

THE ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS IN INDONESIAN CLASSROOMS

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ABSTRACT

Speaking is one of the most important language skills to be mastered. Speaking is a person's ability to express or express ideas and thoughts within oneself that involve others in conveying this information using words. This research examined the assessment practiced by the teachers in assessing speaking skills. This research method is a qualitative method where the data were analyzed critically and presented descriptively. Data required for this study were collected through interviews and classroom observations. This study found that teachers conducted various assessments to assess students' speaking skills. Assessment becomes highly powerful tool in improving the quality of learning. Consequently, careful considerations should be taken into account to carry out valid and reliable assessment. This study implies that teachers should always consider the appropriate assessment to be carried out in the classroom to measure the students' speaking skills and use the results for learning and teaching improvement.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Language is the most complete and effective form of communication to convey ideas, messages, intentions, feelings, and opinions to others language is to understand thoughts and feelings, as well as express thoughts and feelings. Language skills are the leading benchmark for students in studying language learning. Language skills have four components, namely, 1) listening skills; 2) speaking skills; 3) reading skills; and 4) writing skills. Writing skill is a more complex skill compared to other skills (Mantra et al., 2020).

Language skills are the ability to use language, including listening or listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Language skills are divided into two: Oral and Writing (Nengah Dwi Handayani et al., 2019). Oral includes listening and speaking, while written language skills include reading and writing. So, language skills are essential for everyone to master. In a society, everyone is interconnected with other people by communicating. It cannot be denied that language skills are crucial to communication success (Widiastuti, 2019).

The success of a communication process depends on the process of encoding and decoding. The encoding process is when the message sender actively selects the message to be conveyed, and formulates it in the form of symbols in the form of sound or writing, while the decoding process is when the recipient of the message actively translates the symbols in the form of sound or writing into meaning so that the message can be received as a whole (Widiastuti et al., 2022). The benefit of this language skill is that we can express thoughts, express feelings, report the facts we observe, and understand the thoughts, feelings, ideas and facts that people convey to others (Astawa et al., 2018).

One of the most important language skills is speaking. It is mainly used to communicate with other people in a spoken way. Speaking is a concept that has its own limitations. Many experts have expressed their opinion about speech limits (Maba, 2022). These opinions are reviewed from various angles, so do not be surprised if there are differences between these opinions. However, there is one thing that underlies this opinion, namely, speaking is form of communication and a form of practical language skills. As a means of communication, speaking does not only

convey the speaker's ideas to the listeners but further from the speaker, it is carried out with the various tools (Mantra et al., 2022).

Speaking, in general, can be interpreted as conveying one's intentions to others by using spoken language so that others can understand these intentions. The meaning, in particular, has been put forward by many experts. Speaking is the ability to pronounce articulation sounds or words to express and convey thoughts, ideas and feelings (Mantra & Maba, 2018). Meanwhile, as a form or form, speaking is referred to as a tool for communicating ideas and is developed according to listener's needs. Speaking is expressing the speaker's thoughts, feelings, and wishes, which need to be communicated to others through speech. Meanwhile, speaking is defined as the skill of conveying messages through spoken language. Furthermore, speaking is a form of verbal communication that humans use to express ideas and ideas that have been compiled in the mind (Widiastuti et al., 2020).

The primary purpose of speaking is to inform the speaker's ideas to the listeners. However, the purpose of speaking is broader than providing information to others (Sripradith, 2019). Determining the purpose of speaking means that speaking activities must be placed as a means of conveying something to others under the expected goals of the speaker. Speaking as a form of communication can be used for various purposes. In this case, the purposes of speaking into four objectives, namely social, expressive, ritual and instrumental purposes (Handayani et al., 2021).

