**THE USE OF MINIMAL PAIR TECHNIQUE IN TEACHING PRONUNCIATION AT THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS**

**OF SMAN 4 BANTIMURUNG**

**Isna Nur**

English Education Department

[Isnanur7177@yahoo.com](mailto:Isnanur7177@yahoo.com)

Indah Fadhilah Rahman

[Indah.fadhilah@uin-alauddin.ac.id](mailto:Indah.fadhilah@uin-alauddin.ac.id)

**ABSTRACT:** This objectives of this research were to find out (1) Use of minimal pair technique in teaching pronunciation at the second year students of SMAN 4 Bantimurung. (2) Whether the minimal pair technique effective in teaching pronunciation or not at the second year students of SMAN 4 Bantimurung. This researcher applied quasi-experimental design with non-equivalent controlled group design. The sample was taken by using purposive sampling that devided into two groups were **25** students as experimented class and **25** students as controlled class. The result of the data indicated that there was a significance difference between students’ post-test in the experimented class and the controlled class. The mean score of post-test **(2.96)** in the experimented class was greater than the mean score of post-test **(2.2)** in the controlled class and the standard deviation of the post-test **(0.83)** in experimented class was greater than the standard deviation of the post –test **(0.4)** in controlled class and the value of t-test **(5.84)** was higher than t-Table **(2.021).** Based on the result of this study implies that use of minimal pair technique was effective to improve the students’ pronunciation ability at the second year students of SMA Negeri 4 Bantimurung. Besides, the significant improvement can be seen from the students’ response to researcher’s performance. They seem more active during teaching learning activity. Therefore, the researcher suggests that the English teacher should implement minimal pair technique in teaching pronunciation in order to improve students’ pronunciation ability.

**Keywords:** Pronunciation, Minimal Pair Technique

**INTRODUCTION**

P

ronunciation is one of the language components in English which is needed to be learned to support the development of language skills mastery of the students specially in speaking, and it hold an important role in English teaching since mostof country has totally different pronunciation counted Indonesia.

There are excessive differences between English Language and Indonesian Language especially in it symbol and sound.For instance,English language has vowel and consonant sound changing after becoming word. Whereas, Indonesian pronunciation has no various sound after becoming word. For instance, if the consonant /s/ sound is combined with /k/ /i/ and /d/ sounds in “kids” /kidz/, the /s/ sounds becomes /z/ or voiced sound. While Indonesian for instance if the letter M /m/ combined with sound /a/ and /s/ sounds in word is “Mas” /mas/ there is no vowel sound changing at all.Ramelan (2005:5) said the greater similarity between them; the less difficult it will be for various sounds after becoming a word.

Teaching pronunciation in the classroom involved many challenges, for instance, about the time. English is learning at the second year students of Senior High School only two hour in a week. This statement mean that in teaching-learning English process in Indonesia still has limited time, so there is no adequatetime to provide proper attention in pronunciation. Another problem is, the students’ mother tongue which is influencing them in pronouncing the English words, the students’ problems is appeared when they try to transferring their first language into their target language (English). Furthermore, the other problem faced by students is the difficulties of students in differentiating the pronunciation of the words that have similar sound. They also pronounce the English word as written. For example in English *“Umbrella”* pronounced /ʌmˈbrelə/, but isna pronounce it /Umrella/ the same as written word.

According to Harmer (2007: 59), for all those people who learn English, being made aware of pronunciation issues will give them benefit not only to their own production but also to their own understanding of spoken English. This means, the students who have good pronunciation, they can speak and understand the spoken English and being understood by the others. Therefore it is prominent for the students to learn pronunciation.

