

## THE EFFECT OF ACTIVITY BASED-LEARNING (ABL) ON STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

(An Experimental Research at SMA Bina Putera-Kopo)

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of the Activity-Based Learning (ABL) method on students' speaking skills of class XI SMA Bina Putera-Kopo. The method in this study is a qualitative method with a quasi-experimental research design using a non-equivalent control group design. The variables in this study consist of two variables. Those are independent variables the implementation of the ABL method (X) and bound to students' speaking skills (Y). This research was conducted at SMAS Bina Putera-Kopo. Data collection was carried out using tests (pre and post-tests). Data analysis techniques using descriptive data, prerequisite analysis and hypothesis testing. The results showed that there was a significant effect of the application of the Activity-Based Learning (ABL) method on improving students' speaking skills by testing the hypothesis using the Wilcoxon test (t test) proving Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) has a value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . This means that the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted and the null hypothesis ( $H_o$ ) is rejected.

**Keywords:** *Activity-Based Learning, Speaking Skills*

### INTRODUCTION

English is a compulsory subject in junior high school to university and various methods have been used by educators to learn English effectively in the class, but the fact that there are still many students who cannot speak English properly, even though they have studied English for years. According to Farhani et al., students clearly know what they want to say in the Indonesia language, but when they have to switch it into English, they are often confused about how to say it properly (Randu Farhani et al., 2020). This is happened because students lack speaking practice. The opportunities or moments that they learn to practice speaking only exist in English class. After that, they are faced with an environment that does not support interaction in English. The speaking English lesson with limited learning time in the classroom must be used properly and a creative teacher is needed to make English speaking activities in the class effective and meaningful for students.

Apart from that, another problem is that the learning process of speaking English is commonly passive because students are only fixated on the textbook and what is explained by the teacher, so that students seem to be dictated by what the book says, they do not explore or express what is on their minds that they have and are actually able to express it, they tend to be quiet and passive in speaking class. Learning English is not enough to learn simply from textbooks, but it takes a lot of practice to be able to use the language. Speaking activities are needed in learning English with the aim that students are able to use what they have learned in English lessons. According to Harmer, speaking activities should be a big part of language lessons because these can help students quickly improve their English processing skills (Harmer, 2001).

Therefore, it requires a learning method that encourages students to actively participate in speaking English subject to improve their speaking skills.

English speaking lessons at school, especially at the high school level, educators have done various ways to improve students' language skills. It usually follows learning steps that have proven successful in previous learning and that can be a relatively new method or strategy. There are several methods of speaking English lessons that educators have used to engage students in the learning process, one of the methods is Activity-Based Learning (ABL). ABL was developed based on several studies that showed how students' intellectual abilities can be optimally improved (Priyono et al., 2017). Students are given an open opportunity to be creative and develop their potential through activities that suit their interests and desires (Rusman, 2012). This method can be adapted into English speaking lessons for high school students with various speaking activities that are expected to improve students' speaking skills.

Based on the background above, the researcher conducted research on "The Effect of Activity-Based Learning (ABL) on Students' Speaking Skills" a quasi-experimental research on 11<sup>th</sup> grade Students of SMA Bina Putera-Kopo. The researcher wanted to find out how effective the use of the ABL method was for high school students in speaking English in improving students' speaking skills.

## **THEORETICAL REVIEW**

### **A. The Activity-Based Learning Method**

#### **1. Definition of Activity-Based Learning Method**

The word "activity" is defined as "work that involves the students' direct experience rather than a textbook study." The learner must be able to interact with and process the information in activity-based learning in order to comprehend and build his knowledge of a particular subject. The standard definition of ABL is a series of educational methods that include students in the learning process on an individual and groups through activities and/or discussions in the classroom that require higher-order thinking, all of which are followed by a period of reflections. Students actively participate in class rather than just listening to the teacher read from a text, write on the board, or stare at a computer screen. They also reflect on what they are doing (Blaz, 2023).

