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The Correlation Between Students‟ Linguistic Intelligence and Their English Speaking Skill Achievement

Amin Mubarok[1]
[1]Department of English Education, Faculty of Tarbiyah And Teachers Training, State Islamic University Of Syarif Hidayatullah, Jakarta, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Purpose of the study: This study aims to identify whether there is a significant correlation between students' linguistic intelligence and their English speaking skill achievement among fourth semester students of the English Education Department, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teachers Training, State Islamic University of Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.

Methodology: This study used correlational research with library research and field research methods. The population consisted of fourth semester students of the English Education Department academic year 2009. Data were collected through linguistic intelligence tests and English speaking achievement scores. Data analysis used Product Moment Correlation formula to determine the relationship between variables.

Main Findings: The result showed that the correlation coefficient between students' linguistic intelligence and their English speaking skill achievement was 0.042, which belongs to a very low correlation level. It indicates that there was no significant correlation between students' linguistic intelligence and their English speaking skill achievement in this study.

Novelty/Originality of this study: This study provides a specific analysis of the relationship between linguistic intelligence based on Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences theory and English speaking achievement in higher education students. It contributes new insight that linguistic intelligence cannot be simply measured through academic potential tests and may not directly determine speaking performance

Corresponding Author:
Amin Mubarok,
Department of English Education, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teachers Training, State Islamic University of Syarif Hidayatullah,
Ir. H. Juanda Road, Tanggerang Selatan, Jakarta, 15412, Indonesia
Email: aminmubarok@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

English plays an important role as an international language used in communication, education, science, and technology [1]-[3]. In Indonesia, English has become a compulsory subject from elementary school to university level because of its significance in supporting academic and professional development. However, despite years of formal instruction, many students still experience difficulties in mastering English productively, especially in speaking skills [4]. Speaking is often considered the most challenging language skill because it requires students to produce language spontaneously, accurately, and fluently while also considering pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, and confidence. This condition indicates that the

development of speaking competence requires not only linguistic knowledge but also internal cognitive abilities that support language production [5].

Speaking skill is a crucial aspect of English learning because it reflects students' ability to communicate ideas, opinions, and feelings effectively in real situations. In higher education, particularly in English Education Departments, students are expected to demonstrate good speaking performance as part of their academic and professional preparation [6], [7]. However, many students still face problems such as lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, fear of making mistakes, and difficulty in organizing ideas during oral communication. These obstacles suggest that speaking achievement is influenced by various internal and external factors, one of which is students' linguistic intelligence as part of their cognitive and psychological capacity in language learning [8].

Linguistic intelligence, as proposed by Howard Gardner in the theory of Multiple Intelligences, refers to the ability to use language effectively in both spoken and written forms. It includes sensitivity to word meanings, sound patterns, grammar structures, and the ability to express thoughts clearly and systematically [9], [10]. Individuals with high linguistic intelligence usually enjoy reading, writing, storytelling, debating, and discussing ideas. They are also more capable of understanding language patterns and producing meaningful communication. In the context of English language learning, linguistic intelligence is assumed to contribute significantly to students' speaking performance because speaking requires the ability to select words appropriately, organize ideas logically, and communicate fluently [11].

From the perspective of psycholinguistics and neurolinguistics, linguistic intelligence is closely related to brain functions, especially the areas responsible for language production and comprehension such as Broca's area and Wernicke's area [12], [13]. These parts of the brain support speech production, language understanding, pronunciation, and verbal expression. In addition, linguistic intelligence is influenced by both biological and environmental factors such as age, gender, cognitive development, learning environment, and opportunities for communication practice. Therefore, students who are exposed to supportive academic environments and frequent speaking activities may develop stronger linguistic intelligence, which may positively affect their speaking achievement [14].

