

**A STUDY ON THE SPEAKING ABILITY OF THE FIRST YEAR  
STUDENTS OF SMA NEGERI 14 PEKANBARU IN  
DESCRIPTIVE TEXT**

**INDAH SARI DEWI, SYOFIA DELFI, MASYHUR**  
Student of English Language Education Department  
Faculty of Teacher's Training and Education  
Riau University

---

**Abstract**

The purpose of this descriptive research is to know how good is the speaking ability of the first year students of SMA Negeri 14 Pekanbaru in Descriptive Text. The subjects were 41 students from X1 class at SMA Negeri 14 Pekanbaru. The researcher used the speaking test as an instrument in collecting the data. The students' score were analyzed by three raters. The aspects which were evaluated were; pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The first year students' average speaking score of SMAN 14 Pekanbaru according to three rater in terms of Pronunciation is 48.13 (**Poor**). In terms of Grammar, the students' average score is 41.46 (**Poor**). In terms of Vocabulary, the students' average score is 44.06 (**Poor**). In terms of Fluency, the students' average is 48.78 (**Poor**). In terms of Comprehension the mean score is 51.86 (**Poor to average**). The results showed that the most difficult aspect of speaking for students is grammar, where the average score is 41.46 (**Poor**). Finally, the researcher gets the conclusion that the score of students' ability in speaking descriptive text is in the average to poor level.

**Keyword:** Descriptive research, Study on the ability, Speaking

## INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a language skill or means of communication to other orally. In order to have speaking ability, a learner needs direct interaction. To develop the students speaking skill, learners have to be able to practice in many ways. Speaking is very important for us in learning a language because someone purposes in learning a language is to be able to communicate the language.

Brown (1994:40) defines that speaking is oral interaction where participants need to negotiate meaning contained an ideas, feelings and information, and manage in terms of who is, to want, to whom and what about. It means that when speakers says something, he gives meaning by expressing his ideas, feeling, information even by using gesture. Yerdebbber (1979:5) states that speaking is communication in which a process that involves meaning in the mind of another person; is speaker does a good job meaning that other person has the same or analogous to the meaning you intended. Thus, we speak effective communication as the process of sharing meaning.

Wright (1981:177) states that if the students are learning to speak, then students must have the maximum opportunities to speak. The students should be ready to speak when they come to the speaking class. There are twelve genre taught in Senior High School. Descriptive text is a text which says what a person or a thing is like. Descriptive text is also a text which lists the characteristics of something.

Gerot(1995: 208) states that descriptive is a kind of text which is aimed to describe particular person, place, or thing. We can use descriptive text to say what something or somebody is describe a person, other animals, plants, place, process, thoughts, or feelings. The students need to know what descriptive text is the social function(social function is the purpose of the text), they should know the generic structure(the generic structure of descriptive texts are the identification and the description), and language features(Focus on specific participants, Use of attributive and identifying processes, Use of simple present tense, Frequent use of epithets and classifier in nominal groups) of descriptive text.

Description is describe parts, qualities, characteristics and the way to be done. Besides it also help student to understand the content of descriptive text. In telling descriptive text, the students know how to describe a person, place or a thing. Furthermore, the students also comprehend the component of speaking comprehension involving pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that it is important for students to understand descriptive text. This is because no scientific study about how good the student's ability in telling descriptive text, the writer is interested to conduct a research entitled "A Study On The Speaking Ability Of The First Year Students Of SMA N 14 Pekanbaru In Descriptive Texts."

## **METHODOLOGY**

The This is descriptive research which has only one variable. It is intended to know the ability of the second year students at SMA N 14 Pekanbaru. Gay (2002:175), descriptive research involves the collecting data in order to answer the current status of the subject being studied. Gay (2002:122) states that population is the group of interest to research or to which he/she would like result of the study to be generalizable. The target of population of this study is the first year students of SMAN 14 Pekanbaru.

