



**A CORRELATION STUDY BETWEEN
STUDENTS' LISTENING SKILL AND
STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION ABILITY
(A Case of the Eleventh Grade Students of SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang
in the Academic Year of 2012/2013)**

Rio Luhung Pribadi[✉]

Department of English, Faculty Language and Arts, Semarang State University, Indonesia

Info Artikel

Sejarah Artikel:

Diterima September 2013
Disetujui Oktober 2013
Dipublikasikan November
2013

Keywords:

: Listening skill,
Pronunciation Ability

Abstract

This final project is about the correlation between the students' listening skill and students' pronunciation ability. The subject of the research was the eleventh grade students of SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang. The basic problem the writer wanted to discuss in this final project was the importance of listening skill and pronunciation ability of the eleventh grade students of SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang in order to develop their communication skill. The final project was aimed at finding out the level of listening skill of the eleventh grade students of SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang in the academic year of 2012/2013, examining their pronunciation ability, and finding out whether there is a correlation between students' listening skill and students' pronunciation ability. The population of this final project was the eleventh grade students of SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang in the academic year of 2012/2013 and it was 43 students. Twenty students were taken as the representations in this research. After conducting the research, it was found that the average score of the students' listening skill was 80.1, that was in good level. On the contrary, their pronunciation score was poor referring to their average score, which were 48.78. Moreover, the result of data analysis using SPSS shows that the correlation coefficient between the two variables (listening skill and pronunciation ability) is 0.379, while the critical value for 18 students and 95% confidence is 0.468. Since the correlation coefficient obtained (0.379) is lower than the table value (0.468), it means that there is no significant positive correlation between the two variables and the correlation is considered to be low. Based on the research findings, it is suggested that the teachers should find an effective way to develop the students' listening skill and their pronunciation. Furthermore, since pronunciation is not explicitly specified in the curriculum, the teachers have a duty to help their students in improving their pronunciation ability.

© 2013 Universitas Negeri Semarang

[✉] Alamat korespondensi:
Gedung B3 Lantai 3 FBS Unnes
Kampus Sekaran, Gunungpati, Semarang, 50229
E-mail: rio.pribadi@yahoo.co.id

INTRODUCTION

The fact that English is now the main international language is indisputable. In all aspect of international life – trade, science, diplomacy, travel, and education – the common language is English and it has been used for decades. In Indonesia, English is taught almost in all level of study from Kindergarten (TK), Elementary school (SD), SMP (junior high school), SMU (senior high school), in university, and many courses. Knowing that English is quite significant for Indonesia in the future, the government keep improving the quality of teachers and other components in educational process.

There are four skills in English that should be mastered and they are stated in school curriculum. One of them is listening skill. It is a receptive skill that needs to be developed to help the students to understand what they hear or when they communicate with others. Moreover, listening test is now included in students' final exam. But in fact, there are still just a few efforts from the teacher to check or even to develop students' listening skill if it compares with other skills.

Pronunciation refers to the production of sounds that we use to make meaning. The way we speak immediately conveys something about ourselves to the people around us. Learners with good pronunciation in English are more likely to be understood even if they make errors in other areas, whereas learners whose pronunciation is difficult to understand will not be understood, even if their grammar is perfect.

An investigation on correlation between students' listening skill and students' pronunciation ability of the second year students of senior high school is conducted to find out whether or not there is a significant correlation between students' listening skill and students' pronunciation ability.

The problems that will be discussed in this study are:

- (1) What is the correlation between students' listening skill and students' pronunciation ability?

- (2) How significant is the correlation between students' listening skill and students' pronunciation ability?

This study was aimed to find out the level of listening skill and pronunciation ability of the second year students of SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang, and also the correlation between them.

The scope and the set of study were limited so that the problems do not wide. The listening skill and pronunciation ability stated in this study only focus on *one syllable words*. There are two meetings during the research. First, when the writer gives pre-test to examine the validity and the reliability. Second, when the writer conducts listening and pronunciation test to collect the data.

