



STUDENTS' RESPONSE TOWARD SYAFAHI (Oral) EXAMINATION IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS

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Abstract: *The aims of this research were to know the students' responses toward Syafahi (Oral) examination and to know the students' difficulties in facing oral examination. In addition, the subject of this research was 30 female students of class XI (Eleventh). The qualitative descriptive was the method used in submitting the data. The instrument of this research was Interview question which consisted of 10 questions. The result finding were as follows; Syafahi (oral) examination could improve students' speaking ability since the students could increase their capability in answering each question which asked by the examiner through conversation, reading and writing, translation, and dictation. They also had enough time to prepare themselves before their turn to be examined. However some difficulties also faced by the students, 28 (93,33) of the students still have some difficulties in following the Syafahi (oral) examination such as hesitate in answering the questions, did not fluent in producing English words, lack of vocabulary, anxious in oral examination, low self – confidence, unpredictable questions, embarrassed and shy when they did not get directly to the examiner question, afraid of examination failure's score, and their heart beaten faster because they did not have any experiences before in facing such examination .*

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INTRODUCTION

As we know that speaking skill is one of the fourth skills that must be mastered by the students at Senior high school in mastering their ability in English. Kholid (2022: 23), Speaking is one way to communicate and interact with other people orally. So, many ways, methods and techniques that used by the English teachers in increasing their students' speaking ability to be better day by day and they also hoped that all the students could be able to speak English correctly and confidently and also could be able to pass the *Syafahi* (Oral) examination before they follow the written examination at school. However, as the human being, we always interact and communicate with other people in our daily life and live to share our ideas, thought, comments, point of view, reasons and feelings to other people by utterance the speaking. At this school the students stay in the hostel and spend

the time about 3 until 6 years together with their mate and automatically they will talk and communicate with them days and nights by using English and Arabic since those languages are the major language that communicate and interact by them. But here, the focus is only English speaking ability in facing *Syafahi* (oral) examination. In addition, Now days, English use widely all over the world and many people learn and use this language Internationally without comparing the educational level, status, ages, gender, clan, and tribes. It is also supported by Ambarita, et.al (2022: 200), English is a widely spoken language throughout the world and English is a language that many people use to communicate with people in different countries.

In Babun Najah Ulee Kareng Islamic Boarding School, this *Syafahi* (oral) examination is conducted for the first time at this semester in academic year 2022/2023 at the second semester at this Boarding School. However it is the new thing not only for the English teachers but also for the students as well. The Education section has invited several English teachers who teach English at the boarding school to be the examiners for this *Syafahi* (Oral) Examination. The students before attending or following the examination, they have to prepare themselves about 4 days. This examination conducted about 5 days which started on Monday until Friday. The students also get the module that could be the guidance for them to learn English common questions, tenses, and also the English texts. However, in this examination, they have to sharpen their skills in English likes conversation, tenses, translation, reading, and writing. Each students spent about 45 minutes to be examine and they also gave about 3 up 4 times to get out if they did not able to answer and they also could ask the correct answer for their friends until they ready to answer the next questions.

In facing this examination, the students only focus on their vocabulary, tenses, translation, writing and reading. Related to the vocabulary, they only focus on the common vocabulary that use in their daily life and the common vocabulary they use in daily conversation with friends but when the examination happen, they have to speak formally with the examiner and they have to focus not only toward the knowledge but also toward their politeness and attitude. Furthermore, the students also prepare the reading text and they must be able to translate the English text into Indonesian. Besides, they have to be able to write the dictation sentences correctly. In addition, speaking is engaged the producing of the movements such as the movements of the rib cage, the vocal cords, and also the mouth. In creating and making these movements, we need to control 100 muscles of this activity. It is also supported by Smith (2005), One thing about stuttering is very clear: when dis fluency occurs, Individual who stutters is not able to appropriately control the activity of the many muscles involved in speech.

Furthermore, speaking is very important skill at this school since they only have to speaking two languages; Arabic and English. That's why the *Syafahi* (oral) examination is very important to the students to know their ability in speaking. Regarding the importance and the difficulty in speaking, it caused five components in speaking; comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency. As mentioned by Syakur (1987), there were generally five components of speaking skill, they were; comprehension, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency. But, in this examination, the examiner only focuses toward students' reading skills, the conversation, translation, vocabulary, and dictation. However, the school has its own policy in conducting such oral examination toward their students.

