IMPROVING THE PRONUNCIATION THROUGH LISTENING TO ENGLISH SONGS

Stefani Jessica[1], Hasan Basri[2], Josep E. Ohoiwutun [3]

Abstract

The objective of this research was to prove that using English songs could improve the pronunciation of the eighth grade students at SMP Katolik St. Paulus Palu. This research applied true-experimental research design with 48 students as sample. It was selected by using a cluster random sampling technique. The population was 72 students which were divided into 3 classes. The instrument of data collection was a test divided into pre-test and post-test. The data gathered were analyzed statistically. The results of mean score of pre-test in experimental group were 38.05 and control group was 29.30. The result of post-test's mean score in experimental group was 78.38 and control group was 60.13. After doing treatment in experimental group, the researcher found that there was a significant difference between students' means score (38.05-78.38). Then, researcher computed $t_{counted}$ in order to know the significant difference of the students' knowledge after they had finished getting the treatment. The result shows that the $t_{counted}$ (2.30) was higher than t_{table} (2.009) by applying 0.05 level of significance and the degree of freedom (df) 48-2=46. It means that using English songs can improve the pronunciation of the eighth grade students of SMP Katolik St. Paulus Palu. In short, the application of English songs is effective to be used to improve the students' ability in learning pronunciation.

Keywords: Improving, Pronunciation, listening to English Songs

INTRODUCTION

English can help people to communicate in many different nations all over the world because it is a global language. In Indonesia, English is used as a foreign language. Indonesian people use English to communicate for several circumstances.

Not only is English used as a foreign language, but also it is learnt as a compulsory subject in junior high school up to university level. Listening, speaking, reading, and writing are parts of English and there are language components such as vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar.

Pronunciation is an important language component in communication. It helps the listener to understand words which are uttered by the speaker. If the speaker is not able to

[1]Prodi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris FKIP Universitas Tadulako - email: Stefani.jessie@gmail.com
[2]email: hbasri99@yahoo.com
[3]email: josohiwutun@gmail.com

pronounce the English word appropriately, the communication cannot run well. It is supported by Harmer (2000:183) who says "For all these people, being made aware of pronunciation issues will be of immense benefit not only to their own production but also to their own understanding of spoken English."

Wong (1987:24) points out "Even when the non-native speakers' vocabulary and grammar are excellent, if their pronunciation falls below a certain threshold level, they are unable to communicate effectively." Therefore, when we communicate with other people, we should not only have a good vocabulary but also have good pronunciation. Therefore, it is important to teach pronunciation.

There are several sounds in English which do not exist in Indonesian. It makes difficulty for Indonesian students to learn pronunciation, for instance, fricative sounds like [θ], [ð], [ʃ], [ʒ]. Those sounds might be hard to pronounce. There are many factors that cause difficulties in pronouncing English words. The major problem lies on the sound system of English and Indonesian. Some of English vowels and consonants are not found in Indonesian. When the students pronounce English words, they are influenced by their native language. They substituted the unfamiliar sounds and then changed them into the nearest sounds in their native language. For instance, when the teacher said "thank", the students tended to be pronounced "tenk". Native language extremely affected the students to produce English sounds.

There are many techniques that can be used to improve the pronunciation. In this research, the researcher used listening to English songs. Children do not learn the rules of spoken language by explicit instruction, but they copy what they hear. Most people enjoy singing songs. From the songs many people can learn many things such as culture, new words, and how to pronounce words. Based on the reasons above, the researcher believes that songs can be used as an alternative way in the language learning. The reason why the researcher chose songs as media is because songs could make the atmosphere in class become interesting. In the class, the students can sing together.

