

IMPROVING STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION THROUGH ENGLISH SONG

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ABSTRACT

Some teachers do not teach pronunciation very well in their class. The more frequently teach reading and grammar than pronunciation. Therefore, students' ability in pronouncing the words is still low and they feel difficult to pronounce the words given by the teacher. It makes the students feel afraid of making mistakes in pronouncing the words. It happens because the students do not have any habit in learning pronunciation in their class and they are not interested of learning pronunciation. The objective of this research is to improve students' pronunciation ability by using English song media. English songs can be used by English teachers to teach pronunciation in every level. This research uses classroom action research. It was conducted in three cycles and each cycle has four steps; planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The data gained from observation and students' score test of pronunciation. The researcher took a class consists of thirty students with three cycles. The result showed that there is improvement in students' test scores after the researcher conduct three cycles of research. The result was taken from students' scores in pronunciation. It showed that teaching pronunciation by using English songs is very effective in the teaching-learning process.

Keywords: Teaching, pronunciation, classroom action research

INTRODUCTION

Language is used to communicate between one person and another. According to Verderber (1999) "Language is the body of words and the system for their use in communicating that are common to the people of the same community or nation, the same geographical area or the same cultural tradition"(p.52). Imagine if a human being does not have any language, they cannot develop their culture and transfer the knowledge to other people. Human life perpetuity runs well because they use language to communicate something one to another. Through language, people gain a better insight into human relations. They use it to express their ideas and thoughts. Meanwhile, language itself can survive and develop because people use it and teach it to other people.

English is one of the languages which are widely used in the world as a means of communication between

people who have a different language to interact with others. For various historical and economic reasons, English has become the dominant language of the world in the twenty-first century. Brown (2000) stated that "Learning is the process of acquiring or getting knowledge of a subject or a skill by studying experience or instruction" (p.6). In Indonesia, English is the first foreign language that must be learned by students from kindergarten to university students. English becomes the compulsory subject that has to be taught and applied in school. Besides formal education, English is also taught in many informal educations like courses and training. English as a second language takes an important part in our daily life because many things that we find in our community or society use English as a means of communication both oral and written. About learning, Brown (2000) stated that "Teaching is the process of guiding

and facilitating learning” (p.7). Teaching also enables the learners to learn and setting the condition for learning. It implies that teaching cannot be separated from learning. Therefore, that is the reason why improving the quality in teaching English is very important to prepare English learners that can be competitive as human resource global.

Since English is one of many compulsory subjects taught in school, many aspects dealing with its achievement and the output expected should be thoroughly and wisely concerned. Besides, many problems are found in learning English, one of the problems is pronunciation. Many students are still confused to pronounce some words; they feel difficult to pronounce the words that teacher has given. When they feel difficult, they will be afraid of making mistakes in pronouncing the words and this will make them be lazy in learning pronunciation again. The aspects that should be learned in mastering English pronunciation are varied. Murphy in Nunan (2003) stated that pronunciation deals with the speed of the speech, tone, pausing patterns, intonation, and even gesture to completely convey the message. Furthermore, the most serious problem is actually because pronunciation does not get enough attention from the teachers. As we know, most teachers only ask the students to read the text and study grammar. In the other word, the teachers give too much reading and grammar than pronunciation practice. It makes students' pronunciation appeared less and much misunderstanding that happen between someone to another when they were talking.

Remembering the condition that teenagers are the creatures that keep searching for their identity, sometimes it emerges clearly in their daily life, especially in school life. Their hobbies

or interest are sometimes able to motivate them in their study. One of their hobbies is listening to music or song. As Griffie (1992) said that “The word song refers to pieces of music that have words, especially popular songs such as that one hears on the radio” (p.3). Songs are one of the most charming and ethnically prosperous that the teacher can easily use in verbal communication. Song purpose a change from habitual classroom actions. Unconsciously, students have heard the song frequently throughout their lives. They use the song as “sonic background” to activities such as studying, jogging, driving a car, washing, even more imaging, etc. Performances of their favorite bands or singers impress them so much. By imitating how they utter or speak out every single word in the songs, the students also learn English voluntarily or happily. At the time, they listen, pronounce, and sing it spontaneously together with the singer of the song.