The procedures of collecting the data of this research involved several steps. The first step was constructing the listening test and pronunciation test. The second step was trying out the instrument to examine whether or not they needed improvement.

The third one was collecting and analyzing the listening test and pronunciation test to measure their validity and reliability. The fourth one was conducting the research. The writer conducted the research for the listening test and pronunciation test.

The last step was obtaining the scores of vocabulary test and translation test and then computing the data.

DISCUSSION

2.1 Instruments

Instrument is the important thing in an experiment in which the reliability of the instrument will automatically affect the reliability of the data obtained.

In line with the purpose of the study, that is to find out the relationship between students' listening skill and students' pronunciation ability of the second year students of senior high

school, two instruments were used in this study. They were listening test and pronunciation test.

Listening test in the level of *Intensive task* was used to test students' perception on phonemes through minimal pairs on one syllable words. While in the pronunciation test, the students were asked to record their answers with the appropriate pronunciation.

Reliability refers to the consistency of scores, that is, an instrument's ability to produce "approximately" the same score for an individual over repeated testing or across different raters (Lodico, 2006). According to Speaks (2009), Reliability is defined as the probability that a device will perform its required function under stated conditions for a specific period of time.

The following is the formula which is used to compute the reliability of listening and pronunciation test:

1.1.1 The Condition of the Test

1.1.1.1 Reliability of the Instrument

$$r_{11} = \left(\frac{n}{n-1} \right) \left(\frac{S^2 - \Sigma pq}{S^2} \right)$$

In which:

- r_{11} : reliability
 - p : the subjects who answer correctly
 - q : the subjects who answer incorrectly ($q = p - 1$)
 - n : total of the item test
 - S : standard deviation of the test
- (Arikunto 2006:100)

1.1.1.2 Validity of the Instrument

Validity is the most important criteria in measuring an instrument. Validity is that quality of a data-gathering instrument or procedure that enables it to determine what it was designed to

determine (Best, 1981:153). A test said to be valid when it can measure what is intended to be measured. Product Moment Formula was used to measure the validity test. The formula is as follows:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \sum xy - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{\{\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2\} \{N \sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2\}}}$$

Where:

- r_{xy} : correlation coefficient between X and Y
- $\sum XY$: the result of multiplying scores between X and Y for each respondent
- $\sum X^2$: the score of squared in X
- $\sum Y^2$: the score of squared in Y
- N : the number of student taking the test

2.2 Research Finding

The research was conducted to find out whether there was a correlation between students' listening skill and their pronunciation ability. Two kinds of test were administered for

measuring the second year students of SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang listening skill and pronunciation ability; they are listening and pronunciation tests.

2.2.1 Students' Listening Skill

There were 28 multiple-choice questions used in conducting the listening test. Each question has four choices. The score of each item was 1. Students' marks are got by adding the total score by 2, dividing it by 3 and then multiplied by 100.

To facilitate the measurement of student's listening skill, the raw scores were converted into the standard score using the percentage correction formula. To judge the students' grade and the level of the listening skill, there were seven levels of the classification of the students' grade based on Depdikbud as cited by Novikasari (2011).

Table 4.1
The Table of the Grade Classification

Score	Grade
96 to 100	Excellent
86 to 95	very good
76 to 85	Good
66 to 75	fairly good
56 to 65	very fair
36 to 55	Poor
0 to 35	very poor

