

Improving Students' Speaking Skill of Descriptive Text by Using Three-Step Interview Technique at Grade VIII.B of SMP N 2 Sarolangun

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui peningkatan keterampilan berbicara menggunakan tehnik wawancara tiga langkah. Metode penelitian ini adalah penelitian tindakan kelas (PTK) yang dilaksanakan dalam dua siklus dan masing-masing siklus terdiri atas perencanaan, pelaksanaan, pengamatan dan refleksi. Penelitian ini dilakukan di kelas VIII.B SMPN 2 Sarolangun dan melibatkan 27 orang siswa semester satu tahun akademik 2013-2014. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa; (1) tehnik wawancara tiga langkah berhasil meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa dalam teks descriptif, dan (2) perubahan pemahaman kemampuan berbicara siswa dipengaruhi oleh dua faktor, yaitu (a) faktor internal di mana kemampuan berbicara siswa berubah disebabkan oleh motivasi dan kecemasan, dan (b) faktor eksternal yang meliputi materi pembelajaran, kegiatan kelas, pengelolaan kelas dan pendekatan guru. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa penerapan tehnik wawancara tiga langkah pada pengajaran berbicara teks descriptif dapat memberikan hasil yang signifikan pada peningkatan keterampilan berbicara mereka.

Keywords: Speaking Skill, Descriptive Text, Three Step Interview

Introduction

Speaking is one of the four skills that the students should master in learning English as a compulsory subject in all levels of education. Many students regard speaking skill measurent of knowing a language. They define fluency as the ability to speak with others, much more than the ability to read, write, or comprehend oral language. By learning speaking, the students know the way to express their ideas, opinions, feelings, and emotion meaningfully. They consider speaking as the most important skill they can acquire, and they assess their progress in terms of their accomplishments in spoken communication. Besides, it also leads them to make interaction in the society by using the language.

Nunan (2003:81) says that speaking is the productive oral skill that consists of producing systematic verbal utterance to convey meaning. Speaking is an important thing for communication. The goal of teaching speaking is communicate orally. Students are expected to be able to understand and communicate in English in daily communication. It is supported by Brown and Nation (1997:12), "the goal of teaching speaking skill is to communicate in target language." It means that the teacher has to emphasize on the efficiency of oral communication so that, the use of language work well rather than the usage of the language.

In addition, Brown (2004: 140) states that speaking as productive skill can be directed and empirically observed. The teacher can directly show the students' speaking skill through their speaking performance. It means that the teacher's has a main responsibility to assess the students' mastery on oral language that is to see whether they are able to communicate effectively and to know how far the students comprehend the teaching material by expressing it orally

For junior high school, the speaking skill is taught through Genre Based Approach. There are various genres that the students have to be mastered. The genres are classified into transactional and interpersonal, functional, and monologue text. The transactional and

interpersonal texts involves asking and offering help, asking and giving things, congratulation and compliment, asking and giving opinion, etc. Functional texts include short message, announcement and greeting card. The examples of monologue texts are narrative, descriptive, procedure and recount text.

Based on the syllabus of Junior High School at the eight grade, the students have to acquire the speaking skill in some types of monologue text. One of them is descriptive text. According to Fulwiler (2002:34), "descriptive text is a text that describes a person, place, or thing". It is to create a verbal image so that readers can see what you see, hear what you hear, and taste, smell and feel what you taste, smell and feel.

In addition, Depdiknas (2006) states that the objective of teaching speaking of descriptive text is the students are able to express meaning in simple short monologue in descriptive form based on the generic structures and language features of the text. According to Hammond (1992:4), there are two generic structures of this text, they are identification and description, meanwhile the language features of a descriptive text are the use of simple present tense, adjective clause and etc.

Unfortunately, those expectation demanded by the curriculum above do not seem to have been reached yet by the students of grade VIII.B of SMPN 2 Sarolangun. It is reflected by the students' daily test result in speaking of descriptive text that is lower than Minimum Achievement Criteria (Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal). The Minimum Achievement Criteria scoring (Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal) of SMP N 2 Sarolangun is 70, even the average score of students was only 53.40 for their speaking test result. Recently, the result of speaking test of descriptive text showed that only 5 (18.5%) from 27 students who could reach the minimum achievement criteria score. Thus, 22 (81.5%) of the students should follow remedial class.

