

THE CORRELATION BETWEEN THE STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION MASTERY AND THEIR ABILITY IN SPEAKING

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Abstract

Mostly students cannot speak fluently because they lack of pronunciation of how to pronounce the words correctly. They have difficulty in their conversation comprehending or understanding with someone they talk to because lack of the ability to pronounce the words. The objective of this research was to find out the correlation between the students' pronunciation mastery and their ability in speaking of grade eight students of SMPN 21 Bandar Lampung. Two kinds of tests were administered. They were pronunciation test and speaking test. In the pronunciation test, spoken tests were used, each student was asked to read 50 item words and sentences in English. For speaking test, each student also was asked to read the text consist of two paragraphs. The method of this research was the correlational research. Data were analyzed using r-Product Moment. The result of r_{xy} was 0.910. The p-value in 5% was 0.361 and in 1% was 0.463. So, the result showed that there was a significant correlation between the students' pronunciation mastery and their ability in speaking of grade eight students of SMPN 12 Bandar Lampung. Based on the result of the research, it was important both for the English teachers and the students to realize one of the factors that gave positive contribution to the students' ability in speaking was their pronunciation mastery.

Keywords: Pronunciation mastery, speaking ability.

1. INTRODUCTION

SMPN 12 Bandar Lampung is one of the Junior High Schools in Bandar Lampung that always concerns to all subjects and one of them is English lesson. The students learn English because it is one of the required lessons taught in this school. There are many materials learned in English. One of the materials is speaking to make them speak naturally in their daily life.

The English teachers frequently use dialogue and also text to teach the students in speaking. It is based on the curriculum that the students should study the texts from grade seven until grade nine. The students are frequently asked by their English teachers to practice speaking dialogue or text and pay attention for pronunciation in front of the class.

Pronunciation always has a close relation for all grade levels especially for Junior High School students' English subject. The students must be conquering in four important English skills such as, listening, speaking, reading and writing. Speaking is closely related to pronunciation. When the students are asked by teacher to practice a dialogue or text in English, they also have to correct to pronounce the words or the sentences. The activity means they are pronouncing. So, the researcher uses pronunciation as her research because it has a close relation to Junior High School's subject in the beginner level.

Based on the descriptions above, the students must obligate pronunciation mastery to aid them to speaking ability. Pronunciation is not an easy thing. Pronunciation is the ability to use the correct stress, rhythm, and intonation of a word in a spoken language. We may judge people by the way they speak, and so people with poor pronunciation may be judged as incompetent, uneducated or lacking in knowledge (Kelly, 2000).

Pronouncing a language is a skill. Every normal person is an expert in the skill of pronouncing his own languages. Now there are many reasons of this, some obvious, some perhaps not so obvious. The basic reason why people in general do not speak foreign languages as well as they do their native tongue is that they fail to understand the true nature of the problem of learning to pronounce. Far too many people fail to realize that pronouncing a foreign language is a skill, one that needs careful training of a special kind, and

one that cannot be gained by just leaving it to take care of itself. So, there are two levels that students' can be said master of pronunciation. The first is the beginning level and second is intermediate/advanced level.

For a beginning student, adequate pronunciation will include control of the vowel and consonant phonemes, statement and question intonation, and stress and rhythm, patterns for simple utterances, At intermediate and advanced levels, pronunciation practice should concentrate on the allophonic variants, intonation patterns of complex sentences, contrastive stress patterns and the affective devices by which native speakers indicate anger, amusement, sympathy and so on. (Yung, 2004).

2. THE CORRELATION BETWEEN PRONUNCIATION MASTERY AND THE ABILITY IN SPEAKING

Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information it can be seen when you pronounce the words. (Florez, 1999, p. 1). It is "often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving"(ibid., p. 1), but it is not completely unpredictable.

Speaking is the ability of language learners to interact with other speakers, to make meaning, as distinct from their ability to perform on discrete-point tests of grammatical knowledge (Savigno, 1991).

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that speaking is the process to interact with each other. The most important thing is speaker and listener understands each other of what they are talking about. Speaking is needed to be straightforward because actually the listener can guess what you want to explain.

