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USING REAL OBJECTS THROUGH DISCUSSION TO IMPROVE THE SPEAKING ABILITY OF THE SECOND YEAR STUDENTS OF SMPN 11 PEKANBARU IN DESCRIBING THINGS

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Abstract

The problem of this research is how to improve the speaking ability of the second year students of SMPN 11 Pekanbaru in describing things using real objects. The research was guided by a conceptual framework leading to the use of real objects through discussion to improve their motivation to speak English during the classroom communication interaction. This is an action research. The subject consists of 35 second year students of SMPN 11 Pekanbaru in 2012-2013 academic year. The research data were collected using the pre-test (before the treatments) and the post-test (after the treatments in three meetings), and observation concerning on the students' motivation in describing things using real objects. Their speaking ability will be analyzed using five components: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The study concluded that using real objects through discussion as a teaching strategy variation can improve the students' speaking ability in describing things.

Keywords : Classroom Action Research, Speaking Ability, Real Objects, Discussion.

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is very important for us in learning a language because someone's purpose in learning a language is to be able to communicate the language. According to Nunan (1999:226), one needs to know how to articulate sounds in a comprehensible manner, one needs an adequate vocabulary, and one needs to have mastery of syntax in order to speak in another language. These various elements can help the students in building communicative competence.

There are two functions of speaking as explained by Brown and Yule (1983) : (1) Interactional function serves to establish and maintain social relations; (2) Transactional function focuses on the exchange of information.

According to the explanations above, it can be concluded that speaking is a tool of communication to each other where the speaker can deliver his/her idea, opinion, and

feeling through verbal skill to the listener. In speaking activity, both speaker and listener must be capable to express their ideas to convey the message each other. In other words, there are two sides of communication happened in one time, so that the speaking activity going communicatively.

English teaching in Indonesia traditionally focuses on the grammar, not on the speaking. Ideally, an English class should become a place for students to practice their speaking skill in English, but in fact most Indonesian students did not practice it. In learning English, students need practice. The more someone practices, the more active he/she becomes. Nunan (1993) states that there are some challenges in teaching oral skill in EFL classroom namely lack of motivation, get students to speak, and use of the first language. Rivers (1968) in Kurniawan (2011) stated that the teacher should give the students opportunities to practice speaking. She further stated that if the students are able to practice the new speech habit throughout as the children do in his native language, the problem of speaking fluency of foreign language would be lessened.

Teaching speaking at Junior High School in Indonesia is one of the main focuses in the English teaching. Therefore, the English teachers should have the effort on searching and creating a new model in presenting materials, in order to increase speaking ability. Various speaking activities can contribute a great deal to the development of basic interactive skills that useful for life. Teacher also has to know about how far the student's can speak well.

In this research, the writer use real objects as media in teaching speaking. There are three kinds of media : (1) visual media; (2) audio media; (3) audio visual media. Real object included in visual media. Doff (1988:81-92) in Thirumalai sates that visual media are important because showing visuals focuses attention on meaning, and helps to make the language in the class more real and alive; having something to look at keeps the students' attention, and makes the class more interesting; visuals can be used at any stage of the lesson, to help in presenting new language or introducing a topic, as part of language practice, and when reviewing language that has been presented earlier; good visual aids can be used again and again and shared by different teachers.

Real object is kind of media which is used in learning process. It is used for helping in learning process. According to Soulier (1981:12), bringing real objects to the class can help achieve teacher's instructional purposes by :

1. Stimulating student interest in the real world;
2. Introducing new ideas and information related to the objects around us;
3. Making instruction relevant by relating abstract ideas to a concrete world;
4. Developing individual and group responsibility through collection and care of objects;
5. Lending beauty and atmosphere to the classroom;
6. Providing students an alternative means of self-expression; and
7. Establishing a focal point for learning in which numerous concepts are related .

For those reason, teachers are suggested to make a collection of every day objects including such things as newspaper, foods, bottles, fruit, vegetables, animals, etc. The teacher emphasizes the objects by demonstrating them into some relevant activities such as how to use it, how to save it, and the students also can explain about the size, shape, color, texture, smell, taste and function of the objects.

