Relationship Between Reading and Pronunciation and Students' Speaking Skills

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ABSTRACT

Speaking is one of the main skills in language learning and it is utilized as a means of transferring the speaker's knowledge to the audience. It is also agreed that speaking is a highly complex and demanding process. The ability to speak well is not naturally acquired except by practicing and learning through experience. This study has been devoted to investigate whether there is any relationship between pronunciation and reading knowledge and English as a foreign language (EFL) learners' speaking performance. Twenty seven candidates were employed in the present study, which has been conducted at STKIP Garut University located in the city of Garut, West Java. After getting the scores of reading, Pronunciation and Speaking, the researcher analyzed the score. To analyze the data of this study, the 'correlation analyses and 'multiple- regression' were run to measure the degree of relationship among variables. The results revealed that there is a high and significant correlation between reading and pronunciation and the learners' speaking performance. In other words, reading and pronunciation can assess speaking scores. Furthermore, the findings suggested that pronunciation can assess learner's speaking performance more than reading.

Keywords: *pronunciation, reading, speaking skill*

1   INTRODUCTION.

A.   Background of the Study

Speaking, especially in a foreign language, is a very demanding activity for all ages of learners. It is because in order to share understanding with other people using a foreign language, one needs to pay attention to precise details of the language. Nunan (2003) states that speaking is the productive oral skill and it consists of producing systematic verbal utterance to convey meaning. There are at least two components which influence speaking skills, namely reading and pronunciation. Reading is very important in increasing speaking skills. The importance of word knowledge, which facilitates speaking skills, has been a major resource in the development of reading skills. Therefore fostering improvement in word knowledge through wide reading has the potential for fostering improvement in speaking skills. One important notion of developing reading skills and speaking skills is to use the language for learning as well as communication. Then, according to Harmer (2001) pronunciation has also a significant factor in improving speaking skills. Traditionally, pronunciation is related to expressing referential meaning. The students should pronounce each word correctly in order to give the correct meaning in communication. Therefore, this study was to find out the relationship between reading, pronunciation and speaking skill.

To support this research, there are some theoretical foundations. According to Hedge (1985) reading can develop speaking skills. Students who read a lot are more likely to speak well. Reading will enable learners to develop their vocabulary and grammar knowledge which will effectively contribute to their speaking skills. In this line, Lechmann (2007) states that through reading language learners will have vocabulary knowledge which will facilitate their speaking performance and their usage of structure in the target language will develop. Then, pronunciation knowledge should be mastered by the students to improve their speaking skills. According to Pennington & Richards (1986) students should struggle with unfamiliar consonants and they need to have long term memory of all those sounds and train their articulators to be able to pronounce a combination of those sounds in speech. Mastering vocabulary is one of the methods to be better in speaking in order to avoid misunderstanding issue. There are many key studies that have proved that there are relationship between reading knowledge, pronunciation knowledge and speaking skill. Koizumi (2010) predicted speaking ability from vocabulary knowledge. It was found that vocabulary could predict speaking ability. Noro & Shimamoto (2003) found that vocabulary knowledge contributes to predicting speaking ability. Mart (2012) conducted the research about developing speaking skill through reading and it was found that through reading the students could improve their

speaking skills. Elliot (1994) found that pronunciation could predict students' speaking skills. Based on the topic above, the researcher decides investigates whether there is relationship between reading and speaking skill, pronunciation and speaking skill and reading and pronunciation can predict speaking skill.

2   LITERATURE REVIEW

A.   Reading knowledge

Language acquisition without reading is difficult. A good reader is able to understand sentences and structures of a written text. It appears that reading is a key factor in language learning. According to Nunan (2003) reading can play a big part in successful language learning. It can develop speaking skills. Students who read a lot are more likely to speak well. Students through reading develop in both fluency and accuracy of expression in their speaking. Reading will enable learners to develop their vocabulary and grammar knowledge which will effectively contribute to their speaking skills. The ability to read requires that the reader draw information from a text. Reading will help learners to decipher new words that they need for conversations. According to Nation (1994) through reading language learners will have vocabulary knowledge which will facilitate their speaking performance and their usage of structure in the target language will develop.

B.   Integrating Reading and Speaking Skills

Reading may contribute significantly to competence in a second language. Therefore reading is probably the best way to learn new words. Reading results in incidental vocabulary acquisition (Lechmann, 2007). Nation supports this idea and states that Reading has long been seen as a major source of vocabulary growth (Nation, 1995). Most people recognize the important relationship between knowing

words and reading well. Hedge (1985) also states that through extensive reading learners advance their ability to of guessing the meanings of unknown words and phrases from clues in the context and he concludes that students who read a lot outside the classroom may increase both their comprehending the context and improving their vocabulary which are essential elements to advance speaking skills. An improved vocabulary will help learners develop their speaking skills. Speech without vocabulary cannot be produced. Laufer (1997) stresses the importance of vocabulary knowledge and adds that without words to express a wider range of meaning, communication in a second language cannot happen in a meaningful way. Learners will improve their speaking competence if they have better vocabulary knowledge which they can get through reading.

C.   Students' Pronounciation

Pronunciation is an essential in speaking skills. Traditionally, pronunciation is related to expressing referential meaning. Individual sounds with the stress and intonation patterns of the target language form higher level meanings (Pennington & Richards, 1986). Students should struggle with unfamiliar consonants and they need to have long term memory of all those sounds and train their articulators to be able to pronounce a combination of thosesounds in speech.

