

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS AND ORAL LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY IN ADULT EFL STUDENTS

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Abstract

Phonological awareness has a crucial role in understanding language and how words come together. The factors that cause difficulties are the lack of a sound of English in other languages, especially in Indonesia. This study was conducted to investigate the relationship between phonological awareness and oral language proficiency in adult English foreign language learners. This is based on curiosity whether phonological awareness still has a relationship with oral language proficiency in adult EFL learners, however, more specific research on phonological awareness and oral language proficiency on adult EFL as not been widely carried out. Researcher used quantitative methods with a correlation design. This research was followed by sixty-two respondents from the 3rd year students of the English Education department program STKIP PGRI Jombang. The selection of respondents was used the purposive technique. The data is taken from the mid-semester exam assignments. The instrument was developed by the lecturer of phonology and speaking for an academic setting course in semester 4. The data were analyzed using non-parametric Spearman's rho with the help of SPSS version 25. Based on the results of the data analysis obtained, the value of sig. (2-tailed) is 0.463 which is higher than 0.05. So, the researcher conclude that there is no significant correlation between Phonological awareness and Oral language proficiency. The Researcher assumed that the result was caused by the focus difference in Speaking for academic setting course materials and the aspects being scored in the speaking test.

Keyword: Correlation , Adult EFL, Phonological awareness, Oral language proficiency.

Abstrak

Kesadaran fonologis memiliki peran penting dalam memahami bahasa dan bagaimana kata-kata bersatu. Faktor yang menyebabkan kesulitan adalah kurangnya bunyi bahasa Inggris dalam bahasa lain, terutama di Indonesia. Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk mengetahui hubungan antara kesadaran fonologi dan kemampuan bahasa lisan pada pembelajar usia dewasa. Penelitian ini didasari dari rasa keingintahuan peneliti, apakah kesadaran fonologis masih memiliki hubungan dengan kemampuan bahasa lisan pada pembelajar usia dewasa. Namun, penelitian lebih spesifik terhadap kesadaran fonologi dan kemampuan bahasa lisan oleh mahasiswa Bahasa Inggris di usia dewasa belum banyak dilakukan. Peneliti menggunakan metode kuantitatif dengan desain korelasi. Penelitian ini diikuti oleh enam puluh dua responden dari mahasiswa tahun ke 3 Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris STKIP PGRI Jombang. Pemilihan responden menggunakan teknik purposive. Data diambil dari tugas ujian tengah semester. Instrumen dikembangkan oleh dosen phonology dan berbicara untuk setting akademik. Data tersebut dianalisis menggunakan non-parametric Spearman's rho dengan bantuan SPSS versi 25. Berdasarkan hasil analisis data diperoleh nilai sig. (2-tailed) adalah 0,463 yang lebih tinggi dari 0,05. Jadi, peneliti menyimpulkan bahwa tidak ada hubungan yang signifikan antara kesadaran fonologis dan kemampuan berbahasa lisan. Peneliti berasumsi bahwa hasil tersebut disebabkan oleh perbedaan fokus dalam mata kuliah berbicara untuk tingkat akademik dan aspek yang dinilai dalam tes berbicara.

Kata Kunci: Korelasi, Pembelajar Dewasa Bahasa Inggris Untuk Bahasa Asing, Kesadaran Fonologi, Kemampuan Bahasa Lisan

INTRODUCTION

Phonological awareness (P.A) is the ability to identify and manipulate parts of oral languages, such as words, onsets, and rimes. Fakhir (2014) states that Phonological Awareness refers to an understanding of the language's sound structure, which is made up of words, syllables, rhymes, and sounds (phonemes). Phonological awareness has a crucial role in understanding language and how words come together. In use, phonological awareness becomes a tool for EFL students to absorb the words they hear and at the same time rephrase them with proper pronunciation. According to Hentasmaka (2020), phonological awareness affected significantly both receptive and productive skills.

Research has shown a majority of poor readers and spellers display a weakness in phonological awareness. An example is EFL in Indonesia. The factors that cause difficulties are the lack of a sound of English in Indonesian, some sounds are allophonic in the Indonesian language but English are different sounds, some words are not familiar pronunciation in Indonesian or Local language and inconsistent spelling-sound correspondence in English which also causes problems in mastering phonological awareness for Indonesian EFL learners (Yulia, Kadarisman 2017). Discussing more detail about phonological awareness, According to Yeung,

Chan (2013), oral language proficiency and phonological awareness significantly predicted word reading in kindergarten children. Oral language proficiency refers to the point of skill, which students can use the language. “ The latter term [proficiency] designating something like the ability to make use of competence.

Most studies examining the relationship between phonological awareness and oral language proficiency are used in early childhood or young children as a subject. Therefore, Research that discusses the relationship between phonological awareness and oral language proficiency of adult EFL in Indonesia does not yet exist. The researcher investigates the phonological awareness abilities of English department students at STKIP PGRI Jombang and the relationship with their oral language proficiency. The discussion of the research focuses on correlation studies of student scores in phonological awareness and their mid-test scores at oral language proficiency in speaking.

