

CHAPTER I

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1.1 Background of the Study

Since the primary purpose of language is communication, using language to communicate should be the central in all classroom language instruction. Ponsonby (1987:7) states that language as a means of communication has three components, namely (1) structures, (2) words that convey meaning, (3) sound, stress, and intonation patterns, which combine to make up 'Pronunciation'. If you communicate only through written words, you will need only the first two of these components. If, on the other hand, you want to be able to understand the spoken language, and to be understood, you will need all the three components.

According to Ponsoby (1987:vii), communication is a two-way process, understanding other people when they speak and conveying what you want to say so that other people can understand you. For the first, understanding, we need (a) knowledge and (b) awareness, sensitivity. For the second, conveying meaning, we need (a) knowledge, (b) awareness, and (c) control. If you have no idea, for instance, that there is an important difference in English between 's' and 'sh' (phonetically written s and ʃ), and furthermore you cannot distinguish between the two, you will not know how to react if someone asks you to 'bring in the seat'- or was it sheet? This situation does not seem very serious, but it could be.

Ponsonby (1987:viii) states that if there were two or three mistakes in your pronunciation, the consequences could be (a) listeners are offended, (b) listeners

may misunderstand what you have said, (c) listeners find difficulties to comprehend what you have said, (d) listeners are exhausted by the effort of trying to interpret what it is you are trying to say that they give up and go and talk to someone else. Kenworthy (1987:19) also points out that pronunciation has a strong influence on the other people's judgments about the attitudes, character, ways of behaving, of a particular speaker. Therefore, it is important to teach pronunciation and to make learners aware of the importance of good pronunciation for ease of communication.

Many students want to be able to speak English well, with a pronunciation which can be easily understood both by their fellow-students and by English people. But the reality shows that most university students still pronounce some words incorrectly when they speak. In order to improve the students' pronunciation, it is part of the teachers' job to raise the students' awareness of shortcomings in their pronunciation.

Based on the writer's observation, the technique that the teachers use in the teaching of English pronunciation involves merely the drilling of students on the various sounds of English in which the teacher provides a model for learners to listen to and repeat. This is important in teaching pronunciation, but as the teacher always uses the same procedure during the lesson, it tends to make the students easily get bored and therefore they lack of interest. This makes learning even more difficult for the students, just because they are gradually losing interest in what they are learning.

Seeing this problem, the writer wants to propose a way of teaching pronunciation which can help teachers vary their technique. As it is said by Monreal (1982:44) that variety is one of the most important factors in maintaining a high level of motivation and interest among students. One of the ways to make teaching interesting is the use of games.

Ong Kian Ann (1981:8) suggests the use of games as a medium of teaching: "In the field of language teaching, games have helped to make the task of learning less boring and tedious. Used appropriately, language games can stimulate the interest of pupils and help them acquire certain essential language skills". Weed (1972:29) also says that games can promote and maintain interest in the recognition and pronunciation of different sounds, from a phonetic unit up to complete sentences and beyond.

Language learning is hard work. Effort is required at every moment and must be maintained over a long period of time. Wright (1984:1) says that games help and encourage many learners to sustain their interest and work. In line with Wright, Carrier (1980: 6) states that games are invaluable to the teacher of a foreign language because they provide an opportunity for students to use their language skills in a less formal situation and enable students to practice formally-learned language in a more stimulating way.

The use of games in teaching pronunciation can avoid the student's laziness and boredom. Both the teacher and the students can also enjoy a relaxed situation, meanwhile the student's are learning the language. Sometimes they really do not feel that the process of learning is implied in the games.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Based on the background of the study, the writer wanted to propose games as a means of teaching pronunciation. For this reason, the problem is presented in the following research questions:

1. What are the advantages of using games for teaching pronunciation at the university level?
2. What kinds of games can be used to teach English pronunciation at the university level?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Derived from the statement of the problem above, the objectives of the study are to:

1. describe the advantages of using games for teaching pronunciation at the university level.
2. propose some kinds of games which can be used to teach pronunciation at the university level.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The writer hopes that this study would be helpful for English teacher in teaching pronunciation more creatively by using games. Besides, it is expected that this study can increase the students' motivation and concern for good pronunciation and help them to pronounce English better than they do now.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study is concerned with the games as an additional means for teaching pronunciation at the university level.

There are some aspects of pronunciation, but in this study the writer limits it on stress, rhythm, and intonation. The writer focuses on these features because these features are important in communication. If learners stress the wrong syllable and use incorrect rhythm patterns, it would be difficult for native-speaking listener to understand what is said. More seriously, if learners use improper intonation, they can be perceived as abrupt or rude.

1.6 Definitions of Key Terms

To avoid misinterpretation that might happen in reading this thesis, the writer provides some definitions of key terms used in this thesis. The definitions of the key terms are as follows:

a. Game

Brown (1977:292) defines game as a structured activity with set rules for play in which two or more students interact and compete, and usually there is a winner.

Another definition of game according to Jill (1987:iii), a game is an activity with rules, a goal and an element of fun.

b. Pronunciation

According to Croft (1968:5), pronunciation is the production of speech sounds for communication.

1.7 Research Method

In this study, the writer uses library research. The writer look for information relevant to this study in books, articles, magazines, and papers of the previous studies. Then she explores the theories and references needed to complete this study.

1.8 Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter I is the introduction which discusses the background of the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, the significance of the study, the scope and limitation, the definition of key terms, research method, and the organization of the study. Chapter II is concerned with the theories of pronunciation teaching goals, factors affecting pronunciation learning, and the aspects of pronunciation. Chapter III deals with the role of games in the teaching of pronunciation. The suggested games to be used for teaching pronunciation are presented in Chapter IV. Chapter V is the last chapter of this study. In this chapter, the writer presents the conclusion and gives some suggestions concerning the topic of this study.