

# **A STUDY ON THE SPEAKING ABILITY OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF SMPN 4 SIAK HULU KABUPATEN KAMPAR IN TELLING EXPERIENCES**

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## **Abstract**

This research was intended to analyze the speaking ability of the second year students of SMPN 4 Siak Hulu Kabupaten Kampar in telling experiences. The research was conducted from July up to October 2012. In analyzing the research findings, the writer was helped by three raters; that is the English teachers of SMPN 4 Siak Hulu Kabupaten Kampar, to assess the students' performance in telling experiences.

The research used analytic assessment in which the score was considered based on the level of ability. Besides, the students' performance was analyzed based on four aspects: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency. According to the three raters, the speaking ability of the students of SMPN 4 Siak Hulu Kabupaten Kampar is in poor level. In addition, the majority of students have highest scores at vocabulary aspect while the lowest scores were at the grammar aspect.

Based on the findings, it was concluded that the speaking ability of the second year students of SMPN 4 Siak Hulu Kabupaten Kampar is in poor level.

*Keywords: Descriptive Research, Speaking ability, Telling Experience*

## INTRODUCTION

Speaking is the capability in using language to communicate orally. The purpose of speaking is to enable someone to use the language communicatively to share ideas and deliver messages. Speaking is one of important skills that should be learned by students. Nunan (1995:39) states that mastering the arts of speaking is the single most important aspect of learning second of foreign language. In relation to this, Richard (2008:19) states the mastery of speaking skill in English is a priority for many second-language or foreign-language learners. It means that, speaking needs to be mastered by English learners. Speaking, as the basic of human communication, helps the students deliver their ideas, thoughts, suggestions, and comments in order to communicate. Learning speaking well also motivates students to learn English more, as Richard (2008: 19) states that learners often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they feel and they have improved in their spoken language proficiency.

Considering the importance of speaking skill, students should be good in speaking. However, in order to master speaking skill is not an easy way to do, including for EFL students in Indonesia, particularly, in SMPN 4 Siak Hulu Kabupaten Kampar. Speaking skill, at this school, is one of indicators that should be achieved. For that, the students should have the opportunity to practice their English in the classroom. In fact, most of the teachers of this school tend not to perform this task of speaking very well. The portion of speaking skill used in the classroom is still less than other skills. So that, the students lack of getting chances to practice their English effectively. As Tsou in Alice (2010:1) states that the problem with speaking is even more crucial because students lack of opportunities to speak English in everyday life and the motivation to speak English in public.

Then, speaking skill is integrated to other skills. It means that, when teaching speaking the teachers also teaching writing, listening and reading. Unfortunately, the speaking skill is not the priority for them. In the speaking class, the teachers tend to give the students in written form rather than spoken form. When they are teaching, for example 'the expressions', they explain the students many kinds of expressions in front of the class and ask them to take notes in note book. Then, ask them to make a written conversation using that expression (writing skill), and finally, ask just a few of students to have or to share their conversation in front of the class (speaking skill).

Next, most of English teachers, at this school, do not have reflection of their students' speaking skill clearly. They teach speaking in the class, but do not know the capability of their students on speaking skills. Actually, to be aware of students' ability is important for the teachers as a reference to know the students' weakness and progress to improve the quality of teaching in the classroom. Therefore, in order to improve the speaking skills, the student are required to practice a lot; and to help the students improve their speaking ability, the teachers are recommended to be more creative in presenting the materials in the classroom.

Telling experiences is one of the ways in teaching speaking. It means that someone tells events or incidents happened to him/her in the past. This activity is closely related to recount text. Recount text belongs to the non-fiction types of text. It

is a kind of text telling something happened in the past by chronological orders. Hence, the students must be able to explore something happened in the past, through recount text (As *Curriculum KTSP* states that one of genres must be mastered by the eight grade students is recount text). The students learn about the verb past, connectives, language features of recount text, and how to make the paragraphs of recount.