With language, humans can show who they are. People who don't communicate tend not to understand who they are and their roles as social beings. Every human being develops his self-concept through interaction with other people in society, which is done through communication. Through speaking, a person can know his quality. As social beings, relationships between people are one of the necessities of life that must be met. By speaking, a person can express his ideas, opinions, thought, feeling, wishes and many others to other people (Amelia, 2019). There was an understanding that among them needed each other. Humans are full of all the necessities of life, starting from physical and spiritual needs. All of these needs must be met to survive. To meet these needs can be done by informing others of these needs.

Many communication experts have expressed their opinion about the limits of speech. The limitation of speaking must be seen for its usefulness in explaining restricted phenomena. Under their needs, speaking can be narrowly defined; for example, speaking is a form of communication using language media (Sirismangkon, 2018). Speaking is a form of human behaviour that extensively uses physical, psychological, semantic, and environmental factors so extensively that it is the essential human tool for social control. Similarly, speaking is a process of thinking and reasoning. Speaking is producing the flow of an articulation sound system to convey wills, needs, feelings, and desires to others. Generally, speaking is a process of expressing ideas in utterances (Mantra et al., 2018). The utterances that appear are embodiments of previous ideas at the level of ideas.

Learning to speak is intended to improve the ability to think and reason. Learning to speak is the interaction between participants students/students with teachers and learning resources in a learning environment that includes teachers and students who exchange information (Elhadi, 2018). Learning speaking skills is a process to help students learn to speak well. People who can be said as a skilled person is a person who is doing or gets the job done quickly and correctly. However, if that person does or completes the work quickly but the results are not appropriate or wrong, then that person cannot be said to be skilled. If the person does the job correctly and according to what is ordered, then that person can be considered competent.

Assessment in a study is an absolute thing to be done. Learning is a process carried out between teachers and students and students who aim to change students from not knowing to know, from not understanding to understanding. Therefore, to determine whether there is a change in students after learning needs to be assessed. The assessment description above shows that implementing assessment in Indonesian classrooms is required to improve teaching and learning quality. Therefore, this research was conducted to investigate the assessments carried out by teachers at the school.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design to investigate the assessment practiced by the teachers in assessing speaking skills. Qualitative research is a method used to collect qualitative data to reveal natural phenomena. Data were collected through interviews and direct classroom observations. Data analysis was carried out descriptively to draw factual information about the assessment practiced by the teachers in assessing speaking skills. Data analysis was done by organizing data into specific arrangements within a framework for data interpretation. The data were presented appropriately and critically required by the data analysis process. The data analysis was done after the complete data collection process was considered representative enough. The results of this study were presented descriptively by providing valid and factual information regarding the variables of this study.

3. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Speaking skill is a language ability to pronounce articulation sounds or utter words to express, state, and convey ideas, thoughts, opinions, ideas, and feelings to others as speaking partners based on self-confidence, honesty, correctness, and responsibility. Aspects of speaking help students and teachers achieve the results desired in speaking skills. The teachers design and implement, and follow up on authentic research in schools. Various techniques and tools must be adapted to the assessment objectives, the time available, the nature of the tasks carried out by students and the material lessons taught.

Based on the interviews conducted with the four teachers who were selected to be participants in this study, some excerpts from the interviews can be presented as follows:

"I always conducted assessment after teaching speaking. I use several types of assessment to check the students' speaking skill" (Teacher A)

"Speaking skill is essential for the students, so I always teach it well and assess it properly using various assessment activities. Assessing speaking skill is very difficult because it is a complex process" (Teacher B)

"I assess speaking skill using many assessment formats to ensure the students know their ability and I can teach them better" (Teacher C)

"I teach speaking seriously because speaking is an essential skill. I carry out formative and summative assessments in various formats. It is not easy to assess speaking skill" (Teacher D)

All teachers above conducted speaking assessments in various formats. Assessing speaking skills is a complex process that requires special consideration for teachers. Teachers need to identify instruments or strategies appropriate that allow them to evaluate students properly directly or through methods of recorded speech. In addition, the assessment process must be linked to the instruction given by the teacher. Those instructions make it easier for teachers to create decisions considering students' linguistic abilities and choose a speaking skills task.

