



An Analysis of Students' Speaking Ability at SMA Pembangunan Padang

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Abstract

This study aimed to describe the students' speaking ability and then investigate the causes of their problems in speaking. The population of this research was the 12th grade of natural science consists of 92 students. The sample was taken through proportional random sampling and the number of the sample was 30 students. The instrument of this research was speaking test in the form of role play and interview. The result of the analysis showed that the students' speaking ability was in the poor category and they faced some problems related to grammar, fluency, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Then, their problems in speaking were caused by teaching materials, teaching techniques, and teaching media. The findings suggest pedagogical implications for promoting the students to speak English such as the teachers joining the training or workshop to improve their teaching materials, teaching method, and teaching media. Then, teach the component of speaking; grammar, fluency, vocabulary, and pronunciation specifically with appropriate techniques, and give more opportunities for the students to express themselves by giving various spoken English activities. Finally, the school should develop a more effective English-speaking environment by making an English club.

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INTRODUCTION

High school in Indonesia learn English by using the 2013 curriculum, which focuses on spoken and written language. In spoken language, they are taught about daily conversation while in written language, they are taught about the functional text. For spoken language, the focus is on the language concept and the speaking skills as stated in basic competence 3 and 4 that they must be able to carry out a conversation.

In learning the spoken text, the goal of teaching is to provide learners with communicative competence and classroom activities that develop learners' ability to express themselves through speech (Richards, 2006). Therefore, the success of

speaking is measured by the terms of the ability to carry out a conversation. To reach this goal, teachers provide the students with various topics starting from self-introduction, congratulation, compliment, talking about plans and intentions, asking and giving advice, agreeing and disagreeing, asking and giving an opinion, and asking for and giving a favor. Specifically, the materials in spoken language are in the form of conversations, but if we look deeply at the 2013 curriculum, the speaking activity also occurred in the form of discussion activities or presentations when the teacher teaches the functional text.

Having speaking ability is not an easy task for Indonesian students who learn English as a foreign language. Speaking is difficult, according to Leong and Ahmadi (2017), since it necessitates the control of numerous factors, including pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and pronunciation. . To have speaking ability students have to know the components of speaking. Therefore, teachers must introduce them to the students and also practices, especially in pronunciation and fluency. However, some research found that the teaching of speaking at Indonesian schools was not successful yet (Gunawan, 2022; Arizah, Restiani, and Yulia, 2021; Lasismi, 2021.)

The speaking problems as mentioned above are also faced by students of SMA Pembangunan Padang. Some researcher's colleagues who did practice teaching at that school told that the students experienced problems in speaking. The problems influenced the learners' motivation and disturbed the teaching process. Based on the discussion with the English teacher at that school, it is crucial to find out the ability and the causes of the speaking problems in order to establish and maintain the learning activity. Concerning this condition, the researcher wants to know deeply about students' speaking ability and investigate the causes of their problems in speaking.

METHODS

Research Design

This study has a descriptive research design. As a research problem, it concentrates on providing answers to the how and what questions rather than the why. This study described students speaking ability speaking problems , and the causes of the problems

Population and Sample

The population of this research was the 12th grade of natural science at SMA Pembangunan Padang with the number is 92 students. The sample was taken through proportional random sampling and the number of the sample was 30 students.

Instrumentation

The instrument of this research was speaking test and interview. The speaking test was in the form of role-play. The aspects that will be examined are pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency. The interview is used to find the causes of problems in speaking. The researcher used an interview after analyzing the result of a speaking test. The key themes of the interview are teaching materials (grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciations), teaching methods, and teaching media. The speaking test and interview was validated by Dr. Kurnia Ningsih, M.A. lectures from the English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang and its transcription was discussed with

Ingrid Brita Mathew, M.App.Ling, a professional judgment who is also a native speaker and a visiting lecturer at the English Department of Universitas Negeri Padang.

Technique of Data Collection

To gain the data of the speaking ability, the researcher asked the students' free time and made an appointment with them to do the speaking test. The researcher asked them to make a pair and choose the topic for their role play. Before doing the role play, they have been given 15 minutes of preparation time to discuss the conversation they were going to perform. Then, the researcher recorded the role play by using the video recorder.

To gain the data of causes of the speaking problems, the researcher did the interview session by interviewing the students and recording it through mobile phone.

Techniques of Data Analysis

The result of the speaking test was transcribed and analyzed by using Brown Oral Proficiency Scoring Rubric. Analyzed is carried out by identifying errors that appear in the transcript then compare them with the scoring rubric to find out at what level students' speaking ability and the assessment is carried out by native speakers. With native speaker assessment, it was decided the level of students' speaking ability according to the scoring rubric which consists of levels 1-5.

Then categorized the students' speaking ability by using Brown Categorization of Speaking Ability. The researcher calculated the total score for each component (grammar, vocabulary, Pronunciation, and fluency) then this total is converted to the Brown categorization of speaking ability

To analyze the data from the interview, first, the researcher transcribed the interviews word-for-word manually, then, read through the transcript, identified the key theme in the data, and used different code for each theme. Last, grouping similar codes into categories to organize data and make it easier to analyze, the summarization was presented by using a table as a data description.

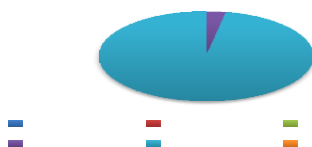
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. Students speaking ability and students' speaking problems

The researcher used the Brown Oral Proficiency scoring rubric and Brown's categorization of speaking to interpret the result of the test. The rubric consists of the speaking components: grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and pronunciation, and the category of speaking: excellent, very good, good, average, poor, and very poor.

