

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a background of the research, research questions and purposes, research significance, research scope, research framework, and previous research.

A. Background of Study

Pronunciation is an inseparable part of a language that should be taught simultaneously with the other language features (Houdek, 2020). It is the principal element for all spoken languages. Because each spoken language has its pronunciation features that need to be mastered to build a comprehensive conversation, it is important to learn pronunciation beside the other language skills. In relation to educating young learners, the necessity of acquiring pronunciation at a young age arises from the fact that all language learners are expected not just to have a strong comprehension of grammar but also to be able to communicate appropriately (Triana, 2017).

With this importance, teachers are expected to build up their learners' pronunciation ability during classroom activity of English lesson. Since learning pronunciation needs guidance and habitual practice, teachers provide their learners by being their ideal pronunciation models. In the case of teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), they are expected to be able to talk in any specific accent like 'an ideal native speaker' or have a 'good' pronunciation, since the learners will learn from and try to sound exactly like them as their model. However, the term 'speaking with native-like pronunciation' seems to be hard to measure or to be reached as a goal. Furthermore, Yoshida (2016) pointed out that it is better to have an intelligible pronunciation and to speak understandably, as it decreases confusion in communication. As long as both the speaker and listener understand each other, it is fine to communicate in that way even though

they can tell which specific region or country their interlocutors came from (Yoshida, 2016).

Based on researcher's personal experience during her internship program at SMPN 8 Bandung, the pronunciation teaching process in the classroom is dominated by an explanation of grammatical patterns or the addition of vocabulary as well as language skills mastery. There is no room for pronunciation to be aware of. In addition to this, learners' pronunciation of several sounds also usually affected by their mother tongue which is Indonesian or Sundanese language. Moreover, this problems give disadvantage for young learners which are often enthusiastic to memorize new words yet mispronounce or misspell them. Even though they can have a good understanding of the English context, they can not speak well. For this reason, as the ideal pronunciation model for their learners, teachers need to be able to implicitly deliver pronunciation concepts during the learning process in the classroom.

Furthermore, problems in pronunciation teaching and learning also stated by Harmer (1979). According to him, the two general problems of it are the intonation of the speaker and what students can hear. Both of those problems are correlated with learners' listening skills or their understanding and teachers' speaking skills or how they manage to pronounce each word during the learning activity. Besides, according to Yoshida, there are three types of problems that are often found in the process of teaching English to non-native speakers. Listeners often merge two different sounds and pronounce them the same way, they often substitute a new sound they don't know with a familiar sound, and they also often expected to hear one particular sound but hear a different one because of the merging and substitute issues before (Yoshida, 2016). Those pronunciation teaching and learning problems are affected by many aspects such as techniques and quality of teaching, the age of the learners, learners' motivation and personality, and the influence of learners' mother tongue or second language (Yoshida, 2016).

Furthermore, there are several techniques that can be used in the pronunciation learning process to decrease the problems. However, for young learners who have different characteristics from teenagers or adults (Brown, 2000), teacher should be aware of their characteristics to create suitable learning activity (technique, method, or strategy) for them and differentiate it from how they teach adult learners. Brown and Lee (2015) suggested some practical approaches based on five young learners' characteristics. The first is intellectual development. Because their way of thinking is a part of their intellectual development, young learners need to start from concrete to abstract thinking to make it easier for them to understand the concept. After that, short attention span. They need to experience an interesting learning atmosphere so they could focus more and avoid boredom. The next is sensory input. They need to have all their five senses stimulated to help them emphasize the concept they learn. The fourth is affective factors. They need to be appreciated and supported so their self-esteem is built and their sensitivity is managed. The last is authentic and meaningful learning. They need to participate in authentic and meaningful learning to keep their motivation and interest in learning.

Regarding that case, there are some research about teaching pronunciation to young learners and the use of pronunciation teaching techniques to them. The first, there is a research by Dwiningrum (2016) that focuses on finding out pronunciation teaching techniques that the teacher used to young learners at SDN 06 Ciputat. The next is a research by Astina et al. (2020) that conducted at SD Negeri 82 Parepare which explores the use of pronunciation teaching techniques and the difficulties in teaching pronunciation there. After that, there is a research by (Sarıçoban & Kuç, 2010) that conducted at Jale Tezer College which focuses on improving Turkish young (fourth-grade) learners' pronunciation ability of problematic consonants using several songs and games. The last, there is a research by (Saldıraner & Cinkara, 2021) that exposes the significance of using songs to teach pronunciation in young EFL classes in south-eastern Turkey.

However, this research is different from several previous research because it is intended to investigate what are pronunciation teaching techniques, what is the most preferred used by English pre-service teachers in the learning process, and the reasons why do they use it to young English Foreign Language (EFL) learners.

B. Research Questions

From the research background, the problems are constructed into the following question:

1. What are pronunciation teaching techniques used by the pre-service teachers to young English Foreign Language (EFL) learners and why do they use them?

C. Research Purposes

Based on the research question above, this research is intended to resulting the following purpose:

1. To figure out what are pronunciation teaching techniques used by the pre-service teachers to young English Foreign Language (EFL) learners and the reasons why do they use them.

