TEACHING PRONUNCIATION TO DIFFERENTIATE PHONEME /p/ AND /f/ BY USING MINIMAL PAIRS TECHNIQUE

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Abstract: This research is about teaching pronunciation of one syllable words to differentiate phoneme /p/ and /f/ by using minimal pairs technique to the fifth grade students of SDN 08 DELTA PAWAN Ketapang in academic year 2012/2013. The research method applied is a Pre-Eperimental study. The result of this research shows that the alternative hypothesis is accepted with high effective category. It proves that the achievement of students improve with the interval score of pre test and post test 44,2. The mean of pre test score is 47,9 and the mean of post test score is 92,1. In addition, the significance of effect size achievement of Pre test and Post test is 4,97 which indicates that t-test score is higher than t-table (2.060). it indicates that the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted. Thus, it can be concluded that teaching pronunciation by using minimal pairs technique to the fifth grade students of SDN 08 DELTA PAWAN in academic year 2012/2013 can improve students’ ability in differentiating the pronunciation of phoneme /p/ and /f/ effectively.

Keyword: Minimal Pairs, Phoneme /p/, /f/.

Pronunciation teaching is a prominent factor in foreign language teaching. Since sounds play an important role in communication, foreign language teachers must attribute proper importance to teaching pronunciation in their classes. However, this fact is very much neglected by many teachers. It is known that communication is a mutual relationship between the speaker and the hearer. This means that one must comprehend what he listens in the target language and must produce the sounds of the language he is trying to learn accurately.
In oral communication problem might happen when speakers fail to pronounce word correctly. It will lead into confusion or misscommunication because wrong pronunciation may result different meaning of words. For example, the word “part” that means “bagian” in Indonesian language should be pronounced “pɑːrt”. It will be a big problem when speakers fail to pronounce it well by pronouncing it as “fɑːrt” that means “kentut” in Indonesian language. Therefore English teachers must have a good grounding knowledge of pronunciation, so that they can pronounce every word well and be good models for learners.

Problem that occurs in the writer school is that many the students are unable to pronounce phoneme /p/ and /f/ correctly. They are often unable to differentiate both phonemes. It is because the do the same thing in their daily communication. For example the word four that should be pronounced as “fɔːr” is pronounced “pɔːr”. Another example is the word pan that should be pronounced as “pæn”, is pronounced as “fæn”. Therefore, based on this problem, the teacher needs to pay attention to the students’ pronunciation to differentiate phoneme /p/ and /f/.

In this research, the writer applied the treatment to the fifth grade the students of SDN 08 DELTA PAWAN Ketapang. The writer chose these the students because of several reasons. First, the writer refers to the school’s curriculum. Second, based on the observation, the writer found that the students have difficulties to pronounce one syllable word to differentiate phoneme /p/ and /f/.

This research was conducted in the form of pre-experimental study and used only one class as a sample. Pre-experimental study is a study to investigate the language behavior under controlled condition. In this case, the study answered whether the particular tool is effective or not to the subject of treatment. Moreover, the writer took pre test and post test as a tool of data collecting and the result was calculated to know the effectiveness of technique. The pre test and post test were given in the form of oral test. The pretest was done before the treatment. It was done to know the students’ pre condition of pronunciation. The post test was done after the treatment. It was done to know the the students’ achievement or the result after treatment was given. The treatment is teaching pronunciation to differentiate phoneme /p/ and /f/ by using minimal pairs technique.

Teaching is a process of changing somebody’s condition by giving several treatments as it is mentioned by Brown (2007:8), teaching is showing or helping someone how to do something, giving instruction, guiding in the study of something, providing with knowledge, causing to know or understand. Based on this theory, there are some activities done in teaching. Those activities are having objective in teaching, giving instruction, guiding, providing knowledge, and result wanted to be achieved. Guiding in teaching process means facilitating the students in order to help them learn maximally. In guiding the students, teacher should be able to use appropriate material and technique that will help to achieve the learning target designed.
Brown (2007:7-8) says learning is acquiring or getting of knowledge of a subject or a skill by study, experience or instruction. According to this definition, in order to achieve the maximum goal of learning, learners need to study and experience that mean learners need to engage, to completely involve in the process of learning. It is intended to make learners not only know a knowledge but also understand the implication of it.