#### **2. Characteristics of Activity-based Learning Method**

Through activity-based learning, students are actively involved in their learning while educators serve as mentors and coaches rather than just passive information providers. In activity-based learning, a teacher provides activities to help students learn. Using the activities as a foundation, students will develop their own learning style and arrange language-related material. The teacher supports active learning by getting students to interact with one another as well as the teacher. Students are creative, but there is a teacher behind them who encourages the students to experiment with different ways of creating and using language. Students who use this kind of practice have a proactive attitude toward their learning. They see themselves in control of their own learning rather than as passive recipients of content provided by teachers or textbooks (Nunan, 2004).

The characteristics of activity-based learning in teaching English learning materials include (Siswoirwanto, 2018):

- a. Activities are used in all types of teaching methods both inside and outside the classroom,
- b. Activities aim to develop and express ideas in a certain form,
- c. Activities can enjoy aesthetic experiences,
- d. Solve an intellectual difficulty, and
- e. Gain certain experiences and skills.

### 3. Principles of Activity-Based Learning Method

The following are the basic principles of activity-based learning methods (Unicef, 2021):

- a. Learning-focused activities that are meaningful and purposeful.
- b. The range of educational materials used.
- c. Creating scope for individual and independent learning.
- d. The chance to learn in many ways.
- e. The potential for critical inquiry and higher-order thinking.
- f. Everyone or each individual engaged.
- g. Integration of ongoing assessment into the educational process.
- h. Democratic interactions/processes in the classroom.
- i. An inclusive and equitable learning environment.
- j. Setting the lesson in the context of the students' community and daily life.
- k. Focus on comprehensive and all-around growth.

## B. Speaking Skills

### 1. Definitions of Speaking Skills

Producing, receiving, and processing information are steps in the interactive process of constructing the meaning of spoken language. Speaking, according to Deborah Blaz, involves generating linguistic responses to certain situations (Blaz, 2023). Speaking involves utilizing words to convey ideas and emotions. Speaking is a behavior used to interact or communicate with other people. Robert Barrass said that speaking is the capacity to effectively, concisely, and convincingly express one's ideas. Unspoken cues regarding people's thoughts and feelings let people communicate, whether or not they are really speaking. The act of speaking to someone is not simple. Verbal communication requires the careful selection of words and their appropriate use in order to clearly communicate ideas in order to elicit the same concepts in the minds of listeners and ensure that the message is understood (Barrass, 2006).

### 2. Types of Speaking

There are two types of speaking: interactional and transactional. These are differentiated by their form and function. In Richards, Brown and Yule make a distinction between the transactional functions of speaking, which concentrate on the exchange of information, and the interactional functions of speaking, which serve to establish and maintain social relationships. Speaking as interaction, speaking as

transaction, and speaking as performance are the three components of Brown and Yule's framework. The definition of each is as follows (Richards, 2008):

a. Speaking as Interaction

The term "talking as interaction" relates to what is typically indicated by the word "conversation" and covers interactions that have an essential social purpose. To build friends and provide a safe space for contact with others, people greet one other when they first meet, exchange pleasantries, share recent experiences, and so on. The message is less important than the speaker and how they wish to exhibit themselves to one another. Depending on the circumstance, informal or formal.

b. Speaking as Transaction

Situations where the emphasis is on what is said or done are referred to be speaking as transactions. Two different types of transactions using speech. The first kind includes situations where participants primarily concentrate on what is said or accomplished and the focus is on delivering and receiving information, such as when asking someone for directions. As long as information is successfully transmitted or comprehended, accuracy may not be a top priority. The second category of transactions includes those that are centered on acquiring goods or services, such booking a hotel room or placing a food order at a restaurant.

c. Speaking as Performance

Performance speaking is the third type of speaking. This is a reference to public speaking, which includes speaking in front of an audience during activities like speeches, announcements, and class presentations. Speaking as performance frequently takes the form of a monologue rather than a dialogue, adheres to a set structure (such as speech), and is more similar to written language than spoken language. Similar to how talk as interaction or transaction is not conceivable, it is frequently judged in terms of effectiveness or impact on listeners.