Based on the researcher's observation as the teacher during class performance some problems were found dealing with speaking faced by the students especially in using descriptive text. First, the students are not able to express their ideas fluently. The students could not optimally describe things, person and places, in detail because they do not have any ideas when they are asked to describe them.

Another problem that the researcher found in teaching learning process; the students did not understand well about the components of descriptive text. Most of them got problem in using language features of descriptive text. The language features of a descriptive text are the basis on the use of tense and grammar.

In addition to the problems of students' speaking skill of descriptive text, the students' attitude and motivation toward speaking was still low. Most of the students were reluctant and ashamed to speak English in teaching learning English process because they were afraid of making mistakes. It seemed that they had no motivation and confidence to take part in the conversation although perhaps they wanted to speak.

Actually, in this classroom the teacher uses some techniques to improve the students' interest but the result is still questionable because the students still have low interest in English. The students do not listen to the teacher's explanation; some of them are joking and talking to their friend, some others are walking around the classroom. Only a few students pay attention to the teacher's explanation, though only for a moment. It seemed to be lack of students' participation

In order to solve all the problems above, the researcher was interested to do a research related to the use three-step interview technique in teaching speaking of descriptive text. According to Lipton and Wellman (1998:75) three step interview helps students personalize their learning and listen to and appreciate the ideas and thinking of others. In the line with it (Kagan, 2009:131) states that three step interview is an effective way to encourage students to share their thinking, ask questions, and take notes. In brief, three step interview technique is defined as a cooperative learning in which team members interview one another on a particular topic

Furthermore, Kagan (2009:13) mentions that the procedure of three step interview; Partner A interviews Partner B while Partner C records important points of the response.

Roles are rotated until all members have been interviewed. Students are directed to speak or write statements about something. Then, the students mix the order of the statements, and then ask teammates to guess which statement is true. One member of the team reports the findings to the class.

Method

The method of this research was Classroom Action Research (CAR). Gay and Airisian (2003:223) states that classroom action research is a research done by the teachers and other educational personal to identify the problems in the classroom for the main purpose to improve their practice. Because of the fact, this research was conducted by the researcher in order to explain whether three-step interview technique can improve the students speaking skill of descriptive text.

This research took a place at grade VIII.B of SMPN 2 Sarolangun which involved 27 students on their first semester. The researcher conducted the research at academic year 2013/2014 since for this period of time the teaching material had well inserted a kind of monologue text such as descriptive text, recount text, narrative text and procedure text that were formally programmed by the syllabus of the school.

There were two types of data (quantitative and qualitative data) that had been collected in this research. Quantitative data getting from task and speaking test, while qualitative data taken from observation, field note and interview.

In analyzing the data, it was done by using two methods of data analysis. Quantitative data analysis was used to examining and interpreting data from the students' task and students' achievement of speaking skill of descriptive text in performance test. On the other hand, for the data taken from observation and interview was analyzed by using qualitative data analysis.

Finding and Discussion

Based on the results of the data analysis and findings of this research, the researcher concludes the result of the research, as follows:

1. The implementation three step interview technique can improve students' speaking skill on descriptive text. The improvement of the students' speaking skill of descriptive text could be seen from analyzing numerical, as the test results were compared between pre-cycle test, first cycle test, and second cycle test. The average score of students speaking improved from 50.2 in pre-cycle test and 67.5 in the first cycle test to 73.8 in the second cycle.
2. The changes of students' speaking skill are influenced by the some factors.
 - a. The internal factor from the students themselves; the students' speaking skill changes because of students' motivation was increased and their anxiety to speak was reduced. These elements are influenced by students' internally.
 - b. The second factor that changes the students' speaking skill is the external factor. The factors were known as outside factors such as materials, classroom activities, classroom management and teacher approach.

There are 5 indicators of speaking skill of descriptive text that were improved by using three steps interview technique taken from this research;

a. Content

By giving clearly explanation about the content of descriptive text helped the students to produce a good descriptive text. Teacher should try to bring the students create identification of an object by using topic sentence correctly. Besides, the teacher also explained how to use description correctly.