The song is extremely adaptable and can suit any age, sex, taste, mood, or level of ability. Song also gives new insight into the objective traditions. They are means in the course of which educational topics are presented successfully. While they supply genuine texts, they are inspiring. Prosodic features of the language such as stress, rhythm, intonation are presented through songs, thus from side to side using their language, which is cut up into sequences of structural points, becomes an entire once more.

If we try to give a question to some teenagers, especially at junior high school level, about their favorite songs, they will simultaneously answer and most of their interest in English songs is great and it can be considered to be significant. Logically, learning by song is more interesting than any other usual teaching aids. Students can enjoy the song and simultaneously they also

generate the feeling or establish the interest in it. By listening to songs, students can improve their vocabulary, pronunciation, and their listening skills. It is hoped that teaching-learning process in the classroom will be more enjoyable or entertaining so the objective of the teaching-learning process can be obtained through listening to English songs. Because of the facts above, the researcher chooses song to improve the students' pronunciation.

The problem of the research is students' ability in pronunciation is still low. It happens because pronunciation gets less attention in learning English. Therefore, the purpose of the research is to improve students' pronunciation ability through English songs using the classroom action research method conducted in three cycles. After the researcher conducts research three cycles, it is expected the students' pronunciation ability can improve from before.

RESEARCH METHOD

The method which is used in this research is classroom action research. Harmer (2007) stated that "Action research is the name given to a series of procedures teachers can engage in, perhaps because they wish to improve aspects of their teaching (p.414)". This is because classroom action research is very compatible once in effort conducting the research which deals with repair an effort and makes up of study quality in the class. Burns (2010) stated that "Action research involves taking a self-reflective, critical, and systematic approach to exploring your teaching contexts (p.2)". The research was done in three cycles and each cycle has four steps; planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. From cycle 1 into cycle 3, the research was done continuously to find out the improvement of students' pronunciation

by English songs. The steps of the research consist of cycle 1, cycle 2, and cycle 3.

Cycle 1

Planning 1

The researcher prepared supporter media and facility, the researcher made the planning to give the lesson, the researcher prepared an assessment instrument.

Acting 1

The activity of the research was executed according to the lesson plan with the following steps; Opening (greetings, the researcher read the list of student present), main activities (the researcher read song lyric for the first time, and then the researcher ordered each student for reading song lyric one by one, the students looked up the reading of their friends, the researcher played the English song in the first time, the students started to listen to the English song, the researcher ordered to students to go forward one by one, the students sang a song one by one, the researcher took the score from each student, the title of the song is "BEN"), closing (the researcher told and repaired the words mistaken that had done by students, the researcher made summary from experiment and discussion, the, parting).

Observing 1

The collaborator (headmaster and English teacher) and the researcher observed the activity of students with some steps; the teacher and the researcher checked the students' pronunciation when the students read and sang a song, the point was the student was not interested in the material, because they did not know how to pronounce the words. Some students did not pay attention and tried to make fun of how the sound-producing, there were few sounds that

students hard to pronounce, the students afraid of making mistakes in pronouncing the words.

Reflecting 1

The researcher must use the famous songs in the next cycle, the researcher must give motivation to the students, and the researcher must give more exercise.

Cycle 2

Planning 2

The researcher prepared supporter media and facility, the researcher made the lesson plan for teaching about pronunciation based on the result of cycle 1, and then to overcome the problem on cycle 1, the researcher prepared more assessment instruments.

Acting 2

The activity of study was executed as according to the lesson plan with the following steps; Opening (greetings, the researcher read the list of student present, gave more motivations to the students), main activities (the researcher read the English song lyric carefully, the students listened and repeated what that they heard together, the researcher played the English song for several times, the researcher ordered to the students to underline difficult words on a song lyric, the researcher repeated some difficult words in the song, the students pronounced the song lyric which they heard one by one, the researcher took the score from each student, the title of the song is "I believe I can fly"), closing (the researcher told and repaired the words mistaken that had done by students, the researcher made summary from experiment and discussion, parting).

Observing 2

The collaborator (headmaster and English teacher) and the researcher

observed the activity of students with some steps; the point was the students were interested in the material and the song, the researcher would give the exercise more, support and motivation.

