

An Analysis of Convergence in Speaking Skills among the Eleventh-Graders

Tri Wahyudi¹, Yeasy Agustina Sari^{2*}, Trisna Dinillah Harya³
Institut Agama Islam Negeri Metro (IAIN) Metro, Indonesia^{1,2,3}

Email: yeasyagustina@metrouniv.ac.id^{1*}

ABSTRACT

Communication's objective is to deliver information from one person to another. People adapt their communication in everyday life in order to attain the purpose of communication. It can be shown which features of convergence mostly appeal appear communication-related to the reason for it. The aim of this study is to analyze the English convergence in speaking skills among the eleventh-grade students at senior high school in Lampung Tengah, Indonesia. It is especially interested in analyzing the most dominant feature of convergence and why the students have it when speaking English. In this study, a qualitative method using a case study approach was applied. The participants were chosen from a group of sixteen eleventh graders. A classroom observations sheet and interview session were used to collect the data. The result of the study shows that the most dominant feature of convergence in speaking skills among the eleventh graders at senior high school in Lampung Tengah, Indonesia is Utterance Length. Utterance length involves Listening and Clarifying. All students certainly listen to the interlocutor and are speechless while clarifying. Secondly, the reason for the eleventh graders at senior high school in Lampung Tengah, Indonesia apply convergence is to be attracted by others and evoke social status.

Keywords: *English; language; convergence; speaking skills; utterance length*

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received
January 23, 2022

Revised
March 13, 2022

Accepted
June 2, 2022

How to cite

Sari, Y.A., Wahyudi, T., Harya, T.D. (2022). An Analysis of Convergence in Speaking Skills among the Eleventh-Graders. *Pedagogy: Journal of English Language Teaching*, 10(1). 85-96
DOI 10.32332/joelt.v10i1.4986.

Journal Homepage

<https://e-journal.metrouniv.ac.id/index.php/pedagogy>

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INTRODUCTION

In order to make efficient communication, giving and transferring information has an essential role. According to Douglas (2019), The act of transferring meaning from one person or group to another using mutually understood signs, symbols, and semiotic norms is referred to as communication. The preparation of an institution or school in the face of a high current period of globalization, particularly in English, is critical. There are four fundamental abilities in English that must be acquired. These abilities include reading, speaking, writing, and listening. Determination is required in order to acquire the fundamentals of these talents. Particularly in speaking, which is frequently used in a direct conversation.

Considering English is presently the most widely taught foreign language in over 100 countries across the world, (Crystal, 2003). SMA Manbaul Ulum is one of several high schools in Lampung's center of the city. This school offers English teaching with conversations among students, almost all of them are in the eleventh grade being observed. Learning English with a close friend or partner may be more appealing to certain students. Furthermore, there would be a shift in speaking styles within the discourse. Speaking, according to

Brown (2003), is a productive skill that could be explicitly and experimentally observed; however, those observations are invariably colored by the accuracy and effectiveness of a test taker's listening skill, which necessarily compromises the reliability and validity of an oral production test.

Because of this condition, the students must adjust in order to begin engaging. In such cases, students usually adapt their language by choosing the style that is most appropriate for their interlocutor or collaborator. In other words, each individual's speech tends to converge on the speech of the person to whom they are speaking, or their speech patterns become fairly similar. (Holmes, 1992, p.255). In this context, the students must struggle with revealing their identities when conversing with one another.

Actually, there are several theories related to students' adjustment in their speaking skills. Ellis (1999) stated Convergence occurs when speakers modify their natural speech to sound more like their interlocutor's speech or a stereotype of it (the speaker converges towards some prestige norm that they believe their interlocutor values). Changes in speech patterns can be seen when a conversation begins, for a student who is talking to another student setting the tone of the conversation is absolute. The change states how important it is for a student to change the style of speech in order to give the

impression of politeness or vice versa.

There will be term convergence and divergence in the language whenever the student communicates. However, the researchers' discussion this time is more focused on identifying convergence features that appears in student engagement and providing a foundation for students to undertake linguistic convergence. Convergence has been defined as a language approach in which people adjust one other's speech using a variety of linguistic qualities such as speech rate, pause, utterance lengths, and pronunciation. According to Convergence, individuals deliberately modify actual speech rate to seem attractive to their interlocutors (Giles and Powesland, 1975).

