IMPROVING STUDENTS' ABILITY IN SPEAKING ABOUT ASKING AND GIVING OPINION THROUGH GUIDED CONVERSATIONS

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Abstract: Improving Students' Ability in Speaking about Asking and Giving Opinion through Guided Conversations is a Classroom Action Research at Eighth Grade B Students of SMP N 21 Terpadu Pontianak in Academic Year 2011/2012. The aim of this research is to know how guided conversations improve students ability in speaking about asking and giving opinion. The researcher used classroom action research as the method of this research. Based on the analysis of the students' test result, the writer describes the qualification of students' mean score in second cycles (70.8) which reached 100% of achievement score is Good to Excellent.

Key Word: speaking, asking and giving opinion, guided conversations

Abstrak: Meningkatkan Kemampuan Siswa dalam Berbicara mengenai Meminta dan Memberikan Pendapat menggunakan Percakapan-percakapan Terpandu adalah sebuah Penelitian Tindakan Kelas pada Siswa Kelas Delapan B di SMP N 21 Terpadu Pontianak Tahun Ajaran 2011/2012. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bagaimana percakapan-percakapan terpandu meningkatkan kemampuan siswa dalam berbicara mengenai meminta dan memberikan pendapat. Peneliti menggunakan penelitian tindakan kelas sebagai metode dalam penelitian ini. Berdasarkan analisa pada hasil test siswa, penulis menyimpulkan bahwa kualifikasi nilai rata-rata siswa pada putaran kedua (70,8) yang mana mencapai nilai ketuntasan 100% dikategorikan Good to Excellent.

Kata Kunci: berbicara, meminta dan memberikan pendapat, percakapanpercakapan terpandu

The success of learning a foreign language is assumed in term of the ability to communicate by using English. Therefore students should be able to have a good ability in speaking as one of achievement in learning English. Students are supposed to use oral communication and it is done in speaking class. It means the students are demanded to be more active in giving response to each other (Hybels and Weaver, 1986:18). Thus, it becomes really important for the teacher to improve teaching activity in speaking class and to motivate the students in learning English because those can help the students have a good ability in speaking.

Teaching becomes an important thing to improve students' ability in speaking, especially in asking and giving opinion. Teaching means showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instruction, guiding the knowledge, causing to know or to understand (Brown, 2001:7). In this case, the teaching has an aim to make the students understand from the lesson given since they do not know. For example: the researcher taught expression about asking and giving opinion to the students through showing or helping them to learn how to ask and give their opinion by using guided conversations. It helps students to know and understand the use of guided conversations and help them to communicate as accurate and acceptable to the environment.

Speaking in a second language (L2) involves the development of a particular type of communication skill. Oral language, because of its circumstances of production, tends to differ from written language in its typical grammatical, lexical and discourse patterns (Nunan, 2001:14). It means that speaking- where people interact and communicate to share ideas, thought, feeling, information and knowledge in their daily activities- are different with written language. The differences can be seen by its typical of sentence structure, word and phrases, and language patterns.

It is essential for students to be mastered tool of communication as a matter of transfering one's idea and feeling orraly. To be mastered that tool of communication the teacher should teach speaking in a vatious ways. In teaching speaking, various ways are very useful to be used to attract students' interest to overcome some problem which faced by the students, such as they are not able to construct the sentences grammatically means they have problem in accuracy which led them not to be able to speak fluently.

There are many techniques to teach speaking, such as short conversation, discussion, debate, role playing and stimulation (Kayi, 2006:6). In this research, the researcher used short conversations to teach speaking about asking and giving opinion. The short conversations presented as the guided conversations. It is presented with a model of conversation that highlight a specific aspect of grammar to help the students improve their accuracy in constructing the sentences.

In order to make students easier in costructing the sentences grammatically and led them to be able to speak fluently, the researcher used guided conversations by using short conversations as the technique. Guided Conversations are the dialogues and the question and answer exchanges. Students are presented with a model conversation that highlights a specific aspect of the grammar. The goal of these guided conversations is to tackle a specific grammatical structure and give students the opportunity to rehearse this structure in short, playful classroom conversations (Steven J. Molinsky and Bill Bliss, 1983:X). That is why the appropriate technique in improving the students' ability in speaking is by using guided conversations.

