



The implementation of the integrated performance assessment (IPA) model to improve English students' speaking skills

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the extent to which the application of the IPA model could improve Indonesian students' speaking skill, especially speaking skills for discussion course. It was classroom action research in which the stages of its activities include planning, implementation, evaluation, and reflection. This research's subjects were the third semester English Department University of Bengkulu. The researchers only took four cycles as the data of the research. Qualitative and quantitative data were analyzed to find a valid conclusion. The results show that the application of the IPA model improved the basic skills of students' speaking skills in class. It can be seen from the improvement in almost every cycle. The mean score in cycle 1 was 80, followed by 80.3 in cycle 2, but slightly decreased in cycle 3 with a mean score of 79.6 and got higher again in cycle 4 with a mean score of 82. Internal and external factors also contribute to the students' speaking skills.



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English language teaching focusing on productive skills (speaking) requires an appropriate assessment model to apply to the course (British Council, n.d.). It is because the assessment (authentic and meaningful tasks) should facilitate the learning activity which can encourage students to achieve their oral skills (Kayi, 2006). However, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, English speaking classes in Indonesia, have never used an

assessment system which involve an Integrated Performance Assessment (IPA). Meanwhile, if we look at the purposes of assessment, this assessment model allows students to achieve their learning goals, including speaking skills. Moreover, referring to the world-readiness standard for learning language by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL, n.d.), it seems clear that the role of assessment with IPA system affects the success of students in learning a foreign language such as English (Davin, K., Troyan, F., Donato, R & Hellman, A., 2011). However, once again, this system has never been piloted in speaking courses, especially in Indonesian.

Speaking is one of the English language skills considered the most difficult to master by some foreign language learners (Ulker, 2017; Hosni, 2014; Hamad & Alnuzaili, 2022). Some research on the causes of difficulty mastering this skill have been done by researchers (Shen and Chiu, 2019; Asworo, 2019; Holandyah, Marzulina, Erlina, Harto, Amalia, Fridiyanto, & Mukminin, 2022). The research summarized that vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, understanding, fluency, mother tongue use, and preference on particular topics of conversation are the main obstacles foreign learners face when trying to speak in English.

Teachers have made some efforts to help students improve their speaking skills such as using story telling models (Erfiani, 2017), using reciprocal teaching strategies (Ahmad, 2014), using shadow teaching techniques (Yahya, 2020), and using reciprocal teaching strategies (Ahmad, 2014), using shadow teaching techniques (Yahya, 2020), and using methods of teaching "Everyone is Teacher Here" (Elvionita, 2018). However, these attempts have not effectively addressed the problems of English-speaking skills.

Furthermore, what Lim, Ko, Park & Ihm (2022) investigate on teacher intervention in a discussion based on learning activities is probably very relevant information in helping students to have better speaking skills. To respond to this, the researcher would like to interfere with the learning activities by applying the IPA model in class. According to the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) University of Minnesota (2019), IPA is defined as a classroom-based performance assessment model which is used to evaluate student's communication skills in the three modes of communication (Interpretive, Presentational, Interpersonal). ACTFL develops this assessment model.

Using this model can help students solve their English speaking-problems. The reasons to use this are because firstly, students are given many opportunities to show how they use their language skills. Secondly, students continue growing and learning something new since they are supported with a real-life task and a cultural topic evaluated in the three modes of

communication: Interpretive, Interpersonal, and Presentational (Toward Proficiency, 2020). Finally, each element of the activity allows students to have other languages skills, for example, in the interpretive phase, the skills integrated in this step are listening, reading, and writing (CARLA: Assessment of Second Language, n.d.).

This model has been recognized as one of the most effective assessing methods for high thinking level because this emphasizes the application and demonstration of the ability to solve problems (Kuo-Hung, Chao, et al., 2016). Moreover, Kuo-Hung, Chao, et al. emphasize that measuring students' performance can allow them to study the concepts, complex event, and their structure". Also, the main strength of the implementation IPA model is feedback or reciprocity from lecturer to the performance of language skills of the students. Providing feedback in the oral and written form allows the students to know their weaknesses that must be corrected in the future. Below is the description of the IPA model.



