

IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL THROUGH ORAL DESCRIPTION PRACTICE

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Abstract: This research was intended to improve the students' speaking skill through oral description practice technique. The aspects of speaking skill focused in this research were accuracy, fluency, and confidence. The research method that used was a classroom action research. The subject of this research was Grade VIII D at junior high school SMP Negeri 2 Tebas which consist of 28 students. The data was collected by using oral test, observation checklist, fieldnotes, and tape recorder. It was analyzed by describing oral test, tape recorder, observation checklist and fieldnote, and by using formula of mean score. The findings indicated the students' speaking skill improved through oral description technique in three cycles. The students' mean score in the first cycle was 63.35, the second cycle 72.15 and the last cycle was 75,37. Oral Description Technique was an interesting technique that can be applied in the classroom. It helps student to remind the student about the topic to be described. So, it is hoped that they can speak more fluently. Moreover, by holding something on their hand, they feel confident on their speaking. In addition, the students could learn many vocabularies through describing thing.

Keywords: Speaking Skill, Oral Description, Visual aid

Abstrak: Penelitian ini dimaksudkan untuk meningkatkan skil berbicara siswa melalui teknik latihan oral deskripsi. Aspek dari skil berbicara yang difokuskan dalam penelitian ini adalah akurat, lancar dan percaya diri. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah penelitian tindakan kelas. Subjek dari penelitian ini adalah Kelas VIII D SMP Negeri 2 Tebas yang terdiri dari 32 siswa. Data penelitian dikumpulkan dengan menggunakan oral tes, ceklis observasi, catatan lapangan, dan perekam suara. Data tersebut dianalisa dengan mendeskripsikan oral tes, perekam suara, ceklis observasi dan catatan lapangan, dan menggunakan rumus mencari nilai rata-rata. Hasil temuan penelitian menunjukkan skil berbicara siswa meningkat dalam tiga siklus melalui teknik oral deskripsi. Nilai rata-rata siswa pada siklus pertama adalah 63.35, pada siklus kedua 72.15 dan siklus ketiga 75.37. Oral deskripsi adalah teknik yang menarik yang dapat diterapkan di ruang kelas. Oral deskripsi dapat membantu siswa untuk mengingat topic yang akan dideskripsikan. Jadi, mereka dapat berbicara dengan lancar. Disamping itu, dengan memegang sesuatu di tangan, mereka akan lebih percaya diri dalam berbicara dan dapat belajar lebih banyak kosa kata dengan mendeskripsikan benda.

Kata Kunci : Skil Berbicara, Oral Deskripsi, Benda Visual

English as a subject matter in school covers four basic language skills: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Among those four language skills, speaking is one of the skills that must be mastered by the students. Speaking is a kind of activity to transfer the information orally to other people.

According to Cunningham (1999:3) “speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information”. Moreover, speaking is a complex skill requiring the simultaneous use of a number of different abilities which often develop at different rate”(Harris, 1969:81). On the other hand, Gower et al. (1995) note down that from the communicative point of view, speaking has many different aspects including two major categories – accuracy, involving the correct use of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation practiced through controlled and guided activities; and, fluency, considered to be ‘the ability to keep going when speaking spontaneously’.

In spoken language, there are some key characteristics. Cole et al (2007) stated that there are three key characteristic of spoken language. The first, it takes place in real time and space, Second, It usually involves face-to-face communication, and the last is it involves speakers and listeners adjusting to context – for example, who, when, where.

In general, speaking activity have two categories, there are dialogue and monologue (Brown, 1980:251). In dialogue, the students have partners to talk with, but in monologue, they do it by themselves without a partner and they need to have a lot of ideas in their mind. Moreover, Harris (1969) stated that there are five components are generally recognized in analyses of the speech process: 1) Pronunciation (including the segmental features-vowels and consonants- and the stress and intonation patterns); 2) Grammar; 3) Vocabulary; 4) Fluency (the ease and the speed of flow of speech); and 5) Comprehension.

Monologue speaking in terms of describing something is one of the standard competences that must be covered by the student. Monologue speaking is a kind of performance test, while performance tests, is a kind of authentic assessment. Beside authentic assessment, monologue speaking also can connect academic with the prior knowledge, doing significant work, self-regulated learning, nurturing the individual and many others which was categorized as component in Contextual Teaching Learning (CTL). So, monologue speaking has significant relation with CTL.

“The contextual Teaching Learning system is an educational process that aims to help students see meaning in the academic material they are studying by connecting academic subjects with the context of their daily livesm that is, with the context of their personal, social, and cultural circumstance”(Johnson, 2002:25). He also stated that contextual teaching and learning have some advantages. There are: 1) help students achieve academic excellent; 2) acquire career skills; 3) it develops character by connecting school work with their own experience and knowledge.