Reflecting 2

The students felt more enjoyable in learning English pronunciation, the students considered with their pronunciation, the researcher must give more attention to the students, and the researcher would use a more popular song in the next cycle, the situation of inside and outside must be conducive; such as it was not noisy and had to calm.

Cycle 3

Planning 3

The researcher prepared supporter media and facility, the researcher made the lesson plan based on the result of cycle 2, and then to overcome the problem on cycle 2, the researcher prepared more assessment instruments and made sure that the situation was calm.

Acting 3

The activity of study was executed as according to the lesson plan with some steps; Opening (greetings, the researcher read the list of the students present, gave more motivations to the students), main activities (the researcher read the English song lyric carefully for three times, the students repeated what they heard together and one by one, the researcher played the song, the students listened to the song while they were giving attention to difficult words, the students underlined and told some difficult words to the researcher, the researcher repeated some difficult words while the researcher was playing the song for several times, the students pronounced it while they were singing one by one in front of the class, the researcher took

the score from each student, the title of the song is “I have a dream”), closing (the researcher made summary from experiment and discussion, parting)

Observing 3

The collaborator (headmaster and English teacher) and the researcher observed the activity of students with some steps; the researcher already delivered the material clearly, the point was the student was very interested in the material, the students were able to pronounce words, all the students were enthusiastic in listening English song to improve their pronunciation, the researcher gave support and motivation.

Reflecting 3

The researcher was able to manage the class and delivered the material successfully; the students were more enjoyed and relaxed when they studied English especially in pronunciation. It was because they could produce the sounds properly, all the students were able to produce sound properly, all the students were interested in learning English song, the researcher could create fun and effective teaching-learning process in improving pronunciation, the situation of inside and outside the classroom was very conducive.

To acquire the data or information the researcher needs, the researcher gives a test and observes the students. This is done to see the improvement of each cycle in pronunciation learning through English songs. The data on the students' pronunciation is collected inline with the data of the research and analyzed based on KKM and using the scoring system. The standardizations are fluency, intonation, stress, and pronounce.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The problem which appears in teaching-learning process especially in learning English is the motivation of the students to study English. They do not feel comfortable and interest in studying English, because of some reasons like English is difficult, they do not know the meaning of words or sentences, understanding of grammar and they cannot pronounce English well. Especially in learning pronunciation, the students have difficulty pronouncing the word given and understand what other person said to them because they do not have the habit of pronouncing English in their daily life and the teacher more frequently teaches reading and grammar than pronunciation. Therefore, the students are not interested in learning pronunciation. In this research, the researcher chooses 7th grade to conduct the research. The class has 30 students with 17 boys and 13 girls. The class situation is nice and comfortable for teaching-learning activities. The students have good personalities and character. The teaching process that was done by the researcher is explained below:

Cycle 1 Planning

Before researching in the classroom, the researcher made the planning of the research. The planning was included a lesson plan, English song text, audio player, and pronunciation text materials. In the lesson plan, the students will be told how to pronounce the song lyric and sing a song one by one. The title of the song is “BEN” by Michel Jackson.

Acting

Warming Up

The researcher gave the greeting to the students and read the list of students present, and then told to the

students about the reason why the researcher was in the classroom, explained the importance of learning English and the differences between English and Indonesian.

Main Activities

The researcher explained the importance of the ability to pronounce the words or phrases uses intonation, stress, and pronunciation clearly and correctly. The researcher gave some examples of the words to pronounce the words correctly based on phonetics. After that, the researcher gave the English song lyric with the title of the song is "BEN" and the students asked to pronounce the words in the lyric of the song one by one. Next, the researcher played the song through an audio player and students asked to give their attention to the song lyric and after listened to the song frequently, the students asked to go forward in front of the class to pronounce and sang the song one by one.

Closing

The researcher evaluated the pronunciation of every student and the researcher told and repaired the mistakes of the students. After that, the researcher concluded the learning activity and gave the parting to the students.

Observing

From the activity of cycle 1, the collaborator (headmaster and English teacher) and the researcher found some facts that the students were afraid of making mistakes in pronouncing the words, they were not interested in the material, and did not give attention to the lesson. Some words were difficult to say because they did not have any habit of pronouncing the words in daily activities.

