


Empowering Eleventh Graders' Speaking Proficiency through a Humanistic Approach

 <https://doi.org/10.31004/jele.v10i3.894>

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the implementation of a Humanistic Approach—emphasizing self-esteem, emotional engagement, and student-centered learning—to improve the speaking abilities of eleventh-grade students at a senior high school in expressing feelings of love during the 2024/2025 academic year. Utilizing Classroom Action Research (CAR), the intervention aimed to address challenges such as low self-confidence, limited vocabulary, and reliance on traditional teaching methods. The research was conducted in two cycles, each involving stages of planning, action, observation, and reflection. Data were gathered through observation sheets, oral tests, and video recordings. Findings indicate that the Humanistic Approach significantly enhanced students' speaking fluency. While Cycle I showed only modest gains, Cycle II demonstrated substantial improvement, with 79.16% of students reaching the expected competency levels. These results underscore the effectiveness of a humanistic, student-centered methodology in creating a supportive environment that fosters oral language development.

Keywords: *Humanistic Approach, Speaking Proficiency*

Article History:

Received 16th May 2025

Accepted 26th May 2025

Published 06th June 2025



INTRODUCTION

Language is fundamentally an instrument of communication. It is very important for human life to express their ideas, opinions, and feelings to other people. Without language, people cannot convey their ideas, thoughts, and feelings to others. In learning English, there are four basic language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these, speaking is very important for students to master because it is one of the fundamental linguistic skills and serves as a tool for communication, allowing people to express their ideas, feelings, or opinions orally. According to Richards (2021), "Speaking is a fundamental means through which communication occurs, involving a combination of language knowledge, fluency, and confidence." Additionally, Brown and Lee (2015) define speaking as "an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information." Based on these statements, it is clear that speaking is a vital language skill that must be mastered, as it enables individuals to express ideas, desires, feelings, and more in dialogues, discussions, and conversations.

In order for students to communicate effectively through speaking, they need to learn how to clearly state and express ideas, opinions, and feelings. Therefore, they must practice these skills. The Senior High School curriculum (KTSP 2006) expects students to develop competence in speaking. Specifically, the competencies students should master, as outlined in the competency standards, include expressing the meaning of transactional and interpersonal conversations in formal and sustained contexts in daily life.

The basic competence is expressing the meaning of the transactional conversation (to get things done) and interpersonal in the formal and sustained by using the oral language accurately, fluently, and acceptable in daily life context to express feeling love, sorrow,

attention, embarrassment, anger, attitude, and annoyance. The competence standard above has two indicators as follows: 1) Using the speech act to express the feeling, 2) Responding the speech act to express the feeling

The Minimum Competence Criterion for the speaking skills of eleventh-grade students is 63 (sixty-three) points. For the first indicator, the Minimum Competence Criterion is also 63 (sixty-three) points, and for the second indicator, it is 60 (sixty) points. However, in reality, the expectations outlined in the curriculum have not been fully achieved. Based on the researcher's observations and an interview with the English teacher at SMA Negeri 1 Lahewa, it was reported that many problems occur in the speaking class. For example, the students were extremely unconfident and unenthusiastic about speaking. They would simply smile and remain silent when the teacher asked them questions. The students tended to be passive and lacked creativity when participating in speaking activities in the classroom.

The failure mentioned above may be caused by several factors, namely: a lack of student motivation in speaking, limited vocabulary, the absence of an appropriate teaching approach, students' shyness in speaking English, fear of making mistakes, and unengaging learning materials. Additionally, the teacher continues to apply a conventional approach in the teaching and learning process. This means that the teacher uses a standard, traditional method that does not help students develop personally or emotionally. It also fails to encourage positive feelings that could build students' confidence and help them express their thoughts through speaking. As a result, the teaching and learning process becomes boring and uninteresting, and students struggle to master speaking skills effectively. They rely solely on the teacher for information and become passive recipients of instruction rather than active participants in the learning process. Consequently, most students' scores do not meet the Minimum Competency Criterion (MCC), as previously mentioned. They are unable to speak fluently and perceive speaking as very difficult. As a result, the students' average score is only 45.

In solving the problem above, it is important to start by choosing an appropriate approach for teaching speaking. An appropriate approach helps create an effective classroom environment. One such approach is the Affective Humanistic, or Humanistic Approach. The researcher aims to apply this approach to increase students' speaking ability. According to Dornyei (2020), this approach builds confidence and self-esteem. Nation and Newton (2020) argue that it fosters interactive and student-centered learning environments, reducing anxiety. Stevick (1990) further explains that humanistic teaching supports learners in expressing themselves authentically.

According to Dornyei (2020), the Humanistic Approach helps students build confidence and self-esteem, which are critical for expressing themselves orally. Similarly, Nation and Newton (2020) argue that this approach fosters an interactive and student-centered learning atmosphere, encouraging active participation and reducing anxiety about speaking. This means that, through the Humanistic Approach, students gain self-awareness and become brave enough to express their ideas and feelings to others. Based on the explanations above, the researcher intends to conduct a study entitled: "Increasing Students' Speaking Ability through the Humanistic Approach at the Eleventh Grade of SMA Negeri 1 Lahewa in the 2011/2012 Academic Year."

