

Improving the Students' English Speaking Competence through Storytelling (Study in Pangeran Diponegoro Islamic College (STAI) of Nganjuk, East Java, Indonesia)

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Abstract

Having good English speaking is very essential especially for the students because it becomes the bridge for them to know the world. So improving the English speaking competence is very important for the Indonesian students where we know Speaking is extremely need to gives the big contribution to students to perform their communication skill better. Furthermore, the newest curriculum also stated that English as a language of global science, technology, and business should be taught communicatively at students of college or university. The students of college or university graduate are expected to be able to communicate English well. It means that speaking is the primary competence to develop. However, the students of Pangeran Diponegoro Islamic College (STAI) of Nganjuk, East Java, Indonesia don't have good competence in speaking. In other words, it can be said that they have low competence in English speaking. Realizing the condition, the researcher thinks an appropriate way to improve the students' English speaking competence using storytelling. we use stories which rely so much on words, offer a major and constant source of language experience for students. Stories are motivating, rich in language experience and inexpensive. Finally, the research result stated that When storytelling were implemented in teaching speaking it could improve the students' fluency, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and content. The strength of speaking using storytelling areThe students feel that the teacher is giving them something very personal, It is often easier to understand a story being told than one which is read aloud because, storytelling give motivation, meaning, fluency, language awareness, and stimulus for the students speaking. Despite having the strength, storytelling also has weaknesses when it is applied in teaching language. The weaknesses are the teacher/lecturer must learn the story well enough to tell it without the book because he/she might some mistake in English and sometime the class need more time.

Introduction

Language is a means of communication or speaking. In this case, as a human being, it must be able to communicate or speak orally. language has a main role in students' intellectual, social, and emotional development and it is the key towards the successful studying all of the subject. In the curriculum, speaking is one of the basic competences which should be mastered by the students.

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The Indonesian students learning English are expected to be able to communicate fluently and accurately based on the social context. In spoken English, students are hoped to be able to convey meanings and various spoken texts that have certain communicative purpose, text structure and linguistics.

It means that speaking is the primary competence to develop. To acquire speaking competence students must have many aspects of speaking such as pronunciation, structure, vocabulary, content, and fluency.

Therefore it is a must for the students to improve their speaking skill using storytelling. It means that it gives a lot of exposure and enables them to focus on their specific speaking problem. By using this method, they can increase their sensitivity in recognizing pronunciation errors, enlarge vocabulary, understand how to make sentence in a good structure, and speak fluently in concrete content.

The research was carried out to Pangeran Diponegoro Islamic University (STAI) of Nganjuk, East Java, Indonesia. The focus of the research are how storytelling improving the students' English speaking competence in Pangeran Diponegoro Islamic College (STAI) of Nganjuk, East Java, Indonesia and what are the strengths and weaknesses of using storytelling in improving the students' English speaking competence in Pangeran Diponegoro Islamic College (STAI) of Nganjuk, East Java, Indonesia.

Literature Review

1. The concepts of speaking

Speaking is a speech production that becomes a part of our daily activities, Thornbury (2005:8). While Underwood (1997:11) says that speaking means creative process; an active interaction between speaker and listener that involves thought and emotion. Speaking involves three areas of knowledge. They are mechanics (pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary). It is the ability to use the right words in the right order with the correct pronunciation, function (transaction and interaction); knowing when clarity of message is essential (transaction/information exchange) and when precise understanding is not required (interaction/relation building) and also social cultural rules and norms. It consists of the knowledge of turn-taking, rate of speech; length of pauses between speakers, relative's roles of participants). It is an ability to understand how to take into account who is speaking to whom, in what circumstances, about what and for what reason. Then Weir defines that there are five aspects have to pay attention in speaking, they are content, vocabulary, grammar, performance, and fluency. Rychman (1983: 91-95) said that there are many requirements for making a good speech, such as speech of speaking, voice and delivery, vocabulary profanity, grammar, and self-improvement suggestions.