In this study, the writer took one class as a sample by using cluster random sampling. Cluster random sampling is sampling in which groups, not individuals, are randomly selected (Gay, 2000:141). The researcher choose the class that has been selected becomes sample of this research by using lottery.

The technique of collecting the data plays an important role in conducting a research. In this case, the writer collects the data by using a research instrument that is telling descriptive text speech. The writer uses the telling descriptive text speech as an instrument in order to know students' ability in speaking descriptive text.

Before conducting the research, the writer did some steps. The first, the writer gave the students briefly explanation about descriptive text that they learn before including how to tell descriptive text. This is done in order to remind them about it. The second the writer tells the students that they, one by one, should tell their topic descriptive text in front of the class. In this case the students are given choose to have preparation at home.

The technique of the collecting the data was be done as follows: Ask the respondents to choose one of the topics given by the writer. Ask the respondents to prepare the topic individually. Ask the respondents to tell the story for 3 up to 5 minutes. The test served to know the students' ability in speaking. The writer prepared three topics of describes, then the writer asked the students to choose one of them. Finally the students must tell those describe based on the topic given; My Family, My Pet and My House.

For the performance, each student has about 3 to 5 minutes to deliver the speech. When a student tells how describe something, the other students may watch their friends' performance. Then, the students' performance will be recorded in order to get reliable data. After distributing a set of test to first year students of SMAN 14 Pekanbaru chosen as the sample, the writer choose three raters because their speaking were evaluated by three raters.

In speaking involves many components that should be concerned by the writer. Harris (1974:81) says, there are five components in measuring the speaking ability: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

The students' speaking ability can be classified as follows:

**Table 3**

**The Classification of the Level of Speaking Ability**

Score Classification	Category
80 - 100	Good to Excellent
60 - 79	Average to Good
50 - 59	Poor to Average
0 - 49	Poor

(Harris, 1974:134)

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this part, the writer presents the findings of the research in the speaking ability of the second year students of SMA N 14 Pekanbaru in telling descriptive texts. The findings are the analysis results of the data from the three raters who help the writer in giving score to the students' performance in telling descriptive texts.

Table 1

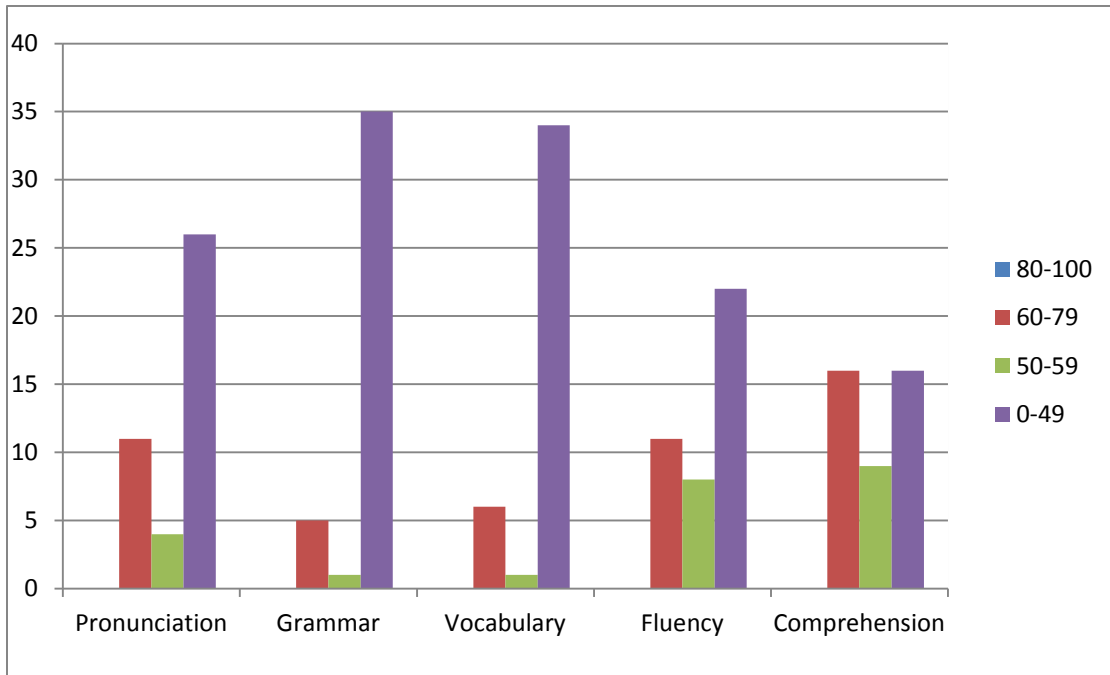
The students' Score for Each Aspect of Speaking

