Developing Articulator Model to Enhance Speaking Skill in French for Students of SMA and SMK in City and Regency of Bandung

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Abstract:

French phonology system clearly distinguishes phonemically between /v/-/f/, /z/ – /s/, /u/ – /y/, /o/ – /ɔ/, /s/ – /z/, /œ/ – /ø/, etc. For example to pronounce words such as *ba<u>se</u>* /baz/, *ba<u>sse</u>* /bas/, *ba<u>che</u>* //, there are three different consonant phonemes /z/, /s/, /ʒ/. Furthermore, we have *rue* /ry/ and *roue* /ru/, *but* /byt/ and bout /bu/ which have two different phonemes /y/ and /u/. Meanwhile, Indonesian language does not have too much variation in its phoneme system; pronouncing *baju, saku, buku* and *surat* needs only one phoneme; /u/. Based on these facts, we need some pronunciation model to make it easier for students speaking French correctly.

The purpose of this study in general is to develop a model for teaching pronunciation in French to enhance speaking competency for students of SMA and SMK in City and Regency of Bandung following French as a foreign Language.

Specifically, the purposes of this study are: (1) analyzing theories in French pronunciation correctly; 2) identifying problems faced by students at SMA and SMK in City of Regency Bandung.

The data needed in this study is collected through literature study and field observation.

Data analysis is carried out according to the needs in this study that is through both qualitative and quantitative analysis. We hope that our finding can be useful for both teachers and students in increasing their skill in speaking French.

Key words: Articulator model, Speaking, Pronunciation, Vocal, Consonant, Semi-Vocal

Introduction

In term of language learning, Samsuri (1993:8) suggests that foreign language should be taught by listening and imitating the pronunciation, while reading and writing skill should be built after the mastery of language orally. This is in accordance with Guy CAPELLE (in Léon, 1964: xii) who argues that teaching pronunciation should be given at the very beginning of foreign language learning program. In addition, Léon affirms that teaching pronunciation should be part of French as Foreign Language class because it is required to

master two language skills: listening and speaking. He also suggests that whatever methods used, phonetic can be part of foreign language teaching material. It is not only to be given to beginners but also to students of all levels.

French as a Foreign Language learnt formally in Indonesian high schools as well as universities has phonology system different than Indonesian. This difference can cause problems for learners. The first simplest problem for a student learning French is difference in the sound between Indonesian language and French language.

In General High School (SMA) and Technical High School (SMK), pronunciation teaching is not delivered explicitly but integrally within French subject in general. Hence, it is not surprising that many students still produce many mistakes while pronouncing French words.

Based on these facts, it is necessary that teachers are provided with a model in teaching pronunciation in French. One of the models existing is *Articulator* model. It is a model of teaching French pronunciation through mechanisms of speech organ. It is hoped that with this model students can enhance their speaking skill.

The general purpose of this study is to develop a mode in teaching French pronunciation to improve SMA and SMK students' speaking skill in City and Regency of Bandung. More specifically, it is aimed to:

1. Carry out a theoretical analysis in correct French pronunciation;
2. Identify the problems encountered by students of SMA and SMK in Regency of Bandung in pronouncing French.

The result of this study may be elaborated in finding new theories and solve problems in teaching-learning of French pronunciation at schools. Moreover, hopefully, it can be of practical use for teachers and students of French as Foreign Language.

(1) Finding of New Theories

Study of *Articulator* model in French as Foreign Language has not been carried out. Besides this model is still theoretical and has not been applied practically. Therefore, it is hoped that the result of this study could complete and develop theories existing in teaching-learning process of pronunciation.

(2) Solution of Problems in teaching-learning of French pronunciation

It is hoped that the result of this study can give general idea of difficulties encountered by students when pronouncing French, thus provide a clear and practical solution in a form of developed articulator model. Practically, the result of this

investigation will give ways and basics in correct French pronunciation which includes the mechanism of speech organ.

(3) Practical use for teachers and students

It is hoped that the result of this study can give benefits for teachers in a form of teaching materials, techniques and assessment in French pronunciation. As for students, the model can be used as reference to make French pronunciation easier and in turn ameliorate their speaking skill.

The method used in this study is semi-experiment with pre-test and post-test group design as follows:

$$0_1 \text{ X } 0_2$$

where:

0_1 = pre-test

0_2 = post-test

X   = treatment

We carry out two tests, before and after the experiments.

We have chosen to carry out the experiments in SMA and SMK of City and Regency Bandung for three reasons.

