Improving the Students' Speaking Skill through Debate Technique

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Abstract

This study is based on the important of speaking skill. Speaking was important to be learnt because speaking is the way to communicate with other people in order to deliver opinion and express idea, but in fact, the students' ability in speaking English is low. It is caused by several factors such as the elements of speaking like vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and fluency that must be mastered by students in order to be good English speaker. In this research, the researcher used debate technique to improve students' speaking skill.

The main objective of this study is to describe the implementation of debate technique in teaching speaking and to identify how much students' speaking skill improvement after being taught by using debate technique.

This study is classroom action research that was done in two cycles. The data collection was done using test and observation. The data from the test and observation that had been taken from every cycle were analyzed quantitatively.

The implementation of debate technique in teaching speaking at the second year of SMA Negeri 1 Lasusua was conducted in two cycles including cycle one and cycle two. The participants of this study were 29 students in class XI/IPA 2. The result of this study showed that using debate technique can improve students' speaking skill.

This is proven by students' test score that improved in every cycle. In the first cycle, the students' average score was 64 and in the second cycle students got 78,4.

Debate is an appropriate technique used to improve students' speaking skill for the students at class XI/IPA 2. The result of this study is helpful information especially for the English teacher who is teaching at that class and all English teachers generally.

Keywords: speaking improvement, speaking skill, debate technique, classroom action research, action research

A. Introduction

Language is a system for the expression of meaning. Its primary function is for interaction and communication (Mcdonough & Shaw, 2003). Language is used by human in order to know and understand each other. As we know that God created human in different condition and character, so they need to interact among people.

English is used by millions of people all over the world. In Indonesia, English is considered as a foreign language that has been taught from elementary school up to the university. In

education aspect, the students hopefully to be able to speak English fluently in order that they can compete in the technology development.

Speaking is one of the important skills in language learning besides listening, writing and reading. Speaking is activity in giving and asking information as if dialoguing by two or more people.

In teaching and learning English as the foreign language, most students cannot speak English well. For that condition, there are some factors of the difficulties. There are internal and external factors. Internal factors come from the student themselves. These concern with personality factors. The students were afraid to express their ideas. They worried everyone will mock them. Other factors came out from students. This concerns with their environment, parents and teaching learning technique in their school. Teaching learning technique is the important factor to the success of language learning for all aspects in education. But for the fact, the teacher does not choose the suitable technique of teaching speaking. She thought them by asking the students to read the dialogue in front of the class. These activities did not give any opportunity to express their idea directly. So, students cannot improve their speaking skill in teaching learning process.

Based on the result of interview with English teacher of SMA Negeri 1 Lasusua on March 2015 (See Appendix 1), it found kinds of student problem in learning English, especially in speaking. The teacher said that his students cannot express their idea, they were afraid to make mistake and did not have enough vocabulary. He should prepare a good technique in conducting their teaching to motivate the students to speak English.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in conducting the research entitled "Improving students' speaking skill through debate technique at the second year of SMA Negeri 1 Lasusua".

B. Literature Review

1. Concept of Speaking

Speaking is making use of language in ordinary voice; uttering words; knowing and being able to use a language; expressing oneself in words; making speech (Hornby, 1987).

Based on the definitions above, we can conclude that speaking is an important skill which is done by producing voice of words. It is using for communicating with others.

Harmer, 2002. States that the ability to speak English presupposes the elements necessary for spoken production as follows:

1) Connected speech: The effective speakers of English need to be able not only to produce individual phonemes of English, but also to use fluent connected speech. So, the teachers should involve students in oral activities designed specifically to improve their connective speech.

2) Expressive devices: native of English change the pitch and stress of particular parts of utterances, vary volume and speed, and show by other physical and non verbal means how they are feeling. The use of these devices contributes to the skill to convey meaning. They allow the extra expressions of emotion and intensity, students should be able to deploy at least some of such supra segmental features and devices in the same way if they are to be fully effective communicators.

3) Lexis and grammar: spontaneous speech is marked by the use of number of common lexical phrases, especially in their performance of certain language function. Teachers should therefore supply variety of phrases for different functions, such as: greeting, agreeing and disagreeing.

4) Negotiation language: effective speaking benefits from the negotiatory language we use to seek clarification and to show the structure of what we are saying.

Speaking is not only having amount of vocabularies and knowing the grammatical structures, but also mastering all elements of speaking above. All messages we deliver will be acceptable by all communicants if we master those elements.

