

Teachers Practices on Speaking Assessment of English as a Foreign Language A Descriptive Study at Junior High Schools in Sintuk Toboh Gadang Subdistrict

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Abstract

This research aims to find out the types of speaking assessment used by the teachers in their practices, the ways in applying those assessment tasks, and the way the teacher give the feedback based on the result of assessment. The method used in this research is descriptive. The population of the research is an English teacher at public junior high school in Sintuk Toboh Gadang Subdistrict that consists of 8 English teachers. The researcher used random sampling technique and selected 4 teachers as a sample in this research. The data were collected through the observation and analyzing the teacher's documents. The findings indicate that (1) the teachers have varied the speaking assessment tasks, (2) the teachers have done several procedures of the authentic assessment, however in rating the speaking skill of the students, they still used the same scoring rubrics stated in the lesson plans, and meanwhile each of the tasks has its own criteria in rating students' speaking skill.

Keywords: speaking assessment, teacher practice, teacher feedback

Introduction

Everyone has priority to express their thinking, emotion and feeling, and then all of these need language. Relating to this global era, English language has urgent position in the world because English as international language which is all of peoples in these world have to comprehend and communicate whether orally or written. In learning English as a foreign language, there are four skills that have to be mastered, namely; listening and reading as receptive skills, speaking and writing as productive skills. One of language skills which are really necessary to be developed on students is speaking. Speaking is one of ways in deciding whether they are able in applying theoretical knowledge into practice or not. According to Douglas (2003: 140) speaking is a productive skill that can be directly and empirical observed those observations are invariably collared by the accuracy effectiveness of a test taker's listening skill which necessarily compromises the reliability and validity of an oral test. Because of this reason, speaking is one of language skills which are concerned to be developed on students in the 2013 curriculum. In short, teacher should carry out speaking in the classroom instructions and do the assessment on it authentically. Assessment refers to the general process of monitoring or keeping back track of the learners' progress (Hedge, 2007:376). The reason is because the 2013 curriculum emphasizes both process and product of learning. It means that students are not only expected to master the learning theories, but they are also expected to be able in comprehending and applying those learning theories into the real life situations. In other words, authentic assessment is the right assessment to be used in assessing both process and product of learning.

According to Zaim and Refnaldi (2016), authentic assessment is the way to evaluate students' learning progress through numerous assessment tasks. In addition, Brown (2010: 126) also notes, the belief of authenticity portrays the real-world tasks in which motivate the students to use the language skills in practice more communicatively. Furthermore, Palm (2008: 7) states that in authentic assessment students have to relate their background knowledge to deal with information needed on

the topic and express their ideas in detailed. Thus, it can be assumed that the multiple tasks given in authentic assessment should reflect to the real world situations and give a chance to the students to do the tasks meaningfully.

Based on preliminary research done at junior high school in Sintuk Toboh Gadang district, it was found that English teachers have applied authentic assessment for speaking but not fully covered students' needs and knowledge level. It is in line with Zaim (2013) who says that only a limited number of teachers can apply authentic assessment. For example, a teacher showed a picture to whole class, and then asked them to speak up based on the picture that has been seen previously. The other teacher also has applied role-play to the students. The topic was about shopping and the students were asked to practice speaking English about how to bargain, to buy and to thank before leaving the shop.

O'Malley and Pierce (1996: 77) note that there are eight types of oral language assessment tasks, namely: (1) oral interview, (2) picture-cued descriptions or stories, (3) radio broadcasts, (4) video clips, (5) information gap, (6) story/text retelling, (7) role plays, (8) oral reports, and (9) debates. Dealing with those assessment tasks, it seems that picture-cued description, story/text retelling and oral reports tasks are compatible to be used in assessing students' speaking skill when they learn functional/monologue texts. However in reality, based on the researcher's preliminary research there were still many problems arise related to the oral language assessment practices. One of them was that there were still a few tasks given to students on speaking. Because of this problem, students were not familiar with any oral language assessment activities. Moreover, it was not common for them to practice the language theories into speaking. Although students had understood the theories, they were sometimes still difficult in conveying their ideas in speaking because there was lack of speaking practice. In addition, the common language used by the teachers in teaching English was Indonesian. It also caused students could not develop the new English vocabularies.

Based on explanation above, this study aims to find out the types of oral language assessment used by the grade IX teachers of SMPN Sintuk Toboh Gadang Subdistrict in assessing students' speaking skill. It is also done to find out the ways of teachers in using the assessment tasks in their practices.

Method

This study was descriptive research. It was aimed at determining and describing the data as the way they are. Gay and Airasian (2000:275) state that descriptive research determines and describes the way things are, this research was reported the result of research just as it is finding. It means that in this research all the findings gathered would be described as what they were. This research was conducted at grade IX teachers of SMPN Sintuk Toboh Gadang Subdistrict. There were four teachers in this research. The data were collected through observation and analyzing the teachers documents. There were two documents analyzed in this research were teachers' lesson plans and examination sheet. In this research, the data analysis was conducted regarding to the instrument of this research. The data were gain from observation and document analysis.