Based on the explanation above, the general objective of this research is as follows: to find out the speaking ability of the second year students of SMPN 4 Siak Hulu Kabupaten Kampar in telling experiences.

Hopefully, the result of this research will give a meaningful contribution to: (1) Teachers: as information of concerning students' speaking ability, specifically on telling experiences; (2) Students: to improve their speaking ability and motivate them to communicate in English; (3) And the writer: who has experience in conducting this research.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This is a descriptive research. The research consists of one variable. It is to find out the speaking ability of the second year students of SMPN 4 Siak Hulu Kampar in telling experiences. According to Gay (2003:315), the descriptive research involves collecting data experiment or to answer question about the opinions of people about some topic or issue.

The population of this research is the second year students of SMPN 4 Siak Hulu Kampar. There are 8 classes for second grade in this school, each class have about 35-37 students. Because the population is large enough, it is important for the writer to have a sample. In this research, the writer used cluster random sampling technique. The reason for choosing this technique is less time and easier to obtain permission to use all the students in certain class than several students in many classes. Every class had an equal chance to be selected as a sample. Here, the writer prepared 8 cards that used to get the sample. Each cards written number from 1-7 on it, and one of them was blank. The chairman of each class took one card randomly. And the result, the class 8.5 got the blank card. It means that, this class was chosen as the sample of this research.

There are many types of speaking test that can be used to measure the students' speaking ability. In this research, the data was collected by using performance assessment, specifically, was oral test in telling experiences. In order to collect the data, the writer used instruments about making a speech of telling experiences. In this case, the students are required to improve their ideas at home, and in the next meeting, they had to tell their friends about their experiences in front of the class one by one as performance test. The time was limited about 3 up to 5 minutes of each student, and their performance was recorded in order to get reliable data.

In analyzing the students' speaking ability, the writer was helped by three raters; that is the English teachers in SMPN 4 Siak Hulu Kampar. The three raters

helped the writer to score the students' performance in terms of four aspects: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and fluency.

In scoring the students' speaking ability, the writer used the following formula to get the total score:

$$SA : P + G + V + F$$

Note:

SA : Students' speaking Ability

P : Pronunciation

G : Grammar

V : Vocabulary

F : Fluency

To know the real score of the students' speaking ability, the writer used the following formula:

$$\text{Score} : \frac{TS \times W}{MS}$$

Note:

TS : Total Score of all aspects

W : Weight (25)

MS : Maximum Score

Moreover, to know the average score of students' speaking ability in general, the data was analyzed by using the following formula:

$$X = \frac{X}{N}$$

Note:

$X$  : The average score of the test

$X$  : The total score

$N$  : Number of students

Then, In order to know the level of ability of the students' speaking ability, it can be classified as follows:

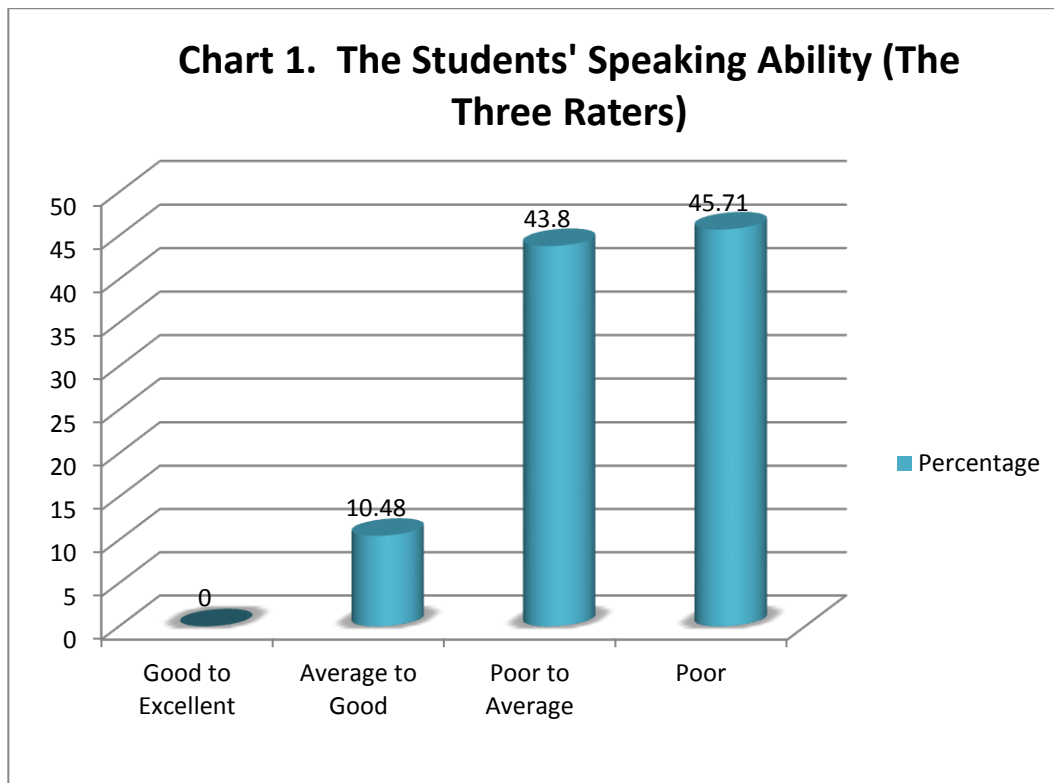
**Table.1 The Classification of Ability Level**

No.	Score	Classification
1	80 – 100	Good to excellent
2	60 – 79	Average to good
3	50 – 59	Poor to average
4	0 – 49	Poor

(Harris (1974:23))

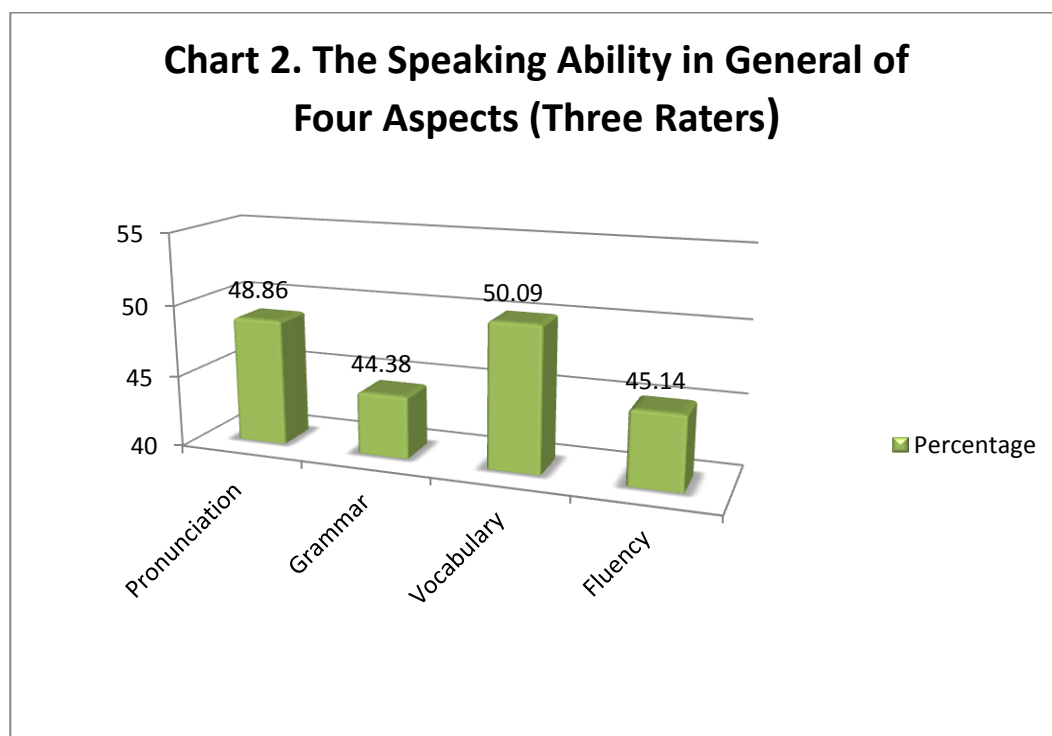
## RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

