

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Findings

This chapter presented and discussed the data findings that the researcher answered from two main points of research questions as following. The outcomes of this narrative inquiry research show that the Dayak mother language has a considerable impact on pupils' ability to speak English.

1. The Experiences of Dayak Student in English Speaking Skills.

The participant stated that she began practicing English speaking in elementary school, despite the fact that English was difficult and unfamiliar to her at the time. As she proceeded through junior and senior high school, particularly at an Islamic boarding school that promoted English and Arabic, her speaking confidence and fluency grew. Her interest in English was sparked by participation in speech contests, which required her to speak publicly in English and communicate thoughts eloquently.

She stated that speaking became her favorite English skill since it helped her gain self-confidence, particularly when contrasted to other abilities such as reading and writing. Speaking in English gradually became a daily

activity in class and outside of school, while she said she still forgot certain language or hesitated when meeting foreign terms.

"Speaking English is fun and makes me feel more confident—especially when I prepare well. But I know sometimes I still bring my Dayak accent into it."

She emphasized the importance of confidence, stating that as long as she knew what she was saying, she could talk clearly and naturally. Her speaking experience was characterized by exhilaration, sometimes fear, and a constant desire to sound more fluent.

2. The Impact of Mother Tongue on English Speaking Skills

The participant agrees that her Dayak cultural heritage affects how he speaks English, notably her accent. He speaks Dayak at home for around 24 hours a day, which impacts her accent.

"However, sometimes the accent of my mother tongue still comes through a little when I'm speaking English."

Although she did not get regular corrections from professors or classmates, she noticed that her English accent was slightly different, particularly in rhythm and emphasis, than native speakers'. She also noticed that speaking in Dayak is inherently louder and more passionate, which impacted her English intonation. She underlined that unknown English terminology frequently needed her to pause and repeat the word many times

in order to pronounce it correctly, showing slight phonological interference from her native language.

3. Strategies to Overcome Speaking Difficulties

To address the accent-related difficulties, the participant used a variety of self-regulated learning techniques. She frequently listened to English music, viewed English-language video (especially on TikTok), and practiced reading aloud.

“I frequently overcome my trouble speaking English by first listening to music or singing in English. Then, in the TikTok app, there is generally a section for learning to read English, which is simple to comprehend and makes me even more excited about learning English. And I believe that my trouble speaking English may be overcome.”

These behaviors helped her recognize accent, pronunciation patterns and become more familiar with English rhythm and tone. She underlined the importance of having self-confidence when speaking English in public.

"Confidence is essential while speaking English in public. However, we are unsure about what we are conveying. As a result, before speaking in public, we must first comprehend the context, or what we intend to express. When combined with our high confidence, the context or what we say helps us appear cooler.”

Even when she was doubtful of her accuracy, she thought that speaking confidently helped her look more fluent. She also acknowledged her

bilingual upbringing (including Banjar and Arabic) for improving her versatility when switching accents.

B. Discussion

This discussion focuses on how the participant's Dayak mother tongue affected her English accent, causing specific challenges in pronunciation and clarity. The participant's own narrative serves as a foundation to examine the implications of mother tongue interference and is supported by comparisons to existing linguistic theories.

1. Problematic Accent Patterns from Mother Tongue

The participant's report clearly demonstrated that her English pronunciation was impacted by the Dayak language's phonological system. She made it clear: "The Dayak language also has a slight impact on my accent, which means that when I speak English, my accent comes through." This comment demonstrates her awareness that her accent, which is created by the phonetic qualities of the Dayak language, becomes apparent while speaking English. This accent is distinguished by overpronounced vowels and variations in stress and intonation patterns. Such characteristics contributed to instances of misunderstanding or decreased clarity in speaking, particularly during academic presentations or formal speech activities. Specifically, she mentioned:

"When I speak English, sometimes I realize that I pronounce words differently, especially the 'e' sound... it feels like it's not English enough."

This reflects a common feature in Dayak phonology where vowel sounds like /e/ are strongly pronounced and deeply internalized. As a result, her English accent bore the imprint of these L1 characteristics. Such interference sometimes led to misunderstandings or reduced intelligibility, especially in formal or academic speaking contexts.

This aligns with Odlin's (2022) Language Transfer Theory, which states that learners often carry over features from their first language into the second language, leading to either positive or negative transfer. In her case, the accent interference was clearly a form of negative transfer.

2. Behind the Experience: Realization and Self-Awareness

Initially, the participant perceived her English speaking skills as fluent and expressive. However, after engaging in deep reflection during the narrative interview, she began to recognize the subtle yet persistent impact of her Dayak accent:

"I never thought my accent was a problem. But when I listened to myself or tried to compare with native speakers, I could hear the difference."

This moment of revelation was profound. It prompted her to reconsider her speaking patterns and begin using techniques to neutralize or enhance her accent. She began imitating native pronunciation, paying close attention to spoken English, and recording her own voice to track her development. These phases are unambiguous evidence of increasing metalinguistic awareness, which Cabrelli et al. (2023) highlight as critical in multilingual learners for accent correction.

3. Compare and Contrast with Theory

Her experience both confirms and extends existing theoretical frameworks:

Language Transfer Theory (Odlin, 2022): Her pronunciation difficulties confirm the theory's prediction that L1 phonology can cause pronunciation errors in L2. However, unlike learners who remain unaware of this transfer, she demonstrated the capacity to recognize and address it over time.

Metalinguistic Awareness (Cabrelli et al., 2023): Although multilingual learners are expected to have heightened awareness of language features, the participant's case shows that such awareness may not develop naturally—it may require guided reflection, as seen through this study.

Self-Regulated Learning (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011): Her response to accent problems—using self-correction, imitation, and multimedia input—aligns well with self-directed strategies described in the theory. Yet her approach was deeply personal and independent, lacking institutional or peer feedback.

In contrast to these theories, which often describe idealized or structured learning environments, the participant's story reveals the role of personal struggle, delayed realization, and individual effort in accent development.

4. Accent and Its Impact on Speaking Skill

The participant's accent—shaped by her Dayak language background—had a direct impact on her speaking skills in English. While she demonstrated fluency and confidence, the presence of her accent affected certain aspects of intelligibility and listener comprehension. During public speaking or structured oral assessments, her accent occasionally made it difficult for listeners to clearly understand specific words or phrases. This impacted her perceived speaking performance, even if her grammar and vocabulary were correct.

Her own reflection on this issue showed a growing understanding that accent is not merely a matter of identity, but also a functional element in communication. Although she initially did not consider her accent problematic, the experience of comparing herself with native speakers and

receiving informal feedback made her more aware of its communicative implications. This realization motivated her to take active steps toward pronunciation improvement, which in turn enhanced the clarity and effectiveness of her spoken English.

The participant's accent, which was rooted in her Dayak native tongue, created significant pronunciation and clarity concerns. However, through introspection and increased self-awareness, she began to actively address her concerns. Her trip emphasizes the significance of viewing mother tongue impact as a dynamic component of the learner's linguistic identity, rather than a permanent constraint. When compared to theory, it is obvious that personal reflection and motivation are equally important in overcoming accent-related issues in second language learning.