Based on to the researcher’s observation which was done on 9th November 2016 at the second grade of SMAN 4 Bantimurungin class XI IPS 1 and unstructured interview with the English teacher of this classroom, the researcher found some problems that were appeared concerning students’ ability in pronunciation. The common problem that the research found in this class is the students have difficulty in differentiating the pronunciation of words that similar in sound. For instance, students difficult differentiating and pronouncing vowel sound in words *least / li:st /* and *list /list/.* In addition students also have difficultyin differentiating and pronouncing consonant sound for example the words *live / live /*and *life / life/.*

A numbers of students’ problems above are very prominent to solve. Therefore, referring to the way to solve the students’ problems above; the researcher used an interesting technique which was called minimal pairs. So far it is considered to be a good way of learning English pronunciation.

Fromkim, Rodman, &Hayms (2003: 277) stated that, *minimal pair is two words which different meanings that are identical except for one sound segment that occurs in the same place in the string*. According to Crystal (2008) stated that, a minimal pair carries two words which are similar to each other except for only one sound which can be vowel as well as a consonant (for example, cat and bat, it and fat and so on). It is also supported by Tuan, he explains that, Minimal pairs are pairs of words that differ in meaning on the basis of a change in only one sound. Based on the three explanation above the researcher can conclude that minimal pair is a pair of words which differ by only one sound. Teaching pronunciation by using this technique, supposed be able to help students to establish the habit of thinking in English.To distinguish the English sound that has the similar sound obscurely by pairing those two words, so it could be easy to recognizewhether the soundpronounced contextually or not, because wrong pronunciation could be misunderstanding and obstruct the communication fluency.

Technique of minimal pair is interesting activity because it is considered easy to understand and effective. Besides, the students would know many English words. So the students not only had good pronunciation but also enriched their vocabulary.

That is the reason why these problems should be studied by the researcher in writing her thesis with the title “The use of minimal pair technique in teaching pronunciation at the second year of SMAN 4 Bantimurung”. Technique of minimal pair hopefully helps the students to distinguish the similar sounds in English word theoretically and contextually and to practice their fluency and accuracy in pronouncing words.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

Tuan (2010)in his research *“Teaching English Discrete Sound Trough Minimal Pair”.*In his research, he wanted to know how far minimal pairs is facilitate non-majored students at Hung Vuong University in recognizing and producing English discrete sound as well as in what way and to what extend do minimal pairs facilitate the teaching and learning of English discrete sound. The result of this research was both teacher and students are appreciate minimal pairs as tool of teaching and learning. The students’ recognition and production in English discrete sound also showing an improvement.

Fatmawati(2014) in herresearch *“The Application of Minimal Pair to Improve the Pronunciation of Voiced and Voiceless Sounds (A True-Experiment Research at the eighth grade students of SMPN 13 Palu in Academic year 2013/2014).* Sheobserved the application of minimal pairs to improve the pronunciation of voiced and voiceless sounds. In the end of her research she found that the application of minimal pair can improve the pronunciation of the students.

Nuraeni (2015) in her thesis*“The Effectiveness of Minimal Pairs toward Students’ English Pronunciation (A Pre-Experimental Research at the seventh grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 17 Ciputat in Academic year 2014/2015)*. The objective of her research was to assist students in distinguishing between long and short vowel by using minimal pair in improving students’ pronunciation. The results of her research showed that there was improvement of students’ pronunciation after being taught using minimal pairs. As her conclusion, minimal pair technique is effective and helping the students’ ability and achievements in pronunciation.

Putri (2015) in her thesis *“The Effectiveness of Minimal Pairs Drills toward Students’ Ability in Pronouncing Similar Sound of Words (A Quasi-Experiment Study in the Eight Grade MTs.KhazanahKebajikan in Academic year 2014/201)”.*She concludes that there is significance effect of minimal pairs drill technique on students’ ability in pronouncing similar sound of word. It was proven by the data shown. The value of count­was 2.25 while the value of ttable­­ in the significance level 5% was 2.02. Therefore the score of counts­higher than tt­able­or 2,25>2.02. It means that the alternative hypothesis (H­a­) is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected (H­0).

Mahmood et al (2015)*,* in his research *“The Effectiveness of Minimal Pairs in Teaching Phonemic Transcription”*. In his research the researcher wanted to know the effectiveness of minimal pairs in developing students’ recognition of English phonemes. The result of this research showed that the experimental group performed far better that the control group due to the treatment, it is mean that minimal pairs is effective in developing students’ recognition of English phonemes.

