

# **A STUDY ON THE SPEAKING ABILITY OF SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF SMA N 2 SIAK HULU**

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## **Abstract**

Speaking is one of the language skills which are important for second language learners to be developed. Capability to speak English is the priority for many second-language or foreign language learners. Therefore, this research was aimed at knowing the speaking ability of the second year students of SMA N 2 Siak Hulu. The students may tell their experience after preparation before performing in front of the class. This is the important part in developing their memory to make a well-arranged story. Their speaking will be analyzed through five components: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. This research needs three raters in order to avoid subjectivity in evaluating the test.

*Keyword :Descriptive Research, Speaking ability, telling experience*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Speaking is a productive skill with which people produce words or send a message orally. This skill is closely bound up with the listening. Harmer (2001) states that in many situations productive skill is combined with the practice of receptive skills. The communication between two or more people is a blend of listening and speaking where the comprehension of what has been said is necessary for what the participant says next.

Productive skills include speaking and writing, two critical components of the complex process of communication. There are countless reasons for communication between individuals: they have something they wish to express, there is something they wish to learn, and the list goes on and on. Speaking requires a greater degree of fluency and thinking "on the spot", and requires practice and exposure to the language over time. While productive skills are the skills that involve the process of language production either in oral or written forms. Speaking as one of the productive skills should be learned by the students in order to carry out a communication with other people easily.

Speaking plays an important role in social communication. Perhaps, this is because we can deliver our ideas and information to other people with oral communication. According to Martin Bygate (1987) People speak to make interactions with other people, we often need confidence to speak in order to carry out many of our basic interactions. Consequently, improving your English speaking skills will help you communicate more easily and effectively. Furthermore, speaking is good for motivating the students to learn the language in their school. Speaking is designed to enable the students to communicate and interact to other people in order to gain and enrich their knowledge.

Essentially, the goal of language learning is to enable the students to communicate in the language. Therefore, the main purpose of learning is aimed at increasing the students' skills in communicating English well. Definition of communication mentioned is to understand and express information, mind, feelings and develop science, technology, and culture by using the English language (Depdiknas, 2003). English achievement in the future expected by learning English can develop their knowledge to all people in the world.

Harris (1969) stated that speaking ability has five components which are generally recognized in analyzing speaking. They are as follows:

- a. Pronunciation includes the segmental features of vowels, consonants, stress, and intonation patterns.
- b. Grammar correct use of language with respect to word form and word order at the sentence level
- c. Vocabulary is one of words include in language, have many words that must mastery to make the acquisition of an adequate vocabulary as essential for successful second language use.
- d. Fluency is probably best achieved by allowing the air stream of speech to flow then as some of this speech spill over beyond comprehensibility.
- e. Comprehension in brief speaking requires that not only knowing how to produce it well but also understanding when, what, and why to produce the language.

The ability to speak cannot be separated from these five components. A good speaker will deliver the topic to make listener understand it easily. In some cases, students get problems in speaking. It is the fact that to be a good speaker or able to speak becomes a problem for most of students. Teachers always give lessons just with old teaching techniques without give the students' chances to speak or deliver their ideas; students might be shy to make mistakes in speaking. In fact, students are not interested in studying more about English because of lack of motivation in classroom learning, students only receives materials, write, and follow all the teachers command.

According to Joanna Baker and Heather Westrup (2003), there are many reasons why students may find learning and using English difficult such as cultural differences, personal differences, and lack of confidence, no time for speaking when studying for examinations, preparation for speaking, and interest in topic. This can lead to real barriers to communication, and can contribute to poor motivation in learning. Whereas, we know that the purpose of learning English especially in speaking is to enable the students to use English well both accurately and fluently. In a language lesson, students need to spend time on becoming more accurate. But they also need to practice using the language fluently.

## METHODOLOGY

The population of this research is the second year students of SMA N 2 SIAK HULU academic year of 2012-2013. The number of the students is 315. Because the population is large enough, it is necessary to have sample. According to Gay (2004), sampling is the process of selecting number of individuals for a study that represented the larger group from which they were selected. There are several appropriate techniques for selecting a sample which is suitable in certain situations. In this research, the writer use cluster random sampling technique. Cluster random sampling is sampling in which groups, not individuals, are randomly selected. 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. So, the writer takes only one class out of 9 classes as the sample of this research. There are 35 students who took the speaking test. The process of choosing the class is by using lottery.

In this case, the writer uses the research instrument of speech in telling experience (recounting events) to collect the data. Each student will speak about their experience in front of the class one by one as a performance test.

In order to get the data needed for this research, the writer had administered a test. The test was conducted to know the students' ability in speaking. Three raters checked the result by listening to the students' recorded speech and checking the pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension aspects. The raters give scores for each student. Finally, the scores of the raters are totaled and then divided by three.

