

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEACHER BASED ASSESSMENT
IN TEACHING SPEAKING SKILL
(A Descriptive Study Conducted through Subject: English 2, for MPI Students
in Their Second Semester)

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ABSTRACT

Lecturer's job is not only teaching but also assessing. The way a lecturer assesses the students' achievement can be different one to others. In learning process, to know our students' progress and improvement, we need "assessment". Teacher-Based Assessment (TBA) is one of many kind of assessments in language teaching. TBA is an integral part of language instruction where the teachers, as "agents" (Rea-Dickins, 2004), are the ones responsible for facilitating student learning and obtaining information about their progress and achievement, hence, also earning the name "teacher assessment". Unfortunately, there has not been a lot of studies on TBA implementation in Indonesia contexts. By conducting this study, the writers shared a new knowledge and experience in how TBA was conducted in teaching speaking for MPI'S students. The findings and discussion of this study showed that the MPI students could improve their speaking skill after the writer applied TBA (teacher-based assessment). The writer arranged her speaking class with some formation activities; for the examples; group discussion, presentation, and pair woks.

Key words: teacher-based assessment, teaching, and speaking skill

INTRODUCTION

There are four skills in learning English; speaking and writing are productive skills while listening and reading are receiving skills. From this point, as an English lecturer, we should

find the best assessment to assess all those skills.

Especially for speaking skill, during 3 years in STAI AL MUHAMMAD CEPU, the writer had tried some teaching method and types of assessment to measure the

MPI students' progress and achievement in speaking skill.

For the first and the second year, the writer applied the conventional assessment in teaching speaking skill. The classroom activities was just about delivering material, giving a role model, and ended with students' speaking practice. By doing this method, MPI students still got many difficulties in their speaking practice.

In the third year, the writer tried to change the teaching method. The writer wanted to pay more attention in students' process rather than their final result. As stated; "Speaking skill is regarded as the productive skill where people or the learners acquire to convey meaning, as stated in Bailey, that "the production skill consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning".¹

Regarding the difficulties found in MPI students' speaking practice, and related to the theory of speaking skill as a productive skill, in this study the writer proposed another type of assessment to teach and assess speaking skill. Here, the writer wanted to share her experience in conducting "Teacher-Based Assessment" to

teach and asses MPI students' speaking skill.

Teacher Based Assessment

TBA is an assessment which places teachers as the only agent who conducts assessment from beginning till the end of one learning goal accomplished. TBA is an integral part of language instruction where the teachers, as "agents" (Rea-Dickins, 2004), are the ones responsible for facilitating student learning and obtaining information about their progress and achievement, hence, also earning the name *teacher assessment*. From *planning* what to assess and how, through *implementing* assessment procedures and *monitoring* students' performances to *recording* students' attainment and progress, the teacher is constantly making decisions on how to keep track of students' progress and attainment.²

Speaking Skill

Speaking is one of four main skills required for actual communication in any language, chiefly when presenters are not employing their mother tongue. Speaking is

¹ Bailey, K. M., 2005, Practical English Language Teaching: Speaking. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2

² Rea-Dickins, P. & Gardner, S., 2000, Snares and silver bullets: disentangling the construct of formative assessment. *Language Testing*, 17(2), 215-243.

an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997). Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs, including the participants themselves, their collective experiences, the physical environment, and the purposes for speaking. It is often spontaneous, open-ended, and evolving. However, speech is not always unpredictable. Language functions (or patterns) that tend to recur in certain discourse situations (e.g., declining an invitation or requesting time off from work), can be identified and charted (Burns & Joyce, 1997). For example, when a salesperson asks "May I help you?" the expected discourse sequence includes a statement of need, response to the need, offer of appreciation, acknowledgement of the appreciation, and a leave-taking exchange. Speaking requires that learners not only know how to produce specific points of language such as grammar, pronunciation, or vocabulary (*linguistic competence*), but also that they understand when, why, and in what ways to produce language (*sociolinguistic competence*). Finally, speech has its own skills, structures,

and conventions different from written language.³

By looking the theories above, the writer realized then, the MPI students' speaking skill should have been tested by not only individual practice but also their process before, during, and at the speaking test itself. Moreover, the writer believed that the teaching and learning atmosphere and various speaking activities also defined the students' success in speaking skill. So, it was clear that, this study was done to find out any information in detail, about the implementation of TBA (with various speaking activities in the class room) to improve MPI students' speaking skill.

Research Method

In this study, the writer used descriptive qualitative research. To gain the data, the writer observed the students' speaking skill in some formations of speaking activities and practices in the classroom; and the writer also conducted interview section. To analyze the data, the writer followed the sequence steps as stated by Miles and Huberman theory, in the descriptive qualitative research the data

³ Bruce, G., Darrell L. Fisher., & Jeffrey P. Dorman. *Students' Perceptions Of Assessment Process: Questionnaire Development And Validation*.

analysis are: “data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification.”⁴

1) Data Reduction

Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data that appear in written up field notes or transcriptions.

2) Data Display

Data display is a second component or level in Miles and Huberman model of qualitative data analysis. A display can be an extended piece of text or a diagram, graph, chart, table or matrix that provides a new way of arranging thinking about the more textually embedded data.

3) Conclusion Drawing and Verification

The last step of analysing the data is conclusion drawing/verification. Conclusion drawing involves stepping back to consider what the analysed data mean and to assess their implication for the questions at hand.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

During three weeks, the writer varied the speaking class for MPI students. In the first week, the writer arranged the students into some group discussion by the topic “Boy Scott and Girl Scott should be only an optional extracurricular at high school level”. Each group should proposed at least five arguments whether they agreed or disagreed.

In the second week, the writer changed the speaking activity into group presentation. Each group should present their arguments from the previous meeting in front of the class room. Not only presenting their group’s opinion, the presenting group should also answer all the questions from other groups.

