ASSESSING ABILITY ON SPEAKING ENGLISH OF STUDENTS OF SMPN NEONBAT

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Abstract

The current research was carried out in order to answer the following questions: 1) What are the level of the students' ability in speaking English and 2) What are the difficult aspects in speaking English. This research was conducted on the students of grade VIIIA of SMP Negeri Neonbat, in North Central Timor Regency. The subject of the research was the eighth grade students consisted of 20 students. A speaking test, observation and documentation were the instruments for collecting the data. The researcher took three topics in speaking test mentioned as: 1) telling short story, 2) telling daily activity and 3) describing people. In analyzing the data, the researcher implemented qualitative method. The data then be analysed following eight steps as follows: 1)playing the record, 2) replaying the record, 3) transcribing, 4) codifying, 5) categorizing, 6) tabulating, 7) analysing and 8) discussing. Based on the result of the data analysis, it was found out that the students' level of ability in speaking was good and the average score is 79.62. Vocabulary and grammar aspects are still difficult for the students in speaking English since the scores for those two aspects were lower than the aspects of pronunciation and idea.

Keywords: *assessing, speaking, ability.*

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a skill articulation utter sounds or words to express and convey meaning, ideas, thoughts, and feelings of one person to another with spoken language. Speaking is also one of the basic human needs in the environment. Human life will be wonderful if life by communicating and interacting with their environment. Learning English is very important for human in daily life because English has become an international language that used by people all over the world.

Speaking English is one of the ways to find information through oral communication in the world. In this global era, many people used English as a media of communication and it makes people who come from different countries to be easier in making interaction and communication. If two people can communicate through language, then they must have shared knowledge. They need to have a vocabulary in common, attaching fairly much the same meanings to most of the words they use and attaching pronunciations to those words which are enough alike that each recognizes (almost instantly) what the other intends (Kreidler, 1997: 36). That is why, speaking is very important for the people for interaction where people almost speak everywhere and every day.

In North Central Timor Regency, English is also a subject that becomes a teaching program in the classroom. However, as a matter of fact, especially in teaching and learning process most of the students of SMP Negeri Neonbat do not perform English in their language conversation. They would rather to use either Meto or Indonesian language than English as a medium of communication, it's because of the method in teaching English that is used by English teacher in classroom is boring, there is

no innovation in teaching English, which the teacher used traditional method that made English atmosphere in the classroom seems monotone. The students of SMP Negeri Neonbat tend to use their mother tongue in daily communication than English. They do not use English outside of the classroom but they always use their mother tongue in their daily communication.

The researcher found many problems on field research such us pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar during observation in that school. That is why, the researcher tries to give solution to solve the problems which are faced by the students in SMP Negeri Neonbat. The solution that given by the researcher is motivation in learning English. In teaching learning process, the researcher implemented the topic of speaking such as:1) telling short story, 2) telling daily activity and 3) describing people. The researcher gave chance to the student to choose one of the topics to practice in front of class. And then, the researcher scored to the students based on aspects in assessing students' ability on speaking English, there are: vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and idea.

To give support towards the literature review, there are some researchers who had concluded their researches. Three of them presented here are: *Improving Speaking Ability Through Story Telling Technique by Using Picture Series* of students of grade X-9 of MAN 2 *Madiun* in 2014/2015 academic year (Purwatiningsih, 2015), *Developing Assessment for Speaking* of Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University of Jakarta *(*Yenny, Rahmawati & Ertin, 2014), *The Use of Speaking Techniques by Native and Non-Native English Instructors*: A case in Turkey (Mede et al., 2017), and *Improving the Students' Speaking Practice in Describing People by Using Contextualized Card Game of Semarang State University* (Muslichatun, 2013).

The research of Purwatiningsih (2015) was conducted to solve the students' problems in speaking. It is to improve the students' ability in speaking through story-telling technique by using picture series in terms of content and delivery of the story. Furthermore, the study of Yenny, Rahmawati & Ertin (2014) said that recently there have been debates on assessing students' performances on speaking since the cultural and subjective issues embedded in bringing awareness on how teachers construct their speaking assessment. The main focus of this paper is a way to design assessment for speaking suitable for the Indonesian context at a university level.

