CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background of the Study

Language is an instrument to express an idea, opinion, thinking and feeling to communicate. In order to get a good communication, each communicators and hearers should understand for everything they said. Nowadays, English is very important, because it is one of the international languages in the world, which is widely used to communicate among countries to make a good relationship in the areas of politics, economics, social, culture and education. Spoken language is the most common way that is used by people when they want to communicate and interact with each others.

Many people think that the success of learning foreign language is through their speaking ability of that language. As we all know that speaking is a very important spoken language, or we can call it “crucial” part in language learning, because we will never know someone’s language mastery except by knowing their speaking competence in uttering opinions, feeling or idea. Many people also believe that speaking is the most important aspect in foreign language learning. It is all because the goal of learning of foreign language is able to speak the language without any difficulty. If we want to be able to speak foreign language, we must practice it all the time and we can’t speak any foreign language because this is not our mother tongue that can be form automatically in our mind and society.

In fact, English is not just a written lesson. In reality there are lots of students who can write but cannot speak up. The students were still afraid of making mistakes in grammar and afraid their words or sentences couldn’t be understood by the teacher or their friends. It will be a big problem for the students in pronouncing words. Consequently, they won’t be able to master English completely.
Based on the English teacher’s information in SMA Negeri 1 Boyolali, the students’ motivation was considered low. This condition made the students hard to focus on the lesson that was being taught. The teacher informed that the most difficult skills in English faced by the students are speaking and writing. After observing the class, the researcher found out that the students often make some mistakes especially when they produced oral English during the lesson. It was revealed the students’ inability in pronouncing appropriately. Consequently, they have difficulty in understanding material especially English pronunciation. For example, when I was teaching speaking with the theme of past continuous tense, the students were doing a lot of mispronunciation, especially for new words that they had heard. They pronounced vaulting [ˈvɔːlɪŋ] as [ˈvɔːlɪn], rescue [ˈrɛskjuː] as [rɛskjuː], follow [ˈfɒləʊ] as [ˈfɒləʊ] and cetera. They got difficulties in differentiating English pronunciation from Indonesian pronunciation. Pronunciation is the most important thing in doing communication. When people communicate with other people, the first thing which they will notice is their pronunciation, not their grammar or their vocabulary.

The researcher gave some question to the students in order to know students’ pronunciation skill of X2 in SMA Negeri 1 Boyolali. Based on the interview result, the researcher found that students had problems in pronouncing words especially for new vocabulary. Besides that, some students had low motivation to learn English and they lacked of confidence because they were afraid of making mistakes.

In the pre-test, the researcher asked the students to tell about their unforgettable experience one by one in front of the class. According to the pre-test result, the researcher concluded that the students’ pronunciation ability was low. Their mean score was under the passing grade.
Table 1.1. Students’ mean score of pre-test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Average of mean score (Pre-test)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Word Stress</td>
<td>13.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sentence Stress</td>
<td>12.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rising Intonation</td>
<td>12.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Falling Intonation</td>
<td>13.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Segmental phonemes</td>
<td>14.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean Score</td>
<td>66.81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the pre-test, the lowest score was detected in the rising intonation. The student spoke very quickly with flat intonation and wrong pronunciation. They could not distinguish between rising intonation with falling intonation. After looking at the table of pre-test score, we could conclude that students’ pronunciation skill was low. Their mean score was under the passing grade of English subject (>72).

Based on the result of the pre-research during peer teaching and learning process in the classroom, the problems in pronunciation were described as follows:

1. **Students Pronunciation Skill**

   a) Students got difficulties in pronouncing words, the biggest problem encountered was almost dealing with students’ performance while producing oral form in the speaking class, for instance in making utterances, especially on pronunciation. The students were doing a lot of mispronunciation, especially for new words that they had heard. They pronounced vaulting [ˈvɔːtɪŋ] as [ˈvʌtɪŋ], rescue [ˈreskjuː] as [resjuː], follow [ˈfɔːləʊ] as [ˈfɔːləʊ] et cetera.
b) The students’ conversation was flat, they spoke very quickly without intonation, and they could not distinguish between rising intonation with falling intonation.

c) The pre-test score showed that the students’ pronunciation skill was low. (<72)

2. The Effectiveness of teaching and learning

a) The teacher used conventional method to teach English, he only spoke up in front of the class and sometimes asked the student to read the dialogue in front of the class or answered the question.

b) The teacher provideless model for improving students’ pronunciation. He just drilled the whole students to express the model of expression that being taught once by using repetition drilling only. When the students were drilling to imitate a certain part of expression in the model of dialogue, a number of them just kept silent and were busy with themselves.

c) Actually, the teacher had facilitated the students by using LCD projector, but it could not be used optimally. There was just a transcript of dialogue provided on the screen without any video or audio as the model for the students.

d) The students were passive. They just kept silent pretending they have understood the instruction of the teacher, but actually some of them were still confused of the instruction given by the teacher.

e) The students lacked of confidence, because they were afraid of making mistakes and because they were too shy to speak.

English pronunciation is different from Indonesian pronunciation. This is because the spaces between words in English are different in written form from spoken form. This difference makes most of students unable to pronounce English correctly. Bad pronunciation can be a serious problem if it negatively affects understanding. Based on the result of pre-research, the
researcher concludes that pronunciation needs to get more attention. Then, the researcher intends to improve students' pronunciation ability in SMA Negeri 1 Boyolali.

