

SPEAKING CHALLENGE, DOES PRONUNCIATION AS THE ATTRIBUTE OF FLUENCY?

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Submitted : 28 June 2023 Accepted : 23 July 2023 Published : 25 July 2023	<p>Speaking skill is a difficult aspect for language students. In speaking, there are things that need to be considered such as pronunciation of vocabulary. However, students still have difficulty in articulating many words as the indicator of fluency. This case also brings many assumptions in vocabulary pronunciation. The variety of speaking difficulties faced by students of grade VIII in MTs S Ummi Lubuk Pakam was being the main aim. A qualitative descriptive method that presents findings and research results qualitatively was implemented. The voice recordings used as the data and the supporting finding was gotten from the observation result, then it was clarified through the interviews transcript. This analysis found that in speaking English accurately, students had not mastered the phonological rules and they did not know the various sounds or pronunciations. The evidence also proven that the stress, intonation and pitch become the big problems in English utterances. The low quality of pronunciation brings conclusion about students' factors in low speaking competency.</p>
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Introduction

Speaking is an important part of English skills that must be mastered by students beside reading, writing and listening. By mastering Speaking English, students are able to convey ideas, information or other things well. Speaking skill is a difficult aspect for language students. There are things that need to be considered in English speaking such as vocabulary pronunciation. According Leong & Ahmad (2017) declared that the lowest level of knowledge learners tend to pay attention to pronunciation. In this case to speak English accurately, students can master phonological rules and they should be aware of the various sounds and their pronunciations. Students can know the stress, intonation and pitch. All these elements help students speak English easily and effectively.

In fact, the problems in students' English speaking were clearly illustrated starting from difficulties in speaking English, confusion in answering or expressing words in English, unclear pronunciation of vocabulary and slightly confused expressions when answering questions. In addition, students also use familiar vocabulary and answer questions very briefly, lack confidence, do not have the courage to speak English, low motivation, high anxiety and students cannot pronounce words in a good way and make it difficult for people to speak English understand what is said and many other students' problem face when speaking in English. This matter could interfere the students' ability in English utterances. Those following reasons affected learners with emotional, physical and self-productivity conditions. It can be classified into lack of confidence, anxiety and embarrassment when speaking English.

The high level of English-Speaking achievement as the fundamental requirements

owned by learners in the current era. Muslim & Nugroho (2015) a language learner has to study speaking English as the second language. Words expressing, communicating, and requesting are defined as speaking (Leong & Ahmad 2017). In addition, the process of making and sharing meaning is called speaking (Leong & Ahmad 2017).

Speaking also being indicated as processing and parting of creating meaning. (Nurdin, 2020) Speaking scope are classified into mentioning something, getting communication to others, purposing statements to a person, saying something or expressing oneself in a language. According Astuti (2019) communication as the aim of English speaking. An effective speaker needs to know well the meaning expressed and the interlocutor's message taken comprehensively.

Besides that, a speaker also needs to know the principles that underlie all speech situations. Humans can send, receive, understand, and comprehend a message. There are several supporting components that need to be considered. According to Muslim & Nugroho (2015) there are a number of factors that can be used to measure English learners' speaking achievement as the priority portion.

According to Nurdin (2020) there are four elements in the speech process, namely pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and fluency.

1. Pronunciation

The measurement of utterances quality appropriately was becoming crucial section in speaking ability. Leong & Ahmad (2017) declared that pronunciation has been concerned as the students' hardest part of English insight. Speaking English correctly can be raised by learners through mastering the rules of sound and pronunciation. The stress, intonation, and pitch are things learners should know. Those factors assisted students in gaining a better quality of communication in English that assumed as something strange and weird.

2. Grammar

The application of grammar with the target of building connection in any situation is something that needs attention. Harmer defines that the alteration pattern and formulation creating new words combined into sentences was described as the meaning of grammar. It can be concluded that by having or mastering grammar used by the speaker could be able to convey words or share information correctly.

3. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the vocabulary in the structure of the language used by people in constructing new sentences. In general, vocabulary is considered very important in developing one's ability to a language that has been mastered.