Mede, Cosgun & Atay (2017) on their researches, explained that the main purpose of English language instruction is to provide assistance to the students to acquire communicative competence. In the development of this ability, it might be not an easy task for teachers since not all English language learners have strong desire to interact in the language they are learning. Teachers implement different method of teaching as a way of developing both communication skills and willingness to speak of the learners. This qualitative study aimed at finding out and compare the speaking techniques that are used by native (NESTs) and non-native (NNESTs) instructors of English Preparatory Programs at universities around Turkey.

The last researcher is Muslichatun (2013) who provided conclusion that the problems faced by the students in describing people were in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary and structure. The problems faced by the students are actually rooted from lack of practice. Learners needed sufficient, enjoyment

and easy practice which could boost their spirit to learn the target language. Therefore, she proposed to use of contextualized card game to improve the students' speaking practice in describing people. The researcher implemented a classroom-action research to scrutinize the use of contextualized game of card to improve the practice of students' speaking practice in describing people.

Some researches aforementioned are not far different from the writer's research which is about assessing students' ability on speaking English of second grade students of SMP Negeri Neonbat. It focused on the speaking ability and how to improve speaking ability on speaking English. The aims of this research were 1) to find out the level of students' ability on speaking English, 2) to know difficult aspects on speaking English and 3) to know the problems encountered by the students of the second grade of SMP Negeri Neonbat in the year of 2019/2020. The researcher gave the students three topics of speaking namely: 1) telling short story, 2) telling daily activity and 3) describing people. The writer gave liberty to the students to choose one of the topic and practice in front of the classroom. The writer gave score to the students based on aspects in assessing students' ability on speaking English, there were: vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and idea.

Since the topic of the research is dealing with speaking, some theories of speaking are also put forward in this writing. Speaking is an effort to convey a purpose to someone. Gert and Hans (2008: 207) states that speech or utterances aimed at having intention to be noticed by speaker and the recipient goes through the utterancess in order to recognize their intentions. According to Bryne (1984) speaking is to communicate orally, it is a mutual process between speaker and recipient where the skills of productive and receptive to understand are the parts of it. And then Burkart (1998: 1) states that many language learners with regard to speaking ability as the measure of knowing a language. They regard speaking as the most important skill they can achieve, and they assess their progress in terms of their ability in spoken communication.

Brown (2001: 268 - 269) introduces the main emphasis in the skill of speaking mentioned as, fluency, accuracy, pronunciation and vocabulary. The focus of accuracy is on the correct use of grammar and vocabularies while fluency is related to the skill to speak fluently and obviously. The general issue faced by the students in speaking are little mastery of vocabulary and troubles in giving feedback or response to the teacher talks about. Another problem said by the students is connected with uncommunicative atmosphere in the classroom. Frequently the students get bored easily anytime their teacher gives them questions. The perspective is how to make the students not only know about the structure of this language (grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary), but something more important is how to make them use it as the means of communication.

Brown (2003: 140) affirmed that speaking is a type of productive skill that could be straightly and analitically examined, those investigations are in ocassionally shaded by the veracity and efficacy of a test-taker skill of listening, which automatically deal with the authenticity and legality of a spoken construction test. Besides, Brown (1994) claims that a speaker's skills and speech habits have impact on the success of any exchange. Speakers need to have ability to anticipate and then construct the deal figures of certain utterance situations that could be stated below:

1) Producing the sounds, stress patterns, rhythmic structures, and intonations of the language;
2) Using grammar structures accurately;
3) Assessing characteristics of the target audience, including shared knowledge or shared points of reference, status and power relations of participants, interest levels, or differences in perspectives;
4) Selecting vocabulary that is understandable and appropriate for the audience, the topic being discussed, and the setting in which the speech act occurs;
5) Applying strategies to enhance comprehensibility, such as emphasizing key words, rephrasing, or checking for listener comprehension;
6) Using gestures or body language.
7) Paying attention to the success of the interaction and adjusting components of speech such as vocabulary, rate of speech, and complexity of grammar structures to maximize listener comprehension and involvement.