Sari (2011), in her thesis entitled *“Improving Students’ Pronunciation by Using Minimal Pair Drill ( A Classroom Action Research at Grade VII.3 SMPN 66 Jakarta)”.* She concluded that the implementation of minimal pair in improving students’ pronunciation is success since the criteria of success were achieved. The criterion of success that has been agreed by the teacher and researcher is if the improvement from pre-test to post-test is 30%. And the result was 34,01%, the improvement of students’ mean score from pre-test result to post-test.

Based on some reviews of related research above, the different between my researches were: in Tuan, he used minimal pair in teaching English discrete sound, in Fatmawati, she used the Application of minimal pair to improve the pronunciation of voiced and voiceless sound. In Nuraeni, she used minimal pair technique to improve students’ ability in differentiating long and short vowel. In Putri, she used minimal pair drills towards students’ ability in differentiating the pronunciation of similar sound. While inMahmood, he used minimal pair in teaching phonetic transcription to know the effectiveness in developing students’ recognition of English Phonem. While In my research I used minimal pair technique to teach pronunciation focused on consonant sound.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

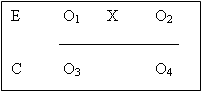
In this research, the researcher asserted quasi-experimental research design. According to Nunan (1991: 105) said that quasi experimental research is defined as experimental design which is conducted as if it look like the real situation.

The form of Quasi-Experimental design used in this research was NonequivalentControl Group Design with experimental class and control class to find out the enhancement of students’ ability in differentiating the pronounciation of the same sound of words by using minimal pair technique.

In the experimented class, the researcher aplied minimal pair technique in teaching pronunciation while in controlled class used conventional technique. The researcher used pre-test and post-test design in both experimentedand controlled class. The aim was to prove or disprove a hypothesis mathematically, with statistical analysis.

This was the model of Quasi Experimental Design, exactly Pre-test-Post-test Control Group Design.

Table 1. Research Design



E O1 X O2

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

C O3 O4

Where:

E : Experimental class

C : Controlled class

O1 : Pre-test (in experimental class)

O3 : Pre-test (in controlled class)

X : Treatment that will be given for experimental class

O2 : Post-test (in experimental class)

O4 : Post-test (in controlled class)

(Sugiyono, 2010:116)

**FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

Findings

* + 1. The classification of students’ pre-test and post-test score in experimental class

The following tables showed the classification of frequency and percentage the score of students’ pronunciation at the second year students of SMAN 4 Bantimurung in pre-test and post-test of experimented class.

**Table 4.1**

**The rate percentage of score experimental class in pre-test**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No | Classification | Score | Frequency | Percentage |
| 1 | Very Good | 4.01-5.00 | 0 | 0% |
| 2 | Good | 3.01-4.00 | 0 | 0% |
| 3 | Average | 2.01-3.00 | 4 | 16% |
| 4 | Poor | 1.01-2.00 | 11 | 44% |
| 5 | Very Poor | 0.01-1.00 | 10 | 40% |
| Total | | | 25 | 100% |

The table above showed the rate percentage and frequency of score experimented class in pre-test. It showed that none of the students (0%) can be classified very good and good in pronouncing the minimal pair, 4 students (16%) as an average score, 11 students (44%) as a poor scorein and 10 students (40%) classified as a very poor score.

**Table 4.2**

**The rate percentage of score experimented class in post-test**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Classification** | **Score** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| 1 | Very Good | 4.01-5.00 | 1 | 4% |
| 2 | Good | 3.01-4.00 | 5 | 20% |
| 3 | Average | 2.01-3.00 | 11 | 44% |
| 4 | Poor | 1.01-2.00 | 8 | 32% |
| 5 | Very Poor | 0.01-1.00 | 0 | 0% |
| Total | | | 25 | 100% |

The table 4.2 above showed that in post-test, there were 1 students (4%) got very good score, 5 students (20%) got good score, 11 students (44%) got average score, 8 student (4%) got poor score and none of the students got very poor score.

