CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Pronunciation Competence

1. Definition of Pronunciation

   An essential part of learning a new language is to acquire a good pronunciation. Gilakjani (2012: 96) defined that pronunciation is a set of habits of producing sounds. The habit of producing a sound is acquired by repeating it repeatedly and by being corrected when it is pronounced wrongly. It includes attention to the particular sounds of a language (segments), as aspect of speech beyond the level of the individual sound, such as intonation, phrasing, stress, timing and rhythm.

   In addition, Fraser (2001:6) stated that pronunciation is an essential ingredient of oral communication, which also includes grammar, vocabulary choice, cultural consideration and so on. He also stated "excellent grammar can be completely masked by poor pronunciation". This means that learners who have better pronunciation will have more opportunities to communicate naturally with native speakers.

2. The Element of English Pronunciation

   James in Gilakjani (2012: 98) assumes that a learner's pronunciation has three basic levels:

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Level 1: People often do not understand what speaker is saying. The speaker uses the wrong sounds when making English words or uses the wrong prosodic features when making English sentences.

Level 2: People understand what the speaker is saying, but the speaker's pronunciation is not pleasant to listen because the speaker has a distracting and/or heavy accent.

Level 3: People understand the speaker, and the speaker's English is pleasant to listen to.

Burns in Gilakjani (2012: 121) stated that the various features that make up the production of sound in English are:

a. Suprasegmental Features

Suprasegmental features relate to sounds at the macro level. Advances in research have developed descriptions of the suprasegmental features of speech extending across whole stretches of language (*prosody*).

The effective communicative pronunciation competence can be achieved through improving suprasegmental production in preference to segmental. Linking, intonation and stress are important features for effective pronunciation at the supresegmental level.

1) Linking

Linking refers to the way the last sound of one word is joined to the first sound of the next word. To produce

connected speech, people run words together to link consonant to vowel, consonant to consonant, vowel to vowel and also shorten sounds and leave others out altogether.

a) Consonant to vowel *an_Australian_animal*

b) Consonant to consonant *next_week; seven_months*

c) Vowel to vowel, some sounds such as *r, w,* and *j (y)* are inserted to link adjacent words ending and beginning with a vowel: *where (r_) are you?; you (w_) ought to; Saturday (y_) evening*

d) Sounds that are left out. Some sounds are so short that they virtually disappear (become elided): *does (-h)e like soccer?*

2) Intonation

Intonation can be thought as the melody of the language – the way the voice goes up and down according to the context and meaning of the communication. For example, note the differences in:

a) Can you take the scissors? (request)

b) Can you take the scissors! (command)

3) Word stress

Word stress relate to the prominence given to certain words in an utterance. These focus words are stressed (made long and loud) to convey:

- the overall rhythm of the utterance

- the most meaningful part of the utterance.

At the meaning level, some words are given more prominence that others to foreground which meaning is important. For example:

a) Can YOU take the scissors? (not someone else)

b) Can you take the SCISSORS! (not the knife)

b. Segmental Features

Segmental aspects of the sound system include individual vowels and consonants. Because segmental phonology os relatively more easy to be explained and taught than the supra-segmental features, some studies focus on studying segmental phonology in preference to suprasegmental features. Segmental features relate to sounds at the micro level. They include specific sounds within words (for example, *l* as in *lamp*, *r* as in *ramp*, *a* as in *hat*).

The sound systems of consonants, vowels or their combinations are called *phonemes*. Phonemes are sounds that will have different meaning when pronounced incorrectly. Compare the changes of meaning in: pet – pat; lamp – ramp; about – abort.

a) Consonants

Consonant is a part of words. Without consonants, a word does not have meaning or it will be difficult to understand. Consonant can be voiced (a part of the mouth is closed and the air behind it released suddenly, for example *v* as in *van*, *b* as in *bun*) – or unvoiced (air is pushed through a narrow part of the mouth, for example *f* as in *fan*, *th* as in *thin*).

b) Vowels

A vowel is a speech sound produced with vibrating vocal cords and continuous unrestricted flow air coming from the mouth. Vowel sounds are articulated as single sounds. They can be shorten (*ae* as in *cat)* or long (*a* as in *cart*).

c) Diphthong

A diphthong is a combination of two vowel sounds. It begins as one vowel and ends as another. For example *ei* as in *Kate* or *oi* as in *boy*.

3. Pronunciation competence

According to Oxford Dictionary, competence is the fact of having the ability or skill that is needed for something. The word competence derives from 'compete' that means to try to win or achieve something. Pronunciation competence is one's ability in mastering pronunciation, and usually symbolized by one' ability in communicating with native.

B. Reading Age

1. Definition of Reading Age

   According to the dictionary of information and library management (2006:172) reading age is a child's competence in reading, measured against the average competence of children of the same age. Mac Nab (2008:1-2) also stated that reading age is when a reading test is administered the tester is able to calculate the child's reading age; this figure represent the reading performance of average child who has this age. For example a reading age is 7.6 (expressed in years and months) would be the performance of an average child at 7 and a half years. A reading test not only provides this figure but also enables the tester to find out the percentile point at which the child reading.

2. The Procedure of Reading Age Test

   Reading age is level of comprehension for children and it closely follows their chronology age. Educationalist requires being able to assess the minimum reading age of their student so that he/she can give an appropriate book for their students.

   According to BURT (19974:1-2) there are several things that should be considered;

a. Before begin the test

   1) None of the words used in the test should be taught to the child.

2) Place the students being tested at their comfort.

3) Offer support and honor their performance.

4) Record students answer.

5) The words in the test are presented in groups of ten, begin with the easiest

b. Instructions

1) Each student should be tested individually.

2) The test should be held in a place which is quite and free from distraction.

3) The students should begin at the top of the page and read the words from left to right.

4) The test should go until student has made ten errors in sequence.

c. Recording the result

The examiner should keep a record of the student responses as they read through the words in the test. Use photocopy of the test and tick the correct responses as they made.

d. The answer that is allowed

1) Take student first response as their answer.

2) Do not tell the student whether their answer right or wrong.

3) Only ask the student to repeat a word if the answer is not clear enough.

4) Let the student read at their own spead.

5) Guessing is allowed.

e. Scoring the results and the meaning

Count the word that have been read correctly. The result is a raw score, then convert it into a reading age by looking at the table and compare with the chronology age (actual age) of the students.

3. Reading Age calculation

Subjective assessment has been shown to be inaccurate, with teachers (perhaps because of their reading competence and familiarity with the subject) usually under estimating the difficulty of the text.

There have been many attempts at designing a formula to find the reading age. The formulates are given below;

a. Forest formula

$$R = 25 - \frac{N}{10}$$

When N is the number of syllable words in passage of 150 words.

b. FOG index (Mc Laughin 1969: 639-646)

$$R = \frac{2}{5} \frac{A}{n} + \frac{100\,L}{A}$$

A: number of words in the passage

n: number of sentences

L: number of word containing 3 or more syllables (excluding the '-ing' and 'ed' at the end)

c. FLESCH formula

Score = 206.85 − (0.846 x 5) − (1.015 x W)

S: total number of syllables in 100 words

W: average number of words in a sentences

Score	Reading Age
≥ 70	$5 + \dfrac{150 - Score}{10}$
$61 - 69$	$5 + \dfrac{150 - Score}{5}$
$51 - 60$	$5 + \dfrac{150 - Score}{3.33}$
≤ 50	$5 + \dfrac{150 - Score}{6.66}$

d. Schonell Reading Age

Reading age $= \dfrac{Number\ of\ Words\ Correct}{10} + 5$