However, this study focuses on the convergence that occurs in conversations between high school students in the eleventh grade. Unlike previous research, this one uses a syllables game to study the concept of phonetic convergence in children. (Lelong and Bailly, 2011). This study focuses on observational aspects and convergence features in student conversations, and also their causes.

Following the rationales, the current study tries to answer two research questions: First, what is the most dominant feature of convergence that appear in speaking skill among the eleventh grader? Second, why do the

students apply convergence in speaking skills among the eleventh grader?

METHOD

Design

To obtain data from the participants, a qualitative research approach is used. In most cases, the qualitative technique is utilized to obtain comprehensive information about specific occurrences from participants (Creswell, 2014). In this study, qualitative methodologies were employed to gather students' beliefs about the convergence of speaking skills.

Participants

This research involved 16 students from the eleventh grade at SMAManbaul Ulum. The students that took part in the study were in their second semester. A partnered with discussion is observed with 16 eleventh grade students from SMA Manbaul Ulum Lampung Tengah. The 16 students agreed to be interviewed based on the findings of the observations. One question represents two responses, namely absentees' number one and number two, and so on.

Instruments

To be more specific, this study relied on observations and interviews. The observation was carried out for the dominant characteristic of convergence

that appears in speaking skill in order to address the first research question concerning what is the most dominant feature of convergence that appears in speaking skill among eleventh graders.

Interviews were conducted to address the second question on why students employ convergence in their speaking skills. The use of two separate techniques was also meant for triangulation, with

During the conversation, an observation sheet was utilized to evaluate the participants' behavior, instruction answer, and activities. (Nelson et al., 2008). This study conducted semi-structured interviews in the classroom using pre-existing health protocols. The interview consists of eight questions, each of which is answered by two students.

Data Analysis Technique

Furthermore, the observation result was presented descriptively, In order to acquire correct data for the first research topic, a conversation is held immediately in the classroom during its implementation. In addition, the interviews were transcribed and classified in accordance with the second research question. The interview data is then analysed using text analysis. (Miles and Hubberman, 1994).

the purpose of gaining a more accurate evaluation of qualitative data related to the current study's objectives (Oliver-Hoyo & Allen, 2006).

Data Collecting Technique

The data collecting technique used in the study was observation and interview. These were to assess their convergence in speaking skills.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

There are four features of convergence that should be observed, including speech rate, pause, utterance length, and pronunciation. The information was gathered among eleventh graders at SMA Manba'ul Ulum Lampung Tengah. The observation results showed all the data from the observation sheet indicate the four convergence aspects in a speech that are most frequently employed or dominant during the conversation. Students who engage in a conversation would be directly examined by researchers, who would use an observation sheet generated by the researcher to determine the most dominant feature of convergence in speaking skills.

The most dominant feature of convergence that appears in speaking skills among the eleventh grader

This observation took the student's conversation directly with the researcher as an evaluator that aimed to know the percentage of students that make convergence appeared in their speaking skills. The features of convergence that appeared in speaking skills can be seen as follows:

Table 1. Speech Rate

No	Name	Average	Moderately Slow
1	ADF	√	
2	AF		√
3	AS		√
4	AL		√
5	ABN		√
6	AC		√
7	AG		√
8	AB		√
9	BA		√
10	CY	√	
11	DSY		√
12	DM		√
13	EA	√	
14	FF	√	
15	FM		√
16	MN		√
Percentage		25%	75%

There were sixteen students, and during the conversation, they adjust their speech rate to the conversation. The stage of measurement was employed by the researcher. And speech rate stated by Pimsleur et al.(1977) with the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Words in total}}{\text{Second}} 60 = wpm$$

After analyzing with the formula, it can be said speech rate has 75% of students most dominant in moderately slow's sub-feature.

