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## An Analysis of Factors Influencing the Students' Phonemic Awareness in Speaking Activities

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### Article History



### Abstract

This research used descriptive quantitative method. The sample consisted of 18 participants from MA Al Hidayah Bakke. The objective of the research is to find out the factors influencing the students' phonemic awareness by carrying out questionnaire. In this research, there were four factors influencing the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity such as practicing time, language difference, motivation, and phoneme teaching and learning in the school. The result shows that as EFL learners there are four factors influence the students' phonemic awareness such as practicing time is categorized as sufficient factor, language difference is categorized as strong factor, motivation is categorized as strong factor and phoneme teaching and learning is categorized as strong factor.

### Keywords

English Phonemes  
Phonemes  
Factors Influencing  
Phonemic Awareness  
Speaking Activity

## Introduction

Phonemic awareness, according to Snider (1997), is the conscious understanding that spoken words are made up of distinct sounds (phonemes). Phonemic awareness is crucial for speaking because it helps kids pronounce words correctly and identify the phonemes that make up words. Children can benefit from learning to read and speak. Based on the pronunciation issues Indonesian students commonly confront, some of them occasionally mispronounce words when participating in oral activities. Another issue is that some students participated in oral activities without understanding the proper English phonemes. It is because the correct pronunciation of English words differs from what is printed, they also experience issues with spelling and pronunciation (Tambunsaribu & Simatupang, 2021).

Even though the majority of these studies focused on reading rather than speaking, there are numerous previous studies on phonemic awareness that may be explored. Beyond reading exercises, phonemic awareness is quite important. The relationship between phonemic awareness and pronunciation shows that students with higher levels of phonemic awareness are able to pronounce words more clearly than students with lower levels of phonemic awareness, according to previous research (Griffith, 1991). This prior discovery illustrated how

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phonemic awareness affects students' spoken language pronunciation. This current research is adapted to the previous related research toward phonemic awareness. This study has several updates from the previous research that mostly linked the phonemic awareness only in beginner reading. Arriving from the previous research findings, those previous studies did not analyze the students' phonemic awareness in specific. Thus, the researcher then proposed a new study to explore the factors influencing the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity

Based on the background of the study, the main problem statement of this study is that Indonesian students are generally English foreign language learners where the Indonesian phonemes are different with English phonemes which influence their phonemic awareness especially in oral activity. Thus, the researcher decided to conduct this research to analyze the factors influencing the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity.

## Research Methods

According to Leedy & Ormrod (2015), the research technique consists of all the actions that a researcher takes before starting a research project. The quantitative descriptive design was used to carry out this study by the researcher. According to Aliaga & Gunderson (1999), quantitative research methods involve acquiring data in numerical form and evaluating it using mathematical techniques, particularly statistics, to understand a problem or phenomena. The researcher collected 18 samples for this investigation, which was carried out in MA Al Hidayah Bakke. 20 statements were presented on a questionnaire that was used in the research to collect data.

In determining the factors influencing the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity, the researcher adapted the criteria of Kahiking et al. (2023):

Table 1. The Interpretation Score of Questionnaire Classification

Percentage	Category
81% - 100%	Very strong
61%-80%	Strong
41% - 60%	Sufficient
21% - 40%	Weak
0% - 20%	Very Weak

Source: Kahiking et al. (2023)

Base on the table above, the analysis of the factors influencing the students' phonemic awareness was determined by using the five scales started from very weak, weak, sufficient, strong and very strong. By following the scale, factors influencing the students' phonemic awareness which consist of four indicators such as practicing time, language difference, motivation, and phonemic awareness teaching and learning are analyzed using descriptive quantitative as follow.

## Results and Discussion

The data collection for this study was obtained from questionnaire. There were four factors influencing the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity which adapted from Brown (2001). The result is displayed in the following explanation below.