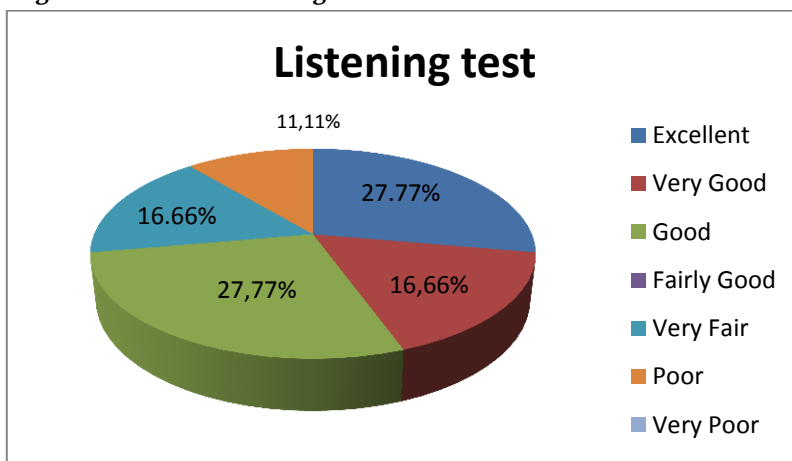
(Depdikbud as cited by Novikasari, 2011)

There were various scores, from high to low score. After computing the 28 items of test, 3 students got 100, 2 students got 96, 1 student got 93, 1 student got 90, 1 student got 86, 2 students got 83, 1 student got 80, 2 students got

76, and 1 student for each score of 63, 60, 56, 53, and 50. The complete data could be seen in Appendix 7. The diagram below shows the percentage of the result of the test:

Diagram 1

Percentage of Students' Listening Skill



From the diagram above, we can see that 5 students got the excellent grade; 3 students got the very good grade; 5 students got the good grade; 3 students got the very fair grade; and 2 students got the poor grade. The complete data could be seen in appendix 8.

After computing the data using SPSS, we could see that the average score (mean) of students' listening test was 80,1. It can be said that the students' vocabulary mastery of the eleventh grade students of SMK

Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang in the academic year of 2012/2013 was good.

2.2.2 Students' Pronunciation Ability

There were 28 items used in conducting the pronunciation test, each of them consisted of one word to pronounce.

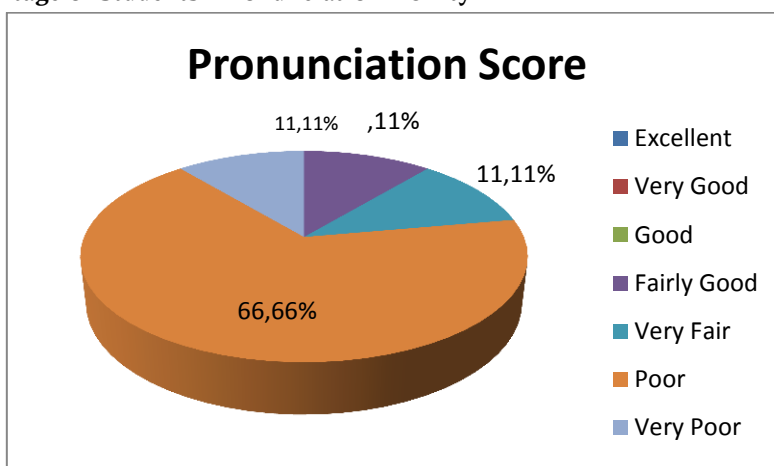
The test was designed to test the learner's ability to discriminate phonemes or groups of phonemes on one syllable words. The score of each item was 1. Students' marks are got by

adding the total score by 2, dividing it by 3 and then multiplied by 100.

There were less various scores in pronunciation test. After computing the test, 2 students got 66, 1 student got 60, 1 student got 56, 3 students got 53, 3 students got 50, 2 students got 46, 2 students got 43, 2 students got 40, and 1 student for each score of 33 and 30. The complete data could be seen in Appendix 9. The diagram below shows the percentage of the result of the test:

Diagram 2

Percentage of Students' Pronunciation Ability



From the diagram above, we can see that 2 students got the fairly good grade; 2 students got the very fair grade; 12 students got the poor grade; and 2 students got very poor grade. None of the students got the excellent, very good, and good grade. The complete data could be seen in appendix 10.