4. Fluency

The ability to speak fluently and accurately is vital. This point classified into important so that the audience can understand the idea or message you are trying to convey. Nurdin (2020) states that successful communication will involve:

- a. Articulating the phonetic features of the language
- b. Rhythm, accent mastery and intonation patterns
- c. Acceptable Fluency
- d. Transactional and People Skills
- e. e. Able to use short and long sentences
- f. Interaction management skills
- g. Implications for skills negotiation

h. Conversational Listening Skills

i. Skills for Understanding and Negotiating Purposeful Conversations

Meanwhile (Nurdin 2020) describes the need element in speaking as follows:

- 1) The connected speech of an effective English speaker must not only be able to pronounce the personal phonemes of English, but also be fluent in the connected speech.
- 2) Expensive equipment Native English speakers alter the pitch and emphasis of certain parts of speech, and how they feel, at different volumes and speeds.
- 3) Part of common lexical phrases and performing specific linguistic functions categorized as speech spontaneity. It is commonly identified as grammar and vocabulary combination.
- 4) Negotiation language. Effective speech benefits from negotiating language, which is used to seek clarification and demonstrate linguistic structure.

Pronunciation is one element of speaking. Gilakjani (2016) defines the production of English sounds is called pronunciation. Pronunciation can be learned by repeating sounds. Gilakjani (2016) stated that the main objective of pronunciation instruction is understandable pronunciation. In addition Gilakjani (2016) the production of sounds used for meaning is called pronunciation. Djurayeva (2021) a part of the communication process is pronunciation. Djurayeva (2021) learners should spend a lot of time improving their English pronunciation because it's one of the most difficult skills to acquire. Fraser in Djurayeva (2021) stated that the most important oral communication skill is pronunciation. According to this point of view, it is clear that pronunciation is a measure of a person's ability to learn a language correctly. It shows that the speech can be understood by the person listening to it.

Djurayeva (2021) pronunciation is a complexity of perceptual interaction, articulatory, and interactional factors contained several features: segmental features, voice-setting features, and prosodic features.

1. Segmental Features.

This was being a part of analyzable sound units. Phonemes are the most basic elements of pronunciation. A phonemic differences and phoneme forms' understanding in a certain environment is what learning the phonological system of the target language all is about. It's the personal sound segments formulation according to (Djurayeva, 2021).

2. Voice Setting Features

General features of the speech range are voice adjustment features. The propensity of speakers of a definite language to pursue certain positions in connected speech is shown. Sound adjustment features are important in pronunciation so that a word is heard clearly (Djurayeva, 2021).

3. Prosodic features.

Prosodic features are the relative levels of stress and pitch within words and phrases. According to Djurayeva (2021) learners should pay attention to the features of their pronunciation that make them better at comprehensibility and help them to decrease miscommunication. The learner needs to be careful when pronouncing the word. It is important for learners to pay attention to the features of pronunciation which are related to larger units of speech and how the different sounds of English are produced.

The way to measure students' pronunciation ability is with IPA. The International

Phonetic Alphabet stands for IPA. IPA is the standard phonetic symbol for every alphabet in English. According to Asrul (2007) the standard sound representation for oral language is the IPA. Anderson (2018) it is stated that According to the International Phonetic Association, the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA 1999) is the most common phonetic system. As an alphabetic system, it is based on the Latin alphabet and made up of letters, diacritics and suprasegmental markers. The goal of the IPA is to serve as a system that is capable of transcribing all languages and realization of speech, which is eventually expanded with additional systems related to speech in a broader sense, such as singing, acting, or speech pathology. The last major update of the IPA was in 1993 and the last minor changes were published in 2005. Additionally, Setiyono (2019) mentions that the IPA was founded in 1886 by English and French language teachers, and as the study of speech and phonetics has progressed, the amount of symbols required to express speech and sounds of different languages has increased.

As a result of that issue, this study will focus on the following research questions:

1. To what extent is the students' English speaking fluency in vocabulary pronunciation?
2. What are the factors that affect fluency in speaking English?

