IMPROVING STUDENTS’ SPEAKING FREQUENCY THROUGH TALKING STICK

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Abstract: The aim of this research was to investigate the effect of using Talking Stick technique to the eighth grade students’ of MTs Al-Muttaqien Nanga Suhaid. This study used classroom action research (CAR) through 3 cycles. The participants in this study were the eighth grade students which is totaling 20 people. In using the Talking Stick technique, students make a small circle in the state sit and sing a short English song and hold the stick Talking Stick and run until the song ends. Students who hold the stick when the song was end will be a speaker and stand among other students. Technique of data collection was use observation sheet and will be calculated the average frequency of speaking students. The results using techniques Talking Stick is 40, which is a total 625% of the overall cycle. This results into the moderate category.

Key Words: Speaking Frequency, Talking Stick
In communication activity, we know well the term where we called it speaking. Speaking is an activity used by someone to communicate with others. It takes place everywhere and has become part of our daily activities. Speaking is very important to learn. When someone speaks, he or she interacts and uses the language to express his or her ideas, feelings and thoughts. Speaking is also expressing ideas, opinions, or feelings to others by using words or sounds of articulation in order to inform, to persuade, and to entertain that can be learned through teaching and learning process (Cook and Linse (2000) in FitriYenti and Sulastrinani (2012)). In the classroom, where is the communication should be created. The teacher is demanded to create the situation that can encourage real communication. It was because communication will make the class atmosphere run as teaching learning activity. In speaking class, when the teacher teaches the students definitely the teacher need the response from the students to show that the students understood the teacher’s explanation. To make the students join the class discussion, teacher is demanded to have high creativity to make students join the communication in the class or improve the students speaking frequency. According to David Holmes (2004) in Speaking Activities for The Classroom, there are two types of tasks proceeding in stimulate the students to more frequently in speaking. The first type is based on having the students interviewing one-another and asking questions, so that there is an independent dialogue between class members, with a minimum of interruption and supervision by the teacher. The second type is based on easy games and speaking tasks that should not be seen as threatening to the students and that should help to ease them into talking in programmed, student centred exercises. From the types of tasks, the students may have more topics to discuss in speaking class. In the class, the teacher is motivator for the students to encourage students feeling fun and enjoyable in the classroom. “Teachers who less skilled in managing the teaching learning process at class were the main factor caused the low achievement in Indonesia” (Dikti, 2007 sited in Rayandra Asyhar, 2011:14).

Based on the researcher’s pre-observation and discussion with the English teacher of this school, it was found that the students have difficulties in practicing the speaking, they found some difficulties make their own conversation in front of the class, they are still not confidence to practice the conversation, the speaker in the class was dominated by the active students, some of them are also too shy and afraid to take part in the conversation, other reason is because of the students are lack of motivation to practice the foreign language in daily conversation. These kinds of problems can be solved by one of
the techniques, which was Talking Stick technique. Talking Stick technique work with the students makes a circle and running together with simple song such as “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” and then only the student or the team member holding the stick is allowed to speak. He or she may hold the stick for an agreed-upon length of time (usually one minute) before passing the stick to the next person on the team. A Talking stick is usually decorated in some manner. When teams are newly formed have them create a team Talking Stick as a team-building activity. The team sticks could be decorated to represent the team’s name or the content currently being studied by the class. When each student is in possession of the stick, he or she is asked to speak whatever comes to their mind based on the topic.

This technique first time was known as Native American technique to let everyone speak their mind during a council meeting, a type of tribal meeting. Dr.Locust, in The Talking Stick: An American Indian Tradition in the ESL Classroom by Fujioka describes the talking stick, according to Native American tradition:

"The talking stick has been used for centuries by many Indian tribes as a means of just and impartial hearing. The talking stick was commonly used in council circles to decide who had the right to speak. When matters of great concern would come before the council, the leading elder would hold the talking stick, and begin the discussion. When he would finish what he had to say, he would hold out the talking stick, and whoever would speak after him would take it. In this manner, the stick would be passed from one individual to another until all who wanted to speak had done so. The stick was then passed back to the elder for safe keeping." (Locust, 1998 sited in Fujioka, 1998)

Based on the explanation above, it is interesting to use this technique to help the students of MTs Al-Muttaqien Nanga Suhaidin improving their speaking frequency through talking stick technique. Where everyone can speak without worry about their speaking is not being listened.