Based on the result above, it can be conclude that the percentage in post-test was higher than the percentage in pre-test.

1. The classification of students’ pre-test and post-test score in controlled class

The following tables were showed the classification of frequency and percentage the score of students’ pronunciation at the second year students of SMAN 4 Bantimurung in pre-test and post-test of controlled class.

**Table 4.3**

**The rate percentage of score controlled class in pre-test**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | **Classification** | **Score** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| 1 | Very Good | 4.01-5.00 | 0 | 0% |
| 2 | Good | 3.01-4.00 | 0 | 0% |
| 3 | Average | 2.01-3.00 | 3 | 12% |
| 4 | Poor | 1.01-2.00 | 12 | 48% |
| 5 | Very Poor | 0.01-1.00 | 10 | 40% |
| Total | | | 25 | 100% |

The table above shows the rate percentage and frequency of the students’ controlled class in pre-test. It shows that none of the students got very good and good score, 3 students (12%) got average score, 12 students (48%) got poor score, and 10 students (40%) got very poor in pronouncing minimal pair.

**Table 4.4**

**The rate percentage of score controlled class in post-test**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **No** | | **Classification** | **Score** | **Frequency** | **Percentage** |
| 1 | Very Good | 4.01-5.00 | 0 | 0% |
| 2 | Good | 3.01-4.00 | 2 | 8% |
| 3 | Average | 2.01-3.00 | 2 | 8% |
| 4 | Poor | 1.01-2.00 | 18 | 72% |
| 5 | Very Poor | 0.01-1.00 | 3 | 12% |
| Total | | | 25 | 100% |

The table above shows that in post-test, there were none student (0%) got very good score, 2 students (8%) got good score, 2 students (8%) got average score, 18 students (72%) got poor score, and 3 students (28%) got very poor score.

Viewed from the result above, it can be conclude that the percentage in post-test was different in the rate percentage in pre-test.

1. The mean score and standard deviation of experimented class and controlled class

After calculating the result of the students’ score, the mean scores and the standards deviation for both classes can be presented by the following table.

**Table 4.5**

**The mean score and standard deviation of experimented class and controlled class in pre-test**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Class** | **Mean Score** | **Standard Deviation** |
| Experimented | 1.76 | 0.72 |
| Controlled | 1.72 | 0.62 |

The table above shows that, themean score in pre-test of experimented class was (1.76) and the standard deviation was (0.72), while the mean score of students in controlled class was (1.72) where the standard deviation was (0.62). It means that, the students’ ability in pre-test were still in the same level.

**Table 4.6**

**The mean score and standard deviation of experimented class and**

**controlled class in post-test.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Class** | **Mean Score** | **Standard Deviation** |
| Experimental | 2.96 | 0.83 |
| Controlled | 2.2 | 0.4 |

The table above shows that, the mean score of experimental class in post-test was (2.29) and the standard deviation of experimental class was (0.83), while the mean score of control class in post-test was (2.2) and its standard deviation was (0.4). It means that, the mean score of control class was lower than the mean score of experimental class.

1. Hypothesis testing and the difference significant between the experimented class and controlled class.

The significant score between experimental and controlled class can be calculated by using t-Test. The result of t-Test can be seen in the table 4.7 as follows:

**Table 4.7**

**The significance score of experimental and controlled class**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Variable** | **t-Test** | **t-Table** |
| Post-Test | 5.84 | 2.021 |

The table above shows the result of test of significance testing. For the level of significance (P) 0.05 and the degree of freedom (df) (N1+N2)-2 = (25+25)-2= 48, showed that the value of the t-Test was higher than t-Table. The result of the test clearly showed that there was significance different between the students’ score in the experimental and controlled class after applying the treatment of minimal pair technique. It indicates that the minimal pair technique is very effective in teaching pronunciation. It means H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted because the T-test is higher than t-Table (5.84> 2.021). Hence, the hypothesis of the research is accepted.

