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The Importance of Parental Involvement on Students' Speaking Achievement

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Abstract

This research article explores the importance of parental involvement on students' speaking achievement. The researchers demonstrate how parental involvement in children's learning process can lead to numerous benefits for both children and parents, educators, and also school; including speaking achievement in English subject area. In this global era, Indonesian students are expected to master English as stated in the curriculum. Speaking is an essential skill in English to help students facing the global era in order to build relationships with other people around the world. Sometimes students have difficulties in practicing their speaking skills. This may be due to the lack of involvement of parents in the children's learning process. Parents should encourage their children to be fluent in English as one of the international languages which are needed to find a job and pursue further education. As a result, it is not only parents that become the crucial components in educating students to create a better achievement but also school and community matters. Thus, the involvement of parents is needed to play an active role in collaboration with school and community to help students to be actively participating in the learning process to increase students' speaking achievement.

Keywords: Parental Involvement; Students' Speaking Achievement

Introduction

Parental involvement can be explained as a tremendous responsibility to take care for the children's attitudes and social relationships in order to achieve better development of the children's personality (Ceka & Murati, 2016). Parental involvement is becoming an important factor in education to improve children's achievement. According to Ahmad et al. (2017), parental involvement means that both fathers and mothers can participate in school activities, play an important role in the children's learning process at home, and obtain other information from the community to support the children. In other words, parental involvement has a great influence and impact in students' academic development, be it at home, at school, or at the neighboring community (Reynolds, 1992:441).

Parental involvement is very essential at every level of education. At kindergarten, parental involvement needs to be well coordinated and planned in early childhood to play a role in developing the growth of children in this digital age (Nurhayati, 2021). At primary school, parents need to be involved in giving their children freedom of creativity and giving them the opportunity to express themselves in a wider area (Suparmi et al., 2018). In addition, parental involvement is very important at the university level, as adult learners at this level require parental advice and guidance (Arshad et al., 2016). Therefore, parents are a prominent factor in children's education and they should be involved in their children's learning development in every education level that they pursue. In order to be directly participated in children's development, parents need to be aware of the alternation of generations and global competition that their children face. One of them is by familiarizing themselves with English as one of the important international languages used to build relationships with other people around the world and career development.

Indonesian students are expected to master English as stated in the curriculum specifically in this global era. Despite Indonesia's uneven language policy, English has progressively infiltrated many aspects of society during the last two decades (Lie, 2017). According to Lauder (2008), English has played a significant part in education because it is a required subject in schools, and university students are unlikely to complete their degrees without it. In Indonesia, English has been taught as a foreign language in the formal curriculum from Grades 7 through 12 and at the university level. English may be included as part of the local content or as an extracurricular activity in elementary schools. As early as pre-kindergarten, several private schools have included English in their curriculum. In addition, English-medium formal schools and after-school English courses have grown in popularity, drawing children from middle-class families.

Lie (2017) notes that the challenges of studying English go hand in hand with the desire of the middle class to push their children up the globalized world's success ladder. The middle class begin to send their children to Australia, Singapore, or Malaysia for education in terms of viable alternative, although they are consulting experts to see if the English their children will learn there is a desirable, or at the

very least a bearable, standard (Lauder, 2008). According to Lauder (2020), there are other parents who want to send their children to a private school because of the facilities and increased English exposure. Private schools may be referred to as "national plus schools" since they provide a curriculum that covers the national curriculum while also providing a more worldwide perspective, and in certain circumstances, instruction is delivered in English for particular courses. Parents in the urban middle class believe that mastering English will give their children an advantage in the global marketplace, such as be able to find a decent career and have a bright future.

Speaking is one of important skills in English. Speaking in general aids people in expressing their feelings, ideas, and opinions in a real-life environment so that they can exchange information (Hybel, 2001). It is very essential remembering the students need to face the global era so they need to be able to use their speaking ability in order to build relationship with other people around the world. Unlike writing, people are almost always spontaneous when they are speaking, so they cannot correct their utterances when interacting with each other because we speak more than we write and we read. Thus, it can be said that speaking is the most difficult aspect of language learning (Hinkel, 2005; Leong & Ahmadi, 2017; Rafada & Madini, 2017), as it contains various aspects such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and several linguistic elements as a tool for communicating and connecting with people.

