DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILL
OF GRADE VIII STUDENTS
THROUGH SHORT CONVERSATION

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to find out whether or not the grade VIII students' speaking skill at SMP Negeri 19 Palu can be developed by applying short conversation. This research employed pre-experimental design. The sample of this research was the grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 19 Palu consisting of 20 students and selected by using cluster sampling technique. The instrument of data collection was a test; pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was used to measure the students' speaking skill before treatment; and the post-test was used to measure the students' speaking skill after the treatment was given. The data was analyzed statistically. The result of data analysis showed that the hypothesis was accepted by regarding to the analysis that t-counted (8.04) is higher than the t-table (1.729). The degree of freedom (df) of the table is 20-1 = 19. The level of significance is set up at 0.05. It means that the application of short conversation can significantly develop the grade VIII students' speaking skill at SMP Negeri 19 palu.

Keywords: Developing, Speaking Skill, Short Conversation

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of the skills in language learning that has to be fulfilled. Speaking is a skill which holds oral communication that involves meaning derivation between two persons or more, as the speaker and the listener. Both are talking about the content that is related to their needs, situation, and purposes. The spoken contents or ideas contain information that we are expected to hold in memory, and all at once to give feedback to the interlocutor. According to Chaney and Burke (1998:13)

> Speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of the context. The skill is acquired by much repetition; it is primarily a neuromuscular and not an intellectual process. It consists of competence in sending and receiving messages.

Relates to the definition above, it can be inferred that speaking is expressing ideas, opinions, or feelings to others by using words or sounds.

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There are some components in speaking. The students who master the components of speaking can easily perform their speaking. According to Heaton (1988:100), "There are three components of speaking. They are accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility". The used of those components of speaking can affect the listener to comprehend, to be clear, and to be easy to understand messages produced by the speaker. As the affect, the process of communication will be run well.

Fluency relates to the condition or quality of being fluent. It is one of the learners' problems in using English orally. Speaker should transfer his/her thoughts fluently where the speaker shall not too slow and not too fast or other listeners may get bored or lose their attention. Gu (2010:6) states "Fluency is the ability to read, speak, or write easily, smoothly, and expressively". At the same time, Davis (1989:25) defines "Fluency in speaking is achieved through the series to the situational dialogue". It can be concluded that in fluency, the speaker tries to use the language in simple form by focusing on the point of messages conveyed. They may use sufficient grammar in order to get easier to comprehend the meaning. The speaker does not have a long pause in searching for perfect grammar in speaking.

One of the goals of learners in learning speaking is accuracy. It is related to the exact of being correct and without error, especially the result from careful effort. In this case, good pronunciation and structure can make the speakers' utterances clearly understandable. Students at the school faced this problem when they pronounce English words. It is caused by their mother tongue. They should be accustomed to practicing those sounds by giving lot of practice. Gu (2010:7) exposes "Accuracy is the ability to produce the correct sentences using correct grammar and vocabulary". In this case the speakers are demanded to use correct grammar in using the target language.

The most important factor in communication is comprehensibility. Comprehensibility is the ability of how to make the language produced is understandable for the interlocutor. Therefore, those speakers who can make their interlocutors understand can be justified by having a good comprehensibility. According to Richard and Rodgers (1986:5), "The comprehensibility includes the ability to understand someone's utterance (speaker) and ability in speaking to be understood by other (listener)". It shows that the content of the speaking should be well understood by both the speaker and the listener before they took a communication.

The grade VIII students of SMP Negeri 19 Palu got difficulties when they speak English. There are some factors that influence the students to speak English; The students are

not interested and motivated in learning English, they had lack of vocabulary, they were not confident to speak English directly with their English teacher and their classmates, they were afraid of making mistakes in speaking English, and they rarely practiced speaking English. It means that they need more chance to practice it. To make the research specific, the researcher provided the limitation of the research. The researcher focused on her research in developing students' speaking skill through short conversation focusing on fluency and accuracy.

