

**IMPROVING STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION USING AUDIO VISUAL AIDS
(AVAs) AT THE FIFTH YEAR OF AL-AZHAR SYIFA BUDI ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL OF SURAKARTA IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2007/2008
(A CLASSROOM ACTION RESEARCH)**

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to describe the implementation, result, and students' responses to the implementation of teaching English pronunciation using Audio Visual Aids (AVAs). This descriptive qualitative study requires four procedures: planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. The object of the study is the fifth year consisting of 19 students of Al-Azhar Syifa Budi Elementary School of Surakarta. The methods of data collection are pre-test and post-test, interview, questionnaires, and observation. The findings show that the mean score of students' pre-test is 7.5 and the mean score of students' post-test is 9.4. The result of the pre-test and post-test indicates that there is an improvement in students' pronunciation, especially in pronouncing word-stress. The students' responses to the implementation of AVAs are positive. It is proven by their enjoyment and excitement condition during the implementation of AVAs. Besides, their pronunciation ability, especially in pronouncing the correct word-stress has also improved. They are very interested in learning English pronunciation by watching video, since they can watch the characters' expressions, listen to the native speaker's voice, and read the subtitling appeared on the screen.

Key words: AVAs, Classroom Action Research, video, pronunciation, and word-stress.

1. Introduction

Recently, English language becomes the most outstanding language in Indonesia. Many people in all level try to master it well. Moreover, the young language learners in big cities often mix and switch it with Indonesian language. They may assume if they can speak English fluently and clearly, they will look like intelligent and modern persons. As a matter of fact, there are only few young language learners who can speak English fluently.

The development of teaching English has grown fast. Nowadays, English is taught from pre-elementary level up to university level. The goal is basically to enable students to comprehend the four language skills, namely listening, speaking, writing, and reading. An English teacher is the source of knowledge for students to learn and to be a model of English. However, to speak English fluently and smoothly is not an easy task. There are many English teachers who still speak English a little

or incorrectly. These kinds of manner will enormously influence their students' pronunciation.

The current phenomenon reveals that elementary school students face pronunciation problem in learning English as their foreign language. Their pronunciation is still greatly influenced by their mother tongue or their native language. Young learners have to study pronunciation early; otherwise they will face more problems dealing with pronunciation. Indeed, English teachers neglect to teach pronunciation to their students. Whereas, this is the duty of English teachers to naturally make their students' pronunciation to be native-like pronunciation. It is so as stated by Harmer that:

yet some of these teachers make little attempt to pronunciation in any overt way and only give attention to it in passing. Pronunciation teaching not only makes students aware of different sounds and sounds features (and what these mean), but can also improve their speaking immeasurably (2002: 183).

Moreover, pronunciation is the way in which language is spoken (Hornby, 1995: 928). Work on pronunciation is important for two main reasons: to help the students to understand the spoken English they hear, and to help them make their own speech more comprehensible and meaningful to others (Gower, Phillips, and Walters, 1995: 153).

Based on the statement above, to speak and understand English well, students need to be able to use the stress pattern of the language, even if they cannot state the rules. They may still need to be taught that; in English, stress vowels are both longer and louder (Avery and Ehrlich, 1997: 63).

According to Harmer (2002: 183), concentrating on sounds, showing where they are made in the mouth, making students aware of where words should be stressed –all these

things give them extra information about spoken English and help them achieve the goal of improved comprehension and intelligibility.

Based on the phenomena in speaking English of the fifth year students of *Al-Azhar Syifa Budi* Elementary School of Surakarta, there are still mispronunciation of words with incorrect word-stress. For example,

A student pronounced 'breakfast', in which this

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should be 'breakfast'. Another, a

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student pronounced 'thirty' as 'thirty'. By

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knowing this phenomena, the writer mainly intends to make a study dealing with the implementation, results, and the students' responses toward the implementation of AVAs in improving students' pronunciation, especially in pronouncing word-stress.

One of the supra-segmental aspects of phonetics is stress. According to Cross (1991: 224), stress is the articulation of a syllable with greater emphasis, or more force, than others. In addition, according to Wolfram (1981: 35), stress is the relative prominence of syllables. The main phonetic ingredients of stress are pitch, length, and loudness (Katamba, 1991: 221). Therefore, stress can be defined as a condition having different prominence of a syllable. Different syllable may have different stress placement. It can be influenced by grammatical factors.

