Investigating Problems and Difficulties of Speaking That Encounter English Language Speaking Students of Junior High School

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ABSTRACT

This study is aimed at investigating the students' ability, the problems of why they faced problems on English speaking. The triangulation of mixed methods was used in this study to show and measure the speaking difficulties encountered by students of 7th grade Junior High School at MTS N 2 Kudus. The quantitative data gathered from the speaking test result in by involving 31 students of MTSN 2 Kudus and the qualitative data gathered from the questionnaire and interview results from the selected students who meet criteria. The findings showed that the students' ability was categorized difficulties in speaking English (26.009); the students have problems on vocabulary (100%), pronunciation (100%), grammar (83.9%), and fluency (96.7%). The causes of problems faced by students on English speaking that English were not only having limited knowledge on the components of speaking skills including vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and fluency but also they have their own personal reasons, such shyness, anxiety, confusion, lack confidence, and fear of making mistake. This study indicated that the students' ability should be increased by giving motivation and taught them with th esuitable and interested English speaking materials.

1. Introduction

English occupies important prestige place simply because it is lingua franca in the world. English is compulsion learned especially for non-native speaker due to the reason that the English knowledge is expected to enable people to establish intellectual, social commercial, economic and even diplomatic relations with the rest of the world. English is essential to be learned especially for junior high school due to one of compulsory subject. English become an indispensable part of educational curriculum in Indonesia. English learned as foreign language, it can be guarantee the availability of opportunities to higher education, employment, travelling, and even a better life (Crystal, 1997).

Due to English is as compulsory subject at junior high school, researchers tried to investigate problems and difficulties of speaking that encounter English language speaking at MTS N 2 Kudus. Speaking is one integrated skill taught in English classroom. It is productive skill which involves

communicative performance, and other elements such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, intonation, and so forth. Mastery of English speaking is a priority for many second language or foreign language learners (Richard, 2008). It is one English skill must be mastered to achieve communicative competence. Lazaraton (2001) suggest that speaking, as one of oral communication, is based on four dimensions or competences including grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Those competences were a demand in industrial revolution 4.0. As the compulsory subject, in reality most students preferred use *Bahasa Indonesia* and their local language than English as a medium of interaction. It is because they have problems on speaking English.

Speaking is one of language skill meant as an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information. The information is shared verbally and nonverbally in variety of contexts in which it occurs based on the existence of participants with their collective experiences, the physical environments, and the speaking purpose (Chaney and Burke, 1998). Speakers as encoders are able to communicate and express their ideas, thoughts, feelings, and needs in order to make sense of hearers to decode message. In this case, the skills of speaking are needed namely accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility (Heaton, 1989). Further, Heaton pointed out that the accuracy concerns on vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation as the components of how students are able to use the right words in the in the correct sequence of utterance and produce clear pronunciation. And then, the fluency deals with the ability of speakers to speak fluently and accurately to express their ideas.

Emerging ideas through speaking is not an easy task moreover for Junior High School students. It is not about memorizing vocabularies and different set of names or things around us but it is about an educational experience students carry out. The good idea to stimulate speaking is using the process of acquiring new language to gain further insights into their own personality and culture. In other words, motivating students to speak is more effective if the students are actively involved in a process such as playing roles, describing classmates, or games (Klippel, 1985). It is important to investigate the problems the students at MTS N 2 Kudus that encounter English language speaking for students of grade 7th. This study was designed to address students' problems facing speaking class including the problems of students' speaking ability, students' speaking problems, and facing the speaking problems.

Investigating the problems of speaking, furthermore, is conducted as a process for gaining information regarding the learning's necessaries, preferences, and problems which are identified with subjective (students) and objective (researchers) opinions to suit the language learning requirements for learners. Some researchers hold that English Foreign Language (EFL) students' speaking skills might be affected by multitude factors. EFL students may face numerous problems regardless of linguistic knowledge in the way of developing speaking skills, the same as the college students' problems faced in initial speaking course (Andi, 2017). The minimal exposure to the target language becomes their problems (Shumin, 2002). In addition, Aleksandrzak (2011) also believes that the problems source of speaking skills in the context of EFL is the insufficient of speaking varieties and opportunities to compare with a multitude varieties and genres in real-life situation. The difficulties in mastery of English speaking commonly are due to students' mindset of lack confidence and their feeling of inability to speak English. Students must have academic mindset as their beliefs about the ways of learning and intelligence work (National Report, 2019). It will frame their thinking, influence them to interpret events, and ultimately affect their success. They must have their productive academic mindset than non productive academic mindset. Students with productive mindset can change their intelligence and have their confidence to learn challenging material and accomplish difficult tasks. By contrast, students with nonproductive mindset feel lack confidence and confront themselves that they are not good in certain material, such as English.

Learning how to learn (self-directed learning) has been argued to be of utmost importance for language learners for three reasons. The first reason is due to the complexity task and never enough time within a formal scheme of instruction to ensure mastery on the part of students. Thus, preparationin the classroom to take responsibility to learn autonomously outside is a must-needed (Carver & Dickinson, 1982; Dickinson & Carver 1980).