Short conversation is one of activity to help beginning learners build basic English skill. It consists of six up to twelve sentences between two people. This activity gives more opportunity to the student to speak. It is also called as a free communicative interaction. It means that the students are free to use their own words to talk about their own way. According to Thornbury (1984:25) "Conversation models can help students increase their fluency, accuracy, and confidence by encouraging them to progress from giving brief response to engaging in more expanded, interactive discussion". The teacher can start or create the situation in which students or learners want to talk. Conversation involves at least two people where both speaker and listener need to communicate to exchange information, ideas, opinions, views, or feelings. The advantage of short conversation is that the learners are not only able to understand the words of English but also able to understand the correct English rules. It can be said that learning short conversation can represent the learners' intention by using suitable words in the sentence.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher formulated a research question as follow: *Can grade VIII students speaking skill at SMP Negeri 19 Palu be developed through Short Conversation?*. The objective of the research was to find out that the students' speaking skill of grade VIII students of SMP Negeri 19 Palu could be developed through Short Conversation.

METHODOLOGY

In conducting this research, the researcher applied pre-experimental research design. It means that there was only one class as the sample of the research. The pre-test was given to measure the student's speaking ability before the treatment. Then, the researcher treated the students through short conversation, and the post-test was given to measure the effect of this technique. The design of this research is proposed by Arikunto (2006: 85).

$$01 \quad X \quad 02$$

Where:

01   : pre-test
X   : treatment
02   : post-test

   Population is a group of people, things, or events which are going to be investigated. Best (1981:8) states, "Population is any group of individuals that have one or more characters in common had are of interest to the researcher". The population of this research is the grade VIII student at SMP Negeri 19 Palu. It consists of four parallel classes. The total number of population is 78 students.

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Table 1 Population

Number	Class	Number of students
1	VIII^A	20
2	VIII^B	20
3	VIII^C	19
4	VIII^D	19
Total		**78**

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   Best (1981:8) argues, "Sample is a small proportion selected for observation and analysis." In selecting the sample, the researcher applied cluster sampling technique. The researcher chose VIII^B as the sample of the research which consisted of 20 students.

   Ary et al (2002: 35) adds, "Independent variables are antecedent to dependent variable and are known or are hypothesized to influence the dependent variable, which is the outcome. The treatment is the independent variable and the outcome is dependent variable." In this research, there were two variables which were categorized into dependent and independent variables. The researcher formulated speaking skill as the dependent variable and the application of short conversation as the independent variable of this research.

   In conducting this research the researcher used two different kinds of instruments; they are test and non test instruments. The test instrument was in form of oral test consisting of pre-test and post-test. On the other side, the non test covered observation. The non-test instrument is used to collect additional information related to the research before the researcher conducted the treatment. In administering the test to the students, the researcher employed the scale of scoring as proposed by Heaton (1988:100) as in table 2.

   The researcher analyzed the data by using statistical analysis. It is used to analyze the test instruments result (pre-test and post-test). The researcher computed the individual score by using formula recommended by Arikunto (2006:308):

$$\sum = \frac{x}{N} \, x \, 100$$

Where:

$\sum$: standard score

X   : raw score

N   : maximum score

Table 2 Speaking Scoring System

	Fluency	**Accuracy**
5	Has to make an effort at times to search for words. Nevertheless, smooth delivery on the whole and only a few unnatural processes.	Pronunciation is slightly influenced by the mother tongue. A few minor and grammatical errors, but most utterances are correct.
4	Although he has to make an effort and search of words, there are not too many unnatural pauses. Fairly smooth delivery mostly. Occasionally fragmentary but succeed in conveying the general meaning. Fair range of expression.	Pronunciation is still moderately influenced by the mother tongue but not serious phonological errors. A few grammatical and lexical errors but only one two major errors causing confusion.
3	Has to make an effort for much of the time. Often has to search for desired meaning. Rather halting delivery, and fragmentary range of expression often limited.	Pronunciation is still influenced by the mother tongue but only a few serious phonological errors. Several grammatical and lexical errors, some of which cause confusion.
2	Long pauses while the searches for desired meaning. Frequently fragmentary and halting delivery. Almost gives up making an effort at times. Limited range of expression.	Pronunciation seriously influenced by the mother tongue with error causing a breakdown in communication. Many "basic" grammatical and lexical errors.
1	Full of long and unnatural pauses. Very halting and fragmentary delivery. At times gives up making the effort. Very limited range of expression.	Serious pronunciation errors as well as many "basic" grammatical and lexical errors. No evidence of having mastered any of language skill and areas practiced in the course.