### Practicing time

The first indicator of factor influencing students' phonemic awareness is practicing time. The data obtained from questionnaire showed that the students give various responses for each sub-indicator. Each sub-indicator gained different score since the respondents gave various responses. Each response is calculated based on the value of each criterion where SA (strongly agree) is valued 5 score, A (agree) is valued 4 score, N (neutral/neither agree nor disagree) is valued 3 score, D (disagree) is valued 2 score, and SD (strongly disagree) is valued 1 score). Based on the score for each response, the students' responses for practicing time are shown on the table below.

Table 2. Students' Responses for Practicing Time

No	Sub-indicators	Number of Respondent for each Criteria				
		SA	A	N	D	SD
1.	I frequently practice my pronunciation in home.	1	4	13	-	-
2.	I only practice to pronounce and recognize English phonemes in English classroom in the school	1	5	8	4	-
3.	I always practice to pronounce and recognize English phonemes by myself	-	1	9	8	-
4.	I need more time to practice in pronouncing and recognizing English phoneme.	1	1	11	5	-
5.	I cannot practice to pronounce and recognize English phonemes without teachers and instructors.	-	6	4	7	1

The data above shows that sub-indicators of practice were variously responded by the eleventh-grade students of MA Al Hidayah Bakke. When the data on is analyzed based on each score of the responses, the scores of each number of sub-indicators are different as what displayed on the table below

Table 3. Calculation of Students' Response for Practicing Time

Number of Sub-Indicator	Scores of each Criteria					Total Score
	SA	A	N	D	SD	
1	5	16	39	0	0	60
2	5	20	24	8	0	57
3	0	4	27	16	0	47
4	5	4	33	10	0	52
5	0	24	12	14	1	51
Total score						267
Ideal score: the highest score x total sub indicator x total respondent (5x5x18)						450
Percentage (%): (Total score: ideal score) x 100% (267: 450) x 100%						59.33%

The table showed that the first factor influencing the students' phonemic awareness (practice time) has five sub-indicators. The scores of sub-indicators are calculated according to the amount of respondents who gave responses for strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and

strongly disagree and then multiplied according to the value of each criterion. After the scores of each sub-indicator calculated, the scores are summed up where the total scores are

267. To measure the percentage of the data, as the formula and the calculation displayed on the table, the final result of the students' responses toward practicing time is 59.33% which means that practice time is categorized sufficient where the range is 40% - 60%. It means that practice time sufficiently influence the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity.

### Language difference

The second indicator of factors influencing the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity is language difference. The data obtained from questionnaire shows that students gave responses according to their condition variously. Each sub-indicator gained different score since the respondents gave various responses. Each responses is calculated based on the value of each criteria where SA (strongly agree) is valued 5 score, A (agree) is valued 4 score, N (neutral/neither agree nor disagree) is valued 3 score, D (disagree) is valued 2 score, and SD (strongly disagree) is valued 1 score. The students' responses are displayed in the table below:

Table 4. Students' Responses for Language Difference

No	Sub-indicators	Number of Respondent for each Criteria				
		SA	A	N	D	SD
6.	Phoneme differences of English, Indonesian and my local language make me confused to pronounce words.	2	12	3	1	-
7.	English phoneme is difficult because it is different from my daily language.	2	13	-	3	-
8.	I feel difficult to pronounce and recognize English phonemes in a word because the pronunciation is different with what written.	5	9	4	-	-
9.	My daily language influences me to speak other languages especially to pronounce and recognize phonemes.	2	1	1 4	1	-
10.	Every language has different phonemes so it makes me a little longer to understand correct phonemes for the target language that I learn.	5	5	8	-	-

Based on the data from the table above, the numbers of students who gave responses for each criterion are calculated to find out the percentage of the second indicator of factor influencing the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity and the calculation is displayed on the table below.

