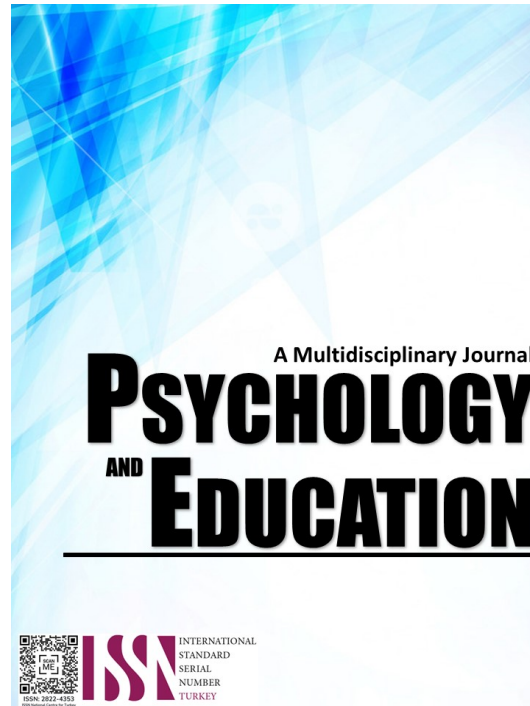


ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS: THE PLIGHT OF MAGUINDANAON STUDENTS: A PHENOMENOLOGY



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English Speaking Skills: the Plight of Maguindanaon Students: a Phenomenology

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Abstract

This qualitative phenomenological inquiry was to determine the unraveled story of the plight of Maguindanaon English speaking skills of selected Grade 10 students of Datu Saudi Uy Ampatuan Memorial National High School, Maguindanao-1 Division. Thus, English speaking skills is one of the most essential for all the learners who wish to learn English to enhance their career, improve in business, build confidence levels, to get better job opportunities and success their respective fields. In the present modern world, everything is linked with speaking skills. The classroom is the ideal platform to acquire good communication skills. English language teachers have to understand the problems of English language learners and try to implement various teaching strategies. Hence, the study utilizing purposive sampling technique with in-depth interview with participants to gather data relevant to the research study. The researchers' made guided questionnaires in order to the participants explicate their experiences in the phenomena. Thematic analysis was utilized to provide rigorous analysis of data. Finally, the study revealed that, majority of the students learned the English language at the age of seven to twelve years old. (7-12). They mentioned that it took a long time for them to speak English language. Therefore, The English Language learners learned to speak English by reading books, listen to music and watching movies, observe, imitate, dramatize, socialize, and use English in social media to master and develop speaking skills. Consequently, ELLs have faced difficulties, like grammar, pronunciation, and lack of confidence. Moreover, many factors affect the English language of students, such as, lack of vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, level of comprehension, social criticism, socio-economic status, and lastly lack of practice speaking the English language. Findings suggested that, some useful tips for the teachers to introduce various activities that involve the ELLs more on practicing their speaking skills in English Classroom. So that the ELLs their speaking skills that is useful for them to build their future career in a perfect way.

Keywords: Phenomenology, English, English Language Learners, Speaking Skills, Maguindanaon

Introduction

Language is a great instrument of communication that plays a very important role in social relationship among human beings. As international languages, English plays the most important role in the world communication system. English as language of global competitiveness, that requires students to prepare globally competitiveness and it is language of competitive people. (Bernardo, 2007) as stated by Mohamad, (2022).

Currently, English is very necessary for this reason which speaking skills are essential part in effectively determine the language from the speakers to use in an extensive world of social online and communicate with other people over the world. Especially, there are generally about 375 million people to speak English as the first language and approximately 750 million people to speak English as a second language.