Picture 1. The steps for IPA Model
(<https://towardproficiency.com/>)

In the IPA model, there are three learning tasks that the students need to follow. They are interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational tasks. An interpretative task involves reading and listening tasks, and this step aims to explore students' background knowledge about the topic being presented in class. The lecturer provides a learning topic either in the form of reading, listening or both. The topic itself should be authentic and refers to the target language. Furthermore, dealing with the assessment, the lecturer assesses students' initial understanding of the topic/material; on the other hand, students try to understand, interpret, and analyze what they see, hear, or feel regarding the presented topics. In general, this interpersonal assessment is related to the lecturer's assessment of activities between students with certain tasks that the lecturer has determined. In this activity, students interact, negotiate, share information, opinions, understanding, and feelings about the task.

In addition, the presentational assessment is an assessment of student performance either in the form of material presentation, describing something, written or spoken. From each of these assessments, the lecturer consults with students about what is going to be assessed and how much its worth, including providing input (feedback) from each assessment that has been done. Students understand what must be achieved and know what must be done to be successful in learning. Students get assessment criteria before they are assessed, and the lecturer must provide feedback on the results of assessments given individually or in a group.

Regarding the explanation above, researchers would like to present this assessment model in the Speaking for Discussion class because the purpose of this class is in line with one of the objectives of IPA which is to facilitate the students to have better communication skills. Finally, the research aims illustrate the extent to which the application of the IPA model can improve students speaking skills in the Speaking for Discussion course.

METHOD

The method used in this research was classroom action research. It consists of four cycles: planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. These cycles could be repeated if at the stage of reflection there is no improvement at all. To enter the next cycle, a revision is required at the planning stage. If this research's success indicators are met, then there is no need for an advanced cycle; in other words, the research can be stopped. This study was planned to carry out one cycle in advance consisting of 4 meetings in 4 weeks. Each stage in the cycle is described as follows:

Planning

Activities carried out in the planning stage were developing learning strategies, preparing learning implementation plans and preparing devices (such as media, materials and tools, and observation instruments), and preparing IPA sheet instruments (assessment sheets for interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational for each meeting, field note sheets, English tests, research schedules). The main researcher acted as a lecturer who taught the class, while research member acted as collaborators in implementing classroom action research.

Implementation

At this stage, the researcher as a lecturer carried out learning that has been prepared in the learning implementation plan. The lecturer must have mastered the strategies that applied in learning and followed the signs that were prepared in the learning implementation plan. During the learning process, research members as collaborators helped the lecturer observe the

continuity of learning (co-observer). One cycle was held for four meetings with 100 minutes for each meeting for four weeks. At the end of each meeting, students were asked to fill out a self-assessment sheet including feedback that the research team had prepared. At the end of the cycle, students were given a questionnaire to measure their level of speaking skills.

Observation

The research member acted as collaborators, observing the continuity of learning. What was observed was not the teaching lecturer but the learning activity that was the focus of observation. Collaborators as co-observers then recorded things that considered necessary during the learning process on the field note sheet. At this stage the data collection process had begun.

Reflection

The reflection stage is the stage where researchers analyze the data that has been collected; observation sheets, self-assessment, IPA sheets, and a questionnaire. The data obtained are compared to the success indicators established at the planning stage. If the indicator of student success has not been achieved, then the researcher would be continued to the next cycle. On the other hand, if the study results have reached the indicator of success, then the research would be stopped or would not continue to the next cycle.