Celce-Murcia (1996: 144) states that there are several systems of notation for making stress, namely CAPitals, **boldface**, bubbles (● • ·), accents, and underlining. Bubbles work in presenting stress, since the size of the circles can be well differentiated (they may, of course, be written in by hand) (Celce-Murcia, 1996: 144). It is in accordance with what Avery and Ehrlich (1997: 63) state that the larger the dot, the heavier stress; the smaller the dot, the lighter the stress does.

This study employs bubbles in presenting word-stress, since it will be easy for students to recognize the placement of the word-stress. The primary stress or major stress is represented by the biggest dot (●), the secondary or minor stress is represented by smaller dot (●), tertiary or unstressed syllable is represented by smallest dot (●).

English teachers should be a good model for their students to imitate; otherwise, their students' pronunciation will be worse and lead to make fossilization mistake. Therefore, English teacher should teach the students clearly about how the sounds are produced and how the word-stress is placed.

Technology has developed rapidly in education field. Of course, teachers can use the technology development, such as television, radio, computer, as a media to teach English. Interest in the use of film and television for teaching at all levels increased throughout the 1950s and 1960s (British Universities Film and Video Council, 1995: 79). In contrast, English teachers in Indonesia tend to use conventional methods during their teaching. They just teach their students in a particular way. The students just sit down and listen to the teacher's explanation without any competence achieved.

The educational technology is a technology applied to the teaching and learning process. AVAs is the common term used for teaching aids that bring media other than speech into the learning equation (Poole, 1998: 224). Kenworthy (1987: 122) states that learners should be involved occasionally in activities which require them to 'put on their best pronunciation'—activities involving planning, rehearsal, and presentation.

Teacher can use techniques and practice materials. Listen and imitate: A technique used in Direct Method in which students listen to a teacher-provided model and repeat or imitate it. This technique has been enhanced by the use of tape recorders, language labs, and video recorders (Celce-Murcia, 1996: 8). Celce-

Murcia (1996: 314) also states that video is a powerful medium – more so than its audio counterpart due to the visual element.

Elliot, Kratochwill, Littlefield, and Travers (1998: 491) states that AVAs are the use of technology to present information in several different formats (e.g., visual, auditory), usually supplementing a teacher-or text-based presentation. For example, overhead projectors, slide projectors, television, and video players. Poole (1998: 224) states that Audio Visual Aids are the common term used for the teaching aids that bring media other than speech into the learning equation. Moore states that:

Classroom audio visual equipment today is lighter, more energy efficient, and easier to operate than in the past. Video and television are similar in that they both portray moving images, along with sounds, and in that these sounds may be either natural or contrived and tailored to desired situation. Additionally, as instructional tools, both provide a teacher the opportunities for presenting, describing, and clarifying information, ideas, and concepts; for teaching a skill; for condensing or expanding time; and for affecting attitudes (1999: 162).

By using AVAs, the students will be more interested in learning pronunciation, because they can see as well as hear what is being said. Besides, video is much easier to understand because it includes the speakers' facial expressions and gestures. It is in accordance with what Gower, Phillips, and Walters (1995: 75) state that the visual element is attractive and commands the attention better than audio alone.

According to Elliot, Kratochwill, Littlefield, and Travers (1998: 492), the main idea underlying of AVAs is that presenting information in several formats offers students the advantages of not only hearing about informa-

tion (from a teacher or a textbook), but also seeing it, thus receiving a “dual presentation”. The use of AVAs allows information to be presented in two different modalities, with the assumption that more information can be processed.

To summarize, AVAs is a teaching media that can be used to teach pronunciation to the students. By using AVAs, the students can listen to the information and also can watch the visual element that can make them easier in comprehending the information.

2. Research Method

The design employed in this research is descriptive qualitative approach. Besides, Classroom Action Research (CAR) is adopted in this study. As quoted by Lewin and Stringer in Johnson and Christensen (2000: 7), action research is a form of applied focused on solving local problems that practitioners face. Action research involves the process of diagnosing a local problem, planning, and carrying out a research study, developing new knowledge based on the research and implementing the research findings to solve or improve a local problem. Besides, action research is a cyclical process because problems are rarely solved through one research study.

