

The Way EFL Student Using English Language in Oral Communication in the Classroom (What They Concern)

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Abstarct

Oral communication skills in English are one of the important aspects that must be mastered by EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students to support real language learning and application. However, the use of English in oral communication in the classroom is often a challenge for students, especially in environments where English is not their mother tongue. This research aims to identify and analyze the way EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students use English in oral communication in the classroom and what they concern about. Through qualitative methods and data collection in the form of class observations and interviews, the subject of this research is an English education student. The research results show that the students' focus is: grammar, pronunciation, and listening. This research provides important insights for educators in designing teaching strategies that support students' oral communication skills in EFL learning environments. By creating a learning environment that supports and encourages students to actively speak English, it is hoped that their oral communication skills can develop significantly.

Keywords : *English education students' oral communication skills, grammar, pronunciation, and listening.*

Abstrak

Kemampuan komunikasi lisan dalam bahasa Inggris merupakan salah satu aspek penting yang harus dikuasai oleh siswa EFL (English as a Foreign Language) untuk mendukung pembelajaran dan pengaplikasian bahasa secara nyata. Namun, penggunaan bahasa Inggris dalam komunikasi lisan di kelas sering kali menjadi tantangan tersendiri bagi siswa, terutama di lingkungan di mana bahasa Inggris bukan merupakan bahasa ibu. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi dan menganalisis cara siswa EFL (English as a Foreign Language) menggunakan bahasa Inggris dalam komunikasi lisan di dalam kelas serta faktor-faktor yang menjadi perhatian mereka. Melalui metode kualitatif dan pengumpulan data berupa observasi kelas serta wawancara, dan subjek penelitian ini adalah seorang mahasiswa pendidikan Bahasa Inggris. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa yang menjadi fokus siswa adalah : tata bahasa, pengucapan, dan mendengarkan. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan penting bagi pendidik dalam merancang strategi pengajaran yang mendukung kemampuan komunikasi lisan siswa di lingkungan belajar EFL. Dengan menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang mendukung dan mendorong siswa untuk aktif berbicara dalam bahasa Inggris, diharapkan kemampuan komunikasi lisan mereka dapat berkembang secara signifikan.

Kata kunci : *Keterampilan komunikasi lisan siswa pendidikan bahasa Inggris, tata bahasa, pengucapan, dan mendengarkan.*

1. Introduction

Oral communication plays a vital role in language learning, particularly for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, as it is the primary means of expressing ideas, sharing knowledge, and engaging in discussions. Proficiency in oral communication involves mastering pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency, which are all interconnected components that require continuous practice and exposure (Pranoto & Suprayogi, 2019). However, achieving effective

oral communication remains a challenge for many EFL students due to various factors, including limited opportunities to speak English outside the classroom and a lack of confidence in their abilities (Xodabande, 2017).

The integration of technology into language learning has provided new avenues for EFL students to improve their oral communication skills. Digital tools such as language apps, podcasts, and online platforms enable students to practice speaking, receive feedback, and engage in immersive experiences. Despite these advancements, the classroom remains a critical environment where students actively develop their speaking abilities through interaction with peers and instructors (Bona, 2017).

Given these considerations, this research explores how EFL students utilize English in oral communication during classroom activities. It aims to understand their concerns, challenges, and strategies, focusing on the factors that influence their ability to express themselves effectively in English.

2. Literature Review

- Oral Communication in EFL Context

In EFL (English as a Foreign Language) settings, oral communication plays a crucial role in the development of students' overall language proficiency. Speaking skills are often perceived as the most demanding to acquire, as they require not only linguistic competence but also the ability to use language in real-time interaction (Richards, 2015). Classroom activities such as discussions, role-plays, and presentations are often implemented to encourage students to actively use English in a spoken format. Despite its importance, many EFL students struggle with confidence, fluency, and accuracy when speaking in English (Brown & Lee, 2018). These challenges are often attributed to limited vocabulary, fear of making mistakes, and insufficient exposure to authentic conversational settings (Harmer, 2013).

- Factors Influencing Oral Communication

Internal factors such as confidence, motivation, and anxiety significantly impact students' willingness to communicate. Classroom dynamics, teacher support, and peer relationships also influence how students engage in oral activities (Nation, 2014).