Table 5. Calculation of Students' Response for Language Difference

Number of Sub-Indicator	Scores of each Criteria					Total Score
	SA	A	N	D	SD	
6	10	48	9	2	0	69
7	10	52	0	6	0	68
8	25	36	12	0	0	73
9	10	4	42	2	0	58

10	25	20	24	0	0	69
Total score						337
Ideal score: the highest score x total sub indicator x total respondent (5x5x18)						450
Percentage (%): (Total score: ideal score) x 100% (337: 450) x 100%						74.89%

The table showed that the second factor influencing the students' phonemic awareness known as language difference has five sub-indicators. The scores of sub-indicators are calculated according to the amount of respondents who gave responses for strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree and then multiplied according to the value of each criterion. After the scores of each sub-indicator calculated, the scores are summed up where the total scores are 337. To measure the percentage of the data, as the formula and the calculation displayed on the table, the final result of the students' responses toward language difference is 74,89% which means that language difference is categorized strong where the range is 61% - 80%. It means that practice time strongly influence the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity.

### Motivation

The third indicator of factors influencing the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity is motivation. (Meléndez, 2006) stated that as EFL learners, students have less or even do not have chance to practice their language beside in the classroom since the language is not used in their daily activity. Thus, the teachers or instructors must find new or different strategy for their students so that they are motivated to learn foreign language including practicing their pronunciation in order to have native-like speaking. Therefore, the data obtained from this research towards motivation from questionnaire is displayed to reveal how much motivation influence the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity. The data obtained from questionnaire shows that students gave responses according to their condition variously. Each sub-indicator gained different score since the respondents gave various responses. Each response is calculated based on the value of each criteria where SA (strongly agree) is valued 5 score, A (agree) is valued 4 score, N (neutral/neither agree nor disagree) is valued 3 score, D (disagree) is valued 2 score, and SD (strongly disagree) is valued 1 score. The students' responses are displayed in the table below:

Table 6. Students' Responses for Motivation

No	Sub-indicators	Number of Respondent for each Criteria				
		SA	A	N	D	SD
11.	I learn phonemes only when I learn English at school because I am not motivated to learn by myself.	1	5	6	6	-
12.	I want to speak like native speaker, so I learn To pronounce and recognize phonemes with or without teachers.	4	7	2	5	-
13.	When I hear people pronounce sounds correctly, I feel motivated to do the same.	6	7	5	-	-
14.	I am motivated to pronounce and recognize sounds correctly so that I can talk to people easily.	6	10	2	-	-

15.	I only get motivated to learn phoneme when my teacher teaches me in school.	-	3	10	5	-
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The table above shows that it is similarly with the previous factors where motivation has five sub-indicators. The number of respondents for each criterion is different as can be seen on the table above. Thus, to find out the result of how much motivation influence the students' phonemic awareness is shown on the table below.

Table 7. Calculation of Students' Responses for Motivation

Number of Sub-Indicator	Scores of each Criteria					Total Score
	SA	A	N	D	SD	
11	5	20	18	12	0	55
12	20	28	6	10	0	64
13	30	28	15	0	0	73
14	30	40	6	0	0	76
15	0	12	30	10	0	52
Total score						320
Ideal score: the highest score x total sub indicator x total respondent (5x5x18)						450
Percentage (%): (Total score: ideal score) x 100% (320 : 450) x 100%						71.11%

The table showed that the scores of sub-indicators are calculated according to the amount of respondents who gave responses strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree and then multiplied according to the value of each criterion. After the scores of each sub-indicator calculated, the scores are summed up where the total scores are

320. To measure the percentage of the data, as the formula and the calculation displayed on the table, the final result of the students' responses toward language difference is 71,11% which means that language difference is categorized strong factor where the range is 61% - 80%. It means that practice time strongly influence the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity.

### Phonemic teaching and learning

Phoneme teaching and learning in the classroom become another factor influencing the students' phonemic awareness because the students' phonemic awareness after learning in the classroom depends on the teachers' teaching style. (Mahfoudhi & Haynes, 2009) state that teaching and learning of phonemic awareness in the classroom should be planned based on the students and teacher condition. Teachers need to consider their own ability or experience and also students' need in teaching phonemic awareness. Therefore, in this session, the data of phonemic teaching and learning reveals how much this factor influence the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity as displayed on the table below.