Students' speaking ability can be seen and in accordance with reality if the assessment technique used is appropriate. Assessment is a very important part of the learning process, including learning to speak. Speaking assessment aims to understand and obtain information about students in developing their speaking skills. Two types of assessment are used in teaching speaking, namely process assessment and outcome assessment. Process assessment is carried out during learning activities to assess students' attitudes in participating in learning activities. Results are evaluated based on students' performance when presenting the speaking competence required by the curriculum or individually.

In the process assessment based on the results of the study, an attitude (affective) assessment sheet is used, which consists of the following aspects: (1) discipline; (2) interest; (3) cooperation; (4) liveliness; and (5) responsibility. In evaluating the results, an assessment rubric is used to determine students' competence in speaking, for example, responding to poetry readings. Several aspects are assessed, namely (1) fluency in expressing opinions/responses; (2) vocal clarity; (3) accuracy of intonation; (4) the accuracy of word choice (diction); (5) sentence structure (speech); (6) eye contact with listeners; (7) the accuracy of expressing ideas accompanied by textual data.

The assessment of speaking competence is carried out by performance. The primary performance that needs to be measured is related to the use of language, such as mastery of pronunciation, structure, and vocabulary richness. In addition, it is also the mastery of the issues that are the subject of discussion, how students understand the topics discussed and express ideas in them, and the ability to understand the language of the interlocutor. Assessment of speaking ability must familiarize students with producing language and expressing ideas through the language they are learning. In other words, speaking assessment has to do with speaking practice. The form of assessment of speaking learning should allow students to speak their language skills and express ideas, thoughts, and feelings so that this assessment is functional.

The most common assessment of speaking skills is direct tests, for example, interviews with structured or semi-structured interactions. Such practice testing is an example of a summative assessment to determine and evaluate students' knowledge and skills developed over a certain period. Summative assessment practices need to be carefully considered, where test results affect student scores (Widiastuti et al., 2021). If the test results do not meet the educational standards set by the institution, the consequences can be sanctions for schools, teachers and even students. Summative tests can address specific needs regarding foreign language learning, such as listening, speaking, reading and writing. A more humanistic variation of assessment is an alternative and formative assessment practice. Examples of alternative assessments are journals, blogs, videotapes and audiotapes, self-evaluations, and other assignments encouraging students to show their potential.

Formative assessment can be given in formal or informal practice. There is planning and student preparation in formal practice, and the teacher uses assessment criteria for student development. While in informal practice, there

are no specific instructions for its implementation. Assessment of students' speaking ability using English can be included in an alternative assessment and used by the teacher to give formative test scores (Widiastuti & Saukah, 2017).

Linguistically, a speaker must get used to pronouncing the sounds of language correctly. Improper or defective pronunciation of language sounds cause boredom, be less pleasant or less attractive, or at least be able to distract listeners. Pronunciation of language sounds is considered only good if it deviates from the usual spoken variety. So that it attracts too much attention, interferes with communication, or its use (speaker) is considered strange. Placement of appropriate pressure, tone, joint and duration. Appropriateness of stress, pitch, joints, and duration is the main attraction in speaking; sometimes, it is the determining factor. The accuracy of the issues discussed and the appropriate duration is more interesting. On the other hand, if the delivery is flat, it is almost certain that it causes boredom, and the effectiveness of speaking certainly decreases. The choice of words should be precise, clear, and varied. The target audience easily understands the clear meaning.

The listener can be more aroused and understand if the words used are words that the listener already knows. Listeners are more interested and happier to listen if the speaker speaks clearly in the language they master, in a sense that truly belongs to them, both as an individual and a speaker. In addition, the choice of words is also adjusted to the subject matter. Target accuracy concerns using speaker sentences that use effective sentences to make it easier for listeners to catch the conversation. The composition of the narrative of this sentence is a considerable influence on the effectiveness of delivery. A speaker must be able to compose effective sentences, sentences that hit the target, so as to be able to influence, leave an impression, or cause consequences.

