

Enhancing Informatics Engineering students' speaking skills at Asahan university using picture media in present tense

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Abstract

The ability to speak English with good and right pronunciation, accuracy, fluency, and intonation is a test for university students of the Informatics Engineering Department at the University of Asahan to achieve new knowledge. There are still many university students who are not good at speaking skills in English. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate the implementation of image media techniques to students' speaking skills in the present tense. This research is descriptive qualitative research. This research was conducted in three cycles, each consisting of two learning cycles or face-to-face. The research subjects were 20 education participants. The methods used to collect data are observation, interviews, and tests. The instrument used to obtain data is a test question. The data analysis technique used is descriptive qualitative and quantitative analysis. The results showed that university students in cycles I, II, and III had an average score which indicated that image media techniques could enhance English speaking skills in the present tense. It was summarized that the implementation of image media could effectively enhance the ability to speak English. Picture media can help university students understand English. This finding can also be used as a reference for lecturers to enhance the speaking-learning process

Keywords: *picture; media; ; speaking; EFL.*

INTRODUCTION

Language is a device used to deliver or express ideas, opinions, and desires for something both verbally and writing. All languages have four main components: writing, speaking, listening, and reading (Milati, Ni Made, 2021). Speaking is one of the language skills committed orally by speakers to make sure others understand their intents and aims (Setyaningsih et al, 2021). Good speaking ability is a productive skill in understanding English because it makes be able that speakers to express their minds correctly (Feng et al, 2021). Speaking ability is the competency in pronouncing articulation words to express, and deliver thoughts, ideas, and feelings. Speaking is an oral language used to deliver intentions, such as ideas, opinions, and feelings, with someone. Speaking skills are used to produce a flow of articulation sound systems to deliver wishes, ideas, feelings, and experiences to

others (Chien et al., 2020). The English language consists of four language skills related to each other, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Zaretsky, 2020).

There are several steps of students' speaking development, such as listening and speaking productively. Accepting is a speaking step where students accept more from the learning environment or listen to many speaking styles from others to develop their vocabulary (Alavi et al, 2020). Meanwhile, productive speaking is when students have carried out many practices to enhance their speaking skills. This is followed by students' ability to form and reproduce new expressions, such as asking, explaining, discussing, and even assisting friends in class (Lan W et al. 2020). Speaking test is a way to conduct an assessment in the form of duties carried out by students to reduce subjective results. This assessment guide uses the speaking technique to determine the correlation between information, the accuracy of structure, vocabulary, fluency, and pronunciation style (Sharif Matthews et al, 2019).

Data obtained through observation showed that in 2023 in informatics Engineering students in University of Asahan had several errors associated with their speaking skills. These problems consist of pronunciation, misuse of vocabulary, and grammar, specifically in the present tense material, which increased due to internal and external factors. Present tense is used to express an action or event happens in an event or the real activity. It is also used to express an action or activity that occurs at the the fact. The internal factors include learning motivation and students' intelligence level, as well as psychological factors, such as low self-confidence in public speaking and the discourage of making mistakes during conversation, specially in choosing the correct tenses. Meanwhile, the external factors are lecturers, friends, environment, and learning methods used. Low speaking ability will make students lose their confidence in foreign languages (Liyana et al, 2019).

Therefore, to overcome the problems mentioned above, this study used the picture media technique to enhance students' ability of informatics Engineering Department in University of Asahan to speak English in the present tense to have clear, definite, and detailed objectives. The picture media is a material used to discuss the learning process and deliver messages from lecturers to students (Hidayah N, et al, 2020). It also helps students to reveal the information contained in the problem, hence, the correlation between the components in the problem becomes clearer (Priani et al, 2019). Picture media is one of the most effective learning techniques used to enhance understanding and increase student learning motivation due to its ability to provide new situations, thereby eliminating boredom (Asmonah, 2019). This learning technique attracts attention and also describes a certain fact. Picture media is a medium that uses pictures to deliver messages through the sense of sight. The message delivered is analyzed through visual communication symbols and aims to attract attention, clarify the material, illustrate facts and information (Dewi et al, 2019). The general form of picture media is concluded in terms of graphic media for ease in describing and concluding an idea and activity. Graphic media is a visual-based media consisting of symbols, pictures, dots, and lines. Picture media is the most commonly used intermediary because it is understandable and can be viewed everywhere (Widiana et al,