In Indonesia, English is one of the compulsory subjects which are taught in junior high school, senior high school and university as the first foreign language. In China, English is not only regarded as a second language, which is widely used in both formal and informal occasion, but also considered to be the initial foreign language that is being learned

compulsorily since middle school until university level for many years (Actually, in recent years, the English course has been started since primary school). According to the speaking problems in Thailand that emphasizes English grammar and writing skills do not focuses on speaking and listening even through the educational system of Thailand. It has have provided a model of developing countries into Thai schools and Universities. Most Thai people still speak Thai native language in classes, but they do not have many opportunities to use English communication and many students lack of confidence in speaking English skills in different situations as well.

Therefore, English as a major course must be learned and mastered by every student. In learning English, there are four skills that should be mastered by the students. One of them is speaking.

Speaking is an essential component of success several domains of life. Being a good speaker helps an individual advance the career, grow business and form strong collaborations. It is functional when people are standing in a front of an audience and delivering an idea or a body of work. Hence speaking plays a vital role in building up personally in general and status in life.

Speakers begin with the intention of affecting their

listeners in a particular way. They select and utter a sentence they will bring just this affect. Based on the KTSP academic curriculum, the goal of language learning is to enable students to communicate the language. The main purpose of learning is aimed to improve the students' skills in communicating English well. Furthermore, the students should master all of the components of speaking, they are fluency, accuracy, and comprehensibility.

Moreover, developing speaking skill among the students still can be a big problem. There are several reasons why this happened. First, they did not practice the lesson after they learned from their teachers. Next, the teachers gave them a little chance to explore their ability in the class. In addition, when teaching in the class, the teacher did not know what kind of problem that faced by their students in learning English.

As a result, the teacher only came to the class to fill the attendance list. Besides, the method that teacher used in teaching English speaking is still conventional method such as; teacher exemplifying, describing and dominating the lesson. Meanwhile, the students just sit down and listened to what was explained by their teachers.

Garcia-Lopez and Almansa-Moreno (2018) has reported that previously trained students could act as trainers to other students and help them to improve their public speaking skills. Based on the researchers' observation, schools at Maguindanao-1 Division have students who have noticeable speaking anxiety in a public rhetoric. Thus, as an English language Teacher of DSUAMNHS, he is interested to conduct this study on plight of Maguindanaon students in developing the English speaking skills.

Research Questions

This study sought to determine the Plight of the Maguindanaon students in developing their speaking skills at Datu Saudi Uy Ampatuan Memorial National High School during the school year 2021-2022. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. When do the students learn to speak English Language?
2. How do the students learn to speak English language?
3. What struggles do the students experienced in developing their English speaking skills?
4. What are the factors affect their English speaking skills?
5. How each factor affects their speaking skills?

6. What are the possible interventions to help the students improve their English speaking skills?

Literature Review

Methodology

Research Design

This study is qualitative in nature was employing based from phenomenological inquiry to obtain knowledge aimed to describe experiences how do participants share their ideas and understanding to the existing phenomena that is shared by the group of people (Cresswell, 2009). qualitative methods typically produce a wealth of detailed information about much smaller number of people and cases (Patton, 1990) as cited by (Mohamad, 2022; Zaniel, Mohamad & Parcon, 2023) in addition Phenomenological inquiry is an inductive qualitative research approach that is rooted in the Philosophical proposition that researchers can gain valuable insight into the structure of how participants understand their experiences in English Language learning as independent on personal inclination of the particular topic. (Pontillas, et al., 2021)

A group of selected students will be undergone an interview and it will be helped the researchers to understand the deep and real life experiences of students in their speaking problems. This will be done to find out the plight of students in developing their speaking skills. A research design is used to structure the research to show how all of the major parts of the research project work together to address the research questions. It will be used to gather in-depth insights into a problem or generate new ideas for research.

Locale of the study

The study conducted at Datu Saudi Uy Ampatuan Memorial National High School (DSUAMNHS). Maguindanao-1 Division during the school year 2020-2021. The school is a Public Educational Government and it is located within Datu Piang Maguindanao, It was established in 2005, started as a private high school until it became a public school and presently offers only Junior High School due to small size of school area located. Each grade section has 60 plus students and with different class section, five

sections for Grade-7, four sections for Grade-8, three sections for Grade-9 and two sections for Grade-10. The said locale of the study is accessible by means of transportation through motorcycling around Datu Piang, Maguindanao. The Public school will continue to serve the humanity Quality Education and continuously moving towards excellence.