First, within formal institution, French as Foreign Language is only introduced in grade 10, in contrast with English which is already introduced from the first year of elementary. Second, based on the first reason and related to speaking skill in French, the authors consider it necessary to introduce a model in teaching pronunciation in both institutions mentioned to anticipate mistakes in French pronunciation. Moreover, speaking skill is a matter of practical and habit. In another word, if a student is getting used with pronouncing wrongly, it is likely that this will continue to the next step of learning. Third, teachers of French in SMA and SMK do not use the norm of teaching-learning model of pronunciation according to CEF (Common European Framework). Forth, there is a need in helping teachers and students of French as a Foreign Language in teaching-learning process of French pronunciation.

The population of this study is students' speaking skill studying at SMA and SMK equipped with language laboratory and located in City and Regency of Bandung from academic year of 2007/2008. The sample is chosen randomly; one class of each school.

The instrument used is articulator model in French language tested to students of SMA and SMK in City and Regency of Bandung as treatment instrument. The test instrument is French pronunciation test carried out at the language laboratory of each school. Following

is the process of experiment: Students pronounce the phonemes, words, chain of words and are recorded in a cassette. The recording is the data to be analyzed in this study.

Bibliographical Study

French Phonetic System

Human beings have speech organs and almost all speech organ movements can be learnt. Léon Monique (1964:3) states as followes:

"Indeed, each language uses a sound material easy to learn. However, difficulties begin when using this material with articulator, rhythmic, melodious, and certain linguistic habit.

In addition to the statement above, Lyons John (1969: 102) argues that: "Inability to produce certain sounds is generally a result of environmental factors in childhood, the main factor being that of learning one's native language as one hears it pronounced.

Mutiarsih (2000:99-104), using contrastive analysis, sees that learners whose mother tongue is Sundanese have difficulties in French pronunciation different to other Indonesians. Generally, these learners have difficulties in pronouncing the phonemes /f/, /v/, /z/, /y/, /œ/, /ø/. As for the other Indonesians are likely to have difficulties in pronouncing the phonemes /v/, /œ/, /y/, /ø/. Phonologically, learners of FFL are likely to transfer Indonesian or regional sound system to French when they pronounce French phonemes, words, phrases and sentences. Besides, other problem identified is the unwillingness among certain students to function their speech organs optimally.

French has three sound classes: vocal, consonant, and semi-vocal or semi-consonant (Joëlle Gardes-Tamine, 1990:9).

In written and oral language, French graph and *phono* are not like Indonesian; the later needing only one *phono* and one graph. In French, one *phono* can be written in several graphs.

    a. French Vocal system

French language has 16 vocals consisting of 12 oral vocals /i/, /ɛ/, /e/, /a/, /ɑ/, /o/, /ɔ/, /u/, /y/, /ø/, /œ/, /∂/, and 4 nasal vocals /ɛ/, /ᾶ/, /œ/, /õ/, and 3 semi-vocals, /j/, /μ/, /w/.

<u>Oral Vocal</u>

1. /i/ as in *ni̲d* /ni/ meaning nest
2. /y/ as in *r̲u̲e* /ry/ meaning street
3. /u/ as in *l̲o̲u̲p* /lu/ meaning wolf

4. /e/ as in *dé* /de/ meaning dice

5. /ɛ/ as in *dès* /dɛ/ meaning since

6. /ø/* as in *peux* /pø/ meaning can (v)

7. /œ/* as in *peur /p*œ/ meaning to be scared

8. /∂/ as in *le* /l∂/ representing masculine article

9. /o/ as in *pot* /po/

10. /ɔ/ as in *fort* /fɔr/ meaning strong

11. /a/ as in *part* /par/ meaning leave

12. /ɑ/ as in *pâte* /pɑt/ meaning pasta or paste

The symbol /ø/ is French phoneme pronounced for closed syllable while the symbol /œ/ is for open syllable.

