

IMPROVING STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION BY USING READING ALOUD IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

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Abstrak: Penelitian ini dilaksanakan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam pengucapan bahasa Inggris dalam bentuk teks pendek dengan menggunakan tehnik membaca nyaring. Penelitian ini adalah sebuah Penelitian Tindakan Kelas yang dilaksanakan dalam tiga siklus. Subjek dari penelitian ini adalah kelas VIII SMP Pelita Ngabang Kab.Landak Provinsi Kalimantan Barat, yang terdiri dari 25 siswa. Data penelitian dikumpulkan melalui ceklis observasi, catatan lapangan, dan tes. Data tersebut dianalisa dengan mendiskripsikan ceklis observasi dan catatan lapangan, dan menggunakan rumus mencari nilai rata-rata. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan kemampuan siswa dalam pengucapan meningkat dari tiap siklusnyamelalui tehnik membaca nyaring dengan skor rata-rata pada siklus ke tiga yaitu 76,6 dan masuk dalam kategori cukup bagus.

Kata kunci: Pengucapan, Teknik Membaca Nyaring, Teks Pendek

Abstract: This research is held to improve the students' pronunciation especially English words in the form short text used readin aloud. It is a Classroom Action Research which is conducted in three cycles. The subject of this research is grade VIII, which is consists 25 students. The data is collected by using observation checklist, fieldnote, and test. The data is analyzed by describing the observation checklist and filed note, and by using formula of mean score. The result indicate the students' pronunciation in short text improve of each cycle by using reading aloud,it can be seen from the mean score on the third cycle was 76.6, it was categorized as good.

Key words: Pronunciation, Reading Aloud, Short Text

Pronunciation is one of the essential noun based in an oral form and the basic ability of speaking English as well as other languages. The correct pronunciation of English is to help the students to pronounce correctly. Clear pronunciation makes the students easy to understand and produce intelligible sound.

The study of pronunciation has become an important aspect in teaching English as a foreign Language. In learning process, student may face difficulty which is crucial to be described and analyzed. One of them is difficulty in pronouncing English words. Pronunciation has become a dilemma for students.

As a result, making errors in pronouncing English as foreign language is common. It is natural in the early stage of second/foreign language learning process. Goodwin (2001: 117) says, In teaching pronunciation, the goal of instructions threefold: to enable our learners to understand and be understood, to build their confidence in entering communicative situations, and to enable them to monitor their speech based on input from the environment. To accomplish these goals, he describes the tools we need to teach pronunciation in a systematic and principled way.

In most languages, including Indonesian language, pronunciation follows predictable rules but not in English. Spelling is not a reliable guide to know how a word is pronounced. English must surely rank among the most irritating language when it comes to pronunciation. Certainly, it has caused so much trouble for the learners to students.

The same cases also happen in Junior High School Pelita Ngabang where the students always found difficulties in pronouncing English words. English is one of difficult subjects for them, especially in pronouncing. Based on the research in SMP Pelita Ngabang showed that 90% students making errors in pronounce. Moreover, they usually use their regional language in their daily life as mother tongue. Furthermore, Baker (1982) says students of different mother tongues have different pronunciation problems. Particularly at beginner level, some students may be happy to spend some time on sounds which are easy for them, deriving some encouragement in the relief of finding an English sound which they can pronounce. However, time is usually precious and if some of it is to be spent in this way, teachers must be aware of how relevant this practice is to the students' real pronunciation needs.

From the writer observation as a teacher, the students usually reading in whisper because they felt worried if they made errors in pronouncing. They get difficulties especially in English vowel sound. In producing different sounds, the learners are sometimes influenced by the native language process which is used frequently. The interference of native language process influences the learners' imitation. Hence, the errors in mastering new language cannot be avoided. For example, they may pronounce the word *read* is said [red] not [ried], another example when they pronounce the word *like* is [lik] not [laik].

