

IMPROVING THE STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION SKILL THROUGH CHORAL DRILL TECHNIQUE

(An Action Research at Tenth Grade Students of SMK Karya Bahana Mandiri
Bekasi)

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to solve the English pronunciation problem. Besides, this research is also to know the effectiveness of using choral drill technique in teaching pronunciation. The research is conducted at SMK Karya Bahana Mandiri Bekasi, in semester two of academic year 2011/2012. Data needed is obtain from direct and indirect observation and collaboration. In the direct observation, the data is from field observation. In the indirect one, the data is from the test result. Meanwhile in collaboration, the collaborator informs teaching and learning process through choral drill technique. Based on the data collected it is found that some students are active in pronunciation practice through choral drill technique. Further, the students have more desire and motivation to improve their pronunciation skill. Looking up the evaluation table, the pronunciation from twenty one students in three cycles can be explained; in the first cycle, there are only three students (15%) who achieve the standard of minimum score. In the second cycle, there are nine students (45%) who achieved the standard minimum score. While in the third cycle, all of them (100%) can achieve the standard minimum score. Furthermore, the writer concludes that the use of choral drill technique can be one of the appropriate approach to teach English pronunciation for the students.

Keywords: pronunciation, choral drill technique, action research

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Background

Language as means of communication is very useful and flexible. It is one of a macro thing that people need to communicate each other. Language is really rich and beautiful, because by the language we can express almost everything such as

thought, action, ideas, emotion, information, etc. This activity indicates that language is essential thing to be mastered. Language can also be used to transmit culture from generation to generation. This world consist of hundreds of countries which consider has own language. So, to transfer a lot of information from or to different countries needed understandable language called international language.

As an international language, English is used in communication among people all over the world. English is also used in written texts and books as the source of knowledge that people really need. It is a fact that English is the most frequent language used in international communication, because there are a big number of the countries that use English as a means of daily communication, and there are the number of non-native speakers that use English in incidental communication, especially in international communication.

The function of language including English is to communicate each other. So, if someone's pronunciation is not correct, he or she cannot transfer the information to other people. That is why, learning pronunciation the words of the language clearly and correctly is one of important part of learning English. Pronunciation is one of the most important in sub system of language and one of the kinds of skill that must be taught to the students, especially in English as an international foreign language.

Pronunciation is more important than phonetic. Stress and intonation are as important as the sounds themselves and should be taught from the very beginning. Whether pronunciation needs special attention or focus in language teaching depends on many factors especially learner factors.

Learners whose native language has similar sounds to English are less likely to have problems with pronunciation. Learners who have more exposure to English need less focus on pronunciation. Adult learners need more focus on pronunciation because they are more likely to substitute English sounds with sounds their native language.

Pronunciation is always important not only for beginning students, not only when it interferences with intelligibility, but at all times. Before the students start drilling in oral expression, it is important for them to develop an adequate pronunciation of language. This will be better to do beginning, so every word they

utter sounding more and more habit and no faulty of pronunciation should be made can be very difficult and most time consuming.

Unfortunately, students really hard to pronounce the word correctly, although they have learned English since they were in the elementary school. That is the reason why the writer chooses the students' pronunciation.

Also known as listen and repeat, choral drills are mainly used for modeling target language. The teacher says a word or sentence out loud and students try to repeat it verbatim with correct pronunciation, stress and intonation. The teacher may even mark the utterance on the board with phonetic script, stressed syllables and rising or falling intonation; possibly even tapping out the rhythm of the stressed syllables while enunciating.

Choral repetition is a commonly used method of drilling. Students simply have to repeat words or phrases after the teacher. This is a good method because it means that students are given excellent model pronunciation immediately before they are asked to respond.

2. The Objective

The objectives of this paper are to present the outline program and its implementation of choral drill technique in improving students' pronunciation. This paper also present steps of classroom action research in three cycles which each cycle consist of four steps; planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1 Pronunciation

Good pronunciation of a language is important. Articulating foreign language will always very dissonant to all beginner because they do not want to give revolution change assumption. Student bravely to articulate is very important step to teach and everyone who learns foreign language because will be assisting them to study good uttering or good speech. Daniel Jones said that "good speech as a way of speaking with is clearly intelligible to all ordinary people, but speech is a way of talking with is difficult for most people to understand, it is caused by mumbling or lack of definiteness of utterance"

(Daniel Jones, 1986:5). Teaching pronunciation must be interesting for the students, if the teacher can give an interesting menu in the learning process. The students' ability will be created and supported progressively. As Chambers state that "Pronunciation is the act or a manner of pronouncing a word, sound, and letter. Pronunciation is also the correct way of pronouncing a word. Sound in a given language, a set of symbols indicating how a word is to be pronounced" (Chambers, 1997:110).