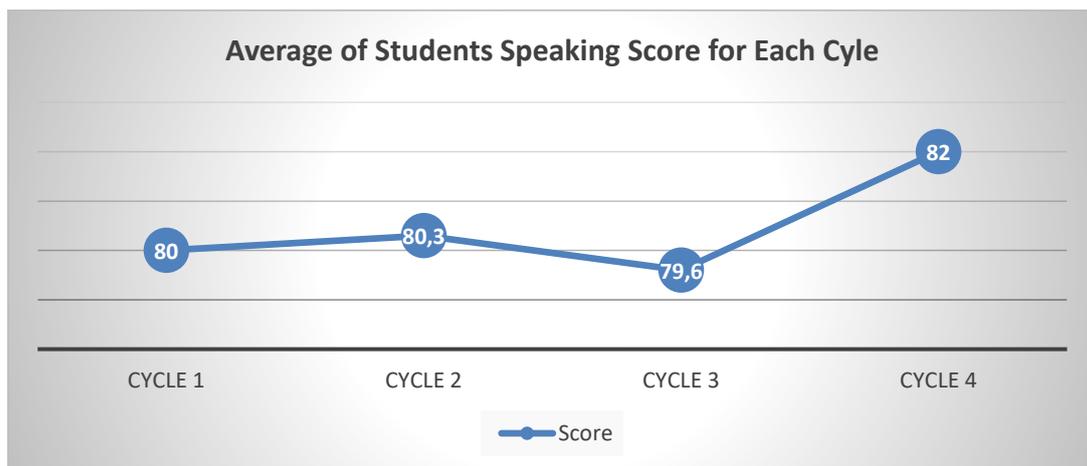
The research setting was the Speaking for Discussion class in the English Education Study Program, Department of Language and Arts, University of Bengkulu. The study was conducted from the third week of August to the fourth week of October 2021. The subject of this research was a third-semester students in the English Language Education program, Department of Language and Arts Education, University of Bengkulu Academic Year 2021/2022. There were three classes in that course, but for this study, the class used was a class that researchers taught.

The data were collected through an IPA sheet conducted by researchers at each meeting, and a field note sheet filled in by a co-observer of each meeting. There are four research instruments; IPA sheets, field notes, English tests and questionnaire. The data obtained from field notes and feedback were analyzed qualitatively. While the data obtained from integrated performance assessment and questionnaires were analyzed with a quantitative approach. The research could be successful if it had reached two indicators or criteria of success. The first indicator was that 75% of students had reached Novice High level (Grade A-) and 25% of the students fall into the Very High (Grade A) category. The second indicator was that the English-speaking skills test average grade reached the good category (Grade B).

FINDINGS

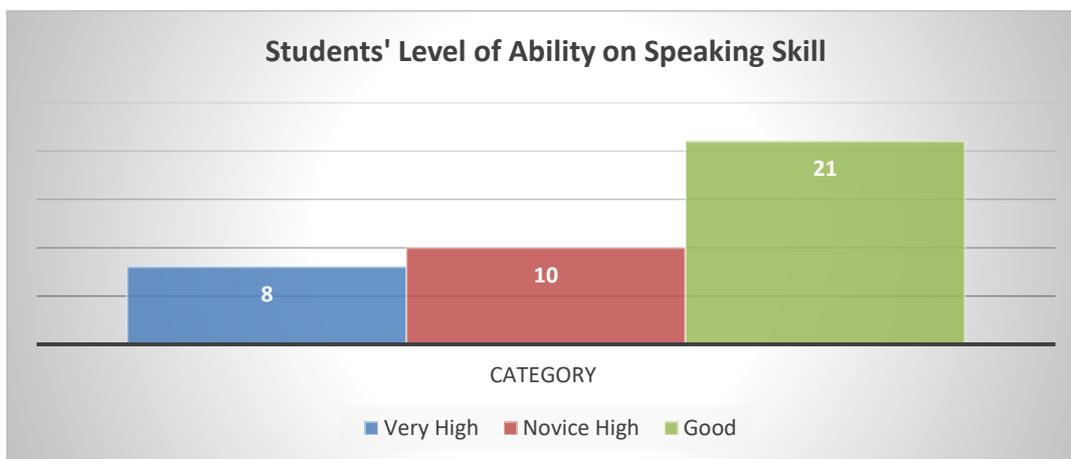
Overall, the use of IPA has contributed to students' achievement in speaking skills, especially in Speaking for Discussion class. Furthermore, students' performance in the speaking skills was at a good level which can be seen from the average grade they had, which was (B+), meaning good. However, since this Speaking for Discussion class was advanced, the difficulty level was much higher than in the previous speaking classes. In this Speaking for Discussion class, students were not only required to have high ranges of vocabulary and pronunciation, but also fluency. However, some students faced some problems dealing with the components of speaking skills such as fluency, grammar and understanding; they still had lower score for each component.