The score	The Aspect of Speaking Evaluated									
	Pronunciation		Grammar		Vocabulary		Fluency		Comprehension	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
80-100	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
60-79	11	26,82%	5	12,19%	6	14,63%	11	26,82%	16	39,02%
50-59	4	9,75%	1	2,43%	1	2,43%	8	19,51%	9	21,95%
0-49	26	63,41%	35	85,36%	34	82,92%	22	53,65%	16	39,02%
Total	41	100%	41	100%	41	100%	41	100%	41	100%

Based on the table above, there are 41 students who took the speaking test. The students' score have been analyzed by three raters. The writer get conclusion, the results showed that the most difficult aspect of speaking for students is Grammar. Then, the students' highest score was in the aspect of Comprehension.

Table 2

The Total Score for Each Aspect of Speaking



The Aspect of Speaking	The Average Score	Classification
Pronunciation	48,13	Poor
Grammar	41,46	Poor
Vocabulary	44,06	Poor
Fluency	48,78	Poor
Comprehension	51,86	Poor to Average

On the table above, Furthermore, from the five aspects of speaking evaluated, the students' average score in terms of pronunciation is 48.13. It shows that their pronunciation is very hard to understand because pronunciation problem. In term of grammar, the students' average score is 41.46. In other word their make frequent errors of grammar which occasionally obscure meaning. In terms vocabulary, the students' average score is 44.06. They frequently used the wrong words, conversation somewhat limited because of inadequate vocabulary, and in terms of fluency, the students' average score is 44.06. In term of fluency, the students' average score is 48.87, and in terms of comprehension, the students' average score is 51.86.

The writer found that the highest mean score obtained by the students in telling descriptive text is on comprehension aspect which is 51.86. It means that they have good ability in comprehension although they still make some error in pronouncing the words, but the raters got the point of the story. However, the students got the lowest average score on grammar aspect that is 41.46. It means the students still have low ability in understanding descriptive texts

From the five aspects of speaking (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension), the students' score in terms of grammar is lowest than other aspect. The mean score of the students who did the test is 46,86. It means that the first year student of SMA N 14 Pekanbaru of Speaking Ability in Descriptive Texts is **Poor** Level. The fact shows that, each individual students has different ability including in speaking English. Some of them cannot speak well, but some others can do it well, or at least good enough in speaking.

## CONCLUSION

The objective of this study is to find out the speaking ability of the first year students of SMA N 14 Pekanbaru in Descriptive Texts. From the result of the data analysis the Chapter IV, some conclusions can be drawn in this chapter. First, the first year students' average speaking score of SMAN 14 Pekanbaru according to three rater in terms of pronunciation is 48.13 (Poor). In terms of grammar, the students' average score is 41.46 (Poor). In terms of vocabulary, the students' average score is 44.06 (Poor). In terms of fluency, the students' average is 48.78 (Poor). In terms of comprehension the mean score is 51.86 (Poor to average).

Second, From the five aspects of speaking (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension), the students' score in terms of pronunciation is lowest than other aspect. The mean score of the students who did the test is 46,86. It means that the first year student of SMA N 14 Pekanbaru of Speaking Ability in Descriptive Texts is **Poor** Level.