Speaking is such a fundamental human behavior that we do not stop to analyze it unless there is something noticeable about it. Likewise, if someone is a particularly effective or lucid speaker, may notice that her speech is atypical, mental, psychological, social, and cultural factors that must all work together when we speak. It is even a more impressive feat when we hear someone speaking effectively in a second or foreign language.

For many years, language teaching was seen as helping learners develop *linguistic competence* that is, helping students master the sounds, words and grammar patterns of English. The idea was that by studying the bits and pieces of a language, students could eventually put them all together and communicate. In the mid-1970s the notion of linguistic competence came to be viewed as a component of the broader idea of *communicative competence*.

Communicative competence is the ability to speak with different speakers from another country to make meaning. It is also the ability to interact with other speakers to get the purpose. It is not determined by grammar. Being communicatively competent "requires an understanding of socio cultural contexts of language use" (ibid ., p. 267). There are several important models of communicative competence, all of which include some form of *sociolinguistic competence*, or the ability to use language appropriately in various contexts. Sociolinguistic competence involves register (degrees of formality and informality), appropriate word choice, *style shifting*, and politeness strategies.

Another important element of communicative competence is *strategic competence*. In terms of speaking, this is the learner's ability to use language strategies to compensate for gaps in skill and knowledge. A fourth component of communicative competence is discourse *competence* of how sentence elements are tied together. Cohesion is the grammatical and/or lexical relationship between the different parts of sentence. So, cohesion is the relationship between groups of sentences that closely united. (Richards, Platt, and Weber, 1985).

These four components of communicative component have several practical implications for EFL and ESL teachers. Since communicative competence is a multifaceted construct, it is important for teachers to understand the complexities learners face when they are speaking English. One of the complexities is balancing fluency and accuracy. *Accuracy* in this context refers to the ability to speak properly that is, selecting the correct words and expressions to convey the intended meaning, as well as using the grammatical patterns of English. *Fluency*, on the other hand, is the capacity to speak fluidly, confidently, and at a rate consistent with the norms of the relevant native speech community.

Likewise, language learners can sometimes speak quickly, without hesitating to apply the rules they have learned, but doing so may decrease their accuracy. An important concept to keep in mind is that people use language in recognizable ways to get things done. There are many, "speech acts" in language, and it is important that students learn the appropriate ways to accomplish their goals when they are speaking. There are many ways of making spoken utterances more or less polite. The various linguistic means of softening a message are known as mitigation. This "softening" can be accomplished through pronunciation of words, phrases, clauses, or entire utterances.

Speaking is in many ways an undervalued skill/ability. Perhaps this is because we can almost all speak, and so take the ability too much for granted. Speaking is often thought of as a 'popular' form of expression which uses the unprestigious 'colloquial' register: literally ability is on the whole more prized.

Speaking is, however, an ability which deserves attention every bit as much a literally ability, in both first and second languages. Learners often need to be able to speak with confidence in order to carry out many of their most basic transactions. It is the ability by which they are most frequently judged, and through which they may make or lose friends. It is vehicle par excellence of social solidarity, of social ranking, of professional advancement and of business. It is also a medium through which much language is learnt, and which for many is particularly conducive for learning.

There are four levels to extent that someone may have ability in speaking. First is superior level, this level characterized by the ability to participate fully and effectively in conversations in formal and informal settings on topics related to practical needs and areas of professional and/or scholarly interest, provide a structured argument to explain and defend opinions and develop effective hypotheses within extended discourse, discuss topics concretely and abstractly, deal with a linguistically unfamiliar situation, maintain a high degree of linguistic accuracy and also satisfy the linguistic demands of professional and/or scholarly life. This level is from lecturer and professional/expert.

Second is advanced, this level characterized by the ability to participate actively in conversations in most informal and some formal settings on topics of personal and public interest, narrate and describe in major time frames with good control of aspect, deal effectively with unanticipated complications through a variety of communicative devices, sustain communication by using, with suitable accuracy and confidence, connected discourse of paragraph length and substance and satisfy the demands of work and/or school situations. Student who studies in university and lecturer are include this level.