An action research is a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the ratio-

nality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of these practices, and the situations in which these practices are carried out (Carr and Kemmis in Nunan, 1989: 12).

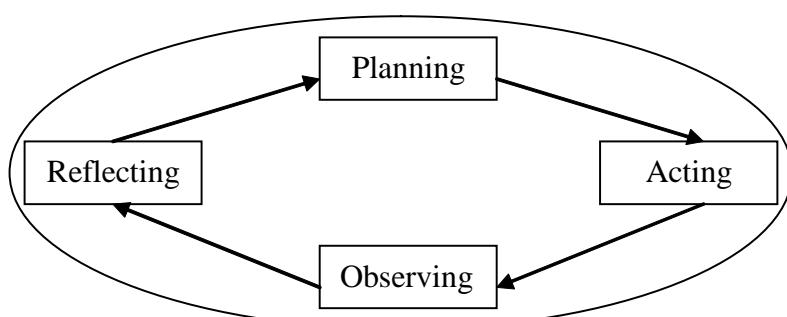
Kemmis and Mc. Taggart in Nunan (1989: 12) states that the procedure for carrying out action research consists of four developmental Phase. These are as follows:

- Phase I, Develop a plan of action to improve what is already happening.
- Phase II, Act to implement the plan.
- Phase III, Observe the effects of action in the context in which it occurs.
- Phase IV, Reflect on these effects.

These four phases are meant to form part of ongoing cycle. Thus, the critical reflection which occurs during phase IV provides a basis for further planning and reflection.

The subject of the study is the fifth year consisting of 19 students (10 male students and 9 female students) of Al-Azhar Syifa Budi Elementary School of Surakarta in the 2007/2008 academic year.

In this research, there are two kinds of data, namely primary data and secondary data. The primary data are the students' score which is taken from the pre-test and post-test score, field notes which is taken from the implementation of teaching pronunciation using AVAs,



(Adopted from Kemmis and Mc. Taggart in Nunan, 1989: 13)

interview scripts which is taken from the interview conducted with the students, and the percentage of students' responses toward the implementation of AVAs which is taken from the questionnaires. While the secondary data are taken from the existing documents which will enrich and add the data of the implementation of teaching pronunciation using Audio Visual Aids at the fifth of SD Al-Azhar Syifa Budi Solo.

According to Johnson and Christensen (2000: 153), method of data collection is a technique for physically obtaining data to be analyzed in a research study. To obtain the data, the writer uses some instruments of collecting data as follows:

1) Interview

Interview is a verbal communication that aims at obtaining information. In the interview, the questions and answers are given verbally (Nasution, 2004: 113). In this study the writer interviews the English teacher and all of the students of the fifth year of *Al-Azhar Syifa Budi* Elementary School of Surakarta to know their responses toward the implementation of Audio Visual Aids in teaching pronunciation.

2) Questionnaires

Questionnaire is a method to collect the data by asking some questions in written forms and it should be answered in written forms too (Nawawi, 1995: 117). The students' response of the implementation of Audio Visual Aids is obtained from the given questionnaires that should be filled by the students.

3) Observation

According to Johnson and Christensen (2000: 147), observation is defined as the unobtrusive watching of behavioral patterns of people in certain situations to obtain information about phenomena of interest. The researcher observes anything happened in the classroom during the implementation of Audio

Visual Aids.

According to Miles and Huberman in Sarmiyatun (2007: 22), there are three interactive models as follows:

1) Reduction of the data

According to Miles and Huberman in Sarmiyatun (2007: 23), data reduction can be interpreted as the process of selection, simplification, and transformation of the data to the field notes. In this step, the researcher takes some notes and describes about the real condition of the observation that the researcher has done.

2) Display the data

After the researcher presents the data, the researcher analyzes the data. In this step, the researcher describes the answer of problem statement, such as; the researcher describes the implementation, the result, and the students' responses of the implementation of Audio Visual Aids.