Participants of the study

The 10 selected Grade 10 Maguindanaon High School students from Datu Saudi Uy Ampatuan Memorial National High School, Datu Piang, Maguindanao will be chosen as respondents of the study using the Purposive sampling technique. The respondents will be purposively selected from students who are enrolled during the school year 2021-2022. With perfect attendance, which is the criteria relevant to the research study that is introduced by Richards and Morse (2006; Saunders 2012; Speziale & Carpenter, 2007; Alquizar, 2018; Crossman, 2019; Mohamad, 2022).

Research Instrument

Interview Guide Questions were utilized to determine the Plight of students' in speaking of English Language. The researchers made six questions which were based on problems of the study to be determined, it were all researchers made and validated by the panel members and research adviser. This was used for the participants to bring out the problems that they face and the students who have problem in speaking. Furthermore, voice recorder was used during the conduct of interview to store and keep the information in record. It was carefully designed to ensure complete description of the situation and information, making sure that the response answers in collection of data was accurate and to reduce errors in interpreting the data collected.

Data Gathering Procedures

Upon approval of the research proposal, the researcher will ask permission by writing a letter to Datu Saudi Uy Ampatuan Memorial National High School Principal to allow the researcher to conduct the study. Upon approval, another letters were sent to respective school advisers to allow their students as the respondents of the study. Then, the researcher will communicate with the participants for the conduct of the study. Upon selection of the participants, the researcher will interview personally to the respondents. After which, the researcher will record the response answers of the participants. The

researcher's translate the data and the results will analyze and interpret carefully.

Data Analysis

The thematic content analysis was used to analyze the interview data. The researchers will be organized, and transferred recorded data onto paper, and read it to get an idea of what about. It will be transferred the information from the recorded interviews into written form. The checking and editing will be done by reviewing the data, analyzing and interpreting all parts of written form information. The differences and similarities between the different interviews will be identified. Validity of data will be checked by going through the transcription again as well as to validate the finding. The researchers also identifies different segments of the data that describe related phenomena and labeling these parts using coding category. In order to satisfy the objectives of the study, a Thematic Analysis was applied the researchers closely examined the data to identify common themes, topics, ideas, and patterns of meaning that come up repeatedly. (Pontellas., et al., 2021). Constructionists claim that truth is relative and that it is dependent on one's perspective. Constructiveness is built upon the premise of a social construction of reality. One of the advantages of this approach is the close collaboration between the researchers and the participants, while enabling participants to tell their stories. Through these stories the participants are able to describe their views of reality and this enables the researchers to better understand the participants' actions.

Result

This section presents the results and analysis of data. The data are presented in narrative forms. The researcher used coding. Coding is used to ensure the data ethical considerations of the conduct of the study. The research study is focused on the Plight of Maguindanaon students in their English language Speaking. Transcription of participants' responses was recorded and transcribed. Thematic analysis was used on qualitative data.

This table shows the significant statements, coding concept and theme.

<i>RQ's</i>	<i>Significant Statements</i>	<i>Coding Concept</i>	<i>Theme</i>
1. What age do you learn to speak English and how much long does it take for you to speak the language	Majority of the participants mentioned: "7-12 years old."	Age of 7-12 for them to learn the English.	Ages (7-12 years old)
	Participants 7 and 8 shared: "14-15 years old."		
	All participants mentioned: "Very long time to learn speak the language."	Many years that passed for them to speak the English language.	Very long time
	Participants 5 and 6 shared: "Short period of time and slightly easy."		
2. How do you learn to speak English Language?	All participants mentioned: "Reading a books, poems, novels, wattpad is the way of learning the English language and using dictionaries."	Saying reading a books and using dictionaries is easiest form of learning the language.	Reading a books and using dictionaries
	Majority of the participants shared: listening music and watching tv and movie with sub titles is one of the ways of learning to speak."	Stated that listening and watching can be ways of learning to speak.	Listening music and watching tv and movie

Figure 1. .

