

IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING FLUENCY BY USING IMPROMPTU SPEECH AT FIRST YEAR STUDENTS OF LANGUAGE DEPARTMENT

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Abstract

Based on the issues identified in the classroom, students at the State Polytechnic of Bengkalis faced significant challenges in developing their speaking fluency. They struggled with comprehending and identifying key points in oral texts and exhibited a limited vocabulary. To address these problems, the researcher implemented the impromptu technique as a pedagogical tool. This study aimed to evaluate the extent to which the use of the impromptu technique could enhance students' speaking fluency. This research was carried out over two cycles, with each cycle comprising four sessions: three focused on teaching speaking, and one dedicated to a post-test. The participants in the study were 22 students from the English Department. Several instruments were utilized for data collection, including (1) observation sheets for students, teachers, and teaching activities, (2) field notes, and (3) speaking fluency tests. The findings demonstrated that the use of the impromptu technique significantly improved the students' speaking abilities, especially the fluency component. This was evidenced by the increase in their average speaking fluency scores. Prior to implementing the technique, the students' average score was 50, which rose to 65 by the conclusion of the study. In summary, the implementation of the impromptu technique effectively enhanced the speaking fluency of students in the English Department at the State Polytechnic of Bengkalis. In addition to improving their test scores, it also fostered a greater interest in speaking activities.

Keywords : impromptu Speech, Speaking fluency

1. INTRODUCTION

English is one of the most widely studied and utilized foreign languages worldwide. Within the education system, from elementary levels to higher education, English consistently occupies a central role as a critical competency that every student must acquire. The current reality demonstrates that proficiency in English facilitates global communication and serves as an essential skill for students upon graduation from higher education. Consequently, English is a mandatory course in nearly all universities, including at the State Polytechnic of Bengkalis.

English communication skills can be assessed through various standardized tests, such as TOEIC, TOEFL, and IELTS. At the State Polytechnic of Bengkalis, the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) is employed as a graduation requirement. This test comprises two sections: Listening and Reading. However, test results indicate that a majority of students at the State Polytechnic of Bengkalis struggle with both language comprehension and production. This difficulty is further evidenced in the oral speaking assessments conducted across various English courses at the institution.

Several factors, both internal and external, contribute to students' poor speaking abilities. These factors include inadequate teaching materials, students' limited speaking proficiency, and a lack of understanding of effective learning strategies for improving speaking skills.

Addressing these challenges is crucial to enhancing students' speaking performance. In this context, the use of appropriate teaching techniques is deemed essential. Therefore, this study seeks to implement a learning strategy using the Impromptu Speech method for students in the Language Department at the State Polytechnic of Bengkalis. The application of this technique aims to address the institution's challenges in improving the quality of its graduates.

The Impromptu Speech technique is an effective approach for teaching speaking skills, especially the fluency. This method encourages students to think independently, quickly organize their ideas, and speak informatively and confidently on a variety of topics. Moreover, Impromptu Speech, also known as extemporaneous speaking, requires students to think on their feet, arranging their thoughts and speaking on a subject without prior preparation.

According to Preston, as cited by David E. Williams (2011), impromptu speaking offers more than just an engaging form of competition for students. It can also take the form of entertainment events, speeches, and debates, often involving an eight-minute speech, with three of those minutes allocated for preparation, commonly referred to as "prep time."

In essence, impromptu speaking, synonymous with Impromptu Speech or extemporaneous speech, can be used to enhance both students' speaking and listening skills. However, this study focuses exclusively on improving speaking abilities through the use of the Impromptu Speech technique. By incorporating this method into English language learning, students are expected to receive a positive stimulus that will significantly enhance their speaking proficiency.

2. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There were some researchers have done such research. First, the research conducted by Husna, et al. (2022) entitled *A Study of Students' Skill in Performing Impromptu Speech in the English Department in the Third Semester of FKIP Universitas Eka Sakti Padang*. This experiment research aimed at finding out the effectiveness of impromptu speech. The result showed that the class applying this technique can improve the students speaking ability significantly.

Second, conducted by Wirdayana (2022) entitled *The Effectiveness Of Impromptu Speaking Method On Students' Speaking Of Introducing Oneself And Others*. The finding of this research showed the effectiveness of applying impromptu speech technique.

The next Research conducted by Azzahra, et al. (2019) "*Developing Students' Speaking Skills through the Impromptu Speech Method*." This research used quantitative research in the form of an experimental design. The result showed the students' responses toward the teaching-learning process using impromptu technique.

The last research The Research conducted by Tetuko Barruansyah (2018), entitled *Applying Impromptu Speech Technique to Improve Students' Speaking Ability in the Fourth Semester Students of STIBA Persada*. This study aimed at finding out the effectiveness of using impromptu speech to improve students ability. As the result 11 of 15 students at good level.

