

Using Homophone Game to Improve Students' Pronunciation at Junior High School 5 of Tidore Archipelago

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Abstract

This study was conducted to examine the effect of homophone game towards the students' pronunciation improvement. Designed as a classroom action research, this study took place in the state junior high school 5 of Tidore archipelago. The researcher involved 20 students as the participants of the research. Through two cycles, the analysis of the data indicated that homophone game could improve the students' pronunciation.

Keywords: *homophone game, pronunciation, English testing.*

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1. Background

Pronunciation is one of the basic elements of speech which is very important to be mastered by any language user. Pronunciation becomes important since without accurate pronunciation, a word can be misunderstood by the interlocutors. This importance, perhaps, is the reason why pronunciation is studied in separated subject in EFL curriculums.

In EFL area like Indonesia, accurate pronunciation is a challenging performance. This is true because the way Indonesian word and English word pronounced are different. In Indonesian, words or morphemes are pronounced consistently. This case must be different in English. It is not intended to state that English word or morphemes are not pronounced in consistent sound like the word "read" which is pronounced differently in different tenses.

EFL students learn how to pronounce English words one by one word because there is no generalization for certain syllables although those are written in the same letter. Although "dove" and "love" are only different in the sound of the first letter, there is no consensus among linguists to generalize that "dove, love, stove, clove, and glove" are pronounced similarly. Therefore, EFL

students must learn (or they demand themselves to learn) English pronunciation from word to word.

Being aware on the case, teaching English, especially pronunciation, can be tough. Game is one of the exciting techniques usable in teaching pronunciation. Game can minimize the risk of students' boredom. However, it is assumed that relevant game is more prioritized. Therefore, the researcher decided to take homophone game as a technique to use in teaching pronunciation. This research was then conducted to examine whether homophone game can improve students' pronunciation.

2. Theoretical Basis

Pronunciation is actually more than how a word sounds. In English, how a word sounds represents the meaning of the word. Broughton (1980:49) mentions that pronunciation is the sound of the word of which to give its meaning. Today, it is common to define pronunciation as the sound that a speaker use in order to be understood by the listener (Byrne, 1987). Hornby (1995) seems to define pronunciation in deeper sense where it is divided into three means. Firstly, pronunciation is the way in which a language is spoken; secondly, pronunciation is the way a person speak a language; and thirdly, pronunciation is the way a word is spoken.

EFL students usually do mistakes in pronouncing English words because of difference between English words and their native language words. Harmer (2001) mentions that the mistake in pronunciation can be divided into three broad categories:

- a. Slips: mistake that the students can correct immediately after recognizing it;
- b. Errors: mistake that the students cannot correct themselves and need practice;
- c. Attempts: mistake that the students make because they do not know the proper pronunciation of the word.

Knowing the categories of the pronunciation mistake mentioned above is important for each category demands specific treatment.

There are various factors that can emerge the mistake in pronouncing a word. These factors can be listed as follow (based on Ramelan, 2003):

- (1) The existence of a given sound in the latter which is not found in the former;
- (2) Sounds which have the same phonetic features in both languages but differ in their distribution;
- (3) Similar sounds in two languages which differ only slightly in their phonetic features;
- (4) Sounds that have the same qualities in both languages may constitute some learning problem if they occur in a cluster or sequence of sounds

Ramelan seems not to mention personal and social factors related to the mistakes in pronouncing a word. However, some points have shown that languages can affect each other and this confirms the assumption that EFL learners in our area, Indonesia, do mistakes in pronouncing English words because (one of the many reasons) of the speaking habit in Indonesian language.

Game is a structured (or semi-structured) activity undertaken for joy and sometimes is useful as an educational instrument. Uberman (1998) mentions that a game is a competitive activity and should be played joyfully. As an educational instrument, it offers the students relaxing learning condition. Since it is joyful, game is said motivational.

Homophones are words that sound the same, but are spelled differently and mean different things. For example “bear” and “bare” are homophones. The homophone game helps students to recognize homophones and their everyday occurrence in the English language. When tutoring or in-class work on homophone does not seem enough, try out a few different games for a fun yet educative approach to learning homophones.

Homophone game is one of the games. It is a game in which a player creates a sentence or phrase containing a pair or larger set of homophones, substitutes the homophone pair with another pair of words, then reads the newly created sentence out loud. The objective of the game is for the other players to deduce what the original homophone pair is.