In the teaching learning process the students seldom get the exercise about pronunciation. In teaching, the teacher just read the text, explain material and ask students to read and answer the question in individual or in pair without explain about how to pronounce it well. So, when the teacher asks them to read the text the students felt shy and worry about their pronunciation and they always read in whisper. The smart students listened to the teacher and did the task easily, while the others who did not understand what the teacher was explaining would get trouble in doing task, so they were not interested in doing the task and copied their friends' answer without understanding it. Not all of students took part actively in this teaching learning process especially when the teacher ask them to read the text, they get bored because they always get same instructions from the teacher. The students less motivated in learning. Therefore, many passive learners in classroom as long as process of teaching and learning.

From this reason and the fact above, the writer as the teacher needed to solve those problems immediately. The teacher had to consider another technique that can help students in solving their problem in order to have better in pronouncing. Regarding the situation, the research chose Reading Aloud as a technique to solve the problems.

Huang (2003) at English Department, Zhenjiang Watercraft College of PLA in his research about reading aloud said “reading aloud to middle and high school students can motivate them to read, enticing them with good a short story and providing a model of excellent reading, phrasing, expression, and pronunciation”.

When the teacher reading aloud to students, the teacher engages them in texts that they might not be able to teach. In the process, the teacher expands their imagination, provide new knowledge, support language acquisition, build vocabulary, promote reading as a worthwhile, enjoyable activity. All students, from pre-school through high school, can benefit from being read to.

Lundy (2004) in English Autumn from the British Council said that “Reading aloud has been actively discouraged in the EFL classroom since he first trained as a teacher. Furthermore, Lundy (2004) said that it is obvious that some people are much better at reading aloud than others. They are confident, polished and interesting. In all reading aloud it is important to emphasise the main ideas while conveying the appropriate attitude or emotion. As most of my students’ aim were, vaguely, to improve pronunciation.

As a language teacher, the writer believes reading aloud should be use more in foreign language learning. Whether the students are learning English as a second language or another language. Reading aloud is a simple way to learn faster and better. And it is easy to do by students.

Reading aloud can motivate the students to read, enticing them with good a short story and providing a model of excellent reading, phrasing, expression, and pronunciation. When the teacher reading aloud to students, the teacher engages them in texts that they might not be able to teach. In the process, the teacher expands their imagination, provide new knowledge, support language acquisition, build vocabulary, promote reading as a worthwhile, enjoyable activity. All students, from pre-school through high school, can benefit from being read to.

This technique could help the students in solving the problem when they have difficulty in pronouncing. For some students who do not have the confidence to practice spoken English, reading aloud can help them overcome the faults of dissilency, repeat, improper pause, and develop natural and good pronunciation habit. Try to read with expression, change the pitch (high-low), tone (gentle-rough), and volume (soft-loud) of our voice to show different characters or create a mood. Reading aloud can not only helps us open our mouths, but also improve our oral English evidently.

From a research of Teachers’ Read-Aloud Practices in Middle Schools by Ariail (2006) in Georgia State University and Albright (2006) in Texas Woman’s University “reading aloud is a valuable skill for learners of all ages and languages. Reading aloud helps students learn to read smoothly, building skill of fluency, continuity and confidence. Therefore, Reading aloud has been shown to increase accessibility to texts for students who are unable to read the text for themselves.

Reading aloud is a classroom activity which has fallen in and out of favor with teachers at various times. The main argument against it is that it can interfere with successful pronunciation; spelling clearly affects pronunciation performance adversely. But reading aloud offers opportunities for the study of the link between spelling and pronunciation, of stress and intonation, and of the linking of sounds between words in connected speech; all of these can be highlighted and investigated further in fun and interesting ways through reading aloud.