2021). The findings of previous studies also stated that picture media would enhance students' learning motivation (Hidayah et al, 2020). Other research findings also state that image media can make it easier for students to understand learning material (Suhandra, 2018). It can be summarized that picture of media can facilitate students' learning. This study has purpose to evaluate the implementation of image media to enhance English speaking skills. The difference between this study and the previous one is that the image media in this study is implemented to enhance students' speaking English skills in present tense learning. It is expected that the image media can enhance the ability to speak English in the present lesson.

METHOD

This research is a descriptive qualitative research consisting of planning, action, observation, and reflection. This research was conducted in three cycles, each consisting of two learning cycles or face-to-face. The research subjects were 20 students of informatics Engineering Department in University of Asahan. Methods used to obtain data are observation, interviews, and tests. The instrument used to obtain data is test questions. The technique used to analyze the data is descriptive qualitative and quantitative analysis. Three types of data analysis were used: reduction, description, and leverage. The process is used to collect, focus, and filter data, describe the source and compare student scores in each cycle based on minimum completeness criteria (KKM). The results of observations, tests, and interviews were compared with the Creswell (2009) triangulation method to validate the collected data (Creswell, 2009).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Pre-action description. In the early stages, the teaching and learning activities in the classroom were observed and evaluated. Lecturers used the conventional learning activities to explain the material and notes required for university students to conduct tasks. It was also found that many students found it difficult to develop ideas needed to prepare sentences, avoid pronunciation mistakes, choose the right vocabulary, and arrange sentences easily using verbs with the present tense pattern. Moreover, students were less motivated to study English because the media was boring. Based on observations, lecturers mostly use teaching materials from textbooks that do not prepare sufficient exposure, specially in speaking practice. Most students of informatics Engineering Department in University of Asahan to enhance their efficiency in speaking English because their grades are generally low, with an average score of 75, which is below the minimum criteria. Based on the above reasons, enhancing students' English speaking skills using a more interesting technique, such as picture media, is necessary. Through this medium, students can directly visualize the activities, objects, and situation observed in the picture. Therefore, they are stimulated to speak English, making it easier for them to develop ideas by arranging sentences into good paragraphs and telling events in pictures.

Cycle 1. At this step the syllabus, lesson plans, pre-and post-tests, student observation sheets for each cycle, collaborator observation sheets, and pictures were prepared according to the material. At the first meeting, the functions, patterns and adverbs of the present tense often used in sentences were analyzed with example sentences accompanied by pictorial representation using family activities. Besides preparing colorful pictures, some of the existing verbs were explained based on changes in the form of the base verb. Moreover, students were asked to analyze the pictures and explain the activities' inherent the content. They are then asked to deliver the activities of one person on the picture with the present tense pattern one after another. The observation sheets were filled out during teaching and learning activities for further discussion with collaborators at the reflection step. Cycle 2 was conducted due to the problems found in the students' present tense speaking skills found in cycle 1. For example, some find it difficult to speak English because of their inability to understand the present tense and their lack vocabulary. This makes students speak less English with the content of their conversation far different from the topic, without achieving the minimum standard score. In the second cycle, the teaching and learning process was focused on mastering the present tense and vocabulary in learning activities.

The teaching and learning process starts with asking university students several questions about their understanding of the material. For example: "what does the lecturer do? What do the students do? Where does the dean sit?" There was progress in students' understanding of the material because almost all were able to answer the questions by telling stories using the present tense. Moreover, they were guided on the right strategies to discuss with friends to get more information about the present tense. In this cycle, students were asked to look for new words related to the topic and guides to translate it into English correctly to increase their vocabulary. During this process, observation sheets were filled by students and collaborators. Cycle 3. The main activity is to explain the topic related to the situation at work and the office.

