IMPROVING SPEAKING ABILITY OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF SMK NEGERI 1 SINJAI THROUGH SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

ST. RAHMANIAH BAHRUN

Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Ilmu Keguruan IAI Muhammadiyah Sinjai

Email :strahmaniahbahrun@gmail.com, tlp.085255365464

Abstrak

ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to find out the improvement of students speaking ability through small group discussion. The researcher applied quasi-experimental method. The population of this research is the second year students of SMK Negeri 1 Sinjai. The researcher used total sampling technique, where two classes were taken as sample, class of 2 AK 1 consisting of 20 students as the experimental group, and class of 2 AK 2 with 20 students as a control class. The findings of the study showed that small group discussion activated the students. The result of data analysis shows that t-test value is greater than t-table value ($4.81 > 2.042$) at level of significance (p) = .05 with degree of freedom (df) = 19. It means that there is a significant difference of speaking skill between two groups and it indicates that null hypothesis (H0) is rejected and alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted. It is also supported by the observation checklist analysis that shows the students' progress from each treatment. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of small group discussion can improve the students' speaking skill.

Key words: speaking ability, small group discussion

1. Introduction

In learning English, there are four skills that have to be mastered. They are reading, speaking writing, and listening. Bahadorfar and Omidvar (2015: 9) say that speaking skills can be categorized as good speaking skill when the listener can understand the words produced by the speaker. Additionally, Ur in Akhyak and Indramawan (2013: 20) says that the successful speaking activity has the characteristics as follows: 1. The language learners talk so much, 2. All the participants of speaking activity get the opportunity to, 3. The language learners are highly motivated and have interest in the speaking, 4. The language produced is at the acceptable level. So, it plays an important rule in studying the subject, because as we know English is an international language. Since most of the books are written in English, Indonesian students have opportunity to practice this language in the class. Then, Akbar (2014: 92)

argues that encouraging the students to read a certain text can solve the problem of the hesitation and the weakness of speaking. In this case, the teachers must be able to help them to master the language in the limited time. Many students find difficulties to speak English, which is caused by some factors such as lack of vocabulary and practice. but this condition can be different if the teacher can be more creative to use method and technique of teaching. Therefore, teachers should give students numerous speaking opportunities to develop their speaking ability. Al-Issa and Al-Qubtan (2010), states that oral presentation is one of activity, which can encourage students to take initiative, think beyond the mandated textbook, and use language creatively, purposefully, and interactively, and an important feature of the EFL classroom in different parts of the world. Thus, the students are taught to improve their creativity through the language.Small group discussion is a form of speaking in which the speakers attempt, through cooperative exchange of ideas, to solve a problem or more toward its solution by better understanding of it. Antoni (2014: 56) explains that discussion techniques for use in small group discussion are outlined as follows: First, Divide the class into small group of three to four students each. Give each group a different discussion topic that will necessitate outlining of several important points. Have one student in each group to write down these points as they emerge from discussion by group members. Second, Allow the groups to discuss their respective topic for at least 10 minutes. When group member have finished their discussion, they should elect a spokesman who will report on the group collective thoughts to entire class. Third, Call on the spokesman of one of the groups. After he gives a short presentation (five minutes or so), class members should question him or anyone else in the group in view point expressed. You can help general discussion along by addressing your own questions to members of the group. This facilitates English use to meet a specific goal, in an authentic way, and with very little intervention from the teacher (Brooks & Wilson, 2014). They have more chances in speaking English, they can ask questions and give responses and arguments.

The researcher formulates research question as follow, "Can the use of Small Group Discussion improve the English speaking ability of the second year student's of SMK Negeri I Sinjai?".

This researcher aims to find out the improvement of students speaking ability through Small Group Discussion.

2. Research Methodology

The method applied in this research was experimental design with two classes of control and experimental class. This design was presented as follows. The design of the research:

$$
\begin{array}{ccccc}
E & \underline{O_1} & \underline{X} & \underline{O_2} \\
C & \underline{O_1} & \underline{X} & \underline{O_2}
\end{array}
$$

Note:
E   : Experimental Class
C   : Control Class
O_1 : Pre-test
X   : Treatment
O_2 : Post-test
— — — : Experimental and control class are resulted from random

(Tuckman, 1990:160)

Independent variable was using small group discussion as a learning interaction technique in the classroom and Dependent variable was speaking ability.

The population of this research was the second year students of SMK Negeri 1 Sinjai. There were two classes namely 2 AK 1 and 2 AK 2. Each class has 20 students. The total number of population was 40 students. In this research, the researcher used the total sampling technique, It means that all the populations taken as the sample were 40 students, and they were divided into two classes, namely experimental and control class.