In this research, the writer formulates the following research questions: Can the use of real objects through discussion improve students' speaking ability in describing things?

Related to the problem statement above, the objective of this research is then specified: (1) to know about the effectiveness of real objects in improving their ability to speak English through discussion; (2) to know about the effectiveness of using real objects through discussion in improving students' speaking ability in describing things.

The result of this research is expected to be useful information to: (1) increase the teachers' knowledge of English and share experiences in improving speaking ability using real object; (2) give any contribution to the general public in increasing knowledge concerning about classroom action research and get any reflection for being perfection.

METHODOLOGY

This research is an classroom action research which focused on improving students' speaking ability in describing things using real object. The subject of the research consisted of 35 students of the second year of SMPN 11 Pekanbaru.

In order to get the data, the researcher tested the students in speaking by describing objects orally. The techniques of collecting data were divided into two ways, before treatment (pre-test) and after treatment given (post-test). After the pre-test, teaching and learning processes with the strategies in cycle are carried out and the post-test was held after those processes to know the development of applying them.

Based on the ways to use real objects in the classroom by Heinich, Molenda, and Russel (1993) and also Soulier (1981:16), researcher designed the activities that will be done in teaching speaking using real objects as in the following :

- a. The teacher explains about descriptive text to provide students with more information about the text they will produce orally.
- b. The teacher introduces the idea that the real objects are media in teaching speaking and give example of it.
- c. The teacher shows some objects and describe its description to the students.
- d. The teacher asks the students to sit in groups consisting of 5 persons and gives real object for every group.
- e. The teacher asks the students to discuss and gather/share as much information as possible about the objects given (the size, shape, color, texture, smell, function, how to use and save the objects) in 15 minutes.
- f. The teacher asks the students to produce a descriptive text about real object orally using the information that they get from the discussion time in front of the class.
- g. The teacher asked some students to perform their description in front of the class.
- h. The teacher can help the students to speak more by giving them some question about their objects.
- i. The teacher motivates the students to be more active in the classroom.

The writer uses the research instrument of speech in describing an object (describing thing) to collect the data. Each student will describe about the object given in front of the class one by one as a performance test. The writer used pencil as the object that should be describe by the students in the pre-test and handphone in the post-test.

To give scores for each student, the writer helped by three raters. Three raters checked the result by listening to the students' recorded speech and checking the pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension aspects.

In scoring the students speaking ability, the writer uses the scoring which found in Harris (1969). Analyzing the students' speaking ability can be done as follows :

$$SA = G + V + C + F + P/A$$

Note :

- SA = Speaking Ability
- G = Grammar
- V = Vocabulary
- C = Comprehension
- F = Fluency
- P/A = Pronunciation/Accent

There were five components of speaking to be scored in this research; pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary use, grammar and comprehensibility as Brown (2004:140) has stated. To analyze the students' speaking ability, the scoring process was based on the weighting table below:

The Weighting Table

Weighting Table						
	1	2	3	4	5	(A)
Accent/Pronunciation	0	1	2	3	4	
Grammar	6	12	18	24	30	
Vocabulary	4	8	12	16	20	
Fluency	2	4	6	8	10	
Comprehension	4	8	12	15	19	
Total						

(Adam and Frith (1979) in Hughes 1989)

In order to know the level of ability of the students' speaking ability can be classified as follows:

The Classification of the Level of Speaking Ability

Score Classification	Category
81 – 100	Excellent
61 – 80	Good
41 – 60	Mediocre
21 – 40	Poor
0 – 20	Very Poor

(Harris, 1974:134)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The pre-test was conducted to the students before the writer did the teaching action. It was done to know the students ability in speaking. The teacher asked the students to produce a simple description of a pencil. The writer helped by three raters to grade the students' speaking ability. After the scores from the three raters were collected, the writer calculated the scores in order to know the speaking ability of each student.