Teaching speaking is one of process in improving speaking skill. Improving speaking skill can be started by teaching them how to pronounce the language. Then ask them to practice it to others English learner without afraid of mistakes. The teacher should be able to encourage students for speaking some sounds until they are required to use and do oral language.

Either 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 speed of the flow of speech.

5) Comprehension. For oral communication certainly requires a subject to respond to speech as well as to initiate it (Harris, 1969).

The five factors of speaking skill above have important role in speaking. By mastering all the factors, people can produce good speech. Many of classroom speaking activities which are currently used are:

1. Acting from script

This activity encourages students to act out scenes from plays or their course books, sometimes filming the result. Students will often act out dialogues they have written themselves (Harmer, 2002). This frequently involves them in coming out to the front of the class.

1) Communication games

Speaking activities based on games are often a useful way of giving students valuable practice, where younger learners are involved. Games based activities can involve practice of oral strategies such as describing, predicting, simplifying, and asking for feedback. (Mcdonough & Shaw, 2003).

2) Discussion

One of the reasons that discussion fail is that students are reluctant to give an opinion in front of the whole class, particularly if they cannot think of anything to say and are not confident of the language they might use to say it. Many students feel extremely expose in discussion situations (Harmer, 2002).

A popular kind of activity is the prepared talk where students make a presentation on a topic of their own choice. Students should speak from notes rather than from a script. Prepared talks represent a defined and useful speaking genre, and if properly organized, can be extremely interesting for both speaker and listener (Mcdonough & Shaw, 2003).

3) Questionnaires

Questionnaires are useful because by being pre planed they ensure that both questioner and respondent have something to say each other. Depending on how tightly design they are, they may well encourage the natural use of certain receptive language pattern and thus be situated in the middle of our communication continuum. Students can design questionnaires on any topic that is appropriate. As they do so the teacher can act as a resource, helping them in the design process (Mcdonough & Shaw, 2003).

4) Simulation and role-play

Many students derive greet benefit from simulation and role-play. Students simulate a real life encounter as if they were doing so in the real world. A simulation and role-play can be used to encourage general oral fluency to train students for specific situation (Mcdonough & Shaw, 2003).

5) Debate

All speaking activities above encourage students to practice speaking in classroom. Teacher should choose appropriate activities above based on the level of the students. Every teaching and learning process can be enjoyable if teacher gives the appropriate activity based on students' levels. Beside it the process of transferring knowledge can be done easily.

2. Concept of Debate

A debate is a speaking situation in which opposite points of view are presented and argued (Dale & Wolf, 2000).

A debate is about the real or simulated issue. The learners' roles ensure that they have adequate shared knowledge about the issue and different opinions or interest to defend. At the end of activity, they may have to reach a concrete decision or put the issue to a vote (Littlewood, 1981).

Debate is data in which people take up positions, sue arguments, and expound on their opinions on a range or matters; with or without some sort of lead figure or chair person (Carter & Carthy, 1997).

Based on the definitions above, it can be concluded that debate is an activity in which students take up positions on issue and defend their position.

Debate is one of technique which has many benefits for students:

1) Improve students' critical thinking. In debating, every student is proposed to analyze a problem critically.

2) Develop students' communication skill. Debaters spend many hours assembling and practicing hundreds of public speeches on topics of national importance.

3) Questioning skill developed in and struggle-often in the face of disappointment and defeat.

4) They are capable of making and defending informed choices about complex issues outside of their own area of interest because they do so on a daily basis.

5) Debate is thus not only a way to connect students with academic subjects in meaningful ways; it is also a way to re-connect students to public life if they have been overcome by feelings of alienation.

6) Policy debate specifically teaches students to adopt multiple perspectives which describe as one of the most important problem solving skills (Bellon, 2000).

Because of some benefits above, the researcher argue that debate really needs to be practiced in speaking classroom. It is one of better way for students to improve their speaking skill.

In (Mellshaliha, 2008), there are some items related to debate:

1) Motion. The topic debated is called a motion. Usually, motion stars with word like "this house" (TH) "or "this house believes that (THBT)". Both affirmative and negative teams are debating upon a motion which should be debatable and impartial. Debatable means that the motion is still falsifiable can be denied in some ways. Impartial implies a meaning that the motion should stand in the middle of neutral; it doesn't incline to any sides. For example, this house believes that (THBT) e-book contributes for developmental education. So, both teams need to prove or justify whether e-book really can contribute for developmental education.

2) Definition. Debaters should "down to earth" or see the current issue happened in society. Definition can be done in two ways; word by word definition or the global definition. In fact, the word E-book is rarely heard' thus we need to define it first. Or anyway, when we heard motion, "that sex education must be socialized in the school" what we need to do is giving the global meaning on it.