Participants 4,5 and 7 shared: "Through observation, imitation and dramatization."	Considered that observation, imitation and dramatization is other form of learning the English language."	Observation, imitation and dramatization
Participant 2 shared: learning to speak an English by socializing."	Looks socializing to others is one of ways to speak.	Socialization
Participant 10 shared: "By means of Facebook messaging and Group chatting is unexpectedly learned the English."	Also, noticed that by Facebook group chatting can be ways to speak the language.	Facebook messaging and group chatting
3. What difficulties/struggles do you experience when speaking English Language?	Majority of participants mentioned: "experiencing difficulties in grammar, comprehension and pronunciation."	Participants encountered grammatical error, mispronunciation and difficult in comprehension.
		Difficulty in Grammar, pronunciation, comprehension
		Experiencing lack of confidence

Figure 2. .

	Majority of the participants mentioned: "unconfident, getting shy, nervous and afraid of judging by others."	Believed that confidence is very important to speak to avoid shyness and nervous and not afraid to judge.	Bullying
	Participants 3, 5 and 8 shared: "experienced bullying."	Experiencing bullying sometimes	
4. What do you think are the factors that affect your English Language skills?	All participants mentioned: "Wrong grammar, lack of vocabulary, mispronunciation and unconfident."	Considered many factors affect their speaking skills	Lack of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation
	Participants 2 and 3 shared: "social criticism is one of the factors affect speaking."	Considered that social criticism is also one of the factors.	Social Criticism
	Participant 7 shared: "educational background and socio economic background were one of the biggest factors."	Highlights the educational factors and socio-economic.	Educational background and socio-economic background
5. How each factors you mentioned affects your English Language skills?	All of the participants mentioned: "We lose our confidence."	Believed that losing of confidence really much affect.	Lose of Confidence

Figure 3. .

Majority said: "We are not motivated enough to learn to speak the English language."	Believed that motivation is the key to learn the language.	Motivation
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Figure 4. .

I- Age of students learn to speak English language

They were different ages of students when they learned the English language like at the age of 7 to 15 years old. Also the data revealed that majority of them learned on their elementary level. Majority of them were taken many years to take in learning the language to speak.

Theme 1- Ages of 7-12 years old students to learn English

The data revealed that majority of the students learned the English language at the age of seven to twelve years old in their elementary days and in a different

way such reading books and listening and watching movies with sub title.

In fact, one participant said

"I learned the English language when I was seven years old and I just know those simple English like what, where, when etc. because my parents did not finished their schooling and that is why I had very little knowledge on how to learn English and besides we don't have any sources like cellphone and tv before unlike now because I got my cellphone when I was high school it was when I in grade eight and now we have tv that we can watch easily and learn some basic english unlike before"

It was support by Russian researcher Lev Vgotsky, language stems from social interactions in which the need to communicate drives development and by language becomes a tool for intellectual growth and development in children 4-7 years old. Sometimes after age of 6, private speech mutates into inaudible muttering, which then becomes internalized as thought and "inner speech." Thus, Vggotsky argues, thought is the result of language.

In addition, using Vgotsky's framework, it is no surprise that six and seven years old are often quite chatty, telling jokes, expressing ideas, and making more extended comments on situations and events. They begin a time of rapid vocabulary expansion. Children to this age come to understand the function and purpose of language.

As participants 7 and 8 shared that their age learn to speak were at the age of teenagers, 14 and 15 years old when they tried to speak the language. Accordingly, they were learned when they were in a high school days because it was hard for them because of struggling in learning the language itself.

Accordingly to Suzie Hayman, author of Teach Yourself Parenting Teenager, says "By now the separation from parents is in full swing, your teenager is more likely to them, so try to talk things through and negotiate solutions that suit you both." Teenager's stage spends too much listening to music or talking to their friends through text messages, research indicates that this can actually benefit your child's language skills.

