

## IMPROVING THE SPEAKING SKILLS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS THROUGH A COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH

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### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study is to find out the extent to which the communicative approach is able to have an appropriate influence on the speaking skills of elementary school students. The method used in this research is action research. This research was conducted at SD Negeri Tonga, The research subject was class V- A students totaling 24 students consisting of 11 boys and 13 girls. The participants involved in this study were the researchers themselves who acted as teachers who taught in class V-A and class V-B teachers as collaborators. The instrument used in this study was an observation sheet. Based on the results of data processing and analysis, the conclusion of the results of this study is that there is a significant improvement in speaking skills through a communicative approach in grade V students with theme one "Objects in the Environment," subtheme "Humans and the Environment". In cycle I, 13 students (54.17%) were complete, and 11 students (45.83%) were not complete. In cycle II theme two "Events in Life", subtheme "Various Events in Life", as many as 18 students (75%) were complete, and 6 students (25%) were not complete with an average score of 80.*

**Keywords:** *Speaking Skills; Communicative Approach; Primary School.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The communicative approach is an approach that views language as something that deals with what can be done or acted upon with language (function) or with regard to what meaning can be expressed through language (nosi), but not with regard to grammar points. Meanwhile, according to Savignon in his book *Communicative Competence: Theory and Classroom Practice*, as cited by Parera that the communicative approach is the provision of language use activities in accordance with grammatical rules, or language learning from surface grammatical structure to meaning. Communicative teaching orientation tends to emphasize the use of language (greetings, suggestions, apologies, giving instructions, and providing information) in social situations such as a friend's house, doctor's clinic, train station. Students receive practice interacting with teachers or friends Usually the class activity starts with an interactive situation with an information gap (one of the speakers knows something that the listener does not." "Where do you live?" "What are your plans for the summer?"). The speaker who wants to obtain this information needs to use appropriate linguistic forms (grammatical structures and vocabulary) to convey meaning to the listener. Based on the feedback received from the listener, the speaker may have to negotiate the meaning of the message by paraphrasing, restating, or using non-linguistic resources.

Savignon (in Ghazali, 2010) argues that the communicative classroom should involve "learners in a dynamic and interactive process of communication" and provide opportunities for them to "experience language as well as analyse it". The learning experience should involve the students as a whole, i.e. involving cognitive and physical as well as affective dimensions

in order to involve all three facets that highlight the communication goals of language learners. The communicative approach is based on its view of language use in actual everyday communication. Like the pragmatics approach, the communicative approach abandons the discrete approach which is structural, and the integrative approach which is still essentially structural. As an approach with a psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic orientation, the communicative approach gives importance to the role of non-linguistic elements, especially those elements related to the implementation of good communication. However, unlike the pragmatic approach which emphasizes the role of context in language use and understanding, the communicative approach expands the element of context to include elements that take part in the realization of good communication. As a result, the communicative approach details the intricacies of communication which is the main purpose of language use.

The intricacies of communication include elements such as who communicates, what is the relationship between those who communicate, what are the aims and objectives of communication, under what circumstances communication occurs, when and how communication occurs, and so on (Djiwandono, 2008). Some aspects that must be considered in relation to the communicative approach are language theory, learning theory, objectives, syllabus, types of activities, the role of the teacher, the role of students, and the role of materials. In applying this communicative approach, there are two things that must be considered, namely the learning objectives and the curriculum used. Included in the Indonesian language learning strategy based on the communicative approach are classroom organization and teaching and learning methods and techniques (Laily, 2008).

In language learning, one of the skills that students must master is speaking skills. This speaking skill occupies an important position because it characterizes students' communicative ability (Arisandi, 2021). In other words, speaking skills not only play a role in language learning but also play an important role in other learning. This means that one of the indicators of students' success in learning is their ability to express their ideas orally in class within the scope of a particular subject (Abidin, 2012). Language is an effective means of communication between people. In various situations, language can be used to convey the speaker's ideas to the listener or the writer to the reader. Of course, in each communication situation encountered, one of a number of variations of language use is chosen. Speaking in the market between buyers, between buyers and sellers, or between sellers must be different from speaking in front of respected people, between superiors and subordinates, between patients and doctors, between students and teachers, between members of official meetings, and so on (Saudah & Sugihastuti, 2016).

