

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of the Problem

English is a world language of communication that is utilized by numerous countries in the world. English has been adopted by various countries for international communication within homogeneous nations and across multiple countries worldwide. Indonesia is a country that implements English as a Foreign language (EFL) in communication activities. In addition, the Merdeka Curriculum is under a policy that has been regulated by the Minister of Higher Education, Science, and Technology. It has been actualized English learning since Primary School to Senior High School, which students must be capable of using English as one of the major subjects that is applied in all schools in Indonesia. Hence, English becomes the ultimate subject that is implemented into the formal education system, particularly within the academic sphere of the Senior High School. Additionally, in Senior High School, English is introduced the signifikan deep study of English, which students must be more complex for students to learn English.

In addition, the institutionalization of English as a compulsory subject under Indonesia's Merdeka Curriculum reflects a strategic national response to the accelerating demands of globalization. Within this framework, English is not merely positioned as an auxiliary discipline but rather as an academic priority intended to equip Senior High School students with the communicative competence necessary to participate in transnational academic, economic, and sociocultural exchanges. The government, through its curriculum design, implicitly recognizes English proficiency as a form of linguistic capital that enhances students' competitiveness in higher education and the global labor market. Consequently, the curriculum encourages pedagogical practices that promote active language use, critical literacy, and intercultural awareness, moving beyond traditional grammar-centered instruction toward communicative and student-centered approaches. This policy environment gradually situates English within the functional domain of a Second Language, particularly in educational settings where exposure, assessment, and academic engagement increasingly require operational proficiency. Although Indonesia is traditionally categorized within an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context, the compulsory nature of English instruction, combined with its expanding instrumental value, creates conditions that resemble an emergent ESL orientation in schools. In this sense, the policy does not simply mandate

language learning; it constructs English as an essential tool for knowledge acquisition, digital participation, and global citizenship. However, the effectiveness of such a mandate ultimately depends on equitable resource distribution, teacher preparedness, and contextualized instructional strategies that acknowledge Indonesia's linguistic diversity while fostering high levels of English proficiency among learners.

The Merdeka Curriculum represents a strategic effort by the Indonesian government to enhance students' competencies in response to global educational demands. Within this framework, learners are expected to develop effective English communication skills; consequently, English is positioned as a priority subject in Senior High School. It rules that students must be able to communicate in English; Consequently, English becomes a priority subject in Senior High School. Permendikbudristek Nomor 12 Tahun 2024 elaborated that *dasar hukum yang mengatur tentang Kurikulum Merdeka menjelaskan bahwa bahasa Inggris menjadi mata pelajaran wajib mulai dari sekolah dasar (SD) hingga sekolah menengah atas (SMA)*. Based on the general policy above, English is a mandatory subject in schools. Hence, students can indirectly enhance their capability in English, particularly speaking and pronunciation, from Primary School to Senior High School. Moreover, the elevation of English within the Merdeka Curriculum can also be interpreted as part of a broader educational transformation aimed at aligning national learning outcomes with international standards. By prioritizing English proficiency, policymakers seek to cultivate a generation capable of accessing global knowledge networks, engaging with scholarly discourse, and contributing to innovation across disciplinary boundaries.

This orientation reinforces the role of English as a medium through which students encounter scientific literature, technological developments, and cross-cultural perspectives, thereby reducing intellectual isolation in an increasingly interconnected world. Students of Senior High School are challenged to balance the promotion of English with the preservation of national and local languages, ensuring that linguistic advancement does not lead to cultural displacement. Teachers, therefore, are expected to adopt adaptive methodologies that integrate contextual relevance with global communicative standards, fostering not only linguistic accuracy but also pragmatic competence and critical thinking. Ultimately, the policy signifies more than a curricular requirement; it represents a long-term investment in human capital development, positioning English as a transformative educational instrument that supports academic mobility, professional readiness, and meaningful participation in the global community.

