

The Implementation of Authentic Assessment in Speaking Tests for Secondary School Students

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Abstract:

The use of authentic assessment in speaking tests has gained greater significance to close the gap between theory and practice in the classroom. Although its value in measuring actual language skills in everyday life is well understood, its effective implementation by teachers remains a challenge, and inconsistencies in measuring students' speaking skills are the result. This study aims to explore the implementation of authentic assessment in speaking tests in SMA Negeri 5 Pamekasan, namely the implementation processes employed by teachers and the impact on the students' actual speaking abilities. Conducting a qualitative descriptive study, data were collected using interviews, observation, and documents to represent the naturalistic nature of the classroom and the teachers' assessment strategies. The study reveals that SMA Negeri 5 Pamekasan teachers have informal and formative tests that involve reading aloud, pronunciation, intonation, and confidence measures in classroom interactions. Question-answer and reading aloud are some of the strategies used to overcome the students' shyness to speak and judge their communications more realistically. The study concludes that authentic assessment, when properly understood and implemented, accurately measures students' speaking skills under actual circumstances and helps teachers understand how to direct further improvement. This study provides implications and pedagogical suggestions for teachers to enhance authentic assessment practice in English-speaking courses.

Keywords: Authentic Assessment, Speaking Test, Secondary School, English Language Teaching.

Introduction

English is an important thing in the modern era, English is starting to be used by young people in today's society such as especially high school students who start to hang out and style like foreigners, often young people feel cool if English is often used in their daily lives, such as listening to English songs to singing them. It cannot be denied that saying something using English does

make us confident and feel proud, but there are still many skills that we need to explore in English.

Speaking, listening, writing and reading are the most important skills in English. This must really be owned by someone in mastering and communicating in a second language, especially speaking, speaking is one of the ways we convey information, communicate with one another. Speaking that is natural from someone is certainly a major focus in English. Often people judge someone by the way they speak. Usually the assessment of someone's speaking occurs spontaneously and naturally when someone starts talking, this becomes an attraction for people who see and hear it.

Speaking is one of the learning languages, it is one of the ways to communicate (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). A study by (Rao, 2019) revealed that speaking competence is crucial for achieving effective communication. Speaking is successful if the speaker is able to convey information clearly (Firdausi, 2024). That indicates that there is a necessity for a holistic instruction in language teaching, focusing on enhancing speaking practice and vocabulary mastery that can equip students for academic and professional communication (Wafi et al., 2025).

A test is one of the tools to assess students related to the learning outcomes that students are exposed to (Brown, 2004). A speaking test is a way of assessing students' speaking ability. Speaking assessment is a way of evaluating students' speaking skills. Speaking assessment is important in the learning process in English, this is because students can find out about their abilities during the teaching and learning process at school so that later students can learn again for better progress in the future. It is also important for teachers to see the extent of students' ability to communicate in English, this make knowledge for teachers to see which students have good abilities in communicating well and which ones do not have the ability so that teachers can guide and train these students, especially speaking assessments that occur naturally in the classroom during the teaching and learning process which quickly affects students.

Assessment is an assessment that occurs during the teaching and learning process (Brown, 2004). Authentic assessment is a way of assessing student performance in terms of their abilities (Tabi et al., 2020). Based on the theory

that there are several factors that influence authentic speaking assessment, one of which is the conditions and resources available at school. Although one of the factors of authentic speaking assessment depends on the conditions in the field, but in the process of assessing it the teacher must still provide certain methods or techniques to students during the learning process because the teacher needs to assess which students have the ability and which ones lack the ability to communicate well, then it is usually done so that students have development during the speaking process and students know the results of the assessment as a guide during learning (Souzandehfar, 2023).

The previous study by Firdausi (2024) used qualitative descriptive methods, and focuses on fitting types as well as teacher perceptions of authentic assessment. This previous research focuses on types of authentic assessment. It was found that some techniques are quite effective in authentic speaking assessment, including role play, storytelling, debate, oral report and others. While in our research, it is more focused on how authentic assessment techniques or types are used by teachers and whether this authentic assessment can assess student abilities in real terms. However, this kind of authentic speaking assessment technique can be different from some other schools, as this is due to differences in student abilities, learning methods, and also teacher perceptions regarding authentic assessment in speaking. Such as the use of question-answer techniques in authentic assessment used in student speaking tests.