Pronunciation is also pronouncing authoritatively or proclaiming, declaration, promulgation, a pronouncement. According to Chambers dictionary, pronunciation is the act manner of pronouncing words, sound and letter. Pronunciation is also the correct way of pronouncing a word, sound in a given language or a set of symbols indicating how a word is to be pronounced.

According to Webster, pronunciation is also the act or manner of pronouncing something articulate utterance or the way or ways in which unit language is usually spoken or on the basis of analogy would be spoken by person qualified by education or otherwise to be speakers worthy for imitation. According to Jody Pearsall, pronunciation is the way in which a word is pronounced. Spelling does not determine pronunciation.

English pronunciation sometimes is difficult rules existing but not reliable because many possible exception. English pronunciation can sometimes be a little tricky or not consistent. Mainly for two reasons, the first is that English has many homophones, words that sound alike but don't look alike. When we hear rain, someone may mean rain, reign, or rein. The other reason is that English words often pronounced differently from quite closely related words in other language. In learning English pronunciation the students should have to produce receivable pronunciation.

3.2 Aspects of Pronunciation There are four aspects in teaching pronunciation, they are :

a) The Sound of The Language

Each language has its own distinctive set of categories and part of the process of leaning a new language is learning the significant sounds. The person who begins the study of foreign language is faced with the problem of

having to produce unfamiliar sounds. A system that would represent each different sound with different symbol would help him identify and imitate those sounds.

N.E. Collinge said, "sound is the perception of the movement of air particles which causes a displacement of the eardrum. Certain concepts in acoustics (frequency, amplitude, waveform analysis and resonance) provide the bases for an understanding of the structure of these sound waves. The subject is the death with by fry (N.E. Collinge, 1990:3). While according to Mark Hancock, "a sound is a phoneme. In teaching pronunciation it is often necessary to make it clear when you are talking about sounds and when you are talking about letters" (Mark Hancock, 1995:5).

b) Stress

Stress is emphasis given to syllables in words. Often words that look very similar in two languages actually have the stress in a different place, making them sound quite different. It is useful in teaching about stress to use symbols to represent stress patterns. The stress patterns of words can change in the context of speech under the influence of surrounding words. For example, the stress in the *sixteen* /s;ˈti:n/ may be lost in the phrase sixteen days. This is called **stress shift**. Stress is the first vocal features we will deal with. Stress can also change the meaning of a sentence "He won't go" implies a meaning different from "He won't **go**". In English, proper use of stress enables you to clearly understand the difference between such words as the noun *present* (a gift) and the verb *present* (to introduce, to offer)

c) Rhythm

Rhythm is the way a language sounds as a result of the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in speech. Rhythm are different between languages and contribute to the characteristic sound different languages have. Rhythm is created by the strong stresses or beats in a sentence. In many languages, the rhythm is syllable timed. This means that all vowels in all syllables are pronounced almost equally

d) Intonation

Intonation patterns involve pitch and are responsible for the melody of the language. Speakers frequently depend more on intonation pattern to convey their meaning than on the pronunciation of the individual vowel and consonants. For example, in English the same words can be used to make a statement or ask a question. If your vocal intonation rises, you are asking a question and become the question, when you raise the pitch of your voice at the end (Paulette Dale, 1985:83).

3.3 The Goal of Teaching Pronunciation

We come now to the question of what goals should be set for individual learners. How 'good' should the learner's pronunciation aim to be? Whereas some time ago it might have been said that the goal should always be native – like pronunciation, even though it was realized that this would be achieved by relatively few, most people now think that this is an inappropriate goal for learners. The great majority of learners will have a very practical purpose for learning English and will derive no particular benefit from acquiring a native-like pronunciation.

Learners who want to work as air traffic controllers or telephone operators, for example will need to have a pronunciation which easily to understood in less than ideal conditions. In these situation there is a limited opportunity for repetition and second tries; indeed, these can be dangerous.