Pronunciation is closely related to phonology because it represents the practical realization of the sound patterns that phonology seeks to explain. While phonology focuses on the abstract organization of sounds within a language, pronunciation concerns how those sounds are accurately produced, perceived, and interpreted in real communication. From a global perspective, differences in pronunciation reflect the rich diversity of phonological systems across languages, as each speech community develops its own rules for stress, intonation, rhythm, and sound contrasts. These variations often influence intelligibility in international contexts, particularly as English and other major languages function as global means of communication among speakers from diverse linguistic backgrounds. Therefore, understanding phonological principles can significantly improve pronunciation by helping learners recognize which sound distinctions are meaningful and how prosodic features shape clarity and comprehension.

In this sense, the relationship between pronunciation and phonology is essential not only for linguistic theory but also for language education, intercultural communication, and the development of effective global discourse. According to Odden (2005: 2), phonology is a branch of linguistics, the study of language in general. Phonology is one of the core fields that compose the discipline of linguistics, which is defined as the scientific study of language structure. The point which is most important to appreciate at this moment is that the “sounds” which phonology is concerned with are symbolic; they are cognitive abstractions which represent but are not the same as physical sounds. It is said to be an abstract cognitive system dealing with rules in a mental grammar: principles of subconscious “thought” as they are general. In the statement above, phonology has abstract rules to pronounce English vocabulary, which depend on the words in English. Phonology is a part of phonetics that refers to the glottic pronunciation of English skills, particularly glottalization, in a part of phonology.

Furthermore, pronunciation connects to Glottalization is constructed from the specific sound produced by the sound and vibration between the vocal cords and the larynx. Pronunciation skills in glottalization words are selected to choose for native speakers in communication, formal and informal activities; otherwise, native speakers’ daily communication influences the development of communication, particularly speech sound and pronunciation. A student who is studying English as a second language (ESL) must be savvy with the phonetic process, glottalization sound, and pronunciation skills of glottal words in academic and formal settings. For learners of English as a Second Language (ESL), understanding glottalization extends beyond

simple pronunciation practice and enters the domain of phonological awareness. Students must develop sensitivity to how sounds interact within connected speech, including processes such as elision, assimilation, and sound reduction. Without this awareness, learners may experience difficulty interpreting rapid speech or may produce overly careful articulation that sounds unnatural in spontaneous interaction. Furthermore, in academic and professional settings where intelligibility is prioritized, balanced instruction is necessary: learners should be able to recognize glottalized forms while maintaining clear and comprehensible pronunciation. Therefore, integrating phonetic training into language instruction supports not only accurate speech production but also communicative adaptability, allowing learners to participate more effectively in diverse linguistic environments while strengthening their overall communicative competence.

The implementation of English instruction in senior high schools presents numerous challenges, particularly in the area of pronunciation. Many students experience misunderstandings because English phonological patterns differ significantly from those of their first language, resulting in difficulties in both producing and interpreting spoken forms accurately. Limited exposure to authentic English communication further exacerbates this issue, as learners often rely heavily on written texts rather than auditory input, which restricts their ability to develop phonetic awareness. In addition, large classroom sizes and insufficient opportunities for individualized feedback can prevent teachers from addressing each student's specific pronunciation errors. Consequently, these obstacles may hinder effective communication, reduce learners' confidence, and ultimately impede the development of overall language proficiency. Therefore, it is essential for educational institutions to adopt more interactive and pronunciation-focused pedagogical strategies, such as incorporating listening exercises, phonetic training, and technology-assisted learning, to support students in achieving clearer and more comprehensible speech.

