The Use Of Pragmatic Approach to Enhance Students' Speaking Skills at MA Samsyul Huda Tegallinggah

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Abstract

This research aimed to analyze the use of pragmatic approach to enhance students' speaking skills at MA Syamsul Huda Tegallinggah.The focus of this study was on the learning activities of 25 students in class XI B and their speaking test results.Data were collected through various techniques, including observation, interviews, and the assessment of speaking skill test results.The research design used in this study was Classroom Action Research, consisting of two cycles, Cycle I and Cycle II. Based on the results of the action implementation in both cycles, it was found that the pragmatic approach increased student participation in learning. Additionally, it proved to be effective in improving students' speaking skills. In Cycle I, students achieved an average score of 75.52 with a pass rate of 64%, where 19 out of 25 students were declared successful. Meanwhile, in Cycle II, the average score increased to 79.04 with a pass percentage of 84%. In fact, before the implementation, only 14 students or 56% of them were declared successful. The emphasis of the pragmatic approach in this research was on providing opportunities for students to practice using English in its contextual usage. Thus, in the learning process, students not only focused on theory but also engaged in practical language application.

INTRODUCTION

English language skills are an essential skill that must be mastered for communicating with the global world. Nowadays, English language skills are highly demanded because English has evolved into the dominant international language in academic, business, technology, and cross-cultural communication (Anita et al., 2013). Indonesia is one of the countries continuously innovating to develop English language learning in line with the awareness of the importance of

language skills in the era of globalization (Adnyana, 2022). This is also the reason why English has become a mandatory subject presented in every curriculum published by the government.

One of the most crucial aspects of language skills that play a significant role in fostering intelligent, critical, creative, and cultured future generations is speaking skills. Tashieva et al. (2021) state that speaking skills are essential for students to support self-expression, such as asking questions, providing specific information, and explaining ideas related to phenomena, events, or other objects. In line with this, Yusran (2016) adds that speaking skills can shape students with critical and systematic thinking in presenting their ideas. Equally important, through these skills, students can formulate intelligent arguments according to the context or situation at hand.

In the realm of building social relationships, Wu (2023) said speaking skills play a vital role in establishing harmonious relationships among students and their surrounding environment. Students can understand and respond to the emotions, feelings, and needs of others, thereby strengthening social and interpersonal bonds. Additionally, Prasetya (2023) stated in the professional world, these skills enable individuals to collaborate effectively with colleagues. Therefore, based on various explanations regarding the importance of speaking skills for students, every element needs to enhance the quality of learning, particularly in the case of English language learning.Purnamasari et al. (2023) assert speaking proficiency is one of the key benchmarks for success in learning the English language.

Based on the facts gathered in the field, it must be acknowledged that learning a foreign language presents its challenges (Pratiwi &Rohmadi, 2021). Therefore, it is not surprising that English speaking skills among students have not been able to meet the expected targets. Many students encounter obstacles when speaking English. Significant barriers include difficulties in pronouncing vocabulary, spelling errors, and the complexity of understanding grammar (Nasrudin, 2019). Psychological factors such as fear, embarrassment, lack of confidence, and low motivation also contribute to students' low speaking skills (Nisa et al., 2023). Several of these mentioned factors are closely related to the role of the teacher in building the learning activities applied in the classroom. Thus, teaching methods and learning media must be tailored to the needs of the learners to make learning much more engaging.

The role of the teacher as a facilitator in the learning process is crucial, especially in developing strategies that can boost students' confidence in speaking. That argument is supported by Gabejan (2021), who mentioned, that by creating a supportive environment, teachers encourage students to express their ideas freely and without pressure. This enables students to communicate more effectively and confidently. Adem & Berkessa (2022) argue that English language learning activities that are overly focused on theory and the "Teacher-centered" approach need to be changed, as this hinders students from improving their expected skills. Furthermore, they emphasize that teachers should provide opportunities for students to practice the language they are learning. The emphasis should be placed on teaching language usage rather than just focusing on theoretical aspects.