Reflecting

The researcher and collaborator (headmaster and English teacher) had discussed and found some teaching-learning strategies in cycle 2 to overcome the problems, like the researcher would be more frequent to give motivation to the students in learning English, the researcher would give examples and exercise frequently in learning pronunciation, and the researcher would use the familiar song in the next cycle that could increase motivation and students' interest to the lesson. Below is a table of the result in pronunciation test cycle 1 with a KKM (minimum completeness criteria) score is 75:

Table 1.
Pronunciation Test Result in Cycle 1
with KKM Score is 75 at 7th grade
students of SMP Islam Nurus
SKHI Depok

Students' Score	Total (person)	Percentage (%)
Score 50	1	3,3
Score 55	1	3,3
Score 60	4	13,4
Score 65	3	10
Score 70	1	3,3
Score 75	17	56,7
Score 80	3	10
Total	30	100

Source: Students' pronunciation score

The table above showed about pronunciation test result in cycle 1 that has been done to every student. Each student has a varied score. The result is there are thirty students in the class. Of the thirty students, ten students failed because their score are still under KKM, meanwhile, twenty students passed because their scores are over the KKM or achieve KKM. It is taken based on the KKM score for every student that has been told above. Therefore, the researcher continued the

research by giving more exercises in pronunciation in cycle 2 to get the best result for every student.

Cycle 2

Planning

Before researching in cycle 2 in the classroom, the researcher made the planning of the research based on the result of cycle 1. The planning was included a lesson plan, English song text, audio player, and pronunciation test materials. In the lesson plan, the researcher would give more exercise and used the familiar songs to motivate students in learning pronunciation. The song that is used is "I Believe I Can Fly" by Richard Kelly.

Acting

Warming Up

The researcher gave the greeting to the students and read the list of students present. Next, the researcher gave motivation to the students about the importance of mastering English and learning pronunciation and convinced the students to more confidence in pronouncing the words.

Main Activities

The researcher gave the English song lyric to the students with the title of the song is "I Believe I Can Fly". The researcher gave example how the way to pronounce the words and the students listen carefully. After that, the researcher asked the students to repeat what the researcher said together. Next, the researcher played the song in an audio player frequently and the students were asked to listen carefully while saw the song lyric, and then they were asked to underline the words that they did not hear clearly and difficult to says. Next, the students tell to the researcher about the words that they considered difficult. And the researcher replied frequently those difficult words. After the students understood how to say it, the students

asked to go forward one by one in front of the class to sing the song rightly.

Closing

The researcher evaluated the pronunciation of every student and the researcher told and repaired the mistakes of the students. After that, the researcher concluded this learning and gave the parting to the students.

Observing

From the activity of cycle 2, the researcher and collaborator (headmaster and English teacher) found some facts that the students looked more interested in learning pronunciation because the researcher used the familiar songs. Therefore, the students could enjoy the song and the researcher gave more exercise. Furthermore, they were more confident in pronouncing the words. But, some students still did not have attention to the lesson because the condition in outside of the classroom is noisy. It can bother their attention to the lesson.

Reflecting

Based on the facts from the observation above, the researcher discussed with the collaborator (headmaster and English teacher) to make some strategies to overcome the problem in cycle 2, such as, the researcher would give motivation continuously and give more popular song which has simple lyric to be easy listening by the students and the researcher would make conducive situation inside and outside of the classroom to the students would more attention and focused to the lesson. Below is the table of the result in pronunciation test cycle 2 with a KKM (minimum completeness criteria) score is 75:

Table 2
Pronunciation Test Result in Cycle 2
with KKM Score is 75 at 7th grade
students of SMP Islam Nurus
SKHI Depok

Students' Score	Total (person)	Percentage (%)
Score 50	0	0
Score 55	1	3,3
Score 60	3	10
Score 65	2	6,7
Score 70	0	0
Score 75	16	53,3
Score 80	8	26,7
Total	30	100

Source: Students' pronunciation score

The table above showed about pronunciation test result in cycle 2 that has been done to every student. Each student has the varied scores. The result is there are thirty students in the class. From thirty students, six students failed because their scores are still under KKM, meanwhile, twenty-four students passed because their scores are over the KKM or achieve KKM. It is taken based on the KKM score for every student that has been told above. Therefore, the researcher continued the research by giving more exercises in pronunciation in cycle 3 to get the best result for every student.