First thing that the teacher should improve the teaching learning process to reach the aim of guided conversaion is students' ability in constructing grammatical sentences related to the expression about asking and giving opinion. Thus, grammar must be taught and be learned by students in order to help them in mastering the accurate sentences. Cook and Sutter (cited in Agnes, 2007:8) define grammar as a set of rules by which people speak and write. Without grammar, a language cannot be understandable and has no meaning. For example, the expression that should be taught in this level has many types of expressions, which are the form that verbs take in order to communicate information.

Teachers' aim in teaching grammar should be to ensure that students are communicatively efficient with the grammar they have in this level. Harmer maintains that teaching grammar is aimed to make the students to be able to communicate with the grammar as efficiently as possible. Therefore, it is better do not teach formal rules of grammar but through real communication and meaningful experiences. Besides the learners know the rules of grammar, they also think about it and have time to apply it in their daily life. For example, students taught some expression in asking and giving opinion. It is taught to help them to be able to express those expressions as accurate, fluent and acceptable to interact with the environment.

Weaver cited in Cox described the reasons and the great importance of teaching grammar. The study of grammar is a way of learning how to (1) Use a language, (2) Approach other topics that require a scientific investigate approach, (3) Think, since language is a reflection of thought, (4) Learn a second language more easily, (5) Speak and write in socially acceptable and even prestigious way, (6) Become a better speaker and writer.

Teaching grammar can be defined as teaching the form, rules and system of English. Mc Kay (cited in Nunan, 2001: 31) suggest that there are three different views on what is means to teach grammar. Those three different views are teaching grammar entails the formal explanation of grammar rules, teaching grammar is basically a matter of providing learners with practice in mastering grammatical pattern through a process of analogy rather than explanation, and teaching grammar is a matter of giving students the opportunity to use English in a variety of realistic situations.

In this research, the researcher teach grammar to help the students in mastering grammatical pattern and give the opportunity for students to use English in English class activity. It is hoped that students be able in constructing grammatical sentences and improve their ability in speaking.

The formal explanation of grammar rules about the expression of asking and giving opinion will be teach to help the students make the conversations before their present it in the class. The rules consist of kind of expression such as (1) What do you think of? I think..... (2) What's your opinion about ...? In my opinion, (3) What do you feel about? I feel (4) What about? I recon (5) How about? I feel.... (6) Do you agree with? I'm sorry, I don't agree with your opinion. But, I think Those kind of expression help students in constructing the accurate sentences.

Here is a model of conversation about asking and giving opinion. Teacher takes School Environment as the subtopic, then the teacher shows a picture which shows the beautiful park in their school. The example of the conversation; Rino: our park? (Asks Nina's opinion about the park that they have in their school) This is the correct expression which Rino can use to ask Nina: (a) What

do you think of, (b) What do you feel about, (c) What's your opinion about... Nina: (Gives her opinion) our park is the most beautiful park. This is the correct expression which Nina can use to respond Rinos' question: (a) I think, (b) I recon that, (c) In my opinion... At the end of each conversation that students presentated, the teacher takes note and gives score in scoring table.

Teaching grammar is teaching the form, rule and system of English in order to ease the understanding of a language itself. It is necessary to teach grammar to students since grammar is an essential of language components besides vocabulary, spelling and pronunciation. In relation with that, the researcher wants to improve students' ability in speaking through guided conversations technique, because this technique helps students learn to use the language grammatically, through practice with meaningful conversational exchange.

Grammar exists to enable us to mean, and without grammar it is impossible to communicate beyond a very rudimentary level (Nunan, 1991:153). Therefore, grammar is one of important elements of language which must be learned since it can be influences in teaching the four language skills. Those four language skills are listening, speaking, reading and writing.

Teaching grammar is a way to improve students' ability in speaking, because it helps the students to construct the grammatical sentences and to be able to speak fluently. Thus, grammar must be taught and be learned by students in order to help them understand and master the lesson easier and also can help them to make the correct and effective language.

An effective conversation class involves the active participation by students to express orally and confidently what they have in mind. Practicing is very useful for the students to train spoken English. Therefore, the teacher should provide opportunities for meaningful communicative behavior about relevant topic by using learner-learner interaction as they key to teaching language for communication derives essentially from interaction (Rivers, 1987:36).