Third is intermediate, this level characterized by the ability to participate in simple, direct conversations on generally predictable topics related to daily activities and personal environment create with the language and communicate personal meaning to sympathetic interlocutors by combining language elements in discrete sentences and string of sentences, obtain and give information by asking and answering questions, sustain and bring to a close a number of basic, uncomplicated communicative exchanges, often in a reactive mode and satisfy simple personal needs and social demands to survive in the target language culture. This level is from student in university and senior high school.

The last is novice, this level characterized by the ability to respond to simple questions on the most common features of daily life, convey minimal meaning to interlocutors' experienced in dealing with foreigners by using isolated words, lists of words, memorized phrases, and some personalized recombination's of words and phrases and satisfy a very limited number of immediate needs. Junior high school and elementary student include to this level. Based on the explanation above and the curriculum, junior high school of grade eight include to novice level. (Brown, 2004)

3. RESEARCH METHOD

Two instruments were used in obtaining the data. In obtaining data, two instruments were used; both of them were spoken test. They did test on pronunciation and speaking test. In the pronunciation test, students read 50 items that consist of phonemes, morphemes and suprasegmental features such as intonation and stress to test. They did the test for about five minutes. However, for testing speaking each students read a text about recount text from lesson seven "Who should you marry" and they did the test for about five minutes.

The procedure of this research was described into four steps such as determining the population and sample, selecting materials, administering the pronunciation test and speaking test to the students, and the last was analyzing data. In determining the population and sample, the researcher stipulated the students grade eight of SMP Negeri 12 as the population. Then, she used a systematic sampling technique to get the sample.

In selecting materials, the researcher gave the pronunciation test and speaking tests based on the materials of the second semester of grade eight. For both pronunciation and speaking test, the writer administered spoken or oral test and asked the students to read the words which was made by the writer for the pronunciation test and for the speaking test, then the writer asked the students to read the text clearly and loudly based on student's book *Flying Start* for junior high school year VIII the second semester.

After the two kinds of the test had finish, the writer analyzed the student's scores which meant analyzing data. She evaluated the scores after the students did the pronunciation test and speaking test.

Finally, the result of the two tests show whether the student's pronunciation mastery and their ability in speaking texts of SMP Negeri 12 had correlation or not after she measured by using r- Product Moment. The formula was presented in figure 1 below.

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{\{N \sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2\}\{N \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2\}}}$$

df = N-2

Figure 1. The Equation of r-Product Moment

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The students who have high scores of pronunciation mastery give positive contributions for their ability in speaking texts. This is proved by the fact that the students who pass the test of pronunciation mastery well get good scores from their ability in speaking test. Moreover, students who do not pass the test of pronunciation mastery well get bad scores from their ability in speaking test. This can be seen in table 4.4 below.

Table 1. The High Scores of the Students' Pronunciation Mastery and Their Ability in Speaking

Students' Number	The Scores of The Students' Pronunciation Mastery	The Scores of The Students' Ability in Speaking
18	76	86
45	81	89
126	87	93
198	88	94
225	82	94

In the table, it is the correlation of the students' high scores. The students who do the test of pronunciation mastery and get good scores have good levels in speaking. It is shown from their results of doing those tests that the students who get good scores of pronunciation mastery test also get high scores in their ability in speaking.

Moreover, the results are described clearly through the students' number 18, 45, 126, 198, and 225. The student's number 18 who gets 76 in the score of pronunciation mastery and 86 in his score of speaking. Additionally, the student's number 45 gets 81 in the pronunciation mastery test and gets 89 in her score of speaking. For the student's number 126, she gets 87 in the pronunciation mastery test and gets 93 in her score of speaking. Furthermore, the student's number 198 gets 88 in the pronunciation mastery test and gets 94 in his score of speaking and the student's number 225 gets 82 in the pronunciation mastery test and gets 94 in her score of speaking. So, it shows the students' score relations between the two tests.