The diversity of English pronunciation reflects the dynamic nature of the language as it evolves across regions and speech communities. Variations in accent and phonological patterns often influence how particular consonants are articulated, thereby shaping listeners' perceptions and comprehension. Among these phonological features, the realization of the [t] sound demonstrates notable variability, especially in informal and connected speech. Such variation not only signals regional identity but also contributes to ongoing linguistic change within global English. Introducing the specific pronunciation in English, glottal [t] sounds can add new information related to certain vocabulary with different pronunciation. Several English-speaking

countries adopted glottal [t] for the entire English vocabulary that contains [t] sounds. Introducing the specific pronunciation in English, glottal [t] sounds can add new information related to certain vocabulary with different pronunciation. Several English-speaking countries adopted glottal [t] for the entire English vocabulary that contains [t] sounds. Albeit in academic and professional fields, the glottal [t] is used in communication. It means that Indonesia, as a non-English-speaking country, must comprehend the evolution of pronunciation. The evolution of pronunciation glottal [t] has come into the academic and professional sectors, bringing significant change, particularly in Indonesia, as a non-English speaking country. It requires an adaptation of student understanding and the implementation of the evolution of pronunciation.

Alongside the comprehension of pronunciation becomes a pivotal aspect in learning English for students at the Senior High School level. In addition, it can be implemented with digital method learning and specific elaboration of pronunciation, which phonology as a part of the subject at universities, requires being introduced to students at the Senior High school level, particularly comprehending how to pronounce correctly and understanding other formal pronunciation, such as glottal [t] sounds. Understanding specific pronunciation at the beginning for students can add a new perspective, and knowledge encompasses pronunciation formally. Introducing glottal [t] materials, giving an understanding of using the sound [t] in every single word in the English vocabulary. Additionally, students who select and proceed with caution towards the English vocabulary containing [t] sounds. Besides providing an understanding of [t] sounds in teaching and learning, it also requires facilitation, such as media, for bridging between the implementation of materials and students. To date, teaching and learning rarely use digital media platforms such as applications and websites as a friend and resource to seek information correctly and appropriately in the classroom. Furthermore, the Skills of pronunciation are essential for students due to an early understanding of other pronunciations of glottal [t] sounds that still feel missing and unfamiliar. Moreover, A lot of comprehension in pronunciation enables students to be confident to practice and implement all English vocabulary in daily communication without feeling anxiety.

As part of English-speaking fields, the glottal [t] has been adopted in daily speech in modern communication; native speakers utilize the glottalization system in formal communication. In addition, utilizing glottalization in daily communication indicates that students have improved in English to be more academically in pronunciation. Migrating pronunciation from basic English speaking and pronunciation to adding new vocabulary has provided significant impacts on daily

communications, particularly the pronunciation of glottal [t] in the vocabulary. This glottal [t] pattern demonstrates that the glottal [t] is no longer solely a marker of casual speech, but a normalized phonological feature governed by contextual and phonotactic constraints. For learners of English as a second language, the ability to recognize and appropriately interpret glottalization signifies an advanced level of phonological awareness and contributes to more academically informed pronunciation competence. As students progress from basic pronunciation models toward more naturalistic speech patterns, their expanding vocabulary interacts with increasingly complex phonological processes, including the glottalization of [t] in medial and final positions. This migration from elementary pronunciation toward more nuanced phonetic variation enhances listening accuracy and spoken intelligibility in everyday communication. Consequently, the incorporation of glottal [t] awareness into learners' phonological systems has a significant impact on communicative effectiveness, as it enables students to align their pronunciation and perception with authentic English usage while maintaining clarity and academic appropriateness in modern communication contexts.

Besides, in evolution, producing sounds and pronunciations have changed significantly towards changing sounds entirely. There were several components of pronunciation skills related to glottalization in English, to begin with glottal stop, which is produced by briefly closing the vocal folds (glottis) and releasing them; this type of sound is made by blocking the airflow at the vocal folds. Afterwards, glottal reinforcement (pre-glottalization), which is a glottal closure that happens together with another consonant [p], [t], [k]. It means consonant [p], [t], [k] pronounced stronger or reinforced. Additionally, glottal [t] is a further distinction of this feature affecting the [t] phoneme that must be regarded: glottal reinforcement and glottal replacement. Roberts (2006), cited by M.B. Monjo (2020). Pronunciation skills glottal [t] stated above the whole English words that contained [t] inside the words, it must be pronounced glottis or plosive. Eventually, in academic fields, glottalization, pronunciation, and sound are implemented into academic assessment. In the development and evolution of English, it requires creating an application focused on pronunciation and the sound glottal [t].