3) Theme line. To agree or disagree towards a motion, the reason must lie on a strong ground that could cover the whole argumentation. Theme line is the underlying reason which answers the big question "why" one side of the house supports or opposes a motion. Theme line is what a team needs to proof, it is also the main reason why a team attacks the opponent's case.

4) Argument. A debate is like a battle of argument, in which each team stands on their position, attacks the opposite and defends their own case. The praiseworthy jobs can be done well by using critical and logical thinking. Argument is the fragment of thought to support the theme line.

5) Rebuttal. To win a debate, debaters not only need to build a strong case but they also have to attack their opponent's arguments and provide strong defense from any attacks. That is why, rebuttal is one of the key to get the crown of victory. Basically, there are two kinds of rebuttal. Global rebuttal: it is an attack against the main core of the opponent's case, the theme line. Consequently, their case is crumbling down. Detailed rebuttal: it is an attack towards each argument or example.

6) Sum-up/closing. Closing is simply concluding what has been through. A nice summary is preferable.

Before starting debate, debaters should know these parts of debate in order to be a good debater. It also hoped that debate will run success.

There are some models of English debate, but this research tends to Australasian parliamentary model.

Debating usually consist of three members in every team, although sometimes four members in many debates. Debates are varied in use, sometimes it used based on the number of students in the classroom and the level of students.

C. Methodology

The design of research which used by the researcher in this Research was Classroom Action Research (CAR). Action research is the name given to a series of procedures teachers can engage in, either because they wish to improve aspects of their teaching, or because they wish to evaluate the success and or appropriacy of certain activities and procedures (Harmer : 2002). Action research is one of the type investigation that has characteristic reflective participative, collaborative, and spiral that have purpose to repair and to increase the system, method, process, substance, competence, and situation (Arikunto, 2008). Kemmis & Taggart add in Nunans' book explain that action research is a group of activity and a piece of descriptive

research carry out by the teacher in his or her own classroom, without the involvement of others, which is aimed at interesting our understanding rather than changing the phenomenon under the investigation that would not be considered by these commentators to be 'action research', the essential impetus for carrying out action research is to change the system (Nunan : 1993).

From all the definitions above, the researcher concluded that classroom action research is a classroom action in a research, which can be done by teacher, researcher, and teacher with his or her colleague, etc with involves a group of students to improve teaching and learning process or to enhance the understanding of the students to the lesson. This research used data observation toward teaching speaking through debate, this data was analyzed through two cycles in action.

Kemmis & Mc. Taggart in Nunan's book argue that there are three defining characteristic of action research, they are: 17

1) It is carried out by practitioners (for our purposes, classroom teachers) rather than outside researchers.
2) It is collaborative.
3) It is aimed at changing things.

There is four components in one cycle for conducting classroom action research. It consists of planning, action, observation, and reflection. The four phases of the classroom action cycle were conducted integrated like spiral. Each phase is concluded based on the previous one and the next. It means that the activities in the classroom action research were based on planning, action, and observation, then, the researcher could make a reflection to determine the next cycle (Arikunto, 2008).

The researcher conducted the classroom action research at SMA Negeri 1 Lasusua. It was located in Jl. Baru, Lasusua, Kolaka Utara. This school had 72 teachers, 8 of them were English teachers and consist of 24 classes.

This research was conducted at the second year of scientific department, at class XI/IPA-2. It was consist of 31 students and they were as subjects of this research.

The source of the data in this research is from what the researcher got during the research. The researcher collected the source of the data related to this research from observation and test which was conducted in every cycle.

In the classroom action research needed the data to support the investigation. There were several ways to collect data like questionnaire, observation, field notes, interview, documentation, test, et cetera. In this research, the researcher choose some of which were appropriate to his school environment, and can be done there. The techniques and methods which used by the researcher to collect the data were observation and test.

Classroom observation is an observation that is focused on the understanding of how social event of the language classroom are enacted (Nunan, 1993). In this classroom observation, the objects of observation were students' activities in English language teaching learning. The researcher use the checklist observation to make it more systematic, containing list of students' activities and response or happening which might happen. Observation was intended to see and to know about the condition of class and students. Process of teaching and learning through debate to know the obstacles appear during teaching learning process, the students' motivation, to see their difficulties, their problem, and their understanding about the material given that can be seen from their attitude, behavior, and response.