In general, majority of the students learned to speak the language at the age of 7 -12 years old, therefore they were in an elementary school days to learn to speak. Only 2 participants said they were just 14 and

15 years old when they tried to speak and learned it. Also majority of participants mentioned that many time that passed for them to speak the language. This implies that the students were learning the language at the early age and it was a very long time for them to learn. The revealed result is supported by some research shows that learning a second language boosts problem solving, critical thinking, and listening skills, in addition to improving memory, concentration, and ability to multitask. Children proficient in other languages also show signs of enhanced creativity and mental flexibility. Younger learners are also uninhibited by the fear of making mistakes, which is sometimes an obstacle for older beginners. In addition, the length time of as student is able to devote to learning a language has a direct positive correlation to cognitive development. Longer sequences also provide the opportunity for learners to grow alongside the additional language. This is also inline with policy makers are mandating earlier starting ages for foreign language learning in schools (Enever 2018). In many cases, this foreign language is English, because of its dominating role as a lingua franca world-wide (Butler and Le 2018).

II- Students on how learn the English language.

The different ways on how students learn the English languages include reading books, listening music and watching movies, observation, and imitation and dramatizing, socializing and facebook message and group chatting.

Theme 1- Reading books and using dictionaries

Reading is a skill and multifaceted process involving word recognition, comprehension, fluency, and motivation. This is one of ways of the majority of students to learn the language. While they were reading the books like poems, novels, and watsapp they were using dictionaries for them to unlock their vocabulary.

To support this claim, participant 2 shared “ *I learned to speak English through reading books like watsapp.*” Also, participant 5 mentioned “ *I am reading books like poem and novels.*”

In this sense, students believed that reading plays important role to learn the second language. According to Jonathan Kozol in "Illiterate America," quoted in "The Teacher Who Couldn't Read, reading is a vital skill and important in variety reasons like to help the children to learn it is important to realize that struggling with a vital reading skill is not a sign of low

intelligence.

In addition, Albert Einstein was asked once how we could make our children intelligent. His reply was both simple and wise. “If you want your children to be intelligent,” he said, “read them fairy tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales.” He understood the value of reading, and of imagining. I hope we can give our children a world in which they will read, and be read to, and imagine, and understand.

In an interview, all of the students mentioned that they were reading books and using dictionaries for some cases which the words were unknown for them. This implies that reading is easiest form of their learning the language. Therefore, reading is most important. As Royal, (2016) stated teaching reading is tremendous challenge, and that first grade teachers need to be expert at teaching students to read.

Theme 2- Listening and watching

Listening is the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages in the communication process. the ability to listen effectively messages are easily misunderstood. Listening is one of the most important skills you can have.

In fact, two participants admitted that “ *How do I learn? By watching cartoons with English version*” and “ *I learn to speak through listening the cartoon movies*”.

People spend considerable amounts of time and money listening to music, watching TV and movies, and reading books and magazines, yet almost no attention in psychology has been devoted to understanding individual differences in preferences for such entertainment.

In this, many of participants mentioned that they are all listening and watching. This says that those were one of their learning styles to learn to speak smoothly.

Further, an average week, the typical American spends approximately 38 hours watching television shows and movies, 8 hours reading books, magazines, and newspapers, and 18 hours listening to recorded music and radio (Motion Picture Association of America, 2007).

In these theme, participant 4, 5 and 7 shared that their experiences on how they learn the language is by means of observation, imitation, dramatizing. also, participant 2 shared her learning the English through

socializing to others. This affirmed that there were others strategies and styles of students for them to gain knowledge on how to learn the English language. Albert Bandura's stressed that individuals may simply learn from the behavior rather than imitate it. Observational learning is a major component of Bandura's social learning theory. He also emphasized that four conditions were necessary in any form of observing and modeling behavior: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation.