Table 1

The Students' Pre-Test Score and Their Ability Level

No.	Score	Ability Level	Rater 1		Rater 2		Rater 3	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	81 - 100	Excellent	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
2.	61 - 80	Good	4	11%	2	6%	4	11%
3.	41 - 60	Mediocre	17	49%	11	31%	17	49%
4.	21 - 40	Poor	14	40%	22	63%	14	40%
5.	0 - 20	Very Poor	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total			35	100%	35	100%	35	100%

Table 1 shows that none of the students got 'excellent' and 'very poor' scores. According to the first rater, 4 students (11%) got 'good' scores, 17 students (49%) got 'mediocre' scores, and the rest, 14 students (40%) got 'poor' scores. According to the second rater, 2 students (6%) got 'good' scores, 11 students (31%) got 'mediocre' scores, and the rest, 22 students (63%) got 'poor' scores. Last, according to the third rater, 4 students (11%) got 'good' scores, 17 students (49%) got 'mediocre' scores, and the rest, 14 students (40%) got 'poor' scores.

After calculating the data by each rater above, the following page is the students' speaking ability according to the three raters :

Table 2
Students' Speaking Ability Level in Pre-test

Score	Ability Level	Frequency	Percentage
81 - 100	Excellent	0	0%
61 - 80	Good	3	8.57%
41 - 60	Mediocre	15	42.86%
21 - 40	Poor	17	48.57%
0 - 20	Very Poor	0	0%

Table 2 shows that 3 students (8.57%) reach 'Good' scores, 15 students (42.85%) reach 'Mediocre' scores, and the rest 17 students (48.57%) were in 'Poor' scores. The writer could assume that none of the students of SMPN 11 Pekanbaru, especially class VIII.1 got 'Very Poor' and 'Excellent' scores.

After all stages got through for three meetings, the researcher began to conduct post-test in the fourth meeting in order to know students' speaking ability after being taught by using real objects. In this case, the teacher asked the students to produce a descriptive text about handphone. Their speaking ability according to each rater after they did the post-test can be seen in table 3 :

Table 3
The Students' Post-Test Score and Their Ability Level

No.	Score	Ability Level	Rater 1		Rater 2		Rater 3	
			F	P	F	P	F	P
1.	81 - 100	Excellent	5	14%	6	17%	7	20%
2.	61 - 80	Good	19	54%	24	69%	21	60%
3.	41 - 60	Mediocre	11	32%	5	14%	7	20%
4.	21 - 40	Poor	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
5.	0 - 20	Very Poor	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
Total			35	100%	35	100%	35	100%

According to table 3, it can be seen that according to the all raters, there were none of the students got 'Very Poor' and 'Poor' scores anymore. According to the first rater, 5

students (14%) got ‘Excellent’ scores, 19 students (54%) got ‘Good’ scores, and 11 students (32%) got ‘Mediocre’ scores.

Next, according to the second rater, 6 students (17%) got ‘Excellent’ scores, 24 students (69%) got ‘Good’ scores, and 5 students (14%) got ‘Mediocre’ scores. Last, according to the third rater, 7 students (20%) got ‘Excellent’ and ‘Mediocre’ scores, and the rest 21 students (60%) got ‘Good’ scores.

After calculating the data by each rater above, the researcher found the result which was presented according to the ability level as presented on below:

Table 4
Students’ Speaking Ability Level in Post-Test

Score	Ability Level	Frequency	Percentage
81 - 100	Excellent	6	17.14%
61 - 80	Good	21	60%
41 - 60	Mediocre	8	22.86%
21 - 40	Poor	0	0%
0 - 20	Very Poor	0	0%

According to table 4, there was good improvement in students’ speaking ability. 6 students (17.14%) got ‘Excellent’ scores, 21 students (60%) got ‘Good’ scores, and the rest 8 students (22.86%) got ‘Mediocre’ scores. There were no more students in the ‘Poor and Very Poor’ scores.

From this study, the writer found that there was improvement in students’ speaking ability in which can be seen and compared from the pre-test to the post-test. Table 8 presents the comparison between the result of the pre-test and the post-test.