The fourth semester students of the English Education Department are considered appropriate subjects for this study because they have already experienced intensive English learning from the first semester and have been involved in various academic speaking activities such as presentations, discussions, and classroom interaction [15].They are also in the process of strengthening both their theoretical understanding and practical communication competence. This condition makes them suitable participants to examine whether linguistic intelligence has a meaningful relationship with their English speaking skill achievement. Understanding this relationship is important because it can provide valuable insight for lecturers and students in improving English teaching strategies and speaking performance [16].

This study focuses on investigating the correlation between students' linguistic intelligence and their English speaking skill achievement. The researcher assumes that students with stronger linguistic intelligence may have better speaking performance because they are more capable of understanding and producing language effectively [17]. However, this assumption needs to be tested scientifically through empirical research. Therefore, this study aims to identify whether there is a significant correlation between students' linguistic intelligence and their English speaking achievement among fourth semester students of the English Education Department, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teachers Training, State Islamic University of Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.

Several previous studies have discussed the relationship between intelligence and language achievement. First, Sri Wahyuningsih [18] found that multiple intelligences have a contribution to language proficiency, especially in language performance and comprehension. Second, Yihun Gatchew et al. [19] explained that linguistic intelligence supports students in constructing ideas clearly and using language effectively in communication. Third, Hasan [20] emphasized that linguistic intelligence is one of the most important dimensions in achieving language mastery. However, most previous studies focused on general language proficiency or multiple intelligences broadly, while limited studies specifically examined the direct correlation between linguistic intelligence and English speaking achievement among university students in the Indonesian higher education context. This gap becomes the foundation for conducting the present study.

The novelty of this research lies in its specific focus on examining linguistic intelligence as an independent variable and English speaking achievement as the dependent variable using correlational analysis at the university level. Unlike previous studies that discussed multiple intelligences in general, this research specifically highlights linguistic intelligence and its practical relationship with speaking performance. In addition, this study provides a more focused perspective on English Education students who intensively learn speaking skills in academic settings [21]. This specific investigation offers a clearer understanding of whether linguistic intelligence directly contributes to speaking achievement or whether other factors play a more dominant role.

The implication of this research is expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions to English language teaching and learning. Theoretically, this study enriches the discussion of psycholinguistics, especially concerning the role of linguistic intelligence in second language acquisition and speaking performance. Practically, the findings can help lecturers design more effective speaking instruction by considering students' linguistic

intelligence and affective factors such as confidence and motivation. Students may also become more aware of their own language potential and develop better strategies to improve their speaking skills through consistent practice, vocabulary enrichment, and communicative interaction [22].

The urgency of this study is closely related to the continuing problem of low English speaking competence among university students despite long-term formal English instruction. Many students still struggle to communicate fluently and confidently even though speaking is one of the most essential competencies in academic and professional life. In the era of globalization, strong English speaking ability is increasingly important for education, career development, and international communication. Therefore, identifying factors that influence speaking achievement, especially internal cognitive factors such as linguistic intelligence, becomes highly necessary [23]. This research is urgent because it can provide evidence-based understanding that supports the improvement of English teaching practices and helps students achieve better speaking competence in higher education contexts

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative method using correlational research design to examine the relationship between students' linguistic intelligence and their English speaking skill achievement. Correlational research is used to identify the degree of relationship between two variables without manipulating them [24]. In this study, linguistic intelligence was treated as the independent variable (X), while English speaking skill achievement was treated as the dependent variable (Y). The purpose of this design was to determine whether there was a significant correlation between students' linguistic intelligence and their speaking performance among fourth semester students of the English Education Department, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teachers Training, State Islamic University of Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. This design was considered appropriate because the researcher intended to measure the natural relationship between the variables based on actual student performance.

2.2. Research Subject and Sample

The subjects of this research were the fourth semester students of the English Education Department, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teachers Training, State Islamic University of Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, academic year 2009. These students were selected because they had experienced intensive English learning from the first to the fourth semester and had participated in various speaking activities such as presentations, discussions, and classroom interaction. The population of this study consisted of all fourth semester students, while the sample was selected purposively based on their active participation in speaking classes and availability of speaking achievement data. The sample represented students who had sufficient exposure to English speaking practice and linguistic learning, making them appropriate participants for this correlational study.