To collect data, the researcher applied two kinds of instrument, they are observation checklist is administered during the teaching implementation, particularly during the classroom activity. It aims at finding out the students' active participation. and speaking test, It was administered in pretest and posttest, pretest was intend to find out the prior level of students' speaking performance, while is posttest intend to find out the improvement of the treatment.

In collecting the data, the researcher used some procedures as follows: Before giving the treatment the researcher divided the students into two classes: as experimental class, After giving pretest, the researcher was give treatment to the students and use small group discussion in teaching speaking. and as control class, the researcher do not gave a treatment to the students, but the researcher just gave a pre-test and post-test to the students. The posttest is undertaken after treatment though small group discussion. The purpose is to measure whether the technique can or not significantly improve students' speaking ability.

Technique of data analysis: Observation checklist is used to observe the activity of the students in small groups discussion. It is every meeting of treatment. And speaking test. The students answer from the interview will be transcribed. The transcription is subject to analysis using the following criteria level introduced by Heaton 1988.

The Rating score of the students participations in speaking English.

No	Level	The frequency of speaking
1.	Very active	The amount of speaking frequency is >4 times in approximately over 3 minutes for one student.
2.	Active	The amount of speaking frequency is2 to 3 times in approximately 2 minutes for one student.
3.	Less active	The amount of speaking is only once a time in approximately less than one minutes for one students.
4.	Non-active	The amount of speaking frequency is zero.

(Sandra Zurina, 2008)

The score criteria of speaking accuracy

Classification	Score	Criteria
Excellent	6	Pronunciation is only slightly influenced by the mother tongue. Two or three minor grammatical and lexical errors.
Very good	5	Pronunciation is only slightly influenced by the mother tongue. A few minor grammatical and lexical errors but most utterances are correct.
Good	4	Pronunciation is still moderately influenced by the mother tongue but not serious phonological errors.
Average	3	Pronunciation is influenced by the mother tongue , only a few phonological errors, several grammatical errors.
Poor	2	Pronunciation is seriously influenced by the mother tongue with errors causing a breakdown in a communication. Many grammatical errors.
Very poor	1	Serious Pronunciation error as many basic grammatical errors. No evidence of having mastered any of the language skills and areas practiced in the course.

The score criteria of speaking Fluency

classification	Score	Criteria
Excellent	6	Speaks without too great on effort with fairly wide range of expression.
Very good	5	Has to make an effort at time to search for words, smooth delivery on the whole and only a few unnatural pauses.
Good	4	Although he has to make an effort and time to search for words, there are not too many unnatural pause. fairly smooth delivery.
Average	3	Has to make an effort for much of the time. Often has to search for the desired meaning. Range of expression often limited.
Poor	2	Long pauses while he searchers for the desired meaning. Almost give up making the effort at times limited range of expression.
Very poor	1	Full of long unnatural pauses. Very halting and fragmentary delivery. At times up making the effort, very limited range of expression.

The score criteria of speaking comprehensibility

Classification	Score	Criteria
Excellent	6	Easy for listener to understand the speaker's intention and general meaning. Very few interruption or clarification required.
Very good	5	The speaker's intention and general meaning are fairly clear. a few interruption by the listener for the sake of clarification are necessary.
Good	4	Most of what the speaker say is easy to follow. His intention is always clear but several interruption are necessary to help him to convey the message or to seek clarification.
Average	3	The listener can understand a lot of what is said, but he must constantly seek clarification. Cannot understand many of the speaker's more complex or longer sentences.
Poor	2	Only small bit's, usually short sentences. Can be

		understood and then with considerable effort by someone who listening to the speaker.
Very poor	1	Hardly anything of what is said can be understood.

Classification	Converted Score
Excellent	5.01 – 6.00
Very Good	4.01 – 5.00
Good	3.01 – 4.00
Average	2.01 – 3.00
Poor	1.01 – 2.00
Very Poor	0.00 – 1.00

Calculating the mean score of treatment using the formula:

$$\overline{X} = \frac{\sum \overline{X}}{N}$$

Where: $\overline{X}$ = mean score

$\sum X$ = the number of all scores

N = the number of students

Finding out the significant difference between the pre-test and post-test from the experimental group and the control group by calculating the value of the test using the following formula:

$$t = \frac{\overline{X}_E - \overline{X}_C}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{SS_E + SS_C}{\eta_E + \eta_{C-2}}\right)\left(\frac{1}{\eta_E} + \frac{1}{\eta_C}\right)}}$$

Notation:

t   = Test of significance.

X_C = Mean Score of experimental class.

X_E = Mean score of control class.

SS_E = The sum of square of experimental class.

η_E = The subject of experimental class.

η_C = The subject of control class.

