

A STUDY ON THE FOURTH SEMESTER STUDENTS' SKILL OF ENGLISH STUDY PROGRAM IN UNIVERSITY OF PASIR PENGARAIAN IN STATING OPINIONS ABOUT CERTAIN TOPICS

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ABSTRAK

Latar belakang permasalahan dari penelitian deskriptif ini adalah masih rendahnya kemampuan berbicara mahasiswa semester IV pada Program studi pendidikan bahasa inggris. Hal ini dapat dilihat dengan beberapa fenomena dan fakta di lapangan, seperti masih kurangnya keberanian dari mereka untuk mempraktekkan bahasa inggris di kehidupan sehari-hari yang mungkin dikarenakan oleh beberapa hal, diantaranya ketakutan mereka terhadap tata bahasa, kurangnya kelancaran dalam pengucapan kata, dan lainnya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menilai atau mengukur kemampuan berbicara mahasiswa tersebut tetapi melalui pendapat atau ide yang akan mereka keluarkan dari topik-topik yang telah disediakan.

Populasi pada penelitian ini adalah seluruh mahasiswa semester IV B Program studi pendidikan bahasa inggris yang berjumlah 45 orang. Setelah melalui random sampling maka dapat diperoleh untuk sample pada penelitian ini adalah sebanyak 23 orang. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan mulai february 2013 sampai May 2013. Teknik pengambilan data yang digunakan adalah dengan menggunakan interview dan kuisisioner yang berisitopik-topik yang dapat mereka pilih dan pendapat yang mereka berikan direkam lalu dianalisis.

Dari hasil penelitian ini ditemukan bahwa tidak semua dari mahasiswa tersebut memiliki kemampuan berbicara yang bagus. Hal ini dikarenakan oleh beberapa hal diantaranya kurangnya bahasa inggris tersebut dipakai di kehidupan sehari-hari. Secara numerik nilai kemampuan berbicara mahasiswa semester IV Prodi pendidikan bahasa inggris yaitu, accent 100%, grammar 69,6%, vocabulary 86,9%, fluency 74% dan comprehension 82,7%. Secara garis besar kemampuan berbicara mahasiswa sem IV Prodi pendidikan bahasa inggris FKIP Universitas Pasir Pengaraian didalam mengemukakan pendapat adalah pada kualifikasi Baik.

KataKunci : Kemampuan Berbicara, Mengemukakan Pendapat

INTRODUCTION

A. The Background

Speaking, as one of the four language skills, should be learned by every student if he or she wants to be succesful in terms of communication. **Hornby (1989:19)** says, "Language is speaking". If we can speak up with the language it means that we master

the language, because the more you speak the more you will understand what the language means. In line with this, **Nunan (1991:510)** says "learning to speak a foreign language will be facilitated when learners are actively engaged in attempting to communicate". In other words speaking is an important skill. This

has to be achieved in learning language, because it has an important role in communication.

The students of English Department in University of Pasir Pengaraian have learnt many English subjects. One of them is speaking. Speaking subject is divided into three levels; speaking I, speaking II, and speaking III. All speaking levels are intended to encourage the students to practice the language that they have already known. Sometimes when they want to state their ideas, it is not easy for them to utter in the correct words of the language. Moreover, if speakers do not know how to use its structure, vocabulary, and pronunciation in their speaking, misunderstanding will happen **Brown and Yole** in *Hornby* (2003:5) supports this viewpoint that "one needs to master rules of speaking, usage of vocabulary and pronunciation". In addition, **Haris (1981:81)** defines speaking as a complex skill requiring the simultaneous use of different abilities. Five components were generally recognized in speaking. They were pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension.

Then, there are some objectives of speaking IV based on the English Study Program syllabus 1997. First, the students are expected to be able to develop their fluency and confidence in speaking by having many opportunities to speak. Second, they enjoy learning English by providing variety activities that is given by the lecturer. Third, the students can express their own views clearly and regularly. However, in classroom, most of the students do not use English, as Syllabus required. They are not self-confident to say what

they want to say something important expected in the subject.

From the background, it can be seen by taking the speaking subjects the fourth semester students of English study program in University of Pasir Pengaraian are able to deliver their feelings, thoughts suggestion or experiences by speaking English. This study focuses on the skill of the fourth semester students of English Study Program in University of Pasir Pengaraian in stating opinions about certain topics.

As explained above, speaking is a complex skill. In oral communication, in terms of stating opinion, most of people face some problems. They cannot speak clearly because their skill in using some accurate components, such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and the like. Furthermore, some of students of English Study Program in University of Pasir Pengaraian still get difficulties to apply this language in classroom. They can be reluctant to speak English in class for one or some of these reasons:

1. Some students consider speaking English is difficult because they need to memorize some grammatical formulas.
2. They feel silly speaking a language in which they know they are making mistake
3. They are difficult to state their ideas because of lacking practice or vocabulary
4. They can not express the ideas, thought or feelings that the lecturer wants them to express

Dealing with the problem stated in the description above, the writer conducted this research in order to know how good is the skill of the fourth semester students in University

of PasirPengaraianin stating opinion about certain topics.