Test is important part of every teaching and learning experience. Both testing and teaching are so closely interrelated that it is virtually impossible to work in either field without being constantly concerned with the other. Tests may be constructed primarily as devices to reinforce learning and to motivate the students' performance in the language (Heaton : 1975). The researcher used an achievement test to measure the student's progress in speaking. The forms of tests were spoken test in the form of debate. From those forms, the researcher got score directly the specific learning. The scoring can be done quickly and easily. There are five aspects of assessment in speaking. They are vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency and comprehension.

Research instrument is a device used by researcher while collecting data to make his work becomes easier and to get better result, complete, and systematic in order to make the data easy to be processed (Suharsimi, 2008).

There are some instruments can be used in research, like questionnaire, observation list, test, etc. But in this Research the researcher used observation checklist, document, and test as his supporting instrument.

1. Observation Check List

In arranging check list observation, the researcher lists some students' observable behavior that indicates their understanding on the material taught that teacher could see from their activities and response during teaching learning process.

2. Test

In this research, the researcher used an achievement test to measure the student's speaking skill improvement. The researcher used oral test in the form of debate. There are three elements of speaking that used to assess students' speaking skill, there were: vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. With this form, the scoring can be done quickly and easily.

In analyzing the data, the researcher collected the data from document, observing the teaching learning process, and the result of the students' test. In processing the data, the researcher used descriptive statistic. It was to explain the condition in raising indicator achievement every cycle, and to describe the success of the teaching learning process using debate in improving speaking skill. The data from observation were grouped based on students' behavior and students' response that can be taken as a clue or indicator for students' activeness when the debate technique was introduced.

The researcher got score from the two cycles conducted in the research. Mean of score from first cycle was compared with mean of second cycle. It was to know how far the progress of students in this research.

D. Findings

As whole the meetings ran well. There was some significant improvement from cycle one to cycle two.

In the first cycle, the average result was 64. The teacher used debate as technique in teaching speaking. In teaching learning process, there were many students joined the class enthusiastically. They paid attention to the lesson, although many of students still confused with debate technique, because they never practice debate before. Researcher found many students that were still confused to join debate.

In the second cycle, the average result was 78,4. The teaching learning process in this cycle was better the previous one. The score above shows that the second cycle got improvement. The researcher found that majority of students was enjoyed the activity.
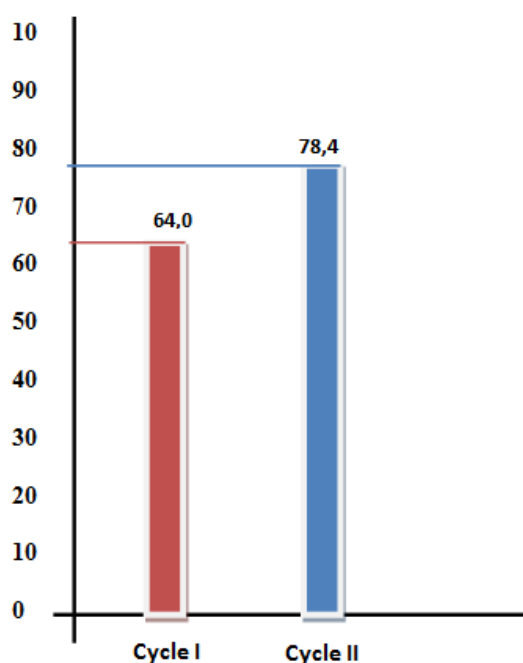

Figure II the average of students' speaking in two cycles

The researcher felt that the implementation of debate in teaching speaking was successful, because debate is an interesting activity where students have a lot of opportunity to practice speaking in speaking class. Students also had active involvement during the debate process in order to defend their opinions. So, researcher concluded that debate is an appropriate technique used in teaching speaking for students.

E. Conclusion

The research conclusion is presented according with the data which have been analyzed in the previous chapter. From all the data analysis about using debate technique to improve students' speaking skill at of second Year SMA Negeri 1 Lasusua, it can be concluded that:

1). The use of debate technique has been advocated in teaching speaking process. Typically, debate is very interested to be implemented to improve speaking skill. Students have a lot of opportunity to practice speaking and have active involvement in debate. However, they worked very cooperative and tried to defend their team, and they were more active to speak in classroom.

2). Teaching speaking through debate can be enjoyable experience for both teacher and student. In fact, students can improve their speaking skill after being taught by debate technique. It can be seen by students' achievement in speaking test in each cycle. In the first cycle the average of the students' achievement was 64. In the second cycle the average of the students' achievement was 78,4. Students' speaking skill increased as well as their motivation in speaking and they were interested speaking through debate.

Result of the research show that the students improve their speaking skill efficiently and effectively.

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