Non-linguistically, in assessing a person's speaking skills include A reasonable attitude, calmness, and not rigidity. A speaker who is restless, lethargic, and stiff certainly gives an unattractive first impression. From an appropriate attitude, the speaker shows his authority and integrity. Of course, this attitude is determined by the situation, place, and mastery of the material. In order for listeners and speakers to really engage in speaking activities, the speaker's views must match. Listeners who are only focused on one direction cause the listener to feel less cared for. In conveying the contents of the conversation, a speaker should have an open attitude in the sense that he can accept the opinions of other parties, is willing to take criticism, and is ready to change his opinion if it turns out to be wrong. The right gestures and expressions can also support the effectiveness of speaking. Things that are important besides getting pressure are usually also assisted with gestures or expressions. This can liven up communication, meaning it is flexible. But excessive gestures interfere with the effectiveness of speaking. The loudness level is adjusted to the situation, place, number of listeners, and acoustics. But it is essential to pay attention not to shout and adjust the volume so that all listeners can hear it clearly, also keeping in mind the possibility of outside interference. A speaker who speaks fluently makes it easier for listeners to capture the contents of his speech.

Often a person hears a speaker speaking intermittently, and certain sounds that disturb the listener's grasp are inserted between the interrupted parts. On the other hand, a speaker who speaks too fast also makes it difficult for the listener to catch the subject of his conversation. Idea after idea must relate to reality. The thought process to arrive at a conclusion must be clear. This means that the relationship between the parts in the sentence and the relationship between the sentences and sentences must be clear and related to the subject matter.

Assessment is an important part of a lesson. Without assessment, ability development or students' learning outcomes are not well known. To find out the learning outcomes, tools are needed, quality assessment instruments or rubric. The quality of tools, instruments, or the assessment rubric positively impacts the quality of the assessment results. Associated with assessment, especially assessment of speaking ability, the quality of tools, instruments, or the scoring rubric determines the quality of the results of the ability assessment speak. Assessment of speaking ability is an assessment activity for knowing someone's speaking ability. Assessment of speaking ability in higher education, conducted to determine the quality of student speaking. Speaking ability assessment activities are carried out in ability courses or speaking skills.

In carrying out the assessment, tools are also needed, quality assessment instruments or rubrics. The assessment can be said to be of high quality if the assessment tool pays attention to valuation principles. The principles of assessment are very important to be used as a basis in the preparation of assessment instruments. It is said so because, in principles, the valuation reflects the condition of the expected valuation. Fulfilment of the principles of assessment in the assessment tool shows that the assessment tool is meant to have a high level of objectivity.

4. CONCLUSION

Speaking as a language skill is bound by linguistic rules. Language consists of a set of rules that are interrelated and support each other. In language, there are rules relating to the process of forming words, units of language, and meaning; there are even rules for using language associated with social elements. Speaking can also be used for survival. As social beings, relationships between people are one of the necessities of life that must be met. By speaking, a person can express his wishes to others. Likewise, other people express their wishes by speaking. There was an understanding that among them needed each other. Apart from being a means of communication, speaking does not only convey the speaker's ideas to listeners, but further from the speaker, it is also carried out with various purposes, according to the needs of a speaker conducting the conversation.

Speaking assessment seeks to comprehend and collect information about pupils as they improve their speaking abilities. In teaching speaking, two types of assessments are used: process assessment and result evaluation. Process evaluation occurs throughout learning activities to examine students' attitudes about engaging in learning activities. The assessment of outcomes is based on students' performance while presenting the speaking competence needed by the curriculum or when presenting independently. An evaluation rubric is used to gauge students' skills in speaking, such as reacting to poetry readings while reviewing the outcomes. Students' speaking ability can be seen and in accordance with reality if the assessment technique used is appropriate.

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