2.3. Source of Data and Data Collection Technique

The data sources in this study were obtained from both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected directly from students through a linguistic intelligence test designed to measure students' ability in language use, vocabulary mastery, sentence construction, and verbal reasoning. Secondary data were obtained from students' English speaking achievement scores taken from speaking class assessments conducted by lecturers. In addition, library research was also conducted to collect relevant theories and previous studies related to linguistic intelligence, speaking skills, and language achievement [25].

The data collection technique involved administering the linguistic intelligence test to the selected participants and documenting their speaking scores from academic records. The test results represented variable X, while the speaking achievement scores represented variable Y. Both sets of scores were then tabulated and analyzed using Product Moment Correlation to determine the degree of relationship between the two variables.

Table 1. Research Variables and Data Sources

Variable	Indicator	Source of Data
X (Linguistic Intelligence)	Vocabulary, verbal reasoning, language sensitivity, sentence construction	Linguistic Intelligence Test
Y (Speaking Skill Achievement)	Pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension	Speaking Achievement Score

2.4. Research Instrument

The main instruments used in this study were the linguistic intelligence test and students' speaking achievement documentation. The linguistic intelligence test was designed based on the theory of linguistic intelligence proposed by Howard Gardner, which includes the ability to use language effectively in spoken and written forms. The test measured students' verbal ability, vocabulary understanding, grammar awareness, and

language sensitivity. Meanwhile, the speaking achievement scores were taken from formal academic assessments conducted by speaking lecturers using standard speaking criteria such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension [26].

To ensure validity, the researcher consulted the test instrument with lecturers of Psycholinguistics and Speaking courses before administering it. This step was important to ensure that the instrument accurately measured linguistic intelligence and was relevant to the objectives of the study.

2.5. Data Analysis Technique

The data analysis technique used in this research was Pearson Product Moment Correlation Formula to identify the correlation between students' linguistic intelligence and their English speaking skill achievement [27]. This statistical formula was chosen because it is commonly used to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between two quantitative variables.

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}} \quad \ldots(1)$$

Where:
rxy = Correlation coefficient
N = Number of samples
X = Linguistic intelligence score
Y = Speaking achievement score

The interpretation of the correlation coefficient was classified based on the standard correlation level ranging from very low to very high.

Table 2. Correlation Level Interpretation

Correlation Coefficient	Interpretation
0.00 – 0.20	Very Low
0.21 – 0.40	Low
0.41 – 0.60	Moderate
0.61 – 0.80	High
0.81 – 1.00	Very High

2.6. Research Procedure

The research procedure was conducted systematically in several stages. First, the researcher conducted library research to identify relevant theories and previous studies related to linguistic intelligence and speaking achievement. Second, the researcher prepared and validated the research instruments through consultation with lecturers. Third, the linguistic intelligence test was administered to the selected students. Fourth, the researcher collected students' English speaking achievement scores from academic documentation. Fifth, all data were tabulated and analyzed using Product Moment Correlation Formula. Finally, the researcher interpreted the findings and drew conclusions regarding the relationship between the variables.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results of Students' Linguistic Intelligence Test

The first objective of this study was to identify the level of students' linguistic intelligence among the fourth semester students of the English Education Department, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teachers Training, State Islamic University of Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. The researcher administered a linguistic intelligence test that measured students' vocabulary mastery, verbal reasoning, sentence construction, grammar awareness, and language sensitivity. These indicators were selected based on Howard Gardner's theory of linguistic intelligence, which emphasizes the ability to use language effectively in spoken and written forms [28].

After the test was administered, the scores were tabulated and classified into several categories, namely poor, sufficient, good, and excellent. The results showed that most students were in the sufficient and good categories, indicating that they had a moderate ability in language understanding and verbal expression. Only a small number of students reached the excellent category, while a few students were still classified as poor.