However, sometimes students have difficulties in practicing speaking English because they are often ashamed, fearful of making mistakes, given insufficient practice, overburdened with being confident all of the time, lack of vocabulary and grammar knowledge, and also unsupportive environment (Ratnasari, 2020; Syaifudin, 2017). Students would be affected by an unsupportive environment both friends and parents which make children became demotivated to learn and lost their language learning inventiveness. To the facts that parents play an important role in children's learning development, this may be due to the lack of involvement of parents in the children's learning process mainly in practicing speaking, for example: parents do not help their children to improve their speaking skills, parents do not come to children's activities or even do not make sure that their children do their homework or not. This is a problem that must be overcome; therefore, the researchers want to explore the importance of parental involvement to help students to be actively participating in the learning process to increase students' academic achievement focus on speaking ability.

Types of Parental Involvement

One of the most popular models of parental involvement is known as Epstein's (1997). Joyce Epstein conceptualized parental involvement in six types of family-school partnerships for the benefit of children. This model also includes hands-on examples, challenges, redefinitions, and expected results. The descriptions are as follows:
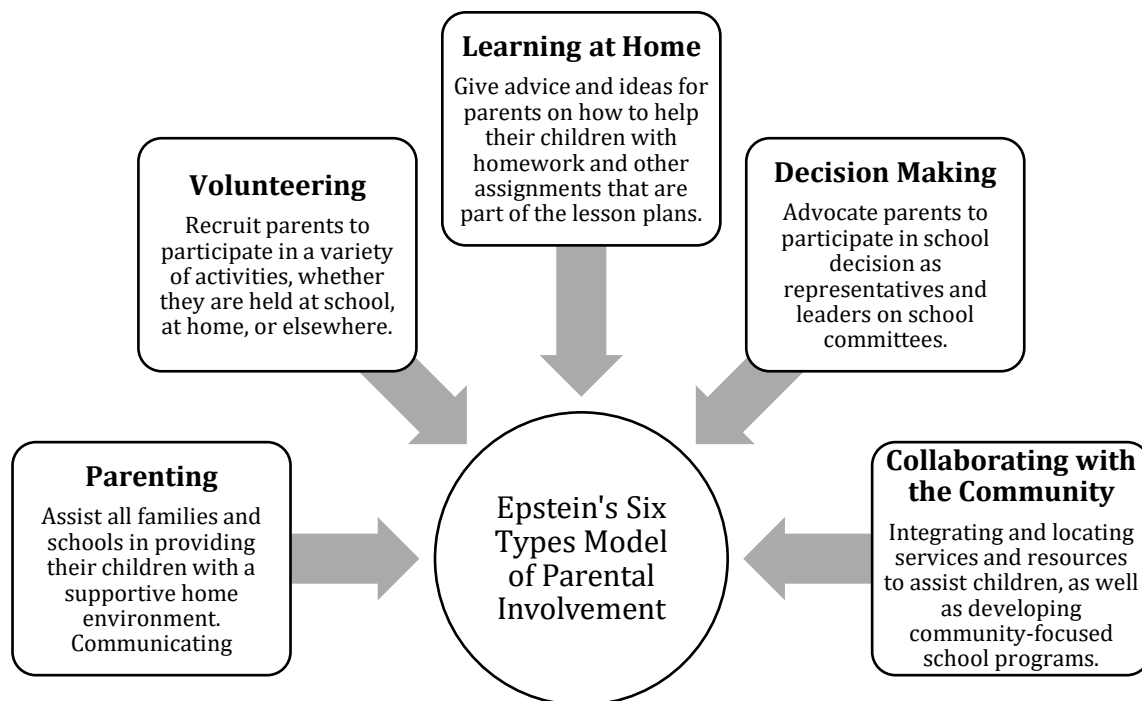
Figure 1. Six Types Model of Parental Involvement

1. *Parenting*. Parent workshops or courses, parenting resources for each grade level and age, school welcoming meetings, and other events can be the sample practices in this type of involvement. There are various obstacles that must be overcome in order for this form of involvement to be successful in terms of design and implementation, such as providing information to all families who want, need, or are able to attend seminars or meetings held in school buildings, as well as allowing families to exchange information about their children's abilities, needs, cultures, and histories. They must also ensure that the information is transparent, reliable, and linked to the academic progress of the pupils. The redefinition relates to parent-teacher conferences held in schools, as well as "workshops", which must accommodate parents who work and are otherwise occupied outside of school. The outcomes of this type of participation are believed to be beneficial to children, parents, and teachers. For pupils, this type of involvement potentially result in beneficial personal values, qualities, beliefs, and habits being instilled by family, as well as a balance in time spent between homework, household tasks, and other activities. Parents are required to view parenting at home as processes of learning for their children, as well as to be aware of parenting concerns, receive school help, and receive mutual support from other parents. Teachers can use the expected outcomes to gain a better knowledge of different families and kids' cultures, backgrounds, challenges, aspirations, and needs.