METHOD OF RESEARCH

The researcher conducted this study on 14th and 21st on November 2019 in the academic year 2019/2020. The subject of this study were second grade students of SMP Negeri Neonbat. This research was carried out to solve the problem which are faced by the students of SMP Negeri Neonbat especially for the second grade students. The researcher used qualitative method in order to assess the students' ability on spoken English. Speaking test was applied to measure the students' ability on speaking English. The population of this study are three classes and each class consist of 25 students but the researcher only chooses 20 students as the sample of this research.

For obtaining the data, the researcher used oral test. In oral test, the researcher prepared materials that consist of speaking test such as: 1) telling short story, 2) telling daily activity and 3) describing people. The students were given chance to write down and choose one of the topics to practice in front of class. Later, the researcher scored the students' performance based on the aspects in assessing students' speaking ability, they are: vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar and idea.

The researcher then analysed the data through the following procedures:

1.1. Playing the Record,
   Record is one of technique of data analysis. The researcher recorded when the students speak in front of class. The record makes the reearcher easy to analyse the data of the students' performances.
1.2. Replaying the Record
   After playing the record, the researcher replayed the record to analyse the data based on the students' ability on speaking English.
1.3. Transcribing
   After analysing the data, the researcher transcribed it based on the collected data.
1.4. Codificating

The researcher determined how far the students have ability on speaking to assist the researcher to know exactly how many students' capacity on speaking English and also the level of speaking the students categorized as.

1.5. Categorizing

After codifying the ability of students on spoken English, the researcher categorized the students based on the aspects of speaking.

1.6. Analysing

In the data analysis, the researcher corrected the students' speaking when they speak in front of class and then the researcher gave score based on the students' ability in speaking English.

The formula used by the researcher to get the students score is as follows:

$$S = \frac{TS}{TA}$$

Note :
S   : Score
TS   : Total of Scores
TA   : Total of Aspects

The levels of students' ability in four aspects of speaking English are stated below:

No.	Test Score	Level of ability
1	80 - 100	Very good
2	70 - 79	Good
3	60 - 69	Enough
4	0 - 59	Poor

Adapted from Harris, 1974

1.7. Discussing

In discussion part, the researcher asked the students about the difficulties in learning English. After that, the writer gives the solution to solve the problems and then the writer gives them motivation to learning English.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research findings and discussion were presented based on the result conducted in SMP Negeri Neonbat, especially the second grade students. The researcher found some aspects that were still difficult for the studentsto be mastered. Regarding to the results analysis of SMP Negeri Neonbat

especially second grade students, it was found some field problems in the teaching and learning processes in terms of 1) vocabulary, 2) grammar, 3) pronunciation and 4) organization of idea.

There are some tables displayed the score of the students of SMP Negeri Neonbat especially second grade students. Table I shows that the second grade students of SMP Negeri Neonbat have mastered speaking. It is based on the data that their average score is 79.62. The same table also presents the fact that the highest score is 95 and lowest one is 67.5. Table II shows that the average score in vocabulary is 78.75 (or good), grammar is 78.75 (or good), pronunciation is 80 (or very good), and organization of idea is 81 (or very good). It means that aspects of vocabulary (78.75) and grammar (78.75) are the two aspects that are still difficult for the students to be mastered.

In order to make it easy to understand, the results were displayed in the chart to follow..