D.   Speaking Ability

Speaking is a communication process which is a primary medium to express ideas. Many experts believe that speaking is a media to interact with the surrounding people in terms of sharing ideas and releasing problems. Colvin (1976, p.6) claims that anyone who cannot speak or understand the language is really cut off from the life of community. The speakers absolutely are able to share ideas and much information to the others without hesitation. However, the speakers should pay more attention while speaking in formal circumstances since a group of people are the listeners with various background of understanding. The speakers, therefore, have to arrange themselves well before involving into these kinds of speaking; otherwise the communication purpose will not be reached properly.

3   Research Methodology

A.   Design

This research is quantitative since it calculated the correlation between reading and pronunciation and students' speaking skill. It used the theory of Multiple Regression.

B.   Population and Sample

The population of this study was 95 students from three classes. Then, the researcher took randomly one class that consists of 27 students.

C.   Instrumentation

The data was taken from the sample in the form of document. The documents were divided into three parts:

1 . Students' reading score
2 . Students' pronunciation score
3 . Students' speaking score
   All scores were taken from the first semester.

D. Variables in the study

Due to the quantitative research used in this study, there were three kinds of variables that would be discussed: the variables are:

1 . Students' reading score (independent variable)
2 . Students' pronunciation score (independent variable)
3 . Students' speaking score (dependent variable)

E. Procedure

The procedure of data collection was divided into three phases:

1 . The first, the data was taken from the samples; the data was students' reading score, students' pronunciation score and students' speaking score. Thus, the data was a document form.
2 . Then, the students' score and attendance were analyzed by using Multiple Regression statistical formula.
3 . Finally, the result of data correlation was concluded.

F. Data Analysis

Once all the tests were administered and corresponding data were gathered, data analysis phase began using the SPSS package. To evaluate the test takers' performance in speaking with their reading and pronunciation knowledge as variables, correlation analysis and multiple- regression were run to measure the degree of relationship among variables. The results would help us understand which of the variables were more effective in improving the students' speaking skill. Furthermore, a correlation coefficient between the obtained scores was calculated which would help us make the results of the study more reliable. The data that had been collected was analyzed and calculated by using statistic formula of Multiple Regression.

4   Results and Discussion

Table 1 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.978[a]	.956	.953	1.467

a. Predictors: (Constant), Pronunciation, Reading

R. Coefficient Correlation is 0.978 means that there is a strong correlation between respond variable and predictor variable. The respond variables are ronunciation and reading and predictor variable is Speaking. Because coefficient has positive value,

so there is a relationship between respond variable and predictor variable. If X rises, Y will rise.

Table 2 Regression Coefficients[a]

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	15.861	4.303		3.686	.001
Reading	.643	.284	.785	2.267	.033
Pronounciation	.178	.319	.194	.559	.581

a. Dependent Variable: Speaking

From the table above, it can be concluded that constant is 15.861, reading coefficient is 0.643 and pronunciation is 0.178. So multiple regression can be written as follows:

$$Y = 15.861 + 0.643X_I + 0.178X_2$$

Constant is 15.861, it means if the student's reading ability in mathematic is zero and his pronunciation is zero also, so his speaking ability is 15.861 from 100.

Coefficient X_I (reading) is 0.643, it means that if the student's pronunciation ability is constant and his reading ability rises one level, so his speaking ability rises 0.643.

Coefficient X_2 (pronunciation) is 0.178, it means that if the student's reading ability is constant and his pronunciation rises one level, so his speaking skill rises 0.178.

- Research question number one: "Is there any statistically significant relationship between students' speaking skill and reading?". Yes, there is a significant relationship between reading and students' speaking skill because significant value $0.033 < \alpha\ 0.05$.

- Research Is there any statistically significant relationship between students speaking skills and students pronunciation?. No, there is not significant relationship between pronunciation and students' speaking skills because significant value $> \alpha\ 0.05$.

Then, from P Value from each variable, it can be concluded that reading affects significantly toward speaking skill and pronunciation does not affect significantly toward speaking skill.

Table 3 **ANOVA[b]**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regresion	1147.692	2	573.846	263.293	.000[a]
Residual	52.308	24	2.179		
Total	1200.000	26			

a. Predictors: (Constant), Pronunciation, Reading

b. Dependent Variable: Speaking

- Research question number three: Do learners' reading and pronunciation scores predict speaking skill?. Yes.

From the table above, it can be concluded that P Value is $0.000 < \alpha\ (0.05)$, it means that pronunciation and reading simultaneously give a significant effect/ predict toward speaking.

5   CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The results revealed the fact that there is a high and significant correlation between Reading and the students' speaking skill. But there is no significant correlation between Pronunciation and students' speaking skills. Through reading, the students can acquire a lot of vocabularies. Communication without vocabulary will break down. One of the most useful ways to improve speaking skills is extensive reading. Extensive reading will help students to develop their ability to express ideas, whilst also enlarging the size of vocabulary. Reading knowledge is one of the crucial factors that will influence fluency in speaking. Reading introduces learners to a wider body of language and contexts. Reading helps learners build up better grammar skills. As learners develop stronger reading skills, they develop more sophisticated speaking skills. On the other hand, in this study, pronunciation does not affect speaking skill. In fact, pronunciation is important in speaking a foreign language. So for further research, the writer recommends that pronunciation should be considered as one of factors in speaking because the learners should pronounce each word correctly. Then, it should take a deeper research in implementing pronunciation to improve speaking skill.

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