Results and Discussion

Types of Authentic Assessment used by Teachers for Assessing Speaking Skill

There are nine types of oral language assessment suggested by O'Malley and Pierce (1996). The types of authentic assessment used by the teachers in assessing students' speaking skill could be seen in the table 1.

Table 1. Types of Authentic Assessment in Assessing Speaking Skill Used by the Teachers at Grade IX

No	Types of Speaking	Teachers			
		A	B	C	D
1	Oral interview	√	√	√	-
2	Story or text retelling	√		√	-
3	Picture cued	√	√	√	√
4	Radio broadcast	-	-	-	-
5	Video clips	√	√	√	-
6	Information gap	-	-	-	-
7	Role play simulation	√	√	√	√
8	Oral report	√	√	√	√
9	Debate	-	-	-	-

Table 1 above show that the teacher A has used seven types of oral language assessment tasks in her practices as suggested above, namely; oral interviews, picture-cued descriptions, video clips, information gaps, story/text retelling, role plays, oral reports, and debates. She did not use the radio broadcasts and debate task because it was a new task of oral language assessment for her. In addition, teacher A said that information gap was used in teaching transactional texts and functional/monologue texts. Even so, she admitted that she preferred using information gap task in teaching functional/monologue texts. In other sides, it was found that teacher B has used five types of the assessment tasks in her practices. They were oral interview, picture-cued descriptions, video clips, role play simulation and oral report. Even she seldom used the oral report task. She used picture-cued description task in teaching transactional text. As O'Malley and Pierce (1996: 80) state that this oral language assessment task can encourage the students to speak up, since the topics given are connected to the daily life situations and need students' background knowledge to process the information.

The Ways Teachers Apply the Authentic Assessment for Speaking Skill

The ways of both teachers assessed students' speaking skill could be as follow:

1) Oral interview

Based on the interview results, there were several ways done by teacher A, B and C in this task. First, they frequently gave free questions to the students related to the topic, which was being learned at the time in her practices. Second, they were sometimes gave prepared questions. For the prepared questions, teacher A shared them to the students. Then, she asked the students to answer the questions orally. In contrast, it is noted that teacher D frequently gave free questions to the students in this task. This task was frequently in the form of conversation between the teacher and the students.

2) Story or text retelling

Story telling is an interactive performance that tells the events to listener or audience. The teacher uses this technique to make them share information with others and to explain why things happened. In this task, teacher s A and C firstly asked students to read and comprehend the text. After that, teachers A and C asked the students to retell the stories on the text which they have read. In her practices, teacher B and D did similar things. First of all, teachers B and D asked the students to read and discussed the contents of the text in groups. Then, they were asked to write the summaries of the story. After they had been ready, the next step was to ask students retell the story in front of the class.

3) Picture cued

Another important type is picture cued. Teacher asks students to describe, give information, and give opinion toward the picture. Picture cued requires no prior explanation on the part of the students and can be used to elicit numerous language functions namely" describing, giving

information and giving opinion toward the picture. To apply it, teacher must match the picture to student's level knowledge. Dealing with this task, teacher A worked this task by asking students to describe the picture(s) related to the topic which was being learned at the time. Students could describe the phenomenon or the objects shown on the picture(s). Furthermore, teacher A said that she also sometimes asked students to prepare the picture(s) themselves. In other sides, teacher B and C frequently asked several questions related to the picture(s) shown at the beginning of the activities. Then, she asked the students to note the points, which had been discussed in paragraphs. After that, she asked the students to describe the picture(s) in front of the class. Teacher D used picture cued to assess students' speaking ability as formative assessment. It was implemented with the topic of procedure text. After explaining what special terms or words for describing thing and activities and how to describe thing, people, and activities, the teacher asked the students to practice base on the picture on the textbook. Next, the lecturer asked the students to describe the picture that they brought in front of the class.

4) Radio broadcast

Teacher A, B, C and D did not use the radio broadcasts. This type not use by the teacher at junior high school in Sintuk Toboh Gadang Subdistrict in assessing speaking during the learning process at classroom activity.

5) Video clips

In doing video clips task to assess students' speaking skill, teacher A, B, and C started the activities by playing short video using the available media. Then, she asked the students to comprehend the contents of the video given. After the students were ready to tell, then she asked students to give information of the video.

6) Information gab

Teacher A, B, C and D did not use the information gap. This type not use by the teacher at junior high school in Sintuk Toboh Gadang Subdistrict in assessing speaking during the learning process at classroom activity.

7) Role play simulation

The teacher uses Fun Learning method to transfer knowledge to the students by giving them role-play. It is same with game, it is used to make them to stand out, to show pride, to promote, to describe and to criticize. According to the findings, in the task four teachers A, B, C and D previously decided the topics or situations to be performed in the role-play. In deciding the topics or situations to be used in the role play task, all of the teachers added that she sometimes let the students to choose the topics themselves in order to ease them in preparing the dialogue.

8) Oral report

In this task, fourth teachers A, B, C and teacher D firstly asked the students to do an observation about the object, which would be presented in this task. From observation, it was found that oral presentation was used almost in every meeting of speaking class. It was implemented by making mind mapping based on the topic or the theme, which was given by the teacher, and then they had to present in the class.