The researcher computed the students' mean score by using formula as recommended by Arikunto (2006:306):

$$X = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Where:

X   : mean score

$\sum x$: sum of the score (total)

N   : number of students

After finding out the mean score of the students, next the researcher calculated the mean deviation score using the following formula from Arikunto (2006:307):

$$Md = \frac{\sum d}{N}$$

Where:

Md   : mean deviation

$\sum d$: the sum of deviation

N   : number of students

After that, the researcher also calculated the square deviation by using the formula proposed by Arikunto (2006:308) as follow:

$$\sum x^2 d = \sum d^2 - \frac{(\sum d)^2}{N}$$

Where:
$\sum x^2 d$: the sum of square deviation
$\sum d^2$: the number of deviation (d^2)
$\sum d$: the sum of deviation
N   : number of students

In proving the significance between the mean of pre-test and post-test, the researcher applied formula proposed by Bungin (2005:191) as follow:

$$t = \frac{Md}{\sqrt{\dfrac{\sum d^2}{N(N-1)}}}$$

Where:
T   : t-test score
Md   : mean deviation
$\sum d^2$: the number of deviation (d^2)
N   : number of students

FINDINGS

The researcher presents and analyzes the data taken from oral test (pre-test and post-test). The researcher used descriptive and statistical analysis. The data from the observation are explained descriptively while the test is explained statistically. In order to conclude whether the students' speaking skill was developed or not, the researcher tested the students both before and after treatment. The pre-test was conducted on September 8, 2014 and the post-test was held on October 11, 2014. Result of the pre-test and post-test are presented in table 3 below.

Based on the table 3, the highest score of the pre-test was 70 and the lowest is 20. After getting the total score of the students, the researcher computed the students' mean score by using the formula below:

$$X = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

$$X = \frac{945}{20}$$

X = **47.25**

Table 3 Result of the Pre-test

Number	Initial	Score			
		Gained		Total	Standard Score
		Fluency	Accuracy		
1	ADI	2	2.5	4.5	45
2	ADR	3	1	4	40
3	AGR	2	2	4	40
4	ALU	1	3	4	40
5	AND	4	3	7	**70**
6	ARI	3.5	3	6.5	65
7	DEL	4	1.5	5.5	55
8	EKS	5	1.5	6.5	65
9	FAH	2	2	4	40
10	FEBR	5	2	7	**70**
11	IIN	3.5	1	4.5	45
12	JUA	2	2.5	4.5	45
13	MREZ	4	2	6	60
14	MRIZ	4.5	1	5.5	55
15	MSYA	3	4	7	**70**
16	RIC	3	1.5	4.5	45
17	SEL	1	2	3	30
18	SIT	2	3	5	50
19	SUS	2.5	4	6.5	65
20	VEL	1	1	2	**20**
Total		58	43.5	101.5	915

After the researcher conducted the treatment, the students' post-test results are shown as in table 4.

