Gender differences and students’ verbal communication

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Abstract

The study was aimed at explaining the way male and female students’ differ in Verbal Communication. This study used quantitative comparative approach with Ex-post Facto design in finding out the answer of problem of the study. The population of this study consist of the third semester student at IAIN Palangka Raya with 30 students determined as sample by using random sampling technique. In collecting the data needed, speaking test was used as the instrument. The result shows that there is significant difference between male and female students in Verbal Communication of the third semester student at IAIN Palangka Raya. It happens because the students’ psycholinguistic factors especially in motivation and interest in learning English.

Keywords: comparative study, verbal communication, male and female students, gender

INTRODUCTION

English is a compulsory subject in Indonesia which had been taught formally to Indonesian students since they are in elementary school. The English subject consists of four skills including speaking, writing, listening and reading. Speaking skill has become the first priority to be taught over other skills since communicative approach implementation has been influential in foreign language learning.

One of the main aims of most English teachers are to make their students able to communicate and most of English teachers have the same aims when they taught English. Kathleen (1994:4) states that one of the main aims is to make their students able to communicate and convey information effectively in spoken English. Besides, the teacher should create active learning condition and develop their techniques they also should pay attention to the factor of gender differences of their students.

According to Arnold (2002:139), The factor of gender differences cannot be ignored in learning language, because it can affect students’ achievement and proficiency in learning. It is clear that the students may be grouped into two different genders, male and female.

Based on Kaufman, Beth and Alan (2004:158) According to national assessment for educational progress in 2001, female did better in reading test and
males had slightly higher scores than female in the science test. Based on this statement, it is real that there is a gender difference such as female are more superior in verbal abilities than male, but male in mechanical ability is superior and males are not less social than female.

Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information. Many people said that speaking is the activity of paying attention to give information to other people. “Speaking is having a conversation by using specific language” (Helen, 1987:211). In expressing speaking we can see the children use the language. They are able to express emotion, gestures, explore the language, and make fun on it. So they expect to be able to speak in English. They may memorize basic sentence to gain confidence in their ability to speak the second language. They may practice sentence and do an oral drill. These activities are preliminary to actual conversation, in a sense; these activities may be the term. In Verbal Communication, there are many activities that can be done as well as a lot of principles to be kept when conducting Verbal Communication.

According to Harris (1969:84), there are four learning elements used in Verbal Communication such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension:

a. Pronunciation

Pronunciation here, however, refers to the standard of correctness and regional differences. It means, it will create misunderstanding toward listeners invited to speak and the message will be conveyed, will lose and difficult to be comprehended. Harmer (1991:11) said that users of the language must know how to say a word that is how to pronounce it. This knowledge is made up of three areas; sounds, stress, and intonation.

To clear about pronunciation, according to Manser (1995:133) pronunciation is a way in which a language and a word are spoken. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that pronouncing a sound or language can result in a certain sound or a lot of sounds. It means that pronunciation is one of five important elements of Verbal Communication with the aim is to make students be able to communicate with others well and understandable.

b. Grammar

Grammar is one of three English components and also one of the speaking abilities to support and help students to have a good ability in communicating well. Grammar is common in both the written and spoken form of the language, so its existence is strongly needed in leaning and speaking skill. Manser (1995:82) stated: “Grammar is a rule for forming words and making the sentence”.

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The explanation above shows that grammar focuses on some roles from words that can be easily understood and match the rules. In addition, it also focuses on how to make good sentences and easily comprehended.

c. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is one of five Verbal Communication components, which has an important role in speaking English skill. That’s why, if the students have a lot of vocabularies, their speaking will be fluent and they are not confused in pronouncing or producing a lot of words just because have many vocabularies. Conversely, just a few vocabularies they have, it does not guarantee their speaking will be fluent, and also will face hardship in pronouncing and producing many words that they want to convey.

English Verbal Communication has a set of qualities that must be rated. Harris (1969:84) states that the qualities are as follow: vocabulary limitation so extreme to make conversation virtually impossible, misuse of words and very limited vocabulary make comprehension quite difficult, frequently uses the wrong words; conversation sometimes limited because of inadequate vocabulary, sometimes using inappropriate term and or must refresh ideas because of lexical inadequacies, the use of vocabulary and idiom are virtually that of native speaker.

d. Fluency

The students can be called a master of English or have a good ability in English if they can speak fluently. It means the student’s fluency in English as a sign that they are master of English. To know about fluency, according to Manser (1995:61), fluency is an ability to speak a language smoothly and easily.