Table 8. Students' Responses for Phoneme Teaching and Learning

No	Sub-indicators	Number of Respondent for each Criteria				
		SA	A	N	D	SD
16.	English phoneme teaching and learning in school is limited so I cannot learn phonemes effectively at school.	3	7	5	3	-

17.	In speaking, English teacher mostly focuses on the students' grammar and fluency rather than pronunciation.	-	2	16	-	-
18.	When teachers teach English phoneme, I cannot understand well because the time is very limited.	-	3	14	1	-
19.	I need simple material and a good teaching method to understand English phonemes well.	5	7	6	-	-
20.	When I learn English phonemes in the classroom, I always need my teacher to guide me in pronunciation so that I can produce sound correctly.	7	8	2	1	

The data above shows that the students' responses are various for each sub-indicator.

Thus, the calculation of the data is as follow:

Table 9. Calculation of Students' Response for Phoneme Teaching and Learning

Number of Sub- Indicator	Scores of each Criteria					Total Score
	SA	A	N	D	SD	
16	15	28	15	6	0	64
17	0	8	48	0	0	56
18	0	12	42	2	0	56
19	25	28	18	0	0	71
20	35	32	6	2	0	75
Total score						322
Ideal score: the highest score x total sub indicator x total respondent (5x5x18)						450
Percentage (%): (Total score: ideal score) x 100% (322: 450) x 100%						71.56

The table showed that the fourth indicator of factors influencing the students' phonemic awareness is phonemic teaching and learning. The scores of sub-indicators are calculated according to the number of respondents who gave responses strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree and then multiplied according to the value of each criterion. After the scores of each sub-indicator calculated, the scores are summed up where the total scores are 322. To measure the percentage of the data, as the formula and the calculation displayed on the table, the final result of the students' responses toward phonemic teaching and learning is 71.56%. It means that phonemic teaching and learning is categorized strong factor where the range is 61% - 80%. It means that phonemic awareness teaching and learning strongly influence the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity.

Based on the data from four indicators above, it is concluded that the final result for the factor influencing the students' phonemic awareness is displayed on the table below.

Table 10. Interpretation of Factors Influencing Phonemic Awareness

Indicators	Percentage	Category
Practice Time	59.33%	Sufficient
Language Different	74.89%	Strong
Motivation	71.11%	Strong
Phonemic Awareness Teaching and Learning	71.56%	Strong

The table above indicates that practice time influences the students' phonemic awareness sufficiently because the percentage is 59.33%. Meanwhile, language difference strongly influences the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity because the percentage is 74.89%. In the same case, motivation is included as a strong factor which means it strongly influences the students' phonemic awareness since the percentage is 71.11%. Similarly, phonemic teaching and learning is classified as a strong factor which mean that it strongly influences the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity with the score 71.56%.

In collecting the data, the questionnaire was used as instrument to measure the factors influencing the students' phonemic awareness. Based on the finding of the study in the previous session, the students' phonemic awareness is influenced by some factors such as practice time, language difference, motivation, aand phonemic teaching and learning in the classroom.

### **Practicing time**

The first factor influencing the students' phonemic awareness is practicing time. In the previous session, the result of practicing time is that it sufficiently influencing the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity. Antaris & Omolu (2019) state that one of the problem solving in pronunciation that the students should have enough time to practice their pronunciation. It means that they must learn regularly to achive and reach the expert level of phonemic awareness so that they will not face difficulty to pronounce the words correctly and have native like speaking. Brown (2001) declares that if students have time practicing phonemes, using English every day, or taking time in foreign country, they will get more frequently to pronounce English phonemes so that influence their pronunciation ability.

Practicing time is really crucial for students' skills in English. Another way for students to practice their phonemic awareness is to practice their istening skills. When they practice their listening skill as they listen to English songs, watching movies, public speaking and even directly practicing their listening skills directly to native speaker to hear the real pronunciation of English phonemes will assist them to receive better awareness of English phonemes. As Andianto (2013) found that the capacity of kids to pronounce words correctly is greatly influenced by their listening skills. Song listening has a positive impact on kids' pronunciation skills.