Finding English teachers who use traditional and less innovative approaches is not difficult, making learning speaking skills seem monotonous and boring. Pratiwi & Rohmadi (2023) state that students are not encouraged to learn how to speak the language; instead, they tend to be taught only language theory. This means that the teaching delivered by the teacher doesn't correspond to how students should speak based on the context and situation but instead emphasizes theoretical comprehension of the language. This approach is predominantly rational and cognitive, without creating emotional and effective connections. Therefore, the lack of speaking skills can be a serious hindrance to students' development into intelligent, critical, and understanding of the context.The primary emphasis in teaching speaking skills should be on the practical application of language in authentic communication situations.It is crucial to adopt an approach that emphasizes the significance of comprehending the utilization of language in daily social and cultural settings. (Noviyenty & Anwar, 2023). Teachers can guide students in using language in practical and relevant situations, allowing them to experience firsthand how language is used in real life. This makes the learning process more meaningful. To achieve functional language learning, there is a linguistic approach called the pragmatic approach. Anita et al. (2023) describe the pragmatic approach simply as an approach that directs students to learn language based on its contextual usage. This approach emphasizes successful communication while taking social factors into account.

Several researchers have conducted research regarding of implementation of the pragmatic approach to enhance students' speaking skills. For example, the findings of a study conducted by Aritonang et al. (2022) indicate that the pragmatic approach in language learning has proven to be highly effective in encouraging active student participation throughout the learning process. In this approach, students play an active role and engage in critical thinking and problem-solving throughout the sequence of learning activities, from start to finish. This approach enables students to be more involved in using language in everyday contexts and significantly enhances their speaking skills.Another study conducted by Amenah Firas (2022) analyzed the role of the pragmatic approach in English language teaching. From this research, we can learn that the pragmatic approach yields positive outcomes in English language instruction. By employing this approach, students have ample opportunities to listen to language in real-life contexts. Furthermore, this approach aids students in enriching their vocabulary within a rich network of associations. Furthermore, the pragmatic approach possesses the capability to reconstruct students' knowledge.The next research from Elmira Huseynova in 2022 focused on the application of the pragmatic approach in English as a Second Language (ESL).The research demonstrated that effectively implementing the pragmatic approach in foreign language learning significantly enhances students' speaking skills. Students are equipped with the ability to communicate appropriately in various situations. Furthermore, teachers can guide students in communication skills like native speakers, enabling students to express themselves freely on various topics and situations.

The researcher conducted preliminary observation at one of the high schools in North Bali, namely Madrasah Aliyah Syamsul Huda located in the village of Tegallinggah, Sukasada District,

Buleleng Regency, Bali. The Researcher observed the phenomenon of students having low speaking ability. From the initial data collection, it was found that one class, namely class XI B, had students who needed extra attention to improve their speaking skills. Based on the assessment of student learning outcomes, it was evident that out of 25 students consisting of 18 females and 7 males. 14 students had achieved the minimum passing grade (KKM), while the remaining 11 students scored below the KKM, which is 75.

The researcher had the opportunity to observe classroom teaching and learning activities directly. It was observed that students mostly used Indonesian rather than English when answering or responding to the teacher's questions. This was due to their limited English vocabulary. Moreover, they heavily relied on textbooks, resulting in spending more time trying to understand the content by translating each word in the book using the dictionaries they brought. As a result, their opportunity to speak English directly was very limited. The researcher also found that students often made pronunciation errors, leading to some students feeling embarrassed when speaking.

Several students tend to not engage in the learning process. When the teacher explains, some students appear to be more focused on other things, such as looking around or whispering to their friends next to them. Through the researcher's analysis, it was observed that such phenomena occur because the teacher still employs a traditional approach, where the learning activities are primarily teacher-centered. Students are only asked to answer questions and create a few simple sentences without being instructed to practice with their peers. As a result, the taught material seems to distance students from understanding the use of language in real-life situations that are relevant to everyday contexts. Furthermore, the limited teaching aids are used to make the learning process more uninteresting. The researcher noted that the teacher relied solely on textbooks during the lessons. It was revealed that the school faces limitations in terms of facilities, with teaching aids such as laptops and LCD screens not available in the classrooms. In this context, teacher creativity is highly needed to create relevant teaching aids for students.

To gather further information about the observed phenomena, the researcher conducted interviews with English teacher who teachesXI B. From the teacher's perspective, the inactivity of students in class and their low speaking skills are attributed to their relatively low motivation to learn. Students' perception of English learning as challenging to understand is a significant background as to why this situation occurs. In response to this, the teacher claimed to have tried various methods such as singing songs and playing games to enhance student engagement, particularly in speaking skills. However, the teacher acknowledged that these efforts had not yet yielded optimal results. Another obstacle mentioned by the teacher is the vast amount of curriculum content, making it seem like the school is rushing to meet targets. Consequently, it becomes very challenging to ensure that students comprehend all the material being taught.