Actually, the students who can speak English fluently, they will not have any difficulties in pronouncing or producing a lot of words. Be sure their pronunciation production of words must be effective and suitable with the reading in the dictionary not up to their wish only. For instance, they use jargon language. Harris (1969:81) says, “Fluency is the ease and speed of the flow of speech”.

According to Harris (1969:48), that there are five qualities that must be rated in the fluency of speaking. They are as follow: speech is co halting and fragmentary as to take the conversation in virtually impossible, usually hesitant, often forced into silence by language limitation, speech and fluency are rather strongly affected by language problems, speech as fluent and errorless as that of a native speaker.

The traditional model for deciding a teacher’s priorities when it comes to reacting to a student’s oral mistakes is based upon the distinction between accuracy and fluency. Accuracy work is defined as a part of the lesson when the students are encouraged to make their utterances as near to native speaker’s as possible which is usually taken as necessitating more intense correction (Bartram and Walton, 1991:32).
a. Reading Aloud

Many present-day oral tests include a test of reading aloud in which the students are given a short time to glance through an extract before being required to read it aloud. The ability to read aloud belongs to formal speech situation, it differing greatly from the ability to converse with another person in a flexible, informal way. Test involving reading aloud are generally used when is desired to assess pronunciation as distinct from the total speaking skills.

b. Oral drills

There are three kinds of oral drills; repetition, structure drills and situational drills. These kinds of drills can be used to help measure oral production range widely from purely repetitive drills to enhance transformation and contraction drills. Repetition is useful for testing phoneme discrimination, stress, and intonation while structure and situation drills are obviously of more use for assessing how well a student can use a certain structure.

c. Using picture

Pictures can be used in oral production test. By serving to stimulate an oral response, pictures provide a realistic context for the structural pattern being tested. A picture provides students with the necessary clue or stimulus to respond to them to produce some words and sentence.

More common in public examination, the picture is used for descriptive and narrative purposes. The students are given a picture to study for a few minutes; then they required to describe the picture in a given time. Separates scores of general fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and accuracy of description/narration are more reliable.

Careful selection of the picture used for the examination will help in controlling the basic vocabulary required. The most effective type of oral examination using picture consists not only of description and narration but also of a discussion about picture concerned. The oral interview like many other examinations of oral production, the scoring of the oral interview is highly subjective and thus sometimes has only low reliability. The interviewer should endeavor to put the students at his ease to the beginning of the interview, adopting a sympathetic attitude and trying to hold a genuine conversation. Students can response orally to questions about a range of topics that might include their prior knowledge, activities, and interest of preferences (O’Malley and Pierce, 1996:11).

The scoring of the interview can range from the impression mark to a mark arrived at on the basis of a fairly detailed marking scheme (showing accuracy of pronunciation, stress, and intonation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and ease of speech).
Some previous studies under the topic of gender difference toward male and female student’s Verbal Communication have been shared positive results. The First research is done by Abi Zaim on March 2008, “A Comparative Study Between Male and Female Students Ability of English Speaking Of The First Year Students of Madrasah Aliyah” The result From this research there are significant differences between males and females in their speaking skill.

Second entitled “The Comparison Between Male And Female Students’ Verbal Communication” by Silpia Rahayu on October 2016, The purpose of this research is to investigate the male and female students’ Verbal Communication. Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that there was a significant difference between the male and the female students Verbal Communication.

**METHOD**

This study classified into quantitative research. “Quantitative research deals with the question of relationship, cause, and effect, or current status that the writer can answer by gathering and statistically analyzing numeric data. It can be further classified as experimental and non-experimental” (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh & Sorenson, 2010, p.26).

The writer used the ex post facto method to do this research because this study compared Verbal Communication between male and female in the third semester of IAIN Palangka Raya in the academic year of 2018/2019. Ex Post Facto research is a type of research that attempts to determine the causes for, or consequence of, differences that already exist in groups of individuals (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh & Sorenson, 2010, p.331). In doing this research, the writer selected students where their English course from randomly, it based on the gender of male and female students. The group received the same tests based on their syllabus of English subject then the writer compared the result of their tests.

The population of this research was the Third Semester of English department student’s at IAIN Palangka Raya. Sample of this research were male and female students of the Third Semester of English department at IAIN Palangka Raya. The number of third semester student from English department at IAIN Palangka Raya is 80 students. The sample of the research consists of three classes; they are the students of class A, class B, and class C. The researcher took 15 male students and 15 female students from those classes by random sampling using microsoft excel.

**RESEARCH INSTRUMENT DEVELOPMENT**

In order to collect the data, the writer needed an instrument. Since the result of the study was influenced by instrument, an appropriate instrument should be carefully designed and constructed. A test is a very important instrument by which the researcher will get the data of her investigation. In this research, the test is used to collect the data. The researcher tests the respondences to know the extent of their Verbal
Communication. After the data collected, the writer will compare the speaking score of male and female students.