After computing the data using SPSS, we could see that the average score (mean) of students' pronunciation score was 48.78. It can be said that the students' pronunciation ability of the eleventh grade students of SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang in the academic year of 2012/2013 was poor.

2.3 Results

The main goal of this research was to find out what the correlation between students'

listening skill and their pronunciation ability of the eleventh grade students of SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang.

After conducting the research to get the scores of the students' listening test and their scores in pronunciation test, the data were statistically computed to find out the correlation between the variables using SPSS, where:

X = the students' listening skill (listening test test)

Y = the students' pronunciation ability (pronunciation test)

In correlating those two variables, a statistical analysis that was used was Pearson's Product Moment formula. The data, then, was calculated using SPSS.

Table 4.2

Correlation Coefficient Result

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
X	18	50,00	100,00	80,0556	17,08275
Y	18	30,00	66,00	48,7778	9,90280
Valid N (listwise)	18				

Correlations			
		X	Y
X	Pearson Correlation	1	,379
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,121
	N	18	18
Y	Pearson Correlation	,379	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,121	
	N	18	18

The correlation coefficient of the two variables was 0.379. To know whether this correlation coefficient (0.379) was significant or not, it was necessary to find out its significance.

In psychological or educational research, the 5 percent alpha of significance (5 percent level of significance) is occasionally used as standard to judge the correlation between the two variables above.

The correlation coefficient gained in this investigation was 0.379, whereas the figure on

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Determinant Index} &= (r_{xy})^2 \times 100\% \\ &= (0.379)^2 \times 100\% \\ &= 14.36\% \end{aligned}$$

The result showed that the extent of the influence of students' listening skill in their pronunciation ability was only 14.36%. It showed that students' listening skill only gave a small contribution to the students' pronunciation ability.

DISCUSSION

After conducting the research, no significant correlation between the two variables was found. The result of the data analysis showed that the correlation coefficient between

the table of critical values of the *r* Product Moment with 95% confidence level and the number of subjects 18 was 0.468. It means that the correlation coefficient between the students' listening skill and their pronunciation ability was not significant because $r_{xy} < r_{table}$ (0.379 < 0.468).

Then, in order to know the extent of the influence of students' listening skill in their pronunciation ability, the determinant index was measured as follow:

the two variables was 0.379, while the critical values of the *r* Product Moment with 95% confidence level and the number of subject 18 is 0.468. It means that there is still a positive correlation between the two variables (listening skill and pronunciation ability) although it is not significant.

In order to know the level of relationship of the correlation coefficient, it could be determined by using the correlation coefficient interpretation by Best (1981) as follows:

Table 4.3
Correlation Coefficient Interpretation

Coefficient	Relationship
.00 to .20	Negligible
.20 to .40	Low
.40 to .60	Moderate
.60 to .80	Substantial
.80 to .100	High to very high

(Best, 1981)

From the table above, the level of relationship of the correlation between the two variables was *low* because the correlation coefficient of the two variables was 0.379 while the determined criteria showed that the correlation coefficient between 0.20 and 0.40 considered low. In this case, the variable Y (students' pronunciation ability) was associated with the variable X (students' listening skill) in a low value (not significant). In other words, the students' listening skill of the eleventh years of SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang was not significantly correlated to their pronunciation ability. It implies that the students' activity in listening only gives a small contribution to enlarge their pronunciation ability.

There was no significant correlation between the students' listening skill and pronunciation ability of the eleventh grade students of SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang in the academic year of 2012/2013. It could be interpreted that there is no guarantee the higher students' listening skill is, the higher their ability in pronunciation will be.

Based on the data obtained, some facts were found in this study. First, the result of the listening test that indicates students' listening skill was very high (*mean 80,1*) if it is compared with their pronunciation test result (*mean 48,78*). From this fact, we can barely see that there was a huge gap between their ability in listening and pronunciation.