Based on researcher’s experience while teaching English to Eighth Grade Students Class D of SMP Negeri 2 Tebas, the students have problems in describing thing such as color, size, shape, material made from and many others. Beside that the students are not confident to speak in public because of their limited vocabulary and spelling words. Moreover, they are afraid of making mistakes especially when they

are asked to speak in public, they usually get nervous when they speak in front of many people so it makes the students forget or lose their ideas and they do not know what they want to say when they come to the front of class. Furthermore, they shy to speak in public and have less motivation to practice. To make students able to speak, teacher must be creative enough to use certain way or technique so that the students are actively involved in the interaction.

In junior high school level, the English syllabus of KTSP Curriculum for the eighth grade students demand the students to have ability to describe thing accurately and fluently. For such condition the researcher should know the way to fulfill the demand and help the students to have speaking skill in describing thing.

In order to overcome describing, the researcher applied oral description technique. Oral description is one of the ways for the students to deliver their ideas. Oral description is a presentation where the students show and tell about specific thing in detail. For example color, size, shape, material made from, and many others. The students describe thing by using those aspect in front of the class individually.

The researcher was interested to apply oral description because the researcher wanted to encourage students to speak English through describing the real things such as ball, medicine box, diary, toy kids and many others. Oral description is important because it can increase student's confidence and their vocabulary mastery in speaking English in class. Oral description also reminds them about topic to be described. Moreover by holding something on their hand, they feel confident on their speaking. Through this technique, the researcher hoped that the students would be more confidence while describing thing in front of the class by using their own thing. They should bring the thing from home to the class. In addition, the students could learn many vocabularies through describing thing. Besides, it also helps students to develop interests in speaking English and to motivate them to acquire better communication. In this activity, students were given opportunity to communicate in a simple way. Moreover, the students have a freedom to explore their ideas in their own words.

Oral description is a strategy teachers have used for years, involve student bringing a favorite object, such as toy kid to the class and telling the class about it. For example in terms of color, size, shape, material made of, and many others. The students begin describing about the object in their hand by using those aspects in front of the class individually. This activity can induce more accurate descriptions when their confidence, comfort and language level are more advanced.

In Oral description, the use of object or thing in order to improve students' speaking skill is needed. Object or thing is one kind of visual aids. Visual aid is a form of speech development that allows audience to see as well as to hear about the material (Syaifullah, 2011:638). Object is an excellent visual aid. Because they can eliminate most of the possible distortions of size, shape, and color (Verderber: 1979). Object is going to be used because it easy to find. Furthermore, Verderber (1979) stated that there are some suggestions in applying visual aids: 1) show visual aids only when you are talking about them; 2) conversely, you should talk about visual aid when you are talking about it; 3) show visual aid so that everyone in audience can see it; 4) talk to your audience not to your visual aid; 5) do not overdo the use of visual aid; 6) think of the entire possible hazard before you decide to pass objects around the class.

In teaching speaking, the teacher should be able to provide interesting topics and apply a suitable technique in order to involve students actively participate in speaking activity. The topic can be related to their environment and life. In addition, teacher has created such a situation to let the students enjoy the activities. Direct correction from the teacher should be avoided. Oral description activities with students' own things would create such kind of situation.

Therefore, the researcher decided to conduct a classroom action research (CAR) using oral description technique to improve students' speaking skill to the eight grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Tebas in academic year 2012/2013

METHOD

The method in this research is classroom action research (CAR). Burns (2010:2) stated that "action research involves taking a self-reflective, critical, and systematic approach to exploring your own teaching contexts" the aim of action research is to change and improve what happen in the classroom. This is supported by Zuber-Skerritt (1996) who stated that "the aims of any action research project or program are to bring out practical improvement, innovation, change or development of social practice, and the practitioners' better understanding of their practices". In this research, the researcher takes the subject of research where the problems found. The subject is Class D of eighth grade of SMP Negeri 2 Tebas academic year 2012/2013, which consists of 28 students.

A classroom action research is usually conducted in a certain cycle. The cycle is divided into two cycles. The first is big cycle. In this research it was five meetings in which the writer applied this technique in teaching learning process. The second is small cycle. Small cycle was consisting of a meeting, which lasts on about 80 minutes or more. In each small cycle or a meeting, the writer applied oral description technique in speaking class.

