IMPLEMENTING QUESTION AND ANSWER TECHNIQUE TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY AT SMP ISLAM PARAMITHA MALANG

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ABSTRACT

Speaking is one of language skills which has to be mastered by the students. By being able to speak, students will be able to transfer their thought to others. Unfortunately, sometimes students, at SMP Islam Paramitha especially, failed to utter their idea in spoken manner due to several factors as lack of vocabulary, not knowing what and how to say the ideas, and mostly feeling unconfident. This problem cannot be neglected; therefore, the researcher decided to carry out a two-cycle Classroom Action Research (CAR). In This CAR the researcher implemented question and answer technique to improve students' speaking ability on expressing their daily activities. By using observation sheets, interview guide, and test, it was found that 70% of the students had been successfully improving their speaking ability. As a result, the intended spoken communication, either between students and students or teacher and students, did take place

Keywords: speaking, teaching technique, question and answer technique

ABSTRAK

Berbicara adalah salah satu ketrampilan yang harus dikuasai oleh siswa. Dengan menguasai kompetensi berbicara, siswa dapat mengekspresikan ide mereka secara lisan. Supaya siswa menguasai ketrampilan dalam berbicara, guru SMP Islam Paramitha mengunakan *question and answers technique* dengan topik kegiatan sehari-hari dengan cara memperbanyak kata tanya agar siswa aktif dalam membuat pertanyaan dan menjawabnya. Penelitian ini adalah Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK). Pada implementasi *question and answer technique* ini dapat dikatakan berhasil, karena 70% siswa mampu membuat pertanyaan dan memjawab pertanyaan sehinggan terjadi komunikasi dalam Bahasa Inggris dalam kelas, baik antar siswa maupun siswa dan guru.

Kata kunci: kemampuan berbicara, teknik pengajaran, teknik bertanya dan menjawab.

INTRODUCTION

English consists of four basic skills; they are speaking, listening, reading, and writing. From the four language skills, speaking is one of the English skills that should be mastered by students, by mastering speaking skill they are able to communicate well and not only for academic purposes, but also for professional purposes.

Huda (1999:72) states that oral communicative ability is an important skill which need to be taught by English language teachers, but in fact this skill is the most difficult skill to develop. This is due to the fact that language environment in Indonesia provides less support for English learners because English is not spoken in the community.

Based on the 2006 curriculum, the basic competence of the seventh graders of junior high school is that in term of speaking skill students are hoped to be able to express transactional and interpersonal conversation both formally and informally in accurate and fluent mannerIn

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addition, the students are also expected to be able to respond various simple of expression in the context of their life. It means that the goal of teaching speaking in the EFL is to have the students to be able to communicate and respond English used in daily conversation and communication among students, teacher, and people in common.

Willis (1998: xii) states that teaching English means using English language in the classroom as often as possible; For example, teachers should use English when they are organizing teaching activities or speaking to students. This is not only aimed at establishing English for communication between students and teacher, but also providing language input for the students so that they can imitate and use the language in real life. In addition, the use of English in the class will make the students realize that at he main aim of learning a language is to learn to communicate in target language. Accordingly, it is very important for students to practice their English that they have gotten from teaching learning process. As Huges (2003: 113) states that the objective of teaching speaking is developing the English speaking ability in order to be able to interact successfully. Further he explains that in order to be able to use the language the students should comprehend the linguistic items of English language. Based on the reason, it can be said that teaching speaking is focused on providing students with comprehensible input in order to enable them to develop their spoken English as one of the productive skills which the students need to obtain.

