

**THE CORRELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION
SKILLS AND THEIR SPEAKING ABILITY IN THE FOURTH
SEMESTER OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT AT UNIVERSITAS ISLAM
MALANG**

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Abstract

English considered as the global link language with paramount relevance in education helps in connecting people of different linguistic backgrounds. The present research focuses on the relationship between students' pronunciation skills and their speaking skills in fourth semester learners in the English Department, Universitas Islam Malang. The research design of the study was correlational quantitative research design, the tools used for data collection included pronunciation assessment and documents review. Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient was used to establish correlation between the two variables, pronunciation mastery and speaking proficiency, and results indicated that there was a strong positive relationship between the two variables with the coefficient $r = 0.859$ and the significance level of 0.05. The findings point out the importance of pronunciation in teaching and enhancing the communication skills among the learners. In particular, students with higher scores in pronunciation have improved speaking skills, thereby proving the role of mastery of correct pronunciation in the acquisition of the language and successful speaking skills. The findings of this study support the notion that specific instructional methods should be incorporated in the classroom to enhance students' overall pronunciation skills to enhance their academic and professional communicative abilities in spoken English.

Keywords: Pronunciation proficiency, Correlation, Speaking Ability.

INTRODUCTION

English, being a global language, is widely recognized as an international means of communication. It is acquired by a vast number of individuals who speak various languages worldwide. In her 2016 statement, Megawati emphasized the significance of English as a global language that facilitates connections between individuals and the world, particularly in the realm of education. There has been a remarkable surge in student enrollment worldwide, particularly among adult and

near-adult learners, within the last 25 years. Ismiatun (2018) stated that the teacher reported that the majority of students showed little enthusiasm in participating in speaking exercises in the classroom. They used to claim to be bored with the activities.

In the era of globalization, pronunciation has often been either intentionally avoided by language teachers or taught implicitly, relying on the learner's ability to imitate sounds and rhythms without explicit guidance. This approach to teaching pronunciation is referred to as the intuitive-imitative method. Harmer (quoted in Mulatsih, 2015) suggests that providing education to these persons regarding pronunciation difficulties will greatly enhance their proficiency in both speaking and understanding English. Indonesia, as a country undergoing a period of change, necessitates the use of English due to the Indonesian government's efforts to enhance several aspects that are common to all nations (Sa'adah 2018).

One of these components is education, which is crucial. In Indonesia, English was acquired and instructed at the junior high, senior high, and university levels. Speaking is one of the four English skills that are instructed at educational institutions. In order to succeed in comprehending the subject, it is necessary across all age groups, from elementary school to university graduate courses. The objective of this study is to showcase the comprehensive range of skills involved in teaching speaking, encompassing more than simply the act of speaking itself. The training of speaking abilities is presented in conjunction with the notion of communicative competence.

The primary argument asserts that in order to achieve proficiency in speaking, learners must acquire expertise in all essential aspects of communicative competence, including linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic skills. In his work, Burke (2017) provided a definition for meaning-creation and meaning-sharing as "the utilization of verbal and nonverbal symbols within various contexts." Proficiency in speaking is essential as it enables individuals worldwide to achieve their objectives and enhance their communication skills. Students initially develop this talent through their inherent aptitude, and then they can further

enhance it as they mature and get more life experience by dedicating themselves to studying English, particularly in the domain of speaking.

Speaking in a natural manner enhances the ability to communicate effectively with others who are native speakers of a language. According to Hoge (2019), being a native English speaker makes it easy for you to interact with clients, establish connections, participate in business meetings, understand films, and secure better job opportunities. In contrast, when students engage in speaking activities, grammar is often overlooked. Certain students believe that grammar can hinder their ability to talk. Speaking while adhering to grammar rules can restrict their ability to express themselves. They are compelled to consider the rules of grammar due to their fear of producing an incorrect sentence.

Santi (2015) conducted a study titled "The Correlation between Students' Pronunciation and Their Speaking Comprehension at the First Semester of Seventh Grade of SMPN 1 Gunung Labuan Way Kanan Lampung in the Academic Year of 2015/2016" for her S-1 thesis. The population of her study comprised the first semester students of the seventh grade at SMPN 1 Gunung Labuan during the academic year 2015/2016. There were a total of three classes. The study's results revealed a robust correlation between students' listening comprehension and pronunciation.

