



An Analysis of Student Speaking Competence and Student Speaking Activity at MTsN Nurul Islam Islamic Boarding School

Hirodian Nurul Fazira¹, Zul Amri²

¹² English Language Majority. Faculty of Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri Padang

Correspondence Email: aziratha1206@gmail.com

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Abstract

This research was conducted to find out the level of students speaking competence of grade VIII MTsN Nurul Islam Islamic Boarding School, and the activities undertaken by students to hone their speaking competence. This descriptive research used a qualitative method. The participant consisted of 33 students of grade VIII Nurul Islam Islamic Boarding school. The research instrument are documentation and observation. The documentation used in this research is the score of students speaking examination. While the observation used for analyze the activities of the students. the study instrument comprises the documentation findings, were analyzed using SPSS 26 for Windows and Pearson Product Moments. Based on the research analysis, it was found that the level of students speaking competence is the good level with the mean score was 73.39. on the other hand, there are several speaking activities researcher assumed as support for students speaking competence of MTsN Nurul Islam Islamic Boarding School. In the classroom, teachers initiate discussions to foster active participation and critical thinking, engage students in question-and-answer sessions to reinforce learning, and organize group presentations on specific topics to encourage teamwork and public speaking. Additionally, communication games like "Two Truths and a Lie" are used to maintain interest and improve verbal fluency. Daily activities include bi-weekly public speaking sessions where students present memorized speeches, weekly conversation practices where students engage in dialogues based on provided texts, and regular vocabulary exercises where students learn and use new words in sentences, with periodic assessments to ensure retention.

Keywords:

Analysis, Speaking Competence, Speaking activity, Boarding School

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INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English is recognized as a crucial foreign language in the educational system, as mandated by Law No. 20 of 2003. This law allows the use of foreign languages in specific educational settings to enhance students' language skills. Despite this, many Indonesian students struggle with English,

particularly in speaking skills, due to various linguistic, environmental, and psychological challenges.

(Nation, 2013) suggest improving vocabulary through structured, meaningful practice and regular review. This method gradually enhances students' language skills. Additionally, Dr. Peter Cookson highlights the advantages of boarding schools, which provide an immersive educational environment, fostering close-knit communities, personal guidance, character development, and independence.

Nurul Islam Islamic Boarding School exemplifies these characteristics. It offers extensive extracurricular activities, particularly in English language development, following the model of Pondok Pesantren Gontor. The school employs a bilingual program, alternating between English and Arabic weeks, to enhance language proficiency. This immersive approach, combined with a focus on discipline and Islamic values, supports students in overcoming language learning challenges and improving their English skills.

Speaking competence refers to the fundamental understanding and knowledge of how to speak in a particular language. It encompasses the ability to use the language effectively in various communication contexts, including grammar usage, vocabulary, and pragmatics (how language is used in social contexts). (Hymes, 1992)

According to Harris (1947) cited in Azlina et al., (2015), there are five components of speaking comprehension, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. While Harmer, (2001) states that speaking covers two elements that cannot be separated from one another they are accuracy which consists of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency which consists of effectiveness and accent.

Several linguistic theories have categorized the function of speech in human interaction. According to Brown & Yule, (1983), there are three functions of speaking, namely: interaction, performance, and transaction. Each of these speech activities is quite different in form and function and requires a different teaching approach.

Harmer, (2007) identifies several classroom activities designed to encourage student speaking. Acting from a script involves students performing scenes from plays or dialogues they have written, sometimes including filming. Communication games aim to enhance fluency through activities like information gap games, where students solve puzzles in pairs, and guessing games where one student describes an object for others to identify. Discussion activities, such as surveys, debates, and unplanned discussions, promote free expression by providing students with information and time to prepare their thoughts. Prepared talk requires students to prepare and present individual performances like presentations, news reports, or storytelling in front of the class. Simulation and role play involve students acting out real-life scenarios, such as business meetings or interviews, with a balance of background information and creative freedom. Additionally, drama can motivate students to speak, though it demands extensive preparation and high-level execution.