In other hand, other research of Hasriani (2018) had been conducted to find out whether practicing listening could improve the students' pronunciation and the students' awareness toward English phonemes to get better pronunciation. The study demonstrates that teaching students' English songs can help them master English pronunciation. This study discovered that students' pronunciation skills might be considerably improved by using the listen and imitate strategy. This study also offers a series of recommendations for resolving the students' pronunciation issues. It is recommended for the students to practice their listening skills through various way such listening to songs or watching short videos and movies. Herjuantoro & Darmawan (2018) declare that utilizing movies has a big impact on how well kids can pronounce things where their study revealed that watching YouTube pronunciation videos has a big impact on students' pronunciation abilities.

### **Language difference**

The second factor influencing the students' phonemic awareness is language difference where the finding reveals that it strongly influences the students' phonemic awareness. Montero et al. (2014) said that the native or first language of learners will affect their second language or their foreign language. When students learn a new language, they will face difficulty in recognizing



the phonemes of target language. They will get influenced by their native languages. The same case with the students of MA Al Hidayah Bakke face in their process of learning foreign language, they are influenced by their native language. Brown (2001) stated that there are six factors affecting pronunciation. One of the factors is native language. If the students learn English as foreign language, they will find that their native language does not have certain phonemes as what English has which make them struggling in pronouncing some words. Another expert also stated that phonological differences between English and home language will affect second and foreign phonology (Duncan, 1983).

### **Motivation**

The third factor is motivation which categorized as a strong factor affecting the students' phonemic awareness. The students will get influenced if they get high motivation to have good pronunciation ability so that they can be more aware about English phonemes which will help them speak fluently as English native speaker. As what Brown (2001) stated that the students that more motivated for good pronunciation will support them to have good pronunciation. Motivation is an effective tool in the learning outcomes either failed or successful (Menggo, 2018). Genc & Aydin (2017) reported that motivation become the major components that influence the language acquisition. It proves that the students with high motivation get better pronunciation and gain more awareness about English phonemes. It has contribution for learners' attitudes where they will be more interested in learning new phonemes and becomes reinforcement for students to have clear learning goal (Kitjaroonchai, 2013).

### **Phonemic Teaching and Learning**

The last factor is phonemic teaching and learning. The finding reveals that it is a strong factor that influence the students' phonemic awareness. Meléndez (2006) revealed that EFL learners have less time to practice their foreign language outside. Thus, the teachers must consider a good strategy in teaching and learning phonemes to students. Unfortunately, the phonemic teaching and learning in Indonesia itself is less considered in school. It is even not concluded as a major material in the curriculum. Mahfoudhi & Hayness (2009) explained that phonemic teaching and learning in the classroom should be adapted to the condition of the teachers themselves and also the students' need. Unfortunately, the students' need has not fully fulfilled by the teachers especially about the students' need about learning English phonemes.

### **Conclusion**

Some factors influencing the students' phonemic awareness are practicing time, language difference, motivation and phonemic teaching and learning. The result shows that practicing time sufficiently influences the students' phonemic awareness. Meanwhile, Language difference, motivation and phonemic teaching and learning become the strong factors affecting the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity. By completing this research, the researcher found that there is one most important implication of the research where English phoneme should be taught as a specific material in the schools not only as partial material during teaching pronunciation. Although phoneme is really related to pronunciation, the students need to learn specifically as the other lessons or materials are taught in the classroom with several meeting and hours. English phoneme is well recommended to be inserted in the curriculum of Indonesia as known that phoneme is actually the first basic knowledge that someone should know when learning new languages. Especially in Indonesia, English is a

foreign language which means it cannot be avoided that the phonemes are commonly different with Indonesian.

This research succeeded to analyze factors influencing the students' phonemic awareness in speaking activity. Unfortunately, it has not found the best solutions to enhance students' phonemic awareness. Thus, it is hoped that the future research can find a good solution for the limitation of this research. Moreover, the future researchers must consider helping the students recognize and distinguish English vowels and consonants. The students need more attention to recognize the English sounds which are new and odd for them so that they will be more flexible to learn foreign language.

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### Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest.

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