3) Verification

In this step, the researcher makes conclusion about the research. Conclusion is drawn continuously throughout the course of study. The researcher writes the conclusion based on her observations and her interpretation of those observations. Operationally, in analyzing the data, the researcher uses this for-

$$\text{mula: } S = \frac{R}{2}$$
$$M = \frac{\sum S}{N}$$

S = Student's score

R = Correct answer

M = Mean score

N = Total students

(Suharsimi in Muryati, 2007: 26)

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1. Findings

The research is carried out to know whether or not Audio Visual Aids can improve the students' pronunciation of *Al-Azhar Syifa Budi* Elementary School of Surakarta. The findings can be best described in the following sections.

3.1.1. The Implementation of Audio Visual Aids in Teaching Pronunciation

Before implementing teaching using AVAs, the researcher held an oral pre-test to know the students' pronunciation. The students were asked to pronounce 20 words. Based on the pre-test score, the students were low in pronouncing the correct word-stress. The average of the students' score in pre-test was 7.5. Next, the researcher prepared three cycles. In each cycle, the researcher taught the students pronunciation by watching videos using AVAs.

There are three cycles in this research. Each cycle consists of one meeting. In conducting each cycle, the researcher used the four procedures in Classroom Action Research, namely planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. In each cycle, the researcher employed video cassettes and AVAs to teach students pronunciation.

The implementation of AVAs in teaching pronunciation is successful. The students can absorb more information than using audio aids alone. The students learn about native speaker's pronunciation by watching video. By watching video, the students can listen and repeat the native speaker's voice, watch the video, and read the subtitling appeared on the screen.

3.1.2. The Improvement of the Student's Pre-Test and Post-Test Score

After the researcher implemented each cycle, the researcher analyzed the students' scores. The students' pre-test score is compared with the students' post-test score. The scores were analyzed in order to find whether there is an improvement or not, after the researcher implemented teaching pronunciation using Audio Visual Aids.

The students' scores were analyzed by using the formula that has been presented in the technique of analyzing data. After the data were analyzed, the average students' pre-test score was 7.5 and the average students' post-test score was 9.4. From the score, it can be seen that teaching pronunciation by using AVAs can improve the students' ability in pronunciation, especially in pronouncing the correct-word stress.

Based on the pre-test score, the highest score is 10 (4 students) and the lowest score is 0.5 (2 students). While in the post-test, the highest score is 10 (6 students) and the lowest score is 8 (1 student).

Based on the result of the students' score in pre-test and post-test, it clearly indicates that the students' pronunciation is improved. It means that teaching pronunciation using AVAs can improve the students' pronunciation.

3.1.3. The Students' Responses toward the Implementation of Teaching Pronunciation Using AVAs

To know the students' responses toward the implementation of teaching pronunciation using AVAs, the researcher interviewed the students one by one. The interview was done on Friday, December 14, 2007. The researcher employed a tape-recorder as a means to record the interview.

Based on the data, the students' responses toward the use of AVAs in teaching English are positive. Most of the students loved this technique. They said that it is very interesting to learn English using AVAs. In addition, they can see both the sound and the picture, so that they can listen to the native speaker's voice and the movement of the character. They also love the video much, because the video was a funny and an interesting video.

In addition, questionnaire is also employed to know the students responses to the implementation of AVAs. The researcher gave the questionnaires to the students on Tuesday, December 18, 2007 and took them as the same time as soon as the students finished filling them.

There are ten questions that the students had to answer in the questionnaires. There are four answers, namely Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The first question is whether or not the students agree towards the implementation of AVAs. There are 11 students (57.8%) who strongly agree,

8 students (42.1%) who agree, and there is 0 student who disagree and 0 student who strongly disagree.

The second question is whether or not the students agree that the implementation of audiovisual is useful for them. There are 6 students (31.5%) who strongly agree, 11 students (57.8%) who agree, 2 students (10.5%) who disagree and 0 student who strongly disagree.

The third question is whether or not the implementation of AVAs can improve the students' pronunciation ability. There are 11 students (57.8%) who strongly agree, 5 students (26.3%) who agree, 3 students (15.7%) who disagree, and 0 student who strongly disagree.