In a learning process, instruction plays an important role. It's the guidance of framework for learners to learn. Instructions show learners what to do and how to do to get knowledge. By having an appropriate instruction, learning process will go on the right way and achieve the goal. Furthermore Brown (2007:8) mentions: “a). Learning is acquisition or getting, b). Learning is retention of information or skill, c). Retention replies storage, d). Learning involves activity, conscious focus on acting upon events outside or inside the organism, e). Learning is relatively permanent but subject to forgetting, f). Learning involves some form of practice perhaps reinforced practice, g). Learning is a change in behavior.

Another definition of learning is given by Slavin (2003:138). He says, learning is a change in an individual caused by experience. According to this definition, learning means changing an individual by giving several sets of treatment continuously. There is a specific form of treatment given in order to make new and better habit, way of thinking and behavior.

Pronunciation is the matter of how to produce words through sound. Therefore, pronunciation plays an important role in learning a foreign language. As it is mentioned by Kelly (2000:11), “A learner who consistently mispronounces a range of phonemes can be extremely difficult for a speaker from another language community to understand. This can be very frustrating for the learner who may have a good command of grammar and lexis but have difficulty in understanding and being understood by a native speaker.” As a foreign language, it is clear that English language has different pronunciation compared to Indonesian language. It becomes problem for the students in learning the language. O’Connor (1998:3) says that the main problem of English pronunciation is to build a new set of boxes corresponding to the sound of native language have so strongly built up. We do this by establishing new ways of hearing, new ways of using our speech organs, new speech habits.

Kelly (2000:2) says that there are two problems in pronunciation teaching. First, it tends to be neglected. Second, when it is not neglected, it tends to be reactive to a particular problem that has arisen in the classroom rather than being strategically planned. Thus, Kelly (2000:3) says that English teacher needs: a) a good grounding in theoretical knowledge; b) practical classroom skills; c) access to good ideas for classroom activities.

Furthermore she also states several strategies and techniques in teaching pronunciation:

“a. Drilling
In its most basic form, drilling simply involves the teacher saying a word or structure, and getting the class to repeat it. Drilling aims to help the students achieve better pronunciation of language items, and to help them remember new items. Drilling is best done before the
students see the written form of the language. The teacher’s main role in drilling is that of providing a model of the word, phrase or structure for the students to copy.

b. Chaining
Chaining can be used for sentences which prove difficult for the students to pronounce, either because they are long, or because they include difficult words and sound.

c. Substitution drilling
Substitution drilling involves drilling a structure, but substituting items of vocabulary into the sentence being dealt with.

d. Minimal pairs and related activities
Minimal pairs are words or utterances that differ by only one phoneme. Teacher can use minimal pairs to good advantage in the classroom as a way of focusing on sounds that have been causing difficulties for the students."

It is this principle that gives us the total number of phonemes in a particular language. Furthermore, Skandera (2005:19) also states that phoneme is the smallest distinctive or the contrastive unit in the sound system of a language. To put it in other words, a phoneme contrasts meaningfully with other speech sounds.

The place of articulation of phoneme /p/ is bilabial which means using closing movements of both lips. Meanwhile phoneme /f/ is labio-dental which means using the lower lips and the upper teeth. Thus, the organ of speech used to pronounce both phonemes are lips and upper teeth.