CAR consists of four steps. It consists of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. The writer procedures of this research were: The first is planning. The planning and the preparation before the teaching learning activities such as lesson plan and instruments to collect data including field note, observation checklist, camera, tape recorder, asking the collaborator to work with, and telling the collaborator what will be done. The second is acting. The researcher in this stage acted as the teacher who teaches the lesson that has already been prepared. The researcher used oral description to encourage students to speak English in front of the class. The students was asked to sit in a group and found the thing to describe and than asked them to tell the thing to the whole classes. The third is observing. The researcher observed her class together with her collaborator when she was doing her action. The observing activities were held to collect the data and put in the field note. Collaborator as the researcher's assistant filled in the field note down to comments anything that occurs in the teaching learning process, including the obstacles that found as well as the probable solution to overcome that problem. Beside that, the collaborator also checked the observation checklist table whether the process is according to the plan or not. And the last is reflecting. After collecting the data, the researcher evaluated the teaching-learning process. The researcher as a teacher and her friend as a collaborator had a discussion concerning with the presentation and the

note in the field note and observation checklist. Through the discussion, the researcher got important feedback in re-planning the next action or presentation.

The techniques of data collecting applied in this research were performance test and observation technique. Using the performance test technique, the researcher took the data by recording students' oral description in front of the class. This data were analyzed to discover the students' speaking performance in the class. The assessment was based on the three aspects of speaking skill which are called accuracy, fluency and confidence. In observation technique, the researcher and her collaborator took some notes and checked the observation checklist whether the activity based on the plan or not. Instead of the above technique, interaction analysis was applied by analyzing students' oral description to improve their speaking skill.

The tools of data collecting applied in this research were: oral test, observation checklist table, field note, and recording. The expected result of score is at least 75 % of students are able to fulfil the requirement of target score minimum in SMP 2 Tebas for English subject that is 65. The average speaking skill of the students' in make oral description of thing as the teaching media will be quantified by using mean formula. From the mean score and statistical analysis then it can be judged whether the students' speaking skill improves or not. To determine students' individual score, the researcher provided standard of minimum score used in the school, as follows: 0-64 was not mastery and 65-100 was students' mastery the lesson material.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

The research findings were discussed based on the result of scoring table, field note and observation checklist. The data from the research presented here focuses on speaking skill which consist of accuracy (pronunciation and vocabulary), fluency, and confidence. This research conducted in three cycles.

First Cycle

In the first cycle, the researcher found that the students have difficulty in their speaking. Some of them can not pronounce word correctly. For example glue become gla, size become siz, from become frum, red become rid and many others. Beside that, some of them can not speak fluently. There are many pauses and silence when they speak.. While in confident, some of them shy and did not serious in doing their speaking. Most of students also make noises while teaching learning process. And the last point is the teacher has to manage the time carefully.

Students' mean score in the first cycle was 63.35, the score was still below minimal passing grade (KKM) and categorized not satisfying.

Second Cycle

In second cycle, it showed that in teaching learning process through oral description practice, students' show their progression and looks enthusiasm while doing their performance by using their own thing/object. It can be seen while teacher give time to themselves to practice their thing through oral description. All of the students practice with their own style and try to have a good performance while describing thing in front of the class. So, they can increase their pronunciation, fluency and confident.

From the weaknesses in the first cycle that is some students make a noise and did not pay attention, in the second cycle the researcher try to manage the class by making more attention to them such as asking them to answer the question. The researcher moves near to the student who sits at the back, side, and in front of the class while teaching learning process. In this cycle, the researcher can manage the time well

Students' mean score in the second cycle was 72.15, the score was passed the the criteria of (KKM) and categorized satisfying. By this result, the researcher decided to do the next research. The researcher wants to focus on student who did not pass the SKM or about 5 students and 1 student who did not attend to the second cycle.

Third Cycle

The researcher give remedial to students who did not passed the SKM or about 7 students. One of them was drop out. So, there were left 6 students which have remedial. Remedial will be done after their finish their study or activity in the school. The researcher floated around the class and observed the process of discussing. She also helped students when they had difficulties. She had to make sure that all students practice speaking correctly. Students' mean score in the third cycle was 75.37, the score was passed the the criteria of (KKM) and categorized satisfying

The students' mean score improvement from cycle to cycle can be seen in the following chart.

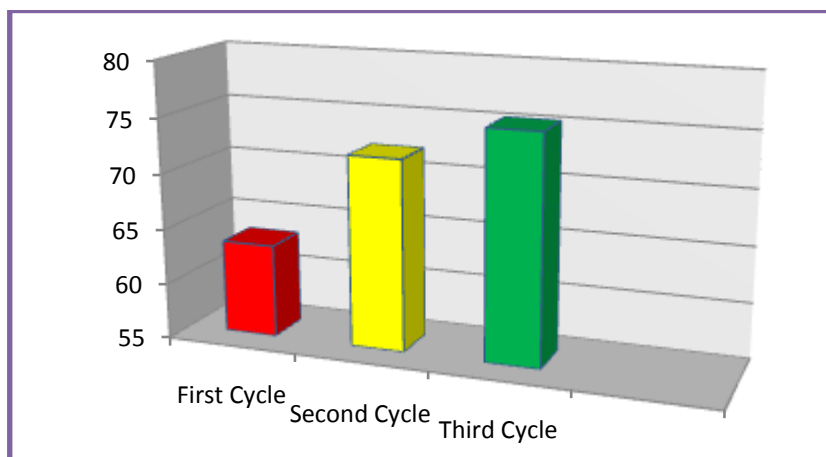


Chart 2: The students' mean score improvement from cycle to cycle

From the chart we can see the students' mean score improvement from the first cycle to the Third cycle. The chart shows significant improvement achieved by the students after the first cycle. In the Third cycle, students' mean score increase to more than 70.