In this study, using a quantitative method with a quasi-experimental technique, this study focused on the effect of the implementation of authentic assessment on science learning and found that the use of authentic assessment has an effect, where students who use authentic assessment get better teaching results (Made et al., 2014). While in this research we used a descriptive qualitative method, and focused on how the techniques used in authentic assessment in the speaking test, and whether the use of authentic assessment can assess students' abilities in real terms.

In this study using quantitative methods with questioner instruments and focusing on pre-service English teachers about the knowledge and perceptions of pre-service English teachers related to authentic assessment, and it was found that around 75% of preservice English teachers were familiar

with authentic assessment while 25% were not familiar with authentic assessment (Sukarno et al., 2023). While our research used qualitative descriptive method with observation, interview, and documents to find out the techniques in authentic assessment in speaking test and whether this assessment can really assess students' abilities.

The implementation of authentic assessment is sometimes poorly understood or mastered by a teacher to assess the real ability of students to speak and communicate using English, besides that sometimes there are differences in assessing with authentic assessment in some schools which depend on what the condition of the student is like in the school. However, the use of authentic assessment is quite important in the process of improving students' communication skills, therefore it must be sufficiently understood how to implement and understand students' abilities in real and correct ways using this authentic assessment.

With this, the researcher is very interested in examining how the teacher implement their authentic assessment in students speaking at school, one of which is at SMA 5 Pamekasan, the researcher wants to know how the teacher assesses students speaking by using authentic assessment, such as techniques that used in assessing speaking at SMA Negeri 5 Pamekasan, and can the use of authentic assessment determine real abilities at SMA Negeri 5 Pamekasan .

This research is useful as a guideline for teachers in applying authentic assessment in speaking to students, this research can also be a knowledge for teachers related to authentic speaking assessment at school, as well as literature for English education students as future teachers.

Review of Literature

Speaking

Speaking is the process of conveying and sharing meaning through words orally, using verbal and non-verbal symbols in various contexts. This activity is interactive because it involves the ability to produce, receive, and process information in direct communication. In addition, speaking is also a systematic way of combining sounds to form meaningful sentences, which takes place as a two-way process between the speaker and the listener at the same time and context (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). So, in general, speaking is an

active communication process that involves the exchange of information, ideas, or feelings directly between two or more parties.

Speaking Techniques

Several techniques are used to teach speaking skills, tailored to the students' proficiency level and learning goals (Farizi & Herwiana, 2022). For beginners, *storytelling* is an effective method for building confidence and improving storytelling skills. *conversation* techniques help students practice everyday communication and interaction in real-world contexts. *Presentations* encourage students to organize and express ideas clearly, while *problem-solving* activities engage them in critical thinking and collaborative speaking. For more advanced students, *discussions and debates* help develop argumentative and spontaneous speaking skills. Finally, *speaking* exercises focus on developing public speaking and formal presentation skills. These techniques were chosen not only because they are effective in improving speaking skills, but also because they make the learning process fun and provide ample opportunities for practice essential components of overcoming speaking difficulties.

Assessment speaking

There are five main types of speaking assessment (Rahmawati & Ertin, 2014). Imitative (repeating words/phrases to assess basic pronunciation and grammar), intensive (producing short utterances such as reading aloud), responsive (answering short questions), interactive (two-way conversations such as interviews or role-plays), and extensive (monologue tasks such as presentations). In practice, teachers often combine these types, using techniques such as debates, argumentation, social surveys, oral presentations, role-plays, and reading aloud although the latter is sometimes criticized as less reflective of communicative competence. Speaking assessments typically use rubrics, checklists, and rating scales to ensure fair and consistent evaluation. Common methods include interviews, discussions, and presentations, while technologies such as computer-based tests and digital recordings are increasingly being used to provide more flexible and in-depth assessments.

Authentic Assessment

Authentic assessment is an approach that assesses students' ability to complete tasks that reflect real-world situations, emphasizing the meaningful application of knowledge and skills (Ukashatu, 2021). This approach highlights tasks that resemble everyday life conditions, such as discussions, presentations, and collaborative projects. The goal is not only to measure how much students know, but also how well they can use that knowledge in practical contexts.