Research Method

In this study, the research design used to find out how to precede data. That is, the plans used to collect and analyze data, as well as answer research questions. Data collection, data analysis and research report writing results were included in the research design. One of the functions of research design is to provide accurate evidence to answer a question. The research design used in this research is descriptive qualitative. According to Sugiyono (2015) this method will only allow you to hypothesize about the problem and describe them, however qualitative descriptive is the presuppositions cause/effect relationship between behavior and outcome.

The subject and setting matter were carried out at MTs S Umami located in Lubuk Pakam. With three female students in class VIII at MTs S Umami Lubuk Pakam with the highest scores. According to (Fitriani, 2018) explains that, women can issue 20,000 words per day while men only use 7,000. The interview will use a purposive sampling technique. Suder (2012: 288) purposive sampling is a sampling technique that depends on itself.

Instruments are tools that help researchers to collect what information will be needed. Sugiyono (2015) research instruments include questionnaires, interview guidelines, observation guidelines, and tests used to collect data. On the one hand, all the equipment used to collect data will be included as research instruments. There are four instruments used in this qualitative descriptive research, namely the researcher, observation guide, interview guide, and the voice recorder.

Research data collection techniques are observation and interviews. The researcher used observation to find students' problems in speaking English. For this data collection researchers will use non-participant observation. Sugiyono (2012: 204) Disclaimer from non-participating observations Researchers did not participate and only acted as independent observers. Researcher only record, analyzes and then can make conclusions about students' speaking abilities. While the interview is a data collection technique by interviewing individuals as respondents. Furthermore, it is a direct face-to-face effort to obtain a reliable and valid measure in the form of a verbal response from

one or more respondents. According to MH (2021) suggests that interviews are a data collection tool that involves direct verbal interaction between people.

This study used qualitative data, so it was analyzed using qualitative descriptive analysis techniques. Qualitative descriptive analysis gives predicates to the variables studied in accordance with the actual conditions. As for, data analysis techniques namely, data reduction, data display and conclusions.

Result and Discussion

To collect data the researcher interviewed three students to find fluency in speaking English in vocabulary pronunciation and problems that contribute to students' speaking. Based on the results of interviews with research subjects, the researcher found many students' mistakes in pronouncing vocabulary and problems that contributed to students' speaking. The results of the interview presented below:

1. Elements of Student Speaking Fluency

a. Ability to articulate the phonetic features of the language

Language is an arrangement of words consisting of phonemes. The aspect of mastering spoken English certainly involves phoneme articulation skills that are different from Indonesian. According to Wardana (2014) phonemes are abstract forms of language sounds or a collection of different sounds that have the same function. In addition, phonetics is the branch of linguistics that studies the sound structure of speech and language (Davronovna 2021). In phonetics, consider categories such as sound classification, pronunciation, logical stress, and intonation.

In this case ANN in interviews conducted by researchers, there were still many sound pronunciation mistakes for example, in the word '*bath*' / *ba:θ* / pronounced by student /*bed*/. Then the word '*come*' / *kam* / is said by the student /*kom*/. After that the word '*help*' / *help*/ was said by the student /*hed* /, then the word '*make*' / *meik*/ was said by the student / *mek*/. This phoneme error greatly affects the understanding of the material presented by their teacher. So there is a need for in-depth research to analyze phoneme errors. Error analysis is an attempt to study learning errors that are believed to be the result of interference in learning a foreign language which is a habit of the mother tongue.

b. Master accent, rhythm, and intonation patterns

Accent, rhythm and intonation have a very close relationship. Accent is how to say the word. Rhythm is the time pattern between syllables. Meanwhile, intonation is a variation of the tone used to distinguish words. Intonation involves the rise and fall of the voice when speaking in complete sentences. Correct intonation and rhythm are the keys to speak English fluently with good pronunciation. According to Davronovna (2021) intonation is used in the external design of sentences. Intonation allows the listener to understand whether the sentence is a story, a question, a request, or an exclamation. Tone of voice also expresses our emotions: surprise, annoyance, joy, dissatisfaction, etc. Every language has its own unique intonation that is very different from the intonation of other languages. In English, intonation plays a very important role due to the highly analytical nature of the language. In analytical languages, the relationship between words is expressed not by means of endings, as in Russian, but by means of official words: prepositions, articles, auxiliary verbs, and intonation. Davronovna (2021) states that there are several elements of intonation as follows:

- The melody of speech, achieved by raising or lowering the pitch in phrases (compare the pronunciation of declarative and interrogative sentences);
- Speech rhythm, i.e. the alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables;
- Speed or slowness of speech and pauses between speech fragments (compare slow speech and tongue twisters);
- Timbre, the color of sound that gives language emotional and expressive nuances;
- Phrasal and logical accents are used to emphasize individual words in a sentence.

According to Widagdo (2021) there are two types of opposing rhythms in language: timing of stress and timing of syllables. For example, in the NCD interview the emphasis on the word does not exist. As in the word *'morning'* /'mɔːnɪŋ/ in this case the word morning needs to be emphasized on the part /mɔː/ but the students pronounce it very flatly and there is no emphasis on the word. Then in the word *'sometimes'* /'sʌmtaɪmz/ in the word /sʌ/ there needs to be an emphasis. Next, on the word *'Music'* /'mjuːzɪk/ the word /mju/ needs to be pressed. Unfortunately, the student did not seem to be aware of the emphasis on the word. As a result, students tend to apply the syllabic rhythm of their mother tongue. This causes them to have unclear pronunciation when they speak English.

c. Acceptable Fluency

In this case the fluency of three students is still not well received. According Leong & Ahmad (2017) expressed that fluency is the ability to answer coherently by connecting the words and phrases, pronouncing the sound clearly, and using stress and intonation. Prasetianto (2019) defines it as "fluency represents the grammar of a truly internalized learner". Prasetianto (2019) believes that "teachers need to find out what learners really want to say, and then teach them how to say it in the target language". In other words, the teacher may not provide a list of words to speak, but instead the students say the words themselves, and then the teacher teaches them how to pronounce them and corrects them if they make mistakes. Prasetianto believes that accuracy is more important than fluency and complex language. Thornbury (2000) defines fluency, accuracy, and complexity as follows. Fluency is synonymous with language use. Accuracy is the degree to which a learner's performance matches that of a native speaker. Complexity means rearranging or rearranging a student's knowledge. In this case the students did not meet the criteria mentioned by Hedge. Therefore, students are not fluent in speaking English. According to Tuan & Mai (2015) Performance conditions, listening skills, and feedback are some of the factors that influence speaking performance.

d. Able to use short and long sentences

Short and long speaking skills are patterns that can be applied so that something discussed becomes more interesting. But in reality students are only able to speak using simple sentences and do not pay attention to the grammar used. For example:

Question: Can you tell me about your daily activities?

ANN : In the morning I wake up at 5 o'clock and I take a bath and go to school at 7 o'clock and I meet my friend and teacher in the school and I come back to home at 3 o'clock.

MFS : Today my activity is practice for our senior graduation.

NCD : In the morning I wake up at 5 o'clock and I take a bath and go to school at 7 o'clock and meet friend and teacher in the school and I come back to home at 3 o'clock.

It can be seen that students answer questions with simple sentences and incorrect grammar. When you want to tell about daily activities which are habits or repetitive activities, you should use the simple present tense.

e. The interaction management skills

Skills in interaction management are very important for achieving goals in communication. In interaction management, it is based on the ability of people to start conversations effectively, develop topics, and end conversations with reference to the interests of the people participating in them. In this case students are not capable of interaction management skills. Students answer questions very briefly and precisely such as:

Question: Can you tell me about your best friend?

ANN: She is cute, beautiful, smart, crazy, and she is like cat

MFS: I don't think I have the best friend but so much friend

NCD: She's funny, beautiful and sulk

From their responses, it can be concluded that they are not able to tell about their best friends, they only mention the characteristics of their best friends.

f. Implications for negotiation skills

The skill of negotiating meaning is a person's ability to communicate to understand a meaning. In this case, students are able to understand a meaning so that students are able to answer questions that are appropriate to its content.