B. Setting of the Problem

The Fourth semester students of English Department always face some problems in speaking. Most of them agree that it is hard to state their opinions directly than in writing. This study is limited to the skill of the fourth semester students of English Study Program in University of Pasir Pengaraian in stating opinions. Furthermore, the writer try to find the result of students opinions in tern of accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. In short, the writer is interested in writing a paper entitled "A Study On the Skill of the fourth semester Students of English Study Program in University of Pasir Pengaraian in Stating Opinions about Certain Topics".

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Review of Related Theories

English is one of the foreign languages in Indonesia. The single most important aspect of learning a language is mastering the art of speaking and success as measured in terms of the skill to carry out a conversation in the language.

According to **Riversin** Erwadi (2004:7), what the students need in a target language is the skill to use the language in acts of communication, because speaking is a very complex and different skill to learn especially by the foreign language students. In other words, learning to speak a foreign language will be facilitated when students are active to communicate, because there is a proverb which says that we learn to read by reading and we learn to speak by speaking. Speaking is a language skill or means of communication in

which one can express his/her idea, feeling and information to others orally. Speaking skill needs direct interactions, in which someone speaks to someone directly. Furthermore, speaking shows capskill to use a language. **Hornby (1989:27)** supports this viewpoint by stating that to speak is to reproduce words or to use words to utter the words by using conversation.

According to **Chastain** in Yossi (2004:6), speaking is a productive skill since it produces ideas, messages, and suggestions and we need to practice it. To increase our skill in communicating in English, it is not enough in the classroom but practice outside of the classroom it will be influenced our speaking skill.

When people speak, they do more than just exchanging information. They use language to make social interaction possible. This involves the skill to carry out the different kinds of conversational tasks and speech function, such as to greet and acknowledge people, to open and close conversation comfortably, to introduce and develop topics naturally. According to **Richards (1985:12)**, when we speak to people we do not only say things, we do such things as describe events, feelings, things, ideas, plans, and accomplishment; we make request, offer suggestions and recommendation; we respond and react to suggestions, opinions, requests, orders and so on. It means that when we communicate we not only speak but we need the comprehension of what we are talking about, therefore speaking is a language skill or means communication in which we can express our ideas, feelings, and information to other people orally.

Speaking skill needs a direct interaction, in which someone speaks to someone else directly. Furthermore, **Wilkin** in Erwadi (2004:7) suggests that in speaking, the skill to compose a sentence is needed but it is not the only one needed because oral communication takes place when someone makes use of sentences to perform a variety of different acts of essential.

It can be concluded that speaking is a language skill or a means of communication in which one can express his ideas or information in a good logical order and master the convention mechanics of speaking (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension). In other words, the purposes of speaking or communication in English, besides being able to describe things, peoples, places, and sequences of even orally, we should be able to express our ideas, opinions, feelings simply and to encourage ourselves to communicate to other people. Based on Urin Hormailis (2003:7), the aim of speaking is to make people able to communicate to others.

B. Stating Opinions

Based on **Maas** on his journal "Make a one-minute speech-youth" 18th January 2006 on the website http://www.kfmaas.de/opin_gap.html, there are some steps when we want to state our opinion.

Introduction

- a. Examine the statement and define what it means.
 1. It is generally believed that...
 2. Most people think that...
 3. At first sight this statement seems to be true...

- b. Say how you are going to deal with the problem
 1. The first thing that comes to my mind is...
 2. In the first place i would like to say that...
 3. First of all let's get the fact that...
 4. Let's begin the fact that...
 5. Let me make quite clear from the start that...
 6. The first question we have to answer is if...
 7. First we must define what we mean by...

Development

- a. Decide what your point of view is going to be
 1. I'm of the opinion that...
- b. First look at the opposite point of view
 1. It might be argued that...
 2. It is often generally accepted that...
 3. There is some evidence to suggest that...
 4. On the other hand...
- c. Develop your own argument in a logical way
 1. Nevertheless...
 2. However...
 3. It is only partly true that...
 4. Although...
 5. Take for example...
 6. There seems to be a contradiction here...
- d. Each paragraph you write or say must add something new to your argument.
 1. This brings me to next point...
 2. A further point to consider is...
 3. We have to admit that...
 4. It is important to realize that...
 5. In addition to this point I want to stress that...

6. Moreover...
7. There can be no doubt that...
8. Everybody knows that this is so...

Conclusion

- a. State the conclusion, which follows from your arguments.
 1. It is for this reason that I believe that...
 2. The simple truth that...
 3. It is only fair that...
- b. Suggest a solution but point out that it is only one of a number of alternatives.
 1. My own view of the matter is...
 2. So all in all I believe that...

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

This research consists of one variable and designed using descriptive research. It intends to know the skill of the fourth semester students of English Study Program in University of Pasir Pengaraian in stating opinions about certain topics. According to **Gay (1987:186)** a descriptive research involves selecting the data in order to answer concerning that current status of the subject of the study.

