



Analysis of Fourth-Grade Students' Ability to Express Their Opinions in Elementary Schools

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Abstract: Speaking skills are crucial for every student, especially in expressing opinions. However, some students still cannot tell stories and convey their respective opinions. There are several factors influencing it. This study aims to identify the factors that influence the speaking skills of fourth-grade students and their efforts to improve their speaking skills in expressing the opinions of fourth-grade students. This study was carried out in one of the state elementary schools in Pedurungan Kidul 02, Semarang, Central Java. The data collected was qualitative in the form of a narrative about the ability of speaking skills in expressing opinions, the factors that influence speaking skills, and efforts to improve speaking skills in expressing opinions. The data source used was the primary data source and the secondary data source. The data collection techniques were observation, interview, test, and documentation. The results of this study show that: (1) the storytelling ability of the three students of grade 4B Pedurungan Kidul 02 Elementary School Semarang City is still in the low category because students are still unable to retell the stories and are not fluent in expressing their opinions, (2) the factors that influence students speaking skills are the first supporting factors which include models, methods, and learning media as well as linguistic factors and non-linguistic factors. The second factor is inhibiting factors, including physical and psychological conditions, and (3) the efforts made to improve students speaking skills are that teachers must modify the use of learning methods, improve facilities and infrastructure, and students must practice a lot to tell stories. This research contributes to creating a learning media that can attract students' attention during learning. In addition, modifying or collaborating on learning models and methods used for learning is expected so that students do not feel bored and saturated when participating in learning.

Keywords: speaking skills, expressing opinions, storytelling

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Introduction

Along with the times, there will always be a change and development in the education system in Indonesia. Changes and development can be seen from various educational system innovations, implementing learning activities, learning media, and renewal policies of applicable education standards such as curriculum changes. The curriculum must respond to each school's situation, improve quality, and address students' needs and progress (Hartoyo & Rahmadayanti, 2022).

The Covid-19 pandemic since 2020 has caused various problems, especially in education. One of these problems is the learning crisis that causes differences in the achievement of student competencies at school. To overcome this problem, a learning recovery policy is needed. Nadiem Anwar Makarim, as the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology of the Republic of Indonesia, has officially launched the *Merdeka* Curriculum in February 2022 as an improvement of the 2013 Curriculum and an effort to overcome the learning crisis in Indonesia caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The *Merdeka* Curriculum has a different concept from the 2013 curriculum, namely the freedom of learning idea. Freedom of learning entails allowing schools, teachers, and students to innovate freely, learn independently and creatively, and foster a pleasant learning environment (Pawero et al., 2022). In

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this independent curriculum, there is no longer a requirement for achieving a minimum completeness value. Instead, this curriculum emphasises quality learning to produce quality students who embody the Pancasila student profile and are competent to face global challenges. Additionally, instructors must be able to adapt to technological advances (Fitriyah & Wardani, 2022).

The independent curriculum has several subjects given to elementary schools, one of which is the Indonesian language. Indonesian language learning aims to improve students' ability to communicate in Indonesian well, correctly, clearly, and precisely, both orally and in writing (Depdiknas, 2006). In elementary schools, the scope of Indonesian language subjects includes reading, speaking, listening, and writing skills. Speaking skills are the most frequently used of the five skills.

Skill is an activity that requires practice. It can also be interpreted that skill implements action (Endang, 2019). Speaking is a skill or a person's ability to express expression, convey opinions and thoughts, and express their feelings through words expressed orally (Tarigan, 2015). Speaking is a complex process because speaking involves several things, such as thinking, language, and social skills (Astutik, 2013). In social life, speaking skills significantly influence the school or education field, family environment, and public environment. One form of influence is when someone wants to convey a message and express an opinion.

KTSP has explained that the fundamental purpose of acquiring oral communication skills lies in utilising spoken discourse as a means to articulate ideas, emotions, facts, personal encounters, viewpoints, and remarks within the context of interviews, report deliveries, group deliberations, public addresses, as well as diverse literary compositions encompassing short narratives, teen novels, poetry, and drama (Depdiknas, 2006). When students can master their speaking skills, they will easily convey their opinions and express their ideas and feelings when they speak. However, in reality, the ability of each student's speaking skills is still inadequate. Some students can speak fluently, but presenting the topic of conversation is less attractive, causing the listener to become bored. Some students present ordinary matters but cause listeners to be interested because they are presented with the right style and way of speaking.

Observations found in grade four show that students' speaking skills are still relatively low. It can be seen when the teacher asks students to tell stories, give responses, and express their opinions in class. Only a few students want to represent them. Of the 28 students in grade four, the value of Indonesian language subjects, especially in learning speaking skills, three students do not reach the passing grade score of 75. The three students have scored in the 40- 60 range. Then the remaining 25 students get scores of 77-90. Based on the results of interviews with fourth-grade teachers, learning Indonesian in the aspect of speaking skills, students use direct practice in class by dialoguing with friends, telling stories, expressing ideas, and expressing their opinions.