Language is also an important part of culture. One of the characteristics of humans as cultured beings is characterized by the existence of human language. Therefore, language is the most distinctive feature of humanity that distinguishes it from other creatures (Musaba, 2009). One of the language skills is speaking. In this study, the focus is on speaking skills. Speaking is the ability to say articulate sounds or words to express, express, or transmit thoughts, ideas, and feelings. For elementary school students, speaking skills are one

of the abilities that must be possessed by students, because speaking skills have been owned by everyone who really needs in communication, both for one way in character and reciprocity or both. In general, humans in their daily lives speak more and the least is writing. Oral culture or speaking is more dominant than reading and writing culture. Nevertheless, a person needs to continue to be nurtured or improved so that the quality or quality of speaking is getting better.

Speaking is often considered the most important human tool as social control because speaking is a form of human behavior that makes extensive use of physical, psychological, neurological, and linguistic factors (Tambunan, 2019). The number of factors seen in it, causes people to assume that speaking is a complex activity. These factors are indicators of speaking success so that they must be considered when we determine whether or not someone is able to speak. So, the level of speaking ability of a person or student is not only determined by measuring the mastery of linguistic factors alone or psychological factors alone, but by measuring the mastery of all these factors as a whole (Santoso, *at all.* 2010).

The reality in the field, namely in class V SDN Tongas, is still lacking in speaking experience. An obstacle among students is learning to express opinions and interview activities. The description of students' speaking ability in class V at this time is that students find it difficult to speak or are nervous, sentences tend to be short and stammered, students lack courage or fear and also cannot speak well. At the time of the interview for example: students have not been able to use the sentence structure correctly, the mantra and intonation are still inappropriate and the expression of the content is not appropriate content or message sent. The description of the ability of students' speaking skills in class V occurs because teachers are focused on carrying out the competencies of learning activities that must be achieved, thus ignoring the ability or dominance of speaking in the learning process of students. In addition, teachers are often burdened with using media, so often teachers give instructions to students to carry out speaking activities only giving grades and finished goods without evaluating student activities.

Based on the above problems, teachers need to apply the correct study approach to improve speaking skills in grade V primary school students. One approach that can be applied is through a communicative approach. The communicative approach represents the study of language that provides language skills to be supported by language knowledge. The communicative approach is taught to obtain information needed in daily life so that students understand research that has more meaning. This communicative approach can give students the freedom to express opinions orally and also string words to tell their friends by themselves. The communicative approach is oriented towards the learning process to teach language based on communication tasks and functions. The basic principles of the communicative approach are (a) items must consist of language as a means of communication, (b) item design must emphasise the fundamental non-discussion teaching and learning process, and (c) items must support students to communicate in their usual way.

Teaching and learning strategies in the communicative approach rely on active student learning, where students are actively involved in the learning process. Strategies based on the procedures of the approach. The communicative approach is shortening

dialogue presentation, presenting oral training dialogue, question and answer presentation, observation and study, inference, interactive activity, task creation and implementation evaluation. Therefore, through communicative approach students are expected to organise speaking skills so as to improve speaking skills which are evaluated accordingly, accuracy, and fluency of speaking. Through communicative approach learning, it can also evaluate students' shortcomings intensively and provide necessary guidance so that learning activities are more active with interest and interactive.

Lamajau (2014) in his research concluded that the group discussion method effectively increased student and teacher activities and also complete learning outcomes with classical and individual. Yusna (2012) concluded that the communicative approach can increase the learning activities of teachers and students and also the learning process becomes more active and motivated. so that the learning outcomes are complete individually or classically. From the two research results, it can be seen that the communicative approach provides results that can improve learning activities and student learning as well as complete learning outcomes with classical and individual in speaking activities. This study aims to find out the extent to which the communicative approach is able to have a true influence on the speaking skills of classical primary school students.