Specifically, the findings are described in the following graphs to illustrate the extent to which the implementation of the IPA model could improve students' skill in Speaking for Discussion class. Firstly, the overall result of students speaking skill per cycle can be found below.



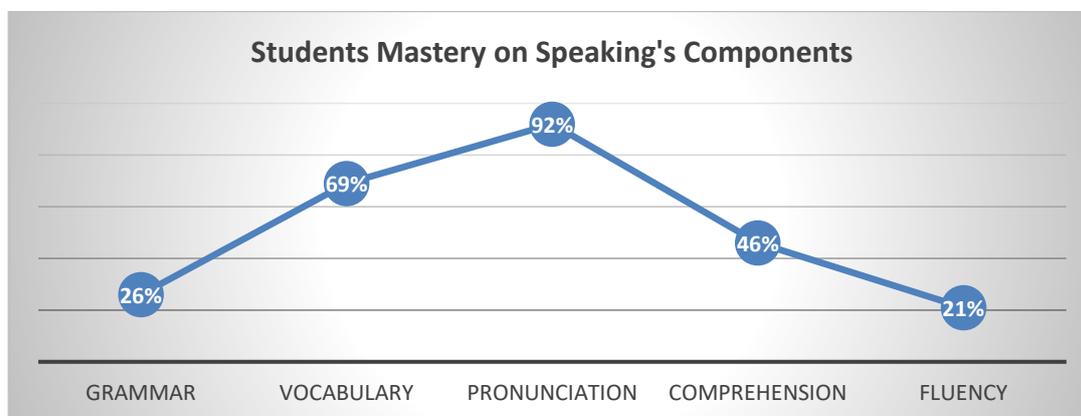
Graph 1. Speaking score per cycle

From the graph above, it is clearly seen that the students' scores for speaking slightly increase from cycle 1 to cycle 2, but the score experiences a slight decrease in cycle 3 and gets higher back in cycle 4 with an average score of 82. It means students' ability in speaking class is improved, compared to the beginning of the cycles. The high score, 82, is categorized as novice high meaning that the implementation of IPA can help students get better performance at the end of the cycle.



Graph 2. Students' Abilities on Speaking Skill

Moreover, the graph 2 shows that most students have a good level of speaking with a total of 21 students. On the other hand, only 8 out of 39 students are categorized into a high level of speaking skill, followed by ten students who were at a novice level. In short, many students in the class have shown good speaking performance.



Graph 3. Students' Mastery on Speaking

Furthermore, in term of students' mastery of speaking, it is clearly shown that fluency and grammar still became the main problem faced by students, only 21% and 26 % respectively. However, vocabulary and comprehension are also in between positions, while pronunciation (92%) shows that the students have good speaking skills.

DISCUSSION

From the findings, in general students make no considerably significant improvement from cycle to another. There are some parts that the students are good at speaking, such as they show good skills pronunciation and vocabulary mastery skill, but also there some points that they need to improve such as in term of fluency, rules and comprehension. However, in this part, there are three main points the researcher wants to discuss. *Firstly, the average score in cycle 3 decreases but then increases slightly in cycle 4.*

The possible explanation for this is that each week, they needed to study different topics of discussion. Sometimes, the topics were new for them, and it caused to lack of any background knowledge about the contents. Indeed, it would influence the final score of their speaking skills' components such as understanding and fluency. Another possible cause was the obligation of each student to give an opinion regarding the topics being discussed in class. Perhaps, some students could give their opinions due to some reasons like they had to gather completed information before taking a group discussion which takes much time. Also, the class needed students to have the ability to read the sources comprehensively and summarize them on their own as a source of information for them to take an active discussion. When the students study first (self-study) before actively participating in discussion, the learning is richer and the learning outcome is better (Lim, Ko, Park & Ihm, 2022).

