High School Students’ Problems in Speaking

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Abstract

The aims of this research were to describing the students’ problem in speaking and finding out the factors that influence students’ eleventh grade in speaking. This researcher used qualitative method. The population of this research was the eleventh grade of SMAN 1 Palopo in academic year 2018/2019. The sample of this research consist of students MIA 1, MIA 2, MIA 3. The researcher took five samples from each class. The researcher used the students score from spoken test to categorize as samples of this research. The instruments of this research were questionnaire, oral speaking test and interview. The results showed that the students problem in speaking such as accuracy, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and fluency. Meanwhile from the result of interview there were several factors that influenced students’ speaking performance namely performance condition, affective factors, listening ability and topical knowledge.

Keywords: Speaking performance; Students Problem

1. Background

Speaking is the most important aspect to be mastered by the students because nowadays people measure someone ability in English based on his or her capability in speaking English. Speaking is the activity of delivering utterances or sentences in the form of oral to convey idea, opinion or information. By speaking, we can communicate with others and maintain social relationship.

Saputra (2018:113) argues that speaking is one way to communicate with ideas through a message orally. Furthermore, in speaking there many aspects to be considered like pronunciation, grammar, fluency, accuracy, and comprehension. It is because speaking is an interactive activity which involves the area of knowledge; pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and fluency. All of the aspects of speaking should be mastered by students in learning of speaking.

According Farianto & Harmaini (2017) there are several reasons of having difficulties to speak. First, the students often do not have self-confidence in speaking because they often feel afraid to making mistake. Second, the students do not motivation to perform their speaking skill in front of class. Third, the teaching technique and teaching materials are not interesting for the students. Beside that most students are not able to express their ideas or their opinions in oral communication because they often still use Indonesian and mother tongue in learning process in English class. The students do not speak English well because they lack of practice.

From preliminary research, the researcher found that some problems were faced by students in learning speaking. Firstly, most of students did not have courage to speak up. Besides that, the problems that are often experienced by students are students feel insecure.
in speaking in class if they do not know the topic being studied. In addition, students felt anxious when they had speaking test, they were afraid of speaking English directly. Secondly, they were afraid of speaking in the class because they thought people would evaluate them negatively when they speaking English in the class. Thirdly, they are still less enthusiastic and less active in speaking activities, they also revealed that they rarely practice using English in the classroom and in daily conversation because English is not their mother tongue. In addition, the students' willingness to learn and use English still low because it still depends on their mood and inner feeling toward the subject itself. So that it also affects their learning achievement that cannot be increased especially in speaking skill. Most of them learn and use English because they must, not because they want to.

Related to the explanation above, the researcher want to analyze more what are the students' problems in speaking at the eleventh grade. Then, the formulations that can be used in this research are: 1) what are the eleventh grade students' problem in speaking?, 2) what are the factors that influence students eleventh grade in speaking?

2. Methods

In this research, the researcher used qualitative descriptive as the research design because the data was described based on a real situation or phenomenon which happened in the activity. The researcher took place in SMA Negeri 1 Palopo especially at the eleventh grade students. To determine the sample, the researcher used purposive sampling because descriptive qualitative is about choosing the subject which is judged to be typical or representative of the population. The sample of this research consist of students MIA 1, MIA 2, MIA 3. The researcher took five samples from each class. The researcher used the students score from spoken test to categorize as samples of this research.

To collect the data, the researcher employed two kinds of instruments, such as: speaking test and interview. In this case, students came forward the class to introduce their self and told about their favorite place, idol and their unforgettable experience. The result was gathered as the data of this study. This interview also used in collecting the data, the researcher did face to face interview with the samples that chosen by giving structured interview and generally closed ended question to find out the sample opinion to got the data about factors that influence students' in speaking.

The data were analyzed into three steps, those are: data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing and verification. In the data reduction, the researcher reduced the data by omitting irrelevant data and choosing the relevant data. The researcher also selected and classified the data. Data display was explained in the form of a brief description, charts, relationships between categories et cetera. By displaying data, it would make easier to draw conclusions. The last steps were conclusion drawing and verification. The data that had been compiled was used to draw conclusions. Then the conclusions were verified with existing data to produce accurate conclusions.

3. Results and Discussion

Accuracy

Accuracy includes grammar and pronunciation. Heaton (1991) (in Silvia & Bambang Setiyadi, 2018) states grammar is needed for students to arrange a correct sentence in conversation. The researcher found that most of students made errors in terms of verb, to be, preposition of place and using of pronoun. In the verb term, the errors such as students still used V1 when talking about unforgettable experience whereas they have to use V2. For example: I have an impressive experience when I join the singing competition in Makassar. She still used V1 that is: join, whereas it should be used V2: joined. In the terms of to be students made errors such as used to be: is, which should: are. For example: My hobby is
swimming and reading. It should: My hobby are singing and reading because she mentioned her hobby more than one.