(Gay, 1998:127)

3. Findings And Discussion
1. Findings

a. **The activeness of the second year students of SMK Negeri 1 Sinjai to speak English through small group discussion**

The level of the students' activeness is explained by the mean gained by the students. Based on the computation of students activity data, the mean score of the students activeness can be presented as follows :
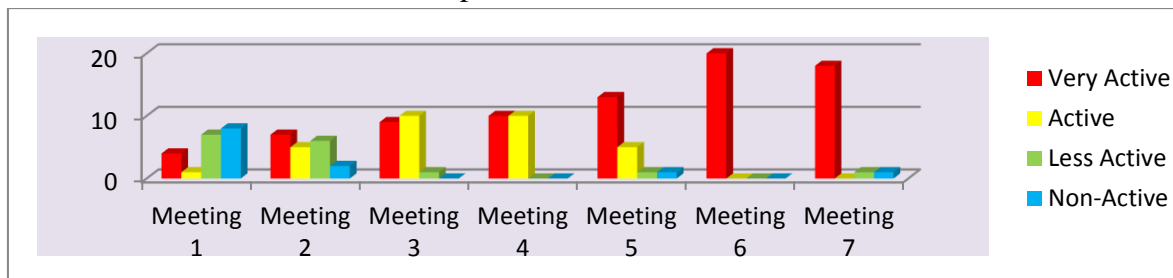

Table above Shows that in meeting 1, 8(40 %) students were in non-active level, 7(35%) students were in less active level category, 1(5%) students were in active level, and 4 (20%) students were in very active level. In meeting 1, student's activeness to speak English using small group discussion was less active.

In meeting 2, 2 (10%) students were in non active level, 6 (30%) students were in less active level category. 5 (25%) students were in active level, and 8 (35%) students were in very active level. In this meeting very active students increased.

In meeting 3, 0 (0%) students were in non active level, 1 (5%) students were in less active level category, 10 (50%) students were in active level, and 9 (45%) students were in very active level. In this meeting the member of very active increased from 7 to 9 students.

In meeting 4 that 0 (0%) students were in non-active level, 0 (0%) students were in less active level category, 10 (50%) students were in active level, and 10 (50%) students were in very active level. In this meeting meeting the member of very active increased from 9 to 10 students.

N meeting 5 shows that 1 (5%) students were in non-active level, 1 (5%) students were in less active level category, 5 (25%) students were in active level, and 13 (65%) students were in very active level. In this meeting, the member of very active increased from 10 to 13 students, almost same with meeting 4, it indicates that in meeting 5 students' activation to speak English using small group discussion was very active.

In meeting 6 shows that 0 (0%) students were in non-active level, 0 (0%) students were in less active level category, 0 (0%) students were in active level, and 20 (100%) students were in very active level. In this meeting all of students was very active.

In meeting 7 shows that score of the students' activeness in meeting 7 were 1(5%) was non-active students, 1(5%) was less active level and 18 (90%) was very active student, It indicates that in seventh meeting students' activeness to speak English using small group discussion very active.

Based on the previous data , the students' activeness increases from meeting to meeting, it indicates that using small group discussion activate students to speak English.

b. **The Data Analysis of Students' Speaking Ability**

The finding of the result deals with the classification of the students' score on the pre-test and post-test in experimental and control class.

Students' classification score at pretest and posttest

No.	Classification	Experimental Group				Control Group			
		Pretest		Posttest		Pretest		Posttest	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1.	Excellent	-	-	1	5%	-	-	-	-
2.	Very Good	-	-	8	40%	-	-	-	-
3.	Good	6	30%	11	55%	-	-	6	30%
4.	Average	6	30%	-	-	9	45%	12	60%
5.	Poor	4	20%	-	-	11	55%	2	10%
6.	Very Poor	4	20%	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total		20	100%	20	100%	20	100%	20	100%

Table above, shows the students' classification score for both experimental and control group at pretest and posttest. In experimental group, students' speaking skill at pretest was average. The data shown that there were no students who got very excellent, and very good score. It shown that there were 6 students (30%) out of 20 students who got average score, 4 students (20%) got poor score, and 4 students (20%) got very poor score. In posttest, there was an improvement of students' score. There were 1 students (5%) out of 20 students got excellent score, 8 students (40%) got very good score, 11 students (55%) good score, and no one got average, poor and very poor score.

For control group, there were not students who got excellent,very good and good score at pretest. The data shows that there was 9 students (45%) out of 20 students who got average score, 11 students (55%) poor score . While in the posttest, the improvement was not really significant as in experimental class. The data shows that there were not still students who got excellent very good score. It shows that there were

only 6 students (30%) out of 20 students got good score, 12 students (60%) got average score, and 2 student (10%) got poor score.

From the data above, the researcher concluded that the students' rate percentage in posttest was greater than the rate percentage in pretest. Experimental group score was also greater than control group score. It meants that there was a significance improvement of students' speaking skill after treatment by Small group discussion technique.