2. *Communicating*. In this type of involvement, there are several practices that can be implemented such as conducting conferences with parents at least once a year to discuss a variety of topics, such as providing transparent information on the

school's vision and mission, courses, programs, and internet safety, preventing bullying among students, and providing language translators to assist families as needed. For the successful design and implementation of this type of involvement, there are also several challenges such as reviewing the quality of communication between the school parties and parents at the conferences that have been held in terms of content, structure, schedule, or others for improvement. The redefinition refers to "communications on student progress and school programming," which refers to two-way or multi-way communication channels that connect students, families, schools, and the community. Students can use the expected results to increase awareness of their own progress in order to improve grades and their position as communicators in partnerships, grasp the value of attendance and following school policies, and be informed about course decisions. Parents are responsible for understanding school policies and programs, monitoring student development and responding to student difficulties, as well as developing constructive relationships with teachers and other school personnel. Teachers can anticipate seeing an increase in their understanding of their abilities to communicate clearly with families utilizing various technologies, use parent networks for communication, and grasp family perspectives on their children's growth and programs.

3. *Volunteering*. The sample practices in this type of involvement are: creating a school-run volunteer program geared at parents with the goal of helping to improve the school's quality, involving administrators, instructors, and students. There are several challenges for successful design and implementation in this type of involvement, such as finding and organizing volunteers with flexible times so that working parents can participate. In addition, they must assess all school members' skills, talents, and requirements in order to plan a successful volunteer event. "Volunteer" is described as an activity in which all members of the school community, including students' parents, participate together in a variety of activities and programs hosted at the school and/or other locations as needed. In this type of involvement, students may gain better communication skills, increased understanding of a range of skills, talents, and jobs, and parent or other volunteer contributions. Parents may gain self-assurance in their ability to work in schools and with children, as well as take steps to improve their own education, such as recognizing that families are welcome and appreciated at school, and developing specific volunteer skills. Teachers are expected to, with the help of volunteers, develop awareness of parents' talents and interests in school and children, as well as pay more attention to students.

4. *Learning at home*. Giving information for families on the skills required of each grade level student, homework regulations and how to discuss and monitor them at home, how to help students improve certain skills, and family involvement in learning activities can be the sample practices in this type of involvement. There are several challenges for this type of involvement's successful design and implementation, such as organizing and designing a regular schedule for students

related to interactive homework with the purpose of discussing the important things of their classwork, family awareness of their children's classwork content, family involvement in all important curriculum-related resolutions with their children, and providing information for families and students on course credits at school. "Homework" is redefined as an activity in which students not only work alone in a quiet environment, but also participate in engaging activities that connect their schooling to their everyday lives. "Help" at home refers to monitoring, leading, discussing, encouraging, or other actions such as listening, reacting, and praising children's daily activities and development, rather than "teaching" school subjects. The outcomes of this type of participation are believed to be beneficial to children, parents, and teachers. Students are able to develop a good attitude toward classwork, being able to finish homework, and improve their abilities, skills, and test scores from both classwork and homework. Parents are expected to grasp the instructional programs and concepts that their children have acquired, as well as to know how to assist and support their children at home and to appreciate the instructors' efforts. Teachers are expected to be able to respect family time, feel gratification from family support and involvement, and provide better homework assignments for specific goals.

5. *Decision making*. In this type of involvement, there is a practice that can be implemented such as creating a room parent or also known as a class for parents, which facilitates to improve contact between teachers and parents, and a network system that connects or links all students' families. For the successful design and implementation of this type of involvement, there are also several challenges such as incorporating parents from all ethnicities, races, socioeconomic backgrounds, and other backgrounds in school committees, provide training for leaders to act on behalf of other parents to engage and inform all parents, include students (along with parents) in decision-making groups. "Decision making" is redefined as a collaborative process involving shared aims, shared opinions, and actions, as well as power struggles between opposing viewpoints. "Leader" means a true representative who has the opportunity and support to listen to and connect with other parents or family members. Students can use the expected results to increase awareness of family representation in school choices and to realize that students' rights must be respected. Parents are expected to be aware of their children's voices in school decisions and policies, to be able to take leadership roles on committees, to share their experiences with other families, and to have a sense of belonging to the school. The expected outcomes for teachers are awareness of the parent's perspective as one of the variables in school policies and choices, as well as equality of family status as representatives in leadership roles and on committees.

