in learning English. Based on the fact that Indonesian EFL learners are having difficulties in pronouncing English diphthong sounds the researcher is interested to discussing "*Students Difficulties in English Pronunciation of The First Graders at SMKN 4 KOTA JAMBI.*"

## **1.2 Research Questions**

1. How do the students pronounce the sounds of the english centering diphthong sounds consists of / eə /, / ɪə /, and / uə /?
2. What are the factors affecting students' difficulties in pronouncing English sounds?

## **1.3 Objective of the Study**

In this research there are two basically essential objectives, they are

1. To analyze the pronunciation of English diphthong sounds including the English centering diphthong produced by Students of SMKN 4 KOTA JAMBI.
2. To find out the factors affecting students' pronunciation difficulties in pronouncing English sounds.

## **1.4 Limitation of the Study**

This study focuses on pronunciation aspect and specified to analyze students' difficulties to pronounce diphthong sounds produced by the students and the factors affect their difficulties in pronouncing English sounds. This research will be conducted to students of SMKN 4 KOTA JAMBI only who have additional class in XI TBG 1 in Jambi city.

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The findings of this research is expected to give contribution to every EFL teacher in Indonesia. It provides some information about students' difficulties in pronouncing particular English sounds as guidance for them to teach pronunciation to their students. To give information about students' pronunciation difficulties in speaking English, to be a source of the idea for other researchers interested in the same topic, to improve the researcher ability in doing research.

### **1.6 Definition of Key Terms**

*Pronunciation* is the way a certain sound or sounds are produced and pronunciation stresses more the way sounds are perceived by the hearer (Richard and Schmidt, 2002: 429).

*Diphthong* is another branch of vowel produced gliding from one position of vowel to another (Jones, 1983).

*Difficuly* is a thing or situation that causes problems (Hornby, 2010).