Question: What activities do you like at home?

ANN: I help my mother, cleaning the house, washing a plate and cooking.

MFS: At home, I like to draw and read

NCD: Bicycle and cleaning home

According Leong & Ahmad (2017) defines speaking as the production of signals that produce different responses. A Sound can be combined to form a meaningful sentence. In this case, students are able to answer and understand the questions posed by researchers.

2. Problem of Students' Speaking Contribution

a. Difficulty in pronouncing vocabulary

Yates (2014) pointed out that pronunciation is a colloquial term commonly used in language learning and teaching to describe the way speech is expressed. As Indonesian students who want to learn English as a second language, we have to learn pronunciation properly so that we can understand the pronunciation of English words. Pronunciation, therefore, has a significant impact on the success of a speech. The way communication is done is through all the dialogue, English students really understand what is going on in the classroom.

Question: What are your reasons for dislike English lessons?

ANN: Because it's hard to pronounce the vocabulary.

One of the students experienced difficulties in speaking English, namely difficulty in pronouncing vocabulary. Pronunciation is one of the key elements in spoken communication, especially in English. According to Gilakjani (2016), the lack of high quality, suitable teaching and learning materials and the lack of time to practice pronunciation are some of the reasons why teachers don't pay enough attention to English pronunciation.

b. The Lack of practice

Question: Have you ever spoken in front of the class?

MFS: Sometimes

NCD: Sometimes

This shows that students rarely speak in front of the class. Speaking is an activity that needs to be mastered by students. Speaking in front of the class can help students improve the quality of speaking English and increase their self-confidence. According to Mazouzi (2013), the characteristic of speaking appearance is accuracy. The teaching process requires accuracy. It is important for the learner to pay attention to the correctness and completeness of language forms. Therefore, practicing speaking in front of the class is very helpful for students in increasing their confidence and ability to speak English.

c. Lack of vocabulary mastery

Vocabulary is considered one of the most important elements for understanding educational material, especially when learning English. Haidari et al. (2012) pointed out that vocabulary is the core of language and the cornerstone of language learning. By understanding foreign words, students will understand the meaning of words. Wessels (2011: 46) argues that vocabulary knowledge is critical to students' academic success. If students don't understand the meaning of words when they speak, they will have a hard time understanding what is being said. Therefore, understanding the meaning of words can help students speak English.

Question: How do you deal with English the lesson in class?

ANN: Memperhatikan guru dan sabar

MFS: Dengan sering bertanya ke guru apa yang tidak diketahui dan sering mengaplikasikan di kelas sehari-hari

NCD: Memperhatikan guru

In this case students still use Indonesian when answering questions posed by researchers. The ability of students to recognize and understand is called vocabulary mastery. The words in the language must be used in the right way. Vocabulary mastery not a simple skill as it is. The mastery process requires students to go through stages. It is important that the vocabulary develops correctly. According to Gorys (2009), this stage has time in childhood, youth and adulthood.

d. Lack of grammar mastery

Question: What are your reasons for like English lessons?

MFS: Because English subject is language I like to study

A grammar is a shared set of assumptions about how a language works. Grammar assessment is not based on how learners demonstrate grammatical rules, but on their ability to use grammatical points to share their thoughts, emotions, feelings or observations with others, especially in teaching English in Indonesia. Grammar lessons must be integrated into the development of the four language skills. Miko (2018) correct grammar is necessary to avoid misunderstandings. In other word, grammars as the way words change form and can be combined into sentences in a language when communicating. In fact, students are not able to use good grammar. This was obvious when the students answered the questions posed by the researcher.

Conclusion

The speaking ability of MTs S Umami Lubuk Pakam needs attention and improvement, because it was found that several elements of English fluency were not

going well such as the ability to articulate the researcher's phonetic characteristics, mastery of accent, rhythm and intonation patterns, unacceptable fluency, defects in using short sentences and length, lacking interaction management skills, and unable to implicate negotiation skills. In addition, the researcher found problems that affected students' fluency in speaking English such as difficulties in pronouncing vocabulary, lack of practice, lack of mastery of vocabulary and grammar.

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