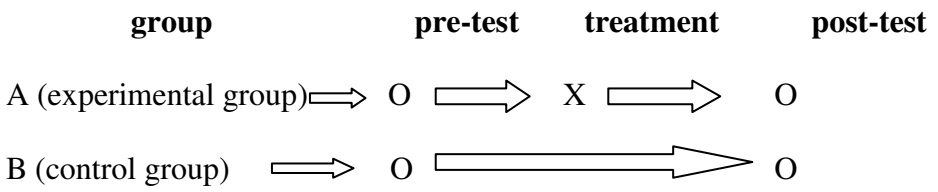
The difficulties in pronunciation were also faced by the students of SMP Katolik Palu. It was difficult for many of them to pronounce some English sounds in fricative sounds: [θ], [ð], [ʃ], and [ʒ]. [θ], [ð], and [ʒ] sounds are not in Indonesia sounds. There is [ʃ] sound in Indonesia such as *syukur* and *syarat*, but the students usually pronounced it [s] instead of [ʃ]. For example in word "share" is pronounced /sher/ instead of /ʃer/.

Based on the statement above, the researcher formulated a research question as follows: *Can the use of English songs improve the pronunciation of the eighth grade*

students of SMP Katolik St. Paulus Palu? It was to find out the use of English songs can improve the pronunciation of the eighth grade students of SMP Katolik St. Paulus Palu.

METHODOLOGY

In conducting this research, the researcher used true experimental research design. This research was conducted based on the following research design proposed by Sukmadinata (2008:204) as follows:



The population of this research was taken from the eighth grade students of SMP Katolik St. Paulus Palu. There were two classes that had been observed which were classes A and C. The sample that the researcher used was cluster random sampling. Several ways used in choosing the samples are; she wrote the name of two classes in two pieces of paper, then put them in a box and she shook the box. The paper which fell out for the first time became the experimental group and the second one was a control group.

There were two variables that the researcher used in this research. They were dependent and independent variables. Cresswell (2005:121) says "A dependent variable is an attribute or characteristic that is dependent on or influenced by the independent variable. An independent variable is an attribute or characteristic that influences or effects on outcome or dependent variable". Furthermore, the dependent variable of this research was the ability of the students' pronunciation and independent variable was listening to English songs.

In conducting this research, the researcher administered test. Before conducting treatment, the researcher distributed pre-test in oral test which has 15 items with 30 maximum score. It means that when the students pronounce the sounds correctly they got score 2 for each word.

Before giving the treatment, the researcher gave pre-test to the students in order to know the students' prior knowledge in pronunciation. After that, she applied her technique to the experimental group. After giving the treatment for eight meetings, she gave post-test to the students. This test is used to know the students' progress after the treatment.

The researcher analyzed the data by using statistical analysis. It was used to know the result of the pre-test and post-test. The individual score of the students was computed by using the formula recommended by Purwanto (1991: 102):

$$Np = \frac{R}{SM} \times 100$$

Where:
NP = average score
R = obtained score
SM = maximum score
100 = fixed score

After getting the individual students' score, the researcher computed the mean score of each group by using formula from Sarwono (2006:140) as follows:

$$\boldsymbol{M} = \frac{\sum \boldsymbol{x}}{\boldsymbol{N}}$$

Where:
M = mean score
N = total number of students
$\sum \boldsymbol{x}$ = obtained score

To find out the result or the effect of the treatment, the researcher used the formula proposed by Arikunto (2006:312) as follows:

$$t = \frac{Mx - My}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{\Sigma x^2 + \Sigma y^2}{Nx + Ny - 2}\right)\left(\frac{1}{Nx} + \frac{1}{Ny}\right)}}$$

Where:
Mx : mean of experimental group
My : mean of control group
Σx : sum of square deviation of experimental group
Σy : sum of square deviation of control group
Nx : number of experimental group
Ny : number of control group

FINDINGS

The researcher gave pre-test to the experimental group and control group. She counted the mean score of the students by applying formula which is proposed previously. The mean score of the experimental group was 38.05 and the control group was 29.30. The representation of test result can be seen in the following table:

Table 1
The pre-test score of the experimental and control group

	Experimental		Control	
No.	Students	standard score	Students	Standard score
1	AFH	76.67	AHAM	33.33
2	AR	36.67	AV	33.33
3	BY	43.33	CGA	23.33
4	CCH	36.67	CA	23.33
5	CV	33.33	CJ	26.67
6	CTSA	33.33	DCS	30.00
7	CEP	33.33	DAG	20.00
8	DDD	40.00	DW	23.33
9	FH	36.67	EER	40.00
10	FJF	43.33	EF	26.67
11	FBK	30.00	EK	26.67
12	FPK	33.33	FXSS	26.67
13	GDCB	56.67	MM	26.67
14	IM	36.67	MG	30.00
15	JMM	56.67	MJ	36.67
16	KTA	33.33	NC	26.67
17	KM	33.33	PTI	20.00
18	LPP	33.33	RE	60.00
19	MBC	36.67	RM	26.67
20	MRD	36.67	RR	20.00
21	SAT	33.33	SA	36.67
22	TNG	33.33	SB	23.33
23	VR	23.33	TRM	33.33
24	RL	23.33	VW	30.00
Total		913.32		703.33

From the representation above, the highest score of experimental group was 76.67 and the lowest score was 2.33. In control group, the highest score of the student was 60.00 and the lowest score was 20.00. From the score which was gotten by the students, it can be concluded that the ability of the grade eight students' pronunciation of SMP Katolik St.Paulus Palu was very poor.

After giving the treatment, the researcher gave them the second test which is called post-test. It was used to know the progress of the students after the treatment. This test was given to the experimental and control groups. The result of the test is shown at the table 2.

The mean score of experimental group was 78.38 and control group was 60.13. There is a significant progress between pre-test and post test in experimental group. In other words, the students could improve their ability in pronunciation after the treatment.

After calculating the mean score of the students' pre-test and post-test, the researcher computed the deviation of the students' score in both pre-test and post-test. The result is shown in the table 3.

Table 2
The post-test of the experimental and control group

Experimental			Control	
No.	Students	standard score	Students	Standard score
1	AFH	93.33	AHAM	66.67
2	AR	83.33	AV	63.33
3	BY	76.66	CGA	50.00
4	CCH	80.00	CA	53.33
5	CV	73.33	CJ	43.33
6	CTSA	70.00	DCS	60.00
7	CEP	70.00	DAG	40.00
8	DDD	83.33	DW	46.67
9	FH	66.66	EER	76.67
10	FJF	76.66	EF	60.00
11	FBK	63.33	EK	63.33
12	FPK	73.33	FXSS	63.33
13	GDCB	90.00	MM	63.33
14	IM	83.33	MG	66.67
15	JMM	83.33	MJ	83.33
16	KTA	76.66	NC	73.33
17	KM	76.66	PTI	40.00
18	LPP	83.33	RE	83.33
19	MBC	70.00	RM	60.00
20	MRD	70.00	RR	46.67
21	SAT	76.66	SA	76.67
22	TNG	83.33	SB	40.00
23	VR	63.33	TRM	63.33
24	RL	66.66	VW	60.00
Total		1833.25		1443.26

The mean score deviation of the experimental group was 38.33 and the square deviation was 36600.31.

The mean score deviation of the control group was 30.83 and the square deviation was 24332.31.

After calculating the mean score of the students' pre-test and post-test, the researcher computed the deviation of the students' score in both pre-test and post-test. The result of the experimental group was 38.33 while the control group was 30.83. Then, the researcher computed the t-test in order to know the significant difference of the students' knowledge before and after the treatment. Here, the researcher found that there was an effectiveness of the technique that was used by her. It can be seen in the result that the $t_{counted}$ (2.30) was higher than the t_{table} (2.009) and the significance of the research was 2.30.