## SUGGESTION

Based on the conclusion above, it can be seen that the first year students of SMA N 14 Pekanbaru of Speaking Ability in Descriptive Texts is **Poor** Level. Therefore, the writer would like to give suggestion. There are some suggestion that might be helpful for the teacher and the students in teaching and learning English, especially in teaching and learning about narrative text, they are:

1. It is better for the teacher to give motivation students more in learning English, particularly speaking skill. The teachers can try some speaking activities that make the students enjoy doing it. The students will be more enjoy it the activity is interesting for them.

2. The students should be more active to practice speaking English skill, the students need practice. By practicing, the students will adjust to use that language to communicate with other people in real life situation.
3. The students are usually afraid to making mistakes when they are speaking. Those problems make them difficult to tell something in their mind. Here, the teacher should ensure all the students in the class that they should not afraid in making mistakes as long as it is the process of learning.
4. In school, the students can build a kind of speaking English club. It is so useful to improve students ability in speaking skill. They can do some activities to improve their ability. In this kind of club, the students are expected to be freer to do speaking activity because the environment in the club is not formal like in the general class in school.

Finally, the writer expects that all findings, conclusions and suggestion in this research will be useful for teacher and students of SMA N 11 Pekanbaru, the reader generally and the writer especially.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Arbon, Ann. 1954. *English Pronunciation Exercises in Sound Segments Intonation and Rhythm*. USA: The University of Michigan Press.
- Azhar, Fadly, et al. 2006. *PanduanPenulisan dan Pelaksanaan Ujian Skripsi Pada Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Jurusan Pendidikan Bahasa dan Seni FKIP UNRI*. FKIP UNRI. Unpublished.
- Berwick, John. 1999. *Targeting Text Photocopiable Units Based on English Text Types*. Black Education. 2008. [www.books.google.co.id](http://www.books.google.co.id)
- Brown, H. D. 1994. *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. United States of America: Prentice Hall Regents.
- Chandler, Daniel. 2000. *An Introduction to Genre Theory*. Retrived on 31 May 2008. <http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/documents/intgenre1.html>
- Chaney, A.L. and T.L. Burk. 1998. *Teaching Oral Communication in Grade K-8*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon
- Clark, Thomas et al. 1961. *Language, art and Skills*. New York: The Macmillan Company.
- Derewianka, Beverly. 1990. *Exploring How Text Work*. Australia: Nationl Library of Australia



- Gay, L. R. 2002. *Educational Research Competence for Analysis and Application*. Boston: Merrill Publishing Company.
- Harris, P. David. 1974. *Testing English as a Second Language*. New York: McGraw Hill Publishing.
- Hartono, Rudi. 2005. *Genres of Texts*. Faculty of Language And Art: Universitas Semarang.
- Harmer, Jeremy. 2002. *The Practice of English Language Teaching*. Malaysia: Longman.
- Hornby, AS. 1995. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*. Oxford University Press.
- Mellie, Jhon, Paulene and Edward, Laney. 1978. *Basic Language Message and Meaning III*. Lonon: Harper and Row Publisher.
- Krohn, Robert. 1986. *English Sentence Structure*. USA: The University of Michigan Press.
- Longman, 1978. *Dictionary of Contemporary English*. The up to date Learning Dictionary.
- Nunan, David. 1995. *Language Teaching Methodology*. Cambridge: Phoenix ELT.
- Orlosky, Donald. 1982. *Introduction to Education*. London: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Company.
- Stern, H H. 1992. *Issues and Optons in Language Teaching*. Oxford University Press.
- Sudarwati, Th.M. 2006. *Look A Head an English Course for Senior High School Students X*. Malang: Erlangga.
- Wright. 1981. *Visual Communication in Classroom Application and Methods for a Communication Approach*. England: Ed KeitJhonson and Keit Morrow.
- Yerdebbber, Rudolph F. 1979. *The Challenge of Effective Speaking* Forth Edition. Wadsworth Publishing Company: California.