Table 2. Pause

No	Name	Filled	Unfilled
1	ADF		√
2	AF		√
3	AS		√
4	AL	√	
5	ABN	√	
6	AC		√
7	AG		√
8	AB		√
9	BA		√
10	CY		√
11	DSY		√
12	DM		√
13	EA	√	
14	FF	√	
15	FM		√
16	MN		√
Percentage		25%	75%

When the student started to talk each other, one of them surely lost their topics that wanted to speak then to improve the atmosphere of the conversation they began to say the presence of vocal spaces just **like ehmm, errrrr**. It has happened on AL, ABN, EA, and FF. Besides, they preferred to be silent or unfilled.

Table 3. Utterance Length

No	Name	Listening	Clarifying
1	ADF	√	√
2	AF	√	√
3	AS	√	√
4	AL	√	
6	AC	√	
7	AG	√	√
8	AB	√	
9	BA	√	
10	CY	√	
11	DSY	√	
12	DM	√	√
13	EA	√	√
14	FF	√	
15	FM	√	
16	MN	√	√
Percentage		100%	43%

As suggested by Giles (1991) that the students adapted the communication through listening and clarifying. During the observation, the students who had conversations simply listened to the interlocutor,

although some were unable to give a feedback. As a result, listening nominated as the most sub feature in Utterance Length that appeared in speaking skill with 100%.

Table 4. Pronunciation

No	Name	Words level	Sentence Level	Contrastive Level
1	ADF		√	
2	AF		√	
3	AS		√	
4	AL		√	
6	AC			√
7	AG			√
8	AB	√		
9	BA		√	
10	CY		√	
11	DSY	√		
12	DM		√	
13	EA			√
14	FF			√
15	FM		√	
16	MN	√		
Percentage		19%	56%	25%

During the conversation, every student talked with different stress of pronunciation. The number of students' Sentence levels was highest, while Word Level was lowest in the Pronunciation feature.

It is related to Coupland (1980), the most common convergence as well as used is utterance length. This seems to be related to the reason why students

perform convergence when communicating. The features were speech rate, pause, utterance length and pronunciation. Speech rates are classified into four factors. Most appeared of the factors in speech rate were Average at 25% and moderately slow within 75%. The pause had filled and unfilled factors within 25% (filled) and 75% (unfilled). Utterance Length features 100% on Listening and 43% on Clarifying. Pronunciation had three factors there was Word Level within 19%, Sentence Level at 56%, and Contrastive Level at 25%.

The reason for the students applying convergence in speaking skills among the eleventh grader

The researcher interviews students to figure out why they are converging. The researcher conducts a semi-structured interview with prepared questions about convergence in student speaking ability with the interlocutor, the researcher gave eight questions related to the observation research. There were a variety of students' responses, the researchers created a summary of respondents' interview results so that they'd be easily analyzed. The interview refers to 16 students. These were eight questions and the summarized answer of students related to speaking:

- 1) What efforts should be made, in your opinion, to increase the quality of English speaking?

Summarized response:

Respondent 1: For me, I frequently practice solely speaking English.

Respondent 2: Perhaps take private classes to improve your fluency in speaking English.

Summarily, based on the result of the interview sample above most students train their English speaking with friends or classmates to improve their skills.

- 2) Is it necessary to improvise or emphasize speech rate, pause, utterance length, and pronunciation while speaking?

Respondent 3: When I started talking to friends and our themes came up, I began cracking some sort of joke or being silent like a Limbad master. Perhaps it is just typical improvisation, but prejudice improves communication efficacy.

Respondent 4: yes, it is. There is no hesitation in the dialogue. There's a lot of humor, but there's also a lot of seriousness. While seeing girls, I'm a little cool as well.

Yes, it is. When someone begins a conversation, it should focus on the topic while they have to prepare a strategy of speaking with the interlocutor and

improvise it. Because the important thing about conversation is understanding.

topic of conversation in the discussion.

3) What is your goal in terms of enhancing your speaking pronunciation?

Because it can foster mutual understanding and acceptance, as well as cohesion and peaceful life based on mutual respect and trust.

Summarized response:

Respondent 5: First, I just want something unique when I speak. Second, let me pay a lot of attention.