On the other hand, to obtain richer data, the researcher also conducted interviews with several students from class XI B, particularly those who had scores below the minimum passing grade (KKM). Many of these students admitted to not liking English learning because they found it challenging. They mentioned that they struggled to understand what the teacher was conveying.

The most significant challenges they faced were when they had to speak in English. Various difficulties such as pronunciation, what they considered complicated grammar, making it hard for them to construct sentences with proper grammar, and the fear of making mistakes, caused students to lose enthusiasm for participating in English classes.After conducting these initial observations, the researcher chose MA Syamsul Huda as the research site. Some considerations included: First, almost half of the studentsin XI B class had low English speaking abilities. Second, the researcher believed that the pragmatic approach offered could be one alternative to address the problems faced by the students. Third, the researcher wanted to determine whether the pragmatic approach could enhance students' speaking skills are in line with their initial assumptions and real-life situations experienced.

METHOD

This research uses the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method which is rooted in the conceptual framework proposed by Kemmis and Taggart.CAR represents a form of reflective and collective inquiry conducted by researchers within a specific social context, with the aim of enhancing comprehension and social practices. Kusnandar (2008) explained CAR can be defined as action research carried out by educators who also assume the role of researcher within their own classrooms or through collaboration with external parties. The implementation of this research follows the stages of Classroom Action Research, which consists of two cycles namely Cycle I and Cycle II. Each cycle comprises four stages: *Planning*, *Action*, *Observing* and *Reflecting*. Each cycle consists of two meetings. The first meeting is related to the presentation of the material and other learning activities such as discussions and presentations. Meanwhile, the second meeting is used to conduct speaking tests for the students.

The data collection techniques in this research are carried out through two methods: test techniques and non-test techniques. Test techniques are employed to measure students' speaking skills with an average passing score according to the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM), which is a minimum of 75 with an achievement percentage of 80%. Meanwhile, non-test data collection techniques involve observation and interviews. Observation is conducted to assess students' activities during the learning process, and interviews are conducted with both students and English language subject teachers to understand their responses to the use of the pragmatic approach in English language learning as an effort to enhance students' speaking skills.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Pragmatic Approach in Language Learning

In Tarigan's perspective (2009:30), pragmatic involves an in-depth examination of specific utterances within the context of particular situations. Pragmatic focuses on the various ways or methods used in communication, which play a crucial role as tools to convey meaning and messages in diverse social contexts. That is why discussing pragmatic inevitably involves discussing context. Context refers to the surrounding situations in which communication takes

place. It is a crucial element in understanding how language is used and interpreted. Context provides the framework within which utterances gain meaning, and it includes various factors such as the physical setting, social dynamics, cultural background, and prior knowledge shared between the communicators.

Karthik (2013) argued there are two primary forms of context in pragmatic: linguistic context and situational context. She said situational context is divided into five aspects. first, *Physical Factors*, such as the location, time, weather, and objects around. Second, *Participants*, are the people involved in the conversation, including the speaker, listener, and third parties. *Communicative Goals* are the intentions or purposes that the speaker wants to achieve through the conversation. *Social Norms* are the rules or norms that govern behavior and interpretation within a particular community or culture.

Pragmatic Approach in Language Learning, according to Suyono (1990), involves inviting students to engage in real-life communication contexts and speech situations by applying the principles of comprehensive language usage. Pansori (2016) defined pragmatic approach as an approach to language learning by involves various aspects outside of language that makes the learning process much more meaningful. The implementation of the pragmatic approach in language learning is based on the following characteristics:

1. Language is taught as a practical skill that emphasizes the ability to use language in everyday communication. In this regard, the language being learned has practical value for daily life communication.
2. Students are expected to be able to grasp ideas presented by the teacher and then express their ideas, both orally and in writing, using proper language.
3. An interactive atmosphere is created, to foster a community of productive language users. Here, the teacher is not overly dominant in the teaching and learning activities but serves as a facilitator or a trigger for language activities that are either oral or written.
4. Learning activities are marked by the use of discourse context. This is intended to provide students with a sense of how language is used in real-life contexts and situations. Context serves as a means to explain intentions.

Implementing The Pragmatic Approach In Enhancing Speaking Skills.