The fourth-grade teacher reported that students continue to struggle when they are asked to recount stories and convey their individual opinions in class. Some students are already fluent in expressing their views. Some students are fluent in speaking their desires, expressing happiness, sadness, and fatigue. Some students still look confused to express their thoughts and feelings, so they still stammer when speaking. Some students are still hesitant and do not dare to come to the front of the class to express their opinions and feelings. The fourth-grade teacher also explained that several factors might contribute to students' speaking difficulties, especially when asked to express their views. These include not maximizing the learning process at school, lack of student reading literacy, lack of student confidence, and lack of parental guidance at home. However, this situation has become the duty of parents and the school, especially teachers, to play an essential role in training and helping students have good speaking skills.

The first study has a theme regarding speaking skills. In this first study, the results showed that the factors that influence speaking skills in students are problems with one's pronunciation apparatus, psychological factors, neurological factors, semantic factors, and linguistic factors (Padmawati et al., 2019). While in the second study with the same theme about students' speaking skills. In this second study, the results showed that the factors that can affect students' speaking skills, namely the first is linguistic factors such as pronunciation, intonation, word selection, and accuracy of the target of the conversation. The second factor is non-language factors such as attitude, mentality, eye gaze, gestures, and reasoning (Faziah, 2022). From the first study and this second study, there are differences in the factors that influence speaking skills in the second study students. In the first study, psychological, neurological, semantic, and linguistic factors influence students' speaking skills. But on the contrary,

the second study explained that the factors that influence students' speaking skills are linguistic factors and non-linguistic factors.

From previous research, it can be analyzed that there are several kinds of factors that can affect students' speaking skills. These factors are psychological, neurological factors, semantic factors, linguistic factors, linguistic factors, and non-language factors. The difference between the previous research and the research conducted by the researcher is that this research will focus on students' speaking skills in expressing their opinions.

Based on the above explanation, the researcher will dig deeper into students' speaking skills when they express their opinions. This study aims to determine what factors affect students' skills when expressing their respective views and how efforts can be made to improve their speaking skills when they express their opinions.

Methods

This study employed a qualitative research method with a descriptive methodology. Post-positivism or interpretive philosophy underlies qualitative research methods (Sugiyono, 2022). This qualitative research produces a more explanatory analysis. The subjects in this study were fourth-grade teachers and fourth-grade students of Pedurungan Kidul 02 Elementary School Semarang City. In this study, researchers took three students from 28 fourth-grade students. The data sources in this study were primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through interviews with class teachers and observations of Indonesian language learning activities. Secondary data in this study included a photo of Indonesian language learning activities and a video recording of student practice when telling stories and expressing their opinions.

The first data collection technique used in this study was observation. Observation in this study was carried out by observing the learning activities of speaking skills in expressing opinions on the content of Indonesian language lessons in grade four Pedurungan Kidul 02 Elementary School Semarang City. The second was an interview. This study interviewed class teachers and fourth-grade students of Pedurungan Kidul 02 Elementary School Semarang City. Then the third was the test. The test referred to here was a written test instrument in the form of a student worksheet to answer several questions that have been provided. In addition, it also used a practical test instrument that is used to assess students' ability to retell a story and the ability of students to express their opinions which include several aspects, namely aspects of fluency, aspects of memorization, and aspects of language style. And the last was documentation. The documentation used in this study was a video when students are retelling a story and expressing their opinions.

The data analysis technique used in this research was the Miles and Huberman model data analysis technique. The data analysis activities carried out are the first data collection in this qualitative research. Data is collected using observation, in-depth interviews, tests, and documentation. The second was data reduction. In this study, reducing data will only focus on speaking skills in conveying students' opinions. The obtained data was then collected and written into a research note. Then the third was data presentation. The presentation of data in this qualitative research can be applied in the form of a brief description, a chart, a flowchart, a relationship between categories, and others (Sugiyono, 2022). The presentation of data by the author was about the speaking skills of fourth-grade students. The data and information presented by the author are the results of data collection and reduction in test sheets and observations made to fourth-grade students of Pedurungan Kidul 02 Elementary School Semarang City.

The conclusion in qualitative research was a new research finding that had not existed before. In this study, the author drew the research conclusions based on the results of the reduction and analysis of data obtained regarding the speaking skills of fourth-grade students of Pedurungan Kidul 02 Elementary School Semarang City.

Results and Discussion

Based on the findings, some students still have not mastered their speaking skills and cannot convey their opinions. In this study, the authors only took a sample of three students. The sample was taken based on the lowest score of 28 students in grade four. During observation activities in the

Indonesian language lesson content in class, the author observed the three students during learning activities.