- Concerns in Oral Communication

The primary concerns for EFL students in oral communication include grammatical accuracy, pronunciation, and fluency. Additionally, cultural factors and limited exposure to authentic conversational contexts often hinder their performance (Bygate, 1987; Tsui, 1996). Accuracy and fluency are central concerns for students during oral communication. Skehan (1996) notes that students often prioritize grammatical correctness, sometimes at the expense of natural fluency, due to fear of making mistakes. Pronunciation clarity is another critical concern, as students aim to be understood and accepted by their peers and teachers (Gilakjani, 2012). Additionally, cultural appropriateness in language use is often a focus, as students strive to align their expressions with social norms (Byram, 1997).

3. Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is the process of identifying and analyzing patterns or themes in qualitative data. The participant in this research was 1 English student at the Muslim Nusantara Al-Washliyah University, Medan. This research was conducted as a data collection technique. Interview is a data collection technique by interviewing selected individuals as respondents. In-depth interviews are the process of obtaining information for research by asking questions between the interviewer and the interviewee, with or without the use of an interview guide. And semi-structured interviews were chosen as the interview method. Researchers choose this type of interview because questions can be developed based on participants' answers and the situations they are experiencing.

Table 3.1 Participant Criteria

No	Participant	Status	University	English learning experience
1	PRI	English student	Muslim Al Medan	Nusantara -Washliyah She is a private English tutor and English teacher at one of the courses in Medan

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Result

The result of the research showed that were found three themes, namely : concentrate on grammar and pronunciation, imitate, and less on the listening part.

- **Concentrate on grammar and pronunciation**

“When you use oral communication in the classroom which part do you focus more on?”

PRI: *I focus more on the grammar and pronunciation part, because grammar is very important for me to speak according to good and correct rules. Meanwhile, in the pronunciation part, I want what I am talking about to be clear and not misunderstanding.*

Based on statement from the participant, the researcher can conclude that knowing grammar and pronunciation is important for students to be able to speak orally in the classroom.

- **Imitate**

“What method do you use to improve your oral speaking skills in the classroom?”

PRI : *Imitating, I can improve my English language skills by imitating someone who I think is good to imitate. Starting from the way of delivery, pronunciation, and gestures. I will make that person my role model. For example, when I teach, I start and end the class usually imitating my previous teacher. But I won't imitate everyone to improve my English skills. I will also choose which one is good for me to imitate.*

Based on the statement from the participant, the researcher can conclude that the participant believes that imitating a role model with strong language skills can be an effective way to improve her own English. By mimicking aspects such as delivery, pronunciation, and gestures, they aim to refine their language abilities. However, she emphasize the importance of choosing the right person to imitate, not just anyone, ensuring that the imitation aligns with her personal learning goals. This approach highlights the value of selective modeling in language development.

- **Less on the listening part**

“What challenges do you face when speaking English orally in the classroom?”

PRI: *Listening, I really lack in listening. Listening to someone who is speaking English is sometimes difficult, because there are vocab that I don't know the meaning of. The solution is usually I will ask the meaning of the words the speaker says to me or I will find out the meaning myself.*

Based on the answers of the participant, the researcher can conclude that the challenge for speaking orally in the classroom is a lack of vocabulary mastery. This was in line with what (Pranoto & Suprayogi, 2019) said that Proficiency in oral communication involves mastering pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency, which are all interconnected components that require continuous practice and exposure.

4.2 Discussion

Based on the interview, the researcher summarize that, the three key themes : Focus on Grammar and Pronunciation, the participant emphasized the importance of mastering grammar and pronunciation to ensure clarity and adherence to language rules. The role of imitation in language development. Imitation was identified as a key strategy for improving oral communication skills. The participant explained that mimicking proficient speakers, including their pronunciation,

delivery, and gestures, serves as a valuable learning method. Selective imitation, where role models are chosen carefully, ensures that learners adopt appropriate and effective communication styles. And difficulties with listening comprehension due to vocabulary gaps. Limited vocabulary not only affects comprehension but also hinders active participation in conversations. To address these challenges, the participant utilized strategies such as asking for clarification or independently looking up word meanings.

5. Conclusion

The researcher concluded after interviewing one student highlight three key themes related to oral communication skills in the classroom: a focus on grammar and pronunciation, the role of imitation in language learning, and challenges with listening comprehension due to vocabulary gaps. Participants emphasized the importance of understanding grammar and pronunciation to communicate effectively, while also recognizing the value of imitating proficient language models to enhance their own skills. However, difficulties in listening, particularly related to unfamiliar vocabulary, were identified as significant barriers to oral communication. These findings suggest that proficiency in oral communication requires a balanced approach, integrating grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, and listening comprehension.

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