Table 3

Students' Deviation of the Experimental Group

NO	Students	Standard Score		Deviation (d) (Post-Pre)	Square Deviation (d^2)
		Pre-test	Post-test		
1	AFH	76.67	93.33	16.66	277.55
2	AR	36.67	83.33	46.66	2177.15
3	BY	43.33	76.66	33.33	1110.88
4	CCH	36.67	80.00	43.33	1877.48
5	CV	33.33	73.33	40.00	1600.00
6	CTSA	33.33	70.00	36.67	1344.68
7	CEP	33.33	70.00	36.67	1344.68
8	DDD	40.00	83.33	43.33	1877.48
9	FH	36.67	66.66	29.99	899.40
10	FJF	43.33	76.66	33.33	1110.88
11	FBK	30.00	63.33	33.33	1110.88
12	FPK	33.33	73.33	40.00	1600.00
13	GDCB	56.67	90.00	33.33	1110.88
14	IM	36.67	83.33	46.66	2177.15
15	JMM	56.67	83.33	26.66	710.75
16	KTA	33.33	76.66	43.33	1877.48
17	KM	33.33	76.66	43.33	1877.48
18	LPP	33.33	83.33	50.00	2500.00
19	MBC	36.67	70.00	33.33	1110.88
20	MRD	36.67	70.00	33.33	1110.88
21	SAT	33.33	76.66	43.33	1877.48
22	TNG	33.33	83.33	50.00	2500.00
23	VR	23.33	63.33	40.00	1600.00
24	RL	23.33	66.66	43.33	1877.48
Total		913.32	1833.25	**Σd** =919.93	**Σd^2** =36661.52

Table 4

Students' Deviation of the Control Group

NO	Students	Standard Score		Deviation (d) (Post-Pre)	Square Deviation (d^2)
		Pre-test	Post-test		
1	AHAM	33,33	66,66	33,33	1110,88
2	AV	33,33	63,33	30,00	900,00
3	CGA	23,33	50,00	26,67	711,28
4	CA	23,33	53,33	30,00	900,00
5	CJ	26,67	43,33	16,66	277,55
6	DCS	30,00	60,00	30,00	900,00
7	DAG	20,00	40,00	20,00	400,00
8	DW	23,33	46,66	23,33	544,28
9	EER	40,00	76,66	36,66	1343,95
10	EF	26,67	60,00	33,33	1110,88
11	EK	26,67	63,33	36,66	1343,95
12	FXSS	26,67	63,33	36,66	1343,95
13	MM	26,67	63,33	36,66	1343,95
14	MG	30,00	66,66	36,66	1343,95
15	MJ	36,67	83,33	46,66	2177,15
16	NC	26,67	73,33	46,66	2177,15
17	PTI	20,00	40,00	20,00	400,00
18	RE	60,00	83,33	23,33	544,28
19	RM	26,67	60,00	33,33	1110,88
20	RR	20,00	46,66	26,66	710,75
21	SA	36,67	76,66	39,99	1599,20
22	SB	23,33	40,00	16,67	277,88
23	TRM	33,33	63,33	30,00	900,00
24	VW	30,00	60,00	30,00	900,00
Total		703,34	1443,26	**Σd** =739,92	**Σd^2** =24371,91

DISCUSSION

There were eight meetings that the researcher had conducted in this research. The researcher applied true experimental research in both of class C (experimental group) and class A (control group). Before the researcher gave the treatment, she gave pre-test to both classes. It was used to know the students' prior knowledge about pronunciation, especially in pronounce the fricative sounds; sounds [θ], [ð], [ʃ], [ʒ]. The test consisted of 15 numbers and the test was about pronouncing the sound in individual word. The percentage of students who were not able to produce sound [θ] 79.17%, sound [ð] 75%, sound [ʃ] 58.33% and sound [ʒ] 65.5%. The students were difficult to pronounce [θ] and [ð] sounds. They only pronounced the English words based on the written form of the words. For example [θ] sound in word "think" is pronounced /ting/ instead for /θɪŋk/ and [ð] sound in word "that" is pronounced /dad/ instead for /ðæt /. It can be analyzed that some students only replaced unfamiliar sound with the familiar sound. Furthermore, the researcher needed to give treatment to the students to know the progress of each student before they got post-test.

