

## IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY BY USING INFORMATION GAP METHOD

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### Abstract

*This research aimed to find out the improvement of students' speaking ability by using the information gap method. The subjects of research were the students in grade X MIA-1, which consists of 36 students in the class. This research was conducted by using Classroom Action Research by Kemmis and McTaggart, which consisted of two cycles. The first was qualitative data that was obtained from observation, interviews, diary notes, and documentation that was analyzed using the Miles and Huberman technique. The quantitative data were obtained from a speaking test and were analyzed using the mean and percentage scores. The result of this research showed that the students' speaking abilities improved after using the information gap method. The students have more participation and are active in conveying their ideas, opinions, and feelings during the process of speaking activity. Moreover, the students' scores were higher than before after implementing the method. It can be shown from the result of the pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2, which are in the pre-test, that the students' mean score was 62, which only 6 students, or 16.6% of the 30 students who passed the minimum passing grade. In post-test 1, the mean student's score was 72, in which there were 17 students, or 47%, who passed the minimum passing grade. At last, the mean score of students in post-test 2 was 76, meaning that 29 students, or 80%, passed the minimum passing grade. It indicated that the information gap method can improve students' speaking ability.*

**Keywords:** Speaking ability, information gap method, classroom action research.

### Introduction

Nowadays, English is one of the international languages that has an important role for other people. Everyone all around the world uses English as the bridge of communication for their daily life. Other people can use the English language to exchange information or knowledge, improve their relationships with each other, or seek a better job.

In Indonesia, English is the foreign language that must be learnt by the other people. Students in Indonesia learn English as the main subject at school. The students at the

Indonesian school are expected to know English and speak it fluently. However, in learning activities, the students and teacher still use Indonesian as their communication language as they are in the process of learning English. The teachers do not provide speaking in communication contexts both in class and out of class in real situations.

Speaking activities should provide sufficient time for students to practice the target language. The activities should also motivate students, so that they can enthusiastically engage in the learning process. The English teacher also needs to contribute by giving the appropriate feedback that helps students in the activity.

One of the speaking methods that promotes communicative situations is the information gap method. In that method, the students can speak actively and exchange information with each other. The students have more talk time in speaking activities. The conditions of teaching speaking are very flexible. They can be on the outside or inside of the class. It will give the students a new atmosphere in the teaching-learning process.

## **Literature Review**

### **1. Speaking as a Language Skill**

Every individual has a language to communicate among his or her society. They use a language to deliver their ideas, to fulfill their needs and ask to for information. They use it every day without second thought. There are so many experts that explained about speaking. Horby stated, speaking is expressing of ideas or feelings using language (Horby, 1994, p.). Meanwhile, Richard stated that speaking refers to the situation where the point is on what is said or done (Richard, J. 2008, p.). Those statement give the explanation that speaking is about someone to deliver the meaning or maessage and how their social interaction to the other people. In speaking, there are some aspects that the teacher must be pay attention to the students' improvement in speaking ability. Harmer explained those four aspects as follow (Harmer, J. 1998).

#### 1.1. Pronunciation

Pronunciation is one of the difficult aspects that the students must be learned. In pronunciation, they will learn about how the words' sounds, intonation, and stress are produced. It is involved their mother tongue which is different with the english.

#### 1.2. Vocabulary.

Vocabulary is very important to the students who wants to start learn english. If the students do not have enough vocabulary, they will not be able to convey and share ideas. Vocabulary is related to how someone using the appropriate word choice to speaking. The lack of vocabulary makes the teaching-learning process to be not intresting. In case, the students cannot be actively participated in speaking english activities.

#### 1.3. Grammar

If someone who speaking english, they should pay attention with the grammar. The grammar utility in speaking english is to make the speaker can arranges the appropriate sentences in grammatically. It is also determine the students to speak up in appropriate and inappropriate sentences. The good grammatical in speaking, make the audience (or listener) can be easily understand the meaning of what the speaker says.

#### 1.4. Fluency

Fluency means that the students can speak English fluently and accurately suited with professional necessity. Everyone who can speak English fluently, they can arrange the next sentences orally. Furthermore, there are some elements of speaking should be mastered by language users :

1. Connected Speech: the effective speaker use English not only to produce the phonemes of English, but also to use fluent connected speech. In connected speech, sounds are modified, omitted, added, or weakened.
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 ability to convey the meaning.
3. Lexis and Grammar : spontaneous speech is marked by the use of number of common lexical phrases, especially in the performance of certain language function.
4. Negotiation Language : effective speaking benefits from the negotiatory language we use to seek the clarification and to show the structure of what we are saying.

The people often ask for the clarification when they are listening to someone else talks. Speaking is not only having the four aspects that the students must be master it, but also it is very important to master it all the elements of speaking. Those elements are as the language feature that involves to the speaking production (M. Dalimunte, 2019).

