

# AN ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENTS' CONVERSATION PERFORMANCE OF EIGHT GRADE STUDENTS OF SMPS KATOLIK AURORA KEFAMENANU

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## Abstract

This study concerned speaking, especially in the English conversation. It aims at knowing the students' speaking English ability in conversation and the students' difficulties in English conversation. The population of this study is the second-year students of SMPS Katolik Aurora, Kefamenanu and the sample of this study is 20 students. The research design uses a descriptive quantitative method to provide a clear description of students' speaking ability in conversation. The instrument of this research is a conversation test for students to perform. The result shows that the students' speaking English ability in conversation is good because the average score is 74.89. The students' difficulties in English conversation in terms of; vocabulary is 85.25 %, pronunciation is 74 %, fluency is 73.5%, and grammar is 72 %.

**Keywords:** *Analysis, Students' conversation, Performance.*

## INTRODUCTION

Language is a means of communication for people all over the world to exchange their ideas, opinions, feelings, and thoughts. Language also enables people to socialize and connect with other people. According to Ramelan (1994), without language people cannot cooperate. English is one of the languages in the world that helps people to socialize and connect with other people from many different countries. Since many people from all over the world use English to communicate with each other, it has been an international language that plays many important roles in terms of business and commerce, science and technology, and international relation and diplomacy. Therefore, English is very important for students to learn especially to deal with the globalization era.

The conversation is one of the most prevalent uses of human language. According to Goodwin and Heritage (1990), conversation is how people socialize and develop and sustain their relationships with each other. Speaking, as one of the basic skills in English is important to use English actively. "Communicative and whole language instructional approaches promote the

integration of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in ways that reflect natural language use. But opportunities for speaking and listening require structure and planning to support language development. This digest describes what speaking involves and what good speakers do in the process of expressing themselves” (Hornby: 2000). This means, without speaking, it can be said that communication cannot be done optimally.

Previous studies have been conducted on the topic of Speaking. The first is “Improving Students’ Speaking through Communicative Language Teaching” (Efrizal, 2012). In this study, the writer proposed that English speaking ability is very important for interaction especially in this global era, many people use English as a medium of communication and it makes people who come from different countries to be easier in making interact and communication. As one of the international languages, English is also being taught in Indonesia both in religious or non-religious institutions. As an institution of education, Islamic boarding school also has a program of learning English as the way of communication in daily conversation. Speaking is one way to communicate ideas and messages orally. To enable students to communicate, we need to apply the language in real communication. According to Gert and Hans (2008: 207) in Efrizal (2012), speaking is speech or utterances to have the intention to be recognized by the speaker, and the receiver processes the statements to recognize their intentions. Brown and Yule (1999: 14) stated that speaking is depending on the complexity of the information to be communicated; however, the speakers sometimes find it difficult to clarify what they want to say. Hughes (2006: 144) stated that speaking is the first mode in which children acquire language, it is part of the daily involvement of most people with language activities, and it is the prime motor of language change.

The second is “Developing Speaking Skills through Speaking-Oriented Workshops” (Macias, 2015). In this study, the writer proposes that, in learning a language, it is important to communicate with each other, therefore, one of the best and most effective ways is to develop speaking skills in the foreign language.

The third study is “Everyday Conversation as a Context for Professional Learning and Development” (Haigh, 2005). He considers conversation a “primordial form of talk-in-interaction” because it is not subject to “functionally specific or context-specific restrictions or specialized practices or conventionalized arrangements”. He also observes that conversation is an occasion of interaction that is “co-constructed” by the participants as it runs its course in real-

time (p. 409). This shared understanding of the “procedural infrastructure” (p. 426) of conversation ensures that it does have an ordered and orderly character, despite the absence of pre-determined or prescribed practices.

The fourth study is “Leadership Coaching as Design Conversation” (Stalinski, 2004). He proposed that the root of meaning conversation is “to turn to one another” (p. 219). Systems scholar Alexander Christakis shares with members of the ISI research community during the 2000 annual conference at Asilomar that the Greek word for conversation is *synizesis*, which means “to search together”. Through such conversation, a *demosophia* emerges within a group, which is experienced as the “wisdom of the people”. Such understanding of the nature of conversation as the integration of generative and strategic dialogue gives rich context to its meaning and purpose.