**DISCUSSION**

Teaching English Pronunciation using minimal pair technique is suitable to be applied in the classroom. This technique helped the students to increase their English pronnuciation ability. Teaching English pronunciation by using minimal pair technique indicte the students easy to differentiate the similar sound of words. The result of this research shows that the students’ scores in pronunciation test particularly in similar sound of consonant words were improved after the treatment in experimented class using minimal pair technique.Most of them got average score, some got good score and there was one got very good score in post-test.

Based on the finding above and as it was stated in the *chapter II page 26*, that there were some advantages of minimal pair technique in teaching pronunciation, which were: 1) the teaching material can be given gradually and regularly, which can make it easier to remember, 2) minimal pair technique effective in facilitates pronunciation acquisition, 3) minimal pair can helps students in practice listening which is also can enrich students’ vocabulary. Besides, minimal pair technique also has disadvantage for example; the students likely not hear the differences between the words so they did pronounce the words incorrectly.

The analysis of the mean score gap in the post-test between the experimented and controlled class ensured if the technique was effective.The mean score of the students inexperimented class was 2.96 and 2.2 for controlled class. It means the gap of the students’ score of the experimented and controlledclass was 0.76. The explanation of the gap between the two classes indicates that the experimented class showed higher score than the controlled class.

The alternative hypothesis of this research would be accepted if the t-test is higher than t-table value. The result of the hypothesis test showed that t-Test(5.9) was higher than t-Table (2.021). Therefore, null hypothesis (H0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H1) was accepted.

According to those statements above, the researcher concluded that minimal pair technique was giving significance effect towards students’ ability in pronouncing similar sound of consinant words.

**CONCLUTION**

After analyzing the data, the researcher makes conclusions based on the result of the data analysis.

1. The researcher concluded that the application or the use of minimal pair technique waseffective in teachingpronunciation at the second year students of SMAN 4 Bantimurung. It can be seen by the result of the data analysis. There was significant different between the score’s result in pre-test and post-test. The student’ score in pronunciation test before applying minimal pair technique in teaching pronunciation were still low. It was different from the students’ ability after applying minimal pair technique in teaching pronunciation. It can be found in the mean score of the students’ in pre-test and post-test.In the pre-test the score was 1.76 while the result of post-test increased to 2.96. Obviously, it defined that the pronunciation of the second grade students at SMAN 4 Bantimurung was improved afterthe treatment.
2. Minimal Pair Technique was effective to used in teachingpronunciationparticularly to consonant words that similar in sound.

**SUGGESTION**

Based on the conclusions above, the researcher would like to deliver some suggestion go to:

1. The teacher, first, since pronunciation tends to be the component of language skill in teaching and learning English, it is very crucial to give more attention on it by providing enough time to focus on improving students’ pronunciation. Second, the teacher should creatively find some novel methods which can motivate students in learning English and the teacher also should provide the students with more media that can support the material given, such as recording of native speaker, dictionary, and pictures and so on. Third, the researcher also suggests using Minimal Pair Technique as a method in teaching pronunciation and improving the material of minimal pair not only from text book but also from other sourses.
2. The students, the researcher suggest to the students to keep practice the minimal pair to improve their pronunciation of similar sound. And be good learner who respect their teacher by pay attention to the lesson for supporting the learning process run well.
3. Next, for the next researcher who want to use minimal pair technique in conducting their research, they should provide many more pairs of words that consisted of sounds will be tested before doing the treatment.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Arikunto, S. *ProsedurPenilaianSuatuPendekatanPrakts*. Jakarta: Pt. RinekaCipta, 2006.

Avery, Peter and Susan Ehrlich.*Teaching American English Pronunciation.*2nd Edition. Oxford: Oxford Edition Press, 2009.

Barlow. Jessica A. And Judith A. Geirut.*Minimal Pair Approaches to Phonological Remediation*.Seminar in Speech Language 2002.Retereive from [www.researchgate.net/](http://www.researchgate.net/) On September 15th 2017.