In scoring the students speaking ability, the writer uses the scoring which found in Harris (1974). All the aspects of speaking is divided by 5. Analyzing the students' speaking ability can be done as follows:

$$SA = \frac{P+G+V+F+C}{5}$$

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

Test Score	Level of Ability
81-100	Excellent
61-80	Good
41-60	Mediocre
21-40	Poor
0-20	Very Poor

Harris (1986)

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There are 35 students who took the speaking test. The students' score 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 who get *excellent*, *good*, *mediocre*, *poor*, and *very poor* level in speaking. The result of it can be seen as in the following table:

**Table 1. The Percentages of the Students' Ability According to the Three Raters**

No	Score Range	Level of Ability	Frequency	Percentage
1	81 - 100	Excellent	0	0.00%
2	61 - 80	Good	9	25.71%
3	41 - 60	Mediocre	17	48.57%
4	21 - 40	Poor	9	25.71%
5	0 - 20	Very Poor	0	0.00%
Total			35	100%

From table 1, the result of the test is *mediocre*. It is calculated by combining the students' scores from each rater and it divided by three. It shows that none of the students is in excellent level, 9 (25.71%) students are in good level, 17 (48.57%) students are in *mediocre* level, then 9 (25.71%) are in *poor* level, at last, there is none of the student who got *very poor* level. By this, the writer concluded that this speaking test is not difficult for the students.

After getting the score of the students from the raters, the writer classified the students' scores based on each component of speaking as shown in the following table:

**Table 2 The Students' Average Scores for Each Aspect of Speaking According to The Three Raters**

The Aspects of Speaking	Rater 1			Rater 2			Rater 3			The Average Scores of Three Raters
	x	N	X	x	N	X	x	N	X	
<b>Pronunciation</b>	79	35	2.26	72	35	2.06	80	35	2.29	44.0
<b>Grammar</b>	89	35	2.54	78	35	2.23	85	35	2.43	48.0
<b>Fluency</b>	79	35	2.26	79	35	2.26	91	35	2.60	47.4
<b>Vocabulary</b>	90	35	2.57	87	35	2.49	80	35	2.29	49.0
<b>Comprehension</b>	102	35	2.91	107	35	3.06	101	35	2.89	59.0
<b>Total</b>										49.5

Table 2 shows that the students' average scores for each aspects of speaking according to the three raters. The average scores of Pronunciation aspect is 44.0. It means that

the most difficult aspect in speaking is pronunciation. Few students can say the words correctly and some of them frequently use wrong words. It can be shown in the following table:

**Table 3. The Percentages of the Students' Pronunciation**

No	Score Range	Level of Ability	Frequency	Percentage
1	81 - 100	Excellent	0	0.00%
2	61 - 80	Good	4	11.43%
3	41 - 60	Mediocre	15	42.86%
4	21 - 40	Poor	12	34.29%
5	0 - 20	Very Poor	4	11.43%
Total			35	100%

Table 3 shows that the students' speaking ability in pronunciation is as follows: none of the students is in *excellent* category, 4 students (11.43%) are in *good* category, 15 students (42.86%) are in *mediocre* category, 12 students (34.29%) are in *poor* category, and none of the students is in *very poor* category. In conclusion, the students' ability in pronunciation falls into *mediocre* level.