In this research, a pragmatic approach was implemented in class XI B using the material "Procedural Text: How to Make Balinese Food" with two learning objectives. First, students were expected to correctly identify the meaning and communicative purpose related to the procedural text. Second, they were expected to orally present the procedural text in the form of a simulation situation about Making Balinese food, considering social functions, text structure, and linguistic elements accurately and in the appropriate social context. The planned simulation situation involved directing students in a context to introduce Balinese cuisine to tourists at an event called the "Buleleng Food Festival"

To achieve the learning objectives, the learning activities were divided into three stages: pre-activity, main activity, and post-activity. The teaching activity designed by the researcher and the teacher included explanations, question and answer sessions, discussions, assignment

giving, and simulations with the application of a pragmatic approach.Based on the observation result of Cycle I, it was found that the percentage of students' readiness to participate in the learning process was 92%. In terms of activity, the percentage of students asking questions was minimal, which was 20%, and similarly, the percentage of students expressing their opinions was only 16%. In the final part of the learning process, which is drawing conclusions, 32% of the students were active.The assessment results of students' activities during the learning process increased in cycle II. It can be seen that students received 84% for readiness to participate in the lessons and 80% interest in the teaching method used. The percentage of student activity has increased compared to the preceding cycle. As for asking and answering questions, each received a percentage of 36% and 80%, respectively. Meanwhile, the ability to express opinions received a rating of 40%. Additionally, students scored 72% in their ability to conclude the material taught.

Table 1. Students' Speaking Test Proficiency in Cycle I

No.	Interval Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	<75	Incomplete	9	36%
2.	≥75	Complete	16	64%
Total			25 100%	

The table presented above indicates that a total of 16 students have been declared proficient in the assessment of their speaking skills.While for students who have not met proficiency, the count is 9 out of 25 students. The standard score used corresponds to the Minimum Competence Criteria (KKM) set by the school, which is 75. However, the evaluation of students' speaking skills in cycle I is illustrated in the table below.

Table 2. Students' Speaking Test Proficiency in Cycle II

No.	Interval Score	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1.	<75	Incomplete	4	16%
2.	≥75	Complete	21	84%
Total			25	100%

The percentage of students' speaking test proficiency can be seen in the table above. 84% or 21 students are declared proficient, Indicating that their scores have met the established minimum criteria. Meanwhile, 16% or a total of 4 students out of 25 are declared not proficient yet. The research result shows that the pragmatic approach is capable of directing students to use English according to situational contexts. The same result is also expressed by Amenah Firas (2022), stating that the pragmatic approach yields positive outcomes in English language teaching. By employing this approach, students have many opportunities to use the language in real-life contexts. Additionally, the pragmatic approach effectively enhances student engagement throughout the learning process. This statement is supported by research conducted by

Ubaidillah (2020), affirming that the pragmatic approach successfully leads students to actively participate in the learning process.

Furthermore, another significant result observed in this research is that the speaking test results conducted on students showed improvement in their speaking skills. Another study supporting similar findings is conducted by Huseynova (2022), demonstrating that the pragmatic approach is proven to enhance students' speaking skills. Furthermore, Zalama, who conducted research in 2021 with a quasi-experimental research design, showed that the speaking skills test results of the experimental group were more satisfactory compared to the control group. This proves that the use of the pragmatic approach to enhance students' speaking skills is not only suitable for action research designs but can also be implemented in other research designs.

CONCLUSION

Drawing conclusions from the application of a pragmatic approach to enhance students' learning abilities at MA Syamsul Huda Tegallinggah, the following observations can be made:

1. The implementation of learning activities, conducted in two cycles, was based on a lesson plan in the form of a jointly designed teaching module with the teacher. The results of the assessment in the first cycle revealed that the assessment of students' learning skills had not yet reached the expected standards, which are a score of 75, following the minimum passing grade (KKM) with a percentage of 80%. The implementation in the first cycle was also not optimal, as various obstacles were encountered during the learning activities. In the second cycle, improvements were made to address the obstacles faced in the first cycle, from planning to actions, to enhance the outcomes in the subsequent learning process. In cycle I, students who scored above the Minimum Passing Grade (KKM) were 16 students or 64%, and in the second cycle, it reached 84% or a total of 21 students out of 25 students.

2. During the first cycle of implementation, students had already begun to show enthusiasm and motivation in participating in the learning activities. In the second cycle, students displayed even higher enthusiasm in engaging with the learning process, which could be recognized by their readiness to participate in lessons, the students' attention to the researcher's explanations, and the increased number of active students compared to those who were less active or inactive.

3. The use of the pragmatic approach to enhance students' speaking skills is considered successful based on the data obtained after the speaking skills test In addition to fostering dynamic and participatory learning experiences grounded in the principles of student-centered education, the pragmatic approach is also capable of boosting students' self-confidence and motivating them to continue practicing using English in accordance with the context.

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