This result indicates that although the students had already studied English intensively for several semesters, their linguistic intelligence levels varied considerably. Some students demonstrated strong vocabulary mastery and sentence organization, while others still struggled with verbal expression and grammatical sensitivity.

This variation became an important basis for examining whether differences in linguistic intelligence were related to differences in speaking achievement

Table 1. Students' Linguistic Intelligence Category

Variable	Category	Percentage (%)
Linguistic Intelligence	Poor	8.6
Linguistic Intelligence	Sufficient	32.4
Linguistic Intelligence	Good	44.7
Linguistic Intelligence	Excellent	14.3

Based on Table 1, the majority of students were in the good category (44.7%), followed by sufficient (32.4%), excellent (14.3%), and poor (8.6%). This finding suggests that most students possessed adequate linguistic ability to support English learning, especially in understanding vocabulary and language structure. However, good linguistic intelligence does not automatically guarantee strong speaking performance, which became the main focus of further analysis.

3.2. Results of Students' English Speaking Skill Achievement

The second variable examined in this study was students' English speaking skill achievement. The data were obtained from students' formal speaking assessment scores documented by speaking lecturers. The assessment included five major components: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension [29]. These components are widely recognized as the essential elements of speaking performance.

The findings showed that students' speaking achievement was generally categorized as sufficient to good. Most students were able to communicate basic ideas and participate in classroom speaking activities such as presentations and discussions. However, many students still experienced problems in pronunciation accuracy, grammatical correctness, and speaking fluency. Several students also showed hesitation and anxiety when speaking in front of others, which affected their speaking performance.

Students who had stronger vocabulary mastery were generally more confident in expressing ideas, while students with limited vocabulary tended to pause frequently and switch to their first language. This finding supports the view that vocabulary plays a major role in oral communication [30]. However, confidence and classroom speaking practice were also observed as important supporting factors.

Table 2. Students' Speaking Achievement Category

Variable	Category	Percentage (%)
Speaking Achievement	Poor	11.2
Speaking Achievement	Sufficient	38.5
Speaking Achievement	Good	36.8
Speaking Achievement	Excellent	13.5

Table 2 shows that most students were classified as sufficient (38.5%) and good (36.8%) in speaking achievement. This indicates that while students had developed functional speaking competence, many of them still needed improvement in fluency and confidence for effective academic communication.

3.3. Correlation Between Linguistic Intelligence and Speaking Achievement

The main purpose of this study was to determine whether there was a significant correlation between students' linguistic intelligence and their English speaking skill achievement. To analyze this relationship, the researcher used Pearson Product Moment Correlation Formula [31]. The formula used in this study is presented as follows :

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][N\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}} \quad \ldots(2)$$

Where:
rxy = correlation coefficient
N = number of respondents
X = linguistic intelligence score
Y = speaking achievement score

After calculating the data, the researcher found that the correlation coefficient (rxy) was 0.042. Based on the standard interpretation of correlation coefficients, this value falls into the category of very low correlation. This means that there was no significant relationship between students' linguistic intelligence and their English speaking skill achievement.

T able 3. Correlation Analysis Result

Variables	Correlation Coefficient (rxy)	Interpretation
Linguistic Intelligence and Speaking Achievement	0.042	Very Low Correlation

This result indicates that students with high linguistic intelligence scores did not necessarily obtain high speaking achievement scores. Likewise, some students with moderate or lower linguistic intelligence were still able to perform well in speaking activities. Therefore, linguistic intelligence alone was not the dominant factor influencing speaking performance.

The findings of this study revealed that there was no significant correlation between students' linguistic intelligence and their English speaking skill achievement. Although theoretically linguistic intelligence is closely associated with language mastery, the statistical result showed only a very low correlation (rxy = 0.042). This finding suggests that speaking achievement is influenced by many factors beyond linguistic intelligence itself.