3. Method

This research was a classroom action research. Action research was chosen based on its function to solve a problem or obtaining new information in order to inform local practice (Fraenkel et al, 2006). The researcher involved 25 students of a state senior high school in Tidore archipelago as the respondents. These students were purposively chosen by considering their poor ability of pronunciation. Observation and the students’ score from test were used as the data. By employing descriptive statistic, the research drew conclusion by comparing the scores between cycles.

4. Finding and Discussion

As stated previously that this research was conducted in two cycles. Therefore, this part is divided into two parts; each discusses the finding in the cycle. Each cycle consisted of preparation (planning the learning activity), observation (observing students’ learning behavior), action (implementing the homophone game in learning event), and reflection (analyzing students’ scores after learning). The following sub-parts contain tables which show the students’ scores and their learning completion. It is important to inform that the school’s decision to state that a student passes the completion criteria is when the student reaches 73 point in the score.

Cycle I

This cycle began on May 2018. The researcher visited the school and submit permission letter. The school accepted the researcher to do this research by facilitating the students, the teachers, and the classrooms.

After looking at the students' preliminary scores, it seemed that the learning result did not meet the learning completion criteria; most of the students did not. The following table shows the result in the cycle I.

No	Name of Students	Score	Criteria of success
1	Ibnu Dzaitullah Mustaf	37	Incomplete
2	Novita Abd Malik	50	Incomplete
3	M. Fathurrahman	37	Incomplete
4	Sridewi Yunus	75	Complete
5	M. Alif	50	Incomplete
6	M. Adrian. M.T	62	Incomplete
7	Nady akshay	25	Incomplete
8	Muliana Mursida	37	Incomplete
9	Ibnu Kholik	62	Incomplete
10	Bambang S	50	Incomplete
11	Adinda Rahmadia	75	Complete
12	A. Haikal	50	Incomplete
13	Hawaria Marajabessy	50	Incomplete
14	Dearahayu Usman	50	Incomplete
15	Nurul Fajria. Abd Muis	37	Incomplete
16	Delyana Safrudin	75	Complete
17	Ririn Irwan	50	Incomplete
18	Rining Ramadani	25	Incomplete
19	Arifin	37	Incomplete
20	Rendi Karton	25	Incomplete
Mean		50	

By looking at the table presented, it can be seen that only 3 of 20 (15%) of the students reach the completion criteria. The highest score is 75 (15%), the lowest score is 25 (15%), and the middle score or the median is 50 or it is ranged from 37-62 (70%).

Cycle II

In the cycle II, the researcher tried to use homophone game. The result from the cycle I was used as the reference in this cycle. The result of the cycle II is shown as follow:

No	Name of Students	Score	Criteria of success
1	Ibnu Dzaitullah Mustaf	37	Incomplete
2	Novita Abd Malik	75	Complete
3	M. Fathurrahman	75	Complete
4	Sridewi Yunus	87	Complete
5	M. Alif	87	Complete
6	M. Adrian. M.T	75	Complete
7	Nady Akshay	75	Complete
8	Muliana Mursida	100	Complete
9	Ibnu Kholik	87	Complete
10	Bambang S	87	Complete
11	Adinda Rahmadia	75	Complete
12	A. Haikal	62	Incomplete
13	Hawaria Marajabessy	87	Complete
14	Dearahayu Usman	62	Incomplete
15	Nurul Fajria. Abd Muis	100	Complete
16	Delyana Safrudin	62	Complete
17	Ririn Irwan	50	Incomplete
18	Rining Ramadani	20	Incomplete
19	Arifin	50	Incomplete
20	Rendi Karton	62	Incomplete
Mean		75,00	

From the table above, it can be seen that the students who reached the completion criteria increased from 15% to 60%. The highest score is 100 (100%), the lowest score is 20 (5%), and the median is 75 or ranged from 37-87 (85%).

The comparison between students' score in the cycle I and cycle II indicated that the game implemented in this classroom has improved the students' pronunciation. This result confirms the theory which supports the implementation of certain relevant game in learning process can help the students reach higher result.

5. Conclusion

Based on the data presented, it is concluded that the homophone game is worthy to be considered as a learning tool in English classrooms. More researches are needed to be conducted in the current theme.



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