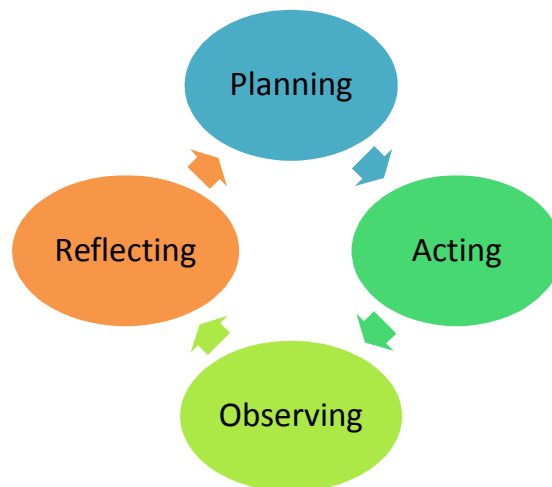
METHOD

In accordance with the problems, the appropriate method to be used in this research is classroom action research. Yoni (2010:165) states “Classroom action research is how a group of teacher can organize learning condition and learn from their experiences, try to make reparation in their learning, and get the desirable result from the action”.

As Arikunto (2006:91) said that classroom action research is a research toward the action which in the classroom.

Mc Niff (1992:2) described that action research as spiral of steps. Each steps had four stages: planning, acting, observing and reflecting.

The cycle form:



In order to make the circle above clear, below is the explanation of those steps:

1. Planning is related to the activity planning which is going to be held by in the classroom. It is about the lesson plan, material, technique, as well as task to improve the students' achievement; both in form of process and score.
2. Acting is the action after planning has been managed. It is when the technique, material and tasks are being held or applied.
3. Observing is to see how the activity is running; and to gather the data as the information to be assessed.
4. Reflecting is the stage to reflect how the research has been carried out; from the planning to the observation stage.

The researcher follows this cycle, and conducts the three cycles. The researcher plans an activity or some activities that can overcome the problems appear in the classroom. The teacher as a researcher has to do a treatment; that is by using the technique which is trusted as the powerful one to help the students for achieving a better result and process of learning.

In the planning stage of the first cycle, the researcher have prepared thematerials for the students such as the list of short vowel words and some short text for the exercise, to know how far the students could be understood about the pronunciation. And prepare microphones to help the process in read-aloud. Before start the lesson, the teacher gave the students brainstorming about vowel sounds especially in which short vowel for the example and then thought them how to pronounce the words correctly. And prepare two kinds the observation checklist and field note. In acting stage, the teacher gave the students a piece of paper that contained some example of words to be pronounced and asked to students listen carefully as long as the teacher read and pronounced the words. After conducting learned the teacher asked students to repeat the words after her uses read aloud voice. And to know how well the students could be understand about the materials and how well they could pronounced the vowels sound , the teacher gave them worksheet about vowels sound in form a short text and then asked them to read-aloud and performed in front of class one by one. In observing stage, the teacherobserved all the activity as well as took notes. In the reflecting stage, the teacher reflected what had been done; and decided to conduct another cycle as the result of the reflection was not satisfactory.

In the planning stage of the second cycle, the teacher had better prepare materials for the students' pronunciation of the vowels sound is better and the result obtained from the students as expected. Prepare a reading text more interesting and simple for performance test. That the atmosphere in the classroom is not boring during lesson, it is prepared award in form a sticker picture of smile that has awarded to students who obtain good score criteria, and to increase the confidence of the students in using reading aloud as technique to pronouncing the words. To get good result in action the teacher has help by other teacher as the collaborator to observe the students' action during class activity. In the acting stage, the teacher made the atmosphere classroom had been relax so that the students did not feel worry or nervous if the teacher asked them to pronounce the text in front of class. Then the teacher showed them a sticker picture of smile and announced that the sticker would be given for the students have good score. Next, the teacher asked the students to imitate the vowels with correct pronunciation through reading aloud. In the observing stage, the teacher observed the activity. In the reflection stage, the researcher and the observer reflected all the activity had been done, and made decision that the result of the activities was not quite satisfactory; so that, the cycle could not be stopped in the second cycle.