METHOD

Design

In this research, the Humanistic Approach was applied to improve students' ability in mastering speaking. The researcher utilized Classroom Action Research (CAR) as the methodological framework. As Burns (2019) explains, this form of action research serves as a means for teachers to enhance their professional practice by reflecting on it in a more structured and systematic way than usual. This means that CAR is a reflective research method used by teachers as a tool to improve their teaching skills, develop the curriculum, and enhance students' learning outcomes in practical classroom settings.

Subject or Participant

The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Lahewa, located in Afia Village. The school has a total of 32 teachers and 9 classes, with an overall student population of 226. The subject of this study is the eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Lahewa, which consists of 118 students divided into two classes. The researcher selected the students of class XI-IA1 as the sample for this research, consisting of 26 students, representing the entire eleventh-grade population.

Data and Source of Data

The research was conducted at SMA Negeri 1 Lahewa, located in Afia Village. The school has a total of 32 teachers and 9 classes, with an overall student population of 226. The subject of this research is the eleventh-grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Lahewa, totaling 118 students divided into two classes. The researcher selected the students of class XI-IA1 as the sample for this study. This class consists of 26 students and was chosen to represent the entire eleventh-grade population.

Data Collecting Technique

The kinds of data collected include qualitative data and quantitative data. Qualitative data are used to provide explanations, while quantitative data consist of numbers, such as students' scores. Since the data are both qualitative and quantitative, the qualitative data will be taken from observation sheets, while the quantitative data will be obtained from interview forms recorded by the researcher.

Data Analysis Technique (how the result is analyzed)

To calculate the percentage of students' activities based on the qualitative data obtained from the observation sheets, the researcher analyzed the data using the following formula, adapted from Tuckman (1975:285) as cited in Nurgiantoro (1986:345-347):

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{Activities Done}}{\text{Whole Activities}} \times 100$$

Then, it can be interpreted into some categories, as the following:

85% - 100%	=	very good
75% - 84%	=	good
60% - 74%	=	adequate
40%-59%	=	less
0% - 39%	=	very weak

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**Explanation of Each Cycle in Increasing Students' Speaking Ability through the Humanistic Promoted Approach**

The findings show that the Humanistic Approach positively influenced students' speaking abilities. Students demonstrated significant improvement in confidence, participation, and fluency. The use of visuals and emotional engagement promoted interest and reduced fear. These outcomes align with Chan and Hyland (2021), who emphasize the role of affective factors in speaking performance. To increase the students' speaking ability through the Humanistic Promoted Approach, the researcher conducted two cycles, as described below:

Cycle I

Cycle I consisted of two meetings. The subjects were the XI IA1 grade students of SMA Negeri 1 Lahewa. The total number of students was 24 – 14 boys and 10 girls – and all were present. The total duration was 4 × 45 minutes, with each meeting lasting 2 × 45 minutes. For both meetings, the researcher prepared one topic: "Expressing Love (for Parents)."

First meeting

The first meeting was held on January 17th 2025 with 2x45 minutes. The material was about "Expressing Love (for parents)".

Planning

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In conducting this cycle, the researcher prepared several items, such as a lesson plan, pictures, observation sheets, materials, a tape recorder or digital camera, and a plan for implementing the procedures of the Humanistic Promoted Approach.

Action

The researcher was accompanied by the teacher-collaborator when entering the class. Upon entering, the researcher greeted the students and introduced herself, then checked the students' attendance. The researcher clearly explained speaking skills and the Humanistic Promoted Approach to guide the students through the teaching-learning process. Next, the researcher introduced the learning objectives and the material the students were going to study. To stimulate the students and identify their entry behavior, the researcher presented some pictures as learning media. The researcher gave statements based on the pictures and provided opportunities for students to ask questions and give comments. Based on the students' comments and opinions, the researcher explained the material according to the learning targets. Finally, the researcher concluded the session.

Observation

The observation was divided into two parts, they were: the observation paper for the researchers' activities and the observation for the students' activities.

The researchers' observation paper

Based on the researcher's observation paper done by the teacher-collaborator in the first meeting of Cycle I, the researcher did not explain the speaking skill and Humanistic Approach clearly and the researcher did not explain the material for the students clearly, the researcher did not introduce the purpose of the learning clearly, and the researcher did not explain the material for the students clearly. So, the researcher done of aspect is 11 and a half done of aspect is 4.

The students' observation paper

Based on the students' observation paper done by the teacher-collaborator in the first meeting of Cycle I, the students had not done all of aspects, they did not replay the greet of the researcher, they did not rising the question, did not give the chance to their friend to convey another experience, so the students' active is 16, the students less-active is 8, the students' cooperative is 18 and the students' less-cooperative is 6.

