

Improving Students Speaking Skill through Discussion Technique

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Abstract

The objective of the research is to improve students speaking skill through Discussion Technique. The present research employed qualitative approach with Classroom Action Research (CAR) method. The participants involved were one class of eighth grades consisting of 25 students. The research was conducted in three cycles. Classroom observation, test, and interview were used to collect the data. The result showed that 1) students' score of speaking skill increase after the implementation of Discussion Technique (in cycle I, only 56% students passed the passing grade, in cycle II, 76% of them passed the passing grade, and in cycle III, 92% students passed the passing grade, and 2) students' motivation and learning excitement increase. The findings lead to a conclusion that this technique can improve students' speaking ability. It is recommended for English teachers to using this technique as a solution to encourage them in teaching speaking skill and to motivate their students to be more active in learning.

Keywords: discussion technique, speaking skill.

INTRODUCTION

Speaking skill becomes an important and crucial part of teaching learning process since it is one of student's successful indicators in English assessment. The students are expected to be able to speak English based on the correct rules of speaking in order to be a good information which can be delivered and easy to understand by the readers.

In fact, speaking skill remains as challenging and demanding learning activity for students. At a Junior High School in Tangerang Banten, it is found some problems identified in speaking activity. The common problems are the low motivation of students in speaking. Vocabulary knowledge remains as the big problem for the students. Additionally, the mechanical aspect of speaking like pronunciation and often miss-spelled several words is the most problem that found in speaking activity.

One technique proposed to increase students speaking skill is Discussion Technique. Discussion as an effective teaching strategy in language activity that help students create more interactional environment especially in speaking. This technique has been being believed to improve students speaking ability and understanding of the material (Risanti, 2018). Honang (2017) claimed that this technique is effective in enhancing students speaking ability.

Considering the explanation above, the research goals at finding out how Discussion Technique can assist and enhance students' speaking skill and

motivation, and how the students' response towards the technique implementation in teaching and learning activity.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Speaking Skill

Speaking is an activity as the ability to express oneself in the situation in precise words or the ability to converse a sequence of ideas fluently. Speaking is also an activity that often carried out in everyday life particularly in the teaching-learning process. Through speaking activity, students can express their mind, feelings and ideas about something orally. According to Brown and Yule (1983) Speaking is to express the needs-requests, information, ideas, and acts. It means that when the speaker says words to the listeners, it's not only to express what he or she needs but also to obtain information or ideas. In order to fulfill those things, the speaker has to use a good speaking and says it clearly. Speaking activity is an interesting activity in teaching and learning process, and it is one of the four basic skills that have to be learned by the students. But commonly, it is a boring one. The students usually seem to be lazy and do not enjoy this activity; one reason is because the teacher is being monotonous in teaching speaking.

According to Brown (2004) there are five basic types of speaking. They are imitative, intensive, responsive, interactive and extensive. Imitative speaking is the ability to imitate a word or phrase or possibly a sentence. Intensive speaking is a type of speaking frequently employed in assessments context is in the production of short stretches of oral language designed to demonstrate competence in a narrow band of grammatical, phrasal, lexical or phonological relationships. Responsive speaking includes interaction and test comprehension but at the somewhat limited level of very short conversations, standard greeting and small talk, simple request and comments. Interactive speaking can take the two forms of transactional language, which has the purpose of exchanging specific information, or interpersonal exchanges, which have the purpose of maintaining social relationships. Extensive speaking is oral production tasks include speeches, oral presentations, and story-telling, during which the opportunity for oral interaction from listeners is either highly limited or ruled out altogether. Harmer (2001) stated that there are three main reasons for teaching speaking skill. Firstly, speaking activities provide rehearsal opportunities chances to practice real-life speaking in the safety of the classroom. Secondly, speaking tasks in which students try to use any or all of the languages they know provide feedback for both teacher and students. Finally, the more students have opportunities to activate the various elements of language; they have stored in their brains, the more automatic their use of these elements become.

Assessment is the process of gathering and discussing information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop deep understanding of what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences. In teaching speaking, assessment is aimed to measure how far the students speaking ability. Brown (2004) stated that assessment is a popular and sometimes misunderstood term in current educational practice. It means, any teacher only assess the students learning without tells their mistakes. Teachers just need a result like value from students.