This process was conducted by reviewing the material on the present tense and preparing some questions to determine students' understanding and ability to memorize the material. The simple present tense was used by students to briefly explain the activities that occur within and outside the classroom. Before lecturers showed the associated pictures to students, they were asked to discuss the topic with their friends and collect more related-vocabularies. This was followed by showing pictures of activities in the office to students and asking them to understand the vocabulary needed to explain the situation in their office. The minimum score for speaking skills in this research is 78. Cycle 1 shows that 8 (24%) and 24 (78%) of the students passed and failed the minimum completeness criteria score. The highest, lowest and average scores are 80, 55 and 68. In cycle 2, 18 (58%) and 14 (44%) of the students passed and failed the minimum completeness criteria with highest, lowest and average scores of 90, 75 and 78. In cycle 3, 29 (99%) and 3 (8%) of the students passed and failed the minimum completeness criteria with the highest, lowest and average scores of 99,

78 and 85. The percentage of student success data in the test in each cycle is shown in Figure 1.

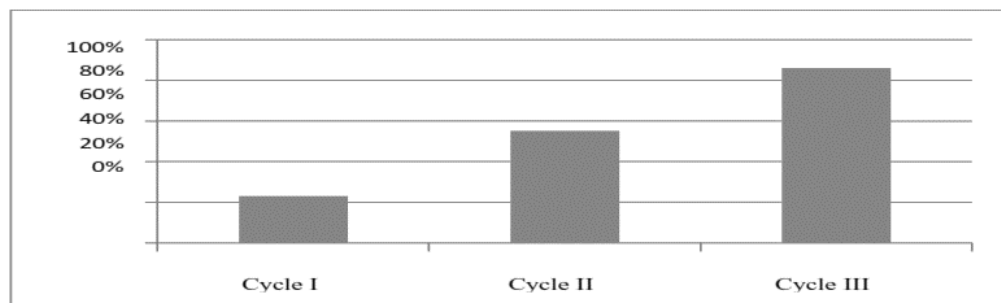


Figure 1: Data on the enhance in student scores in each cycle

Discussion

Several observations were used in each cycle, with an enhance in students (a) learning motivation, (b) ability to ask and answer questions during learning, (c) rise in confidence in speaking the English language from the present tense, and (d) being responsible for their assignments. The interview data results showed that many students do not have confidence in speaking English because they are unable to use the right pronunciation, vocabulary, and correct sentence pattern. In addition, students of informatics Engineering Department in University of Asahan are afraid of making grammatical errors. Media images are very important in the conceptual understanding of members' efforts. Through pictures, the lecturer can help prepare experience and understanding to students to be wider (Arifiyanti A, 2018). The use of picture media enhance students' interest in learning English. This technique enhances vocabulary and accelerates good understanding and mastery of the present tense. The image media used presents the material clearly, making it easier for informatics engineering students to understand the learning material. It is reinforced by previous research, which states that appropriate learning media will make it easier for students to understand learning material quickly (Bus et al, 2020). Students stated that the picture media made it easier for them to understand learning to write descriptive text and choose the right vocabulary when speaking English. *Image media* is a medium that is very easy to find. Words and pictures are an excellent collaboration in the process of *delivering* messages, information, or subject matter (Hidayati et al, 2020). The images presented will provide direction and shadow to students directly regarding the message to be conveyed by the lecturer (Krismasari et al, 2019). Simple and clear picture media will also make students have no difficulty understanding the picture.

In general, the application of picture media motivates and makes it easier for informatics engineering students to learn to speak English in the present tense. From the students' answers, it can be summarized that picture media enhances enthusiasm and learning techniques for mastering vocabulary based on certain topics in the present tense. The findings of previous studies also stated that picture media enhanced students' learning

motivation (Anggraini et al., 2019). Other research findings also state that the help of image media can make it easier for students to understand learning material (Hidayah N, et al, 2020). The benefit of image media is that it can overcome the limitations of space and time because not all objects, objects, or events can be brought into the classroom, and students are not always brought to these objects or events. In addition, image media can clarify a problem in any field and for any age. It can be summarized that image media can help students in learning English be easy.

CONCLUSION

The picture media technique was used to enhance students' ability of informatics Engineering Department in University of Asahan in present tense correctly when speaking English. This statement is evidenced by the test results from cycles 1 to 3, which continued to enhance.

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