The last is “Developing Speaking Skill Using Three Communicative Activities (Discussion, Problem-Solving, and Role-Playing),” (Oradee, 2012). In this study, the writer defined that English teaching and learning has the goal of focusing on students so that they can use English for communication and as a tool for furthering their studies. In the process of teaching and learning, the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) are simultaneously performed.

In Indonesia, English is known as a foreign language however the impact of English has been noticed by Indonesian citizens. Many Indonesian citizens both youths and olds are competing in this digital era for instance through Youtube, *Tiktok*, and many other media to show their talents that are very open for international people to watch and leave comments in English. Such a situation imposes Indonesian youths and olds to learn English to be able to communicate with those people. Furthermore, Indonesia has a lot of great things to display to the world such as culture, beliefs, nature, etc. In the area of education where this pandemic is attacking, everything is conducted online. The media to transfer knowledge have been changed from conventional to modern such as Zoom, Google classroom, Webex, and so forth which utilize English. People include teachers and students are pushed to adopt this new situation rapidly. The need to learn English is urgent in Indonesia.

There are also many foreign people from English speaking countries who live in Indonesia. Their children go to international schools which employ teachers who can speak English. The ability to speak English now is not only for English teachers. Teachers from other

disciplines too are required to speak English when teaching. As Brown and Yule (1983) said, speaking serves two main functions: transactional (transfer of information) and interactional (maintenance of social relationships), students' ability to speak English in conversation is important to learn information in English and to transfer the information to others.

However, not every student shows a willingness to speak in a conversation. Reluctant students are more passive in a conversation and active students are not always correct when speaking English. Speaking in a conversation is quite challenging for students when coming to find the appropriate words to convey ideas in a spontaneous situation which gives short time to think. This is why the writer carried out this study in SMPS Katolik Aurora as she conducted her teaching practice in this school and has observed the students for one month therefore this study is hoped to find out the students' speaking English ability in conversation and the students' difficulties in English conversation.

## **METHOD**

A method is a way that is used to reach the goal of research. The research design of this study was descriptive quantitative because the goal of the study was to provide a clear description of improving speaking ability through conversation. The population covered the second-year students of SMPS Katolik Aurora Kefamenanu that consisted of 60 students and the sample was 20 students taken by random sampling. An instrument is a tool that is used by the researcher for obtaining the data needed. The instrument that was used in this study was a conversation test that focused on the use of simple past tense. The test was prepared by the researcher. Students' responses in the conversation would identify the difficult words in the conversation. In the data collection, the researcher used library research and field research. To analyze the students' performance in conversation the writer used transcription, categorizing, tabulation, analysis.

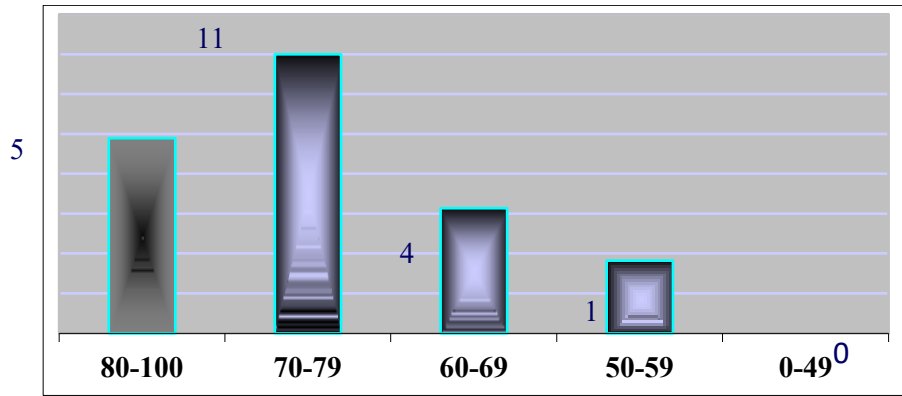
## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

In this section, the results of the study on speaking ability through conversation done by the second-year students of SMPS Katolik Aurora Kefamenanu in the school years of 2018/2019 are presented. 20 students as the sample of this study were offered some topics of conversations to perform. The result of their performance is shown in the table below.