B. The Specific Objective of the Research

The specific objective of this research is to know the result of the skill of the fourth semester students of English Study Program in University of Pasir Pengaraian in stating opinions about certain topics in terms of accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

C. The Place and Time of the Research

The place of the study is English study Program in University of Pasir Pengaraian Rokan Hulu. It took about three months, from February 2013 to May 2013.

D. The Population and Sample of the Research

The population of the study is fourth semester students of English Study Program in University of PasirPengaraian in academic year 2012/2013. The number of population is 45 students. **Surakhmad (1998)**says that, if the population is homogenous enough, for the population that is less than 100 persons, the sample can be taken between 20%-40% or 40%-60%. The sample of the study was taken about 50% of the population. But if the population is more than 100 persons, the sample is taken 25%. The fourth semester student is about 45. So, the sample students are about 23 students ($50\% \times 45 = 23$). **Gay (1987:101)** says the sampling is the process of selecting individuals for a study. The technique used to determine the sample is random sampling, which every member of the population has an equal and independent chance of being selected for he sample. The ways of the selecting sample of the research are as follows:

1. The writer put some pieces of paper into a box; the number of the pieces was the same as the number of the population.
2. 33 pieces of the paper would be written the word 'sample'.
3. Each students was asked to take one piece only.
4. Those who took the pieces with word sample would be the sample of this research.

E. Data Collection Technique

In collecting the data for the research, the writer used the speaking test by recording the data, to measure the students' skill in stating opinions on certain topics. The test consists of 4 topics that should be chosen by the students. In collecting the data, the writer conducted some interaction sessions to the students. When the students choose a topic, the writer tried to encourage them to state their opinions by asking questions. The test showed their proficiency in stating their opinions, in terms of accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. The topics for the instrument deal with the materials that are provide by syllabus of English Study Progrm, i.e. childhood, environment, culture, women and men, gender, education, tourism, work, drug, ect. In this study, the writer chooses some interesting topics, which are familiar with the students and often happens in students' environment. The topics are:

1. Living together before marriage
2. Early marriage
3. Money is the most important things in life
4. Make a "group"

RESEARCH FINDINGS

A. The Description of the Research

This researcher is a descriptive study that is conducted to find out the stating opinion skill of the fourth semester students of English Study Program of University of Pasir Pengaraian. The score of the students' stating opinion skill was gained through short interview.

B. Data Presentation

There are five aspects that must be scored in this research; they are

accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

a. The Result of Students' Stating Opinions

In order to make clearly, the result of the students' stating opinion by three raters can be seen in the following table:

Table 1 The Students' Stating Opinions Skill

Sample	Score	Category
1	64,7	Good
2	64	Good
3	50	Average
4	62,7	Good
5	65,7	Good
6	63,7	Good
7	64,3	Good
8	59	Average
9	60,3	Average
10	63	Good
11	67	Good
12	70,7	Good
13	63	Good
14	61	Good
15	63	Good
16	59	Average
17	60,7	Average
18	63,7	Good
19	72	Good
20	70	Good
21	65	Good
22	63,7	Good
23	70,3	Good

The table above indicates that most of the students have *good* score. It means that the fourth semester students of English Study Program of University of Pasirpengaraian had good skill in stating opinion. 18 students (78, 26%) had good score and 5 students (21,74%) had *average* scores. In conclusion, the table above shows that the students' skill in stating opinion was **good**.

The calculation of the students' skill in stating opinion can be seen in appendixes 1,2,3,4,5. The formula, which is used to calculate this skill, is based on weighting table (Adam and Frith 1979:35-8). (Adam and Frith in Arthur Hughes 1979:35-8)

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

A. Conclusions

After the writer did all of the process for the research, the conclusions are offered as follows:

1. The main purpose of learning and teaching English is actually to provide the students with language skills that enable them to communicate with others in the target language. However, not all the fourth semester students of English Study Program of University of Pasir Pengaraian could speak this language well. There are some factors that influence them to be able to interact to others; they need to know much about the use of grammar, choice of words, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension by practicing in the target language.
2. The students' skill in stating opinions in terms of accent was *average* (100%), the students' skill in stating opinions in terms of grammar was *good* (69,6%), the students' skill in stating opinions in terms of vocabulary was *good* (86,9%), the students' skill in stating opinions in terms of fluency was *good* (74%), and the students' skill in stating opinion in terms of comprehension was *good* (82,7%). So, the writer concluded that stating opinions

skill of the fourth semester students of English Study Program of University of Pasir Pengaraian was **good**.

B. Suggestions

The suggestions are offered as follows:

1. Learning the language means that it is not only building the theoretical knowledge, but also needs practice. Since the students majoring formed in English Study Program, they need practice the language, as practice make perfect.
2. As a teacher of English, in teaching speaking, the teachers or lecturers need to be good models for their students. They should encourage them to improve their speaking skill. Moreover, they should motivate them to improve their skill to use words or vocabulary words and speak without undue hesitation, so that the students will be able to state their opinions based on their feelings directly or become fluent speakers in many context of communication.
3. This research is expected to contribute some ideas in English Study Program that focuses on English to prepare the students who learn English as a foreign language by increasing their English in their environment. Therefore, we learn English and we need to practice so that we will know how to express, utter or to state what we are thingking in this language confidently.

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