The process of asking question, answering, and taking note is an effective way to encourage students to share their thinking about identification and description of an object (Kagan, 2009:131). Doing amount of speaking practices also influenced the students familiar how to construct a descriptive text.

b. Grammar

In junior high school, grammar was only given as part of lesson, not as one specific subject, as the result students' understanding about grammar was also lacking. Therefore, during the implementation of three steps interview technique, the teacher asked the student taking note into the worksheet (three steps interview form). This activity was aimed to evaluate students' grammar mastery. It was supported by Kagan (2009:143), three steps interview also has advantages to improve the student's grammar through process that brought in the three step interview activities. Moreover, the process of doing a lot of speaking practices encouraged them to be careful in using correct grammar.

c. Fluency

In simple terms, fluency in speaking of descriptive text is the ability to talk freely without too much stopping or hesitating. This technique promotes active speaking because students are individually accountable for sharing their partner's information with the team (Kagan, 1994:35).

d. Pronunciation

By giving certain orally models of how to describe a thing, place or person in three steps activity, teacher actually had already been success to develop students' awareness of pronunciation during speaking. Although at their age it is impossible to force them to have good pronunciation, at least teacher can guide them to get closer to the real voice and sound of they had heard, as the target of teaching speaking that students have consistently correct and clear pronunciation (O'Malley and Pierce, 1996:60, and Hughes, 2003:131).

e. Vocabulary

Kagan (2009:143)states that three-step interview has many advantages; one of them could improve students' vocabulary mastery. He mentioned that the students will not only be able to elaborate their vocabulary and the structure of the sentence during implementation of three step interview. The activities of three step interview was also led them to think about mere appropriate or specific vocabulary. In addition, the teacher's approaches in teaching learning process also had essential contribution to improve the student's vocabulary mastery. While the students did three step activities, the teacher monitored them; he asked them to use appropriate and correct vocabulary in speaking.

Moreover, researcher also found the factors influencing the changes of student's speaking skill of descriptive text. Those are classified into two factors; internal factor and external factor. In more details it can be identifies as follows:

a. Internal Factor

The internal factor means the factor which comes from the students themselves (Mai, 2011:10). This factors related to the things inside the students include motivation and anxiety.

1) Motivation

Motivation is an essential condition of learning, so the students' motivation was very important to enhance their speaking skill. This research had proved that motivation to speak given by the students' in learning process during implementation of three step interview had arisen their self confident. They had eagerness, enthusiastic to study better, and become more active in doing the activities. As stated by Brown (2002:234), "motivation is one of the most important factors for success in English." Some people are very strongly motivated to learn a language, others are not, and others are between. It means that everyone has different reasons and purposes in learning something.

The overall results of the interviews describes that the students highly motivated to speak English. They were greatly motivated since three step interview activities was introduced for them as new technique in teaching learning descriptive text. The chance to speak in group was made the students joyful to learn how to speak well. It can be

seen from the fact that most of the students got actively involved in activities, joined the activities eagerly, and did the task seriously.

Here, motivation did not only refer to the student personal satisfaction, interest, enjoyment or pleasure they get from the activity itself but also the reward, benefit, or purpose for doing it, which make it worthwhile. For example, the result of interview informed that most of the students were attracted to speak English because they wanted to go abroad “kalau bisa bahasa Inggris saya bisa keluar negeri”

2) Anxiety

Findings have generally shown that anxiety affected students' speaking skill in several ways. For example when being in front of others students; they were concerned about “forgetting things and making mistakes” due to the fear of speaking in front of their friend, and not being able to convey a clear message. In other word, the students are afraid to be called stupid or to be underestimated by listeners, their teachers, and their friends (Brown et. al, 1996:26).

Sometimes, the students did not ask for clarification even when certain aspects were not well understand. They preferred to ask a classmate. It seemed they preferred not to hold a conversation with the teacher because it would involve a more complex interaction they were not willing to make. By working in groups, students enjoy more opportunity to see how their partners think and construct new ideas.

In brief, three step interview activities in group also offered fun and relax atmosphere to the students. Speaking within the group motivated and established the students' self confidence before they were challenged to perform their speaking skill in front of the class. When the students joined in three step interview, anxiety was reduced and speech fluency was generated. As stated by (Kagan, 2009:143), “this technique can establish students' confidence in speaking.”

b. External Factor

Beside the internal factors above, the researcher also found the factors outside the students which influence the improvement of students' speaking skill. The factors are described as external factors such as materials, classroom activities, classroom management and teacher approach.

1) Materials

The materials that were given to students had been selected based on the curriculum and the students' environment. The colorful pictures, drawing pictures, and showing posters attracted the students' attention. As stated by Harmer (2001:233), one factor of successful students speaking skill is materials, or topics given, when the topic related to students' real life, so they could easily to produce or speak fluently. They can tell about a topic when they have prior knowledge of the topic. It is the reason to the students to be interested when they found the materials were related with their background knowledge.