The manner of articulation of both phonemes is also different. Phoneme /p/ is pronounced by making a complete closure somewhere in the vocal tract, and the soft palate is also raised. Air pressure increases behind the closure, and is then released explosively. It starts by closing both lips together and gives a strong forces to pronounce phoneme /p/. On the other hand, phoneme /f/ is pronounced by making two vocal organs come close enough together for the movement of air between them to be heard. The students must understand this concept of articulation, so that the clear difference pronunciation can be produced.

Kreidler (2004:68), says that syllable is a unit that is hard to define with scientific rigor but fairly easy to recognize. Phonemes in sequence form syllables; syllables in sequence form words. Every English word has at least one syllable; many words have two, three or more syllables.

Referring to the research problem, the technique used in this research was minimal pairs technique as the writer wanted to emphasize on the difference of phoneme /p/ and /f/. Case (2011:1) defines minimal pairs as two words, which only differ by a single sound, such as “tree” and “three”. Based on this definition minimal pairs is suitable to teach pronunciation in term of practicing sounds that the students find them difficult to produce. This potentially huge list of words is usually cut down by limiting it to words that differ in ways that the students often misunderstand and/or cannot produce. Therefore teacher really needs to pay
Teaching English to young learners is different from teaching English to adult learner. Young learners are also divided into their ages. A five years old child will learn differently from an eight years old child. Therefore, they also have different characteristics in learning English. Fifth grade the students of SDN 08 Delta Pawan are in range of 9 to 11 years old. Scott, et all (1990:3-4) says that children of ten are relatively mature children with an adult side and a childish side. Meanwhile, in term of language development, by the age of ten children can: a) understand abstracts; b) understand symbols (beginning with words); c) generalize and systematize.

Another definition of young learners is also given by Ellis (2003:1) she says that the term ‘young learners’ in the network covers a wide age range; 4-18 years of age, and most problems encountered by teachers are due to a lack of understanding of the developmental differences between children and teenagers, and of the appropriate classroom management skills to deal with these. Differences include conceptual and cognitive variations, variations in attention spans and motor skills such as drawing and cutting, as well as social and emotional differences. An understanding of these differences can help develop the flexibility that teachers of young learners require.

Cameron (2001:19) mentions several principles of teaching young learners, a) children actively try to construct meaning, b) Children need space for language growth, c). Language in use carries cues to meaning that may not bee noticed, d) Development can be seen as internalizing from social interaction, e). Children’s foreign language learning depends on what they experience.

Looking at those principals above, there are some relevancies toward minimal pairs technique. The students actively try to construct it means that by doing minimal pair technique, the students are hoped to have better and correct pronunciation to differentiate phoneme /p/ and /f/ in the end. Due to this reason children will be able to name and mention things around them correctly. For example when the students see “pan”, they can correctly mention its name /pæn/.

By doing minimal pairs activities, the students will have more opportunities to practice pronouncing words; it gives the students more spaces for their language growth. Furthermore, language carries cues to meaning that may not be noticed; that is why minimal pairs gives more chances to the students to practice pronouncing words correctly. An example for this is when the students fail to pronounce the word part /paːrt/ into /fɑːrt /; it will lead to different meanings that they may not noticed before.

In making language growth for the students, words used to practice pronunciation using minimal pairs technique should be taken from the students’ daily interaction. This is in order to make the students learn easier. Another thing is that the students’ foreign language learning depends on what they learn. By practicing pronouncing words using minimal pairs technique, the students will experience how to pronounce word correctly. Thus, it will give them modal to pronounce English words well.
METHOD

In order to find the answer to the research problem, the appropriate method should be used. Method of research is used to achieve the research’s goal. The form of this research is pre experimental research. Kothari (2004:41) mention that:

“in a pre experimental research, a single test group or area is selected and the dependent variable is measured before the introduction of the treatment. The treatment is then introduced and the dependent variable is measured again after the treatment has been introduced. The effect of the treatment would be equal to the level of the phenomenon after the treatment minus the level of the phenomenon before the treatment.”