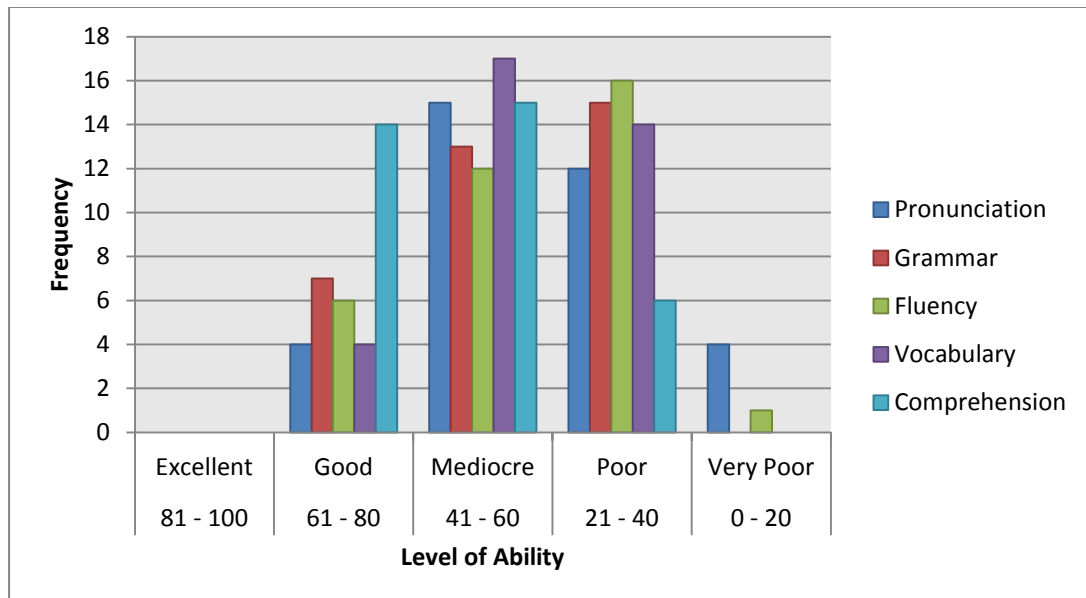
The difficulty of pronunciation made some students get trouble in fluency aspect. The average scores of Fluency aspect is 47.4. They tend to repeat the spelling of the words and make their fluency of speaking disturbed. And the aspect that is quite easy according to the three raters is Grammar. The students' average score for grammar aspect is 48.0. Although not all the students have a good capability in grammar, their speaking is still understandable. And some students sometimes use inappropriate terms and/or must rephrase ideas because of lexical inadequacies. It made their average score for vocabulary aspect is 49.0. Then, the highest average score for each aspects of speaking is comprehension 59.0. It means that can be understandable nearly everything at normal speed although occasional repetition may be necessary. According to three raters, most of the students are able to deliver their own ideas in their unforgettable experience in the past. It can be seen in table 4:

**Table 4. Percentages of the Students' Comprehension**

No	Score Range	Level of Ability	Frequency	Percentage
1	81 - 100	Excellent	0	0.00%
2	61 - 80	Good	14	40.00%
3	41 - 60	Mediocre	15	42.86%
4	21 - 40	Poor	6	17.14%
5	0 - 20	Very Poor	0	0.00%
Total			35	100%

Table 4 shows that the students' speaking ability in comprehension is as follows: none of the students is in *excellent* category, 14 students (40.00%) are in *good* category, 15 students (42.86%) are in *mediocre* category, 6 students (17.14%) are in *poor* category, and none of the students is in *very poor* category. In conclusion, the students' ability in pronunciation falls into *mediocre* level.

Based on the table above, the writer analyzed that there is no significant difference by three raters in scoring students' speaking. All of the raters gave almost the same scores as in each aspect that gave the average score is 49.5. To make it clear, it can be seen in the following graph:



After analyzing the percentages of the students' scores in speaking, the writer calculated the students' average scores according to the raters and the formula that is used to calculate it is as follows:

$$SA = \frac{P + G + V + F + C}{5}$$

$$SA = \frac{44.0 + 48.0 + 47.4 + 49.0 + 59.0}{5}$$

$$SA = 49.5$$

From the calculation above, the students' speaking ability score is 49.5, it means that the students' speaking ability is *mediocre*.

## CONCLUSION

The writer made this research is to know the students' ability in speaking and to find out the speaking aspect of telling experience which is the most difficult and the easiest for the students. Based on the data analysis, the researcher gets the conclusion:

1. The speaking ability of the second year students of SMA N 2 Siak Hulu is mediocre level (49.5).
2. Then, the average score of each aspect of speaking; pronunciation aspect is 44, grammar aspect is 48, fluency aspect is 47.4, vocabulary aspect is 49, and also the comprehension aspect is 59.
3. The aspect of speaking that is the most difficult of the students is pronunciation aspect. Where the students got score 44, which is the lowest score.
4. The highest score of the speaking aspect is comprehension which is 59 score.
5. Based on the percentage of students' speaking ability, It shows that none of the students is in excellent level, 9 (25.71%) students are in good level, 17 (48.57%) students are in *mediocre* level, then 9 (25.71%) are in *poor* level, at last, there is none of the student who got *very poor* level. By this, the writer concluded that this speaking test is not difficult for the students.

## SUGGESTION

Based on the research finding, the speaking ability of the second year students of SMA N 2 Siak Hulu is mediocre. Most of students are not reaching the excellent level yet. In this time, the writer would like to give some suggestions as follows:

1. The students are suggested to study more about how to pronounce the words correctly because the lowest aspect of speaking of SMA N 2 Siak Hulu is pronunciation. Not only to pronunciation but also to other aspects of speaking.
2. The students should be active to speak their ideas in the class.
3. The teacher needs to give more speaking practices for students in order to encourage students' motivation.
4. The next researchers are expected to be able to continue this study by using any methods to improve the students' ability in speaking. As the research finding, pronunciation is the lowest aspect.

Finally, the writer expects for all the participants, the conclusions and suggestion in this research will be useful for the reader, especially teacher and students of the second year students of SMA N 2 Siak Hulu in speaking.

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