## **METHODS**

This research is action research. The research is participatory in the sense that the researcher is involved in the research, and is collaborative because it is involved with other parties (collaborators) (Walidin, et al., 2015). This research uses the procedure of implementing learning through a communicative approach in Indonesian language subjects. The research used Kemmis & Mc Taggart's learning model which has nine phases, namely (1) presenting a short dialogue, (2) presenting oral training, and (3) presenting oral training. dialogue, (3) presentation of questions and answers, (4) analysis and study, (5) inference, (6) presentation activity, (7) oral product activity, 8) task reward, and 9) execution. The research subjects were 24 VA class students of SD Negeri Tongas, Central Lombok Regency. The research data is quantitative data. Data collection techniques were in the form of tests and non-tests. Data collection instruments were observation sheets, and speaking skill sheets in the form of grille instruments.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

In this study, the researcher acted as a planner, implementer, and teacher in the classroom during the class action research. The research was conducted over two cycles, each cycle consisting of two meetings. The time allocation for each meeting was 70 minutes (2 x 35 minutes). The implementation of each cycle went through several stages, namely *planning, acting, observing, and reflecting*.

### **1. Results**

The implementation of the pre-cycle in this series of studies is to determine the condition of learning speaking skills before being given action. Researchers carried out the

pre-cycle on 12 September 2021 with an allocation of 2 x 35 minutes. Learning takes place on theme 1, "objects in the surrounding environment" subtheme 1 "The form of objects and their characteristics, learning 4 with indicators of expressing opinions about the balance of nature. The results of speaking skills can be seen in the table below.

*Table 1. Distribution of Pre-Classroom Speaking Skill Results*

Value Interval	Result	
	Number of students	Percentage (%)
14-27	8	33,33
28-40	5	20,83
41-53	3	12,50
54-66	6	25
67-79	1	4,17

Value Interval	Results		
	Number of Students	Percentage (%)	
Based on the data in table 1, the students' speaking skills	80-92	1	4,17
	93-100	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>

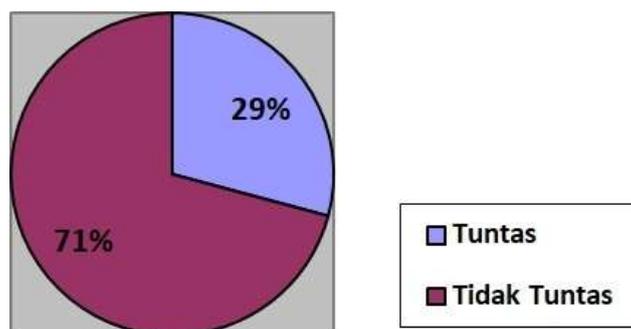
in the pre-cycle, shows the acquisition of the most grades 14-27 totaling 8 students, then grades 28-40 totaling 5 students, for grades 41-53 totaling 3 students. These results show that students' speaking skills are still low so that action is needed in further learning.

The results of the completeness of students' pre-class speaking skills can be seen in the following table.

*Table 2. Results of Pre-classroom Speaking Skills Completion*

Criteria	Total	Percentage (%)
Completed	7	29,17
Not Completed	17	70,83
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>

From the data table above, it can be seen that the results of the pre-cycle test show that the average score of students reached 37.8. With a KKM of 70, out of 24 students only 7 students were complete and 17 students were not complete. The visual description of the pre-cycle results in Figure 1 below.



*Diagram of Student Completion*

Based on the evaluation results on theme one "Things in the Neighborhood" regarding "Humans and their Environment", the results of speaking skills were obtained from tests given at the end of cycle I in the form of tests presenting and presenting the results of interviews in the form of reports. This was done to see the extent to which there was an increase in speaking skills and put it in writing through a communicative approach.

The following presents the results of data processing of student learning outcomes.

*Table 3. Distribution of Speaking skill results*

<b>Interval Value</b>	<b>Result</b>	
	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
14-27	1	4,17
28-40	2	8,33
41-53	1	4,17
54-66	3	12,50
67-79	7	29,17
80-92	3	12,50
93-100	7	29,17
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>

Based on the table above, the results of speaking skills show the most acquisition in the score interval 67-79 and 93-100, namely 7 students with a percentage of 29.17%. It is also known that there are 13 students whose scores exceed the KKM and 11 students who have not completed. Evaluation of speaking skills in the cognitive and psychomotor domains obtained an average of 71.16.

