STUDENTS’ PERCEPTION ON EFL SPEAKING SKILL DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT


Keywords: students’ perception, speaking skill, development.

The purposes of the research are to find out students’ perception on EFL speaking skill development and to describe how students’ develop their speaking skill development. University students had own difficulties in learning speaking skill, such as lack of vocabulary, grammatical structure and pronouncing the words in English. The method used in this research is a case study with mixed method. The instruments used to collect the data are questionnaire and interview. The population of the research is all of four semester students of English Study Program at Jambi University. Totally of respondents are 91 respondents, those are from four classes (a, b, h, i). The researcher used SPSS program to collect data from questionnaire data. The researcher used six students for interview from four classes. To collect the data from interview data, the researcher first did interview with respondents, transcribe the data, coded the data, category the data and interpretation and analyzing the data. The finding of this research was after distributed the questionnaire and did the interview. The most of students think speaking skill is important for them although they had own difficulties in learning speaking skill. Students used internet as source to support them developing speaking skill. The time for practicing speaking skill is in the speaking class, mostly students used speaking class to practice speaking skill. In the learning speaking skill, the lecturer helpful and guide the students to developing speaking skill. And the most problem that face by all of students in learning speaking skill are afraid making mistaken of
pronounce the words, grammatical structures, vocabulary, and the students doesn’t had high confidence to speak English because some of students prepare some notes before speak English. The conclusions of this research are students can devise a good method to learning speaking skill, developing speaking skill, and as a reference for other researcher.

**Introduction**

Language is one of the important tools that people use to communicate with each other. Through language they can express their ideas, communicate to others, and express their feelings. People may communicate as they want to say something meaning that they have some communicative purposes. English is the international language. This makes English becomes the language which is commonly used by most people in the world. For example, in the field of science, English is used for communication both orally, such as in international seminar, conference, and the like or in written, such as in writing international journal, paper, and other scientific report. In university, several supporting references for the students’ courses are written in English. For that reason, the mastery of English may be helpful in terms of bringing students to be successful in their course. Speaking in a foreign language is not easy. According to Renandya (2002: 204) speaking in a foreign language is difficult for foreign language learners because the effectiveness of oral communication requires the ability to use the language appropriately in social interaction.

The reason of this research is to investigate perception on EFL speaking skill development and how students develop their speaking skill. University students have their own perception on their difficulties in learning speaking skill. Because speaking skill is important to complete by the students if the students want to communicate and interact in English. The difficulties those usually the students face in speaking is in terms of vocabulary, grammatical structures, native speakers’ accents, pronunciation, and less English speaking practice. Regarding the explanation above, it is interesting to do a research that tries to find out the students’ perception on EFL speaking skills development. This research was conducted in English study program language and arts department faculty of education and teacher training, Jambi University. Four students are as participants in this research, because they already have a wide range of experience in learning speaking skill. To guide this study, the following research had formulated problem into the following questions: 1. What are students’ perceptions on EFL speaking skills development? 2. How do students develop their speaking skills? The Limitation of this study is to find out students’ perception of speaking skill development and to describe the perception of students’ on EFL speaking skill development.
Review of Related Literature

Speaking seems to be the most important skills of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) because people who know a language are usually referred to as speakers of that language (Ur, 1996). Speaking is one of the most important things in the process of language learning, because students will know their ability on speaking skills if they can master and demonstrate the ability to speak well and correctly in English. Speaking is an oral communication activities involving two or more people and the participants role as speaker and gave a reaction to what he heard and contribute immediately (Sulastri, 2008: 13). Communication will be created if there is a speaker and a listener as participation in communication or conversation. Tompkins and Hoskisson in Roff'udin and Darmayati Ahmad Zuhdi (2001/2002: 8) suggest that the learning process talking with several activities, namely: a. Conversations, b. Speaking aesthetic, c. Speaking to convey information or influence, d. Dramatic activities. The learning process is a process students receive a variety of information in the process. Jeremy Harmer 2007 suggested that teaching speaking skill, the teachers have three particular relevance when trying to get students to speak fluently: prompter, Participant, Feedback provider.

The difficulty to respond something asked in foreign language can be caused by the little ideas about what to say, which vocabulary to use, or how to use the grammar correctly (Baker & Westrup, 2003). Rivers (1968) believes that the learners may have nothing to express because the teacher had chosen topics which are not suitable for them or those which the learners know very little. Speaking skills is easy in terms of communication. Many things happen to students in speaking class, such as many students are less active in class because they do not understand what is learned, they do not have self-prepared, and lacked of grammar and vocabulary. Teachers should use authentic assessment in language in speaking activities, setting real world tasks such as giving directions, and giving students opportunities to use language in situation based on everyday life (O’Malley, 1996: 61-62). Perception includes all signals in the nervous system, is the result of physical stimulation of the sensory organs.