The results of the observations made by the author showed that the three students were not very active in participating in Indonesian language learning in class. The three students were only silent when the teacher explained the learning in class, and occasionally, they talked with other friends, so they did not pay attention when the teacher explained in class. Then when the teacher asked students to convey or express their respective opinions, the three students were just silent. But then, the teacher appointed one of the three students to try to express or convey his opinion, but the student was still quiet and could not answer. Then the test results conducted by the author for the three students also showed that they still had not mastered their speaking skills and could not convey their respective opinions.

The authors have gathered data from interviews, observations, written tests, and oral tests conducted with respondents. Based on this data, the authors present their research results and discussion on the indicators of speaking skills in expressing opinions among fourth-grade students of Pedurungan Kidul 02 Elementary School Semarang City as follows.

a. Memorization

Memorization is a sound pronounced clearly when someone is speaking so that the listener quickly understands every word spoken by someone. Of the three students in grade four, no student had problems with pronunciation when speaking. Even the three students who were used as research samples by this author also did not experience problems with pronunciation when speaking. It can be said that pronunciation in fourth-grade students is already included in the excellent category.

b. Fluency

The author chose the three students as the research sample in this fluency indicator. The results show they cannot regulate tone, speed, and punctuation when telling stories. It is indicated by the ability of students who still stutter when telling stories, voices that are less loud when telling stories, rushing when telling stories, and there are still students who are unable to convey their own opinions. Therefore, the fluency of speech possessed by these three grade IV students is included in the deficient category because some students still stutter when telling stories and cannot convey their own opinions. The three students who became the author's research samples were quite good regarding the choice of words or diction. They could choose reasonable and appropriate words when communicating with their interlocutors, telling stories and expressing their opinions. It is because the teacher always gives and teaches some newly encountered vocabulary so that students know the meaning of the vocabulary and can place when the vocabulary is used when speaking. In addition, students also often learn some foreign vocabulary when studying at home.

c. Style of Speech

Style of speech or facial expressions, in this style of speech or facial expressions, is one part that attracts listeners to focus on the conversation. Based on the three students who became the research sample, it can be concluded that they still cannot use facial expressions when telling stories. When asked to tell a story, the three students were silent, and their bodies were stiff. Therefore, the speaking style or facial expressions possessed by the three students in grade 4B are still lacking. The four indicators of speaking skills above show that students' speaking skills in each indicator get poor results, so students still need guidance from the teacher. The following are the results of the recapitulation of data on speaking skills in expressing opinions of fourth-grade students.

This research reveals that there are still certain markers of speaking skills that students in fourth grade do not fully understand. These indicators demonstrate already good levels of memory on the part of the students. Students still deliver stories with stuttering, a pace that is too quick when telling stories, pauses in punctuation that is still inaccurate, and a lack of confidence on the part of the students. Therefore, the level of student fluency is not adequate. How students communicate verbally, as well as the looks on their faces, is unsuitable since the students are reticent and do not demonstrate any emotion while they are relating stories.

Table 3. Recapitulation of Data from Speaking Skills in Expressing Student's Opinions through Storytelling

Number	Student's Name	Written Test	Memorization Aspect	Fluency Aspect	Speech Style Aspect	Final Score	Category
1.	AHAZ	100	34	25	8	84	A
2.	LCS	40	34	8	8	45	C
3.	SNN	40	34	16	8	49	C

Table 4. Value Interval (Amiruddin, 2010)

Value Interval	Predicate	Category
81-100	A	Very Good
61-80	B	Good
41-60	C	Enough
21-40	D	Less Good
0-20	E	Very Less Good

The passing grade scores in Indonesian language subjects in grade 4B Pedurungan Kidul 02 Elementary School Semarang is 70. Thus, based on the results of all indicators that have been observed by the author on the speaking skills in expressing opinions of fourth-grade students, it can be concluded that of the three research samples selected by the author, there is only one student who has speaking skills in the "very good" category. At the same time, the speaking skills of the other two students are still included in the "very low" category. It is because the final scores of the two students are still below the minimum completeness criteria, while the final score of one student is above the minimum completeness value.

Factors Affecting the Speaking Skills of Fourth-Grade Students

In the observations and interviews, the author found several factors that can affect students' speaking skills. These factors are divided into two, supporting factors and inhibiting factors. Both factors are explained as follows.