The completeness of the results of students' speaking skills at the first cycle stage can be seen in the following.

*Table 4. Results of Speaking Skills Completion Cycle I*

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Completed	13	54,17
Not Completed	11	45,83
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>

Based on the table above, the results of students' speaking skills have not met the expected target. Therefore, further action is needed in cycle II. Researchers must improve the shortcomings found during learning in cycle I so that the results of report writing skills can be further improved. To get a visual picture of the results of students' speaking skills on each indicator, it can be presented in the following diagram.

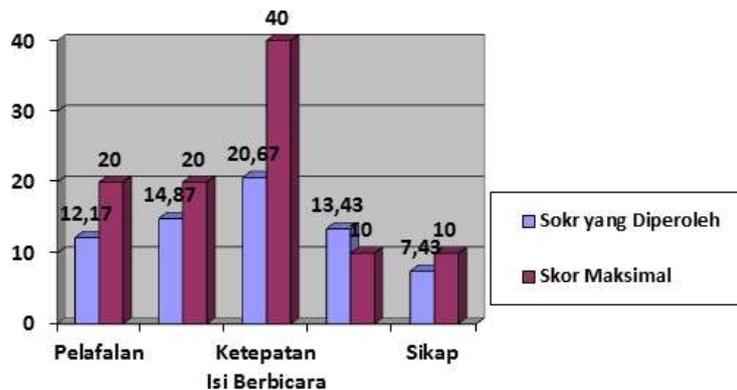


Figure 2. Diagram of Achievement of Speaking Skills Indicators Cycle I

The results of the assessment of each indicator showed that the pronunciation indicator achieved an average score of 12.17 out of a maximum score of 20; the sentence structure indicator achieved a score of 14.87 out of a minimum score of 20; the accuracy of the speaking content achieved an average score of 20.57 out of a maximum score of 40; the expression indicator achieved an average score of 13.43 out of a maximum score of 10; and the attitude indicator achieved an average score of 7.43 out of a maximum score of 10.

Based on the evaluation results on theme two "Events in life" regarding "Various events in life", the results of speaking skills are obtained from tests given at the end of cycle II in the form of tests presenting and presenting the results of interviews in the form of reports. This is done to see the extent to which there is an increase in speaking skills and put it in writing through a communicative approach.

The results of data processing of student learning outcomes in cycle II are presented in the table below.

Table 5. Distribution of Speaking Skill Results Cycle II

Interval	Results	
	Value	Number of Students Percentage (%)
14-27	0	0
28-40	1	4,17
41-53	0	0
54-66	2	8,33
67-79	7	29,17
80-92	5	20,83
93-100	9	37,50
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>

Based on the data in the table above, the results of speaking skills show the most gains in grades 93-100, namely 9 students with a percentage of 37.50%. Based on the predetermined Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) of 70, it is known that all students are complete with a total of 18 students with a percentage of 75%. The evaluation of speaking skills is obtained with an average score of 70.

79.00. A visual description of the results of students' speaking skills on each indicator is presented in the following diagram.

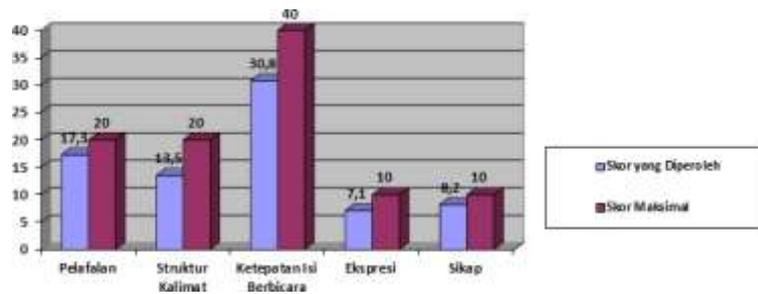


Diagram of the Achievement of Speaking Skills Indicators Cycle II

The results of the assessment of each indicator show that the pronunciation indicator reaches an average score of 17.3 out of a maximum score of 20; the sentence structure indicator reaches a score of 13.5 out of a maximum score of 20; the accuracy of the content of speaking reaches an average score of 30.8 out of a maximum score of 40; the expression indicator reaches an average score of 7.1 out of a maximum score of 10; and the expression in an average score of 7.1 out of a maximum score of 10.

attitude achieved an average score of 8.2 out of a maximum score of 10. In cycle II, the number of students who completed was 18 students.