### **2.2 Speaking Instruction in Indonesia EFL Context.**

Teaching speaking is very important of second language learning. The ability to communicate in a second language clearly and efficiently contributes to the success of the learner at school and to his success later in every phase. Speaking has taught at school based on the consideration of its importance for the human beings.

In the process of teaching learning activity, there are many things that affect students' low speaking mastery. According to Thornbury, there are some factors that affected the students' speaking skill, as follow (Thornbury, S. 2005):

1. Knowledge factor: the learner does not yet know aspects of the language that enable production.
2. Skills factor: the learner's knowledge is not sufficiently automated to ensure fluency.
3. Affective factor; lack of confidence or self-consciousness, which might inhibit fluency.

### **2.3 Methods in Teaching Speaking**

The process of teaching and learning, a thing that must be considered by a teacher is teaching method. A teacher must have a learning method that efficiently and effectively to create a fun learning conditions and not boring. Through a good teaching method, a teacher can control the situation without the bad nervous to the students. There are some methods in the process of teaching speaking, as follow : *The Direct Method*; is also known as the natural method. Stern points out that the direct method is characterized by the use of the target language as a means of instruction and communication (Stern, H. 1991).

*Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)*; the idea behind this approach is to help learners communicate more effectively and correctly in realistic situations that they may find

themselves. Communicative language teaching focuses on developing the ability of real life communication. It focuses on meaning rather than accuracy (Essay, UK. 2018).

*Role Play*; that is creating a dramatic situation in a classroom, or in a part simply acting out dialogues, but also in part re-labeling objects and people in the room to prepare for an imaginative role playing (Fauziati, E. 2010). Based on the methods above, the teacher must implement the appropriate methods in the process of teaching speaking. Information gap method is one of the speaking activities that usually used by the teacher in the class. The students can be actively participate in the class by using that method. They find the information and presented to the other students in front of the class.

#### **2.4. Steps of Information Gap Method**

There are some steps of information gap method, as follow (David N. 1992):

1. Preparing the lesson plan.

Before the teacher start the lesson, they must prepare the lesson plan to know the activities that the teacher will do in the class. The lesson plan will help the teacher to make a plan in the process speaking activities.

2. In the process of speaking activities, the students are given a task.

The teacher will ask the students to accomplish their task in speaking activities to make them to be active and the goals of teaching-learning can be achieve in the class. The teacher must be creatively to arrange the scenario of teaching speaking.

3. To get the information, the students split into two part or make it groups.

In this process, the teacher will divide the students into pairs or groups. It purposes to make the students can cooperate each other to complete their task. Each of the group or pairs of students has a gap information that they must find each other to accomplish their task. Making a group will make all the students participate in the process of speaking activities.

4. The students have to ask each other about the information that they need and come to a decision together.

In the process of completing their task, the students and groups must be collecting the information and their ideas. After they finished to collecting the information related to the material that has given by the teacher, the students must exchange their information each other in the class. This activity must control by the teacher to give the next instruction and the limitation of the time to the students in doing their task.

5. The students use the target language to find out the information that they really need and share their ideas each other.

The teacher will ask the students to use the target language; it purposes to know the students' improvement of speaking English. The implementation of speaking English in the class will make the students practice and mastering the aspects of speaking in English.

From those explanation above, the writer infers that in the process of informatin gap activities there are some main point that the students will do : the process learning will be effective to divided into two person or some groups, the students must be active and creative to develop their ideas about the information that found, they must use the target language and

deliver their ideas by using speaking skill, and the information that has found by them as a gap to know what they do not possess.

## 2.5 The Advantages and Disadvantages of Information Gap Method

According to Raptou, the advantages of information gap method are (Raptou,V. 2001):

- 1) The students can talk a lot while the process learning in the class. Information gap method gives the chance to the students a period of time to talk actively.
- 2) Participation is even. The activities of speaking is not dominated to part of the students but also all the students get the chance to speak and contribution distributed evenly.
- 3) Motivation is high. The students more have the eager to speak because they feel intrested about the topic that given to the teacher. It also obligate them to reveal their opinion and ideas in the activities, so the students motivate themself to be able speak up while the process of speaking activities.
- 4) Sharing the ideas each other and language acceptable. The activities of speaking using information gap method makes the students more sharing the ideas and the language of communication more acceptable because every students use the basic language to reveal their ideas each other.