While native-like pronunciation may be goal for particular learners, and while we should never actively discourage learners from setting themselves 'high' goals, for the majority of learners a far more reasonable goal is to be comfortably intelligible. Let us focus on the word 'comfortably' it is significant that in English and many others language we can make a distinction between 'hearing' and 'listening'. Hearing requires more presence plus ears, listening requires work; we can ask someone to 'listen carefully' and accuse someone of not listening to what we have said. We all realize that some people are more difficult to listen to than others and when we listen to a foreigner speaking our native language we expect to have work a little bit harder. But if we have too hard a time – if the person pronounces in such a way that we have to constantly

ask for repetition – than at some stage we reach our threshold of tolerance. We become irritated, and maybe even resentful of the effort that is being required of us. In some cases we may be willing to be patient and ultra-tolerant, in some cases we may have to be, but for the most part we aspects conversation with non-native speaker to be 'comfortable'. In setting goals for our learners we must consider the effect of mispronunciation on the listener and the degree of tolerance listeners will have for this.

From the statement above the writer concludes, the goal of pronunciation is the native-like pronunciation which is important especially to the learners who plan to become an English teacher that requires native like accent, even though they have to work little bit harder to get native like accent.

In teaching English pronunciation there are some factors that affect pronunciation learning that should pay attention by the teacher, as follow:

- 1) The native language
- 2) The age factor
- 3) Amount of exposure
- 4) Phonetic ability
- 5) Attitude and identity (David Nunan:10).

In teaching English – especially teaching English pronunciation through drill technique – to be more successful the teacher not only should have to take into account certain factors (biological, personal, socio cultural, pedagogic mother tongue influence and setting realistic goals) but also the roles of the teacher. Those are the teacher as a controller, assessor, organizer, prompter, participant, resource, tutor and investigator.

3.4 The Teaching Pronunciation and Its Problem

Why is it usually so extraordinary difficult for students to learn sound or another? The first reason, of course, is that some sounds of new or target language do not exist in the learner's native language. The ability of students to produce some words should be practiced in class. The other problems, the students feel bored in studying English especially pronunciation. It happens

because the students do not like to study English, so they are lazy to practice and to pronounce English words.

The method that is usually used by the teacher to be the cause of success or failure in language teaching, but the extreme has a view that methods are a little importance. There is the view that the teacher is the only important element, methods are only as good as their teacher.

Pronunciation teaching forms a part of many sequences where students study language form. When we model words and phrase we draw our students attention to the way they are said; one of the things we concentrate on during an accurate reproduction stage is the students pronunciation.

3.5 Drill Technique

Drills went out of fashion with audiolingualism because they became associated with mindless and repetitive approaches to teaching. However, drills definitely do not have to be mindless, and they offer a welcome opportunity for learners to get their tongues around new language without the extra strain of trying to communicate. Most learners love them, as long as they are done confidently and do not dominate teaching.

For many teachers, drilling conjures images of a teacher standing next to the whiteboard saying a word and students merely repeating it, again and again. Drill is a form of controlled oral practice involving cues and short responses and focusing on one specific language point which is given only after the initial presentation and before freer forms of practice (such as role plays, discussions, etc). This is supported by Paulston by stating that drill is the automatic use of manipulative patterns and is commensurate with the assumption that language learning is habit formation. It involves the method of learning through instrumental conditioning by immediate reinforcement of the right response (Christina Brat Paulston, 1965:130)

Drill relatively are easy when engaged in pronunciation drill and provide students with a breathing space during which they can converse their mental energy and also might simply involved in that drill.

Pronunciation drill has an important place in the teaching of pronunciation as mean to help the students on articulation become more automatic and routine. It is seen as a step towards more meaningful, communicative practice. "Tobe truly effective drill has to move beyond the simple identification and mimicking the contextualized sound contrast characteristics of input (Rodney H. Jones)

The drill can also be made more lively and memorable by concentrating not just on oral and aural modalities but also including visual representations and training in the awareness of sensation. The benefit of dill may depend on learners aptitude for oral practice.

Teaching pronunciation through drill technique has an important place in the teaching of pronunciation as a means to help articulation become more automatic. This technique regarded better than other existing technique as a step toward more meaningful communicative practice. In teaching English pronunciation through choral drill technique the teacher first goal should be to give assistance during the regular speaking lesson to the students who are having difficult with particular sounds. The particular sounds that the students will find difficult will differ for different language background.