In the planning stage of the third cycle, the teacher as researcher had identified mapped the reflection from the second cycle, revised the lesson plan, preparing the short text more fun and interesting as learnin media, and completed all the things which had missed in the second cycle; such as the text handouts and test sheets. In the actin stage, the researcher did her duties as the facilitator,

activity provider, and motivator like in previous cycles. In the observing stage, the observer observed the activity. In the reflection stage, the researcher and the observed reflected all the activities had been done, and made decision that the result of the activities was satisfactory; so that, the cycle could be stopped in the third cycle.

This research was conducted in a single classroom which consists of 25 students. That was eight grade of VIII of SMP Pelita Ngabang Kab. Landak. The reason for choosing this class was because the researcher found more students who had difficulties in pronouncing especially vowel sound. In collecting the data, the researcher used observation checklist which was divided in two types : teacher's performance and the students' performance, fieldnote to record the unexpected activities happened in the classroom, and test in form short text consists some vowel sound.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

a. Findings

After conducting Reading Aloud technique for three cycles, the students' English pronunciation improved, especially in vowel sounds. Moreover, the process in the classroom activity also improved from the first cycle to the third cycle. Below is the further explanation of each improvements:

Students' mean score

Based on the result of the test, after conducting Reading Aloud technique into third cycles, the students' score improved from the first cycle to third cycle. The improvement was shown by the result of the students' mean score and also the students who passed the standard minimum score. The improvements can be seen in the following charts:

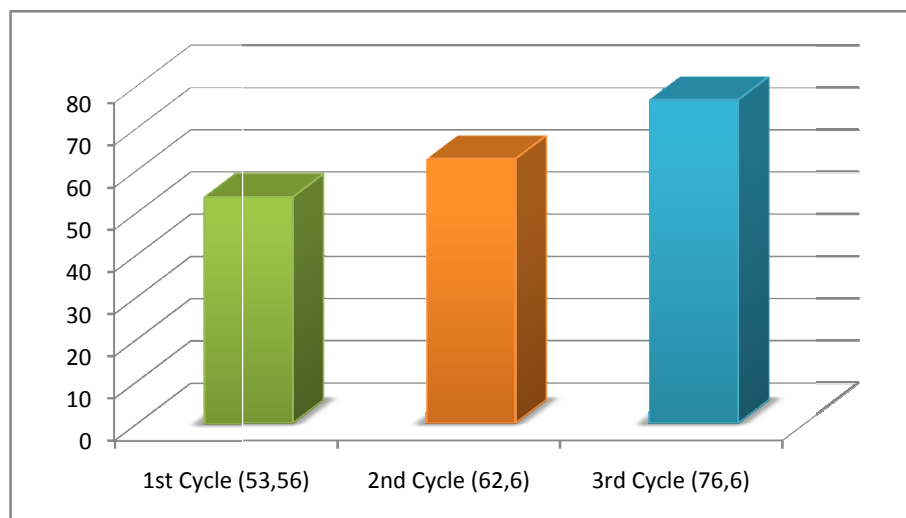


Chart 1 : Students' mean Score on Each Cycle

Chart 1 above shows the students' mean score in the first cycle, the second cycle and the third cycle. As it displayed, there is an improvement from the

first to the third cycle. In the first cycle, the chart of the first cycle shows 53,56. In the first cycle, the students did not gain good result. It could be seen in table I, these table show the mean score of the students' competence in pronunciation namely 53.56 point. It was categorized as poor to average. This point showed that the students' competence in pronunciation was low. At the first time, the teacher expected that every student could apply reading aloud as technique smoothly. In fact, the students still got problems in some vowel sound especially in vowels 'a' and 'u'. This part made the students not able to practice pronunciation through reading aloud smoothly. The second cycle shows 62,6. In the second cycle, the students show little progress. It could be seen from the mean score in the second meeting. The mean score was 62.6 and categorized as sufficient. Although the mean score show more increase from before, the students still had problem in pronouncing but their confidence show increased to pronounce the words. Meanwhile, in the third cycle, the mean score is 76,6. In the third cycle, the students made more and more progress. The students' competence in pronunciation using reading aloud became better and better. It could be seen from the mean score on the third cycle was 76.6 point. It was categorized good to excellent. This point showed great progress from the previous meeting. The students had showed their ability in pronouncing the short text using reading aloud practice.