Pronunciation is one of important aspects in English. Celce-Muria (1996:8) states that intelligible pronunciation is one of the necessary components of oral communication. She also mentions some pronunciation objectives: 1) to comprehend and effectively use English sentence prominence and intonation patterns both in face to face interactions and over the telephone, 2) to gain control over common word stress patterns and apply these to business and marketing terms, especially those describing electronic products, 3) to gain a command of the stress-timed rhythm of English, 4) to apply rules of connected speech (e.g., linking, vowel reduction) to spontaneous oral output, 5) to recognize and gain conscious control over specific vowel and consonant substitution.

To improve the pronunciation’s ability of students, the writer used Meaningful drilling. A drill is “A type of highly controlled oral practice in which the students respond to given cue. The response varies according to the type of drill.” (Matthews, Spratt, and Dangerfield 1991, 210) in article Drills, Dialogues, and Role plays. Spratt also states drills are used usually at the controlled practice stage of language learning so that students have the opportunity to accurately try out what they have learned. Drills help students to develop quick, automatic responses using a specific formulaic expression or structure, such as a tag ending, verb form, or transformation. Drills have been much influence for their behavioristic, stimulus-response nature and for the mechanical, repetitive practice they provide. In classrooms that use the audiolingual method, which became popular in the 1950s, drills are basic to language teaching. Drills can be useful teaching-learning material because they provide practice of small, manageable pieces of language. This helps to build confidence and automatic use of structures and expression that have been drilled. Also, they can be part of a teaching or learning sequence that progresses from more towards less controlled practice.
Mary Spratt (1991) in the same articles notes that drills can be either mechanical or meaningful. Mechanical drills are controlled by the teacher who provides drill cues to which students respond. These drills can give beginning students a chance to articulate the new language fluently. Meaningful drills are controlled by the teacher as well as by the students who must understand the drill cues in order to respond. Meaningful drills are more desirable than mechanical drills because they provide a reason for speaking and are thus more engaging and motivating. Spratt suggests that you can make drills meaningful by using pictures to provide meaning or by giving students choice in their replies to cues. Allowing students' choice means they have to think before they comment. Use the truth principle—students must respond with a true statement about themselves. Here is an example of a meaningful drill to practice the modal "could". It is meaningful because responses are unpredictable and give students choice. Teacher as Student A: I'm bored, Student 1: You could read a book, Student 2: You could go to a movie, Student 3: You could call a friend, Student 4: You could clean up your room.

As we know the purpose of learning process is to improve and achieve an increase in achievement. In the process of teaching and learning activity, a very important aspect for achieving these goals is the participation among teachers and students. The participation between teachers and students is very influential for the achievement of the desired learning goals. It can be interpreted that in a teaching and learning process there must be complicity between teachers and students. The learning process is a very important thing, where the process is going on in the minds of students.

In addition the participation of students in the teaching and learning process is very crucial to improving student learning achievement. It can be concluded that the more students are involved in the process of teaching and learning, and then the greater the achievement will be obtain by the student. The things to consider for achieve this are an effort to improve learning achievements of student, in this case is a learning process as the basis of an activity. A progress will not be obtained without a meaningful effort. An effort
is really needed in terms of increasing students’ achievement. Thus this study is an action research aimed at improving students’ pronunciation skills while engaging students in learning English with Meaningful drilling in the first grade of SMA Negeri 1 Boyolali.

Related with the above phenomenon here researcher was interested in researching one of the methods of languages learning, namely Meaningful Drilling, as an effort to help students learn English pronunciation in English subject. This method has a focused goal of training the correct pronunciation in a language, especially English. Therefore, the researcher examined the influence of the application of this method in improving students’ pronunciation skills. This research was conducted in the form of Classroom Action Research (CAR) with the title “Improving Students’ Pronunciation Skills Using Meaningful Drilling at The First Grade of SMA Negeri 1 Boyolali in The Academic Year 2012/2013”

B. Problem Statement

Based on the background above, the problems that come up in this study as formulated as follows:

1. Does and to what extend the use of Meaningful drilling improve the student’s pronunciation skills of class X2 students at SMA Negeri 1 Boyolali?
2. What is the effectiveness of teaching learning process when Meaningful drilling activities are applied?

C. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the research were:

1. To identify does and to what extent the use of Meaningful Drilling improve the student’s pronunciation skills of class X2 at SMA Negeri 1 Boyolali in the academic year 2012/2013.
2. To describe the effectiveness of teaching learning process when Meaningful Drilling are applied.
D. Benefits of Study

The result of the study is expected to be able to give some contribution for many parties. Below are the significant contributions of the study:

1. The students of the first grade in SMA Negeri 1 Boyolali.
   This report is expected to give benefit to the students of first grade in SMA Negeri 1 Boyolali to improve students’ skill in pronouncing words.

2. The English teacher of SMA Negeri 1 Boyolali, especially the first grades English teachers.
   The result of the study is expected to be one of the consideration English subject teachers in determining a variety of learning models in effective teaching and learning.

3. For the Institution.
   The application of Meaningful Drilling is expected to be a motivation for implementing a model or more varied methods for teachers.

4. The English Education Department, Teacher training and Education Faculty, Sebelas Maret University.
   The writer hopes that this final report could be beneficial for the readers and could be used as the reference for those who are interested in English teaching and learning field.

5. For the Researcher.
   By applying the Meaningful Drilling as a research subject, it is expected to make the good experience for researcher to be applied in the world of education.