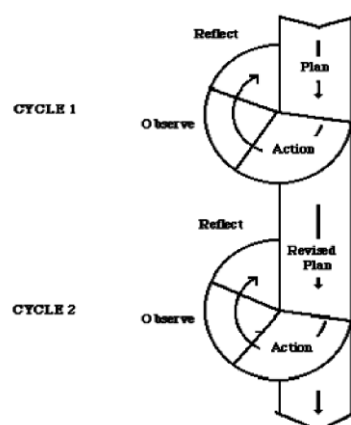
Furthermore, he also states that information gap method has its disadvantages :

- 1) It emphasis the students to initiative more about the ideas. They also sometimes confuse or embarrass to share their ideas and lost of the word when they convey orally.
- 2) The students do not know the words but they need to contribute the new ideas.

## 1. Methods

This research applied by using Classroom Action Research. This action research tries to identify the problem that happened in teaching-learning process and decides an action to overcome the problems. In this research, the researcher tried to find the appropriate method to the teacher in the process of teaching speaking. The researcher use information gap method to take action in students' problem in speaking.

In this research, the researcher uses a Classroom Action Research (CAR) designed by Kemmis and Mc Taggart model that consist of four steps; planning, acting, observing and reflection. The figure is below (Kemmis S and McTaggart, R. 1998):



### **Figure 3.1: Action Research Spiral, Model from Kemmis and Mc Taggart**

The procedures of research are performed by implementing two cycles and so on. Each of cycle contain four steps, which are planning, action, observation and reflection. Before the researcher implement the cycle 1, she must identify the problems of students' speaking ability by using the transcripts of interview with the English teacher. It purposes to know the research plans that the researcher must do in the class.

#### **. 1. Cycle I**

##### **a. Planning**

1. Preparing the lesson plan
2. Giving the learning material of speaking to the students
3. Preparing the media of the teaching-learning process
4. Planning and designing the teaching learning scenario of speaking through Information Gap Method.

##### **b. Action**

In this phase, the reseacher implement all the process of points that planned. The action will implement until there were the improvement on students' speaking. The acting phase should be implemented at least two cycles continuously and the the time period of teaching depends on the material needs.

##### **c. Observation**

The reseacher and collaborator observe the situation and condition while the teaching-learning process. All of the speaking activities in the class will conducted into diary notes. It will make the reseacher know whether the atmosphere of class is good or not. Then, in the process of observation, the reseacher will know the obstacles of students during the teaching-learning process.

##### **d. Reflection**

The reseacher will reflect and evaluate the research after implemented the action. In this phase, the reseacher and collaborator analyze the problems that has already did in action and find the solution to improve the teaching learning in the process of teaching.

After the reseacher has done in cycle one, the reseacher decided whether the research needs to continue in the cycle two or so on. In the cycle two, the reseacher will give the modification of scenario technique in order to smallen the weakness of cycle 1.

#### **2. Cycle 2**

##### **a. Planning**

1. Re-arrange the lesson plan
2. Preparing the media and material of speaking activities.
3. Dividing the students into some groups.
4. Giving the students test in speaking

5. Planning and designing the application of teaching model in speaking activities.

b. Action

In this phase, the teacher gives more explanation and implement the technique or scenario of teaching process which has been revised from the first cycles. The teacher also gives the second test to the students in order to know the improvement of them.

c. Observation

The reseacher observe the process of teaching-learning in the class. Whether the scenarion of teaching can create the good atmosphere or not.

d. Reflection

In this phase, the teacher and collaborator evaluate again the development of students in the process of speaking activities. And all of the data process will collected in diary notes or field notes.

### 3.1 Participants and Location

The participants of this research is the tenth grade students in Cerdas Murni Senior High School, Tembung. The sample will be taken in grade X-MIA 1 which consist only one class in that school. There were 30 students in the classroom, with detail of 10 males and 26 females.

### 3.2 Instruments

The instruments used by the researcher to collect the data were: observation, interview, test and diary notes.

#### Observation

In this process, the researcher will know the students' response (active or passive), the problem of implemented the method, and the students' motivation in the process speaking activities in the class.

#### Interview

Interview is purpose to conduct a conversation that explores the researcher's focus idea (Burn, A. 2010). The researcher conducted interviews with the English teacher, the collaborator and the students to find out their reactions, response and suggestion before and after the researcher implement the method in the class.

#### Test

According to Aiken in Syahrums and Salim, test is the instrument to measure someone's behavior or performance. Test usually consist of two kinds; pre-test and post-test. Pre-test carried out before the treatment of information gap method. The other hand, the post test is carried out after the implementation of using IGM (Syahrums and Salim. 2014).

#### Diary Notes

Diary notes is note for the reseacher when the reseacher was teaching in the class. It contains about reseacher feeling, opinion, estimation, reflection and explanation. And those are was written in diary note.

#### Documentation

Documentation is anything that contain of information serving as the proof.

### 3.3 Data Collection

The researcher collected the data by using quantitative and qualitative. Qualitative data was obtained from observation, interview, documentation and diary notes. Meanwhile, quantitative data was obtained from pre-test and post- test.