After getting the students score in pre-test, the researcher gave treatment to the students. She used English songs as media to teach pronunciation. Harmer (2000:242) states, "Music is a powerful stimulus for student engagement precisely because it speaks directly to our emotions while still allowing us to use our brains to analyze it and its effects if we so wish." In teaching process, the researcher gave the students old song and the paper of lyric with the blank lyric. Then, they listened to song and filled the blank lyric. After that she checked their answer and asked them to pronounce the English consonant sounds containing the song lyrics. Finally, she checked the students' pronunciation.

After conducting the treatment, the researcher gave post-test to the students. In the result of post-test, it was found that most students had a significant progress. There were 58.33% students who could not pronounce the sound [θ], 50% for the sound [ð], 12.5% for the sound [ʃ] and [ʒ]. By seeing at the result, the researcher found that by using English song, the students could improve their pronunciation.

Some researchers have done their research by using the same media and the results were successful. Asaria (2011) applied English songs as media in teaching pronunciation. The result of his research showed that technique used by him was effective because the value of the $t_{counted}$ was higher than the t_{table}.

Miyake (2004) defines that students are often express anxiety about their pronunciation. Consequently, they were afraid of making any mistakes in speaking and song

can be an effective tool for lowering their affective filter (e.g. reduce stress and anxiety) and facilitating learning. From this statement the students were afraid of speaking because they were afraid of making mistake in pronouncing and producing English songs. Songs are effective in learning process especially in pronunciation and reducing stress when students were learning English.

When the researcher taught pronunciation, she saw the same problem. Then she used English songs as media in teaching pronunciation. Before she gave the treatment, the students were afraid of pronouncing English words. After she gave the treatment, the students were brave to pronounce English words. The students would be interested when they were listening to English songs and they were not afraid of speaking English. Finally, they can sing and know how to pronounce the English words by listening to songs.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

After discussing and analyzing the data, the researcher drew conclusions that the use of English songs can improve the pronunciation of the eighth grade students of SMP Katolik St. Paulus Palu. Thus, it can be concluded that the research question or problem statement was solved by using songs. There was a significant improvement after the researcher taught the eighth grade students at SMP Katolik St. Paulus Palu by using English songs. On the other word, it could be concluded that the hypothesis was accepted. It was proven by the result of t-counted value (2.30) which was greater than t-table value (2.009). It means English songs were effective in teaching pronunciation.

The researcher would like to give some suggestion as follow: First, teachers should use media. Furthermore that the difficulties faced by the students in learning English could be handled well and accurately. Teachers should motivate the students to learn English and to provide them more classroom activity by using English songs. English songs should also solve the students' problem in learning pronunciation. Second, the researcher expects the students to practice more in order to make their pronouncing improved, especially in pronouncing the English words. Finally, for the next researchers, they have to master their technique before applying it.

REFERENCES

Arikunto, S. (2006). *Prosedur Penelitian. Suatu Pendekatan Praktek (*Edisi Revisi VI*).* Jakarta: PT Rineka Cipta.

Asaria, N. (2011). *Teaching Pronunciation to the Eighth Year Students of SMP Negeri 16 Palu through English Songs.* Palu: Tadulako University Press. Unpublished Skripsi

Cresswell, J.W. (2005). *Educational Research: Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research*. (2nd ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc.

Harmer, J. (2000). *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. London: Longman Group Ltd.

Miyake, B. (2004). *Pronunciation and Music*. Retrieved from: http://www.jrc.sophia.ac.jp/kiyou/ki24/miyake.pdf. (22 December 2014)

Purwanto, M.V. (1991). *Prinsip-prinsip dan Teknik Evaluasi Pengajaran.* Remaja Posdakarya. Bandung.

Sarwono, J. (2006). *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif dan Kualitatif.* Yogyakarta: Grahayu Ilmu.

Sukmadinata, S.N. (2008). *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan.* Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya.

Wong, R. (1987). *Teaching Pronunciation: Focus on English Rhythm and Intonation*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall Regent.