Discussion Technique

Discussion as an effective teaching strategy in language activity that help students create more interactional environment especially in speaking. In discussion group, learners have the opportunity to interact, question, and elaborate with peers more frequently than they have in teacher centered environment, thus enhancing learning and understanding. According to Welty (1989) discussion is the process of talking things over among two or more persons, preferably face to face. He adds that the total discussion process ideally is a cooperative effort on the part of a number of individuals to work together as a group, through the exchange of thought orally, toward some group objectives. Brookfield (2005) said that discussion is an important way for people to affiliate with one another, to develop the sympathies and skills that make participatory democracy possible. Discussion technique could be an effective organizational medium for encouraging, clarifying, and guiding students' participation in planning classroom activities, both academic and social.

Robert A Slavin explained that to arrange an effective discussion, the group discussion session will be divided into three parts such as follows:

Step 1: Pre-discussion Activities, in this activity, the teacher gives an example of reading text to discussion in groups and read it in 5 minutes.

Step 2: Whilst Discussion Activities, in this activity, the students read and do the small group discussion about the reading text, answering the questions that was given by the teacher, report their own discussion on the piece of paper that was provided by the teacher, and present the result of their discussion in their own group first and to other groups in panel discussion, while other member of group may debate, clarify, give opinion, and criticize.

Step 3: Post Discussion Activities, in this activity, activities the teacher collects the works of group discussion, and then comments the group discussion and giving the reward (score) to each group and members group who participate in discussion, give some corrections if any, and also give several oral question to members of group randomly.

Brookfield (2005) mentions some advantage of Discussion Technique. Students can explore different perspectives, they will assume a sense of ownership of class and learning, they can explore topics deeper, and comfort with ambiguity and complexity.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study objective is to improve students speaking skill at eighth grade students. This research is held at SMP Binong Permai Tangerang. This research conducted in the second semester of 2019/2020 and it done in 3 cycles. The method of research that used in this research is Classroom Action Research. The steps of the research focus on teaching and learning process using classroom action research through Cycle I, Cycle II, Cycle III. Each cycle contains 4 steps consist of: Planning, Acting, Observing and Reflecting. The researchers chose class VIII as the subject of the research that there are 25 students in the classroom consist of 13 male and 12 female students. The data were collected through classroom observation, pre-test and post-test, and interviews. Next, the researchers used

reduction, description, and verification as the technique of data analysis. Then, the researchers used triangulation by compare the result of observation, interview, and speaking test to validate the data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The researchers found that many difficulty that faced by students in speaking activity. The researcher asked view question to them in English, but they just quiet or their answers are terrible. It indicated that their speaking skill is very low. Then, most of the students are not really interested in learning English. They often think that English is not their important subject so that they do not have to be really seriously to learn English.

To increase the students interest in speaking and solve the problem in the class, the researchers use Discussion Technique in teaching and learning process. So that it is clear, the description of the subject of research must be from the aspect of school and the students themselves.

This research conducted for 3 cycles. It has some steps of teaching reading, they are:

1. Pre-teaching activity

The teacher started the lesson by greeting to the students in loudly voice in order to get attention of the students as the absent of students, she called the students one by one. She asked some students about ask and give information about ongoing activities, it used to give students a clue about this topic. The teacher motivates the students by telling the learning objectives and basic competence that should achieve at the end of the lesson.

2. Whilst teaching activity

In this phase, the teacher leads the students to the main activity in the teaching learning process and also applies the discussion technique. The teacher guides the students by giving an example of asking and giving information about ongoing activity to the students. In learning the materials with discussion technique, there are several steps in whilst teaching: observing, questioning, exploring, associating and communicating. In observing the teacher gives a simple question about ongoing activity. Then the students follow the pronunciation of the words that had been spoken by teacher. In questioning, the learning activity in this phase is the teacher gives some pictures about ongoing activity and the students ask a question about the activity in the picture. In exploring, the teacher and students discuss about the social function, the structure of the text, language feature and moral value. The teacher helps the students to answer the questions if there are some confusing words and discuss it together. In associating, the teacher gives a picture for the students as an exercise. Then the teacher asks students to make a group and discuss about the materials. At this stage discussion technique will be conducted. The teacher gives the students several times to discuss about the text that has been given by teacher and all member of group give their idea about the materials. In this phase, students can explore different perspectives. They can explore the topic deeper. Each member should contribute to the result. In communicating, when the students finished the discussion session, the teacher calls one by one group and the students present their result in front of the class and other groups ask some

questions about their result. If their pronunciation is wrong, the teacher will ask other students for the right answer. Finally, after all the students present their result, the teacher explains the material completely and discuss with all the students.