Reflection

In reflection, the researcher did not evaluate the students because they were unable to express their ideas or opinions verbally, were still confused about the material, and their activeness and cooperativeness were low. Therefore, the researcher addressed these weaknesses by providing reinforcements, motivation, time to ask questions, opportunities to share ideas or opinions, and encouragement to participate more actively in speaking.

The researcher's weaknesses found in the first meeting are as follow: 1) The researcher explained the students' about speaking skill and humanistic approach but unclearly and uninterested, 2) The researcher introduced the purposes of the learning to the students but unclearly and uninterested, 3) The researcher introduced the material but unclearly and uninterested, 4) The researcher explained the material but unclearly and uninterested.

The students' weaknesses in the first meeting are as follow: 1) The students did not replay of the greet of the researcher, 2) The students did not listen the explanation of the researcher, 3) The students did not rising the question for the researcher, 4) The students did not give chance to their friend to convey another opinion.

Second Meeting

The second meeting continued from the first meeting. It was held on January 20th, 2025, and lasted 2 × 45 minutes. The material was still about "Expressing Love (for Parents)."

Planning

The researcher prepared several things, such as a lesson plan and an observation paper.

Action

The researcher was accompanied by the teacher collaborator when entering the class. The researcher greeted the students and checked attendance. She reviewed the previous material to remind the students and explained their weaknesses and mistakes from the first

meeting. The researcher then gave the signal for the students to start the lesson as a continuation of the previous material. She provided examples of expressing love and asked the students to practice this material. After the students practiced, the researcher corrected their speaking. Next, the researcher assigned the students to create and practice a dialogue about expressing love for their parents. During this time, the researcher recorded the entire process using a digital camera. Finally, the researcher asked the students if they understood the material and concluded the session.

Observation

The observation was divided into two parts and was conducted by the teacher-collaborator while the researcher implemented the action in the classroom, namely: the observation of the researcher's activities and the students' activities.

The researcher's observation paper

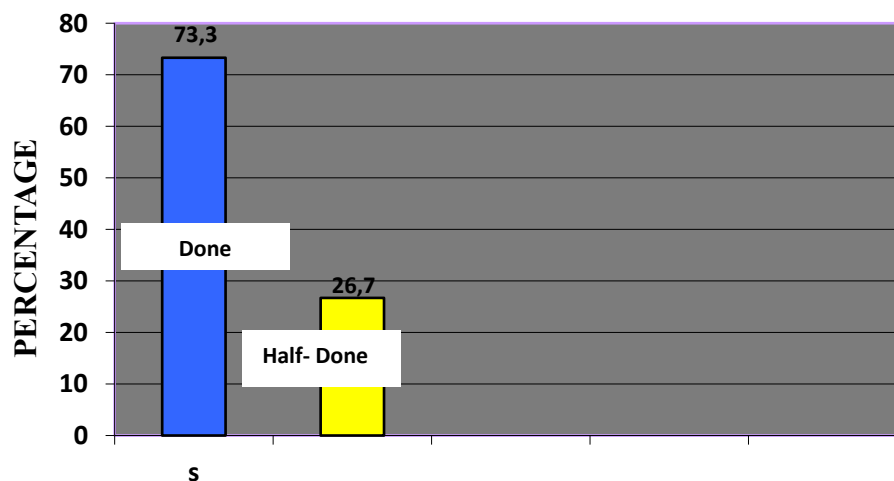
Based on the researcher's observation sheet completed by the teacher-collaborator during the second meeting of Cycle I, an increase in the percentage of completed activities was observed compared to the first meeting. Specifically, the researcher fully completed 12 activities (85.7%) in the teaching-learning process, while half of 2 activities (14.2%) were completed.

The students' observation paper

Based on the students' observation sheet completed by the teacher-collaborator during the first meeting of Cycle I, there was an increase in both students' activeness and cooperative skills compared to previous observations. Specifically, 18 students (75%) were actively engaged in the teaching-learning process, while 6 students (25%) were less active. In terms of cooperative skills, 20 students (83.3%) demonstrated good cooperation, whereas 4 students (16.7%) showed less cooperative behavior.

To know the result of the researcher's observation, the students who were active and cooperative in the teaching-learning process during all meetings in Cycle I can be described by the graphic below:

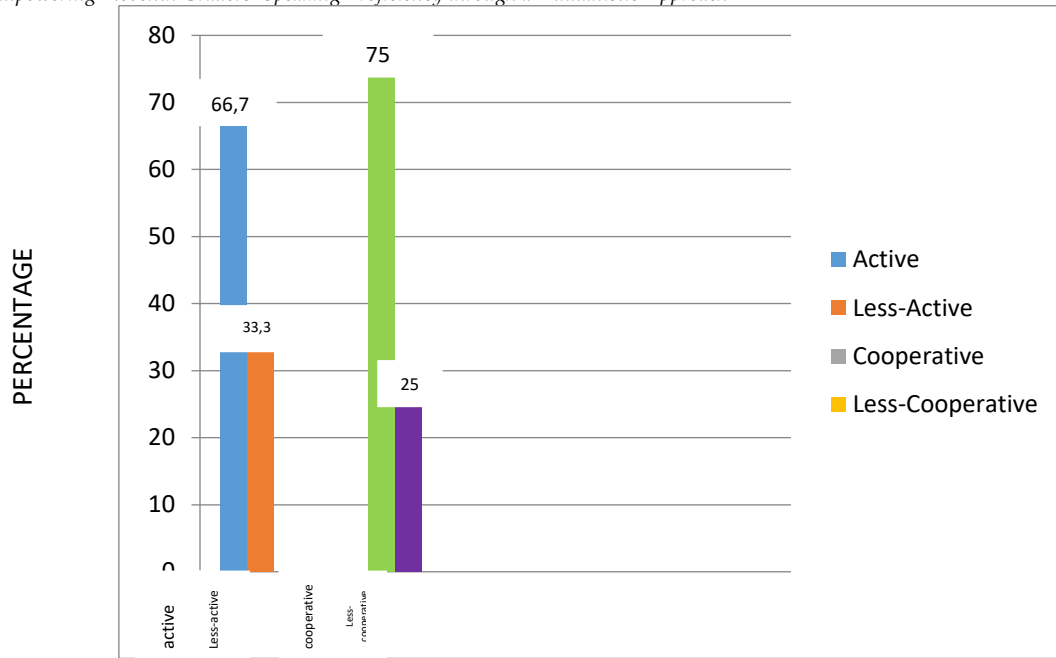
The graphic of the researcher's observation paper from the first meeting of Cycle I.



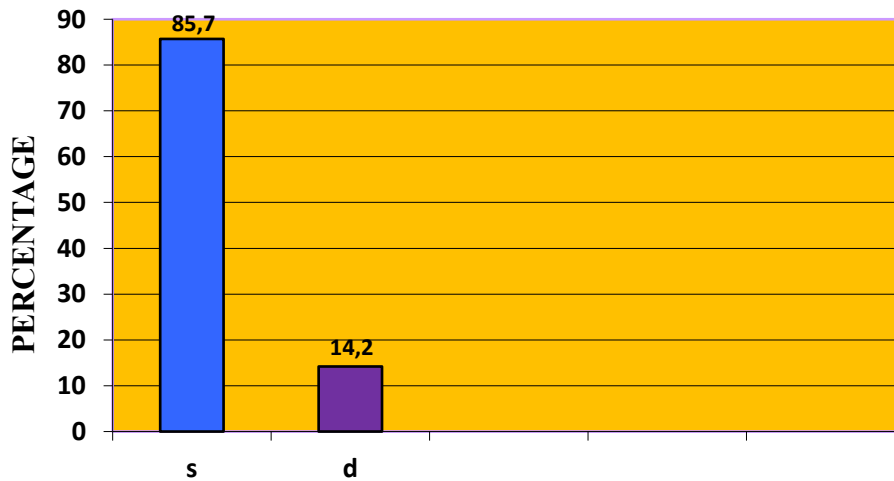
Graphic 1. The Researcher's Observation Paper in the 1st Meeting of Cycle I

The graphic of the students' observation paper in the first meeting of Cycle I

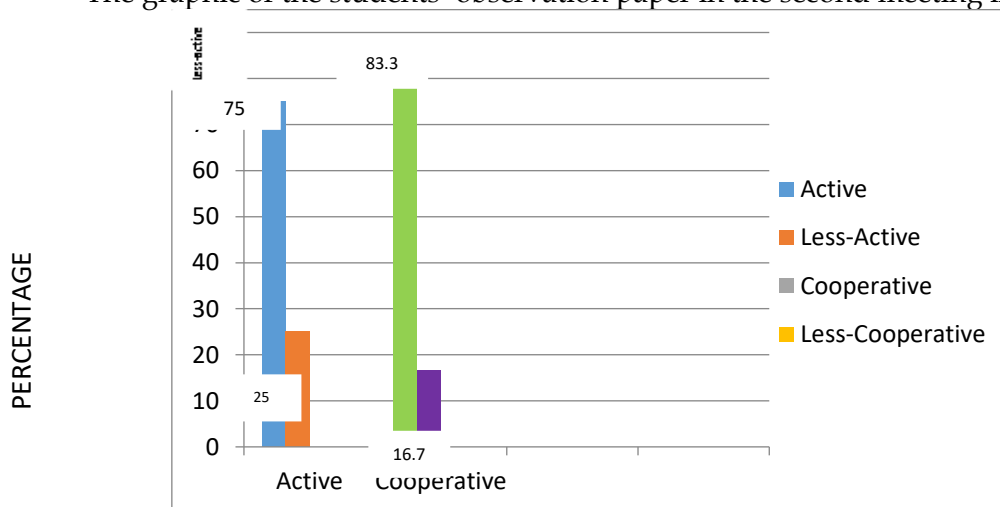
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Graphic 2. The Students' Observation Paper in the 1st meeting of cycle I
The graphic of the researcher's observation paper in the second meeting of Cycle I



Graphic 3. The Researcher Observation Paper in the 2nd meeting of cycle I
The graphic of the students' observation paper in the second meeting in the Cycle I