After analyzing the results, two types of difficulties can be generalized toward students' listening skill. They were difficulties in discriminating certain consonants and vowels. The highest frequency of error dealing with

consonants occurred in item number 7 (see the appendix) in discriminating between sound /d/ and /t/ in the word *hat*. It was proven by the finding that 50% of respondents chose the wrong answer which was *had*. This phenomena followed by item number 17 (see the appendix) which was dealing with the word *but*. Only 42% of respondents chose the right answer while the rest chose the wrong options (*bad, bat, bed*).

Difficulties in discriminating certain vowels also occurred in students' listening test. It can be seen in item number 16 (see the appendix) in discriminating sound /i:/ with /I/ in the word *seat*. 50% of the respondents chose the wrong answers like *sit, set, and sheet*.

Second, from the data gathered, there was no evidence that showed students with the high score in listening would also get a high score in pronunciation.

Pronunciation plays important roles in learning English. But, there was a fact when this study was conducted, students found themselves difficult even unable to pronounce almost all sounds used in the instrument. All of the them found difficulties in pronouncing vowels like /I/(*big*), /æ/(*bad, bag, van, bat*), and some consonants like /v/, /d/, /t/, /g/, /k/, /ʃ/, and /tʃ/ although they could manage such vowels and consonants very well in their listening test.

Phenomena of difficulties in pronouncing some sounds occur in students pronunciation results. First, students find difficulties in pronouncing sound /ʃ/ like stated in item number 3 (see appendix 5) in the word *she*. This difficulty happens since this fricative sound is not found in neither Indonesian nor Javanese.

They tend to substitute sound /s/ for /ʃ/ so that there is likely to be misunderstanding in their English speech for failure in making a distinction between the two sounds. It was proven by the fact that most of the students pronounce “she” and “see” in the same way.

Second difficulty in pronunciation occurs in item number 4 (see appendix 5) in the word *van*. Based on the data, students find difficulty to produce sound /v/ appropriately. They tend to produce sound /f/ instead of /v/. It was proven that none of the students are able to pronounce the word *van* correctly, most of them pronounce this word as same as the word *fan*. This matter happens since both sounds /v/ and /f/ are found in English, so that the students must be aware to make the voiced-voiceless distinction between these two fricatives in order to avoid misunderstanding.

Third difficulty can be seen in item number 5 (see appendix 5) in the word *food*. Students find difficulty to produce sound /d/ as the final voice since in their language the corresponding voiced stop doesn't occur in utterance final positions. It was proven that only 5 students who are able to pronounce it correctly. The other students pronounce this word as same as the word *foot* with the sound /t/ on the final position.

Another difficulty also appears in item number 6 (see appendix 5) in the word *south*. None of the students are able to pronounce the sound /θ/. They tend to substitute the sound /t/ instead of the sound /θ/. This is a mistake in manner of articulation, because the outgoing air meets with a complete closure instead of partial obstruction.

Difficulty in pronouncing certain sound also occurs in item number 7, 18, 19 (see appendix 5) in the words *hat*, *bat*, and *bad*. Based on the data, it can be inferred that all of the students are unable to produce the sound /æ/ correctly since this type of vowel does not exist in their native language. They tend to replace it by a closer front vowel. In this case, all of the students substitute it with the sound /e/.

Another case of sound production difficulty appears in item number 15 (see

appendix 5) in the word *big*. Most of the students tend to replace the sound /I/ with the sound /i:/. It can be proven since there are only two students who are able to pronounce this word correctly. This matter happens because in Bahasa Indonesia the letter i always pronounced as the sound /i:/.

The last problem occurs in item number 6 (see appendix 5) in the word *front*. Only one student who is able to pronounce this word appropriately. The other students tend to replace the sound /ʌ/ with the sound /ɔ/. This problem appears since the letter O always pronounced as the sound /ɔ/ in Bahasa Indonesia. This whole facts show us that there is no guarantee for students who are able to listen a certain word correctly, will also able to pronounce the word appropriately.