Expressing an opinion on an object that is based on evidence or experience that someone has had could be called a perception. Tata (2002) in Sari (2011:5) has given a definition about perception as a cognitive process experienced by every single person in comprehending the information about its environment, whether through sight, hearing, appreciation, feel and even smell.

Method

The research design of this study was a mixed method. According to Cresswell (2009) mixed method research is an approach in which researcher use a research
design that generates quantitative and qualitative data during different stages of the study to support analysis that leads to answering questions or sets of questions. A case study is used to explore or explain some case in depth and follow the structure of case. That is why this research used a case study because the researcher wants to know a case about students’ perception on EFL speaking skills development. The population of this study was all four semester students of English Study Program in academic year 2015 at Jambi University. The population was 91 students from class A, B, H, and I, where there were 24 students in class A, 34 students in class B, 17 students in class H, and 16 students in class I. In collecting the data, the instruments were questionnaire and interview. In this research, there were twenty-four questions for questionnaire section and nineteen questions for interview section. When the process of collecting the data, the researcher informed the chairman from four classes to distributed questionnaire to the participants and also the researcher asked six participants to joined interview section. Before distributing the questionnaire and do the interview, the researcher contacted them first. This research was going by following the procedures to make the data trusted.

After collect data from questionnaire data the researcher used SPSS to collect the data of questionnaire data and interview data, the researcher conducts some themes in this study. Those were included. The themes were about students’ belief on their speaking mastery level, eagerness to develop speaking skill, opportunity and time for practicing speaking, speaking material activities and facilities, classroom climate and student’s psychological barriers. The highest score indicated their perception. Next, stating and analyzing the tendency of students’ perception by using percentage formula. The data analyses were conducted through the data collected from the interview. After doing the interview with some students, the researcher transcribed the data from Smartphone recorder. The researcher transcribed the data from the interview; the researcher read all the answers or responses from the students in interview data. Reading the transcribed the data to make the researcher familiar with the result of interview data. And also make the researcher easier to know about the responses from students. And the researcher transcribed and segments the data from interview data. The researcher makes a theme and sub-theme categorized from interview data. The purpose of categorizing the data was to make clarification of the data and to conclude data. Additionally, the grouping and sorting were also done by cutting out the record or quote transcript of the interview based on the group of theme. It was analyzed to find out what happened in each case, how and why it happened, and logical explanation to understand the studied cases. At the end of the steps in analyzing the data, the researcher did interpretation.

Finding and Discussions

This section presents participants’ answer from questionnaire section and interview section related to two research questions. There are two major topics: (1) what
are students’ perception on EFL speaking skill development? (2) How do students develop their speaking skills? The first purpose of this research is to find out students’ perception on EFL speaking skill development. After the researcher analyzed the data from questionnaire data, there were twenty-four questions two optional in questionnaire data and also questionnaire data used frequency variables from SPSS related to the first research question based on questionnaire analysis. For interview section the researcher analyzed the data from interview data, there were five major themes and twenty sub-themes related to the second research question based on interview analysis. The purposes of this study were to find out students’ perception on EFL speaking skill development and to describe how students develop speaking skill. The researcher focuses on two research questions on this research. They were about students’ perceptions and students strategies to develop speaking skill.

1. Belief in Their Speaking Mastery Level

The result was quantitative data about belief in their speaking mastery level. This research showed the students’ perception about their belief in speaking skill. In the structured items of questions related with belief speaking skill consists of three statements items in questionnaire. Tata (2002) in Sari (2011:5) has given a definition about perception as a cognitive process experienced by every single person in comprehending the information about its environment, whether through sight, hearing, appreciation, feel and even smell. Based on the quantitative data, the students’ perception about belief of speaking skill indicated the mostly students especially four semester students used English to communicate, interact and got new information from others. English as the international language in the world give impact for everyone if they completed and mastered English well. Not only about using English by students to communicate but also the students had perception about their difficulties in learning speaking skill such as: feel difficult of pronunciation, using grammar, lack of vocabulary and etc. Those results indicated of frequencies data from quantitative data in this research.

The result was from qualitative data about belief in their speaking mastery level. The qualitative data was to support the quantitative data in this research. The qualitative data was to describe about how students develop their speaking skill. In the qualitative data, the researcher creates one question to be asked to students about how they develop speaking skill. The researcher interviewed six students to ask these questions. The students had same perception saying that speaking skill is important and speaking is difficult. This statement is proved from the interview result in this research. It is indicated that the students felt speaking had main impact for their ability in learning English. Speaking skill could make the students get some advantages on their ability of English. With speaking skill, students can interact with others; students can communicate using English and other advantages.
2. Eagerness to Develop Speaking Skill

The result was quantitative data about eagerness to develop speaking skill. The results showed about students’ perception of eagerness to develop speaking skill. Based on the quantitative data, the students had different techniques to develop speaking skill. Students never follow some activities outside the classroom to develop speaking skill. Students applied some strategies to develop speaking skill, the strategies applied were things that were enjoyable and not making them bored. The statements were indicated by the frequency data from quantitative data in the findings of chapter 4.