In a study conducted by GNA Sihombing (2014), titled "The Correlation between Students' Pronunciation Mastery and Students' Ability in Speaking at the Second Semester of Eight Grade of SMPN 21 Bandar Lampung in the Academic Year of 2014/2015," a subsequent relevant study was carried out. The participants in her research comprised eighth-grade students from SMPN 21 Bandar Lampung. The study sample has a collective of 143 students. The researcher utilized correlational research methodology. The research sample for her study comprised the eighth-grade students of SMPN 21 Bandar Lampung who were in their second semester. The study demonstrated a noteworthy correlation between the students' proficiency in pronunciation and their capacity to engage in verbal communication.

In addition, the researchers calculated the link between the students' proficiency in pronunciation and their ability to speak, which supported the final hypothesis. The researcher analyzed the strategies she used to facilitate her instruction and acquisition of the English language, particularly in relation to teaching and acquiring oral communication skills with pupils. Therefore, the researcher aimed to employ pronunciation as a method to improve students' speaking proficiency. The objective of this study was to examine "The Correlation between Students' Pronounce Mastery and Their Speaking Ability in The Fourth Semester of English Department at Universitas Islam Malang".

METHOD

This study utilized a correlational research methodology. According to Gay (2006), correlational research is a type of research project in which the researcher does not modify the variable and it is conducted after the fact. Instead, they quantitatively assess the association and its strength by directly measuring the provided correlation coefficient. The objective is to provide a quantitative representation of the relationship between students' pronunciation proficiency and their speaking abilities. The technique utilized pronunciation assessments and document evaluations. The vocabulary exam was formulated to gauge the students' aptitude in enunciation, while the document score was devised to appraise their competence in verbal communication.

The study incorporated two variables, specifically referred to as "X" and "Y". The variables were as specified: The "X" variable in this study was pupils' pronunciation mastery, and the "Y" variable indicated students' speaking abilities. The researcher conducted the study at Universitas Islam Malang. The establishment is located at M.T Haryono 193 street, Malang, East Java, with the postal code 65144. The provided contact number is (0341) 551932. The University of Islam Malang offers a specialized faculty focused on Teacher Training and Education. Within this academic institution, there are various disciplines, including the English Education Department. The researcher gathered data from this particular department.

Sugiyono (2017) defines samples as entities that serve as a representation of the magnitude and attributes of a population. The study's population consisted of students in the fourth semester of the English Education Department at Universitas Islam Malang. The students were divided into three classes, namely class A, class B, and class C. Class A had a total of 33 students, class B had 24 students, and class C had 30 students. Hence, the population comprises a grand total of 87 students. The cluster random sampling technique ensures that any group within the population has an equal probability of being selected as a sample, regardless of the gender distribution. Thus, the researcher employed a lottery system to randomly select two classes. In the end, class A and B were selected as representative samples, consisting of a combined total of 57 students.

An instrument is a tool utilized for the purpose of gathering data. In this investigation, the researcher employed two types of instruments as specified: a pronunciation test and documentation. A proficiency evaluation will be conducted to evaluate the amount of expertise in pronunciation. In this situation, the researcher will introduce a collection of 40 vocabulary words that students must read. Students who possess the ability to fully comprehend all of the vocabulary will be awarded a perfect score of 100 points. The test was developed based on Tussa'adah's research carried out in 2018. The researcher also employed documents to acquire the speaking score of the students. The documentation employed in this inquiry comprised the students' midterm and final results in their speaking proficiency. The speaking proficiency scores of students were collected to investigate the correlation between these two variables.

The result of the data analysis was achieved by utilizing the data percentage technique, which required following a sequence of steps: calculating the mean score, classifying the scores of the pupils, and using specific categories to evaluate the students' proficiency in pronunciation and their speaking scores. Five classes were used to classify the students' proficiency in pronunciation and their speaking scores: Excellent, Good, Average, Poor, and Very Poor. To investigate the correlation between pronunciation proficiency and speaking skills, the researcher utilized a

Pearson Product Moment correlation study with the assistance of SPSS 20.0. The study entailed the acquisition of data in the form of scores. The procedure for data analysis involved inputting the students' evaluations on their proficiency in pronunciation and speaking skills into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), and then performing a Pearson Product Moment link analysis to evaluate the data and determine whether there is a statistically significant link between the students' pronunciation mastery and their speaking abilities among fourth-semester students in the English Department at UNISMA.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the findings of the researcher and offers an in-depth analysis of the data about the relationship between students' proficiency in pronunciation and their speaking abilities. The instruments used in this study were based on the work of Tussa'adah (2018). As the research design used is quantitative, the results and discussion are presented in the form of analytical data using SPSS. The objective is to ascertain the correlation between proficiency in pronunciation and the ability to communicate successfully. The researcher utilized the Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient to determine the correlation between two variables: X (proficiency in pronunciation) and Y (competence in speaking).