There were 35 students who took the speaking test. The students' scores has been analyzed by three raters. After calculating the real scores of the students from each rater, the writer computes the students' scores from each rater to know the percentages of the students' speaking ability. The result can be seen as in the following chart:



The chart above shows the students' speaking ability according to the three raters. Based on the data above, it can be analyzed that 0% of students is in good to excellent level, 10.48 % of students are in average to good level, 43.80% of them are in poor to average level, and 45.71% of others are in poor level. Then, it can be concluded that the students' speaking ability of the second year students of SMPN 4 Siak Hulu Kabupaten Kampar according to the three raters is in poor level where the highest percentage shows 45.71 % in poor level.

Besides, the writer classified the students' scores based on each aspect of the speaking. The result can be seen in the following chart:



The chart above shows the students' speaking ability in general of four aspects according to the three raters. It can be analyzed that percentage of pronunciation is 46.86% in poor level, grammar is 44.38% in poor level, vocabulary is 50.09% in poor to average level and fluency is 45.14% in poor level. In conclusion, it can be seen that the majority of the second year students of SMPN 4 Siak Hulu Kabupaten Kampar have the highest scores at vocabulary aspect while the lowest scores is at grammar aspect.

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the result of the research, some conclusions can be drawn as follows:

1. The students' speaking ability of the second year students of SMPN 4 Siak Hulu Kabupaten Kampar in telling experiences is in poor level
2. The students' speaking ability of the second year students of SMPN 4 Siak Hulu Kabupaten Kampar in general terms of four aspects: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and fluency is also in poor level. The majority of students have the highest score at vocabulary aspect while the lowest score was at the grammar aspect.
3. In term of pronunciation, the students still have some problems in pronounce the words even for the words that familiar enough. This problem make their speaking is difficult to understand by the listeners. Moreover, the students also have a problem in pronounce the words which are little bit long, such as: experience, introduce, unforgettable, etc.
4. In terms of grammar, the students still frequently make grammatical errors when they speak, especially for simple past tense using, whereas, in this speaking activity, telling experience, the students have to use simple past in telling their experience.
5. In terms of vocabulary, the students got the highest score in this aspect. Although, some of them still have problems in providing words to build their speaking because of limited vocabulary. Sometimes, the students use inappropriate vocabulary that make the listeners have to more concentration to know what the speakers want to tell. In addition, vocabulary is also become a problem because of lack of preparation by the students themselves.
6. In terms of fluency aspect. This aspect is related to how confidence they are, how good they pronounce the words and how good their preparation. Here, some of students are not confidence enough, do not have good preparation before, and frequently pronounce the words wrongly, that make them hesitant or have to repeat and repair what they want to speak.

Based on the previous conclusions, there are some suggestions that might be helpful for the teachers and the students in the case teaching and learning English:

1. The teachers need to motivate their students in learning English, particularly in speaking skill. The teachers can try to create theatmosphere of teaching learning more interesting for the students. Not just teach the students all in hand-book, or try to write all the material in the whiteboard, but the teachers should create something different that more interesting to do by the students, such as, playing game, play a drama, storytelling, learning by using pictures or songs, etc.

2. Practice is the most important thing to master speaking skill. Therefore, to increase their speaking skill, the students have to more active in practicing their English. By practice their English frequently, the students will be qualified and more confidence in using their English to communicate.
3. The teachers have to beware in giving the corrections to the students. It is important for the teachers to know the character of their students more. Since, not all of the students can receive their mistakes corrected directly. Sometimes, some of them are not correcting well instead drop their confidence to speak.



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