In term of preposition of place, students made error such as used inappropriate preposition. For example to explain address, generally of students mentioned the street by used: in. Whereas it more specific than city. Therefore it should be used: on for example: I live in Tandi Pau street. It should: I live on Tandi Pau streets. The other error was used inappropriate pronoun. There were students who used subject: she, for explains a man. For example: My favorite idol is Lionel Messi, she as player football. It should be: My favorite idol is Lionel Messi, he as football player.

Pronunciation

For the pronunciation, generally students often made errors. They pronounce some words inappropriate. These errors such as words: experience, because and vacation. Some students pronounce experience by saying eksprens where as it should /ɪk'spɜːrɪəns/ (oxford dictionary). For the word: because, there was student said bekaus whereas it should /bi'kɔz/ (oxford dictionary) and for the word: vacation, there were students said fokesien whereas it should /ˈveɪkənʃən/ (oxford dictionary). There was also the error in pronouncing word because it was adopted from English to Bahasa therefore students pronounce it by using Bahasa. For example the word basket it should /ˈbɑːskɪt/, “admire” there were students said “admir” whereas it should be “/ədˈmɪr/” (oxford dictionary). Then, some students pronounce “because” by saying ‘bikaus” whereas it should be “/biˈkɔz/” (oxford dictionary) and for the word “ambition” there were students said “ambeson” whereas it should be “/əmˈbɪʃn/” (oxford dictionary). Then for the word “public” there were students said “pablɪk” whereas it should be “pʌblɪk” (oxford dictionary). Then, for word “experience” there were students said “eksperien” whereas it should be “/ɪkˈspɜːrɪəns” (oxford dictionary).

Grammar

According to Heaton (Kurniati et al, 2015:5) students’ ability to manipulate structure and to distinguish appropriate grammatical form in appropriateness. Grammar is needed for students to arrange a correct sentence in conversation. From the result of the students speaking test, there are some students still made some errors in grammar like error in using tenses, article, and verb. The examples of grammatical errors based on the findings were; (1) “My hobby is watching and reading”, The word “hobby is” should be replace by using “hobbies are”. (2) “when I go to Toraja with my friends”, for “I go to” should be replace by using “went”. (3) She is a singers, for “singers” should be replace by using “singer”. (4) “I have one idols”, for word “idols” should be replace by word “idol”. Then, Vocabulary means the appropriate diction which is used in communication. Without having a sufficient vocabulary, one cannot communicative effectively or express their ideas both oral and written form.

Vocabulary

According to Brown (in Novianda, 2017: 391) Vocabulary means the appropriate diction which is used in communication. Without having a sufficient vocabulary, someone cannot communicative effectively or express their ideas both oral and written form. From the result of speaking test, the researcher found that there were students still lack of vocabulary and they used a simple vocabulary. The examples of the using of inappropriate vocabulary based on the findings were; (1) “Why I can’t forget that experience? because I wants drowned”, it should replace with “almost”. The correct sentence should be “Why I can’t forget that experience? because I almost drowned”. (2) “He many gave experiments ee.. in in front of of education”, the correct sentence should be “He gave many contribution for education”. (3) “She is cute and my inspire”, the appropriate sentence should be “She is cute and she is my inspiration”.


**Fluency**

Fluency can be defined as the ability to speak fluently and accurately. Brumfit in (Yang, 2014) considered fluency as natural language use like the native speakers. That the ability one speaks fluently can sustain the speaker to produce continuous speech and meaning without comprehension difficulties for the listener. From the result of speaking test, the researcher found that there were some students did not speak fluently and accurately with little using pauses like “ums”, “ers” and etc. Students usually hesitant, they often forced into silence by language limitation. For examples, (1) “They have ee.. good body, they have ee.. good voice”, (2) “mmm.. I can’t I can’t I can’t forget about that”, (3) “ee.. My hobby is aa.. singing”. They often have to search for desire meaning, stop talking, incomplete utterance. However some students have been fluent when speaking although they have to make an effort and search of words but succeed in conveying the general meaning. When students speak, there were pauses marked by the words: a., a... and e.. These words were said while thinking what they would convey anymore. In addition there were fragmentary word such as “interested” and incomplete utterance such as: “ for me and...” which was done by students when speaking. Then comprehension, comprehension is defined as the ability to understand completely and be aware of understanding whatever said by speaker or toward the topics that are discussed during the conversation. From the result of speaking test, it was found that there were some students occasionally understandable but sometimes still less understandable.

**Factors Influence Students' Speaking Performance.**

The data on the findings show that there were some factors that influence students' speaking performance. They gave answer that refers to the factors explain by Tuan & Mai (2015).

**Performance Condition**

Students perform a speaking task under a variety of conditions. The performance conditions can affect speaking performance. It included time pressure, planning, the standard of performance and the amount of support (Nation & Newton, 2009 in Tuan & Mai, 2015).