In addition to the availability of language model, students also need to be given chances to practice their language. By practicing, the students can increase or enrich their oral proficiency. That is way the teacher should give more chance in practice. Murjdibjono (2005: 14) sates some points related to speaking skill. One of which is that it is important for students to have an opportunity to use the language both in formal and informal conversation. Therefore, it can be concluded that learning language needs much more practice or application. The minimum availability of the language, however, sometimes discourages the students to practice their language skill. Consequently, most of them failed in demonstrating their language skills (Sugiarto (2008). Besides, Purnomo (2009) pointed out that unsupportive classroom athosphere might also lead to students' feeling of unconfident and insecure. The two cases which were figured out by the previous reserchers were also found in SMP Islam Paramitha, especially at the seventh grade. The researcher noticed the problems when he conducted a preliminary study by observing the students in the class as well as interviewing teachers and some students.

Based on the preliminary study, the researcher decided to minimize teaching and learning speaking problem by selecting question and answer technique. By implementing this technique the teacher expected that the students would be able to speak and increase their selves-confidence when they were to utter conversation with other students as well as with their English teachers by using English language.

The selection of this technique was based on the belief that the question and answer technique provides them an opportunity to ask by imitation. Lighbown and Spada (2001) state

that learning by imitation is one way to study a foreign language. In addition, it benefits those who give answers because they can express, develop, and on their own ideas (Harmer, 2001). In addition, previous study conducted by Sugiarto (2008) showed that this technique was proven to be successful in increasing the students speaking ability. Furthermore, Purnomo (2009) also conducted a classroom action research by using question and answer technique. He used question and answer technique in SDN 02 Jatiroyo Jatipuro-Karanganyar. He used that technique because his students had difficulties in improving their speaking ability in expressing acceptance and rejection. In his research question and answer was considered to be effective in improving students' speaking ability in expressing acceptance and rejection expression. The findings of the previous research ensured the researcher that this technique wuld also be able to improve the seven graders' speaking ability at SMP Islam Paramitha

Discussing about the selected technique, questions and answers are viewed as essential components of teaching and learning. A teacher will ask questions to his/her students and answer questions from them. According to Kenneth (2010) Question and answer teaching gives the student opportunity to reflect his inquiries and needs for further information. At the same time, by soliciting answers to key questions the teacher gains some insights into the class' progress. Question and answer technique is an activity in which asking and answering take place between the students and students and students with their teacher. By asking questions a mutual communication can occur. This is so due to the fact that every question demands a response (except in the case of requests and suggestions), so that questions inevitably generate communication.

Most of the teachers spend a large percentage of classroom time asking questions because questions are very important for a teacher to know whether the students have understood the lesson or not. For the students, asking questions is also important to ask something that they don't understand or ask some information that they need from the teachers and also to their friends. According to (Pasty and Nina 2001: 102) in their book "How Language are Learned" questions can be divided into two basic types: display questions and genuine questions. The difference between the two is that display questions are those to which the ones who asked the questions know the answer in advance, while the genuine questions are those questions which the answers are not known in advance by the ones who asked the questions. Examples of both question type are presented as follow:

Display question : Are you a student? (Asked to a student in a classroom)
Genuine question : Where does your uncle work? (Asked to a student when discussing families in class.

METHOD

Since the objective of this research was to improve students' speaking skill, the design of this research was Classroom Action Research (CAR). Latief (2010) states that CAR can

help professional teachers to investigate their own practice and to determine what will and will not suitable for their students. Considering that statement, conducting this CAR at SMP Islam Paramitha was a worth doing.

In implementing the method, the researcher followed (Melter 201).who points out that the cycle of CAR needs to be conducted when the first cycle did not show significant improvement to the students' achievement. Therefore, this CAR employed two cycles. As the first cycle the students' scores had not improved, the second cycle, then, needed to be performed. In performing the research in both cycles, the researcher used several instruments as observation sheets, interview guides, speaking test, and scoring rubric. The observation sheets and interview guides were used to elicit the qualitative data. Differently, the speaking test and scoring rubric were utilized to gain quantitative data. The steps at the first cycle covered preliminary study, planning, acting out the plan, developing next cycle and reflecting. Differently, in the second cycle the researcher dropped the preliminary study, so the steps in cycles II were planning, implementing and observing. Brief descriptions about the steps in both cycles are presented in this following chart.