The stimulus materials consisted of two pictures. The two pictures are about people enjoying a quiet time. The first picture is people enjoying their time shopping in the mall or supermarket and the second picture is showing two Children are watching a cartoon on television. For both pictures, the 30 students (15 males and 15 females) must tell the comparison between two pictures of people enjoying their quiet time. The candidate must describe people, places, saying where people and things are and what different people are doing. The candidates should talk about the pictures with little or no prompting specialized words such as hairband ‘crane’ is not expected.

To analyzed students’ ability in English speaking is classified into into four proficiencies category based on Fulcher and Glen (2003).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1. Research Instrument</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accent / Pronunciation</td>
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<td>--------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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ACCENT / PRONUNCIATION

1. Pronunciation frequently unintelligible.

2. Frequent errors and a very heavy accent make understanding difficult, requires frequent repetition.

3. ‘Foreign accent’ requires concentrated listening to mispronunciations lead to occasional misunderstanding and apparent errors in grammar or vocabulary.
4. Marked ‘foreign accent’ and occasional mispronunciation which do not interfere with understanding.

5. No conspicuous mispronunciations, but would not be taken for a native speaker.

GRAMMAR

1. Grammar is almost entirely inaccurate except in stock phrase.

2. Constant errors showing control of very few major patterns and frequently preventing conversation.

3. Frequent errors showing some major patterns uncontrolled and causing occasional irritation and misunderstanding.

4. Occasional errors showing imperfect control of some patterns but no weakness that causes misunderstanding.

5. Few errors with no patterns of failure.

VOCABULARY

1. Vocabulary is inadequate for even the simplest conversation.

2. Vocabulary limited to basic personal and survival areas (time, food, transportation, family, etc).

3. Choices of words sometimes inaccurate, limitation of vocabulary prevent discussion of some common professional and social topic.

4. Professional vocabulary adequate to discuss special interests, general vocabulary permits discussion of the non-technical subject with some circumlocutions.

5. Professional vocabulary broad and precise, general vocabulary adequate to cope with complex practical problems and varied social situations.

FLUENCY

1. Speech is so halting and fragmentary that conversation is virtually impossible.

2. Speech is very slow and uneven except for short or routine sentences.

3. Speech is frequently hesitant and jerky, sentences may be left uncompleted.
4. Speech is occasionally hesitant, with some evenness caused by rephrasing and groping for words.

5. Speech is effortless and smooth, but perceptibly non-native in speed and evenness.

**Data Collection Procedure**

The study was conducted at the English department of IAIN Palangka Raya. Each student was tested individually. The student and writer were facing each other and took the following steps:

a. First, the writer says to the candidate that now, a writer going to give him / her pictures of people enjoying their free time.

b. Second, the writer gives two pictures to the candidate. And ask them to compare between the two pictures.

c. After asking them to describe the pictures, then the writer recorded the students’ responses.

**Data Analysis Procedure**

Based on Syaifuddin and Azwar (2001:123) Analyzing data gathering means as a method to organize the data until readable and interpretable. Analyzing quantitative data are started from the tabulation. Tabulation is a process of making the main table that contains the composition of research data based on systematical classification so, easy to analyze advance.

To analyzed the data, the writer applied the steps as follows:

a. The tabulation of data

b. Summarizing of data

c. Analyzing data in order to testing hypothesis

d. Analyzing data to drawing conclusions.

After the actual test conducted, the writer did some steps to get the results of the test. The first step is to analyzed students’ ability in English speaking is classified into four proficiencies category based on Fulcher and Glen (2003).

The second step was scoring the proficiency description. After getting the score, the writer will calculate the mean for each gender of the male and female base on Arikunto and Suharsimi (2006) formula.
\[ M = \frac{\sum x}{n} \]

Where:
- \( M \) = The mean score
- \( \sum \) = Summation sign
- \( \sum x \) = The sum of all \( x \) scores
- \( n \) = The total number of scores

After knowing the mean then find out the standard deviation male and female student with:

\[ SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum x^2}{n}} \]

\[ t = \frac{M_m - M_f}{SD} \]

Where:
- \( SD \) = Standard deviation
- \( t \) = \( t \)-score/mean of differentiation
- \( M_m \) = Mean of male students
- \( M_f \) = Mean of female students.

After knowing the mean score of both gender then checking hypothesis result. The criteria hypothesis if significant is when \( T \) result is same or more than \( T \) table.

If \( H_0 \) is unacceptable means an alternative hypothesis is acceptable. So, the conclusion is there is a significant difference between the Verbal Communication of male students from female students.