After calculating the mean score, standard deviation, and the classification of students' score, the researcher calculated whether or not both groups are in statistically significant difference at level of significance (p) =0.05 with degree of freedom (df) = 38. The result of those calculation are presented in the following table:

Table The mean score of pre-test and post-test analysis

No	Group	Mean Score		Standard Deviation	
		Pretest	**Posttest**	**Pretest**	**Posttest**
1	Experimental	2,48	3,98	0,98	12,08
2	Control	1,08	2,613	0,01	2,6

Table above,shown that, for experimental group, the mean score at pretest was 2,48 with standard deviation was 0,98 while the mean score at posttest improved to be 3,98 with standard deviation was 12,08. It indicates that the students' speaking skill improved significantly after giving treatment by Small group discussion technique. In other side, the mean score of control group at pretest was 1,08 with standard deviation was 0.01. Control group also made a progress but it was not as significantly as experimental group. The mean score of control group at posttest was 2,613 with standard deviation was 2.6.

After calculating the mean score, standard deviation, and the classification of students' score, the researcher calculated whether or not both groups are in statistically significant difference at level of significance (p) =0.05 with degree of freedom (df) = 38. The result of those calculation are presented in the following table:

Table T-test and t-table value at pretest and posttest

No	Variable	T-test	T-table
1	Pretest	2,87	2,042
2	Posttest	4,81	2,042

Table 10 above,shows that t-test value at pretest was 2.87 and t-table value was 2.042. In this case, t-test value was higher than t-table value (2,87< 2.042). It indicates that there was significant difference between those mean scores. Therefore, null hypothesis (H1) was accepted and alternative hypothesis (H0) was rejected.

It is different from the result found in posttest. The t-test value was 4,81 and t-table value was 2,042. In this case, t-test value was greater than t-table value (4,81> 2.690). It indicates that the difference between those mean scores were statistically significant. Therefeore, null hypothesis (H0) was rejected and alternative hypothesis (H1) was accepted at posttest.

Based on this hypothesis testing, it can be concluded that there was a significant difference speaking skill between the students who were taught by using Small group discussion and without Small group discussion.

4. Discussion

It was shown in the previous section that the mean score of pretest of two groups were almost statisticaly the same. It indicated that both experimental and control group have an equal speaking skill achievement before giving treatment. The two groups were taught speaking under different technique. Experimental group was taught by Small group discussion technique while control group was taught not using Small group discussion technique. The students' speaking skill at experimental group improved significantly from 2,48 up to 3.98.

This improvement was effected by many factors. Because Small group discussion is a form of speaking in which the speakers attempt, through cooperative exchange of ideas, to solve a problem or more toward its solution by better understanding of it.

Students learn fact and concept best when they use them solve problems, small group discussion can be stimulating, provocative, and exciting, this guarantees learning. The teacher is present the problems not give the answer, and to reward good thinking no just right answer.

A small group discussion is extremely important in activating the students to speak English because they can get their notions, emotions and wishes conveyed in communication (Allen, 2001).

Bibliography

Akbar, F. (2014). The role of reading in improving speaking skill in the context of teaching English as a foreign language International Journal of English Language & Translation Studies, 2(4), 92-98.

Akhyak & Indramawan, A. (2013). Improving the students' English speaking competence through storytelling (Study in Pangeran Diponegoro islamic college (STAI) of Nganjuk, East Java, Indonesia). International Journal of Language and Literature, 1(2), 18-24.

Al-Issa, S., & Al-Qubtan, R. (2010). Taking the Floor: Oral Presentations in EFL Classrooms. A Free Article from TESOL Journal, 1(2)

Allen, D.E. 2001. *Minimizing the Perils of Small Group Discussion.* Center for teaching Excellence. On Line (http://www.vcu.edu./cte/resources/nfrg 14-04_minimizing_peril_oh.Htm)

Antoni, Rivi. 2014. Teaching Speaking Skill through Small Group Discussion Technique at the Accounting Study Program. Journal of Education and Islamic Studies Vol. 5, Num. 1, January-June 2014.

Bahadorfar, M. & Omidvar, R. (2015). Technology in teaching speaking skill. Acme International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research, 2(4), 9-13.

Brooks, G., & Wilson, J. (2014). Using Oral Presentations to Improve Students' English Language Skills. Humanities Review Vol.19. Japan: Kwansei Gakuin University.

Gay, L.R. 1998. *Educational Research: Competencies for Analyzing and Application.* Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merril Publishing Company

Heaton,J.B.1988 *Writing English Language Tests.* New York: Longman Group UK Limited

Tuckman, B.W. 1990. Conducting Education Research.3rd Ed America: Harcourt Brance & Company

Zurina, Sandra. 2008. *Small group discussion as a learning interaction device to active the students of sekolah menemgah kejuruan negeri 2 makassar to speak English.* Unpublished Dissertation. Makassar: Postgraduate Program of State university of Makassar.