Literature Review

SYAFAHI (ORAL) EXAMINATION

Syafahi (oral) examination is come from word Arabic means “Speaking”. So, in Babun Najah Islamic Boarding School there were two examination must be followed by all the students who study in that school in the end of the semester, they were called Syafahi (oral) and Tahriri (written) examination. The students were quite familiar with the Tahriri examination where the students follow the written examination as commonly conducted in every school on the certain days. But this semester the school decided to make the Syafahi examination in order to obtain the students’ speaking skills in Arabic and in English. But here, the researcher only focused on the process of Syafahi examination in English that limited and under control on the speaking skills. Teh skills that must be mustered such as the conversation where the students have to speak and answer every single questions asked by the examiner in full English.. teh students also must be able to read and translate the reading text that prepared earlier by the examiner. Lewin (2003) as stated in Nur and Ahmad (2017: 47), stated that reading is understand the meaning of a text in reading activity, the reader makes interaction among eyes and mind to gain what the author extend. Hopefully, after reading the text, the students able to explain and understand the text is about, able to find main ideas, understand the vocabulary and the content of the text. In addition, the students also must be able to write the sentences that dictated by the examiner and each student wxamined in 45 minutes. The aim of this examination is to know the students’ ability in English during the semester and the students’ improvement in English as well. Here, the examiner gave the students the score for each skill that examined as the school standard. The lowest score is 5 and the highest is 10.

Furthermore, *Syafahi* (oral) examination was an oral examination or practice which conducted by the Islamic Boarding School Babun Najah Ulee Kareng that focus on students speaking skill in English or it was an extension of oral communication skill. It is where the students show their knowledge in speaking ability in a particular topic and subject. The students were able to communicate and able to answer all the questions orally that asked by the examiner in English and the answer must be answered in good English by the students. In other words, *Syafahi* examination is the practice that engaged the examiner poses questions to the students in spoken form and the students has to answer the question in such a way as to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the subject to pass the exam.

Syafahi (Oral) examination is an activity that conducted between the teacher and the students and it always take place in the classroom during the examination happen. Baker (1992: 115), oral presentation was like a formal conversation, speaking to group as a natural activity. Furthermore, it is also stated by Swarthout (2013), oral presentation is the processes of transmitting information or ideas from one person to another group verbally. But in *Syafahi* (oral) examination this oral communication must be conducted formally since it was located in formal situation between the students and the examiner. Next, the students who followed the examination in certain day must be obeyed the rules and schedule that about 7 up to 8 students examined a day. To complete this examination, the examiner needed 5 days to complete this exam that started at 07.30 – 12.40 and continued from 14.00 – 13.30.

SPEAKING SKILL

Burns (2019), Speaking skill is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information by using word or sounds of

articulation. In speaking consisted of some require components which consisted of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency, and comprehension. In communication, the students have to understand the grammatical rules, appropriate vocabulary, and correct pronunciation use in utterances the words or vocabulary.

In speaking there are five aspects that must be mastered by the students. They are pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Based on Douglas (2004), there are five aspects of speaking; Pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The explanation as follows; pronunciation is considered the way in producing particular word that pronounced. Grammar is the rules system that arrange and it has relationship with words in a sentences. Grammar also tells us on how to construct a sentence correctly. Vocabulary is the total number of words that make up the language. It refers to the English words or foreign words. Fluency practice usually combines new items from other language as preparation in conversation, without hesitation, and item with some errors. Comprehension is the ability to understand the situation is really like. So, in producing good sentences in English, the students must be put the five aspects mentioned above in the speaking skills.

RESEARCH METHODE

The research method used was qualitative descriptive. The subject of this research was 30 female students of class XI (Eleventh) at MAS Babun Najah Ulee Kareng who followed the *Syafahi* (Oral) examination in 2022/2023 academic year. However, the instrument used in collecting the data was Interview which consisted of 10 interview questions. In addition, the interview was conducted face to face with the subject of the research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

The students' response toward *Syafahi* (oral) examination in improving students' speaking skill as follows;

First interview question is about students' experience in facing the *Syafahi* examination. In answering this question, all the students 30 (100%) of female students stated that the *Syafahi* (oral) examination was their first experience and in earlier they felt not comfortable of this examination and none of the students ever followed that *Syafahi* examination before.

The second question is about *Syafahi* (oral) examination could improve students' conversation. In *Syafahi* (oral) examination the students asked some questions about their personal information such as name, nick name, hobby, religion, occupation, age, sibling, ambition, target and the plan about their future. 15 (50%) of the students able to answer the question correctly, 8 (26,66 %) students stated that they could not understand the questions asked by the examiner, 4 (13,33 %) of the students cannot differ the question about how are you? and how old are you? Because the question is almost similar in pronunciation, and 3 (10 %) of them really not understand every single questions asked for them since they did not like English conversation and they rarely talk by using English with their friends in the hostel or even at school.

Third question is about students' vocabulary improvement. 25 (83,33) of the students said that *Syafahi* (oral) examination could improve and increase their English vocabulary, they could find the difficult vocabulary from the dictionary or could be asked to other students directly outside the class. So, that is one of the reasons on that why they could improve their vocabulary when *Syafahi* (oral) examination held. 3 (10%) of the students

said that the *Syafahi* (oral) examination did not able to increase their vocabulary because the vocabulary asked is really common and they always used them in their conversation, and 2 (6,66%) of the students said the *Syafahi* (oral) examination did not give any impact toward the improvement of their vocabulary.