Cycle 3 **Planning**

Before doing cycle 3 in the classroom, the researcher made the planning of the research based on the result of cycle 2. The planning was included a lesson plan, English song lyrics, audio player, and pronunciation test materials. In the lesson plan, the researcher would give more exercise and motivation to the students before they studied.

Acting

Warming Up

The researcher gave the greeting to the students and read the list of students present. And the researcher gave motivation to the students before they studied to students could have been confident and interest in learning English.

Main Activities

The researcher gave the English song lyric to the students and the researcher read the song lyric and then the students repeated what they heard together and one by one. Next, the researcher played the English song on an audio player and the students listened to the song while underlining the words that they were considered difficult to say. After playing frequently, the students told the researcher about the difficult words in the song and the researcher replied again until the students understood what the song meant and said. After the students understood, the students asked to go forward to sing the song one by one beautifully.

Closing

The researcher evaluated the pronunciation of every student and the researcher told and repaired the mistakes of the students. After that, the researcher concluded this learning and gave the parting to the students.

Observing

From the activity of cycle 3, the researcher observed and found some facts that many students liked the song and they could enjoy the music and followed the song lyrics. Then, the students could pronounce the words or phrases better than they did in cycle 2 because the researcher always gave more motivation so that the students had confidence. Students also became more active in the class; they had

interested in the lesson, situation inside and outside of the classroom were conducive. Thus, the students could be focused and concentrated.

Reflecting

From the result of the learning pronunciation activity and the average score from the test in cycle 3, the researcher and collaborator (headmaster and English teacher) had made some points to be noted to the next teaching-learning. The teacher should be more frequent to give motivation to their students, especially in pronunciation to increase their English basic skills. The situation inside and outside the classroom must be conducive to support the teaching- learning process running well. The teacher must use popular songs that had known by the students. And the last point was about teaching-learning equipment that useful to help teaching-learning activity for the teacher and the students. The teacher had to use audio-visual aids in teaching English thus learning activity was more interesting for the students. Below is the table of the result in pronunciation test cycle 3 with a KKM (minimum completeness criteria) score is 75:

Table 3.
Pronunciation Test Result in Cycle 3
with KKM Score is 75 at 7th grade
students of SMP Islam Nurus
SKHI Depok

Students' Score	Total (person)	Percentage (%)
Score 50	0	0
Score 55	0	0
Score 60	0	0
Score 65	0	0
Score 70	0	0
Score 75	19	63,3
Score 80	9	30
Score 85	2	6,7
Total	30	100

Source: Students' pronunciation score

The table above showed about pronunciation test result in cycle 3 that has been done to every student. Each student has the varied scores. The result is there are thirty students in the class. After doing more pronunciation tests in cycle 3, all of the students passed. It is because their score is over KKM scores. Therefore, the researcher has achieved the best result in this cycle.

DISCUSSION

This action research is divided into three cycles. In this research, the researcher and collaborator (headmaster and English teacher) were collaborating. The meeting with the collaborator has done once a week. The observation, teacher's note, and interview are talked about n every meeting between collaborator and researcher. The result of the research in every cycle is as explained below:

Cycle 1

At the beginning of cycle 1, students were still confused about how pronouncing sounds. The researcher felt confused because the researcher has to teach how to produce the right sound. The researcher had to check the way students produced sounds. Before the researcher played an English song, the researcher read the song lyrics for the first time. And then the researcher ordered each student for reading song lyrics one by one without music. Meanwhile, the other students looked up at the reading of their friends. After that, the researcher played the English song for the first time and the students started to listen to the English song, the researcher ordered to students to go forward one by one, the students sang a song one by one. When students sang a song one by one, some students still could not pronounce it properly. The result of the test in this cycle was 10 students failed and 20 students that

passed. Therefore, it needs to improve in cycle 2.

Cycle 2

In this cycle, students were more active and they could participate in learning pronunciation. Here, the researcher was not only teaching pronunciation but also giving motivation to the students so they not be afraid of pronouncing the words. The students were invited to read together with the researcher and their friends. Therefore, their confidence could appear and they could know the right sounds. Besides, the researcher ordered the students to underline the difficult words, the difficult words will be repeated until the students understood. At the end of this cycle, we could see the changing activity in a positive way. The result of the test was getting better. Six students still failed but twenty-six students were passed. Furthermore, in the next cycle, all of the students have to can reach the KKM score of this school.