### 3. Speaking Assessment

The theoretical basis of the two evaluation frameworks have two main elements: interactional competence and communicative competence. The idea of communicative competence serves as the foundation for explaining the concept of language proficiency as stated in the established assessment methodology. It focuses on the kinds of linguistic information—including the kinds of knowledge connected to what is practical and appropriate—that are not just possible in a language but are actually applied in social contexts. The idea of communicative competence is divided into three categories: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence (Salaberry & Burch, 2021). In order to counter language competency theory, which emphasizes grammar, the idea of communicative competence was brought into applied linguistics. The importance of their language use for communication is emphasized by communicative competence (Luoma, 2004).

## METHOD

This research used a quantitative method which is Aliaga and Gunderson defined that quantitative research is explains phenomena by collecting numerical data that are statistically analysed (Muijs, 2004). It is suitable for analyzing the effect of educational interventions, such as school improvement programs, projects to improve certain elements or professional development programs (Muijs, 2004). This type of research uses quasi-experiments that obtain information from experimental results where it is impossible to control all external variables that affect the implementation of the experiment (Sugiono, 2014). This research was conducted using an experimental method which is a quasi-experimental. The design used in this research is a non-equivalent control group design which begins with taking pre-test data before conducting treatment in speaking English subjects. After taking the pre-test data from the two groups, the researcher continued with giving treatment to students through English speaking subject with different learning methods in each class. The treatment in the experimental group used activity-based learning methods, while the control group used conventional learning methods. Furthermore, after the pre-test and treatment were carried out, it was followed by collecting post-test data as the final research. The variables in this study are as follows: Independent variable is a variable that affect the appearance of the dependent variable. Thus, in this research the independent variable is the implementation of the ABL method (X). The dependent variable is a variable that is influenced or is the result of the independent variable, in this study the dependent variable is students' speaking skills (Y).

The sample of this research totaled 54 students from 255 populations. The researcher took a sample of students from class XI IPA 1 as the experimental group and class XI IPA 2 as the control group, in collecting data this research uses test. Data analysis techniques used include: (1) Data description includes mean, median, and mode, (2) Analysis prerequisite tests include normality tests and linearity tests, (3) Hypothesis testing. Hypothesis testing to determine the effect of using activity-based learning methods on students' speaking skills. Data analysis and hypothesis testing were carried out using the IBM SPSS Statistics 25 program.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

**Table 4.1**

**The Pre-Test Results of Students from the Two Groups**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-Test Experiment	27	20	50	31.56	9.484
Pre-Test Control	27	20	57	33.96	9.062
Valid N (listwise)	27				

The pre-test results of the experimental group and the control group revealed that the mean score of the experimental group was 31.56, which was lower than the mean score of the control group, which was 33.96. The results show the students' initial speaking skills from each class and the researcher can determine which class is used as the experimental group from the results of the mean score. After the pre-test data collection was carried out, the researcher gave treatment at the 2nd meeting by learning speaking English using the method that has been determined for each class.

**Table 4.2**

**The Post-Test Results of Students from the Two Groups**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Post-Test Experiment	27	43	70	56.04	9.772
Post-Test Control	27	30	70	41.52	10.252
Valid N (listwise)	27				

Based on the results of post-test above, the experimental group and the control group revealed that the mean score of the experimental group was 56.04, which was higher than the mean score of the control group, which was only 41.52. The results show that there are differences in the mean score from the results of the students' post-test after getting the treatment with different method in each class. The mean score of the experimental group showed that there was a significant effect of the use of Activity-Based Learning methods on improving students' speaking skills of class XI IPA 1 at SMA Bina Putera-Kopo.

a. Normality Test

The normality test was carried out using the IBM SPSS Statistics 25 program with Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk analysis to determine whether the sample was normally distributed or not. The data is stated to be normally distributed if the significance value is  $> 0.05$ .