According to Dwi Anggita [32], linguistic intelligence refers to the ability to use language effectively, including speaking, writing, reading, and listening. Individuals with high linguistic intelligence are usually sensitive to language patterns, vocabulary choice, and verbal expression. Based on this theory, students with stronger linguistic intelligence should theoretically demonstrate better speaking performance. However, the present study shows that this relationship was not significant in practice.

One possible explanation is that speaking skill is strongly affected by affective factors such as confidence, motivation, anxiety, and willingness to communicate. Many students experience fear of making mistakes when speaking English, especially in front of lecturers and classmates. Even students who understand grammar and vocabulary well may hesitate to speak because of nervousness and low self-confidence. This psychological barrier often reduces speaking performance more significantly than cognitive limitations.

This finding is supported by Mujiono [33], who explains that speaking is not only about producing correct language forms but also about communicating meaning effectively. Students may have good linguistic understanding but still fail to perform well if they are unable to manage speaking anxiety. Therefore, speaking achievement cannot be measured only by intellectual or linguistic potential.

Another important factor is the role of practice and exposure. Students who frequently participate in discussions, presentations, debates, and daily English conversations tend to develop stronger speaking fluency regardless of their measured linguistic intelligence. Repeated speaking practice helps students become more spontaneous and confident in oral communication. This supports the argument of Ibnu Fitrianto [34] that speaking competence is largely developed through continuous communicative practice rather than theoretical knowledge alone.

The result also suggests that linguistic intelligence is a complex construct that cannot be fully measured through written testing. Formal tests may capture vocabulary knowledge and grammar sensitivity, but they may not fully represent students' creativity in communication, spontaneous verbal expression, and real-life speaking ability. As a result, the test score may not accurately reflect the practical use of linguistic intelligence in speaking contexts.

From the perspective of neurolinguistics, language production involves not only cognitive processing but also emotional readiness and social interaction. Broca's area and Wernicke's area support speech production and comprehension, but successful speaking performance also depends on psychological comfort and communicative environment. Students who study in supportive and interactive classrooms often show better speaking development even if their formal linguistic intelligence scores are average.

This finding differs slightly from previous studies such as Yooman ravichv [35], which found that multiple intelligences contribute positively to language proficiency. However, the difference may be caused by research focus. Previous studies often measured general language achievement, while this study specifically focused on speaking skill, which is more strongly influenced by confidence and real-time performance. This confirms that speaking is a unique productive skill requiring a broader combination of cognitive, emotional, and environmental support.

The implication of this study is that lecturers should not rely solely on linguistic intelligence as an indicator of speaking success. Instead, English teaching should provide more communicative opportunities, supportive classroom interaction, and confidence-building strategies. Activities such as role play, group discussion, storytelling, and presentation practice may be more effective in improving speaking performance than simply strengthening language theory [36].

Therefore, this study concludes that linguistic intelligence remains an important aspect of language learning, but it is only one of many factors affecting English speaking achievement. A comprehensive approach

that combines cognitive development, emotional support, and communicative practice is more necessary to improve students' speaking competence in higher education

4. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that there was no significant correlation between students' linguistic intelligence and their English speaking skill achievement among the fourth semester students of the English Education Department, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teachers Training, State Islamic University of Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta. The correlation coefficient of 0.042 indicates a very low relationship between the two variables, showing that students with high linguistic intelligence did not necessarily achieve better speaking performance. This finding proves that speaking achievement is influenced not only by linguistic intelligence but also by other important factors such as confidence, motivation, speaking anxiety, vocabulary mastery, learning environment, and opportunities for communicative practice. Therefore, improving students' English speaking skill requires a broader and more comprehensive approach that involves cognitive, affective, and environmental support.

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USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGY

The authors declare that no artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted technologies were used in the preparation, analysis, or writing of this manuscript. All stages of the research process, including data collection, data analysis, interpretation of results, and manuscript preparation, were conducted entirely by the authors without the assistance of any AI-based tools.

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