The result was qualitative data about eagerness to develop speaking skill. In the qualitative data the students had different perception of their eagerness in developing speaking skill. Most students used internet to help them develop speaking skill. Internet was as the source for students to develop speaking skill. The students watched video of English, from that video the students could imitate better English words pronunciation and also improve their vocabulary. As the activity usually the students speak English with their friends. Kayi (2006) states that now many linguistics and ESL teachers agree on that students learn to speak in the second language by ‘interacting’. Students usually like doing activities with their friends especially speak English to develop speaking skill. An activity was as eagerness from students to develop speaking skill. With interaction between the students and their friends to make the students familiar usually using English in communication with others.

3. Opportunity and Time for Practicing Speaking

Based on the quantitative data obtained about opportunity and time for practicing speaking, the result showed about students’ perception on opportunity and time for practicing speaking. Speaking class was the process when students learn speaking skill. Speaking class become the time for students to practice speaking skill. Most students practice speaking skill in speaking class because in the speaking skill there is the lecturer as the source to guide students to help and conduct them to practice speaking skill. According to Tarigan (1982:18) “Speaking is the ability to pronounce sounds, articulations or words to express, unite and convey thoughts, ideas, opinions, and feelings”. Speaking skill focus with the production skill because the students must have more spoken used English to make more familiar and usual with English. In the speaking class, the students could follow the lecturer’s English words pronunciation. The lecturer can help the students to improve speaking skill. In the production skill, the students must be active and often use English to make them easier to speak English. The result from the quantitative data, it was indicated that the students practice speaking in speaking class, imitate speaking skill but they felt the time of speaking class was limited. And others result from categories of opportunity and time for practicing speaking skill was the
students do not follow or make the other activities outside the classroom to practice speaking skill. This activity would help the students to practice speaking skill. It was indicated that most of students never do activities as their strategies or method to practice speaking skill.

The result from qualitative data was about opportunity and time for practicing speaking skill. From the qualitative data, the researcher created four questions to ask the students about their opportunity and time for practicing speaking. These categories explored about students practice speaking skill in their activity and what strategies that would be use by students to practice speaking skill. Time of practicing speaking skill of students, most students do not have time for practicing speaking skill. When the researcher asked them about the time practicing of speaking skill they had different reasons to answer that question. The middle students do not practice speaking skill everyday the reasons were they do not have partner and are lazy to practice speaking skill because they think English is not their daily language and other students always practice speaking skill with their reasons. The students practice exploited condition and situation of their environment like they practice by themselves. Most female students used that strategy to practice speaking skill and the others practice speaking skill with their friends and family. The students speak English with friends and family although their partner did not respond or accepted about students means of speaks English.

4. Speaking Materials, Activities and Facilities

The results obtained from quantitative data were about speaking materials, activities and facilities. In the categories of speaking materials, activities and facilities of speaking skill, the researcher wanted to find out about students perception towards that topic. This category had positive respond from the students and it was indicated based on quantitative data. The first about students’ perception about the lecturer, the lecturer in teaching speaking skill prepared materials well for students. Based on the quantitative data, the lecturer prepared well about the materials for students. The lecturers as the main advisor for students in the class, in that result the lecturer gave the suitable materials and gave clear instruction when teaching speaking. That was indicated from most students felt that the lecturer helped them to learn speaking skill. The lecturer also used facilities to support the students in learning speaking skill and also used some sequences of activities in learn speaking skill. Harmer, J (2007) stated that the reason in teaching speaking is that speaking activities should rehearsal opportunities chances to practice real-life speaking in the safety of classroom. There are any other ideas from the lecturer to create some materials to support the students in learning speaking skill. The lecturer does not only create and prepare the materials for students but the lecturer also as partner for students in learning speaking skill to support the students in developing their speaking skill.
The result was from qualitative data. This category explained about speaking materials, activities and facilities. The result of this category showed about students’ perception of the materials, activities and facilities learn of speaking skill. The students’ perception was that the students had many experience of learning some materials of speaking skill. All of the materials prepared by lecturer were really supporting students in learning speaking skill. The materials and activities include role-play, debate, presentation and etc. Materials and activities created by lecturer can make the students increase the speaking skill. The students used speaking class as their activities to develop and practice speaking skill. Otherwise, there are facilities to support the students in learning speaking skill. Facilities are tools for students to develop speaking skill. The results of this data about students’ perception were about activity and facility. About them, students had different opinions. Mostly, the facilities used by lecturer included: laptop, infocus, handy cam, and tape-recorder. Those facilities are to support students in learning speaking skill. But some students said that the facilities did not support them in learning speaking skill because the students need more quality of facilities in learning speaking skill. If they got more quality of facilities in learning speaking skill, the students also get benefit from facilities for their ability in speaking skill.