After doing the computation, the researcher found that the highest score is 90 and the lowest score is 60. Then, the researcher calculated the mean score by using the formula below:

$$X = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

$$X = \frac{1.635}{20}$$

X = **77.85**

Table 4 Result of the Post-test

| Number | Initial | Score | | | |
| | | Gained | | Total | Standard Score |
		Fluency	Accuracy		
1	ADI	4	3	7	70
2	ADR	4	3	7	70
3	AGR	4.5	3	7.5	75
4	ALU	3	3	6	**60**
5	AND	5	3	8	80
6	ARI	4	4.5	8.5	85
7	DEL	5	3	8	80
8	EKS	3.5	5	8	80
9	FAH	5	4.5	9.5	**95**
10	FEBR	5	3.5	8.5	85
11	IIN	4.5	2	6.5	65
12	JUA	4	3.5	7.5	75
13	MREZ	4.5	2.5	7	70
14	MRIZ	5	2.5	7.5	75
15	MSYA	3.5	5	8.5	85
16	RIC	3	4.5	7.5	75
17	SEL	3	3.5	6.5	65
18	SIT	4.5	5	9.5	**95**
19	SUS	4	4	8	80
20	VEL	3.5	4	7.5	75
Total		**82**	**73**	**155**	**1,635**

From the calculation above, it shows that there were different results in speaking skill between the students' mean score in the pre-test and the post-test. The students' mean score in the post-test (77.85) is greater than students' mean score in the pre-test (47.25). Those show that students' achievement greatly developed after the treatment.

Based on the table 5, the researcher computed the mean deviation as follows:

$$Md = \frac{\sum d}{N}$$

$$Md = \frac{505}{20}$$

Md = **25.25**

Table 5 Score and Square Deviation

| Number | Initial | Score | | | |
		Pre-test	Post-test	Deviation	D^2

1	ADI	40	70	30	900
2	ADR	40	70	30	900
3	AGR	40	75	35	1225
4	ALU	40	60	20	400
5	AND	70	80	10	100
6	ARI	65	85	30	900
7	DEL	55	80	25	625
8	EKS	65	90	25	625
9	FAH	40	95	55	3025
10	FEBR	70	85	15	225
11	IIN	45	65	20	400
12	JUA	45	75	30	900
13	MREZ	60	70	10	100
14	MRIZ	55	75	20	400
15	MSYA	70	85	15	225
16	RIC	45	75	30	900
17	SEL	30	65	35	1225
18	SIT	80	95	15	225
19	SUS	65	80	15	225
20	VEL	20	75	55	3025
Total		**10,40**	**1,630**	**505**	**16,550**

After finding out the mean deviation, the researcher computed the sum of square deviation of pre-test and post-test as shown below:

$$\sum x^2 d = \sum d^2 - \frac{(\sum d)^2}{N}$$

$$= 16,550 - \frac{(505)^2}{20}$$

$$= 16,550 - 12751.25$$

$$= \mathbf{3798.75}$$

After counting the square deviation, the researcher continued to find out the significant difference between pre-test and post-test. The researcher used the statistical analysis as the following formula:

$$t = \frac{Md}{\sqrt{\dfrac{\sum x^2 d}{N(N-1)}}}$$

$$t = \frac{25.25}{\sqrt{\dfrac{3798.75}{20(20-1)}}}$$

$$t = \frac{25.25}{\sqrt{\dfrac{3798.75}{380}}}$$

$$t = \frac{25.25}{\sqrt{9.99}}$$

$$t = \frac{25.25}{3.14}$$

t = 8.04

After analyzing the data of the test, the researcher found that the result of the data analysis shows that the t-counted is 8.04 by applying 0.05 level of significance with the degree of freedom (df) 20 (N-1=20-1=19), t-counted (8.04) is greater than t-table (1.729). It could be concluded that the research hypothesis is accepted. In other words, short conversation is effective to develop speaking skill of grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 19 Palu.

DISCUSSION

In doing the research, the researcher focused on two components of speaking. They were fluency and accuracy. Then, the researcher needs to test the students' speaking skill whether they can pass the standard score (70) or not. In giving the pre-test related to the two components of speaking, the researcher presented the result of pre-test in the following table.