Graphic 4. The Students' Observation Paper in the 2nd meeting of cycle I

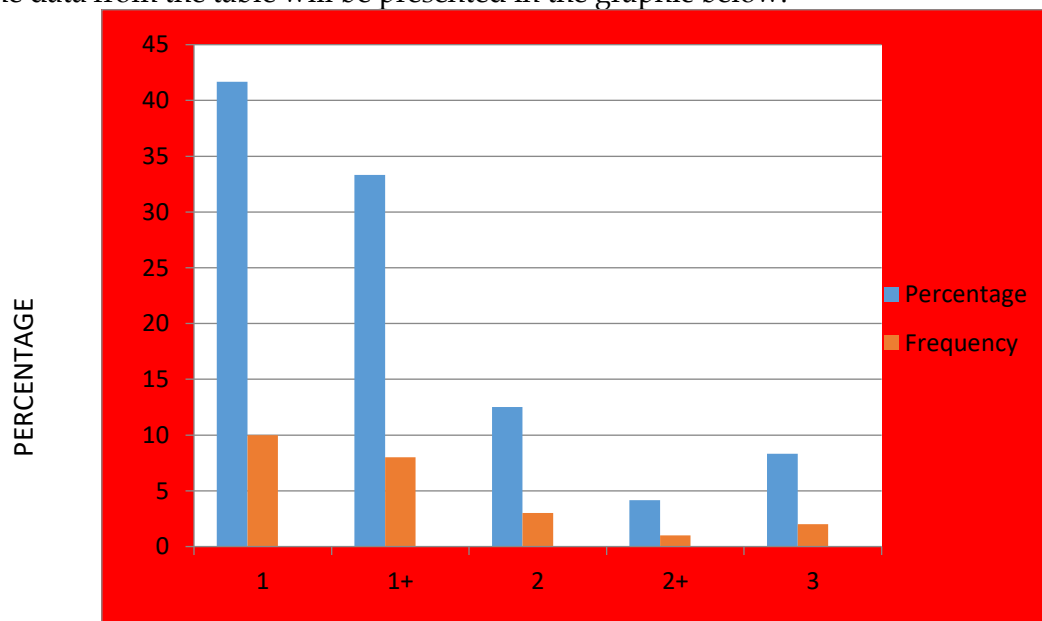
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 Reflection

In reflection, the researcher evaluated the results of the observation during the teaching-learning process to determine the students' ability in speaking through the Humanistic Approach. However, the students still needed to improve, as their speaking ability in this cycle did not meet the Minimum Competence Criterion. Therefore, the researcher decided to continue to the next cycle. The results of the students' tests are classified by the researcher in Table 7 below:

Table 1. The Students' Speaking Ability in Cycle I

No	Score	Rating	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	16-25	0+	0	0
2.	26-32	1	10	41,67
3.	33-42	1+	8	33,33
4.	43-52	2	3	12,5
5.	53-62	2+	1	4,17
6.	63-72	3	2	8,33
7.	73-82	3+	0	0
8.	83-92	4	0	0
9.	93-99	4+	0	0

The explanation based on the data above is as follows: 10 students achieved fluency level 1 (41.67%), 8 students achieved fluency level 1+ (33.33%), 3 students achieved fluency level 2 (12.5%), and 1 student achieved fluency level 2+ (4.17%). Additionally, 2 students achieved fluency level 3 (8.33%). However, none of the students reached fluency levels 0+, 3+, 4, or 4+. The data from the table will be presented in the graphic below:



Graphic 5. The Students' Ability in Speaking in Cycle I

The researcher's weaknesses identified in the second meeting are as follows: 1) The researcher discussed the students' weaknesses found in the first meeting and how to improve them, but the explanation was unclear and unengaging, 2) The researcher corrected the students' speaking after they had practiced, but the feedback was also unclear and unengaging.

The students' weaknesses identified in the second meeting are as follows: 1) The students did not answer the researcher's questions, 2) The students did not respond to the material, 3) The students did not engage in discussion with the researcher, 4) The students did not complete tasks actively.

Cycle II

Cycle I consisted of two meetings. The subject was the XI IPA1 grade of SMA Negeri 1 Lahewa. The total number of students was 24 – 14 boys and 10 girls – and all were present. The total duration was 4 × 45 minutes, with each meeting conducted for 2 × 45 minutes. For both meetings, the researcher prepared one topic: “Expressing Love (for a Boyfriend or Girlfriend).”

First Meeting

The first meeting was held on January 24th, 2025 with 2x45 minutes. The material was about “Expressing Love (for boyfriend or girlfriend)”.

Planning

In conducting this cycle, the researcher prepared several items, such as a lesson plan, pictures, an observation sheet, materials, and a tape recorder or digital camera.