Chart 1. The Description of CAR cycles by Melter (2012)
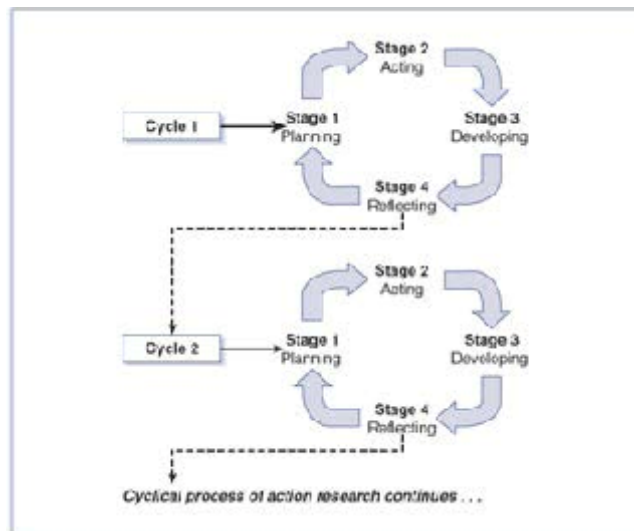
At the preliminary study the researcher was identifying the problems by conducting classroom observation a nd informal interview. The results demonstrated that the students' speaking ability was low. Consequently, the researcher planning an action to solve the problem. In planning section the researcher did literature study, constructed lesson plan, prepared teaching materials and media, set criteria of success by referring to the school minimum passing grade; that was 7 (seven). Next step was acting the plan; in this case the researcher was an observer observing the collaborator, the English teacher, who implementing the action. In addition to observing the collaborator, to make sure that she implemented the action based on the lesson plan, the researcher was also observing the students' attitude during the class. Still in observing

section, but done in another meeting, the researcher and the collaborator assigned the students to tell about their daily activities. During the performance, the researcher and the collaborator assessed the students' performance by using scoring rubric. The last step in the cycle I was reflecting . At this stage the researcher and the collaborator calculated the students' score before finding out the average; and it was found that the average of the class only reached 5.04. As the score was still under the school minimum passing grade, cycle II was performed. Before conducting cycle II, the researcher and the collaborator were trying to find aout what might cause the failure. Therefore, the researcher interviewed some students to state their problems during the implementation of question and answer technique in cycle I. The results showed that the students still found difficulties to find the correct term to answer the questions. If they could answer the questions, they still got it hard to put the answer in complete sentences. This led to many pauses during the assessment section. The second answer gained from the students was that they were afraid that their friend would laugh at them when they made mistake. Based on these basic temporary findings the researcher made some modification in lesson plan for the second cycle.

There were some differences between the first cycle and the second cycle. One of the differences was at the first cycle the given questions was an open ended questions; meanwhile the questions in the second cycles were in the form of multiple choice completed with unfinished statements (Table 1). Another difference was, in conducting assessment, the researcher and his collaborator gave choices to the students: staying inside the class but forbidden to laugh at their friends when they made mistakes or preparing their performance by practicing their monolog outside the class before they got their turn. This was done to create positive classroom atmosphere as positive classroom atmosphere will help the students to produce spoken output (Lightbown and Spada, 2011). By doing so the researcher expected that the one who performed their monologue will feel safe so that they can utter the targeted outputs. The next step in this cycle was done exacty as it was in the cycle I.