Alongside, in the modern era, high technology (Hi-Tech) has encouraged developing English pronunciation to make it easy to learn with several software provider systems, such as websites and applications, which provide features and components that support pronunciation. In addition, technology has had a significant impact on learning English, particularly pronunciation

and speech. The numerous websites and applications facilitate a dynamic system of the English language in the School environment. Additionally, the multidimensional era has also forced students of The State Senior High School in East Jakarta to become more active in English language communication with partners, lecturers, and other people.

Furthermore, in the technology era, which has dominated the whole education with digital implementation, such as transforming conventional resources into digital and softfile such as e-books, utilizing the internet and digital literacy through applications, websites, e-books, e-journals as references, and various platforms applied in the education system. Moreover, high technology (Hi-tech) system encourages students to enhance their capability, particularly in English communication through applications. The importance of speaking and pronunciation of English requires a policy that aligns with digital technology, such as using applications as a model for learning. Learning English from an application means a solution for students learning English through digital media. It is a new method for learners to study English in a modern way by providing feature tools and functions inside the application. Hence, using a learning application also boosts students' creativity in implementing English. Moreover, the communication aspect of speaking and pronunciation is a fundamental aspect of communication globally.

On the one hand, Technology is created to assist students in learning autonomously system in English language pronunciation as a media self-assessment, which can be operated by ourselves, therefore it does not require much time seeking other resources. On the other hand, there is an application that is concerned with producing the English vocabulary, in particular, the pronunciation of the glottal [t]. It is named Wellpron Application that has a lot of functions, such as helping students in learning the pronunciation of glottal [t] sounds. It is a solution to make it understood towards glottal [t] sounds, which it is able to utilize the Wellpron Application.

On the other hand, learning glottal [t] has a strategy to achieve the goals in academic English. Glottal [t] focuses in producing sounds of vocabularies thus it has encouraged students to enhance in pronunciation, numerous factors people learning sounds [t] such as, comprehend phonetic variation in English in particular daily spoken uttered by native speaker which it influences encompasses various fields, like academic English test and world global communication, besides, it stimulates to enhance capability in listening comprehension, which students can listen native and academic speaker using glottal [t] sounds thus avoiding misscommunication because different sounds and misunderstanding pronunciation. Hence, utilizing the Wellpron application

can help students to enhance their capability to pronounce glottal [t] sounds.

Besides, students require an early understanding of the glottal [t] in English pronunciation, particularly in response to its inclusion within mandatory learning frameworks such as the Merdeka Curriculum and the increasing demands of globalization. As the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes communicative competence, authentic language use, and learner readiness for global interaction, exposure to natural spoken English becomes an essential component of instruction from the initial stages of learning. The glottal [t], as a frequent phonological feature in contemporary English speech, appears extensively in academic listening materials, digital media, and cross-cultural communication, making its comprehension crucial for students' listening and speaking development. Introducing this feature at the beginning level supports the formation of accurate phonological representations and prevents gaps between classroom instruction and real-world language use. From a pedagogical perspective, early instruction in glottal [t] pronunciation enhances students' receptive skills and prepares them to engage with diverse English accents encountered in global contexts. Therefore, aligning pronunciation instruction, particularly the understanding of glottal [t], with both curricular mandates and globalization goals ensures that students develop functional, intelligible, and academically grounded English pronunciation competence suited to contemporary international communication.