3. Post-teaching Activity

The teacher gives a chance for the students to ask questions if they still do not understand about the material yet. The teacher may give feedback. Then teacher also asks students to conclude the lesson that has been learned together and asks the students to submit their task. The last one, teacher gives homework for the students to see the students understanding about what they have learned before.

The research result through speaking test and document study show that there is an improvement in performed students, that the students can achieve more than 80% in the learning activities through discussion technique.

Based on the result of cycle one, it can be seen in Chart 1 that 14 students of 25 or 56% could reach 75 of the standard minimum achievement. While 11 students of 25 or 44% fail. It means that the students didn't reach the target of 80% students pass the standard minimum achievement. Percentage of the students' passing in cycle one.

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\% \rightarrow P = \frac{14}{25} \times 100\% = 56\%$$

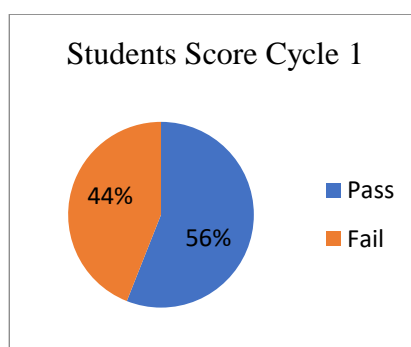


Chart 1. The percentage of students' score result (cycle 1)
Based on the standard minimum achievement

In this cycle, the researchers make reflecting on the activities have been done. The reflecting included the situation of the class, the interest of the students' speaking activity, the process of teaching learning through discussion technique, students' motivation, and also the way how to reduce the weakness of the action research and the result of the speaking test. The researchers found that the students still find the difficult with pronunciation. Therefore, the researchers will continue this research to cycle two, because there are many students' score are still under standard of minimum score.

In cycle 2, the students showed the improvement of their score. The percentage of students' score improvement than previous cycle increase 20% from 56% to 76%.

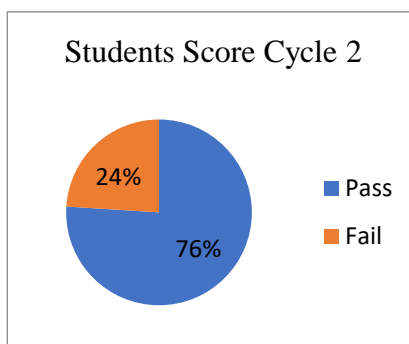


Chart 2. The percentage of students' score result (cycle 2)
Based on the standard minimum achievement

Based on the result of cycle two above, it can be seen in Chart 2 that 19 students of 25 or 76% could reach 75 of the standard minimum achievement. While 6 students of 25 or 24% fail. It means the target of 80% still did not reach of the standard minimum achievement. Percentage of the student passing in cycle two:

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\% \rightarrow P = \frac{19}{25} \times 100\% = 76\%$$

Most of students showed increasing in their speaking skill. They could answer the question orally almost with the correct grammar. The students' discipline and their attention are increase but for their interaction in asking and answering in doing the exercise and the responsibility are still low. A few of the students speaking score is increasing.

In cycle three that 23 of 25 the students could reach 75 the standard minimum achievement, so they can improve their speaking skill to 80% passed on KKM (75). The average score showed the significant improvement. It was 66.26 in cycle 1, 77.32 in cycle 2, and 83.64 in cycle 3. Therefore, the researcher thinks it is enough to prove that discussion technique can improve students' speaking skill.

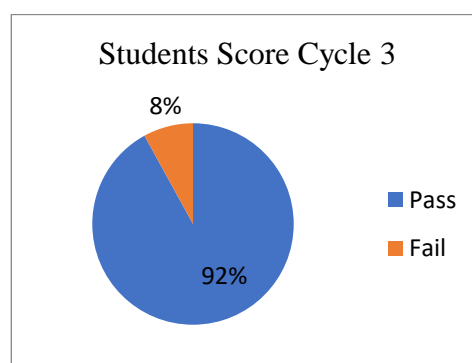


Chart 3. The percentage of students' score result (cycle 3)
Based on the standard minimum achievement

In this cycle, the improvement reach into 92% from the target is 80% in minimal score (75) so it means the cycle is successful. The researcher stops this research until cycle 3. Here is the percentage of the students who passing in the cycle three:

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\% \rightarrow P = \frac{23}{25} \times 100\% = 92\%$$

There was interacting in their speaking ability and the responses showed that they have good motivation in learning speaking. Their motivations were high when the researchers used discussion as a technique to increase and improve their speaking skill.