Basri, H.*A Course Book For English Phonology 1*. Palu: Taduloka University, 2006.

Bluman, Allan G. Elementary Statistic: *A step by step Approach*. New York: the McGraw-Hill Companies, inc, 2004.

Byrne, Donn. *Teaching Oral English*. Long Man Publishing Group, 1987.

Dalton, E &Seidlhofer, B. *Pronunciation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2007

Fatmawati, T. *The Application Of Minimal Pair To Improve The Pronunciation of Voiced And Voiceless Sounds*. Palu: 2014.

Fromkin, V., Rodman, R., &Hymas, N.*An Introduction To Language: Seventh Edition*, 2003.

Gay, L.R. *Education Research: Competencies for Analysis and application.*8th Edition.United State: Earson Merrill Prenfile Hall. 2006.

Heaton, J. B. *Writing English Language Tex*t. New York: Longman Group UK Limited, 1975.

Hermer, Jeremy. *The Practice of English Language Teaching*.4th Edition. New York: Longman, 2007.

Hornoby,S.A. *Oxford Advanced Learners’ Dictionary*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Jones, Daniel. *The Pronunciation of English*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1986.

Kelly, Gerald. *How To Teach Pronunciation. England:* Person Education Limited, 2000.

Kelly, Gerrald.*HowTo Teach Pronunciation*. Malaysia: Longman, 2007.

Kenwothy, J. *Teaching English Pronunciation*. London: Bluestone Press, 1987.

Lenneberg, E.H.*The Geological Foundations of Language*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1967.

Mahmood, A. *Effectiveness Of Minimal Pairs In Teaching Phoneme Transcription*. Pakistan: 2015.

MarrianeCelce-Murcia, Donna M. Brinton. and Janet M. Godwin. *Teaching Pronunciation: A Refference for Teachers of English to Speaker of Other Language.*New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Nuraeni. N. *The Effectiveness Of Minimal Pairs Towards Students’ English Pronunciation*. Ciputat: Skirpsi on SyarifHidayatullah, unpublished 2015.

Otlowsi, M. Pronunciation: *What Are The Expectation?* The Internet TESL Journal.Retrieved from [**http://www.iteslj.org./**](http://www.iteslj.org./)Article/Otlowsski Pronunciation.Htmlon September 26 th, 2017.

Putri, FaraZikara. *The Effectiveness Of Minimal Pair Drills Toward Students’ Ability In Pronouncing Similar Sound Of Words.* Jakarta; Skripsi on SyarifHidayatullah, unpublished 2015.

Puwanto, N. *Prinsip-Prinsip Dan TeknikEvaluasiPengajaran*. Bandung: Pt. RemajaPesdakarya, 1992.

Ramelan.*English Phonetics.* Semarang: Ikip Semarang Press, 1985.

Sari, Y. *Improving Students Pronunciation by Using Minimal Pair Drills*. Skripsi on SyarifHidayatullah State Islamic University; Jakarta: Unpublished 2011.

Selveira, Rosane. *Pronunciation Instruction Classroom Practice and Emperical Research*.Linguagem&Ensino: Santa Catarina, 2002.

Sugiyono. *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan: PendekatanKuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D.* Edition XXII; Bandung: Alfabeta, 2015.

Sutomo.*TeknikPenilaianPendidikan*. Surabaya: BinaIlmu, 1985.

Tithraj, Acharya. *“Teaching Pronunciation” in Kamal Raj Dahal (ed), circle of English Teacher (CET)*: JOURNAL autum issue VOL II, P 86. Nepal: CET, 2010.

Tuan.LuuTrong. *Teaching* English *Discreet Sound Trough Minimal Pair*. Journal of Language Teaching And Research, 2010.

Ur, Penny. *A course in Language Teaching: Practice and Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Yates, Linda. *Fact Sheet-What Pronunciation Is?.*Sydne: Amep Research Centre, 2002.