Table 1. The Example of Questions Distributed in Each Cycle

NO	FORMS OF QUESTION	
	Cycle I	Cycle II
1	What time do you wake up? Answer:.....	What time do you wake up? I wake up at......... a.3 o'clock b. 5 o'clock c. 12 o'clock
2	What do you do at 5 o'clock? Answer:.....	What do you do at 5 o'clock? Usually I ....at 5 o'clock a. Go to school b pray c. Play football

3.	What do you do after praying? Answer:.....	What do you do after praying? After praying, I always............ a. Take a bath b. Pray c. cook

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After all the stages, both in cycle I and cycle II, were done, finally the students scores can be displayed. The final scores were collected based on the final interaters' scores. Meaning that the researcher calculated the final scores given by rater I (the collaborator) and rater II (the researcher). From the calculated data it can be seen that there was significant differences between students' total score in cycle I and cycle II (Table 2)

Table 2. The Students' Scores

No.	Students' Name	Students' Score	
		Cycle I	Cycle II
1	A D	7	8,5
2	A A A	6	7
3	A M G.	5,5	8
4	A U	5,5	8
5	A N	4	7
6	D A	4	7
7	E L	3	7,5
8	E S A	5	7,5
9	F D N	6	7
10	I R S	5	7,5
11	IMM	4	6,5
12	M. S I	5	6,5
13	N S	5,5	6,5
14	N S	6	7
15	P R N	6,5	7
16	R Y S	5,5	6
17	S R	4,5	6
18	T I	2,5	6
19	U I S	6,5	7,5
20	T S	4,5	9
21	W R	3	6,5
22	A Z R	5	6

23	I H	6,5	6,5
Total		116	162
Average		5,04348	7,0434783
Presentage (%)		50,43	70,43

From the displayed data, it can be said that the implementation of question and answer technique in cycle I did not significantly increase the students' speaking skill; only 5.43% of the students reached the minimum passing grade set by the school. This failure was caused by several reasons; first, the students still had lack of vocabulary in expressing their idea in complete sentences. Second reason was that the students saw the presence of their friends as a threat for them; as a result instead of uttering their thought in spoken manner they preferred mumbling or even making long pauses. This situation was so understandable because unrelaxed situation blocks language learners from producing understandable outputs or spoken texts (Lightbown and Spada, 2011). After some modification in cycle II, the students' scores on presenting their daily activities were increased; 70.43 % of the students had improved their ability in speaking, especially in communicating their daily activities.

Considering the results of the students' performance during Cycle I and Cycle II, it can be concluded that question and answer technique was able to improve the students' speaking ability. This finding, then, has supported previous research which pointed that question and answer technique can enhance the students' ability in learning language (Sugiarto 2008 and Purnomo, 2009) In addition to quantitative data (students' score), qualitatively, as admitted by 20 students in interview section, this technique also allowed the students to feel more confident in performing the assigned exercise. This was so because they said that during the teaching the students were given unfinished statements as clues to help them express their thought in correct sentences. Besides, the drilling section also provided opportunity for the students to make accurate imitations on how to pronounce the words and sentences. This finding is in line with (Lighbown and Spada, 2011) who sees that imitating can be viewed as good way in learning a language. Still from the observation, the researcher also noticed that both the speakers and the audiences felt more relax . For the one who performed in front of the class they looked more convincing in expressing their ideas as they made less pauses; while the audiences were noticed to be confident when they proposed questions for the ones performing on the stage. This situation has been noticed by (Dulay and Krashen, 1982) that a safe language environment can be mean a lot for language learners to enable them to produce the targeted language.

Finally, it can be said that question and answer technique is one of teaching techniques that can be used in teaching language skills, not only listening, reading and writing but also in speaking class. In the implementation, however, the facilitators should pay attention to several

factors as the appropriateness of the questions with the students' level, the provided time for imitation section, and the supportive classroom atmosphere

Suggestion

From the above findings and discussion some suggestion are made. First for the English teachers who face similar problems in teaching speaking; they are suggested that they try this technique in solving speaking class problem. Secondly, for further researchers, as this research was limited to improving students' speaking skill at junior high school, they are encouraged to elaborate the same topic in different level, skills, and research designs in order to contribute better understanding on question and answer discussion.

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