5. Classroom Climate and students’ Psychological Barriers

The result was from quantitative data about category of classroom climate and students’ psychological barriers. In this category, the researcher wants to know about students’ perception of classroom condition first. In the classroom climate was mostly students’ perception of the lecturer. The students think the lecturer gave them the suitable materials in learning speaking skill. Rivers (1968) believes that the learners have nothing to express maybe because the teacher had chosen a topic which is not suitable for them or about something which they know very little. Lecturer should teach the students using suitable or easy materials for students because by using easy materials, students will be easier to understand in learning speaking skill. The suitable or easy materials should be adjusted with the students’ ability. About students’ perception on focusing to the lecturer in speaking class, the students thought that the lecturer focus to all of students in the speaking class. That perception was about lecturer’s focus based on the students experience in the qualitative data. Furthermore, about students’ psychological barriers, based on the data students had some problem with psychological barriers. Speaking skills is also based on the confidence to speak fairly, honestly, correctly and responsibly by eliminating the psychological problems such as shyness, low self-esteem, stress, heavy tongue, and others (Iskandarwassid and Suhendar, 2011: 241). Most students had barriers of psychological when speaking English. The most students felt shy and afraid to speak English. That problem was often faced by students because the students do not have confidence to speak English. The students felt shy and afraid to pronounce the English words. They were afraid and shy when they speak English and make a mistake. The
students also felt afraid and shy with the lecturer and their friends when they speak English incorrectly and make mistake in English words pronunciation.

The results obtained from qualitative were about category of classroom climate and students psychological barriers. The result showed about students’ perception of classroom climate and students psychological barriers. Based on the data, most students like speaking skill. According to Widdowson (1994), speaking is the active production skill and use of oral production. Speaking skill must be completed and mastered by students if the students want to speak English fluently. Speaking skill makes the students did more activities to practice speaking skill because speaking skill is not learned theoretically but the students must practice more to speak English. About the students’ perception about their psychological barriers, many students had opinion towards that category. Most students had prepared some notes before speaking English. Many students prepared some notes before speaking English. They prepared vocabulary, in the vocabulary students look for the appropriate words which then can be used when they speak. Prepared the words’ pronunciation and also arrange the words appropriately based on English grammar. Other problem about students’ psychological barriers was about the confidence and difficulties to arrange the words based on the English grammar. Some students felt lost focus when they speak English in front of the class because their friends laughing at them when they make mistake on pronouncing the words. But there are also the students who did not feel lost focus with their mistake when they speak English in front of their friends because they had high confidence when speaking. Therefore, students had psychological barriers like they felt difficult to arrange the word of English. Their problems were about grammatical, vocabulary and pronunciations of English.

Major themes and Sub-themes of Students’ Perception on EFL Speaking Skills Development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Major Theme</th>
<th>Sub-Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Belief in Their Speaking</td>
<td>• Speaking is difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastery Level</td>
<td>• Speaking is important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Eagerness to Develop</td>
<td>• Watch video of English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking Skill</td>
<td>• Used speaking class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


| (3) Opportunity and time for practicing speaking | YouTube  
|                                               | Good pronounce  
|                                               | Improve vocabulary  
| (4) Speaking materials, activities and facilities. | No practice  
|                                               | Speaking with friend  
|                                               | Group discussion  
|                                               | Follow English course  
| (5) Classroom climate and students’ psychological barriers | Debate, role-play, presentation etc.  
|                                               | Lecturer as source  
|                                               | Used speaking class  
|                                               | Infocus, laptop and etc  
|                                               | Increasing skill  
|                                               | Speaking is important  
|                                               | Prepare some notes  
|                                               | Lost focus  
|                                               | Problem with vocabulary and grammar  

**Conclusions and Suggestions**

The results showed that students thought speaking skill was important for them to make them able to interact or communicate with others using English. Most of students had problem with speaking skill. They are afraid making mistakes of pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. Therefore, they prepared notes about pronunciation, grammar, and some vocabularies before speaking to make them become more confidence to speak English. They also had method and strategies to develop their speaking skill such as they do some activities to practice speaking skill: like following English course, practicing speaking skill in speaking class, speaking English with friends, making group discussions, used internet as their source to support them in developing speaking skill.

The researcher suggests for students to know the perception about learning of speaking skill development and also the strategy to develop speaking skill. So, the students can devise the good method to learning speaking skill and developed speaking skill. For further research, the researcher suggests other researcher to conduct a research about students’ perception and how they develop it, especially in speaking.
skill. The results of the research can be a reference for English students and others students in learning speaking skill.

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