### 3.4 Data Analysis

The qualitative data is use to describe the situation during teaching and learning process. The data of analysis in qualitative will get from observation, interview, diary notes and documentation. According to Miles and Huberman, there are three steps of qualitative analysis, as follow : a. Data reduction :summarizing the data coding the data, making notes, and reflecting the data. b. Data display : collecting the result of data reduction, arrange the relevant data, and make a diagram. c. conclusion/verification :make the conclusion from the result of data display (Milles, M. & Huberman M. 1994). After the process of data qualitative analysis was complete, the researcher will make sure the data by using peer de brief. In the process of peer de brief, the researcher will discuss to the teachers in order to reflect on what went right (or wrong) from the data analysis.

The quantitative data was used to analyze the score of students' speaking ability. The data of quantitative will be scoring by using the rubrics of assessment that adopted by Brown. There are some aspects of assessment in speaking such as pronunciation, fluency, grammar, vocabulary and comprehension (look at the appendices of this research). The researcher uses the formula to know the mean and the percentage of the students who can improve the speaking ability by using information gap method.

To calculate the mean of data, the reseacher use the formula as follow (Jaya, I., & Ardat. 2013):

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

X = Class mean score

$\sum x$  = The total score

N = The total number of students

The score percentage of each cycles will be calculated by using this formula :

$$P = \frac{R}{N} \times 100\%$$

P = Percentage of student

R = The number of thos who get the point

N = The total number of student taking the test



## **4. Result**

In this study, the researcher would like to describe the result of preliminary study, cycle I and cycle II, as follows:

### **4.1 Preliminary Study**

In preliminary data, the researcher did two steps; those were giving a pre-test and interview. The speaking test that did by the researcher was aim to know the students' ability in speaking. The researcher entered the class in the first meeting to did the pre-test for 36 students in the class. The Standard Minimum Score or *Kriteria Ketentuan Minimum (KKM)* at the school was 75. The total scores of students' pre-test were 2246 and the students' mean was 62.38. From the result of those students' score, the researcher considered that the students' speaking ability was still low. It just took the total score 2246 with the percentage of students was 16,6%. There were only 6 students who passed the pre-test of speaking. And 30 students failed to did the pre-test of speaking in cause they got the score was lower than 75. The result of quantitative data will be strengthened by using the qualitative data. The result of qualitative data will be taken from the interview and the meeting of students in the class. The researcher did the interview before conducting the first cycle. From the researcher's interview, it was found that there were many difficulties of students' speaking ability at the class. Some of them are; the students still have lack of vocabularies that is inhibiting them to try speaking. The students' pronunciation also needs the improvement because they still use the mother tongue to say it a word in English.

### **4.2 Cycle I**

The students' scores were as the assessment to know the improvement of students in speaking ability. The students' score was improving after the researcher gave the treatment to the students. The result of post-test 1 was better than the result of pre-test. In post-test 1, the total score of students was 2756 and the mean score was 71.5. The number of students who passed the speaking test was increase to be 17 students. It also shown from the percentages of calculation was 47.2%. From the students' score result, the students got the improvement in speaking ability even it was not a very significance for them. Therefore, the researcher prepared and made a plan more to the next.

### **4.3 Cycle II**

From the result of cycle 2, the students' score has improved and more be active in speaking activities. The result of post-test 2 was better than the post-test 1. The total score of students in post-test 2 was 2744 and the mean score was 76.22. The number of students who passed the test was 29 students from 36 students. They got the score 75 and up to 75 (*Standart Minimum Score Kriteria (KKM)*). Then, the percentage of them was 80%. From those result, the researcher conclude that the students' speaking ability by using information gap method improved significantly in the activity of cycle 2. They were success to complete their speaking test.

## **5. Discussion**

Based on the finding of research, it showed that the students have the improvement in speaking ability by using information gap method. The students have more participation

during the process of speaking activity. Moreover, using the information gap method made them talk actively to tell their experiences with their friends and freely to convey their ideas or opinion based on the topic that has given by the teacher. Those findings were supported by (Raptou: 2001) that stated the strenghtness of information gap method; the students can talk a lot while the process of learning in the class. It gives a chance to the students a period time to talk actively. Moreover, the method makes them participate more in the activity, which the students have a chance to speak, and contribution distributed evenly. Information gap method also makes the students sharing the ideas each other, and the language of communication more acceptable because most of the students use the basic language to speaking in the class.

## 6. Conclusion

Based on the finding and result, the implementation of information gap method to the students' speaking ability can be improved. The students were more active to convey their ideas, opinion, and feeling during the process of speaking activity. The difficulties of students were decrease while the teacher teaching speaking in the class. Then, most of the students have the participation and work more cooperatively.

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