

Identifying Errors at IELTS Speaking Mock Test

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Abstract

This study aims to identify errors made by IELTS Mock Test candidates during the Speaking skills test. This study is a qualitative research using content analysis method. The researcher analyzed the video recordings of the mock test which was then transcribed. Content analysis was conducted on these transcripts to identify errors on the mock test based on the IELTS Speaking assessment criteria. The researcher analyzed four errors in this study based on IELTS assessment criteria namely fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range, accuracy, and pronunciation. By analyzing these in a systematic manner, this study sought to uncover the types of errors that candidates made during the mock test. The basis of this study is previous research conducted by Iwashita dan Vasquez (2019), which examined the correlation between discourse competence hallmarks and IELTS speaking band descriptor scoring. The previous research was chosen because it is relevant to the purpose of this study in identifying errors made by IELTS speaking mock test candidates on the speaking skills examination. The findings are intended to provide valuable insights for test takers. Test takers can use this information to better understand their weaknesses and focus their preparation efforts on specific areas that need improvement. This research contributes to a broader understanding of language learning and assessment.

Key words: errors, IELTS mock test, speaking

Introduction

The IELTS speaking test is a part of the IELTS exam that aims to assess a candidate's English speaking skills. In this test, candidates will interact with an examiner in a live interview session. The purpose of the IELTS speaking test is to evaluate the candidate's ability to use English orally in a variety of contexts, including talking about oneself, general topics, and academic topics. The IELTS speaking test is conducted for about 12-15 minutes. The test consists of three parts. The first part includes general questions about the candidate's everyday topics such as work, hometown, clothes, daily routine, family and friends. In the second part, the candidate is given a task and asked to speak on a topic instructed by the examiner for one to two minutes. Before speaking, the candidate will be given one minute to prepare (IELTS, Test format, 2019b). The third part contains a more in depth discussion of abstract ideas related to the topic covered in the second part.

When the candidate speaks, the examiner observes their performance in detail without interrupting. The researcher observed the errors made by the candidate based on the four IELTS speaking assessment criteria. These criteria include fluency and coherence, lexical resource,

grammatical range, accuracy, and pronunciation.

- 1) Fluency and coherence: The ability to speak fluently and without hesitation, and to connect ideas clearly and effectively. This means that one can express their thoughts in a good flow that is easily understood by the listener.
- 2) Lexical resource: The ability to use words accurately and in context. Can express ideas diversely and use the right vocabulary.
- 3) Grammatical range and accuracy: The ability to master various grammatical structures in the language used. This includes the ability to use grammatical rules correctly and appropriately, thus ensuring the message conveyed can be understood clearly and unambiguously.
- 4) Pronunciation: The ability to pronounce words clearly and how to use intonation to indicate meaning in sentences. With good pronunciation, one can highlight the importance of a word or phrase in a sentence correctly, as well as express their feelings or thoughts appropriately through appropriate intonation.

This study aims to identify errors made by IELTS Mock Test candidates during the Speaking skills test. The main focus of the study includes analysis of fluency and coherence in speaking,

evaluation of the use of lexical resources to express ideas appropriately, identification of the range and accuracy of grammatical usage, as well as assessment of clear pronunciation and appropriate use of intonation. To achieve the objectives of this study, there are two research questions:

- 1) What are the errors made by each candidate based on the assessment criteria in conducting the IELTS speaking mock test?
- 2) What are the most common or frequent errors made by the candidates based on the assessment criteria in conducting the IELTS speaking mock test?

The findings are intended to provide valuable insights for test takers. Test takers can use this information to better understand their weaknesses and focus their preparation efforts on specific areas that need improvement.

Literature Review

This research is relevant to the study conducted by Iwashita and Vasquez (2019) as both focused on discourse competence in the context of the IELTS conversation exam. Iwashita and Vasquez looked at performance characteristics in discourse competence such as coherence and speech unity, which are also the focus of analysis in this study. They conducted both quantitative and qualitative analyses of the utterances of test takers of different ability levels, as is done in this study, but this study only uses qualitative.

Methods

This research uses qualitative research with content analysis. Qualitative content analysis was conducted by analyzing the mock test video recordings which were then transcribed. Content analysis of the transcripts was conducted to identify the errors in the mock test based on the IELTS Speaking assessment criteria. The researcher analyzed four errors in this study based on the IELTS assessment criteria namely fluency and coherence, lexical resources, grammatical range, accuracy, and pronunciation.

This study used the transcript of the IELTS mock speaking test recording files as an instrument for qualitative analysis.

There were 6 participants in this study, of which 5 were female and 1 was male.

The researcher transcribed the recorded video files related to the IELTS Speaking Mock test and carefully examined the resulting documents or transcripts whether they were appropriate or not.