Table 5
Comparison of Students’ Speaking Ability In Pre-test and Post-test

No.	Score	Ability Level	Average Percentage		Average Frequency	
			Pre - Test	Post - Test	Pre - Test	Post - Test
1.	81-100	Excellent	0%	17.14%	0	6
2.	61-80	Good	8.57%	60%	3	21

3.	41-60	Mediocre	42.86%	22.86%	15	8
4.	21-40	Poor	48.57%	0%	17	0
5.	0-21	Very Poor	0%	0%	0	0
Total			100%	100%	35	35

According to table 5, there was a significant increase in the number of students in 'Excellent' and 'Good' scores. In the pre-test, none of the student got 'Excellent' scores, but in the post-test 6 students (17.14%) got 'Excellent' scores and 21 students (60%) got 'Good' scores.

For additional information, the writer also presented the improvement of students' speaking ability in each aspect. Let us see the table 6 in the next page :

Table 6

Comparison of Students' Ability in Each Aspect of Speaking in the Pre-test and the Post-test

No	Aspects of Speaking	Pre-test	Post-test	Improvement
1	Accent	2.21	2.63	0.42
2	Grammar	16.56	22.15	5.59
3	Vocabulary	10.58	19.39	8.81
4	Fluency	5.34	8.65	3.31
5	Comprehension	9.69	14.66	4.97
Total Average		44.65	67.48	22.83

The average score of students in the pre-test in aspect of 'Accent' was only 2.21, and then it improved into 2.63 in the post-test. 'Grammar' in the pre-test was 16.56, but it became 22.15 in the post-test. In the pre-test, the score in aspect of 'Vocabulary' was 10.58, but it improved into 19.39 in the post-test. 'Fluency' in the pre-test, the score was only 5.34 then became 8.65 in the post-test. The last one is 'Comprehension' in the pre-test the score was only 9.69, but it improved into 14.66 in the post-test.

Based on the result of this research, it can be concluded that there is an increase level of students' ability in speaking after they got treatment by using real objects as media in teaching speaking. Shortly, it was true that there was improvement in speaking ability of the second year students at SMPN 11 Pekanbaru. From the average score 44.65 with only 3 students (8.57 %) reached 62 (KKM) in the pre-test, then it improved into average score

67.48 in the post-test with 27 students (77.14%), reached the KKM. By looking at the KKM, 62, the improvement was quite high. So, the writer concluded that the use of real objects as media to teach speaking gave improvement to speaking ability of the second year students of SMPN 11 Pekanbaru since the KKM score was achieved by the students.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this research is to find out whether the use of real objects in teaching English specifically speaking skill can improve students' achievement in describing things. From the research that has been done in SMPN 11 Pekanbaru, it can be concluded that:

1. The use of real objects can improve students' speaking achievement in describing things. It can be seen that in the pre-test there were only 3 students who reach KKM, which is 62, with their average score is only 44.65. While in the post-test, the average score increases into 67.48 with 27 (77.14%) of 35 students reached the KKM.
2. In addition, the use of real objects can stimulate the students to be more active in speaking lesson since the use of real objects can make the lesson more interesting and understandable. It can be seen from the three meetings of this research, 26 students (74.29%) are motivated to follow the lesson well.
3. The increase of pre-test to post test is 22.83 or 77.14%. By the increasing score of post-test, it can be concluded that the use of real objects is really effective to improve students' speaking ability of the second year students of SMPN 11 Pekanbaru in the academic year 2012/2013.

SUGGESTIONS

From the conclusions above, there are several suggestions that might be useful for the the teachers or next researcher. Those suggestions are proposed as follows :

1. A Teacher has to understand his/her students' characteristics and conditions including their strength and weakness first before deciding the design of learning process.
2. It is important for the teacher to make a creative teaching activity in the classroom. It will make the students interested and motivated to follow the lesson and comprehend it well. Real Objects can be used by the teachers to create conducive atmosphere.
3. Teachers have to prepare the lesson including the materials and the real objects first before applying them in the classroom. All of them must be suitable with the students' needs and level.
4. It is suggested to other researchers to investigate about the use of real objects in other fields such as in writing.
5. Finally, the researcher realizes that this research is not perfect, so the writer will be grateful for positive feedback.

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