D. Research Significance

The findings of this research are expected to give benefits both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, it is useful as a reference to enrich and provide specific perspectives on research related to English pronunciation, its teaching techniques, and the process of teaching it to young EFL learners, especially in Indonesia. Practically, it can be beneficial to build teachers' awareness and improvement in teaching English pronunciation, especially for teachers or pre-service teachers who teach EFL in elementary schools or primary level.

E. Research Scope

The scope of this research is focused on the application of pronunciation teaching techniques to young EFL learners. The participants of this research are two pre-service teachers in the eighth semester or undergraduates in English Education Department of State Islamic University (UIN) Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, West Java.

F. Research Framework

Pronunciation is fundamental to language use in social and interactive contexts because it symbolizes how the speaker and listener work together to build and maintain common ground for creating and understanding each other's utterances (Levis & Reed, 2015). Therefore, among the other primary skills, pronunciation as one of the sub-skills is crucial to be learned in EFL classes. However, in the general English education curriculum, pronunciation stays moderately marginalized (Pennington & Rogerson-Revell, 2019). There is no specific space to teach pronunciation exclusively as a separate subject. The content of English education as a foreign language is commonly focused on mastering grammar and adding vocabulary which attached to the learners' surrounding or daily life.

In order to support the pronunciation learning activity in the classroom, there are several types of techniques that teachers can employ. The techniques are minimal pair drills, listen and imitate or repetition after teacher and recordings, visual aids, phonetic training, tongue twister, reading aloud or recitation, recordings of learners' production, developmental approximation drills, practice of vowel shifts and stress shifts related by affixation, checking pronunciation in a dictionary, direct instruction, transcription, guessing stress placement in words, rhyming, acting out dialogue, elements of drama, and recognizing sounds (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010; Szyszka, 2016).

Beside English teachers, pronunciation teaching techniques can also be used by pre-service teachers during their training. Pre-service teachers are college or university students who teach learners at schools under the supervision of an experienced teacher as part of their education degree requirements (“Pre-service teachers” 2010). They study pedagogical knowledge and are trained their teaching capability in order to become professional teachers. For their teaching practice training, they usually help teachers at primary, secondary, or high schools.

At primary level of schools, students there are all young learners. Young learners are children from the first year of formal schooling (five or six years old) to the age of eleven or twelve (Skočdoplová, 2012). During this age, they can slowly relate logical thinking to concrete problems because they learn effectively through concrete experience in certain contexts. To handle this situation, Uysal and Yavuz (2015) claim that educating young learners using Total Physical Response (TPR), which was established by James Asher, is an excellent technique to deal with the issue because the method keeps children involved in the learning process while linking the context of language with physical movement.

Based on the analysis above, this research focuses on investigating what kind of pronunciation teaching technique prefer used by pre-service teachers to young EFL learners. Furthermore, it concentrates on analyzing whether or not the reason for its usage is related to their characteristics or the classroom environment.

G. Previous Researches

Even though pronunciation is not explicitly taught in English learning activities to young learners, there are some kinds of research regarding its teaching techniques as follows:

The first is a research by Nicky Dwiningrum (2016). It was written as her thesis at the Department of English Education at State Islamic University (UIN) Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta. This research was focused

on the use of techniques to teach English pronunciation. It used qualitative method and applied case study design. The participant of this research was English teacher who teach sixth-grade young learners at SDN 06 Ciputat. Its data was collected by doing observation, interview, and analysis of the teacher's plan and syllabus. The data of the research showed that the teacher used repetition and chain drills in the classroom activities.

The next is a research written by Astina, Nurhamdah, and Amzah (2020). It was published in the *Inspiring: English Education Journal* Volume 3 Number 1 of 2020. The aims of this research were to describe the pronunciation teaching technique that the teacher used and the difficulties in teaching pronunciation to young learners. It applied case study design and used qualitative method. The participant of this research was English teacher who teach fifth-grade young learners at SD Negeri 82 Parepare. Its data was also collected through observation, interview, and document analysis. The data of the research revealed that repetition drills and visual aid were used by the teacher.

The third is a research written by Arif Sariçoban And Albina Kuç (2010). It was published in the *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences* 2 (2010) 943-947. The purpose of this research was to improve the pronunciation of Turkish young learners using several songs and games. It used quantitative method and applied experimental design. The participants of this research were 18 fourth-grade young learners at Jale Tezer College. Its data was collected by giving a pre-test to the learners first and then creating the experimental and control groups for them to observe. The data of this research showed that the experimental group of young learners who were given pronunciation exercises using songs and games showed a better improvement than the control one.

The last is a research written by Gizem Saldıraner and Emrah Cinkara (2021). It was published in the *PASAA Journal* Volume 62 of 2021. This research intends to expose the significance of using songs to teach pronunciation in young EFL classes. It used quantitative method and applied

quasi-experimental design. The participants of this research were 72 young learners between age of 10 to 12 in a state secondary school in South-Eastern Turkey. Its data was collected by using texts for pronunciation selected from six different songs to present both pre-test and post-test for the control and experimental groups. The teacher also kept a personal note about the student and classroom situation. This research discovered that the use of songs in pronunciation teaching shows a positive outcome on young learners' motivation and pronunciation ability compared to the use of texts only.

However, this research is different from those previous research before. It inspects pronunciation teaching techniques used to young learners and the participants of this research are eighth-semester pre-service teachers in English Education Departement of State Islamic University (UIN) Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung who did their teaching demonstration or practice.