No	IN	Scores
1	ID	77.5
2	LB	75
3	JT	82.5
4	GM	87.5
5	IF	74.5
6	PA	70
7	NM	87.5
8	GM	63.7
9	GB	73.7
10	EN	75
11	AK	76.2
12	GT	70
13	RN	78.7
14	AE	63.7
15	AB	63.7
16	DF	66.2
17	IB	86.2
18	PS	95
19	MC	78.8
20	JM	52.5
<b>Average</b>		<b>74.89</b>

**Table 1.** The Students' Average Scores in Conversation Test

Table 1 presents the students' average scores on the conversation test. The data shows that the highest score was 95 and the lowest score was 52.5. The students' level of ability was identified from very good level up to poor level. The data reveals that only one student scored 95. Two students scored 87.5. One student scored 86.2. One student scored 82.5. One student scored 78.8. One student scored 78.7. One student scored 77.5. One student scored 76.2. Two students scored 75. One student scored 74.5. One student scored 73.7. Two students scored 70. One student scored 66.2. Three students scored 63.7. One student scored 52.5. The average score was 74.89 and the level of ability was good.



**Graph I.** The Distribution of Students' Level Ability

Graph 1 presents the total of students who were distributed in very good level up to poor level. The data shows that five students scored 80-100, eleven students scored 70-79, four students scored 60-69, one student scored 50-59, and no one student scored 0-49 which was categorized as fair. The data indicates that the highest frequency was from a good level.

No	F	V	P	G
1	80	75	80	75
2	75	70	80	75
3	75	100	80	75
4	90	100	85	75
5	70	80	70	70
6	65	80	65	70
7	80	80	100	90
8	60	70	60	65
9	75	75	70	75
10	75	80	75	70
11	75	80	70	80
12	75	80	70	75
13	80	85	75	75
14	70	65	60	60
15	65	70	60	60
16	65	75	65	60

17	80	100	85	80
18	90	100	100	90
19	75	75	80	75
20	50	65	50	45
	<b>73.5</b>	<b>85.25</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>72</b>
	<b>Good</b>	<b>Very Good</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Good</b>

**Table 2.** The Students' Answers Aspects in Conversation

Notes : 1. F : Fluency

2. V : Vocabulary

3. P : Pronunciation

4. G : Grammar

Table 2 shows the students' level ability in conversation test. The data shows that the highest score was 85.25 and the lowest score was 72. The students' level of ability was categorized from very good level up to good level. The data reveals that in fluency, two students scored 90. Four students scored 80. Seven students scored 75. Two students scored 70. Three students scored 65. One student scored 60. One student scored 50. The average score was 73.5 and the level of ability was good.

The data of vocabulary shows that four students scored 100. One student scored 85. Six students scored 80. Four students scored 75. Three students scored 70. Two students scored 65. The average score was 85.25 and the level of ability was very good.

The data of pronunciation presents that two students scored 100. Two students scored 85. Four students scored 80. Two students scored 75. Four students scored 70. Two students scored 65. Three students scored 60. One student scored 50. The average score was 74 and the level of ability was good.

The data of grammar shows that two students scored 90. Two students scored 80. Eight students scored 75. Three students scored 70. One student scored 65. Three students scored 60. One student scored 45. The average score was 72 and the level of ability was good.

## CONCLUSION

In this research the writer concluded that the first: The highest score was 95 and the lowest score was 52.5. The students' level of ability was varied from very good level up to poor level. The average score was 74.89 and the level of ability was good. And the second: The study showed that the second year students of SMPSK Katolik Aurora dealt with some difficulties in conversation. The difficulties of conversation aspects are 73.5% for fluency, 85.25% for vocabulary, 74% for pronunciation and 72% for grammar. It shows that vocabulary was the easiest aspect for the students and grammar was the most difficult aspect for the students.

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