Discussion

Based on the analysis and research, the researchers can improve students speaking skill by discussion technique. The weakness in cycle 1 is when the students in front of the class some students is not confident about their pronunciation so the teacher must repair the students' pronunciation in cycle 2. In cycle 2 the students start to increase their pronunciation with instruction by role play the dialogue they made with the teacher, but in cycle 2 the students' vocabulary must be renovated again because so many students lack with their various vocabulary. So, the teacher must improve their vocabulary in cycle 3. In cycle 3, the researcher look the process of learning speaking through discussion technique is better than before about all of things. The improvement of speaking skill through discussion technique is significant.

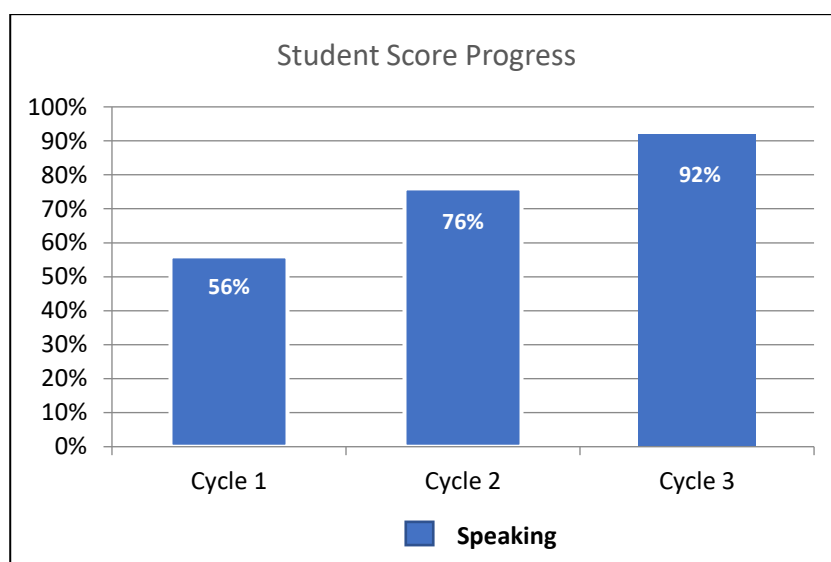


Figure 1. Graphic of Students' Score in Cycle 1, Cycle 2 and Cycle 3

Based on the students' score that they had gotten, the researchers could explain as follows: the percentage of students who passed the speaking test increased 36% from cycle 1 to cycle 3. From those result, it can be concluded that there was improvement between cycle 1, cycle 2 and cycle 3. It was in line with the result of previous study conducted by Risanti, that using Discussion in speaking would lead to better result of students' speaking ability.

Almost all students showed their positive perceptions towards discussion technique in speaking. That could be seen in result that had been done by all students in cycle 1 to cycle 3. Meanwhile, the same perceptions was also be expressed by 2 students who had an interview with researchers in the end of the

research. They think that Discussion was a suitable technique which could be used in education because of very interesting and effective.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion of research, it can be formulated some conclusions of through Discussion Technique in the learning teaching process can improve students' speaking skill. Discussion technique is a suitable technique to improve students' speaking ability and it can increase the students' interest for learning English, especially speaking. It can be seen from the students' scores increased in every cycle. Students' responses towards the use of discussion technique in teaching speaking is also increasing and it means that the most of students agree that discussion technique can increase their motivation and discussion technique could encourage them to learn English

Based on the conclusions above, there are some suggestions advised: 1) Teacher should make a good relation with the students not only in academic formal but also in their personality. The teacher should organize and plan the technique of the lesson and should make conducive and comfortable situation. The teacher should tries to motivate students at the beginning of the learning and can make the process of learning to use discussion technique as one of the alternative subjects in English. 2) If the students find any difficulties in understanding the lesson, they should ask the teacher and the students do not feel bores when the teacher gives new words so the students should keep trying to memorizing the speaking by discussion technique. The students should not afraid to make some mistake, because we can learn from mistaken. 3) The result could be useful to increase the awareness of teachers in the delivery of materials by using two languages, English and Indonesian in delivery materials every day. It can help students to understand the material presented in two languages that can provide clear information to students. Delivery of content with two languages will run well if we as teacher present materials correctly and can understand the difficulties that students encounter in using English speaking.

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