The previous studies showed that the application of impromptu speech can significantly improve the students' ability in Speaking. Therefore, the speaking fluency of students as one of the speaking skill elements could also be improved.

3. METHODS

This research is a Classroom Action Research (CAR) study aimed at improving the Speaking fluency of English oral texts among students at Bengkalis State Polytechnic using the Impromptu Speech Technique. The subjects of the study are 22 students from the 2024-2025 academic year. Gay (2000) states that classroom action research consists of two or more cycles. Each cycle consists of 4 meetings and ends with a post-test. Kemmis and Taggart (2005) in Arikunto state that each cycle consists of Plan, Action, Observation, and Reflection. In addition, data will also be collected through several other methods, namely: (1) observation checklists from students and lecturers, and teaching steps, (2) field notes, (3) interviews, and (4) final tests.

There are several components that must be considered when assessing speaking ability, namely: accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. This research focused on evaluating the students fluency. Hughes explains this ranking as follows:

Table 1. Fluency

Score	Requirement
1	Speech is so halting and fragmentary that conversation is virtually impossible.
2	Speech is very slow and uneven except for short or routine sentences.
3	Speech is frequently hesitant and jerky; sentences may be left uncompleted.
4	Speech is occasionally hesitant, with some unevenness caused by rephrasing and grouping for words.
5	Speech is effortless and smooth, but perceptively non-native an speed and evenness.
6	Speech on all professional and general topics as effortless and smooth as a native speaker's.

The speaking result was evaluated by concerning the component, and the component had score or level. The total of all components is 100.

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research findings discuss data description, analysis, and a comprehensive review of the results, aiming to address the primary research question: to what extent can the impromptu speech technique improve the speaking fluency of students at the State Polytechnic of Bengkalis. The findings are based on the data collected from the tests administered throughout the study.

The Impact of the Impromptu Speech Technique on Students' Speaking Fluency

Cycle 1

This classroom action research was conducted over two cycles, with each cycle comprising four learning sessions, culminating in a post-test during the final session. In the first cycle, the implementation of the impromptu speech technique began with an introduction to the method, including a detailed explanation of its purpose and the stages involved in the learning process. Students were provided with examples and clarifications on how the technique would be applied in their learning activities, ensuring they understood each step.

To ensure clarity, the researcher addressed any student questions about the procedure before proceeding. Following this introduction, the impromptu speech technique was employed during classroom teaching and learning activities. During the lessons, the researcher guided the students, first providing prompts for topics and key points they were to consider. Students then practiced their impromptu speaking skills in small groups, with each group presenting their speeches sequentially. After each presentation, the other groups were encouraged to ask questions about the performance they had just observed.

After all groups had presented, the entire class reconvened. At this stage, the teacher invited students to ask additional questions—either those previously prepared or spontaneous queries—about aspects they found unclear or interesting in the presentations of other groups. This process fostered a meaningful exchange of ideas and reflections.

This sequence of activities was repeated three times during the first cycle. At the end of the cycle, in the fourth session, a post-test was administered to assess the students' speaking abilities. The evaluation was conducted by two independent raters to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the assessment.

The speaking test results from the first cycle are summarized in the following table:

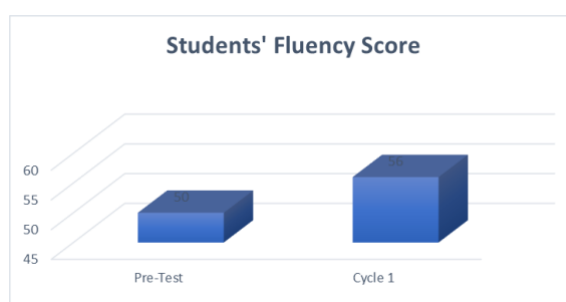
The students' Score of Speaking fluency Test cycle 1

No	Students' code	Score	Category
1	1	44	Less
2	2	64	Fair
3	3	70	Good
4	4	44	Less
5	5	60	Fair
6	6	42	Less
7	7	80	Very Good

8	8	60	Fair
9	9	50	Less
10	10	70	Good
11	11	60	Fair
12	12	40	Less
13	13	60	Fair
14	14	50	Fair
15	15	70	Good
16	16	70	Good
17	17	60	Fair
18	18	80	Very Good
19	19	40	Less
20	20	42	Less
21	21	44	Less
22	22	40	Less
Total Score		1240	
Average Score		56	

The data below show that the average score of the students' speaking ability improved compared to the pre-test scores conducted before the implementation of the Impromptu Speech Technique, as illustrated in the diagram below:

Graph 1. The comparison between Students' Average Score before and after using impromptu Speech Technique in Cycle I



Based on the average Speaking scores of the students in Cycle I, the researcher found that the average score of the students during the post-test in Cycle I was 56. This represents an increase of 6 points compared to the students' average score before using the Impromptu Speech Technique (50). It can be concluded that the average Speaking test score of the students in Cycle I is higher than their average score before using the Impromptu Speech Technique

Cycle 2

In the second cycle, the activities conducted were similar to those of the first cycle. The teaching steps involving the Impromptu Speech Technique followed the same general framework as in the initial cycle. However, there were some modifications to the activity plan. The researcher began by reflecting on the activities from the first cycle, providing feedback and insights on the outcomes achieved. Additionally, the researcher offered guidance on how the Impromptu Speech Technique could be more effectively applied, specifically addressing the issues that arose in the first cycle.

The problems identified were mostly technical, as students were still adjusting to the proper application of the technique. To resolve this, the researcher provided a more detailed explanation of the technique's procedures, supplemented with examples demonstrating its practical use in improving speaking skills. This was followed by the application of the technique during classroom teaching and learning activities.

The second cycle also followed the typical steps of classroom action research, including action, observation, and reflection. These steps were integrated into each session, culminating in a quiz and a post-test at the end of the cycle. The quiz was designed to evaluate students individually, consisting of questions relevant to the material they had covered. For instance, students were asked to describe images in turn, demonstrating their speaking ability. After completing the quiz, students' responses were evaluated, and their performance was assessed.

The speaking ability test was administered once more at the end of the second cycle. The results of the students' speaking test from Cycle 2 are presented in the following table:

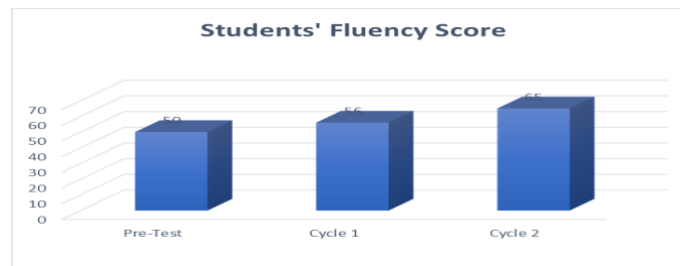
The students' Score of Speaking fluency Test cycle 2

No	Students' code	Score	Category
1	1	42	Less
2	2	80	Very Good
3	3	82	Very Good
4	4	55	Less

5	5	80	Very Good
6	6	50	Less
7	7	80	Very Good
8	8	60	Fair
9	9	60	Fair
10	10	70	Good
11	11	80	Very Good
12	12	44	Less
13	13	60	Fair
14	14	60	Fair
15	15	70	Good
16	16	80	Very Good
17	17	70	Good
18	18	80	Very Good
19	19	64	Fair
20	20	60	Fair
21	21	55	Less
22	22	42	Less
Total Score		1424	
Average Score		65	

The data below shows a significant improvement in the students' average speaking fluency scores.

Graph 2. The comparison between Students' Average Score at Cycle I and after using impromptu Speech Technique at Cycle II



Based on the results of the tests, the average score of the students in the Speaking test during Cycle II demonstrated a significant improvement. In Cycle II, the average score increased to 65, marking a 9-point rise from the average score in Cycle I, which stood at 56. These results suggest that the students' average score in the Speaking test during Cycle II is notably higher than their performance prior to the use of the Impromptu Speech Technique.

The data also illustrate that the students' average Speaking test scores in both Cycles I and II were higher compared to their scores before the implementation of the technique. Additionally, there was a marked improvement from Cycle I to Cycle II. Prior to employing the Impromptu Speech Technique, the students' average score was 50, which increased to 56 in Cycle I and then further improved by 9 points in Cycle II, reaching 65. This progression strongly indicates that the technique effectively enhanced the students' Speaking fluency test scores.

In conclusion, the researcher observed a significant improvement in the speaking fluency of students who applied the Impromptu Speech teaching technique, as evidenced by the notable increase in their average test scores during Cycle II. As a result, the researcher determined that there was no need to continue the classroom action research, since the objective of the study had been successfully achieved.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the data collected, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Impromptu Speech technique in the classroom, aimed at enhancing students' speaking abilities, was successful. This is clearly reflected in the increase in the students' average scores, which rose from 51 points before the introduction of the technique to 65 points by the end of Cycle II.

Furthermore, of the 22 students who participated in the study, over 50% initially had scores below the standard benchmark of 55 points. However, by the end of Cycle II, this percentage had decreased to 28%, further demonstrating the effectiveness of the Impromptu Speech technique in improving the students' speaking abilities, especially the students' fluency.

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