It can be seen based in the result of the interview, in which the students felt the materials were not too difficult and easy to understand. They said that the materials could be explained. Based on the collaborator's observation and her notes, the topics were relevant with the students' desire such as favorite artist, favorite player, and funny animals attracted them to speak by describing the pictures.

2) Classroom activities

Classroom activities were the second factor that influenced students speaking skill of descriptive text. After looking the picture, the teacher helped the students discussed the picture and asked them to make their own descriptive text. Through group work activities that happened during implementation of three step interview technique, the students had direct learning experience in which they together produced a descriptive text. The processes of asking questions and answering questions in the group made the

students could speak freely without feeling afraid of the teacher and friend's correction directly.

Based on the result of the interview, it can be seen that through three step interview activities, the students got much opportunity to speak and challenging to enable themselves to produce descriptive text orally. As stated by Richard and Rodger (2001:20) "classroom activity develop students' communicative competency, classroom activity create the need for communication, classroom activity provide opportunity, and classroom activity make sure to use of the content those connect to students' life and interest". Here, the students must not only be able to create their own descriptive text by interviewing each other but also to practice more to be good in all aspects of speaking skill including grammar, fluency, pronunciation, and vocabularies.

In short, the technique had made most of them active, and creative in doing the tasks, they could work together, help each other. The activities of three step interview could maximize students' involvement in the classroom. They were easier to produce a descriptive text, and built the students' confident in speaking.

3) Classroom management

Classroom management was also one of the factors that influenced the students' speaking skill. The teacher should manage the classroom by using three step interview, in order the successful of learning process could be achieved. The teacher should be able to control, organize, and manage the group work, the use of time allocated for tasks, and monitor students activities by walking around and helping them if necessary. It was supported by Nunan (2003:233), the important role of the teacher is monitoring what and how well the students are do an activity.

Based on the interview result, the learning through three step interview made the students happy and enjoyable because they worked in the group having different roles, helped each other, and they had each responsibility. Even though some of the students in the group were still confused about their role, the teacher was guided all students to do the activities in the classroom. As stated by Richard and Rodger (2001:52), the teacher should be able to control the class by organizing the activities during teaching and learning process. It means that the teacher's control the students' activities in order to improve students' willingness to speak. The teacher had made the classroom atmosphere exciting and interesting during the activities happened.

4) Teacher Approach

Teacher approach also determined the success of teaching result. As explored in this research, the researcher tried hard to have good approach to the students. According to Brown (2001:73) "teacher needs innovative approaches in order to get the learning goals". The teacher's approach operates on the principle that the students work together to learn and are responsible for their group work as well as their own. It means that the teachers need to draw on more than one approach. From the interview result, the student said that they were really helped by the teacher when they found difficulties in learning. This situation was creating enjoyable and comfortable situations in order to improve students' speaking skill.

The teacher made classroom atmosphere enjoyable, so the students did not feel shy to speak in the classroom. The teacher gave helps and more attention to the students who needed helps to solve their problems faced. Besides the students were given motivation in order to lead them to have a lot of practice in speaking skill especially in describing something, the teacher also tried to keep smiling although many mistakes said by the students. He did not give direct correction on the student mistake but let it until the end of the class and gave some correction later on. As the result most of the students wanted to performs their speaking.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the research finding above about improving students' speaking skill of descriptive text by using three step interview at grade VIII.B of SMPN 2 Sarolangun, it can be concluded that:

1. Three step interview technique improves the students' speaking skill on descriptive text: it covered the improvement of speaking indicators in term of content, grammar, fluency, pronunciation and vocabulary.
2. The changes of students' speaking skill were influenced by two factors, namely, (a) internal factor that the students' speaking skill of descriptive text changes because of students' motivation and anxiety, and (b) external factors that consisted of teaching materials, classroom activity, classroom management and teacher approach.

Related to the research finding and discussion above, some suggestions can be given, as follow:

1. The researcher as an English teacher will continue implementing three step interview technique in teaching speaking skill of descriptive text at grade of VIII.B of SMP N 2 Sarolangun.
2. Further and longer studies about the implementation of three step interview technique is highly recommended in order to investigate whether this technique can be a solving problem in other fields such as in listening, reading and writing.

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