2. Method

This study used triangulation of mixed method involving qualitative and quantitative data collection simultaneously at understanding of research problem (Creswell, 2008). The data were gained from the results of test, questionnaire, and interview. The speaking test used to obtain quantitative data and students' speaking ability. Besides, the questionnaire and interview were also used to obtain qualitative data. The questionnaire was administered and piloted to 31 students in order to get the feedback about the problems of speaking. Then, the speaking presented by Haris that consists of vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and fluency were used to analyze the data of speaking test result (Harris, 1969). While, the results of questionnaire and interview transcript were analyzed by using content analysis in which its procedures used the flow model data analysis of Miles and Huberman (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

The data were collected in the year of 2019/2020 to 31 students of junior high school at MTS N 2 Kudus. They were asked to perform the speaking test based on the free and determined topics given. Then the questionnaire is given in order to explore their problems on English speaking.

3. Findings and discussion

The findings present several issues of students' speaking such as students' speaking ability, students' speaking problem, and facing the speaking problem. The data are presented below:

The Students' Speaking Ability

The test was given to identify students' ability to 31 students of seventh grade of Junior High School at MTS N 2 Kudus. The result is gained and calculated that the mean score of the students' speaking ability was 55.23. Furthermore, the description of the students' speaking score can be viewed to the following table:

Table 1.   The Students' Speaking Score Frequency

Interval	Qualification	The number of the students frequency
80-100	Excellent	0
70-79	Good	1
60-69	Low	8
0-59	Failed	22

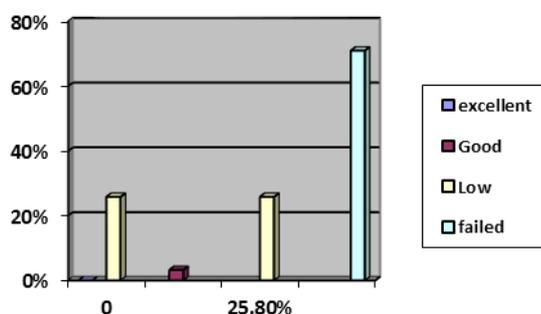Based on the table above, it can be captured through percentage as follows:

Fig. 1. The Percentage of Students' Speaking Score Frequency

Based on the table 1 and the figure 1, the students' ability showed that 0 (0%) were excellent categorized, 1 (3.22%) were good, 8(25.8%) were low categorized and 22(70.97%) were failed categorized.

In addition, the following below is the table of the mean score of the students' ability based on each component of speaking skills:

Table 2.   The students' speaking ability

The elements of speaking	The students' ability (%)
Vocabulary	0%
Grammar	12.90%
Pronunciation	0
Fluency	3.30%

Further clear description, the following below is the diagram of percentage of the students' speaking ability for each component of speaking skill:
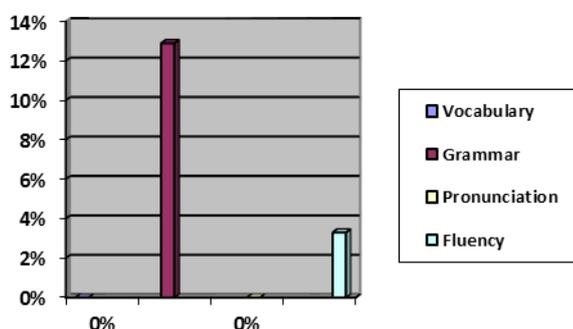

Fig. 2. The Percentage of the Students' Speaking Ability

Based on the table 2 and the figure 2 above, it can be captured that the students' ability for each component of speaking skill, grammar was the highest of all components of students' speaking ability about 12.90%. The second highest component was fluency about 3.30%. It means that these components were failed categorized.

The Students' Problems on Speaking Skills

Their performance was evaluated based on four criteria namely vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and fluency. The following was the table of the students' problems on speaking skills:

Table 3.   The Students' Problems on Speaking Skills

The elements of speaking	The students' ability (%)	The students' problem (%)
Vocabulary	0%	100%
Grammar	12.90%	83.90%
Pronunciation	0	100%
Fluency	3.30%	96.70%

Based on the table 3 above, it can be captured that the biggest problem of speaking skills faced by students were pronunciation and vocabulary was 100%. Then, it was followed by fluency 96.70%, and grammar 83.90%. The finding above was also triangulated with the results of questionnaire and interview among students to obtain relevancy.

The Causes of Problems Faced on Speaking Skills

From the questionnaire and interview were conducted to figure out the causes of problems felt by students of Junior High School at MTSN 2 Kudus. The causes of problems faced by the students

were on English speaking were having limited knowledge on the components of speaking skills including vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and fluency but also they have their own personal reasons, such shyness, anxiety, confusion, lack confidence, and fear of making mistake. This study indicated that that environment (dorm) did not support them to acquire and speak English.

4. Conclusion

The data analysis drawn showed that the mean score of the students' speaking ability was 26.009. It indicated that their ability was categorized failed. This finding based on the problems faced on English speaking in four components including vocabulary and pronunciation with 100%, grammar 83.9%, and fluency 96.7%. Therefore, the students need to increase their speaking skill. In addition, the highest problem faced by students were vocabulary and grammar. Then, it was followed by the second highest problem faced was fluency. And the last was grammar.

The causes of problems faced by students on English speaking that English were not only having limited knowledge on the components of speaking skills including vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and fluency but also they have their own personal reasons, such shyness, anxiety, confusion, lack confidence, and fear of making mistake. This study indicated that the students' ability should be increased by giving motivation and taught them with the suitable and interested English speaking materials.

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