

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Research

In order to be able to use the three language skills; listening, speaking, and reading EFL learners need to master how to pronounce English words. Therefore, the best time to teach pronunciation is in their early days of study English.

English and Indonesian do not have the same system of language it makes English words difficult to be pronounced by Indonesian as good as natives do. Dardjowidjojo (2009: 49) point out that there are two types of problem in learning pronunciation: phonetic and phonemic. He also gives further explanation about Indonesian learners' English pronunciation problems such as Indonesian learners get difficult to utter the English words which contain English consonant that are not found in Indonesian such as /θ/ and /ð/. The goal of learning pronunciation is neither to attain native-like accents nor to promote comfortable intelligibility to native speakers, but to ensure mutual intelligibility among non-native speakers of English (Jenkins, 2000; McKay, 2002).

Besides, learners' pronunciation competence is able to measure students reading age, which level are they now. By knowing their reading age, students are motivated to improve their competence and to reach higher level of reading age.

Most Indonesian are still unfamiliar with reading age itself, which is used by most native countries, they use reading age in adjusting students' textbook. Thus, they will have appropriate textbook based on students' reading age and students will not find any difficulties in understanding the material.

It is why the researcher is interested to conduct a research on the Reading Age of Junior High School Students measured by their pronunciation competence.

B. Reasons of Choosing the Topic

The research will be conducted based on some reasons:

1. Most Indonesian's students are not familiar with reading age, which can help them to measure their English competence.
2. Indonesia do not have reading age guidelines established, so that young EFL learners in Indonesia are not aware with their reading age and have high possibility that they will have inappropriate text book.

C. Problems of the Research

Based on the identification of the problems the writer formulates the research problems as follows.

1. What is the average reading age of Junior High School Students' based on their pronunciation competence?
2. Is their reading age compatible with their grade?

D. Objectives of the Research

The objectives of this research were to find out:

1. To find out the average reading age of Junior High School Students' based on their pronunciation competence.
2. To find out the compatibility of reading age with their grade.

E. Contribution of the Research

This research can be useful for:

1. Teacher

Through this research, the teacher will considerate students' reading age before teaching therefore the student will not find difficulties in teaching learning proses. Wherefore teacher will prepare the material such as text, video or book in accordance with students' reading age.

2. Junior High School

Junior High School could make a test in which the purpose is to know about students' reading age and the teacher could be given the instruction by the school to teach and to make the lesson plan considering students' reading age.

3. Indonesian Ministry of Education

Through this research, the Ministry of Education could make regulation towards the reading series based on students' reading age.

4. Research development

This research can be used for references in the next research.

F. Clarification of Terms

The title of this study is Junior High School Students' Pronunciation Competence: A Study on Reading Age. The terms that are stated in the title above need to be defined in order to get some insight or perception of the key terms. The clarification terms used in this research are explained as follows.

1. Pronunciation Competence

Pronunciation refers to the way in which a word is [pronounced](#). Pronunciation is receiving more attention in many EFL classrooms since it is recognized that students should primarily acquire as fundamental skill because it can affect accuracy and comprehension (Celce-Murcia et al., 2000; Derwing et al., 2006; Hahn, 2004).

Furthermore, students' English pronunciation competence is one of the important aspects to be gained. Their competence of English pronunciation is not expected to be perfect but leastwise their words could be understood.

2. Reading Age

Reading age is child's competence in reading measured against the average competence of children of the same age (Dictionary of Information, 2006). Native countries use child's reading age as a standard in making student's reading series. They have their own standard in creating students' reading series. However, reading age is not familiar for Indonesian who learns English, most of Indonesians do not care about their reading age whether they have hard time in the process of learning English or not.