METHOD

This research is conducted in an action in which researcher pays more attention to the teaching and learning process. The writer searches what the real problems are analysis the caused and decides what action should be taken to solve such kind of problem. As stated by Carr and Kemmis's (cited in Mcniff, 1992:2) seems to be the most comprehensive. Action Research is a form of self reflective enquiry undertaken by participants (teachers, students or principles, for example) in social (including educational) situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of (a) their own social or educational practices, (b) their understanding of these practices, and (c) the situations (and situations) in which these practices are carried out.

In accordance with Lewin (cited in Mcniff, 1992:22), as a spiral of steps, Action Research has four stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Planning is teacher's preparation before doing the action. In this step the researcher prepares everything for the completion of action in the class like designing lesson plan, designing the guided conversations, verifying the schedule, and field note. The preparation can be seen as follows: (a) Steps of teaching within procedure of action, and activities in implementing actions towards problem solving as have been planned, (b) Prepare media and facility as needed in the classroom. (prepare the i-focus to shows the pictures, student's English books, dictionary), (c) Prepare the way of observation such as scoring rubric and fieldnote.

Acting is the action of research. The actions were hold in four meeting of actual classroom teaching and learning activities, they consist of model from the teacher and presentation from the students. The first and the third meeting is used for material and model teaching expression about asking and giving opinion through guided conversation. The second and fourth meeting is used for presentation or students performances. Students' performance can be measured in two components such as accuracy and fluency in doing conversations. Next, in order to achieve the aim of this research, the researcher sets two cycles of action research, Cycle 1 consists of the first and second meeting and Cycle 2 consists of the third and fourth meeting. Every cycle consists of two meetings in one week. One meeting is 80 minutes. Means there two cycle of four meeting need two weeks, and an extra week to anticipate in effective learning process.

The observation is done based on students' performance which observed by using scoring table. In observing a collaborator is needed. It is to observe what happens in presenting guided conversation technique. A collaborator comments or jot down anything occurred when the teacher applies this technique, including obstacles that the researcher found in the learning process.

Reflecting taken after students' performances in every each cycle are evaluated to define weaknesses or problems. Then, the researcher decided which action is needed to overcome the weaknesses or problems. The researcher recalled all information which provided the bases for the revise plan for the next cycle and discussed with the collaborator to get feedback. Based on the result of scoring table and field notes on first meeting, the researcher and the collaborator made a discussion concerning with the presentation. From the discussion, the researcher got some important feedback for example the teacher should notice passive students and ask them to practice on the next meeting. Feedback is important in re-planning the next action. It can change a certain action in order to increase the teaching and learning process.

In this research, the subject of the research is the Eighth grade B of SMP N 21 TERPADU Pontianak in academic year 2011/2012 that consists of 36 students to be observed and they were conducted the guided conversations.

The appropriate technique of data collecting is important to gain the objectives of this research. Researcher used the observation technique both making short conversations and practicing the conversations. The researcher carried out the observation directly when she was taking data in the classroom that was being held and the data were collected by researcher and observed by her collaborator. Besides, the researcher also took some notes while and after teaching instead of guided conversation technique in improving students' ability in speaking in general and doing the conversations in special, was applied by analyzing students' ability in speaking. Technique of data collecting that applied in this research are (1) Observing: (a) Observing is the action that applied by the researcher and her collaborator to watch the subject, (b) Taking note is classroom activity using field notes. (2) Combining result of analysis. Combining the analysis result of students' performance in doing the conversation is by using guided conversation and students' score in practicing the conversations from each meeting in scoring table.

The researcher uses observation, oral test, and field notes as the tools of data collecting. One of the techniques in collecting data is observation. It is done by using field notes as a guidance to notice students' interactions and activities that occurs when the treatment is applied. Besides observation, the researcher also uses the oral test. This test will measure by scoring table. Scoring table is the main tools in collecting data in this research. The data is the students speaking activities (accuracy and fluency) while conducting their presentation.