Action

The researcher was accompanied by the teacher-collaborator to enter the class. In entering the classroom, the researcher greeted the students, introduced herself, and checked the students' attendance. She then introduced the purpose of the lesson and the material that would be covered. The researcher provided a stimulus to help identify the students' entry behavior. She explained the material to the students and showed several pictures as learning media. Based on the pictures, the researcher made some statements and gave the students an opportunity to ask questions and share comments. From the students' comments and opinions, the researcher elaborated on the material in line with the learning objectives. Finally, the researcher concluded the lesson.

Observation

The observation was divided into two parts, they were: the observation paper for the researchers' activities and the observation for the students' activities.

The researchers' observation paper

Based on the researcher's observation paper done by the teacher-collaborator in the first meeting of Cycle II, the researcher did not introduce the purpose of the learning clearly, and the researcher did not give the opportunity for the students to convey another statement based on the pictures clearly. So, the researcher done of aspect is 11 and half done of aspect is 2.

The students' observation paper

Based on the students' observation paper completed by the teacher-collaborator during the first meeting of Cycle II, the students had not fulfilled all aspects. They did not express additional opinions based on the pictures shown by the researcher, did not ask questions, and did not respond to the researcher's greeting. As a result, 21 students were categorized as active, 3 as less active, 22 as cooperative, and 2 as less cooperative.

Reflection

In reflection, the researcher did not evaluate the students formally but addressed their weaknesses by providing reinforcement, motivation, time to ask questions, opportunities to share ideas or opinions, and by encouraging broader participation in discussions. The researcher's weaknesses found in the first meeting are as follows: 1) The researcher introduced the purpose of the lesson to the students, but it was unclear and unengaging, 2) The researcher gave the students an opportunity to express their opinions based on the picture, but it was not effectively facilitated.

The students' weaknesses found in the first meeting are as follows: 1) The students did not convey their opinions based on the picture, 2) The students did not raise questions for the researcher, 3) The students did not respond to the researcher's greeting.

Second Meeting

The second meeting was held on January 27th, 2025 with 2x45 minutes. The material was about “Expressing Love (for boyfriend or girlfriend)”.

Planning

In conducting this cycle, the researcher prepared several items, such as the lesson plan, pictures, observation paper, material, and a tape recorder or digital camera.

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Action

The researcher was accompanied by the teacher collaborator when entering the class. The researcher greeted the students and checked attendance. She reviewed the previous material to remind the students and explained all of the students' weaknesses and mistakes from the first meeting. The researcher gave a signal for the students to start the lesson as a continuation of the last material. The researcher gave an example of expressing love to the students and asked them to practice the dialogue. After the students practiced, the researcher corrected their speaking. Then, the researcher assigned the task of making a dialogue about expressing love to their parents and practicing it with them. Meanwhile, the researcher recorded the entire process with her digital camera. At the end, the researcher asked the students whether they understood the material and drew a conclusion.

Observation

The observation was divided into two parts, they were: the observation paper for the researchers' activities and the observation for the students' activities.

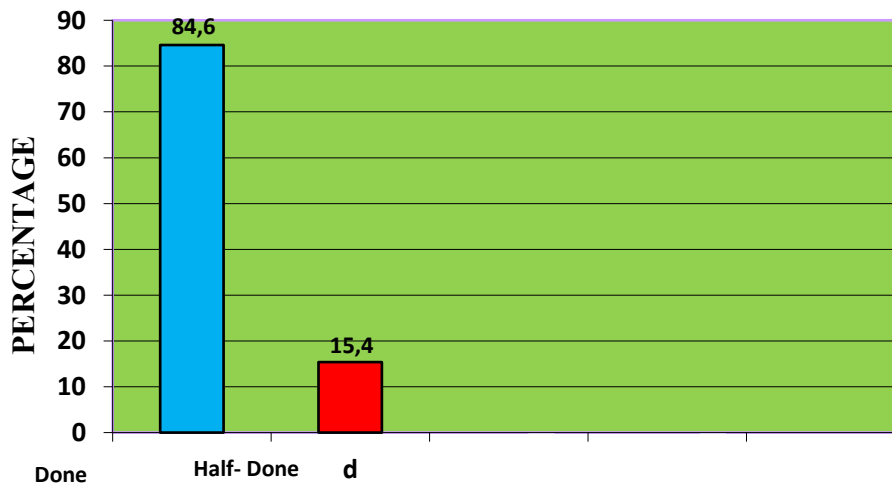
The researchers' observation paper

Based on the researcher's observation sheet completed by the teacher-collaborator during the second meeting of Cycle II, there was an increase in the percentage of completed activities compared to the first meeting. Specifically, the researcher fully completed 13 activities (92.86%) in the teaching-learning process, while half of 2 activities (7.14%) were completed.