Another finding showed that the patterns of students' scores in both listening and pronunciation test were totally random. As said, there is no guarantee the higher students' listening score is, the higher their pronunciation will be. It can be proven by examining the students' scores. For example in student number 8 (see the appendix), she got the highest score in listening test, but her score in pronunciation test was as poor as the others. This fact also occurred in student number 1 (see the appendix). She got the lowest score in listening test, but her score in pronunciation test were not the lowest.

In conclusion, mastering listening skill and pronunciation ability are very important in learning English. Both of them play important roles in communication, so they have to be taught to improve students' ability in English. A special attention should be given to their pronunciation ability since it never been taught in the class, so that the teacher should creatively integrate it with other materials or even create a special material to teach pronunciation.

CONCLUSION

This research is proposed to answer whether or not there is a significant correlation

between students' listening skill and their pronunciation ability.

In attempt to obtain the intended data, the researcher arranged the listening test to measure the students' listening skill and pronunciation test to measure the students' pronunciation ability.

After conducting the research, the writer comes to some conclusions.

First, the listening skill of the second year students of SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang is good. It can be seen from the computation in which the mean score of the students' listening test is 80.1 when it is consulted to the table of category level scores by John W. Best (1981:260); the score is categorized in good.

Second, the pronunciation ability of the second year students of SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang is poor. It can be seen from the computation in which the mean score of the students' pronunciation ability is 48.78 when it is consulted to the table of category level scores by John W. Best (1981:260); the score is categorized in poor.

Third, there is no significant positive correlation between the listening skill and pronunciation ability of the eleventh grade students of SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang in the academic year of 2010/2011.

Recalling the r_{xy} observed value of the correlation between listening skill and pronunciation ability applied to the sample is 0.379, and consulting to the critical values of the r Product Moment with 95% confidence level and the number of subjects 18 was 0.468. It means that the result obtained from the computation is lower than its critical value. Therefore, the writer concludes that there is no significant positive correlation between the listening skill (X) and pronunciation ability (Y) of the second year students of SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Semarang.

REFERENCES

Books :

- Arikunto, S. 2002. *Prosedur Penelitian Suatu Pendekatan Praktek*. Jakarta: PT. RinekaCipta.
- Brown, H. D. 2005. *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching: Fourth Edition*. New York: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Cohen, L. 2000. *Research Methods in Education: Fifth Edition*. New York: Routledge Falmer.
- Lodico, M. G. 2006. *Method in Educational Research: From Theory to Practice*. San Fransisco: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Saleh, M. 2001. *Pengantar Praktik Penelitian Pengajaran Bahasa*. Semarang: IKIP Semarang Press.
- Online articles :
- Gilbert, J. B. 2008. *Teaching Pronunciation*. Available at: www.cambridge.org/other_files/.../Gilbert-Teaching-Pronunciation.pdf [accessed 27/01/13]
- Lawson, K. 2007. *The Importance of Listening*. Available at: www.growinggreatness.com/gg.../The_Importance_of_Listening.pdf [accessed 27/01/13]
- Liubiniene, V. 2009. *Developing Listening Skills in CLIL*. Available at: www.kalbos.lt/zurnalai/15_numeris/14.pdf [accessed 17/05/13]
- Simon, M. and Goes, J. 2011. *Correlational Research*. Available at: dissertationrecipes.com/wp-content/.../04/CorrelationalResearchX.pdf [accessed 04/02/13]
- Speaks, S. 2009. *Reliability and MTBF Review*. Available at: www.vicorpower.com/documents/quality/Real_MTBF.pdf [accessed 27/01/13]
- Wolvin, A. D. 2009. *Listening, Understanding, and Misunderstanding*. Available at: www.sagepub.com/edwards/study/materials/reference/77593_5.1ref.pdf [accessed 28/01/13]