METHOD

In this study, the researcher has used a quantitative approach with a correlational design. There were 2 variables in this study, there were independent variable and dependent variable. The independent variable here was x and the dependent variable was y. The x variable of this research was the phonological awareness test and the y variable was the oral language proficiency test result. The population of this research was the students of the English department on STKIP PGRI Jombang. The researcher focuses on 3rd years students English department. The data in this study were collected through the phonological awareness test. The test was held in the middle of the semester at the mid-term test. Phonological awareness tests here are made by the lecturer. This test consists of 40 pieces consisting of 8 parts; Ryme, Rhyme and Onset, Isolation phonemes, Identifying common phonemes, categorizing phonemes, blending, segmenting, and deleting. Examiners on this test consist of 1 expert, 1 lecturer, and 2 students. To equalize the research process, examiners received training from experts. Oral language proficiency test refers to speaking skill test. This test refers to the mid-semester exam in the speaking for the academic setting course.

The researcher used correlational analysis. It was used to find out the correlation between two variables or more. before the correlation analysis, the researcher did assumption tests to test the normality and linearity of the data. If the assumptions were fulfilled then the correlational analysis was conducted by using Pearson correlation. On the other handed, if the assumptions were not fulfilled so the analysis was done by implementing spearman correlation.

FINDINGS

Researchers found the Sig value on Phonological Awareness and Oral Language Proficiency is .000 where this value is lower than .005. Overall it can be concluded that the assumption of normality is not fulfilled

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Phonological Awareness	,159	62	,000	,913	62	,000
Speaking Skills	,314	62	,000	,772	62	,000

Meanwhile the sig deviation value of linearity was 0.899. on linearity test. this shows that the distribution of phonological awareness and oral language proficiency data was linear because the value was greater than 0.05. so it could be concluded that the linearity assumption was fulfilled.

ANOVA Table

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Speaking Skills * Phonological Awareness	Between Groups	(Combined)	390,804	24	16,283	,650	,866
		Linearity	43,429	1	43,429	1,732	,196
		Deviation from Linearity	347,375	23	15,103	,602	,899
		Within Groups	927,583	37	25,070		
		Total	1318,38	61			
			7				

Since the normality assumption test is not fulfilled, the researcher conducted the hypotheses test by using the non-parametric Spearman's Correlation test.

Correlations

			Phonological Awareness	Speaking Skills
Spearman's rho	Phonological Awareness	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,095
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	,463
		N	62	62
	Speaking Skills	Correlation Coefficient	,095	1,000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	,463	.
		N	62	62

Based on the table above, the result of the value of Sig. (2-tailed) is .463 which is higher than .05. It means the Null hypotheses (Ho) is accepted and the alternative hypotheses (Ha) is rejected. It means that there is No correlation between Phonological Awareness and Oral language proficiency.

DISCUSSION

This research focuses on investigating the correlation between phonological awareness and oral language proficiency in adult EFL. In this study, the researcher only focused on onset rhyme and phonemic awareness. Onsets are any consonants before a vowel in a spoken syllable, rimes are the vowel, and any consonants after it. Meanwhile, Phonemic awareness refers to the specific ability to focus on and manipulate individual sounds (phonemes) in spoken words. Oral language proficiency is another variable investigated in this study. “The latter term [proficiency] designating something like the ability to make use of competence. Competence can be regarded as a static concept, having to do with structure, state, or form, whereas proficiency is essentially a dynamic concept, having to do with process and function.” (Taylor, 1983). The oral language here refers to speaking skills in adult EFL. Speaking skill is a productive skill in the oral mode. According to Nunan (2003), Speaking is a productive oral skill and it consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning.

The results of the analysis in findings show that the value of sig. (2-tailed) is 0.463 which is higher than 0.05. These results show that there is no significant correlation between Phonological awareness and Oral language proficiency. This finding contradicts the previous research findings which is show a significant correlation between Phonological awareness and Oral language proficiency. The researcher assumes the insignificant correlation is caused by some factors. First, the focus of the speaking material. The speaking for academic setting course focuses more on broadcasting and debates. Where this has a slightly different focus from speaking for everyday communication. Second, the aspect of being scored in the speaking test. Aspects assessed from the midterm test is slightly different from the aspects of speaking that are usually assessed such as fluency, pronunciation, etc .

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based This research conducted to investigate the correlation between adult EFL students’ Phonological awareness and Oral language proficiency. The data analysis on the correlation between adult EFL students’ Phonological awareness and Oral language proficiency was conducted by using non-parametric Spearmans’ Correlation, it's because the normality assumption was not fulfilled. based on the results of the data analysis obtained, the value of sig. (2-tailed) is 0.463 which is higher than 0.05. So, the researcher conclude that there is no significant correlation between Phonological awareness and Oral language proficiency. The Researcher assumed that the result was caused by the focus difference in Speaking for academic setting

course materials and the aspects being scored in the speaking test such as fluency, pronunciation, etc.

Regarding the limitations of the findings during the study, the researcher draws some suggestions for better future research. First, it is recommended that the future researcher ensure the focus of the material and aspect being scored for the two skills. Second, it is suggested for the researcher to ensure that the research instrument is in accordance with the research objectives, it is better if the researcher develop their own instrument to collect the data.

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