b. Discussion

The classroom action research had been conducted in three cycles that consisted of six meetings. In each cycles while conducting the research, there were four stages: Planning, action, observation, and reflection. The English teacher acted as collaborator who observed and kept monitoring the process of the research, while the researcher applied the technique in the classroom based on the planning which had been designed by the researcher and the teacher. During research, the collaborator collected data by using fieldnote, observation checklists, and written tests. Observation checklist and fieldnotes were used to record the process in classroom, while pronounce test was used to measure the students' pronunciation.

Since the students faced problem in pronunciation especially in vowel sounds, the researcher tried to solve the problem by a technique which was believed had power to solve the problems. The researcher chose Reading Aloud as a technique which was appropriate to solve the students' problem on pronouncing english.

Based on the observation checklist and field notes, the activities did not run smoothly. The collaborator found some weakness in this cycle related to the researcher's and the students' performance in pronounce in the classroom. In cycle one, the students ot confused about the procedure of technique. As the result, the activity was not accomplished well. The students still worried about their pronunciation, nervous and not confident. The students also still became passive learners; only some of them took part actively in the activities. Besides, the students' mean score also low and more than half students passed SKM. The oal learning did not achieve as expected by the researcher.

In cycle two, the students showed progress and improvements in the activities and their pronunciation, as well as the researcher's performance. The researcher acted as facilitator and motivator. The students knew what they had to do, they were more active and felt confident. The students also were more enthusiastic in learning than before. Since many students did not pass SKM and the mean score of the students were still satisfactory. Therefore, the researcher needed to conduct cycle three.

In cycle three, the students were very enthusiastic in learning. All the students got involved actively in pronouncing the word correctly. They did not feel worried about their pronunciation, more confident when they read aloud the text because they pronounced correctly. The students were very excited in learning by using reading aloud technique. The students recognized that the technique was more interesting than the technique which was used by the teacher before it.

This technique was considered successful in this research, it could be seen that the students' competence in pronunciation using reading aloud increased from cycle to cycle. In the first cycle, the mean score of students' was 53.56, in the second cycle was 62, in the last cycle was 76.6. The improvement which was taken place in the classroom was considered as the results of treatment. The treatment which was mentioned here is using reading aloud technique in improving students' pronunciation. It caused that in reading aloud the students did not need to understand what the meaning of the text are. It more fun in activity to improve the students' pronunciation. Furthermore, the result of the treatment indicated the action hypothesis was accepted.

Reading aloud made students or listeners build listening and comprehension skills through discussion during and after reading, increase their vocabulary foundation by hearing words in context, improve their memory and language skills as they hear a variety of writing styles and paraphrase their understanding, develop individual interests in a broad variety of subjects and they develop imagination and creativity.

In conclusion, the result of research showed that action hypothesis was accepted. And from the above description it showed that encouraging students to practice pronunciation using reading aloud was able to improve the students' pronunciation competence where the students could pronounce correctly and practice it with reading aloud well. In addition, this technique also could help students to overcome their problems especially in pronunciation.

CONCLUSION

Related to the explanation on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded Reading Aloud technique has improved the students' pronunciation especially in vowel sounds on the eight grade students of SMP Pelita Ngaban Kab. Landak academic year 2011/2012. The improvements are related to both the activeness of process in the classroom and the students' achievement on the test. Finally, the researcher hopes the result of this research can be a reference for the English teacher to enhance their technique in teaching, in order to help their students' pronunciation, especially in vowel sounds.

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