Based on the researcher and collaborator's conclusion, the expecting result had achieved. There were all students passed the SKM, so it can be said that this class was succeed in learning describing monologue speaking through oral description technique. By this result, the researcher decided to finish the research.

Discussion

From the research findings above, it could be seen that the student's speaking skill increased from cycle 1 to cycle 3. The students enthusiasm and enjoy in learning by using oral description practice. It can be seen in participation of students in speaking aloud descriptive text together and while they explain the object in group. Thus, they can improve their pronunciation in English language. Oral description also reminds them about topic to be described, so they can speak their ideas fluently. Moreover by holding something on their hand, they feel confident on their speaking. In the first cycle, the mean score of student's speaking skill it was 63,35 which is categorized as fair. After conducting the first cycle, researcher and collaborator saw there was no significant changing of the students' speaking skill score. It was caused by their low accuracy. They did not learn speaking in English class especially to the eight grades. The teacher there focuses on reading and writing. Furthermore, researcher and collaborator continued to the second cycle. For this cycle, students' accuracy was the focused on the research. After doing the research, the researcher and collaborator could see there was a changing of students' score in all aspect of speaking skill. In the second cycle the mean score was 72,15. Based on the researcher and collaborator's conclusion, the expecting result had achieved. So, it can be said that this class was succeed in learning the describing monologue speaking through oral description. By this result, the researcher decided to do the next research. The researcher wants to focus on student who did not pass the SKM. In the third cycle the mean score was 75,37 . The points indicated that the student's speaking through oral description was getting better in every cycle. The improvement that was taken place in the classroom was considered as the result of the treatment. The treatment that was mentioned here is using of Oral description practices technique in improving students' speaking skill.

Furthermore, the result of treatment showed that action hypothesis was accepted. The Speaking skill of eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Tebas in academic year 2012/2013 improved by using Oral Description Technique.

To find out factors influenced students' speaking skill through oral description, the researcher and collaborator analyzed the observation checklist table and field note lists. From this lists, the researcher and collaborator found there were some factors influenced them. Firstly, they did not serious to follow the class. When they were in the class, they made small discussion among their friends. They did not pay full attention to the teacher's explanation and presentation. Second, students still had problem in speaking in front of the class. The students are not confident to speak in public because of their limited vocabulary and spelling words not correctly. Most of them looked nervous and some looked shy.

Oral description technique could not overcome the entire students' problem in speaking, but through this technique, there was actively participate. This technique is considered as a better technique rather than just teacher lecturing the students or just answering question individually. By applying this technique in the classroom, students who were usually passive during teaching learning process, being forced to be more active. They had to present the material that is related to their environment and life. The teaching learning process was also no longer teacher-centered, because the roles of teacher in the classroom are only preparing, setting, mediating, and monitoring.

Moreover, Oral description also can remind students about topic to be described. Students often forgot about the material to be talked. By using oral description of thing they can remember the material and its components. Thus, the students can express their idea fluently. Beside, it also reduce the students' nervous. When they are speaking without holding something on their hand, they are feeling nervous. On the other hand, by holding something on their hand, they feel confident on their speaking.

In conclusion, the research findings of classroom action research are satisfying, but the researcher still expects that there will be more research in this area.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusions

Students' English speaking skill of the eighth grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Tebas in the academic year 2012/2013 improved through Oral Description. Oral Description Technique was an interesting technique that can be applied in the classroom. It helps student to remind the student about the topic to be described. So, it is hoped that they can speak more fluently. Moreover, by holding something on their hand, they feel confident on their speaking. In addition, the students could learn many vocabularies through describing thing. Furthermore, they can share their idea with their friend and it's make them more confident in asking a questions while they found the difficulties both to their teacher and their friend.

Suggestions

Based on the research findings, students accuracy, fluency, and confident increased through oral description technique. They enjoy learning in group and enthusiasm so; the researcher recommends to applies oral description technique in teaching speaking skill. The teacher should monitor the students well and give more practice about the way to describing monologue speaking. The researcher also recommends for further research. It can be about the use of oral description technique to improve students' speaking skill in English by using the other kinds of visual aids.

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