The fourth question is whether or not this technique is an appropriate technique to learn English. There are 8 students (42.1%) who strongly agree, 9 students (47.3%) who agree, 2 students (10.5%) who disagree, and 0 student choose strongly disagree.

The fifth question is whether or not the technique is interesting. There are 12 students (63.1%) who strongly agree, 6 students (31.5%) choose agree, 1 student (5.2%) who disagree, and 0 students who strongly disagree.

The sixth question is whether or not this technique is confusing. There are 1 student (5.2%) who strongly agree, 0 students who agree, 6 students (31.5%) who disagree, and 12 students (63.1%) who strongly disagree.

The seventh question is whether or not this technique is an effective technique to improve their pronunciation. There are 9 students (47.3%) who strongly agree, 7 students (31.5%) who agree, 3 students (15.7%) who disagree, and 0 students who strongly disagree.

The eighth question is whether or not the student agrees if this technique will be implemented on them. There are 5 students (26.3%) who strongly agree, 13 students (68.4%) who agree, 1 student (5.2%) choose disagree, and 0 students choose strongly disagree.

The ninth question is whether or not the students agree if their English teacher applies

this technique sometime. There are 6 students (31.5%) who choose strongly agree, 7 students (31.5%) who agree, 5 students (26.3%) disagree, and 1 student (5.2%) who strongly disagree.

The tenth question is whether or not the students can use this technique as a technique to improve their pronunciation ability. There are 6 students (31.5%) who choose strongly agree, 10 students (52.6%) who agree, 3 students (15.7%) who disagree, and 0 students who strongly disagree.

From the data above, it can be concluded that the students' responses toward the implementation of AVAs are positive. The data show that most of the students love this technique. They agree that this technique is interesting and it can improve their pronunciation ability.

3.2. Discussion

Al-Azhar Syifa Budi Elementary School of Surakarta is an elementary school that adopts bilingualism. In English subject, *Al-Azhar Syifa Budi* Elementary School of Surakarta provides their students with complete facility and media, namely the language laboratory, AVAs, audio aids, video cassettes, replicas, CD, imported books (Pupil's book and Workbook), pictures, etc.

Learning pronunciation is a very good start for elementary school students. Word-stress is an important element in learning pronunciation. Based on the phenomena, there is a problem in students' pronunciation, especially in pronouncing word-stress. In addition, their English teacher seldom plays video cassette by using AVAs.

The researcher is interested to solve the problem by employing Audio Visual Aids as a media to improve the students' pronunciation. The researcher adopts the procedure in Classroom Action Research, namely planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting.

In this study, the Action Research was carried out in three cycles. Each cycle con-

sisted of one meeting. The researcher taught the students using AVAs. After analyzing the data, the researcher found that AVAs can improve the students' pronunciation. There is an improvement in students' score before and after implementing AVAs. The students' pre-test score is 7.5 and the students' post-test score is 9.4.

Generally speaking, the students' responses toward the implementation of AVAs are positive. The students loved this technique, since they can listen and repeat to the native speaker's voice, watch the character expression and movement, and read the subtitling appeared on the screen. They also stated that it is very interesting to learn English by using AVAs. Furthermore, they also said that the video is interesting, since it is funny, interesting, and communicative. Thus, teaching pronunciation by using AVAs is successful.

3. Conclusion

After the writer implements and analyzes the data, the writer draws conclusions based on the results of the research are as follows.

- 1) The implementation of AVAs in teaching pronunciation is successful. The students can absorb more information than using audio aids. The students learn about native speaker's pronunciation by watching video. By watching video, the students can listen and repeat the native speaker's voice, watch the video, and read the subtitling appeared on the screen.
- 2) The implementation of AVAs can really improve the students' pronunciation. The average students' pre-test score is 7.5. Indeed, after the implementation of Audio Visual Aids, the average students' post-test score reaches 9.4. Therefore, Audio Visual Aids can solve the students' pronunciation problem and can improve the students' pronunciation ability.
- 3) The students' responses to the implementation of AVAs are positive. The students

are interested in watching the video. They can listen to the native speaker's voice, watch the character's behavior, and read the subtitling of the speech being spoken.

They feel very happy learning English using AVAs. They also say that this technique is interesting and can improve their pronunciation ability.

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