Chart I
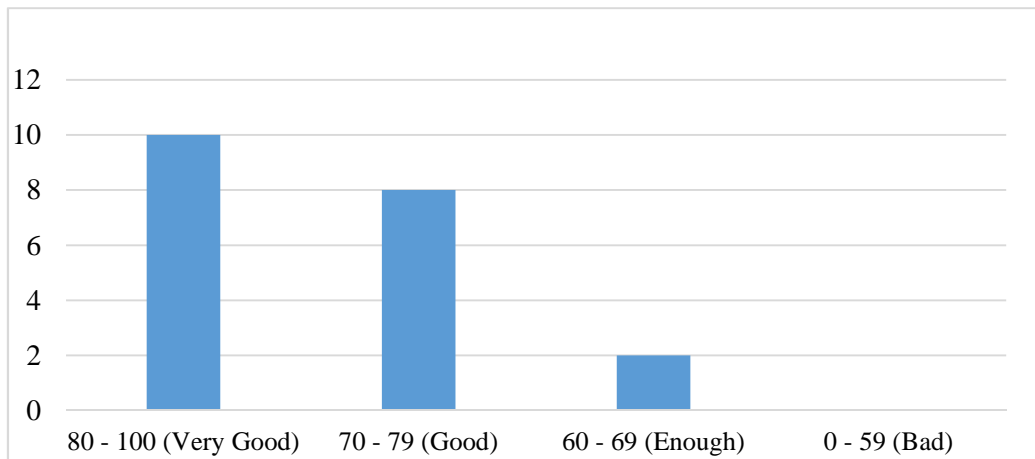Students' Frequency Level of Mastery

Chart I shows that 10 out of 20 students are categorized as very good, 8 students are good, 2 students are enough and none is bad. It indicates that their level of mastery is very good. The data from table III shows the description of students' score on vocabulary. There are eleven students got very good score, eight students got good score, one student got enough score and no one got score in bad level. It can be seen from table IV that there are eleven students have good score, seven students have good score, two students have enough score and no one have score in bad level. Table V shows that fourteen students got very good score, six students got good score and no one got score of enough and bad level. Based on table VI, seventeen students got good score, three students got good score and no one got score in enough and bad level.

After analysing the data, the researcher described the findings of the research in speaking test. It covers two parts: the students' level of ability and the difficult aspect of speaking of the students.

Students Mastery Level of Speaking Ability

The finding data showed that almost all second grade students of SMP Negeri Neonbat got good score or their mastery in speaking ability. It is based on the data taken from 20 students of SMP Negeri Neonbat especially second grade students. They have very good level of mastery based on aspect of speaking, they are: vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and idea. Based on the data analysis, there are ten students got very good score (80-100), eight students got good score (70 - 79) and two students got enough score (60 - 69).

Difficulties on English Speaking Skill

According to the data collection from the second grade students of SMP Negeri Neonbat, the researcher concluded that there were some difficult aspects encountered by the students. It is based on the percentage of each aspect of speaking; vocabulary 78.75%, grammar 78.75%, pronunciation 80% and idea 81%.

In analysing the data, the researcher used three topics namely: 1) telling short story, 2) telling daily activity and 3) describing people. The researcher gives liberty to the students to choose one of the topic and tell it in front of the classroom. The students mostly chose the topics of a) telling daily activity and b) describing people.

In speaking English, the second grade students of SMP Negeri Neonbat still found difficulties in two aspects of speaking namely vocabulary and grammar. Based on the data analysis above, average score in vocabulary is 78.75 (or good), grammar is 78.75 (or good), pronunciation is 80 (or very good), and idea is 81 (or very good). It means that vocabulary (78.75) and grammar (78.75) are considered as difficult aspects for the students.

The following are the result of data analysis of difficult aspect of speaking, there are:

1. Vocabulary
   a. Telling Daily Activities(Topic of Number 2)
      There are three students (10, 15 and 17) got good score (70-79) they still miss some words when they speak in front of class. The mistake taken by the students were as follows:

      Student (10)

      "*I take bath and dinner.*" The correct sentence is *I take a bath and have dinner.*

      Student (15)

      "*I often have snack with my friends while wait the lesson.*"The correct sentence is*I often have snack with my friends while waiting for the next lesson*.

      Student (17)

      "*I usually get up at 05.00 (kosong lima kosong- kosong).*" The correct sentence is *I usually get up at*

05.00 (<u>five o'clock</u>).

b.   Describing People (Topic Number 3)

There are six students (1,3,5,12, 16, and 19) who still have difficulty in using grammar. The mistaken are shown by the following sentences:

Student (12)

"*She is <u>handsome.</u>*" The correct sentence is *she is*

<u>*beautiful.*</u>

Students (1, 3, 12, and16)

"*My <u>friend day</u> I want to describe my friend to all of you.*"The correct sentence is *hello my friends<u>to</u>day I want to describe my friend to all of you.*

Student (5 and 19)

"*He is <u>an</u> student in SMP Negeri Neonbat.*" The correct sentence is *he is <u>a</u> student of SMP Negeri Neonbat*

2.   Grammar

a.   Telling Daily Activity (Topic of Number 2)

There are three students (10, 15 and 17) who got good score (70-79)still have difficulties in using grammar. The mistakes were taken by the students were shown by the sentences below.