This study used qualitative content analysis. The content analysis was conducted on the zoom video recording transcripts to identify errors on the mock test based on the IELTS speaking assessment criteria of fluency and coherence, lexical resources, grammatical range, accuracy, and pronunciation. The analysis process begins with collecting data through zoom video recordings which are then transcribed. After that, the researcher identified the types of errors based on the predetermined assessment criteria.

Results and Discussion

1) Candidate 1

In the first candidate, the speaking errors lies in grammatical range and accuracy. Examples include incorrect use of prepositions and incorrect grammar:

- "It's *on* August or September..."
It should be: "It's *in* August..."
- "...maybe *in* the weekend..."
It should be: "...maybe *on* the weekend..."
- "I work *in* Sriguna High School"
It should be: "I work *at* Sriguna High School."

2) Candidate 2

In the second candidate, her speaking errors were in fluency and coherence because she had many pauses when she spoke such as "What is it, um, uh". She also had errors in grammatical range and accuracy. Examples such as:

- "It is a program *which* gives".
It should be: "It is a program *that* gives"
- "I think it depends on the students *itself*."
It should be: "I think it depends on the students *themselves*."

3) Candidate 3

In the third candidate, the speaking error lies in grammar and accuracy because there are errors in the use of tense, and preposition. This greatly affected the clarity and coherence of what the candidate wanted to convey. For example:

- "I *has* been teaching."
It should be: "I *have* been teaching."
- "...my family here to go *in* that school."
It should be: "...my family here to go *to* that school."
- "...has changed *in* era to era."
It should be: "has changed *from* era to era."

4) Candidate 4

The fourth candidate's speaking error was in grammar and accuracy as there were errors in the use of tense, sentence structure and subject verb agreement that interfered with understanding. For example:

- "...but most *of* people call me..."
It should be: "...but most people call me..."

- "My daily routine *begin* with the morning."
It should be: "My daily routine *begins* with the morning."
- "...I just *having* like praying."
It should be: "I just *have* like praying."

5) Candidate 5

In the fifth candidate, the speaking errors were in grammatical range, fluency and coherence, as there were errors in the use of inappropriate verb tenses and lack of coherence making the answer difficult to understand and inaccurate. For example:

- "I *drank* a fresh lemon water every day."
It should be: "I *drink* a fresh lemon water every day."
- "I *did pray*."
It should be: "I *prayed*."
- "And I wake, I woke up at almost 3.30 pm and after that, I drank a fresh lemon water every day."
It should be: "I wake up at almost 3:30 pm. And after that, I drink a fresh lemon water every day."
- "And my routine is like, meditation maybe for me, my time. I thought it was my me time. Me and myself, I did some activity."
It could have used sentences like: "My routine includes meditation, which I consider my personal time or 'me time'." During this time, I engage in activities by myself."

6) Candidate 6

In the sixth candidate, the speaking error was in the grammatical range as there was an error in the use of an inappropriate phrase. For example:

- "I don't have much money enough."
It should be: "I don't have enough money".

There were several mistakes made by candidates, especially in terms of grammar and accuracy. They often use inappropriate words or phrases, such as using the wrong prepositions or inappropriate tenses. This led to deficiencies in speaking fluently and difficulties in understanding precisely and clearly.

The most common or frequent mistakes made by candidates are grammatical range and accuracy errors. These errors often include incorrect use of prepositions and improper use of verb tenses. Errors such as these can hinder correct and clear comprehension, making it difficult for the listener to understand the message conveyed by the speaker.

These grammatical inaccuracies can have a significant impact on the clarity and effectiveness of communication. If prepositions are used inappropriately or verb forms are out of context, the flow of speech is disrupted, leading to

confusion and misunderstanding. This can affect the coherence of the overall discourse and reduce the speaker's ability to accurately convey their thoughts and ideas.

To improve candidates' speaking fluency, improvements in grammar and word usage are essential. They can ensure that their oral discourse is coherent and easily understood by their audience by focusing on these elements so that they can improve their ability to convey information more effectively. Not only will this improve communication, it will make their speech more interesting and easier to understand.

Conclusion

This study used qualitative content analysis on zoom video recording transcripts to identify errors in the IELTS speaking mock test. The assessment criteria used included fluency and coherence, lexical resources, grammatical range, accuracy, and pronunciation. The analysis process began by collecting data through zoom video recordings which were then transcribed. After that, the researcher identified the types of errors based on the predetermined assessment criteria.

Analysis of the errors made by candidates in the IELTS Speaking mock test revealed challenges in grammar, accuracy, and word usage. Common errors were in grammar range and accuracy such as incorrect use of prepositions, improper verb forms, and inappropriate use of tenses. These errors disrupt speaking fluency and cause speech to be incoherent. As a result, listeners or examiners are not always able to understand the information conveyed clearly.

To improve their speaking skills, candidates need to focus on improving their grammar, expanding their vocabulary, and ensuring that verbs are used correctly in the context of the sentence. Constant practice in correct sentence structure and proper word choice will help them convey their ideas more confidently so that they can face the IELTS speaking mock test better and get more satisfactory results.

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