According to Cohen, et all (2000:212) the one group pre test post test design can be represented as:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experiment</th>
<th>O₁</th>
<th>X</th>
<th>O₂</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

O₁ = pre condition
X = treatment
O₂ = measured group attitude

Notes:

a) O₁ is the first observation, which is the pretest, to know the achievement of the sample of the students’ pronunciation; o1 is used to measure the the students’ mean score of pronunciation mastery to differentiate phoneme /p/ and /f/ before treatment.

b) X is the given two times treatment to the the students, that is teaching pronunciation by using minimal pairs technique.

c) O₂ is the second observation, which is the posttest, to know the achievement of the students in pronunciation of one syllable words to differentiate phoneme /p/ and /f/ after giving the treatment (minimal pairs technique). O2 is used to measure student’s mean score of mastering pronunciation of one syllable word to differentiate phoneme /p/ and /f/.

According to Tjokrosujono (1997:144) population is subject where data can be taken. Moreover, Dornyei (2007:96) says that population is the group of people whom the study is about. That is the target population of a study consists of all the people to whom the survey’s findings are to be applied or generalized. Cohen, et all (2000:92) defines “population as all members of any well-define class of people, eveants or objects.” Based on these definitions, the population of this research is the fifth grade the students of SDN 08 Delta Pawan. Arikunto (1998:117) says that sample is part or representative of the research population. Moreover, Dornyei (2007:96) says that sample is the group of participants whom the writer actually examines in an empirical investigation. That is the sample is a subset of the population that is representative of the whole population. The sample of this research is class 5C that consists of 26 the students. This class was chosen based on the writer consideration that most of the the students in this class have difficulties in pronouncing phoneme /p/ and /f/. The technique used in deciding the sample is purposive sampling because it was chosen based on the
teacher’s consideration. Moreover, this class was selected by also considering the allowed time given by the school and the easiness for the writer in taking the data.

To answer the questions in this research, the writer follows the procedure below:

1. The Analysis on the Effect of the Treatment
   To compute the effect of the treatment, “Effective Size” formula is applied. The formula is as follow:
   \[ Es = t \sqrt{\frac{T}{N}} \]
   Note:
   \( Es \) = Effect size
   \( T \) = the result of t test
   \( N \) = the number of the students
   The result will be categorized as follow:
   \( Es \leq 0.2 \) is categorized as low
   \( 0.2 < Es \leq 0.8 \) is categorized as moderate
   \( Es > 0.8 \) is categorized as high

2. The test on Significance of the The students’ score
   To compute the significance score of pretest and posttest, t-test formula is used. The formula is as follow:
   \[ \frac{MD}{\sqrt{\frac{\sum d^2}{N(N-1)}}} \]
   \[ \sum d^2 = \sum d^2 = \frac{(\sum d^2)}{N} \]
   Note:
   \( T \) = the obtained for correlated sample
   \( MD \) = the mean of difference
   \( \sum d \) = the sum of difference the students’ scores between pretest and posttest
   \( \sum d^2 \) = the quadratic sum of difference the students’ scores between pretest and posttest
   \( N \) = the number of the students

3. The Analysis on The students’ Different Score of Pretest and Posttest
   To compute the students’ different score of pretest and posttest, MD formula is used. The formula is as follow:
   \[ MD = M_2 - M_1 \]
   Note:
   \( MD \) = the different the students’ mean score of pretest and post test
   \( M_2 \) = the students’ mean score of post test
   \( M_1 \) = the students’ mean score of pre test

4. The Analysis on The students’ mean Score of Pretest and Posttest
   The mean is used most frequently to know central tendency of a set score. The the students’ mean score of pretest and posttest can be measured by using the formula as follows:
M = \frac{\sum x_1}{N} \quad \text{M} = \frac{\sum x_2}{N}

Note:
M1 = the students’ mean score of pre test
M2 = the students’ mean score of post test
\sum x_1 = the sum of individual score of pretest
\sum x_2 = the sum of individual score of post test
N = the total number of the students.