Several studies have analyzed student speaking competencies and influencing factors. Maharani (2020) found that students at SMPN 21 Pekanbaru demonstrated excellent speaking skills with high fluency. Prastika (2022) observed that students at SMPN 16 Bandar Lampung excelled in vocabulary and pronunciation but had lower performance in grammar and fluency. Sari (2021) reported average speaking skills among grade VIII students at Darul Azhar Islamic Boarding School. Cahyati (2019) investigated English classroom interactions at a primary school in Cimahi, Jawa Barat. Putri (2019) found that second-grade students at SMPN 1 Rengat Barat were competent in conversation but struggled with certain speaking aspects according to the 2013 curriculum. Asih et al., (2021) highlighted those introverted learners at State Junior High School 2 Sungai Liat faced challenges with vocabulary and self-confidence, suggesting that group discussions could help them improve.

METHOD

1. Research Design

This research uses a quantitative approach to explain the level of students speaking competence at Nurul Islam Islamic Boarding School and identify the speaking activities that may support the students' speaking competencies at Nurul Islam Islamic Boarding School Muara Bungo. As described by Creswell, (2016) quantitative methods use numerical data to measure and analyze variables, allowing for hypothesis testing, identifying patterns, and making predictions.

2. Setting and Participant

This research was conducted at MTsN Nurul Islam Islamic Boarding School, Located in Muara Bungo, Jambi. With totally 33 participant of grade VIII Nurul Islam Islamic Boarding School.

3. Instrumentation

In this research the instrument used were observation and students speaking score documents. Score of student speaking competence taken from student's oral exam score provided by class advisor teacher. These two instruments are important for collecting precise and systematically data, allowing researcher to analyze the speaking competence of the students, and the activity applied in Nurul Islam Islamic Boarding School.

4. Technique of Data Analysis

To analyze data from score documents, researcher categorized the level of students speaking competence adapted from Harris (1996). To process the data, the researcher used IBM SPSS Statistic 26 (Statistical for Social Science) went through descriptive statistic.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research Finding

Data was collected using documentation of speaking score examination and observation. The documents score of speaking used for identify the level of students speaking competence. While, the observation collected students speaking. The result will be discussed next.

a. Students Speaking Competence

The level of students speaking competence was measured through score of speaking examination. From the score used in this research, the result is stated in the table below:

Table 1. Descriptive Statistic of Students Speaking Competence

	Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Speaking_Competence	33	57	82	73.39
Valid N (listwise)	33			

The table above presented the Minimum, Maximum, and Mean of student scores. As can be seen in the table above, the minimum score for speaking competence is 57, while the maximum score is 82, with mean score 73,39. According to Harris (1996) students speaking competence categorized into good category.

b. Students Speaking Activity

There are several speaking activity researchers assumed as support for students speaking competence of MTsN Nurul Islam Islamic Boarding School. In the classroom, teachers initiate discussions to foster active participation and critical thinking, engage students in question-and-answer sessions to reinforce learning, and organize group presentations on specific topics to encourage teamwork and public speaking. Additionally, communication games like "Two Truths and a Lie" are used to maintain interest and improve verbal fluency. Daily activities include bi-weekly public speaking sessions where students present memorized speeches, weekly conversation practices where students engage in dialogues based on provided texts, and regular vocabulary exercises where students learn and use new words in sentences, with periodic assessments to ensure retention.

Discussion

The study at MTsN Nurul Islam Islamic Boarding School evaluated students' speaking competence based on speaking exam scores from March 2024, assessed by a scoring rubric adapted from Harris, (1996). Four students fell into the poor category, with scores of 57 (1 student), 58 (2 students), and 59 (1 student). In the good category, 22 students were classified as good performers, with scores ranging from 64, 65, 67, 70, and 72 (1 student each),

to 69, 73, 74, 77, and 78 (2 students each), 76 (4 students), and 79 (3 students). Seven students achieved excellent scores, with 80 (2 students), 81 (1 student), and 82 (4 students). The average score was 73, indicating a good overall level of speaking competence. Supporting speaking activities included classroom discussions, question-and-answer sessions, group presentations, and communication games like "Two Truths and a Lie" to improve verbal fluency. Daily activities encompassed bi-weekly public speaking sessions, weekly conversation practices, and regular vocabulary exercises with periodic assessments. These activities are assumed to support and enhance students' speaking competence.

CONCLUSION

The students speaking competence of grade VIII Nurul Islam Islamic Boarding school is categorized as good with the mean score 73. In the learning and teaching process the students are facilitated with several activities that the researcher assumed to be supportive of enhancing student speaking competence. Among these activities are discussions, question and answer sessions, presentations, communication games, public speaking, conversations, and vocabulary exercises.

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