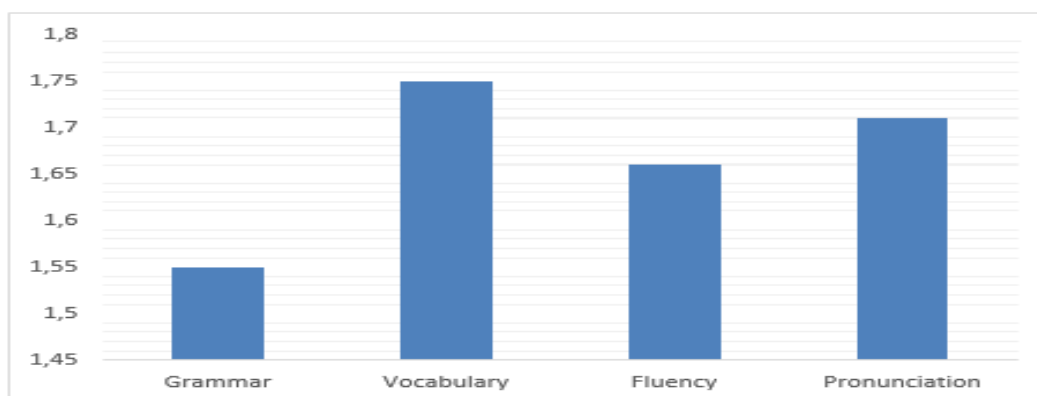
Based on the speaking test, the speaking ability of the 12th grade of natural science students at SMA Pembangunan Padang were poor, in which 29 students (97%) were in the category poor and 1 student (3%) in the category average.

Figure 1. Students' speaking ability



Their result of the speaking test also showed they had problems with grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and pronunciation. The students' speaking scores can be also presented in the following figure:

Figure 2 The students' speaking score



This figure showed that the student's scores on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency were between 1 and 2. In grammar, the mean score was 1.55, vocabulary was 1.75, fluency was 1.66 and pronunciation was 1.71. Brown (2004) described that if the score below 2, they can be categorized into poor and will cause them difficult to speak.

B. The causes of the problems in speaking

The researcher interviewed the respondents to find the causes of the problems inspeaking. The result of the interview is presented below.

Table 4.1 The result of the interview

Key Themes	Cause of speaking problems	Percentage
Teaching materials (Grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciations)	“We don’t learn grammar and vocabulary specifically” “We never get a new vocabulary in the learning process” “We don’t understand grammar becauseit has many rules” “We do not know how to pronounce thewords correctly”	70%

Teaching technique	“We don’t have much time to practice” “We only focus on finishing the materials” “We have less communication practice in class” “It seems that our teacher do not use the appropriate technique”	73%
Teaching media	“Our teachers do not exemplify us how to pronounce the words, whether through herself or other tools”	63%

The result of the interview showed that the students' problem in speaking (insufficient grammar, insufficient vocabulary, fluency errors, and inaccurate pronunciation) were caused by teaching materials, teaching techniques, and teaching media. 70% of the students said that grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciations were a source of problems. 73% said that this was due to a lack of speaking practice in class and an inappropriate teaching style. Then, 73 % of respondents said that the teacher did not provide an example of how to pronounce a word by activating themselves as media or other facilities.

Discussion

The 12th grade of natural science students at SMA Pembangunan ability in speaking English and the problems of speaking they encountered. Most of them were in category poor (97%) and majority of them had problems on grammar (1.55) and fluency (1.66). This result supported Mahripah (2014), who found that Phonology, syntax, vocabulary, and semantics are some linguistic elements of language that have an impact on the speaking skills of EFL learners.

As mentioned in Figure 4.2, majority of the students had problem on grammar (the mean score was 1.55), followed by fluency (the mean score was 1.66), pronunciation (the mean score was 1.71) and vocabulary (the mean score was 1.75) Even though vocabulary is not a major problem in speaking but students still feel they lack of vocabulary and inhibit their spoken activity. The score of students' speaking ability was ≤ 3 . Those results support Brown (2004) and Harris' (1974) description that if the speaker scores ≤ 3 , they can be categorized into average and will cause them difficult to speak. It was similar with. According to Baker and Westrup's (2003) research, many students find it challenging to react when they lack knowledge of appropriate vocabulary or grammar usage. Moreover, this linguistic difficulty was also correlated with Gunning (2002) and Heriansyah (2012), which stated that limited knowledge of vocabulary will be the biggest concern of language learning and students' poor pronunciation was also one kind of speaking problem.

As mentioned in the result of the interview, the causes of speaking problems are related to teaching materials, teaching methods, and teaching media. It was similar with Rababa'h (2005) research which stated that teaching strategies contribute to the speaking problem as the practices are not adequate and do not emphasize on the speaking aspects. Besides, vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar items are taught in isolation. This was also supported by Goktope (2014)

who found that the students complained that their language was limited to mechanic vocabulary and grammatical structures. The research findings stated that the major reasons for this problem are inappropriate teaching methods and teaching materials were offered in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

The result of this research indicated that the speaking ability of the 12th grade of natural science students at SMA Pembangunan Padang were poor (the mean score was 6.6), in which 29 students (97%) were in the category poor and 1 student (3%) in the category average. The research also concluded that students faced problems in English speaking related to pronunciation, fluency, grammar, and vocabulary caused by teaching materials, teaching methods, and teaching media. 70% of the students said that grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciations were a source of problems. 73% said that this was due to a lack of speaking practice in class and an inappropriate teaching style. Then, 73 % of respondents said that the teacher did not provide an example of how to pronounce a word by activating themselves as media or other facilities.

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