III-Difficulties or struggles experienced by students in learning the English language.

Speaking is claimed to be the most important. People still struggle with speaking English since they have fewer opportunities to expose themselves to the language in daily life. There were many difficulties experienced by the students in learning to speak.

Theme 1- Difficulty in grammar, pronunciation and comprehension level

One of the most difficult part of students is to commit mistakes such as grammatically error, mispronunciation and do not understand what they are speak in a publicly.

It was quoted from the participants that *"Yes sir, sometimes I cannot find the exact term for that word or sentence because of some synonyms or antonyms that the same meaning, its difficult to identifying and wrong grammar and not enhance vocabulary"*

In fact, majority of the students claimed that they were encountered some error specially their grammar and pronouncing the word incorrectly and also sometimes they did not know what the word is. Lack of comprehension they have. This means that students need pay attention to their committed mistakes for them to speak fluently and accurately.

It was supported, Teng and Sinwongsuwat (2015) pointed out that there might be some reasons or factors affecting the learners' speaking ability. For some language learners, they struggled and find it difficult 49 THAITESOL JOURNAL, Vol.31 (1) to speak English, while some groups of learners could speak English proficiently and fluently.

In this sense, using correct grammar makes listening and reading easier for others to understand and can make the communication process more enjoyable. As a child gets older grammar becomes an important process as they learn how to communicate their

thoughts and ideas in written and oral form. By using the correct sounds when you speak, others can quickly understand what you're trying to say. If you are great at grammar and know many different words, good pronunciation will help others hear and understand you even more clearly. Thus, Hassan, (2014) claimed that one of the important problems faced by the students of English in general and suddanese students of English in particular, is that each English vowel sound has more than just one pronunciation. So this causes of many diificulties to the learners and leads them to mispronunciation.

Theme 2- Experiencing Lack of self confidence

Self-confidence enables students to handle setbacks with ease. Instead of being crippled by failure, resilient children get up quickly, learn from their mistakes, and try again. They accept that failure is a part of life and take more chances as a result - which makes them even more successful later in life. Regard to this, majority of the participants experiencing lack of confidence when they speak. Participant 9 shared he is not confident to himself.

As mentioned from the responded that *"Non sir hanggan ngayon wala akong confidence sa sarili lalo na sa maraming tao hrap ako magsalita kase sympre di naman ako magaling siguro iyon lang minsan napapakinggan lang sa tv at radio nakakatulong naman sa akin para matuto at my books sa amin binabasa ko."*

This means that students need to read more, speak more by practicing themselves for improvement and developing their speaking skills.

Lerner (2006) argued that problems of low self confidence and poor of social relationship are carried forward into adolescence where they can develop into learned helplessness, a significant drop in their confidence to learn succeed, low motivation to achieve, attention problems and manipulative behaviour which can affect secondary school students' performance negatively.

In addition to this theme, participant 3, 5 and 8 shared that bullying is also one of their experiencing in learning the language itself. This revealed that it makes them felt shy and nervous because they encountered that case of getting uncomfortable to the language.

Discussion

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following are recommended:

(1).The English teacher may render an ample time and extra efforts to train their students to speak English language at an early stage and as much as possible with collaboration with the parents because parents are the first teacher of their children, therefore it is a must practicing their children to learn and love the language at the young age. (2) Teachers may establish integrative, meaningful and appropriate learning activities for each speaking skills way of learning so that students can learn a lot. (3)Teachers may see to it that the teaching style, speaking materials and speaking assessment they employ is suited and fitted to the learners' need and cope up with the experiencing difficulty of these Maguindanaon students on their plight in English language skills. (4).Students shall internalize that speaking is most important among other skills, so they must cope up with the different factors affecting their speaking skills. (5).School administrator, English coordinators and English teachers may ensure to have speaking learning materials or intervention so that students can lessen some factors affecting development of their speaking skill. (6).Finally, future researchers shall venture on further studies on other unraveled experiences and plight of the students towards English language skills.

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