Secondly, in general, the overall level of ability of students in speaking skills at a reasonable level. What makes this happen? Are there any factors influence that matter?

The assumption that led to the fact that the students could not achieve the highest level of speaking skill was due to several factors. First, the language skill level required in the class was much more complicated because they had to master all components of speaking skills such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, understanding and fluency. Based on the finding, the students must increase their capability in terms of *fluency, grammar and understanding* to perform successfully in speaking. It could not be denied that these three things are the main keys for them to get the most out of this speaking activity. However, it is understandable that the students in groups come from the same background. The power of group discussion for solving tasks can be a success if the member of the group is diverse or mixed (Taro, et.all, 2021).

In addition, the students' internal factors might affect their performance when speaking English. Most students were still not confident enough to express their ideas on a particular topic that was being discussed since they lacked knowledge about the content of the topics. Dealing with the topic of discussions, it is in line with the research done by Holandyah, Marzulina, Erlina, Harto, Amalia, Fridiyanto, & Mukminin (2022) who states

that the students face many various challenging which prevent them from having good speaking skill in English, one of them is the issue that the students look for interesting topics of conversation. Therefore, if they find uninteresting topics for discussion, they probably want to get involved in the discussion.

Also, the fear of being embarrassed and afraid of being wrong with their abilities aggravates their internal condition. The embarrassment of appearing in public also contributes to their speaking performance; including they easily give up when making mistakes in terms of pronunciation or grammar.

Furthermore, there were also external factors that possibly affected the success of students in speaking for discussion activities, including internet connection, electronic devices used and time constraints they had. These three things were believed to be the main factors that contribute positively to the failure of students in achieving existing learning goals. The class was conducted online during the pandemic of Covid-19 and most students studied at home with limited internet access. Moreover, not all students had sophisticated smartpone and laptop to support their study.

Therefore, several things need to do by students when learning English, especially for speaking skill such as keep practicing a lot (Arun & Peruvalluthi, 2015), watching English TV shows or movies, listening to English songs or podcasts or other relevant apps to support English learning such as google voice to recognize English pronunciation. Moreover, students need to focus on improving themselves in speaking English, trying to be more confident, and having dare to make mistakes in mastering speaking skill. Futhermore, teachers or schools should provide well-organized English program to help students' challenging speaking skills (Holandyah, Marzulina, Erlina, Harto, Amalia, Fridiyanto, & Mukminin, 2022).

Lastly, dealing with students' mastery of speaking components, why fluency and grammar become the main problem faced by students, meanwhile pronunciation is significantly improved for students in speaking skills

Based on the observation in class, fluency and grammar were becoming a significant matter for students due to some factors. In terms of fluency, for instance, it was hard for students to have excellent fluency if they had problems with vocabulary and grammar. It is undeniable that students who have good vocabulary and understand the rules as well tend to be fluent speakers. Almost students stated that they had ideas to get involved actively in the discussion, but because it required them to use English, it was a great challenge for them to participate. On the other hand, mastering the rules only is not enough for students to become great speakers. They also need other components of speaking skills to be a perfect speaker.

The pronunciation part was interesting to talk about here, which some students felt great about. It could be assumed that they probably often heard the words on the internet, where many students liked to search for information, including finding how to pronounce particular a word correctly using many apps like Google. However, from the questionnaire, they stated that their pronunciation improved because of their curiosity about how to pronounce the unfamiliar words they had during taking this course. From this, they felt that their pronunciation was getting improved after they studied the pronunciation by themselves in this course.

CONCLUSION

From the findings and discussion described above, it can be concluded that implementing this IPA model can improve students' speaking skills. In addition, there are also internal and external factors that play a role in determining the success of students in this speaking class. The squeeze of shame, lack of confidence and fear of doing wrong becomes internal factor students face. Furthermore, external factors such as internet access and device tools used, and time constraints are other parts that contributed to their speaking performance.

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