The fourth question is about students' reading improvement. 17 (56,66) of the students mentioned that by *Syafahi* examination they could improve their reading skills because the examiner gave them enough time to read English text slowly and also correct their pronunciation directly during the reading process and also asked them to read the same sentence thrice until they have the good pronunciation. 9 (30%) of the students said during *Syafahi* examination they could not improve their reading skill because they did not have enough time to read all the text and complete the reading because of the limitation of the time but they still have the improvement even a little. 4 (13,33%) said that they really did not get any improvement in reading during the *Syafahi* examination process since they thought the text given by the examiner is easy, simple, there were no challenges and the vocabulary mentioned in the text was not appropriate for their level education as the senior high school students.

Fifth question is asked about students' translation ability in English text. 21 (70%) of the students explained that in *Syafahi* (oral) examination they able to translate English text into good Indonesian because they understand the vocabulary prepare in the text and they familiar with the information available in the text as well. 4 (13,33%) of the students answered that they could not be able to translate the reading text into Indonesian because there were difficult vocabularies prepare in it. So 4 of them had to go out and asked to their friends' help outside the class and back again to the class to continue their examination, and 5 (16,66%) of the students could not be able to complete the translation of English text correctly and even they have asked to their friends' help because they did not understand on how to translate the English text in good words order. However, the examiner told them the way on how to translate the English reading text in correct words order and also give them the task and have to complete in 45 minutes later.

Sixth question is about the students' difficulties in facing oral examination. 28 (93,33%) said that they still have some difficulties in following the *Syafahi* examination such as hesitate in answering the questions, did not fluent in producing English words, lack of vocabulary, anxious in oral examination, low self – confidence, unpredictable questions, embarrassed and shy when they did not get directly to the examiner question, afraid of examination failure, and the heart beaten faster because they did not have any experience. 2 (6,66%) of the students feel enjoy, confidence, and comfortable when they face the examiner. They were also confidence with their answer of each question.

Seventh question is asked about students' ability in dictation. 21 (70%) of the students answered that they said when the examiner dictates to them the sentences and vocabularies, they did not know how to write in correct sentences and vocabularies. The reason of this situation, they said, they rarely write the sentences and vocabularies in dictation so that's why they could not write them well. But the examiner gave them the change to ask to their friends outside the class and they also tried to re-write the correct sentences and vocabularies. 8 (26,66) of them mentioned that they able to write the sentences and vocabularies which dictated by the examiner and only 1 student (3,33%) who could not able to write in English even that simple dictation given.

Eighth question is about *Syafahi* examination could motivate students' in practicing English. 26 (86,66) of the students answered that *Syafahi* examination could motivate them in practicing English especially they could be able to answer the examiner question

confidently. However, they have the module and they could practice with their friends before their turn to enter to the examination class. 4 (13,33) of the students said that *Syafahi* examination could not able to motivate them in practicing English since the feel so nervous, anxiety and panic during the examination. They have limited of vocabulary and did not good in pronouncing the vocabulary. Mean that they did not fluently in producing English vocabulary.

Ninth question is about the media and facilities prepared during *Syafahi* (oral) examination. 30 (100%) of the students agree that in the *Syafahi* examination the examiner prepared some needs for the students to support their success in following the examination such as the pens, papers, posters, white board, laptop, the board markers, and even the rubber for the students. Those facilities specially prepared for the students who follow the students on that day.

Tenth question is asked about the effectiveness of *Syafahi* examination in improving students' speaking skill. 27 (90%) of the students said that *Syafahi* examination is the effective way in improving their speaking skill because they can practice a lot with their friends about several topic and also can practice directly with the examiner and however they decide that *Syafahi* examination is one of the effective way in increasing and sharpening their ability in speaking. Only 3 (10%) of the students said that the *Syafahi* examination is not effective in proving their ability in speaking since when they wait for their turn to come in to the examination class, they feel bored, exhausted, and tired because the name called is in random. The name which is put in no 1 is not exactly or automatically would call as the first who be examined and the last name is also not directly would call in the last session but all of this would conduct randomly.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the interviews to 30 female students which related to the students' response toward *Syafahi* (oral) examination in improving their speaking skills were as follows; the students able to improve their conversation, reading and writing, translation, and dictation. Even though there were also some difficulties that faced by the students such as hesitate in answering the questions, did not fluent in producing English words, lack of vocabulary, anxious in oral examination, low self – confidence, unpredictable questions, embarrassed and shy when they did not get directly to the examiner question, afraid of examination failure, and the heart beaten faster because they did not have any experience and only 2 students or about (6,66%) of them feel enjoy, confidence, and comfortable when they face the examiner. They were also confidence with their answer of each question. But however, the examiner always supports them in learning speaking by sharing the interesting topics, using the media and preparing good facilities for speaking class, asking them to memorize new vocabulary and adapting the new vocabulary in their daily conversation. In addition, in getting sharpen in English the students need to speak and use it in daily life confident

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