5. Analysis on The students’ Individual Score of Pretest and Posttest
X of the above formula is computed by the following formula:
X = \frac{R}{N} \times 100

Note:
X = the students’ individual score
R = the students’ correct answer
N = total correct answer

FINDING AND DISCUSSION
During the research, there were some important things found and became consideration to held all the activities. Factually, the students misspronounced phoneme /p/ and /f/ not only in English language but also in Indonesian language. For example pronouncing the word “picture” as “ˈfɪk.tʃə” not “ˈpɪk.tʃə”; pronouncing the word “food” as “ˈfuːd” not “ˈfuːd”; pronouncing the word “pain” as “ˈpeɪn” not “ˈpɛn”.

Other examples in Indonesian language; pronouncing the word “fanta” as “panta”; pronouncing the word “kafe” as “kape”; pronouncing the word “film” as “pilm”; pronouncing the word “profil” as “frofil”. This finding showed that students really need more practices to differentiate phoneme /p/ and /f/.

There are several activities done during the research in attempt to reach the high effectiveness of the process 1). Pre test; 2). Drilling activities; 3). Spelling code game activities; 4). Post test. In Pre test activities, the students were given equal opportunities to practice pronouncing several words using phonemes /p/ and /f/ applying their prior knowledge. Feedback was not given yet during this time. From the pretest activity, it was known that the students produced phoneme /f/ by closing both lips inside. Total pre test score is 1244.4 and the mean is 47.9. The pre test mean score is below the standard passing score for the fifth graders students that is 61. It shows that students’ pronunciation in differentiating phoneme /p/ and /f/ need to be improved.

The treatment started with drilling activities, where the students were given more opportunities to practice pronouncing several words using phoneme /p/ and /f/. The students listened to a model of pronunciation played from the recording. At first, the students felt difficult to follow pronouncing words from the recording because it was difficult to use the speech organs. As a continuation, the students were given example how to pronounce phoneme /p/ and /f/; i.e shown the speech organs used to produce the sound. Then, more individual and groups opportunities were given to practice phoneme /p/ and /f/ separately. At the end of the drilling session, the students who had more problems in pronouncing phoneme
/p/ and /f/ were given more opportunities to practice the pronunciation separately in order to get more focus and motivated.

After conducting drilling activities, spelling code game was done to make the students feel relaxed and get more interested in learning differentiating pronouncing phoneme /p/ and /f/. In this game, the students had to really focus in listening and practicing pronouncing the word in order to be the winner. The students were given a list of alphabet with a number next to each letter. The teacher said a word and the students had to write it down on their scrap paper, converted each letter into a number, added up all the numbers, and then shouted out the total. The first person to get the right total number was the winner. For example, the teacher shouted out “pan” and the students converted it P = 8 + A = 2 + N = 10 = 20 and raced to shout out “twenty!”, with other the students no doubt shouting out the different totals that they got by starting with the minimal pairs “pan” and “fan”. By conducting this game, the students were really enthusiastic and motivated in learning pronouncing phoneme /p/ and /f/ correctly.

At the end of the research, post test was done to know the students ability in pronouncing phoneme /p/ and /f/ after being given the treatment. Most students were finally able to to differentiate both phonemes. The post test score is 2394.4 and the mean is 92.1. The post test mean score is above the standard passing score for the fifth graders students. It shows that students’ pronunciation in differentiating phoneme /p/ and /f/ has improved after the treatment using minimal pairs technique. This was affected by some factors as follow 1). The quality of the recording influenced the students’ performances during the activities; 2). Variation to the drilling activities were important; 3). The interview activity which helped the students tell the teacher their problems in differentiating phonemes /p/ and /f/; 4). Conducting game and giving prizes to the winner were fun to do and helped the students to get more enthusiastic in learning; 5). The teacher’s knowledge of English pronunciation also helped the students in learning.