Respondent 6: If I let time to pass, I will see that my comprehension will improve and I will be able to learn additional languages.

The goal is to motivate the person or interlocutor to be more enthusiastic, to persuade others to follow or accept one's opinions (ideas), convey information to the other person, please others, and give the other person the opportunity to think about and evaluate his ideas.

5) Why do you take a pause from communicating?

Summarized response:

Respondent 9: Because the correct conversation must take turns talking about it, and occasionally continue because it has stuck in the thoughts or fits horribly.

Respondent 10: because I generally link what I was saying previously to the present conversation. For example, the growth in bitcoin's price from two years ago is still being compared to this year. If our friends are likewise understanding, such a discourse will be fascinating.

4) Why do you determine the length of the session during the dialogue process?

Because the idea is to disrupt comprehension and decision-making by causing them to think in terms of previously processed understandings.

Summarized response:

Respondent 7: Yes, since there is a moment when we listen to friends and ask questions when conversing.

Respondent 8: When you communicate, you don't always talk about the same things. So, the answer is yes or no, depending on how well I comprehend and know the

6) Why do you change the rate of your speech?

Summarized response:

Respondent 11: Because I need to adapt for to the interlocutor's speaking style, I may accommodate the

efficacy of the discussion by varying the tempo of speech.

Respondent 12: I'd like my interlocutor to comprehend what I'm saying. If I speak too quickly, my colleague could not grasp what I'm saying.

Because speaking excessively quick makes it difficult for the interlocutor to process the information supplied, as well as discern the meaning of the information. Similarly, if you speak slowly, your interlocutor will become saturated with the topic of the debate. This is determined by an individual's social position, which also influences the shift in the pace of another's speech.

7) Does it have anything to do with creating efficient communication by organizing attractive pronunciation?

Summarized response:

Respondent 13: It does, in fact. Usually in talks, even if the topic isn't really relevant. I do, however, occasionally use a funny pronunciation.

Respondent 14: It really does, in essence. To make it more comprehensible, I do an innovative pronunciation by displaying it with my gestures or other parts of my body.

Yes, it does. Both communicators

share the same comprehension of communication. With attractive pronunciation, it could be more understandable.

8) Do you agree with changing one's speech rate will generate one increasingly approachable?

Summarized response:

Respondent 15: Yes, I agreed. It can important in the learning process even if the style of communication varies because it affects the average speed of communication.

Respondent 16: Agree, because it can improve my English skills.

Yes, I agreed. Because adjusting the rate of speech facilitates comprehension and approachability for both social and psychological students, and if used in real life, it has the potential to transform the student's social position.

Based on the interviews stated by students, Michinov and Monteil (2000) reported that the reason for convergence is the desire to gain approval from one another. The eleventh graders at SMA Manba'ul Ulum had converged their speaking style for a variety of reasons, among these include a desire to sound more like their interlocutor or peers, etc. The premise is that of similarity attraction. It might usually cause by the age issue of students who are still in their teens and are attempting to comprehend

how to detect the appropriate distinction between persons or strangers with different statuses.

CONCLUSION

There are four dominant features of convergence that appear in the speaking skill of the eleventh grader of SMA Manba'ul Ulum Lampung Tengah. Furthermore, the utterance length feature dominantly appeared among the others. It means that the student trying to get listened to while the interlocuter begins the conversation with low clarification or gives no feedback and question. While the student's speech rate is moderately slow in terms of adjustment toward the interlocuter and reveals the similarities inherently. Students' convergence that applied in speaking skills due to conversation, is probably used when the students wish to evoke social approval, reach communication of efficiency, and be attracted. It was proven by the result of the summarized interview. Typically, a student will undertake language convergence towards another student or the closest person with a higher social standing than him in order to equalize the tone of speech or begin speaking graciously towards those with a respect to the person. This indicates that the student wishes to conform to the manner of discourse in order to gain more attention.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I'd like to acknowledge those who have contributed to the successful delivery of this research. Thank you for my tutor AN in this research YAS and all participants at SMA Manbaul Ulum Lampung Tengah in Seputih Agung district.

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