1. Supporting Factors

Supporting factors in students' speaking skills are the teacher's planning and implementation of learning and factors within the student. Learning planning and implementation carried out by teachers are usually in the form of models, methods, and teaching media used during speaking skills learning activities. Using appropriate learning models, methods, and media will support speaking skills learning activities to be carried out well. Based on interviews with fourth-grade teachers, the authors found that the supporting factors for students' speaking skills are the methods and media used during speaking skills learning activities. In teaching in class, the teacher applies the show-and-tell method, which is the use of real and direct learning methods. In addition, the teacher also uses videos played via YouTube as learning media in the classroom. While the supporting factors that there are in students, namely linguistic factors and non-language factors. The linguistic factors are the accuracy of students' pronunciation, the choice of words used by students, and the pausing of students' punctuation when speaking. For non-language factors themselves, namely factors that are not related to language. Non-language factors usually include students' fluency when speaking, body gestures or facial expressions of students when speaking, and the behaviour of students who are calm, not too stiff, not afraid, not embarrassed, not anxious, and not nervous.

2. Inhibiting Factors

Inhibiting factors for students' speaking skills. Based on the interviews and observations, the author found that the inhibiting factors in students' speaking skills usually come from the family environment and within the students themselves. The inhibiting factors that come from the family environment are the lack of learning assistance from parents to their children, and also, students do not take any lessons at home. Parents are too concerned with their work rather than accompanying and helping their children to study at home, so when children feel difficult when looking at home, no one can help to teach and attend them to learn. At the same time, the inhibiting factors of speaking

skills include physical factors, such as someone who has a problem with an imperfect pronunciation tool and psychological factors, namely fear, nervousness, embarrassment, and anxiety in the student.

Efforts Made to Improve Speaking Skills in Expressing Opinions of Fourth-Grade Students

Speaking skills and expressing opinions are very important for students. After the author obtained information about the ability to speak skills and factors that can affect students' speaking skills in grade four, the author made observations and interviews with students and grade four teachers regarding their efforts to improve speaking skills and the ability to convey students' opinions. The efforts made to improve the speaking skills of grade IV students are: (1) teachers must provide students exercises every day. The exercise is like the teacher giving a different reading text to students every day. The teacher asks students to read the text, then practice retelling the story in front of the class and invites them to express their opinions on the text they read; (2) teachers must modify the learning models and methods used during speaking skill learning activities in the classroom. If previously the teacher used the show-and-tell learning method only, then the teacher can modify the show-and-tell method with the role-playing method. This role-playing method can also be said to be the role-playing method. This role-playing method can be done by students doing drama activities with other students, or the teacher can ask students to portray someone's character. Applying this role-playing method can help students train their speaking skills to be even better. Applying this role-playing method has a very high appeal to students because it will increase student creativity so that students will be more active in learning activities. This method can also train students' speaking fluency and train students to be more confident; (3) teachers must improve facilities and infrastructure to support students' speaking skills and learning activities, such as using pictures. Using this image, media can stimulate students' creativity to convey a story or express an opinion according to their imagination; and (4) teachers must always motivate students daily. With this motivation, it can encourage students to be more enthusiastic about learning, especially during learning activities in the classroom.

The results of research that has been done before with the research conducted by researchers this time have a difference. The difference lies in the speaking indicators used by researchers in conducting research. In this study, researchers only used three indicators: memorization, fluency, and body gestures. Then the difference in research lies in the factors that influence the speaking skills of each student. The results of research on factors affecting students' speaking skills in the study explained that two factors affect students' speaking skills, namely supporting factors which include models, methods, learning media, accuracy of student memorization, selection of words used by students, student body gestures, and use of punctuation. The inhibiting factors include students' imperfect pronunciation, lack of learning assistance from parents, and student fear. In addition, previous studies have not given some efforts that teachers and students can do to improve students' speaking skills and ability to express opinions. In this study, the researcher has explained the efforts that teachers and students can make to improve their speaking ability and ability to express the opinions of each student. So, it can be concluded that this research is different from the studies that have been done before. It is evidenced by the difference in research findings from previous studies with this study.

Conclusion

To conclude, the speaking skills of the two fourth-grade students at Pedurungan Kidul 02 Elementary School Semarang City are categorized as "low". Meanwhile, the speaking skill of one fourth-grade student is categorized as "very good". Based on the test results of the three students, it is shown that only one student scored above the KKM. Students still do not understand several indicators, namely indicators of pronunciation, fluency, and body gestures. Factors affecting students' speaking skills are divided into supporting and inhibiting factors. Supporting factors include methods, models, learning media, student memorization, word selection, and punctuation. At the same time, the inhibiting factors are imperfect pronunciation tools and a lack of learning assistance for children. Efforts that can be made to improve students' speaking skills are modifying learning methods and models that will be used in speaking skills learning activities in the classroom, as well as improving facilities and infrastructure for learning speaking skills in the classroom, for example, by using image media to increase student creativity during speaking skills learning activities in the classroom. Meanwhile, the efforts that students can make are to learn more foreign vocabulary and often practice telling stories.

This research is different from the research that has been done before. The difference lies in the indicators used for research and the findings of new research results that have not existed previously.

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