The data for both variables were collected through a combination of tests and surveys and processed via IBM SPSS, yielding a descriptive summary. The mean score for pronunciation mastery was 82.55, with a standard deviation of 5.770, while the mean score for speaking ability was 81.62, with a standard deviation of 5.647. The correlation analysis indicated a strong association between students' proficiency in pronunciation and their speaking skills, with a correlation coefficient of 0.859 and a statistical significance level of 0.000, which is below the threshold of 0.05. This indicates a robust correlation between the two variables, falling within the range of 0.80-1.00.

The hypothesis testing confirmed a robust and affirmative correlation between students' proficiency in pronunciation and their speaking skills in the fourth semester of the English Department at Universitas Islam Malang, with the r-

obtained value of 0.859 indicating a highly significant correlation. The discussion elaborates on the significant correlation found between proficiency in pronunciation and speaking skills among fourth-semester students at the University of Islam Malang. The correlation coefficient of 0.859 provides evidence of a positive association between the factors. According to Mistar (2013), the magnitude of correlation was analyzed using the notion of scale, demonstrating a robust connection between the variables within the 0.80-1.00 range. Tussa'adah (2013) emphasized the importance of pronunciation in achieving effective communication, while Gilakjani (2012) noted that inadequate pronunciation skills could decrease learners' confidence and negatively impact their social interactions and evaluations of their reliability and proficiency. Tussa'adah (2018) further argued that pronunciation is crucial in acquiring a foreign language as it directly impacts learners' communication proficiency and performance. The evaluation indicated that while most students have attained a high degree of mastery in pronunciation, a small number have shown lesser proficiency. Based on these results, possessing proficient pronunciation skills is vital for students aspiring to excel in verbal communication, as it facilitates easier and more effective speaking.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The data in the previous chapter was examined using Pearson product-moment correlation to determine the relationship between students' proficiency in pronunciation and their speaking skills in the fourth semester of the English Department at the University of Islam Malang. The study established a positive association between students' aptitude in pronunciation and their capacity to communicate successfully. The study found that the mean score for pronunciation mastery was 82.55, with a standard deviation of 5.770. The mean score for speaking proficiency was 81.62, with a standard deviation of 5.647. The correlation between the two variables was determined to be 0.859, which falls within the range of 0.80-1.00, indicating a robust correlation at a significant magnitude. The hypothesis that there is a strong and positive correlation between pronunciation proficiency and speaking skills among fourth-semester students in the English Department at the University of Islam Malang has been confirmed. To summarize, having a high level

of competency in speaking is a crucial component that helps students improve their speaking abilities. The students' test scores corroborated the research. Mastery of pronunciation is essential for improving students' speaking abilities. The better the students' pronunciation skills, the higher their speaking competence. This indicates that students who have a strong command of pronunciation will excel in their ability to speak.

Based on the research findings, the researcher aims to offer recommendations for students, lecturers, and future scholars. For students, it is imperative to develop a profound comprehension of the English language to improve and perfect their skills, particularly in pronunciation. Students should actively participate in frequent tasks that require the practical application of English. They should utilize the language they have learned from their environment, including interactions with classmates and instructors. Additionally, students must be motivated to attain English language competence to improve their skills, and they should actively participate in English conversations with their peers to enhance their speaking abilities. Students should increase their level of engagement and proactive involvement in learning English and persistently practice to improve their skill level.

For lecturers, English professors should assist students in cultivating their love for learning English and encourage active participation in the learning process. This can be achieved by helping students enhance their pronunciation skills, enabling them to converse more fluently. Teachers should incorporate activities or approaches into the English teaching process to address students' reduced motivation to learn English, particularly in speaking. Instructors should actively use English as the predominant means of communication in the classroom, providing students with additional information from relevant sources beyond the textbook.

For future researchers, it is recommended that the succeeding investigations explore the relationship between supplementary English skills, such as writing, reading, and listening. Correlational research, as previously described, pertains to non-experimental research that has parallels with ex post facto research. Both types of studies use data acquired from prior factors without altering any variables.

Correlational research employs statistical studies to assess the association between multiple variables or sets of scores. The objective of correlation studies is to improve our understanding of important occurrences by detecting relationships between variables.

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