Furthermore, there were also strengths and weaknesses of this technique that were found in this research. The strengths were 1). This technique gave opportunities to both teacher and the students to focus on certain phonemes to be practiced; 2). This technique could be done by any teacher; 3). This technique provided more opportunities for the students to practice pronunciation.

Meanwhile the weaknesses were 1). This technique had limitation of choice of words that could be used to practice consonants sound not like vowel sound that offers lots of words to be practiced; 2). The wrong choice of words was also problem because when teacher chose words that qualified this technique requirements but the words were not familiar to the students then it was also difficult to do; 3). Applying this technique in a large class may result chaos, especially when some the students did not pay attention to the activities; 4). Teacher whose English phonology knowledge is limited will face many problems, because the teacher will be the direct model for the students.

The result of effective size shows the effectiveness of teaching pronunciation of one syllable word to differentiate phoneme /p/ and /f/ by using minimal pairs technique. The calculation is as follow:

$$\text{ES} = \frac{t}{\sqrt{1/N}}$$
From the result of the calculation it is obtained that the test of significance has indicated a significance difference. The calculation of t-test indicates 4.97. The t-test at 0.05, with df (degree freedom) = N-1 (26-1 = 25) is 2.060. Based on the t-test above, it can be interpreted that teaching pronunciation by using minimal pairs technique to the fifth grade students of SDN 08 DELTA PAWAN in academic year 2012/2013 had increased the students’ score.

Based on the level of significance 5% with the degree of freedom (df) 26-1 = 25, it indicates that the alternative hypothesis is accepted. The effect size of teaching pronunciation by using minimal pairs technique is 0.99 and it is categorized as high. It means that the higher of the effect size value, the higher the effectiveness of teaching pronunciation by using minimal pairs technique has a positive effect to the students’ achievement in teaching pronunciation. Therefore, it answers the first hypothesis; the effectiveness of using minimal pairs technique to improve students’ pronunciation of one syllable words to differentiate phoneme /p/ and /f/ to the fifth grade students of SDN 08 DELTA PAWAN in academic year 2012/2013 is high.

**CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

**Conclusion**, referring to the research findings and analysis of the students’ test result, the writer draws conclusion that teaching pronunciation to differentiate phoneme /p/ and /f/ by using minimal pairs technique is effective. It is shown by the students’ score of post test which is better than the students’ score of pre test. The post test means score is 92.1 while the pre test mean score is 47.9. It shows that there is an increase in the students’ score of post test after using minimal pairs technique. The students’ achievement has been increased with the interval score of pre test and post test 44.2. The obtained t-value of the differences of test is 5 whereas in t-table t-value is 2.060. The effect size is higher than 0,8 (ES > 0,8 or 1 > 0,8). Based on the criteria of the effectiveness, it is categorized as high. Teaching pronunciation of one syllable word to differentiate phoneme /p/ and /f/ by using minimal pairs technique to the fifth grade of SDN 08 Delta Pawan Ketapang in academic year 2012/2013 can be applied well. The fifth graders students of 5C of SDN 08 Delta Pawan Ketapang in academic year of 2012/2013 finally can differentiate phoneme /p/ and /f/ of one syllable word correctly.

**Suggestion**, knowing the result of the research, the writer would like to make the following suggestions 1). Teacher should emphasize the importance of correct pronunciation because wrong pronunciation may interrupt communication; 2). Teacher should be able to choose or even make his/her on variation of the activities that really meet the the students’ condition; 3). Teacher must decide clearly which phoneme and what syllable to be practiced; 4). Teacher must choose the correct word to be used in this activity (avoid unfamiliar words); 5). In a large class, teacher must be able to make a good control of class management in order to reduce chaos during the activities caused by some ignorant the students;
6). In a large class, the students should be divided into smaller groups so that they can follow every activity well; 7). Teacher must always empower and enrich his/her English knowledge in order to give a good example to the students.

REFERENCES