The researcher provides the qualification of students' score as follows:

Aspect		Sc	ore		Catagory
	1	2	3	4	Category
					4= Student uses the accurate expression in asking and giving his/her opinion
					3= Student uses the accurate expression but have some mistakes in pronouncing the word
Accuracy					2= Student does some mistakes in choosing the expression to express his/her opinion and does mistakes in pronouncing the word
					1= Too many errors in using the expression and pronouncing the word, it make the conversations did not done smoothly
					4= Fluent and understandable
					3= There is some mistakes in his/her speech
Fluency					2= Hesitates in his/her speech and stop before the conversation finished
					1= There is no conversation between students who are present in front of the class

Table of qualification for students' score

The other tool is field note, it is used to show the activity in every meeting. It is aimed to note the supporter data that related to the object in this study (students' progress). This note also used to record the teaching learning process related to weaknesses and obstacles found in the research. In order to complete the class performance, the researcher will use the formula of mean score. All individuals score gathered from scoring table will be summed and divided by the number of students in the class. The formula as follow:

$$= \underline{\Sigma}$$
 (David P. Harris. 1969:134)

M = the students' average score

 $\sum \mathbf{x}$ = the sum of students' score

N = the number of students being observed

"Taken from SMP N 21 TERPADU Pontianak's Classification of Quality for speaking"

To know whether the Guided Conversations can improve the students' ability in speaking about asking and giving opinion, the researcher used the observation in every meeting by using students' score. As the minimum score assessment, it will be adopted by the SMP N 21 TERPADU Pontianak's Minimum Mastery Criteria (*Ketuntasan Kelas Minimum*), that is 65 (Sixty Five). Then, to classify the data, the researcher provides the qualification of students' mean score as follows:

Table of students' mean score specification				
The Score	Specification			
85-100	Good to Excellent			
75-84	Average to Good			
65-74	Poor to Average			
55-64	Poor			
0-54	Poor			

"Taken from SMP N 21 TERPADU Pontianak's Classification of Quality for speaking"

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The aim of this research is to know how guided conversations improve students ability in speaking about asking and giving opinion. The researcher used classroom action as the method of this research. The subject of the research is the Eighth grade B of SMP N 21 TERPADU Pontianak in academic year 2011/2012 that consists of 36 students to be observed and they were conducted the guided conversations. Based on the analysis of the students' test result, the writer describes the qualification of students' mean score in second cycles (70.8) which reached 100% of achievement score is Good to Excellent.

English score at SMPN 21 TERPADU Pontianak demanded the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM) of 65 at the end of each final semester meanwhile the students' score of Eighth B at the end of the last semester shows the achievement of 63. After the teacher gave the treatment in Cycle 1, students' score is 68.19

there are still 5 students got the score test lower than 65, the teacher should do the classroom action research in cycle 2. The students' score test shows the significant improvement in cycle 2, the score was 70.83. The result in second cycle shows that all students in eight grade B of SMPN 21 Terpadu Pontianak reached the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM).

DISCUSSION

From the result of computation above, the test indicates that 31 of 36 students got ≥ 65 in first cycle. It means that 86 percents of students at Eighth grade B gain the Minimum Mastery Criteria. Although the test score in cycle 1 shows significant improvement but there are still 5 students of Eighth grade B got test score lower than 65 so that their score improved in cycle 2. The result in second cycle shows all of the students reached the Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM) with 100%.

The Standard Competence and Basic Competence particularly in speaking ability based on the curriculum that is used in SMPN 21 Terpadu Pontianak state that students should be able to express and respond the certain expression which one of the expression is asking and giving opinion, as accurate, fluent, and acceptable to interact with the environment. The researcher applied guided conversations technique in her classroom action research to help the students be able to express and respond the expression about asking and giving opinion, and to help the students to reach the Minimum Mastery Criteria. This technique also helps students in improving their ability in constructing the accurate and acceptable sentences. After the researcher applied the guided conversations in her classroom action research, students can speak more fluently and acceptable.

In this research, the first preparation is making lesson plan and field note form. In this case the writer will apply the guided conversation technique in teaching asking and giving opinion expression while listen to the teacher to make the students easier to act out the conversations by pairs. Then the teacher provides the teaching material such as the example of conversations about asking and giving opinion.