2. Speaking Competence

According to Oxford Advance Dictionary by Hornby, competence is (of person) having ability, power, authority, skill, knowledge, etc, (to do what is needed). While the meaning of ability or competence according to Chomsky in Brumfit and Johnson (1998: 13) is "the speaker-hearer's knowledge and ability thus includes concepts of appropriateness and acceptability. The study of competence will inevitably entail consideration of such variables as attitude, motivation, and a number of socio cultural factors. Speaking ability is not fluent speaking but conversation Nolasco (1997: xii). Speaking competence means conversation ability or conversation skill. It performs mutual interdependent, interactive nature of conversation. It is an awareness activity as well as feedback activity so that a series of tasks is developed to sharpen the students' awareness on the activity and assess their own progress performance. When those awareness and feedback activities done gradually, automatic conversation becomes accustomed; speaking ability, in this case, conversation skill, needs gradual practice-controlled, awareness, and finally fluency conversation.

3. Indicators of Speaking Competence

Brown (2004: 141-142) indicating that one can be called have speaking competence if he/she is able to:

- 1) Imitate a word or phrase or possibly a sentence (imitative).
- 2) Produce short stretches of oral language design to demonstrate competence in a narrow band of grammatical, phrasal, lexical, or phonological relationship. Such as prosodic elements-intonation, stress, rhythm, juncture, intensive ability (intensive).
- 3) Respond a very short conversation, standard greetings and small talk, simple requests and comments, and the like (responsive).
- 4) Take the two forms of either transactional language which has the purpose of exchanging specific information, or interpersonal exchanges which have the purpose of maintaining social relationships (interactive).
- 5) Maintain social relationships with the transmission of facts and information (interpersonal).
- 6) Develop (monologue) oral production including speeches, oral presentations, and story-telling, during which the opportunity for oral interaction from listener is either highly limited or ruled out together (extensive).

Meanwhile, Ur says (1999:120) that the characteristics of a successful speaking activity are as follows:

- 1) Learners talk a lot. As much as possible of the period of time allotted to the activity is in fact occupied by learners' talk. This may seem obvious, but even most time is taken up with teacher talk or pauses.
- 2) Participation is even. Classroom discussion is not determined by a minority of talkative participants; all get chance to speak, and contributions are fairly evenly distributed.
- 3) Motivation is high, learners are eager to speak; because they are interested in the topic and have something new to say about it or because they want to contribute to achieving a task objective.
- 4) Language is of an acceptable level. Learners express themselves in utterances that are relevant, easily comprehensible to each other, and of an acceptable level of language accuracy.

4. Definition of Storytelling

According to Taylor (2000: 6) storytelling is a tale to one or more listener through voice and gesture in oral telling, we usually repeat things more redundancy, especially if the students are having difficult following. Furthermore Ellis (1991: 33) adds vocabularies in story are presented in vivid and clear context and illustration help to convey meaning. Both the context and amusing situation can make the vocabulary easy to remember. Beside that, according to Zaro and Saberri (1998: 2) storytelling is an activity which requires a certain level of interaction between storyteller and audience and between individual and listener.

5. Selecting Story

In selecting the story for the students in teaching learning process, Burn and Broman (1975: 73) state:

- a. A simple well developed plot is centered in one main sequence of events so that a child can anticipate to some degree of the outcome of events with action predominant.
- b. Using repetition, rhyme, and catch phrases that the child memorizes new words quickly and easily.
- c. Using carefully chosen language, not using complicated words and using a large amount of direct conversation.

- d. Using one main character which the child can easily identify. Too many characters can be confusing.

While Ellis and Brewster add the criteria for selecting the story (1991: 12-13) as follow:

- a. Level: Is the level appropriate? Not too easy? Not too difficult?
- b. Pronunciation: Does the story contain any features such as intonation that the students will enjoy imitating and improving their pronunciation?
- c. Content/ Subject matter: Will the story interest the students? Is it relevant to their need? Is it amusing? Is it memorable?
- d. Visuals: Do the illustration relate to the text and support the students' understanding? Are they attractive to the age of the students? Are they big enough for all the class to see?
- e. Encourage participation: Is there any natural repetition to encourage participation in the text and provide pattern practice, pronunciation practice, to recycle language items and develop memory skills?
- f. Motivating: Will the story motivate the students?
- g. Arouse curiosity: Will the story arouse their curiosity?
- h. Create positive attitudes: Will the children respond positively to the story and develop positive attitudes towards the target language, culture, and towards language learning?
- i. Language content: Is the language representative of what is spoken in the target culture? Does the story give any information about life in the target culture?