6. *Collaborating with the community*. The sample practices in this type of involvement are: giving information for students and their families about community health, cultural, recreational, social support, and other programs or services, as well as alumni participation in school programs for students. There

are several challenges for successful design and implementation in this type of involvement, such as adjusting part-time employment of school requirements and goals with high school students, resolving turf issues, informing community programs, and providing opportunities to participate in community programs. "Community" is redefined to include everyone who is affected and interested in the quality of education, not just students' neighbors or groups of people with low or high economic status. In this type of involvement, students can increase talents and skills through extracurricular or curricular experiences, as well as awareness of careers for future schooling and job. Parents are required to communicate with other families in their communities and be aware of the community's contributions to the school, as well as the school's contributions to the community. For teachers, they are expected to know how to engage mentors, corporate partners, community volunteers, and others to support students and supplement teaching approaches, as well as being willing to and skilled at doing so.

Factors and Implications of Parental Involvement

According to Peña (2000), there are some factors influencing parental involvement. For each factor is described as follows:

1. *Language.* Parental group meetings in school activities are not multilingual. Not all parents can understand what is being discussed in the meetings if it is not in their first language. That is the reason why language is particularly influential for parents to determine whether they want to participate.

2. *Parent cliques.* When it comes to parental decision-making, only those listed in the parent cliques can generate ideas, make final decisions, and represent all parents. In most cases, for personal reasons, they do not consider other parents outside the circle attending school meetings.

3. *Parents' education.* The level of parental education affects parental involvement. Because if parents have limited knowledge of the development of their children's learning process, they cannot really be their useful aids. Such issues can prevent parents from expressing their concerns, specifically when submitting ideas, people, or materials related to student's education development. In addition, if they have inadequate literacy skills, they may be far from understanding the development of their children's school.

4. *Attitudes of the school staff.* School staff and parent value parental involvement, but each group is influenced by a variety of factors. School staff feels that involving parents means extra work for them. For parents, parental involvement changed according to their personal feelings compared to school staff and other parents. This behavior showed a strong impact of parental involvement.

5. *Cultural influences.* Parents face social and cultural differences that negatively impact their involvement. Parents may not participate in school activities because fear of being not welcomed or not understood. This limits their active interaction even the schools offer a variety of opportunities for parental involvement.

6. *Family issues*. Childcare and business schedule are factors in parents' participation. Parents with young children at home, and long work plans are often conflicted with the activities planned by the school. These problems are the largest obstacles that directly affect parents' capabilities.

Peña (2000) also adds five implications in parental involvement. First of all, parental involvement can make parents feel more welcome when teachers change their attitudes towards parents and work together without looking at cultural differences or social classes. Second of all, with the help of administrators and school staff, both administrators and school staff will provide plans and involve parents in the school so that teachers can work collaboratively with parents. Third of all, the school staff should consider parent's educational level, culture, language, and their home situations and also be able to provide clear information with any social networks which are always available at all times and accessible in order to involve parents in all situations. Fourth of all, schools need to create a hierarchy of parents' involvement opportunities and provide parents with more knowledge so that they can participate in all school activities. Last of all, teachers and parents need to share an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of parental involvement, so it can have a direct impact on their involvement in school activities.

The Benefits of Parental Involvement

Parental involvement has several positive impacts on children's learning development (Henderson & Berla, 1994; Olsen & Fuller, 2008; Sapungan & Sapungan, 2014) and it also results in substantial benefits to educators and the school. For the children, in general, they do better in terms of grades, test scores, attendance, and they can finish their schoolwork on a regular basis, thus remedial classes are being used by fewer children. Moreover, children have stronger expectations for education, as well as higher self-esteem and self-discipline. At last, when children have a good attitude about school, they tend to behave better in class and are less likely to be suspended for disciplinary reasons.