The research is supported by some stages of guide conversations technique based on Steven J. Molinsky and Bill Bliss. They define the different stages in "life cycle" of guided conversations (Steven J. Molinsky and Bill Bliss, 1983:X). From the researcher understanding those stages can be explains as follows: First is the presentation stage. In this stage the model conversation is introduced and practiced by the class. The teacher will read the example of conversation as the model and then it is follow by the learners. Teacher will ask some students to act out the example in the class as the other model for students. Second is the rehearsal stage. Immediately after practicing the model, students do the conversational exercise. For home work, they practice those conversations, and write out a few. Teacher asks students to complete the guided conversations based on the model and relate to the topic given. The third is the performance stage. The next day students do the conversational exercises in class, preferably with their textbook and notebook closed. Students should not have to memorize those conversations. They will most likely remember them after sufficient practice in class and at home. The last stage is incorporation stage. The class reviews the conversations or pieces of conversation in days that follow. With repetition and time, guided conversation "dissolves" and its components are incorporated into students' active language.

The implementation of research is delivering the lesson material in cycle based on the schedule as follows: The first cycle was conducted on May 7th, 2012. The objective of teaching in this meeting is to encourage students' understanding about asking and giving opinion and guided conversations technique. To improve students' ability in speaking, the teacher motivated the students to have a positive assumption about speaking. The teacher explained about conversation and asked their difficulties in conversation. Then the teacher introduced guided conversations technique to improve students' ability in speaking by using asking and giving opinion.

The teacher did those kind of activity in the whilst activity of the research based on the stages in "life cycle" of guided conversations: (1) Teacher explained briefly about asking and giving opinion. (2) Teacher explained Guided Conversations technique and what will students conduct along this meeting. The students listen to the teacher took some notes about the material that being explained. (3) Teacher showed some pictures about school environment. (4) Teacher gave the guided conversations for students to be complete as the material. (5) Teacher asked the students to have their partner. (6) Then the teacher asked the students to do some exercises related to the topic given. Students also usually look on their notes while doing the exercises (7) Teacher asked 4 students to act out the examples of the conversations based on the expression about asking and giving opinion with their partner. When they are given chance to practice the example of conversation in cycle one, few of them speak even some mistakes happen.

The second meeting was conducted on May 11th 2012, students act out their own conversations on their sit by pair. The conversations they made was the guided conversations that they have to complete. The writer found that the students began to be able to construct and act out some expression about asking and giving opinion in acceptable conversations.

In the post activity of the research, the teacher asked students whether they understood how to use guided conversations technique. The teacher also asked the students' difficulties in learning process. In this step the researcher found that some students were not really involved with this activity. So, the teacher should explain clearly the procedures of guided conversations technique, create better atmosphere in class and make better time management.

After the writer conducted first cycle, the writer found that the students began to be able to construct and act out some expression about asking and giving opinion in acceptable conversations. The significant score could be seen from their test percentage 86%. Although the teacher should conduct the second cycle to improves the fifth students who got the score lower than 65. It means that the use of guided conversations technique in teaching asking and giving opinion can improve students' ability in speaking. The teacher takes a role in helping students

using guided conversations technique to construct and to act out the conversations about asking and giving opinion.

Through guided conversations technique in conversation about asking and giving opinion, the students would help already got model of conversations and add their knowledge to use the language to communicate. As Brown states that teaching is showing or helping someone to learn how to do something, giving instruction, guiding the knowledge, causing to know or to understand (Brown, 2001:7). In this case, the researcher who being a teacher in her classroom action research was successful in showing or helping the learners to learn the materials given through guided conversations technique.

There are six techniques in applying guided conversations technique (Varadi Tamas, 1998:7). The researcher explain those techniques based on her understanding after she read all of the explanation. First technique is accept feeling. It is to acknowledge how a student is feeling about class environment or what he's learning. For example: You seemed to enjoy your class, How do you feel to day? Are you sad? This will help students feel like you know them and are interested in them.

The second technique is accepting ideas, teacher does not have to agree or disagree but just value the contributions. It means that teacher have to take up the students' contributions. Then, praise or encourage the students. Praise willingness to contribute and follow the directions. Teacher has to praise the students when they presents the conversations. It is to motivate them in practicing their speaking and to improve their speaking accuracy and fluency. Teacher usually used kind expression in the third technique to praise or to encourage her students: Your performance is better than before, you have done the better one, both of you are good.