The completeness of the results of students' report writing skills at the cycle II stage can be seen in the following table.

Table 6. Results of Speaking Skills Completion Cycle II

Criteria	Total	Percentage (%)
Completed	18	75
Not Completed	6	25
Total	24	100

Based on the table above, it is known that the results of students' speaking skills have met the expected targets, so the research on improving speaking skills through a communicative approach in grade V students of SDN Tongas was stopped in cycle II.

## 2. Discussion

Based on the research results in the pre-cycle, it was found that the learning conditions of speaking skills were still low with the details of the findings as follows. First, in the learning process the teacher did not pay attention to speaking skill activities, when students performed and only captured the beginning of speaking. Second, the teacher only uses the image media found in the student book. Third, students' enthusiasm in learning to speak is still lacking because they still use lecture techniques. Fourth, there are no examples that students can see for example through

videos so that it can be seen that students have difficulty speaking or are nervous, sentences are unclear as if mumbling, students are less brave or afraid and cannot speak properly. Therefore, it is necessary to take action on learning that can have a positive impact on improving speaking skills.

In cycle II, it is known that the results of speaking skills show the most acquisition in the score interval 67-79 and 93-

100, namely 7 students with a percentage of 29.17%.

Based on the data, it is known that there are 13 students whose scores exceed the KKM and 11 students who have not yet completed. Evaluation of speaking skills in the cognitive and psychomotor domains obtained an average of 71.16. This shows that speaking skills have not reached the predetermined target. Based on each indicator measured, it shows that the pronunciation indicator reaches an average score of 12.17 out of a maximum score of 20; the sentence structure indicator reaches a score of 14.87 out of a minimum score of 20; the accuracy of the speaking content reaches an average score of 20.57 out of a maximum score of 40; the expression indicator reaches an average score of 13.43 out of a maximum score of 10; and the attitude indicator reaches an average score of 7.43 out of a maximum score of 10. The data shows that there has been an increase when compared to the average score of each indicator in the pre-cycle. The improvement in speaking skills occurred because students carried out learning activities with a communicative approach. Teachers together with students carry out learning speaking skills by involving abilities so that the learning objectives on the criteria assessed are achieved, namely: pronunciation/intonation, sentence structure, accuracy of speaking content, expression and attitude.

In cycle II, the results of speaking skills showed the most gains in grades 93-100, namely 9 students with a percentage of 37.50%. Based on the predetermined Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) of 70, it is known that all students are complete with a total of 18 students with a percentage of 75%. Evaluation of speaking skills obtained with an average score of 79.00. This shows that students' speaking skills have reached the expected target.

The results of speaking skills in cycle II are the same as cycle I, there are five indicators that are used as rubrics for assessing students' speaking skills, namely pronunciation/intonation, sentence structure, accuracy of speaking content, expression and attitude. The results of the assessment of speaking skills showed that 14 students (58.33%) who scored between 85 - 100 (criterion A), 6 students (25%) who scored between 75 - 84 (criteria B), 4 students (16.67%) scored between 60 - 74 (criteria C). Then the average student score is 80.

The results of the assessment of each indicator show that the pronunciation indicator reaches an average score of 17.3 out of a maximum score of 20, the sentence structure indicator reaches a score of

13.5 out of a maximum score of 20, the accuracy of the speaking content reaches an average score of 30.8 out of a maximum score of 40, the expression indicator reaches an average score of 7.1 out of a maximum score of 10, and the attitude indicator reaches an average score of 8.2 out of a maximum score of 10. The data shows that there has been an increase when compared to the average score of each indicator in the pre-cycle.

Based on the research that has been carried out, it is concluded that there is a significant increase in students' communication skills from pre- cycle to cycle I and from cycle I to cycle II seen from the completeness and details of the achievement of students' communication skills assessment indicators.

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