Nasal vocal

13. /ɛ/ as in *vin* /vɛ/ meaning wine

14. /œ/ as in *parfum* /parfœ/ meaning parfume

15. /õ/ as in *long* /lõ/, meaning long

16. /ɑ̃/ as in *an* /ɑ̃/ meaning year

Semi-Vocals

17. /j/ as in *hier* /jɛR/ meaning yesterday

18. /ɥ/ as in *nuit* /nɥi/ meaning night

19. /w/ as in *voiture* /vwatyR/ meaning car

Language Teaching Model

Educators have put efforts to continually explore any teaching model for successful education. Based on what they have developed, we now know many kinds of teaching model. Some models focus on individuals and their unique personality, others focus on group dynamics, interpersonal skill and social commitment. These models represent what groups of models known as "Information Processing, Personal Social and Behavioral". Their application depends on the teaching context i.e. teaching objectives and characteristics, students' needs and characteristics, environment and situation, etc. Vivian Cook (1975:56) proposes teaching and learning style for foreign language: Academicals, Audio-lingual, Informative-Communicative, Social Communicative and SOS (Structural-Oral-Situational).

The term "style" is related with "fashion" or changes or alteration from one method to others in teaching. Basically, teaching employs groups of teaching techniques applied to reach learning-teaching objectives. In other words, a teacher can make use of several teaching techniques at a time in his way. There are five teaching styles that can be related to learning a second language: *academicals style* which is usually applied in classes, *audio-lingual style* which focuses on structural oral practice, *informative communicational style* which focuses on information exchanges or transfer (not social interaction among participants), *social communicational style* which focuses interaction among individuals and *SOS style* which is a blend between academicals style and audio-lingual style.

Teaching Model for French as a Foreign Language

When we discuss about teaching models, we come to different terms whose meaning or purpose is the same. Other than model, the terms "pattern" and "method" are also employed.

Several language teaching models can be used in teaching FFL. Tagliante (1994:32) states a couple of methods focusing in mastering speaking skills.

1. Direct method: This method focuses on oral language especially on the formation of language sounds so that students can speak with correct pronunciation.

2. Structural Global Audio Visual Method: This method emphasizes on oral language so that students can speak and communicate in daily context.

3. Communicative Method: This method stresses on oral language and a little bit of written language so that students can speak and communicate in daily context.

4. Functional Method: This method accentuate on both oral and written language depending on the purpose of learning.

According to Pierre LEON (1964:11), as a basic exercise in French pronunciation, students can imitate the pronunciation of i, a, ou; gradually they distinguish the sounds for i, e, a, o, ou. Then, they can encounter words which have i, u and ou: *si, su, sous* and sounds of e, eu and o in words such as *ces, ceux,* and *seau*. To introduce nasal sounds, learners can be helped by comparing the oral vocal /e/ in *vais*, /a/ in *va*, and /o/ in /veau/ followed by the sounds in *vin* /vɛ/, vent /vã/, and vont /võ/. This kind of exercise is very important because the result of one's utterance can influence the meaning of a word or a sentence.

Beside contrasting words, we can also give learners exercise by using phrases. For example:

- to distinguish between closed and open vocals: *ce livre/ces livres, ce garcon/ces garcons, je dis/j'ai dit, je fais/j'ai fait.*

- to distinguish between back and front vocal: *Je vaux/je veux, il vaux/il veut, un pot d'eau/un peu d'eau, un petit pot/un petit peu*

- to distinguish between nasal and oral vocal: *il vient/ils viennent, il tient/ils tiennent, un bon chien/une bonne chienne, un moyen difficile/une moyenne difficile* (1`975 ;18-19)

  Exercises for pronouncing French consonants can be carried out as follow:

- comparing…. : *un habit/un avis, un abbé/un avé, le paire/l'affaire, épais/effet*

- comparing silent and unsilent: *nous savons/nous avons, dessert/desert, coussin/cousin, il a bouché/il a bougé*

- comparing from articulator point: C'est assez/c'est tâché, c'est faussé/c'est fauché, au riz/au lit.

  The followings are exercises to distinguish the semi-vocolas :

  - Distinguishing /j/ and /y/ : *Vous avez scié/vous avez sué.*

  - Distinguishing /ɥ/ and /w/: *C'est à lui/ C'est à Louis.*

  - Distinguishing /v/ and /vw/: *Vous lavez/vous l'avouez*

  - Distinguishing (consonant+w)/(consonant+rw) : *quoi/crois, toi/trios*

Articulator model

This model illustrates an image of left side face pointing at articulator spots and places and the mechanism of organ speech in formation process or French phonemes. It also presents French words and sentences.

We describe characteristic model used and lesson plan for teaching French pronunciation.

    a. Characteristics

      Model   : Articulator

      Aim   :

          1. To train students to pronounce French phonemes and words correctly.

          2. To get students used to pronounce French phonemes, words and sentences correctly.

          3. To help students in mastering speaking skill in French easier and faster.

Students' characteristic : bilingual (Indonesian and regional)

Learning assumption : Behaviorism theory on habit formation

Teaching assumption : Teacher controlled class.

