

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I.I Background of the study

English pronunciation is an essential sub-skill to be mastered by English language learners. This is one of the keys to ensure a good communication between English language learners with others. Gilakjani (as cited in Manjula Reddivari, 2021) defined pronunciation as the method by which speakers produce meaningful speech sounds while speaking. Likewise, Roach (2009) views pronunciation is the act of producing the sounds of a language. That means the EFL students should be able to produce the sounds of words when they would like to utter, so that the listeners can understand them. From these two experts, it can be concluded that pronunciation of the speaker should be clear and understandable to the listener. As we know, we can communicate sensibly if we comprehend what people said.

In teaching English pronunciation, the students may listen to the teacher while the teacher guides them in pronouncing words correctly, such as the students may be given a text by the teacher and asked to read it aloud. Meanwhile, there is a different thing if they must read a text without guidance from the teacher. The main obstacle that occurs to EFL students is they don't have good English pronunciation. Thus when they speak, an English teacher could not catch properly the meaning of the things they said. As Goodwin wrote

(cited in Celce-Murcia, 2006) that pronunciation is the language feature that most readily identifies speakers as non-native. This case discovered in the classroom when the researcher as a preservice teacher carried out practical field experience at a vocational high school namely SMK Negeri 3 Kupang. She found out some mispronunciations committed by the students, such as ‘approximately’/a'prɔzɪmätli/, ‘vacation’/vou'keɪʃən/, ‘usually’/'ju:zuli/, ‘always’/'a:lwäs/, ‘flour’/'flɔ:ɪ/, ‘culture’/'kultʃur/, and ‘present’/'prez.ənt/. Besides, the equal case took place in previous research as well. In Noviyenty & Putri’s research (2020), the students at IAIN Curup mispronounced several words like Wednesday /'wɜ:nzdeɪ/ to be /wednesdə/, Brother /'brʌðə/ to be /brɑ:de(r)/, and Plastic /plæstɪk/ to be /plɑ:stɪk/. The error in pronunciation happened due to the interference of Rejang language as students’ mother language. The problem was also found in Tambunsaribu & Simatupang’s research (2021), in which some of the students pronounced the letter ‘e’ mostly as {ɛ} sound. Some words have different sound for letter ‘e’ which sounds {ɪ} as in the word ‘eleven’ and ‘hero’, they mispronounced these two words into {ɛlɛv(ə)n} and {hɛrɔ}. They only imitated Indonesian sounds for letter ‘e’.

English Pronunciation difficulties encountered by EFL students due to influences of their mother tongue, sometimes mother tongue interference learner in learning pronunciation of the other language. According to Ladefoged, Carter & Nunan (2001), mother tongue has clear influence on learning (L2) second language pronunciation. Where L1 and L2 rules are in conflict, errors are expected to be committed by foreign learners. According to Avery and Ehrlich (cited in

Thanasoulas, 2003), students' mother tongue can have three distinct effects on how their target language, or L2 is pronounced. The first is that some sounds from the target language are missing from the students' native tongue. In Indonesian, the sounds /tʃ/, /ð/, and /æ/, for instance, are absent. The second, the rules of combining sounds into words in the target language are different in the learners' mother tongue. The third, the rule of stress and intonation in terms of words and sentences in students' native language is different with the target language.

In addition, the importance of conducting this research is not only explain related to the problem of EFL students. Nevertheless, the researcher will introduce and encourage the EFL students to use the HelloTalk application as a learning media. This application can be utilized by EFL students to help them learn English pronunciation effectively. The HelloTalk application includes a technology can facilitate communication among individuals who find themselves distant in spaces, times, and cultures (Guillén et al, 2020:321). HelloTalk is renowned application used by people in the world to learn language or they call it as a language exchange app. Rivera (2017:384) defined the HelloTalk application as a conversation-based mobile language learning tool that facilitates cultural immersion, language learning, and practice by allowing users to connect and chat synchronously with native speakers from different parts of the world. From these statements, the HelloTalk app will progress EFL students' pronunciation and potentially learn pronunciation independently.

1.2 Research Questions

1. How is HelloTalk application used in teaching pronunciation to the EFL students?
2. How is EFL students' pronunciation improved after being taught using the HelloTalk application?

1.3 Objectives of Research

1. To find out how HelloTalk application is used in teaching pronunciation to the EFL students.
2. To find out how the EFL students' pronunciation is improved after being taught using the HelloTalk application.

1.4 Significance of the Research

The significance of this research is to improve students' pronunciation using HelloTalk. The HelloTalk app is an instructional media introduced by the researcher to the students in the classroom. It can assist learners who have problem in English pronunciation and they realise pronunciation is a key skill in learning English. Hence, they can employ it to learn how elicit great pronunciation. In addition, they have competence in communicating particularly in English gets much better.

1.4.1 Theoretical Significance

In this study, it is obvious that the pronunciation has become the main effect for EFL students and the HelloTalk application is a feature utilized by them to learn pronunciation. In fact, the HelloTalk application is going to give the positive impact of EFL students. This application is one of the renowned applications used by people all over the world as a medium of learning. Additionally, there are native speakers available as their partners in learning pronunciation. As the evidence, it had been stated by Rivera (2017) that “this application is the 1st global language learning and culture exchange community, connecting you with native speakers of other languages (English, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, French, Mandarin Chinese, Cantonese, Portuguese, German, Italian, Russian, Arabic, and 100 more) for free.”

1.4.2 Practical Significance

As a practical, the HelloTalk application can be applied by the EFL students in the classroom. They can learn practically to connect and discuss with native speakers directly. In addition, this application can be useful as their references in learning English as well as pronunciation.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Research

The target of this study is to investigate students' English pronunciation at SMK Negeri 3 Kupang and the effectiveness of using HelloTalk application as a learning media to help EFL students in learning pronunciation. In this case, the

researcher will provide recount text as the students' practice material in class. The recount text is used by the students to tell about their experiences in learning pronunciation. Next, a native speaker will give corrections for their pronunciation via voice notes on HelloTalk.

1.6 Definition of Terms

To better comprehend this study, the following terms are defined in the context of this research. They are English Pronunciation, EFL, HelloTalk application, and CAR.

Aboe (2018) defined that, English pronunciation is the act or result of producing the sound of speech, including articulation, stress and intonation often with reference to some standard of correctness or acceptability.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is the term used to describe the study of English by non-native speakers in countries where English is not the dominant language (Nordquist & Richard, 2020).

HelloTalk application is the renowned application used by the people in the world so that they can find out the native speakers and dicusses with each other regarding any topics using English. It is called as a language exchange. In addition, this application would like to aid non-native speakers to improve their language especially in English (Rivera, 2017).

Classroom Action Research (CAR) is action research that implemented by the teachers in the classroom. It is a series of action research carried out in cycles to solve problems (Danumiharja, 2014).