Types of Authentic Assessment

Several types of authentic assessments have been identified in educational research. *Performance assessments* assess students' abilities through specific presentations, speeches, or performances. *Project assessments* involve completing tasks that require research, teamwork, and communication. *Portfolio assessments* are collections of students' work over a period of time that demonstrate their development and mastery of the material. *Written assessments* include real-world writing assignments such as letters, reports, or reflective journals. *Oral interviews* give students the opportunity to answer questions about personal experiences or interests to demonstrate their speaking skills. Meanwhile, *retellings of stories or texts* assess students' comprehension and language development by asking them to retell the main ideas or details of a reading. All of these assessments are designed to mirror real-world tasks, providing a more accurate picture of students' ability to apply their knowledge (Ukashatu, 2021).

Method

Researchers used qualitative methods, where qualitative was a method to describe the phenomena that occurred. Qualitative research is research conducted naturally that emphasizes meaning to support the results of previous research (Creswell, 2012). Here researchers focus on digging up information or data on the phenomenon of authentic assessment in speaking according to the teachers and researchers conduct research based on the real situation at school and take the data as it is to understand in detail about the implementation of authentic assessment on the speaking test, with a basic

interpretative studies type. Basic interpretative studies are how someone chooses something to implement. In this case, the researcher describes how a teacher chooses and implements assessments such as authentic assessments applied to 10th-grade high school students (Ary et al., 2010). In this case, researchers explore the implementation of authentic assessment in speaking tests in depth.

Researchers used interview techniques, observation and also documents to find out more about the speaking assessment. Interview is a data collection technique by means of communication to obtain data with sources. Observation is a technique for collecting data by investigating existing conditions. Documents are some of the data in the research site (Abdussamad, 2021). Researchers interviewed teachers as sources to obtain data on authentic assessment using semi-structured interviews. In the research, the researcher frankly stated to research and observe students' speaking activities in class. Researchers used teacher documents including teacher assessments with authentic assessment of student speaking. In this research, the researcher chosed SMA Negeri 5 school located in Kowel, Pamekasan as the research location, here the researcher took the teacher as the source of this research which also involved SMA grade 10 students as examples in speaking assessment. The researcher came to the field to interview, observe and also see some teacher assessment documents related to speaking assessment.

Results and Discussions

In authentic assessment in speaking, the teacher conducts an informal assessment where the teacher assesses students when answering questions using English during the learning process in the classroom, besides that the assessment in speaking students is carried out simultaneously with reading assessments such as intonation, pronunciation and others. This is done because students at SMA Negeri 5 lack confidence when communicating without a text in hand. So in the process of assessing speaking students are asked to read aloud first and the teacher assess the intonation and pronunciation of the student. In this case, the assessment carried out by the

teacher is included in the formative assessment, where the teacher assesses students' speaking during the learning process.

Table 1

| Score | Description |
|-------|--|
| A+ | Good pronunciation, high confidence, correct reading, clear articulation. |
| A | Good pronunciation, lack of confidence, good reading, and good intonation. |
| A- | Good pronunciation, lack of confidence, correct reading, and intonation are not clear. |
| B | Pronunciation is not good, lack of confidence, incorrect reading, and poor intonation. |
| B- | Pronunciation is not good, lack of confidence, the reading method is correct, and clear intonation. |
| C | Pronunciation is not good, lack of confidence, the reading method is correct, and intonation is not clear. |

Here, the teacher assesses students based on their pronunciation, intonation, and confidence, as these are also important in speaking. At the time of assessment in authentic assessment speaking, the teacher gives scores based on letters such as A, B, and C, with certain information for each student. Later, the teacher gives a numerical value based on the existing information that shows the student's ability and others in speaking. This is, of course, also supported by other factors in English language learning, such as activity during English language learning in class and in terms of discipline.

Another way in this authentic speaking assessment, the teacher assesses students based on their answers in class during the teaching and learning process, the teacher asks something that has been learned or will be learned and is being learned, in this case the teacher ask students to answer using English, that way active students answer the teacher's questions with English even though they are not very good at stringing words or others but by students answering using English they have dared to show their English language skills. In this case, the teacher gives a plus in his notes, which can be in the form of points or just a plus sign. This is one part of responsive speaking where students quickly respond to the teacher by providing answers to questions related to the material covered in the teaching and learning process.