3.6 Choral Drill

Listen and repeat drills also known as choral drills are typically used for modeling language. These drills occur when teachers say a word, or sentence out loud and students repeat what has been said. The danger of choral drills is that they can become mind-numbing for both teachers and students. The good news is that there are many ways to spice up choral drills.

The goal through choral drill technique is accuracy and the standard is high. However, a lot of listen and repeat can become very boring and demotivating, especially for long and difficult sentences. For a very long sentence, one useful technique is to have students repeat one extra phrase at a time starting from the back of the sentence.

Another use for corraling is to asses students' ability. It is very difficult to repeat language you do not know. Try it with someone who speaks a

language you do not understand. Get them to say a sentence in their mother tongue and try to repeat what they say accurately. This is a very mechanical form of drilling, and as such students may be able to complete them without much thought or understanding of what they are repeating.

3.7 Classroom action research

The classroom action research is a part of action research which teacher, with collaborator, takes a part in educational improvement and brings a good effect for quality and quantity improvement in a classroom activity. The teacher directly observes the students to get the improvement in the classroom. Hollingsworth states “classroom action research is to bring a theory and a practice of improvement educational system, including participatory research, collaborative inquiry, emancipator research, action learning, and contextual action research, but all are variations on a theme.”(Hollingsworth, 1997:205) It is said that in action research, researcher teacher has to put simply theory and action, action of the research is ‘learning by doin’ – a group of people identify a problem, do something to resolve it, see how successful; their effort were, and if not satisfied, try again.

4. Methodology

This research use the qualitative paradigm in the classroom action research. The subject of the research is all of the students at the accountancy tenth grade of SMK Karya Bahana Mandiri. There are 21 students in accountancy class which consist of 2 boys and 19 girls.

B. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

At the first cycle, most of students still showed their lack of attention and interest to the subject given and they were too shy to practice. But then after they practiced the dialogue, they began to show their interest once at the step. It was showed through the second cycle, where some students started to practice and choose the difficult word based on their self before practice. Finally they participated fully and were active during the lesson. In the activity all students got the same

opportunity to pronounce the words. They happily involved themselves and freely to pronounce although there are some students who have low motivation in the following kind of activities in the teaching learning process; it is shown by some of the students that do not have books that used, they are also lazy to learn English and there are limitation and lack of the knowledge of English.

In this research, the writer found that there were some benefits of using the technique in teaching pronunciation for students such as; it is enjoyable and interesting for the students, they play in pairs, interact in pairs and correct mistake each other. The course lets the students to address their own difficult words by underlined them before practice. This is very useful for them because they can get the good pronunciation from the teacher.

In the classroom activities, the writer could see the progress of pronunciation ability from the students. There was increasing in the amount of students who achieve the target of minimum score from cycle 1, 2 and 3. The writer took their score from exercise that they have done. It was indicated that teaching pronunciation through choral drill technique reached better and better in pronunciation practice. And as the result of the research, the writer took the students score based on their pronunciation practice that the writer evaluate and divided into some of categories, there are utterance, stressing, rhythm, and intonation

C. CONCLUSION

In learning English, students are less motivation and they tend to be bored in the class activity, because of that the writer used choral drill technique that can improve the students' pronunciation skill along the learning process. Besides, the choral drill technique can help the students to find out the certain information or knowledge in short time in practicing pronunciation. Through choral drill technique, the students can study continuously and disciplinary in understanding the dialogue with the efforts to pronounce well.

Implementation of using choral drill technique in teaching learning process to improve pronunciation in grade tenth worked smoothly and as planned. Although

at the first meeting of a classroom's atmosphere was not conducive enough but it can be overcome, it is because the students had got habitual with the new technique which is taught and it can be seen from the increasing of average score which is in cycle 1 the average score is **54.25**, whereas there were only three (3) students who can achieve the standard of minimum score. In cycle 2 the average score is **69,5**, whereas there were nine (9) students who can achieve the standard of minimum score and in cycle 3 the average score is **100**, whereas all of the students (19) can achieve the standard of minimum score.

Choral drill technique make the students encourage to communicate in English. They are not shy anymore and more confident to communicate in English even though sometimes they still make mistake

in teaching learning pronunciation using choral drill technique, the writer asked the students to study the material given and prepare themselves to practice with their friends, but before it the writer asked the students to underlined the words that they think difficult to pronounce and the writer will give the correct pronunciation of the words. the students more encourage and more active when the writer gave the material by work in pair, they more confidence to improve their ability and to practice the words in pairs.

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