**Table 4.3**

**Normality Test**

Class		Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Student's Score	Pre-Test Experiment (ABL)	.195	27	.010	.902	27	.015
	Post-Test Experiment (ABL)	.165	27	.056	.888	27	.007
	Pre-Test Conventional	.246	27	.000	.882	27	.005
	Post-Test Conventional	.257	27	.000	.828	27	.000

Based on the data above, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk analysis shows that the pre-test and post-test of the experimental and control groups have a significance of  $< 0.05$ , it means that the data in this research sample were not normally distributed. One of the reasons why the data is not normal is the presence of outliers. Outliers are data that has an uncommon score, either too high or too low. The existence

of outliers can make the score distribution skewed to the left or right. This happened because of the low score of students' speaking English.

#### b. Homogeneity Test

Homogeneity test was carried out to determine the level of variance of the experimental group data and the control group were the same or not. The data is stated to be homogeneous if the significance is  $> 0.05$ . The researcher used the IBM SPSS Statistics 25 program to test the homogeneity of the data.

**Table 4.4**  
**Test of Homogeneity of Variance**

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Student's Score	Based on Mean	.838	1	52	.364
	Based on Median	.912	1	52	.344
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	.912	1	43.089	.345
	Based on trimmed mean	.925	1	52	.341

Based on the table above, it shows that the student scores in the experiment group and the control group in the section (based on mean) have a significance of 0.364. Therefore, it can be concluded that the variance in the two groups is homogeneous because  $0.364 > 0.05$ .

#### c. Research Hypothesis Test (Wilcoxon Test)

The Wilcoxon test aims to determine whether there is a difference in the mean scores of two paired samples. It is part of the non-parametric test which does not require normally distributed research data and it used as an alternative to the paired sample t test if the data is not normally distributed (Ruland, 2018). The submission of the hypothesis is as follows:

Ho : ABL has no effect on improving students' speaking skills.  
 Ha : ABL has effect on improving students' speaking skills.

The criteria for testing the hypothesis (t test) is if Asymp.Sig.  $< 0.05$ , then the null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is accepted and vice versa if Asymp. Sig.  $> 0.05$ , then the alternative hypothesis (Ha) is rejected and the null hypothesis (Ho) is accepted.

#### Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

1. The negative rank or reduction between the pre-test and post-test scores is 0 in the value of N, mean rank and sum of ranks. This value of 0 indicates that there is no decrease in score from the pre-test to the post-test.
2. The positive rank or improvement from the pre-test and post-test scores. There are 27 positive data, which means that the 27 students experienced an increase in

scores from the pre-test to the post-test. The mean rank or increase in the average score is 14.00. Meanwhile, the number of positive ranks or sum of ranks is 378.00.

3. Ties is the similarity of pre-test and post-test scores. Based on the table above, the Ties value is 0, this shows that there is no equal score between the pre-test and post-test.

Based on the output of "Test Statistics", it shows that Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) has a value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . It means that the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted and the null hypothesis ( $H_o$ ) is rejected, which means there is a difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. Thus, it can be concluded that the activity-based learning has effect on improving students' speaking skills.

## CONCLUSION

The post-test mean score of the students in the experimental group was 56.04 and in the control group was 41.52. These result indicate that there is a significant effect of the implementation of Activity-Based Learning (ABL) method on improving students' speaking skills. This can be seen in the score of the experimental group, with the pre-test mean score of 31.56, an increase in the post-test mean score of 56.04. Besides that, based on the results of the Wilcoxon test (t-test) proving that Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) has a value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . It means that the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted and the null hypothesis ( $H_o$ ) is rejected. Thus, it can be concluded that the activity-based learning has effect on improving students' speaking skills in SMA Bina Putera-Kopo.

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