Ms. Mega: *“Students are usually shy if they want to communicate so I have to provide several ways to find out their English when speaking, with that I can do authentic assessment when students have started talking or communicating in English, so that later I will think of several ideas for methods or other ways to provoke students to show their English skills”.*

Based on the results of observations and interviews, the use of authentic assessment can help students know correctly and realistically related to the results or their abilities in speaking and communicating English, as well as with teachers, by using authentic assessment teachers can assess the real abilities of students and value according to the abilities of their students. That way, in the end, the teacher can provide and adjust learning to the ability of students so that later the speaking skills of students can increase. This can also help teachers in analyzing whether there is progress in the ability of students to speak English in learning activities.

The implementation of the question-answer technique and speaking by reading in authentic assessment is indeed one of the ways to test students' speaking in real terms. That is, there are various ways to use authentic assessment in speaking tests, such as role play, picture text, short question and answer, pair dialogue, narrating sequence (Afriadi et al., 2021). In this assessment, the teacher must provide a variety of ways to obtain data on the

results of students' abilities in speaking, either by using numerical assessments or just points or letters to assess and explain students' abilities. In fact, teachers' ideas or creativity are needed in this authentic assessment which aims to determine students' ability to speak English correctly and realistically (Tabi et al., 2020).

Using an informal assessment method can make students who are assessed or tested by the teacher, they will be more self-conscious about improving their English skills. Using formative assessment in implementing authentic assessment is quite effective in the learning process because then the teacher and students know the results of the learning process at every meeting. This can build students' motivation with self-assessment so that students will try to improve their English skills (Zhang et al., 2024). That way students can assess themselves regarding their abilities so that they can affect their learning achievement, especially in speaking (Khonbi & Sadeghi, 2013).

In implementing authentic speaking, it is very necessary to have a rule or teacher explanation of how the technique is used by the teacher in the learning process to test students' speaking. It is mentioned that in the learning process, especially speaking, teachers need to give detailed or specific instructions so that students can understand how they do the speaking (Kurnia Putri & Zaim, 2019). This help students to make it easier and make students not nervous when speaking, but even so this still meets the standards of implementing authentic assessment in speaking tests, because here the teacher still assess students as they are according to student abilities, so that later the teacher is able to retrain students who lack speaking skills using English.

The use of this authentic assessment turns out to be able to assess students in real terms about their English skills, especially speaking. Indirectly, questions in class and also speaking by reading are able to show how students' speaking skills actually are. As we know that authentic assessment can assess students' skills in English (Chandra Alam et al., 2024). Authentic assessment can also build students' speaking skills and student motivation, so that this can improve students' ability to speak English (Afriadi et al., 2021).

Assessment in spontaneous speaking tests using authentic assessment allows students to practice their pronunciation and fluency when speaking

English (Kuo et al., 2025). Assessment in learning is critical to determine student learning outcomes. This authentic assessment openly allows students to know how the assessment is carried out and can be able to show the results during their learning process. With this kind of assessment, students can participate in the process, which makes students more enthusiastic and confident in showing their English skills, especially in speaking so that they can support the learning process (Hernández-Ocampo et al., 2025).

Conclusion

The implementation of authentic assessment in speaking tests provides a good way to measure students' real communication skills in the classroom. This study shows that simple strategies like reading aloud, spontaneous question-and-answer, and direct classroom interactions help reveal students' abilities in pronunciation, intonation, confidence, and fluency. Teachers' creativity in using various assessment methods is also important to create a supportive environment where students feel more confident and comfortable practicing English speaking. Moreover, this research emphasizes the importance of making assessments relevant to everyday communication so that teachers can not only evaluate results but also motivate and engage students in learning. Authentic assessment serves a dual purpose, both as an evaluation tool and as part of the learning process. For future research, it is suggested that scholars explore more deeply how authentic assessment methods can be adapted and validated across different learner groups and settings. Further studies might also investigate the reliability and challenges of applying these assessments, as well as ways to improve their design to better capture students' communicative competence.

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