The third meeting, the writer conducted debate contest. In this contest, all students should speak up and deliver whether she/he agreed or disagreed with the motion “STAI students should be officially uniformed during class hours”.

From all the speaking practices during three weeks, the writer observed that MPI students’ speaking skill already improved. Those were: their fluency, grammar, accuracy, confidence, gesture and also eye contact. All MPI students’ speaking aspects which already improved

⁴ Miles, Matthew B. and A. Michael Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, (London, Sage Publications, 1994). 12

as mentioned here; "A speaker may produce all the right sounds but not make any sense, or have great difficulties with phonology and grammar and yet to be able to get the message across". Effectiveness of speaking may also depend on such factors as listener/assessor's accent, background knowledge, personal attitude toward a speaker and individual biases.⁵ Besides, speaking is judged during the face-to-face interaction (except the situations where speaking assessment is done via computer and the voice is recorded, but the assessment itself is done by human), in real time, and between the examiner and a candidate.⁶

To simplify the findings, the writer would focus on **four from six** aspects of speaking as stated by Brown in 2004. Brown (2004) has stated.⁷

Pronunciation

⁵ Kitao, S. K., & Kitao, K., 1996, *Testing Speaking*. Available at: <http://eric.ed.gov/?q=Testing+Speaking+Kitao> (Accessed: 5 December 2014). 2

⁶ Luoma, S., 2004, *Assessing Speaking*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

⁷ Brown, H. Douglas. 2004. *Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices*. San Francisco State University.

5= equivalent to and fully accepted by educated native speaker
 4= errors in pronunciation are quite rare
 3= errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker.
 2= accent is intelligible though often quite faulty.
 1= errors in pronunciation are frequent

Grammar

5=equivalent to that of an educated native speaker.
 4= Errors in grammar are quite rare.
 3= control of grammar is good.
 2= does not have thorough or confident control of the grammar.
 1= errors in grammar are frequent,

Vocabulary

5= speech on a levels is fully accepted by educated native speakers, and pertinent cultural references.
 4= can understand and participate in any conversation within the range of his experience with a high degree of precision of vocabulary.
 3= able to speak the language with sufficient vocabulary.
 2= has speaking vocabulary sufficient to express himself simply with some circumlocutions.
 1= speaking vocabulary inadequate to express anything but the most elementary needs.

Fluency

5= has complete fluency in the language such that his speech is fully accepted by educated native speakers.
 4= able to use the language fluently on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs.
 3= can discuss particular interest of competence with reasonable ease. Rarely has to grope for words.

2= can handle with confidence but not with facility most social situations.

1= (no specific fluency description. Refer to other four language areas for implied level of fluency.)

Comprehension

5= Equivalent to that of an educated native speaker.

4= can understand any conversation within the range of his experience.

3= comprehension is quite complete at a normal rate of speech.

2= can get the gist of most conversation of non-technical subjects.

1= within the scope of his very limited language experience.

Task

5= speaking proficiency equivalent to that of an educated native speaker.

4= would rarely be taken for a native speaker but can respond appropriately even in unfamiliar situations?

3= can participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics.

2= able to satisfy routine social demands and work requirement; needs help in handling any complication or difficulties.

1= can ask and answer questions on topics very familiar to him.

Based on the six aspects of speaking mentioned above, the writer could explain four of them as follows:

a. Pronunciation

In week 1, almost MPI students produced mispronounced words in delivering their argument about today's topic. In some cases, the writer could not catch the point of their speech, so the writer very often asked them

to repeat their words and directly correct their mispronounced words. In week 2 and week 3, they seemed already common with the correct pronunciation of words, so at last speaking practice their speech was smooth and understandable. .

b. Grammar and Vocabulary

In the first week, some students could not deal with the proper grammar and vocabularies in delivering their opinion. It motivated the writer to explicitly explain about grammar and words order used in delivering argument (agree/ disagree theme). This case was always repeated by the writer when improper grammar and words order occurred. By doing so, in final practice (week 3), their grammatical errors can be eliminated, and also their vocabulary building had improved.

c. Fluency

From the first speaking activity (week 1), the MPI students' fluency was bothered by a lot of pauses and fall silent moments. They still focused on their note (written text) only. Moreover, some of them stopped their speech in a sudden because they forgot. To make their fluency improved, the writer tried to encourage them with guessing their lost word or sentence with another words and sentences. By doing so, the students who forgot their sentences were still able to

continue their speech with other words and other sentences. Finally, at last activity (week 3), MPI students could eliminate pauses/ sudden stops/ fall silent moments in delivering their speech, so that their speaking was fluent and faster.

Besides, the speaking skill improvement was also felt by the students themselves. In interview section, most of them told that being happy, enthusiast, not bored, and motivated with various speaking activities done together in the class room. TBA with various speaking activities was called “a nice challenge” by the students. Those activities could eliminate their scared while doing speaking practice. Not only that, the corrections they got during the process directly improve their grammar, vocabulary building, and fluency. At last, they said that being satisfied with their speaking skill recently.

CONCLUSION

Finally, the writer could draw the conclusion that; by implementing TBA (teacher-based assessment), varying the speaking activity, maintaining and focusing on the students’ process, MPI students seemed very happy and enthusiast with the speaking activities in the classroom. Moreover, the MPI students’ speaking skill

improved significantly, including; the pronunciation, the grammar used, the vocabulary building, and also the fluency. So that, in their final speaking practice (debate contest) was smooth, fluent, and understandable. Besides, students’ satisfaction of implementing TBA in their speaking class was also seen from their arguments in interview section. So, once more TBA with various speaking activities which had done in the class room successfully helped the MPI students to improve their speaking skill.

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