9) Debate

Teacher A, B, C and D did not use the debate. This type not use by the teacher at junior high school in Sintuk Toboh Gadang Subdistrict in assessing speaking during the learning process at classroom activity.

The research findings toward the type of speaking instrument by the teachers show that each teacher used different types of assessment related with the level of subject that they taught. The findings were discussed in more specified based on the research question that has been constructed earlier. Theories related with findings are provided to support the discussion.

Speaking assessment implemented by teacher related with the types of assessment.

The discussion on the types of assessment used by the teacher to assess students' ability is discussed based on the skill that it is used speaking. It aims to organize the discussion into more clear view for each sub topics. The discussion is started with types of speaking assessment used by teachers. The finding of speaking assessment which were implemented by the teacher in speaking showed that the types of assessment used by them was varied but not yet related with the course objective and the learning objective that should be stated in syllabus and lesson plan. The result of observation proved that the lecturer often used the same types of speaking assessment without clarifying which types of the assessment that was used for certain topic in speaking subject.

Among four teachers, only teacher A and C have implemented various types of speaking assessment. He seemed has a well preparation in assessing students' speaking by using speaking assessment, which was matched with the topic, and macro and micro skill that needed to be measured. The way she implemented the speaking assessment was very systematic so the students can follow her instruction. Teacher A also monitored students' practice and gave a correction if it was necessary as in role play, oral presentation, and picture cued storytelling. Thus, the result of measurement or calculation can be said more accurate than the other two teachers.

The finding also showed that there was an overlap of the topics, which were offered by the teacher A and B since there were some topics, which were asserted in speaking while they had been discussed in speaking. Moreover, some topics, which were assessed in speaking, while they had been, discussed in speaking. Moreover, some topics which were offered in speaking were too simple to be discussed in one meeting and it was not appropriate enough to be discussed in speaking such as expressing thank. Those topics are already learnt by students in junior high school. In conclusion, the topic of speaking re not well designed to fulfil students' need and learning goal related with the level of speaking. The teachers are not discussed what is the objective, the learning goal, and the topics of speaking. Finally, the topics in speaking cannot fully support cultivate students' ability in speaking.

Based on the researcher's finding, the teacher has implemented authentic assessment in assessing speaking. There is some ways use by teacher. The authentic assessment is implemented through classroom activities and teacher's instruction. The ways the teachers assess of speaking are by using classroom activities such as role-play, storytelling and performance. In practical, the teacher use simple techniques to stimulate the students to speak.

The techniques used by the teacher to assess speaking are role play, storytelling, and performance. Although, the techniques used by teacher is different, both of knowledge and skill, those techniques is integrated in the performance of the students. Therefore, it can be said that the techniques used by the teacher is appropriate with the principle assessment in the 2013 curriculum and appropriate with O'Malley theory. The teacher gives feedback for each speaking activities. Feedback is valuable to the students although the teacher only give feedback about pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. The speaking activities are conducted in four meeting because; the teacher is not only assessing knowledge or skill in speaking but writing too. For knowledge and degrees of comparison for skill. For knowledge teacher use role-play, storytelling etc.

From the findings it can be said that authentic assessment is used by the teacher to assessing speaking. In this analysis, the researcher uses the principal assessment of the 2013 curriculum and authentic assessment theory of O'Malley. From the explanation above, the simple techniques used by teacher are actually good enough for the students to understand the material because the teacher use fun learning to transfer the knowledge for the students.

Information from speaking assessment used by teacher as a feedback to students

The finding toward the use of feedback for teacher figures out that the feedback does not have much attention from the teacher. Moreover, all teachers speaking only use the feedback or the result of students' assessment to calculate students' final grade. Their statement about the use of feedback is also very cliché that it users to modelling learning target, motivating students, and assigning grade but they cannot explain more about the method or how to do it and there is no document. Only

teacher A in speaking subject who have complete document about the use of feedback and they can explain it very clear. The teachers of speaking subject do not use feedback as it is assigned in teaching and learning process. The teachers actually have to use all the information to observe whether the learning goal has been achieved or not. Therefore, whether the teachers really used the information from the assessment as a feedback to students and teachers themselves remain a mystery. A very convicting information of using the result of speaking assessment as a feedback was from teacher. Thus, it can be concluded that most of the lecturer did not used the result of assessment as a feedback because the document could not be accessed or are not provided.

Conclusion

From the finding and discussion it can be conclude that: 1) There were 9 type of assessment which were used by the teacher in assessing students speaking subject. Among those types only two types that were used as summative assessment, 2) All teachers who taught speaking constructed and used analytic for speaking assessment. The components of speaking that mostly used were grammar, pronunciations, fluency, and sand pronunciation. However, only one teacher who defined the range of point for each component of speaking rubric while others seemed bias even not clear, 3) It was found that most teachers taught speaking committed that they used the result of students' assessment as a feedback for both teacher and students. For the teacher, the result of students' assessment was mainly used assigning grade to students by speaking teachers. The feedback was also used as motivating students to learn much and get a better mark.

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