**METHOD**

This research used Classroom Action Research which was adopted from Hopkins in Taniredja, Fujiati and Nyata in *Penelitian Tindakan Kelas: Untuk Pengembangan Profesi Guru* (2010). The cycle will be figured as picture below:
Where, plan is a teaching learning activity to overcome the problem found in previous teaching learning process. The plan includes the preparation before the teaching learning activity such as lesson plan, observation checklist, field note and others are supporting material such as the media, books and some theories from experts. It is done in the early stage of the research. Action is the researcher conducted the result in the classroom where the problem found. The researcher acted as the teacher to teach the lesson that has been prepared and also observed the speaking frequency in English class together with the collaborator. In using Talking Stick technique, the students who hold the stick will come into the middle of the students’ cycle and begin to deliver his or her idea to the class. While he or she is speaking, the class have to pay attention to him or her. The next is observing. Observing in every meeting where the researcher and collaborator observe the students learning activity, motivation, and interaction. In this stage, the researcher paid attention to the subject or research performance where has been a research focus. The observation will be done by using observation checklist as a guidance to notice students’ speaking frequency, while the Talking Stick class is being conducted in the classroom. The last was reflecting, in this part, after the procedures above are done, the
The researcher got some important feedback. The feedback is very important to make the next planning or action. It can change a certain the action before or add some action in order to improve the next teaching learning process.

The participants of the research are those who have problem in speaking skill that were the eighth grade students of MTs Al-Muttaqien Nanga Suhaid Kapuas Hulu which consist of 20 students.

In conducting the research, there were three cycles that was done in this research. The first cycle was done on January 21 and January 23 (each meeting last for 60 minutes). The researcher taught about “giving instruction, prohibition and asking for something” as the material of Talking Stick technique. In the second cycle, the cycle was done on January 28 and January 30, 2013. The material that has been taught here was about asking for and giving information, asking for opinion, giving opinion and refusing to give opinion. The third cycle was done on February 4, and February 6, 2013. The materials in this meeting were about expressing offering something, accepting and refusing an offer, and expressing agreement and disagreement.

In collecting the data, the data were collected by measurement of students’ percentage score. To identify whether Talking Stick technique can improve the technique or not, the researcher puts the score into the qualification below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency (%)</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60-70</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 30</td>
<td>Lowest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


These data would show how effective the use of Talking Stick technique to improve students’ speaking frequency. The tool of data collecting was field note and observation checklist where done in every meeting.

**FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

**a. Finding**

Based on the measurement of students’ percentage score data, it found the percentage of students’ speaking frequency in the last cycle was:

\[ P = \frac{\sum f}{n} \times 100\% \]
According to Tjocrosudjoyo in GustiSofiandi(2010), the score above was on the moderate level. It means that the Talking Stick technique is one of suitable technique for speaking class. Especially was for the students of MTs Al-Muttaqien Nanga Suhaid.

b. Discussions

The finding above showed the use of Talking Stick technique was one of suitable techniques in teaching speaking of English class. In the first meeting of the first cycle (the first cycle was done on January 21\textsuperscript{st} and January 23\textsuperscript{rd}, 2013), the score of the students speaking frequency was only 24 actions or 6.25 points or the same as 31.25\%, and in the second meeting was only 25 action or 6.5 points or 32.5\%. In this cycle, the students did not show their speaking ability yet. The students still too much had been quite. These scores were categorized in lowest level.

In the second cycle (the research was done on January 28\textsuperscript{th} and January 30\textsuperscript{th}, 2013), the students’ score in the first meeting was 32.5\% or 6.5 point from 19 students (I student was absent), and from the second meeting was 30 action from 20 students or 37.5\% or 7.5 points.. These scores were also still in low level, but the researcher got the positive points in this meeting; the students already known the rules of the Talking Stick technique. So, the researcher only had to make the students more active in next meeting. It should be done to see how far the technique worked toward the students of MTs Al-Muttaqien Nanga Suhaid especially to the students at the eighth grade on second semester. The third cycle was done on February 4\textsuperscript{th}, 2013. On the first meeting in this cycle, February 4\textsuperscript{th}, 2013; the score of the students was 33 actions or 43.42\% or 8.25 points. And this score was categorized in moderate level. But, because of the writer curious about the technique, then the writer retried the technique in the next meeting (on February 6\textsuperscript{th}, 2013) and made it as a second meeting of the third cycle. The score of the students was 32 action or 43.42 \% or 8.0 points. In this meeting, there were three of students are absent. Teacher expected students to have a better score at least 40\%. In fact, although the percentage was including to a moderate level, it was not mean that the students were free from the problem. The researcher started class activity in this cycle by reminding what students were going to do along this week and then the researcher
taught the material that they had on this week. The students showed some significant positive changes in this activity, but a few of them also showed negative attitude toward this technique. When a few of them were asked to speak up in their turn, he tried to refuse the stick and gave it to their friend on the left or the right side. Then, there was a time they looked busy to annoy their friend who was talking. The teacher also tried to give them some understanding that the technique was not a punishment, but the one of the way to make them all speak up frequently.

CONCLUSION

The conclusions of discussion results are, the implementation of Talking Stick technique in teaching speaking showed the good result in terms of improving students speaking. The improvement can be proven by the students speaking score progress and the classes mean score from cycle I to cycle III increased. The use of Talking Stick technique helped the teacher to conduct teaching and learning activity easier. The teacher could control the students through the rules of using the technique. Although, the teacher should remain the students by explain the instructions in every activity. The students give positive responses in implementing the technique. Sometimes they could help each other when one of their friends got confused in the middle of applying the technique. The students got some opportunities to practice the technique with their friends.

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