Moreover, the correlations of the students' scores in the tests of pronunciation mastery and their ability in speaking are also shown through the students who get bad scores. The students who get bad scores of pronunciation mastery test also get bad scores in the test of their ability in speaking. This can be seen clearly in the following table.

Table 2. the Low Scores of the Students' Pronunciation Mastery and Their Ability in Speaking

Student's Number	The Scores of The Students' Pronunciation Mastery	The Scores of The Students' Ability in Speaking
207	50	74
216	55	75
243	57	75

In the table above, it is the correlation of the students' low scores. It can be seen clearly that almost all students who fail to pass the test of students' pronunciation mastery get unacceptable in the average results in speaking. It means that the students, who do the test of pronunciation mastery and get bad scores, have bad levels in speaking. It can be shown from their results of doing the tests.

The results are described clearly through the students' number 207, 216, and 243. The student's number 207 that gets 50 in the score of the student's pronunciation mastery and 74 in his score of speaking. Additionally, the students' number 216 gets 55 in the pronunciation mastery test and gets 75 in his score of speaking. Moreover, the student's number 243 gets 57 in the pronunciation mastery test and gets 75 in her

score of speaking. Therefore, it shows that the students' pronunciation mastery and their ability in speaking have a close correlation.

There are five results discussed. The first is the students' scores of pronunciation test. The second is their scores of speaking ability test. The other is the calculation of the two tests. The next result is the correlations of their high and low scores. The last is the results of all the calculations which give the final findings.

In the first result, the students' scores of pronunciation mastery test shows that most students get adequate scores based on the average score. It means that their achievements are still intermediate and need to be increased more. The results of the students' scores of speaking ability test are their other achievements. Based on the average score, most students get good speaking results. It means that their achievements are intermediate and need to be increased well.

The other result discussed is the calculation of the two tests. The result is used to find out some indicators which are put into the formula. Those indicators are put into the formula to find out whether r_{xy} is greater than r table or not. The correlations of the students' high and low scores show that they who get good scores in the first test get good scores in the other test. They who get bad scores in the first test get bad scores in the second test. The results show that there are correlations between their good scores of pronunciation mastery test and their good scores of the tests of speaking ability. Their bad scores of the first test and their bad score of the other test also show correlations.

Based on the results, the students who have low mastery of pronunciation have low ability of speaking and they who have high mastery of pronunciation have high ability in speaking. The calculation of all the results which is the last result discussed gives findings. The research findings indicate that there is a significance correlation between the students' pronunciation mastery and their ability in speaking through the statistic analysis.

From the statistic analysis, it is found that there is a positive correlation between the students' pronunciation mastery and their ability in speaking. It is proved by the value of r_{xy} that is greater than r table. The value of r_{xy} is 0,910. Based on the r table with $N = 28$, it shows that r table is 0,361 in 5% and 0,463 in 1%. So, it describes clearly that the value of r_{xy} is greater than the r table. Moreover, these facts indicate that the students' pronunciation mastery give a useful contribution for their ability in speaking. From the result of the research, it can be concluded that the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is accepted and the null hypothesis (H_o) is rejected. So, there is correlation between the students' pronunciation mastery and their ability in speaking.

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the result of the research, the researcher concludes that there is a significant correlation between the students' pronunciation mastery and their ability in speaking of grade eight of SMPN 12 Bandar Lampung. The conclusion is taken based on four considerations. The considerations are the average score of the students' pronunciation mastery, the average score of the students' ability in speaking, the results obtained from the calculation of the correlation between the students' pronunciation mastery and their ability in speaking and the last is hypothesis of the research.

Furthermore, there are some suggestions for the students of Junior High School and the English teachers. The students really need to master pronunciation in order to be able to communicate naturally to native speaker well. The other suggestion for them is they should improve their pronunciation mastery because pronunciation mastery improves their ability in speaking. And then it is important both for the teachers and students to realize that one of the factors that give effects to the students' ability in speaking is the mastery of pronunciation. Therefore, the teachers have to be more serious and careful to teaching speaking without ignoring the pronunciation. Second, they must pay attention much more on students' comprehension of pronunciation because it is one of the ways to make students easier to speaking.

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