Student (10) "*I take a bath and get <u>dress</u>.*" The correct sentence is *I take a bath and get <u>dressed</u>.*

Student (15 and 17*)*

"*<u>I after</u> breakfast, go to school.*" The correct sentence is <u>*after having*</u> *breakfast, <u>I</u> go to school.*

b.   Describing People (Topic of Number 3)

There are five students (1, 4, 5, 16 and 19) who got good score (70-79), and one student (12) who got enough score (60-69). They still have difficulties in using grammar. The mistaken were shown by the sentences:

Students (4,5 and 16)

"*She <u>have</u> oval face.*" The correct sentence is *she <u>has an</u> oval face.*

Students (12 and 19)

"She hair long." The correct sentence is *she has long hair/ Her hair is long.*

Student (12)

"She is Paskalis Bana." The correct sentence is He *is Paskalis Bana.*

Student (1)

"Her my name is Banyu Meilana" The correct
sentence is *her name is Banyu Meilana.*

3. Pronunciation
   a. Telling Daily Activity(Topic of Number 2)

   There are two students (10 and 17) still have difficult when they pronounce the words. They mistake were shown by the words:

   Student (10)

   I make abath from the underline word the student said *"ai meik e bit"* The correct pronunciation is *ai meik eb th.*

   Student (17)

   I have breakfast. From the underline words the student said that *"aihefbrikfast."* The correct pronunciation is *ai h v 'brekf st.*
   After study. From the underline word the student said *"studi."* The correct pronunciation is *'st die*

   b. Describing People(Topic of Number 3)

   There are four students (1, 12, 16 and 19) still have difficulties when they pronounce some words. The mistaken were shown by the words:

   Student (1)

   To all of you. From the underline word the student said "*tu al of yu*". The correct pronunciation is *tu l of yu*

   Her name is. From the underline word the student said "*hirneim is*" the correct pronunciation is *h r neim is.*

   Student (12)

   Oval face. From the underline word the student said "*oval feis.*" The correct pronunciation is *owv l feis*
   Describe. From the underline word the student said "*deskrib*" The correct pronunciation is *di'skraib*

   Student (16)

   I want to. From the underline word, the students said "*ai went tu.*" The correct pronunciation is *ia w nt tu*

   Student (19)

   She is tall. From the underline word she said that *"she is tal."* The correct pronunciation from the underline word is *she ia t l.*

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4. Idea
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  a. Telling Daily Activity (Topic of Number 2)

    "I make a bath and take a dressed." From the sentence, some students (2,7,8,10,15,17,18 and 20) pronounce the words fluently and sometimes they pronounce them not clear, especially for student (17).

  b. Describing People(Topic of Number 3)

    In describing people, there are some students namely: 1,3,4,5,6,9,11,12,13,14,16, and 19 still had mistaken on speaking English, especially students 1, and 12. There were some mistakes that made by the students as stated below:

    She has... From the sentence the students always repeated the sentences and pronounce fluently when they spoke in front of class.

CONCLUSION

The second grade students of SMP Negeri Neonbat have good mastery level on speaking skill. It is based on the data that their average score is 79.62. The finding also presents the fact that the highest score is 95 and lowest one is 67.5. Vocabulary (78.75) and grammar (78.75) are still the difficult aspects of speaking. Another finding shows that the average score in vocabulary is 78.75 (good), grammar is 78.75 (good), pronunciation is 80 (very good), and idea is 81 (very good). The students' level of mastery is very good. The data shows that 10 out of 20 students are categorized as very good, 8 students are good, 2 students are enough and none is bad. Some recomendations also need to be paid attention by the teacher of English in order to deal with the students' problems in speaking English, such as creating more effective ways to teach speaking to the students.

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