Techniques : Drilling; students pronounce repetitively French phonemes properly. After they are able to pronounce the phonemes accurately, they move to pronouncing words. Finally, they can read French sentences right.

b. Manual

Teaching pronouncing using this method starts by describing left face pointing at articulator spot and places and the mechanism of organ speech when forming French phoneme. Phonemes are pronounced according to their sound by explaining step by step its sound formation. The explained phoneme is linked to form words and at last sentences.

c. Process

Lesson starts by introducing French phonemes in general. Each phoneme is taught according to its sound. For example, it begins by introducing the /e/ sound formed by pressing the tongue to lower part of teeth, and the mouth is slightly open from the /i/ sound. The lips smile slightly. Then, other phonemes are introduced: /ɛ/, /ə/, /a/, /o/, /ɔ/, /∂/,/ø/, etc.

After students can produce French phonemes correctly and appropriately, teachers show lists of words using the phonemes learn, for example: /e/ in *des* /de/, *tes /te/, mes* /me/, *nez* /ne/, *les* /le/, *ces* /se/.

Having mastered the pronunciation of words formed from phonemes learn, those words are arranged to form sentences, for example: *Ils vont au cinema avec leur ami* /ilvõocinemaavek lœRami/; *Je prends l'avion pour aller à Jakarta* /ʒəpRɑ̃ laviõpuRaleaʒakaRta/.

As mentioned above, it is expected students can pronounce properly each phonemes learnt within French words or sentences.

At this process, teacher's role in class is very much needed. (S)he has to continue training her/his students to be able to master French phonemes sound by explaining gradually how to produce them.

Based on the observation until now, students are still not able to apply these phonemes to pronouncing French words and sentences. This is caused by the defectiveness of articulator model which focuses only to mastering the sounds without paying attention to how the sounds of words are formed.

Result and Discussion

In this section, we describe and analyze data collected from French pronunciation test; pre-test and post-test, test result and articulator model.

From the result of pre-test, we can get information about students' basic level of French pronunciation. On the other hand, we can see improvement in their level after receiving treatment consisting of teaching-learning process of French pronunciation using articulator model.

Description and Analysis of French Pronunciation Pre-test Result

As mentioned in previous section that sounds of language are divided into two classes: vocal and consonants.

Vocals are generally classified according to three articulator dimension: the level of mouth opening (open and close), highest tongue position (frontal, middle and behind) and lips position (round and not round. Consonants are classified to several categories. Consonant formation is based on four factors: articulator region (relation between articulator and articulator point), articulator means (…), vocal cord (silent and sound), and air circulation way (oral and nasal).

The form of the test given to respondent is French sound test consisting of: phonemes pronunciation, word phrases pronunciation, and word chain pronunciation.

Based on the analyzed post-test result, it can be concluded that SMA and SMK students as respondents still have difficulties mainly pronouncing sounds of /œ/, /õ/, /y/, /œ/, /ø/, /ɔ/, /ɛ/, /v/, and /f/.

More clearly, we describe the percentage of mistakes done by respondent based on types of question:

Phoneme pronunciation

1.   20% students pronounced [∂] for [e].

2.   40% students pronounced [e] for[ɛ].

3.   20% students pronounced [ɑ] for [a].

4.   35% students pronounced [∂] for [a]

5.   25% students pronounced [Ɔ] for [O].

6.   70% students pronounced [O] for [Ɔ].

7.   65% students pronounced [f] for [v].

8.   40% students pronounced [p] for [f].

9.   50% students pronounced [j] for [z].

10.   25% students pronounced [s] for [ʃ].

11.   40% students pronounced [z] for [ʒ].

12.   75% students pronounced [r] for [R].

13.   20% students pronounced [y] for [ɥ].

14.   10% students pronounced [e]for [∂].

15.   35% students pronounced [∂], [O], [u] for [Ø].

16.   50% students pronounced [∂], [u] for [œ].

17.   30% students pronounced [on], [O] for [õ].

18.   15% students pronounced [je], [u], [i] for [j].

19.   75% students pronounced [∂], [on], [õ] for [œ]

20.   35% students pronounced [en], [e], [ã] for [ɛ].

Word pronunciation

Generally, the students do not have difficulties in pronouncing words, but they still do mistakes in pronouncing several words.