The students' observation paper

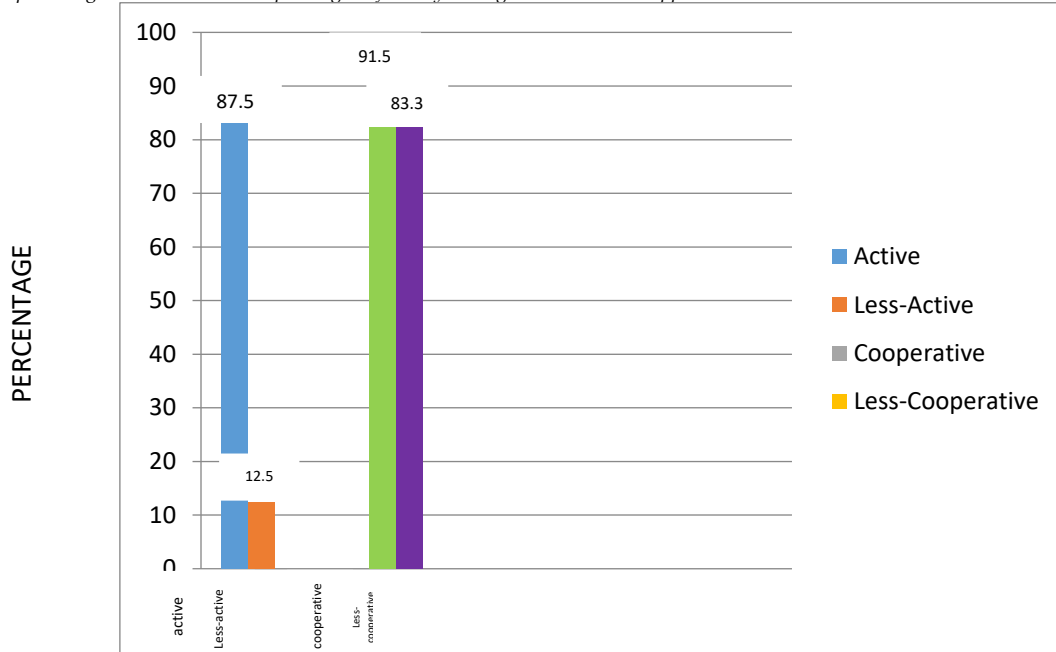
Based on the students' observation sheet completed by the teacher-collaborator during the first meeting of Cycle II, there was an increase in both students' activeness and cooperative skills compared to the previous meeting. Specifically, 22 students (91.67%) were active in the teaching-learning process, while 2 students (8.33%) were less active. Regarding cooperative skills, 23 students (95.83%) demonstrated cooperation, whereas 1 student (4.17%) showed less cooperative behavior.

To show the results of the researcher's observation, the students who were active and cooperative in the teaching-learning process can be described by the graphic below:
The graphic of the researchers' observation paper in the first meeting of Cycle II



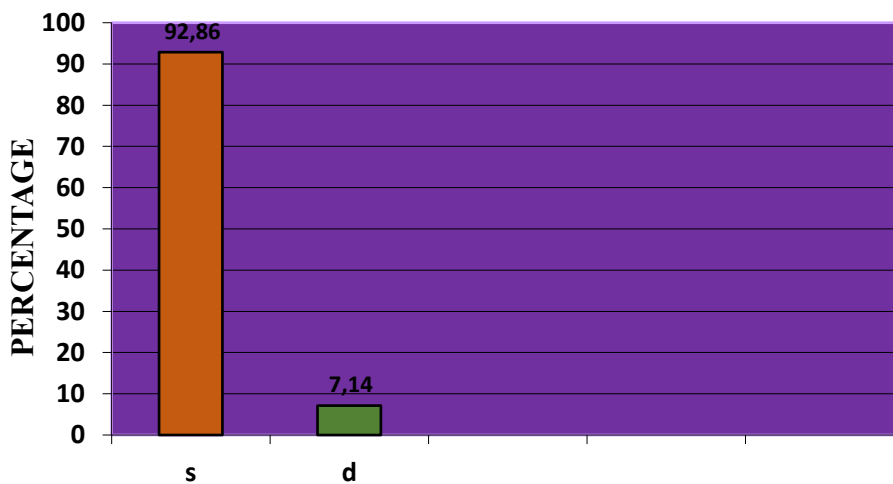
Graphic 6. The Researcher Observation Paper in the 1st meeting of cycle II

The graphic of the students' observation paper in the first meeting of Cycle II.



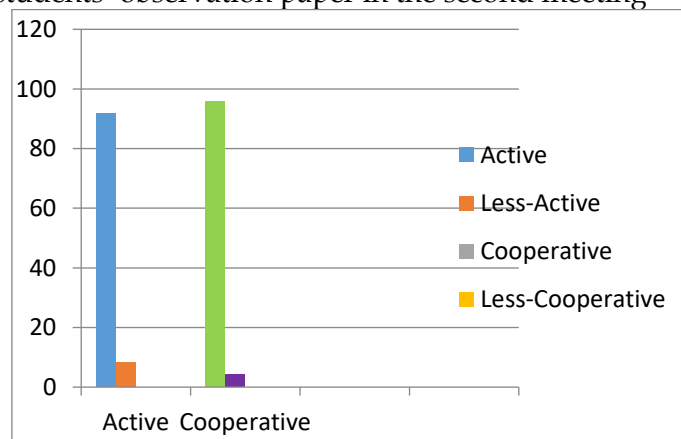
Graphic 7. The Students' Observation Paper in the 1st meeting of cycle II