Asked open-ended questions are used to encourage constructive and productive conversation about asking opinion. This is the fourth technique in applied guided conversations technique. Teacher will ask some questions relate to the topic and ask students difficulties in comprehend the use of guided conversations technique.

The fifth technique is give good directions, make directions simple, brief and clear. It should be very often when students are not doing an activity well or appropriately. This technique can help the teacher to improve the passive learner. The last technique is lecture or information, relate unknown information to known. The information is about what learners already know about the topic or something in their daily live activities. Teacher has to ask lot of questions before they start to do the exercise as a guide for students to make their own conversations.

Although improving students' ability in speaking about asking and giving opinion through guided conversations technique can help students to construct and to act out the conversations, but not all of the students can construct and act out the conversations well. The individual score shows that there are 5 students who got lower score. It means that the teacher has to give good directions for the students. Teacher has to make directions simple, brief and clear. As Varadi Tamas said that the direction must be give very often when students are not doing an activity well or appropriately. The students who have low score have problem to act out the conversations although they had been helped by the teacher oral shaped. But for students that have high score, using guided conversations technique in teaching asking and giving opinion helps them to construct conversation, so that they could act out the conversations correctly. It is shows that "Life Cycle" of guided conversation based on Steven J. Molinsky and Bill Bliss which consists of presentation, rehearsal, performance, and incorporation stage can improve students' ability in speaking.

The second cycle test conducted on May 18th 2012. The result of the students test on cycle 2 increased significant. All of the students gain the Level Mastery Criteria (KKM).

In this cycle, the teacher re-explained about the use of guided conversations in asking and giving opinion. To help the students in performing their conversation, teacher used guided conversation as a technique to improve students' speaking ability. During the explanation about asking and giving opinion, the students actively paid attention to the material. When they used guided conversation technique in pairs, they could finish the exercises without being difficult with exercises. Beside that, the teacher asked some questions related to the material. Most of the students did their work without any problem. The class showed the better activity in conversation activity, especially when they practice the conversations. Students' ability in speaking improved well than the first cycle. The students should gain individually achievement (≥ 65) score or 100% of the students should gain the level of Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM).

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

Based on the research findings, the writer draws the conclusions as follows: (1) The qualification of students' mean score in second cycles which reached 100% of achievement score is Good to Excellent. (2) Improving students' ability in speaking about asking and giving opinion through guided conversations to second semester of Eighth grade B students of SMPN 21 TERPADU Pontianak in academic year 2011/2012 is 86% and it is gualified Excellent. (3) The result of the test in cycle 1 showed that the level of Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM) has not been achieved for 5 students, so that the students should improve their score by doing the next cycle. (4) The students should gain individually achievement (≥ 65) score or 100% of the students should gain the level of Minimum Mastery Criteria (KKM). (5) The teacher needs conduct the Classroom Action Research once more again (Cycle 2) to improve the fifth students who were still got lower score than 65. (6) Through guided conversations in improving students' speaking ability about asking and giving opinion increased the students' scores. This indicated that there is significant improvement between the tests result at first semester and the tests scores in Classroom Action Research Cycle 1 and Cycle 2.

Suggestions

After finding the test that improved students' ability in speaking about asking and giving opinion through guided conversations technique has improves students' score, the writer would like to give the suggestion as follows: (a) Guided Conversations technique is good to be used in teaching English, especially in teaching expression. It is shown by the result of research that has been done by the researcher. (b) By using guided conversations in teaching expression about asking and giving opinion, the activity become lively, fun, and interesting for learners. (c) Teaching English especially in speaking through guided conversation technique has proved to be Excellent to increase students' achievement. (d) Guided Conversations technique is good for student and whoever wants to improve their ability in grammar, writing and speaking. Students can apply the conversations in their daily life. (e) Guided Conversations technique is applied to have knowledge integrative and contextually, based on what the students faced or found in their real life. This technique will make students are accustomed to use English in real life communication, at least in their conversation class. (f) To overcome the students' problems such as the fluency to speak and grammatical problem, the teacher should give various situation or condition for speaking. (g) The teacher manage the class well in applying Guided Conversations technique for benefit of teaching and learning process, otherwise the available time would be spent not affectively.

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