1.   Word *stylo* is pronounced [stil] and [stailo] : 15%

2.   Word *robe* is pronounced [Robe] and [Rob] : 30%

3.   Word *fromage* is pronounced [frɔmaj], [frɔmas] and [frɔmaz] : 50%

4.   Word *vin* is pronounced [fin] and [pin] : 60%

5.   Word *pain* is pronounced [pã] and [pain] : 65%

6.   Word *bon* is pronounced [bon] : 40%

7.   word *dans* is pronounced [dõ] and [dans] : 55%

8.   Word *acteur* is pronounced [akt∂R] : 20%

9.   Word *dimanche* is pronounced [diman] and [dimas] : 35%

10.   Word *bonjour* is pronounced [bojur] and [bonjur] : 5%

Word pair pronunciation

1. 50% students were still not able to distinguish between the sounds [∂] and [ɔ]

2. 40% students were still not able to distinguish between the sounds [f] and [p]

3. 40% students were still not able to distinguish between the sounds [ɔ] and [∂]

4. 50% students were still not able to distinguish between the sounds [ɥ] and [u]

5. 10% students were still not able to distinguish between the sounds [s] and [ʃ]

6. 30% students were still not able to distinguish between the sounds [ʃ] and [s]

7. 60% students were still not able to distinguish between the sounds [ʒ] and [s]

8. 60% students were still not able to distinguish between the sounds [z] and [s]

9. 40% students were still not able to distinguish between the sounds [ã] and [õ]

10. 75% students were still not able to distinguish between the sounds [ã] and [ɛ], also the sounds [f] and [p].

Word chain pronunciation

1. *Elle voit Michel* :
   - 40% students were still not able to distinguish between the sounds [v] and [f]
   - 35% students were still not able to distinguish between the sounds [ʃ] and [s]

2. *Remi et Directeur*
   - 45% students were still not able to distinguish between the sounds [œ] and [∂]

3. *Cette télévision est chère*
   - 55% students were still not able to distinguish between the sounds [v] and [f]
   - 30% students were still not able to distinguish between the sounds [ʃ] and [s]

4. *Je fais du sport*
   - 40% students were still not able to pronounce the sounds [ʒ].
   - 50% students were still not able to distinguish between the sounds [ɥ] and [u]

5. *Ses parents sont chez Zoé*
   - 25% students were still not able to pronounce the sounds [ã]
   - 35% students were still not able to distinguish between the sounds [ʃ] and [f]
   - 25% students were still not able to pronounce the sounds [e].

Conclusion

Considering that language learnt by students is French whose sound phoneme system is so much different than other language they know, i.e. Indonesian and/or regional language, and then their first difficulty found is to pronounce sound system of the language they are learning.

From collected data of test result, we can conclude that there are two kinds of mistakes produced by students.

First, there are still a lot of SMA and SMK students who are likely to transfer directly Indonesian phonology system or regional phonology system to french when they pronouncing French phonemes, words and word chains, such as the sound /e/ are pronounced /ə/, the sound /ø/ is pronounced /ə/, /o/, /u/.

Second, there were still students who were too lazy to use their speech organ appropriately. For example in pronouncing French nasal vocal /õ/, /ã/, and /ɛ/, they did not really get their lips and mouth to function so that the sound produced /on/, /ə/ and /ã/ are not perfect.

Articulator model used in this study can enhance students' capacity in pronouncing phonemes, words and chain of words. It can be seen from the improvement observed from not being at all to pronounce French phonemes, words and chain of words until being able to pronounce them appropriately.

Suggestion

From the finding of this investigation, it is known that students of SMA and SMK of academic year 2008-2009 are still not able to pronounce French phonemes, words and chain of words. Hence all people associated with this process of teaching and learning FFL may as well pay attention.

First, secretary of curriculum (vice principal) should consider to including pronunciation teaching and learning process as a subject apart in the beginning of the program. This can develop as a habit in pronouncing phonemes, words and chain of words correctly and cultivated earlier in the program.

Second, FFL teachers should give pronunciation exercises by drilling and paying attention to students' weakness so that they do not repeat the same mistake. It is suggested that teachers use articulator model which has been tested for its benefit. This model is proven to be able to enhance students' pronunciation and make students easier and faster in learning a language.

Third, students should get used to practicing pronunciation through reading simple texts loudly to create good habit. Besides, students should have French dictionary which includes the transcript. In this investigation, we still can see some students who pronounced phonemes and words alphabetically. Hence, they need to understand the relation between the sound and writing.

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