The graphic of the researchers' observation paper in the first meeting of Cycle II



Graphic 8. The Researcher Observation Paper in the 2nd meeting of cycle II

The graphic of the students' observation paper in the second meeting



Graphic 9: The Students' Observation Paper in the 2nd meeting of cycle II

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 Reflection

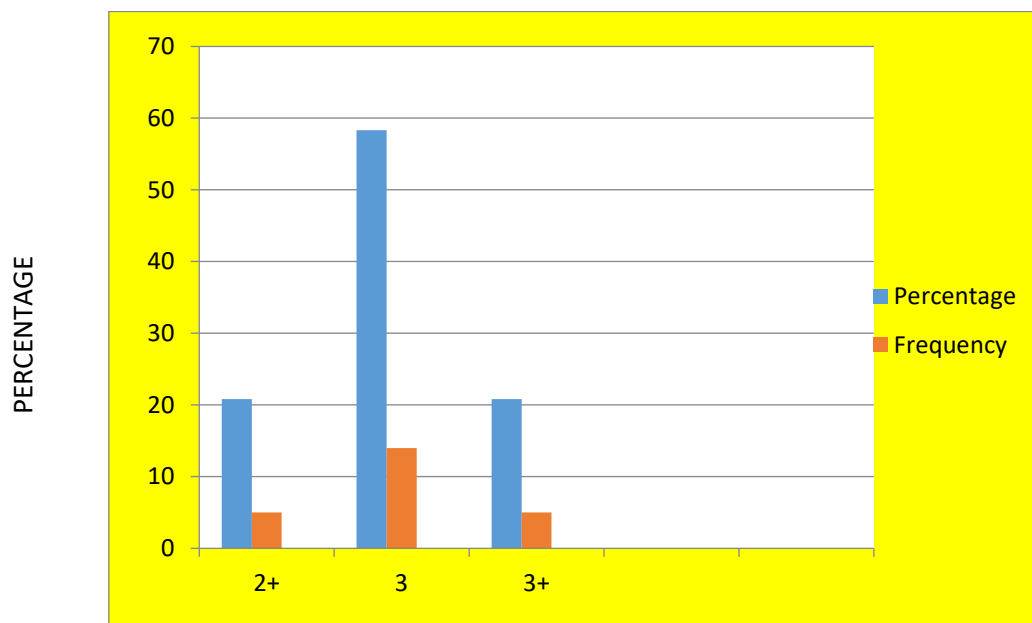
In the reflection, the researcher analyzed the results of the observation during the teaching-learning process to determine the students' speaking ability through the Humanistic Approach. The results showed that the students were able to follow the teaching-learning process and achieved the Minimum Competence Criterion.

The result of the observation paper on the students' test is classified by the researcher as seen below:

Table 2 Students' Speaking Ability In Cycle II

No	Score	Rating	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	16-25	0+	0	0
2	26-32	1	0	0
3	33-42	1+	0	0
4	43-52	2	0	0
5	53-62	2+	5	20,83
6	63-72	3	14	58,33
7	73-82	3+	5	20,83
8	83-92	4	0	0
9	93-99	4+	0	0

The explanation based on the data above shows that the students' speaking ability through the Humanistic Approach is as follows: no students scored at levels 0+, 1, 1+, 4, or 4+. Some students achieved fluency level 2+ (20.83%), others reached level 3 (58.33%), and some attained level 3+ (20.83%). The results of the students' speaking ability are shown in the graphic below:



Graphic 10. The Students' Ability in Speaking in Cycle II

The researcher's weakness found in the second meeting is the researcher tells the students' weakness found in the first meeting and the way how to improve it. The students' weaknesses found in the first meeting are as follows: 1) The students did not answer the researcher's questions, 2) The students did not respond to the material, 3) The students did not discuss with the researcher.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the data analysis, the researcher drew the following conclusions: In Cycle I, the distribution of students' speaking ability across fluency levels was as follows—Level 1: 41.66%, Level 1+: 33.33%, Level 2: 12.5%, Level 2+: 4.17%, and Level 3: 8.33%. These results

indicated that the researcher should proceed to the next phase, Cycle II. In Cycle II, the distribution shifted to Level 2+ at 20.83%, Level 3 at 58.33%, and Level 3+ at 20.83%. These results demonstrate that students were better able to express their viewpoints based on the given topics. Overall, the students' speaking skills in Cycle II showed clear improvement compared to Cycle I. Based on these findings, the researcher concludes that the Humanistic Approach is an effective and appropriate method for teaching speaking, as it fosters a meaningful teaching-learning process in the classroom. However, this study was limited by a small sample size and a short intervention period, which restrict the generalizability of the results. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to incorporate humanistic strategies to enhance student confidence, especially in speaking activities, as these methods have been shown to reduce anxiety and increase engagement. Future research should explore the application of this approach to other language skills—such as writing, listening, and reading—and across different educational levels to assess its broader effectiveness.

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