If \( H_a \) is unacceptable mean an null hypothesis is acceptable. So, the conclusion is there is nothing a significant difference between the Verbal Communication of male students from that of female students.
FINDINGS

Having gained the mean of the two groups, the researcher then tested the hypothesis that has been determined that male and female students are different in their Verbal Communication.

To test the hypothesis, t-test formula was employed using SPSS.18. Following is the result.

Thus, the result of calculating using spss above are the t-value in this case is about 2.794.

The t Distribution: Critical Values of t above shows that t-table at significance 1% and 5% from 28 degree of freedom are 2.048 and 2.763. Thus, the t-value in this case is about 2.794. By 28 degrees of freedom (df), the t observed was upper than ttable at the level significance 1% (2.763) and ttable at the level significance 5% (2.048) or 2.763 < 2.794 > 2.048, it could be interpreted that Ha stating that there is significant difference between male and female students in Verbal Communication was accepted and Ho stating that there is no significant difference between male and female students in Verbal Communication was rejected. It meant that there is significant difference between male and female students in Verbal Communication at third semester of IAIN Palangka Raya.
Table 3. t Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degrees of Freedom</th>
<th>Two-tailed test:</th>
<th>One-tailed test:</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.314</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.920</td>
<td>4.303</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2.132</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>2.015</td>
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<td>1.943</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.894</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.833</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.812</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.796</td>
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<td>30</td>
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DISCUSSION

In speaking, the students have able to convey their ideas and opinion to other people orally. Actually they have to master some components of speaking including vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency. Here, the researcher can know the students' ability when they speak English especially in describing picture. The result of the students test state that the female students are higher than male students in Verbal Communication.

After the researcher calculated and analyzed the data, the researcher gets the result. Then the researcher calculates the average of the students score. From the result, the writer can find out the extent of the students' ability in their Verbal Communication. The average of female students 24.1 and male students is 20. It means that the Verbal
Communication of female students is higher than male. The size of population, actually there were 80 students of 16 males and 68 females. But, the researcher must get proportional sample and impossible if using all of the population. So that way, the researcher used random sampling to get the sample. So, the researcher got 30 of 80 students that consist of 15 males and 15 females who have familiarity background based on the result of the sampling.

The result showed that: (1) the result of tobserved was 2.794, the ttable was 2.763 at the level significance 1% and the ttable was 2.048 at the level significance 5% with the degree of freedom (df) was 28. It meant that the tobserved was upper than the ttable (2.763 < 2.794 > 2.048). It meant that there was significant difference between male and female students in Verbal Communication of third semester student at IAIN Palanga Raya.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research that was carried out in the third semester of the students IAIN Palangka Raya in academic year of 2019/2020, the writer might draw conclusions.

1. The female students reach higher points in Verbal Communication and the average score is 24.1. and the male students reach 20 score in the average. The case in both genders is the same that there is a different in the speaking between male and female. It means that the female students are different in Verbal Communication than male students. The result showed that: the result of tobserved was 2.794, the ttable was 2.763 at the level significance 1% and the ttable was 2.048 at the level significance 5% with the degree of freedom (df) was 28. It meant that the tobserved was upper than the ttable (2.763 < 2.794 > 2.048). It meant that there was significant difference between male and female students in Verbal Communication of third semester student at IAIN Palanga Raya.

2. Most of female students have higher score in the proficiencies than male students, including their pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary. But, in their use of grammar is same. It happens because the learners are mainly influence by the development of their cognitive factor and psycholinguistic factors especially in Motivation and interest in learning English.

Based on the conclusion of the research, the researcher proposes some suggestions for the following parties: Students, Lecturers and Next researchers.

1. For student

It was recommended the students learn more aspects of speaking, since four aspects of speaking will help them gain a better communication skill in conversation. Because the result in this study there is significant difference between male and female students in Verbal Communication and score of their speaking was good even though...
they still in their third semester. So, the students should find many strategies that appropriate to learn more how to have excellent speaking skill.

2. For Lecturers

The gender differences are very affected on student achievement and proficiency. So the teacher must do gender segregation on their class if the class is classroom gender mixed. The teacher has to reduce gender biased on their classroom. Analyze the seating chart in your classroom and determine whether there are gender segregations. When your students work in groups, monitor whether the groups are balanced by the genders.

3. For Next Researcher

They can make this study as their reference to conduct other researcher on the same field. They are also expected to be able to cover the limitation about this. They can conduct a research with the same case in different situation and proficiency. The writer hopes that the text researchers can prepare everything as good as possible in doing research and can follow up this research.

REFERENCES