Table 6 The Students' Error Percentage in Pre-test

Pre-test	Students Error	Students' Error in Percentage	Standard Score
Fluency	14	70	70
Accuracy	18	90	70

Before the researcher administered the treatment, the result of pre-test shows that there are 14 students who could not pass the test in fluency. It can be seen from the percentage of the students' error which is 70%, while it is 90% of the students who got error in accuracy as can be seen from the table that 18 students who could not pass the test. By looking at the percentage of the students' error, the researcher took a conclusion that the students of SMP Negeri 19 Palu have problems in speaking especially in fluency and accuracy. Furthermore, it is that accuracy is the difficult one for the students to pass instead of fluency.

After getting the students' scores in the pre-test, the researcher gave the treatment to the students in eight meetings by applying short conversation in developing their speaking skill. In the first treatment, the researcher explained the material to the students, and then divided them into several groups. Each group consists of two students only. After explaining the material to the students, the researcher asked them to make a short conversation based on the material given. Before going to the main activity, the researcher ensured whether each group had clearly known the context given or not. The researcher gave a time to each group not only to make a short conversation but also to discuss about the context offered by the researcher. After that, the researcher allowed each group to present their short conversation to other groups. For each meeting, the researcher gave the students different materials to make and to practice in front of the class. It is aimed to develop their speaking skill through short conversation. Having given the treatment, the researcher finally administered the post-test to the students in order to measure their progress. The result of post-test is presented in the following table.

Table 7 The Students' Error Percentage in Post-test

Post-test	Students error	Students' Error in Percentage	Standard Score
Fluency	3	15	70
Accuracy	9	45	70

The result of post-test above shows that there is a significant difference between the result in the pre-test and in the post-test. After the researcher administered the treatment, the students felt easier to pronunce and to make a short conversation in correct grammar. It can be seen from the number of students who can reach the standard score. It was also supported by the result of the percentage in students' error in the post-test especially in fluency; there are only 15% students who got error, while in accuracy, the percentage shows that only 45% students who got error in accuracy. The result indicates that there is a different improvement between the result of the pre-test and post-test. After comparing the result in the pre-test and post-test, the researcher concludes that there is a significant progress in developing students' speaking skill by applying short conversation. It means that short conversation can be used in developing students' speaking skill. This fact makes the researcher comess into a conclusion that there is a significant progress after the researcher applied short conversation in teaching and learning speaking in the classroom. Thus, the students' speaking skill increased.

The research about short conversation by focusing on fluency and accuracy in developing students' speaking skill had been conducted by some researchers previously. Dewi (2010) becomes one of the researchers who conducted a research by applying pre-experimental research design; she found out that the students' result in speaking skill based on fluency and accuracy was increased by applying group conversation to the students. Furthermore, this current research was also an experimental research. The researcher concerned to find out the students' achievement in learning speaking skill focusing on fluency and accuracy. She apllied short conversation as a media in teaching speaking skill. As the result, the researcher found that there is a significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test. Therefore, the researcher concludes that short conversation can be considered as one of the effective ways in teaching and learning speaking.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the data of this research, it can be concluded that grade VIII students speaking skill at SMP Negeri 19 Palu can develop through short conversation. It could be seen from the mean score of the pre-test (47.25) and the post-test (77.85). It indicates that the speaking skill of grade VIII students at SMP Negeri 19 palu developed.

Dealing with the conclusion above, the researcher would like to provide some suggestions. The researcher expects that the suggestion can be available for teachers and students. The teachers should not force the students to make their speech but they should be able to make students interested in learning English especially in speaking by applying short conversation. The teachers may apply short conversation because it can develop students' speaking skill. It encourages the students to enjoy and to motivate in learning speaking. As a teacher, English teachers should select and prepare appropriate media or techniques to develop the students' ability, motivation, and interest in learning vocabulary to develope his/her students in speaking skill. Besides, they need to create good atmosphere in the classroom so that the teaching learning process becomes interesting, easy, and enjoyable. For the students, they should study hard and increase their motivations in developing their skills in speaking. Also, they should practice their speaking as much as possible whether in class or out of classroom.

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