Cycle 3

In the third cycle, much positive change that the researcher has gotten. Students could produce sounds. The researcher was proud when the researcher asked the students to repeat the English song in front of the class. Students are tried to be more active in the class and they wanted to be better (pronounce better) than other students. We could tell that students were being active by the interaction during the teaching-learning process. And the students were very interested in the song because it was the famous song, many of them had known about the song. Besides, the situation inside and outside the classroom was very conducive. The result of the test in this cycle was great. All of the students were passed. Furthermore, in this cycle, students were more interesting in the

subject and the test result showed an improvement on students' pronunciation in this cycle. We could see that the third cycle was better than the second one, the second cycle was better than the first one. As we could see here that students' pronunciation ability was getting better. The last test on the third cycle showed a great result.

In the first cycle, it seemed that the students' achievements have existed but the researcher did not satisfy to students' scores. The researcher always motivated students to study hard and gave assignments about pronunciation to them. In the second cycle, the score had increased. It was getting better but the researcher tried and believed that the students will able to changed because they were more serious in the learning process and finally they got best score in third cycle. All of the students passed in the third cycle. They got a good score. The score is higher than the KKM score in this school. It is more than enough. The researcher felt satisfied with the students' improvement in the learning process. They were more confident than the last. The researcher believed that actions, evaluations, and reflections about teaching technique would get the change and improvement.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the research, pronunciation is one of the skills that have to be mastered by students. Learning pronunciation is not easy because the students do not have any habit of learning pronunciation and speak English in their daily life in many activities like a conversation, a study in the classroom, and many others. English songs can be considered as an effective way to improve students' ability in pronunciation skills because they look more interested and enjoyed doing an activity using English songs.

English song offers a change from routine classroom activities, to the students are not bored. The students must have more attention to the lyrics of the song to catch good pronunciation. The result of the pronunciation achievement test depends on the phonetics mastery that the students have. If they have good phonetics mastery and the students are active in listening to their song, their test result can be good. On the other hand, if their phonetics mastery is bad and they are lazy to do the activity, they will get the bad scores too. The teaching-learning activity in the classroom or institution environment can influence the process and the result of students' achievements. The pronunciation materials and teaching-learning equipment that are provided by institutions also can influence the teaching-learning process to run well or not. After giving the test three times, based on the average score of the class, cycle one is 70,83, cycle two is 73, 5, and cycle three is 77, 17. We can see that there is an improvement both in students' score and an average score of the class in learning pronunciation through English songs. This average score in the last cycle is higher than the KKM score in the school. All students passed in the third cycle, there is not failure. It is proved that song is one of media learning that can be used to improve students' pronunciation skills. Therefore, the teacher can teach pronunciation in the class by English song.

SUGGESTIONS

The teacher should keep giving the students explanation about the importance of mastering English, they should be a nice teacher and have a good relationship with the students because it can make the students interested to study, the teachers should have a good way of teaching that can

make the students easy to understand the lesson, the teacher should find and apply any kinds of teaching aids especially in pronunciation, the teacher should give more attention to the students' improvements in learning English by giving advice and motivating to them as well as possible, the teacher should be a pioneer for his/her students to practice English both in written and spoken as their daily habits.

The students should have a habit of using English in their daily life. It will be useful for you to increase your ability in English oral or written. The students should not be ashamed or afraid to speak English wherever they are. The students should be active in learning English by doing more exercise both at school and home. The students had better find as many as possible pronunciation materials from many sources like articles in newspapers, magazines, internet while listening to song or singing a song.

The school should be global-minded. English is an international language that important in the global world; the researcher hopes that the owner of the school or the headmaster can provide equipment in supporting English teaching-learning. The school should prepare many kinds of books or other pronunciation materials to support teaching-learning activities in the classroom. The institution should provide the language laboratory of audiovisual room to be used by the teacher in doing teaching-learning process to improve students' motivation in learning English. The institution should make a teacher's training program in teaching frequently to improve the teaching skill of their teachers, especially for English teachers.

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