Not only for the children, has parental involvement also had benefits for the parents. Parents are more receptive and sensitive to their children's social, emotional, and intellectual developmental needs as a result of more connection and dialogue with them. As parents have a better understanding of child development, they use more affection and positive reinforcement on their children and use less punishment. Parents who are aware of what their children are learning are more inclined to assist when teachers ask them to get more active in their children's home learning activities. Furthermore, parents have a better grasp of the teacher's role and the curriculum at their children's schools. Also, when parents are asked to participate in the decision-making process by the school, they become more aware of and active in policies that affect their children's education, so that parents are more confidence in their ability to parent and make decisions.

In addition, educators and schools also gain the benefits from this parental involvement. Teachers and principals are more likely to have higher morale when

there is a high percentage of an interested parent in and out of school. Another, they have a better awareness of the cultures and diversity of families as well as a greater respect for the abilities and time of parents which can improves communication and relationships between parents, teachers, and administrators. For the schools, schools with active parental and community involvement have a higher reputation in the community which can also increase the better support from community. Afterwards, school programs that encourage and include parents tend to perform better and have higher-quality programs than those who do not.

Parental Involvement and Students' Speaking Achievement

Parents play an important role as first tutors when they have children, mainly in children's process of learning a new language. As a popular language, English was first introduced at the earliest level of education, from kindergarten to high school. As a result, Indonesian children have faced English as a foreign language from an early age. English is not part of the national exam for elementary and junior high school, but it is a part of the national exam and is a requirement for high school students in pursuit of higher education. Therefore, parents need to be involved in the process and use their knowledge to support their children's potential in learning English, specifically in relation to speaking skills.

According to Driessen et al. (2005:511), three significant social factors might influence students' education are family, school, and community. For those who want to master a second language, they must live, communicate, and interact directly with people who use the second language in their daily communication such as schools, homes, offices, markets, or other places where is needed (Bitu, 2020:155). As one of the factors influencing second language acquisition and learning, environment is becoming the most important factor influencing student learning performance, mainly in second language learning (Bitu, 2020). Therefore, parents need to create a good home environment to help student growth in building self-confidence, creating positive behavioral, and emotional traits, and also to be successful in their study and activities whether inside or outside the school (Ahmad et al., 2017).

There are several activities that parents can use to help children improve their speaking skills such as telling or reading a story, practicing pronunciation of simple and complex words, inviting them to talk, and other speaking activities (Anggraini, 2020). Fathers and mothers can actively listen to stories and complaints about what their difficulty in learning English speaking skill. Parents can also read books with their children, listen to children reading books, and assist with schoolwork. Besides, parents can implement one or several of six types of speaking skills; imitative, intensive, responsive, transactional, interpersonal, and extensive. *Imitative* is the way speakers who are just imitating words, phrases, and sentences. The most significant aspect of this type is pronunciation, which is achieved by the use of drilling in the learning process, which involves listening to and repeating the same words repeatedly. *Intensive* refers to how speakers practice certain components of language by themselves in pairs or groups, for example reading aloud or reading

conversation in turn with mother or father. *Responsive* is the way speakers interact with others and mutual response can be reach through the communication, such as short replies to parents or children-initiated questions or comments, giving instructions, and also giving directions. *Transactional* is the way speakers exchange information and express a message in everyday situation, such as short conversation between children and parents. *Interpersonal* refers to how speakers engage in order to convey facts or information, such as through interviews, role plays, discussions, games, and other types of interactions. The last is, *extensive*, which can be defined as a monolog used to improve speaking skills in the form of oral reports such as storytelling, brief speeches, and so on (Brown, 2007). In short, parents should be involved, encouraging, and supporting children's education journey (Epstein, 1992).

Conclusion

This research article reviewed the importance of parental involvement on students' speaking achievement. Parents who raise concerns about their children and play an active role in their lives presumably will have a positive impact on children's academic performance, especially their English-speaking skill. Besides parents, both school and community are also become the crucial components in educating students to create a better achievement. However, parents should not only support their children with teaching materials for speaking, but also encourage and support them with elements that motivate them, such as encouragement, compliments, and support to keep learning their second or foreign language mainly speaking skill. In addition, teachers and schools may be the subject of introspection as an educator of the importance of parental involvement in maintaining children's willingness to learn English speaking skill. Hopefully, future researchers will be able to explore the importance of parental involvement focus on other specific skills in English such as listening, reading, or writing.

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