## **1.2 Identification of the problem**

To identify the existing problem, the researcher observed the result towards students of The State Senior High School in East Jakarta related to pronouncing the glottal [t] vocabulary. This study identifies several pronunciation related challenges faced by students that necessitate the adoption of effective learning strategies, particularly through the Wellpron application, which is expected to influence formal academic practices at a State Senior High School in East Jakarta. The Wellpron digital platform is utilized as an evaluative tool to measure improvements in the glottal [t] pronunciation of students learning English as a Second Language (ESL). Findings indicate a notable enhancement in pronunciation following the implementation and orientation of the application. Furthermore, the study examines whether significant differences exist in the accuracy of glottal [t] pronunciation between students instructed with the Wellpron application and those taught through traditional instructional approaches.

### **1.3 Limitations of the problem**

This study focuses on the pronunciation of the glottal [t] among students at a State Senior High School in East Jakarta. Data were collected from two classes to facilitate a comparative analysis: one class employed the Wellpron application as a digital learning medium, while the other relied on conventional instructional methods. The primary data were obtained through a comparison of both groups' abilities to produce the glottal [t] accurately. Additional data were gathered through student interviews, pre-tests, post-tests, and questionnaires to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of learning outcomes. Furthermore, the research investigated the effectiveness of the Wellpron application in contrast to traditional teaching practices by examining the instructional processes in both classes. Teachers were also included as participants and were asked to complete questionnaires addressing the implementation of Wellpron as a digital medium for teaching glottal [t] pronunciation in the classroom. Nevertheless, the scope of this study is confined to the use of a specific digital learning method, acknowledging that some teachers continue to depend on conventional approaches to support pronunciation instruction.

### **1.4 Formulation of the problem**

Based on the elaboration of the problems related to the pronunciation of the glottal [t] sound and the Wellpron application above, the English learning process has been mentioned in the identification of the problems, and based on the focus of the Spelling and Pronunciation study in Phonology of English pronunciation, the problem is formulated as follows:

1. Is there a significant difference in students' pronunciation skills of Glottal [t] before and after socialization using the Wellpron application?
2. Is there a significant difference in pronunciation skills of Glottal [t] between students taught using the Wellpron application and those taught using conventional teaching methods?

### **1.5 Objective of the research**

The objective of the research study is to answer the formulation of the problem of this research. Moreover, it achieves the aims of the research, and the researcher possesses several steps as follows:

1. To determine a significant difference in students' pronunciation skills of Glottal T before and after instruction using the Wellpron application.

2. To compare the significant difference in pronunciation skills of Glottal T between students taught using the Wellpron application and those taught using conventional teaching methods.

### **1.6 Benefit of the research**

A research study for this theme, more showing the function of the Wellpron application related to the pronunciation of the glottal [t] towards students of The State Senior High School in East Jakarta, is capable of representing English as a Second Language (ESL) anglophones. In addition, the Wellpron application is a tool to assist students in gaining additional competency in English as a Second Language. Furthermore, the Wellpron application can identify the significant differences in students after socializing and introducing glottal [t] pronunciation through the Wellpron application. Alongside, the Wellpron application can detect a significant improvement in students before and after using the Wellpron application.

### **1.7 Systematic Organization of the Research**

In the process of arranging the system of this research study, it requires organizing systematically to make this thesis easier. It will be divided into several points:

#### **CHAPTER 1:**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter contains background of the problem, identification problem, limitation of the problem, formulation of the problem, objective of the research, benefits of the research, and systematic organization of the research.

#### **CHAPTER 2**

#### **THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK**

This chapter consists of the theoretical framework of Linguistics, Phonology, Glottalization, Pronunciation, English as a Second Language, English Application, Previous Study, Hypothesis, and Wellpron Application.

**CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS**

This research method includes time and location, research approach and method, data collection technique, data analysis technique, and Hypothesis testing.

**CHAPTER 4: RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

In this chapter contains description of the research data, Hypothesis test and Discussion of research finding.

**CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION**

In this chapter I present the conclusion, the summary of the observation and data analysis.