Students have answered that performance condition affect their speaking performance. From the students’ answered they think that they have to be good when they were perform. Students felt they have to perform well for various reasons including, people who heard can understand well what was being said, then it can help them to be better at speaking in the future and the other reason was to show that they can speak English well and when they perform well it made them more enthusiastic to learn English and become more confident when appearing to speak. It can be seen from students’ statement who said that: *Iya harus, karena jika kita tampil dengan baik kita tidak akan lupa dengan hafalan yang telah di hafal dan meningkatkan kepercayaan diri* (Yes we must, because if we perform well we will not forget our memorization and increase our confidence).

The second part was planning. In this case the students must prepare in advance what they want to convey so that concentration was maintained, not nervous, can perform well then it help during the process of conversation, not wrong in expressing what they want to convey and the results were satisfactory. The third and fourth part were the time pressure and amount of support. When students appear to speak in English, the teacher did not provide a time limit for students to speak so that students can express anything according to what they have prepared. Furthermore, when they perform, many friends provide support so that they can perform well and made the students who appear as motivated as possible. When there were friends who did not support (laughing or mocking) it made the students who appear to be not focused and not concentration. It can be seen from students’ statement who said that: *Sejauh ini kami diberikan banyak waktu sesuai dengan seberapa banyak yang ingin kami sampaikan* (So far we have been given a lot of time...
According to how much we want to convey) and **Teman-teman selalu membantu saya dan mendukung saya tampil dengan baik** (My friends always help me and support me to perform well). Therefore it was very clear that performance conditions have an influence on students’ speaking performance.

**Affective Factor**

One of the factors that can influence students’ speaking performance was affective factor. Krashen (1982) (in Tuan & Mai, 2015) states that a variety of affective variables have been confirmed to be related to success in the three categories: motivation, self-confidence and anxiety.

Students stated that they had motivation when they were going to speak using English so that they would better understand English itself, to get used to it and be more fluent in English. Students also think they should did their best, then there was motivation such as they can definitely show the best, not only their friends or other people but they also can be better than others. In addition there was also motivation that, they able to get a good grades when performing well. Another motivation was when they speak English it would be easier for them to communicate with many people. Students said that: **Saya mempunyai motivasi yaitu karena bahasa inggris itu merupakan bahasa internasional jadi dengan kita tahu bahasa inggris kita bisa berkomunikasi dengan orang banyak** (I have motivation that is because English is an international language so by knowing English we can communicate with many people).

The other category in affective factors was anxiety. Anxiety was often experienced by students when they appear using English. They were afraid to made mistakes while talking and they were afraid of being ridiculed or laughed by others. But students stated that they were not so anxious if those in front of them were people they already knew or their classmates. Instead they could be anxious if they speak in front of people they did not recognize or people who they met for the first time. It can be seen from students statement who said that: **Kalau berbicara dengan teman tidak cemas tapi kalau sama orang lain cemas** (If I talking with friends I am not worried but if I talking with other people, I feel anxious). Therefore, the affective factors above can greatly influence students’ speaking performance.

**Listening Ability**

The next factor that can influence students’ speaking performance was listening ability. Based on the results found by researchers, students still found it difficult to listened to things expressed in English because people who speak were unclear as in terms of pronunciation then unfamiliar vocabulary and too long sentences. Student said that: **Ya saya bisa mengerti tapi ketika orang itu berbicara dengan jelas** (Yes I can understand but when the person speaks clearly). However there was also student who can listen well therefore he was able to communicate in English because he understood what he was listening to.

This was in line with the explanation that when one person speaks, the other responds through listening to the listening process. In fact, every speaker plays the role of both a listener and a speaker. Therefore, one is certainly unable to respond if he cannot understand what is said. It means speaking is closely related to listening (Doff, 1998 cited in Tuan & Mai, 2015).

**Topical Knowledge**

Topical knowledge was one of the factors that can influence students’ speaking performance. Students said that they could perform well when they knew or mastered the topic of the discussion they were going to convey. Because they already have knowledge about the topic, it making easier for them to memorize and understand the topic when they were going to deliver it. Students said that: **Ya sangat mampu menguasai topiknya karena**
The students’ answer above is in accordance with the explanation that certain test may be easier for those who have topical knowledge and difficult for those who do not. Topical knowledge of effects on speaking performance (Bachman & Palmer, 1996 cited in (Tuan & Mai, 2015). Furthermore it was very clear that topical knowledge can have an influence on student speaking performance.

4. Conclusion

From the discussion above the researcher found that the students problem in speaking such as accuracy, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and fluency. Beside that the students still used their local accent include their pronunciation and the tone of the students’ speaking are still too pitched like Indonesian accent. Furthermore the students also used code mixing by inserting Indonesian vocabulary in English sentence. Code mixing used by the students due to the lack of vocabulary to express the words they want to convey in English.

Whereas, there were several factors that influence students in speaking that were performance condition which includes standard of performance, planning, time pressure and the amount of support. The second factor was affective factor. In this case there were categorizes of affective factor that are motivation and anxiety. The next factor was listening ability. Students must understand what the others say to made them respond it therefore speaking was closely related to listening. The last factor was topical knowledge. To made students good in their performance they have to master or knew about what the topic was. Therefore topical knowledge was a factor that can affect students’ speaking performance.

5. Citation and References