Then Andrew Wright (1995:14-15) add how to choose a story are as follows:

- a. Which will engage the children within the first few lines (note that children often accept and like a story in the foreign language they might feel was childish in their own language)
- b. Which you like
- c. Which you feel is appropriate for the children
- d. Which the children will understand well enough to enjoy
- e. Which offers the children a rich experience of language
- f. Which does not have long descriptive passages
- g. Which is right for the occasion and in its relation with other things you are doing with the children
- h. Which you feel you can tell well

Research Method

a. The setting of The Research

The research is conducted in Pangeran Diponegoro Islamic College (STAI) of Nganjuk, East Java, Indonesia

b. The Subject of The Research

The subject used by the researcher is the college students of semester 1A of Pangeran Diponegoro Islamic College (STAI) of Nganjuk, East Java, Indonesia. The number of the students in this class is 25 students, consisting of 11 male and 14 female.

c. The Method of The Research

The method of the research is classroom action research. Mills (2000: 6) states that action research is any systemic inquiry conducted by teacher, researcher, principals, school counselors, or other stakeholders in the teaching/learning environment, to gather information about the ways that their particular schools operate, how they teach, and how well their students learn. This information is gathered with the goals of gaining insight, developing reflective practice, effecting positive changes in the social environment (and educational practices in general), and improving student outcomes and the lives of those involved.

The action research deals with identify the problem, action planning, implementation, evaluation, and reflection. Then the action research needs teachers to explore how they teach and how well their students learn in order to decide what the future practice should be done by them and enhance the quality of education for the teachers and their students.

The reasons why the writer used action research are:

1. Action research approached education as unified exercise, seeing a teacher in class as the best judge of her total educational experience.
2. The theory and practice of education for teachers were encouraged to develop their own personal theories of education from their own practice.
3. As a teacher understood the situation and the problems of the students, therefore the teacher was able to choose a god solution to be applied in the classroom.
4. The result of the research could improve the quality of education for herself and her pupils.

d. The procedure of The Research

The procedure of the action research are planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting.

e. The Technique of Collecting and Analyzing Data

The writer needs two kinds of the data, qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data we used in this research are observation, interview, documentation, questionnary. The researcher found quantitative data by doing test. In this research, the researcher gives a pre-test and post-test to know the students' speaking ability before and after teaching speaking using storytelling. Its aim to know whether the students' speaking ability can improve or not when they are taught using storytelling.

f. Technique of Analyzing Data

There were two techniques in analyzing data, qualitative and quantitative data. In analyzing qualitative data, the writer uses Constant Comparative Method which is suggested by Glasser and Strauss (1980: 105). The method has four steps namely: (1) comparing incidents applicable to each category; (2) integrating categories and their properties; (3) delimiting the theory; and (4) writing the theory.. In quantitative technique of analyzing data, the writer used the students' previous mark(pre-test) and in the end of the lesson, the writer gave the students post-test in order to know whether using story telling could improve the students' English speaking ability or not. The results of the tests were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Result of the Study

Based on the result of the research, it can be proposed that storytelling can improve students speaking competence. When storytelling were implemented in teaching speaking it could improve the students' fluency, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and content. Besides, the using of storytelling can improve classroom situation of speaking class better.

This finding is supported by the research result stated in pre-test and post- test. That the students' average scores of each element improved. The proves of this action research are as follows:

- a. The students' grammar improved. It proposed by the increasing of the average score of grammar from pre- test and post-test. Some sentence from storytelling help them in making good sentence.
- b. The students' vocabulary improved. It proposed by the increasing of the average score of vocabulary from pre- test and post-test. Some words from storytelling enrich their vocabulary. By practising the storytelling, the students can use the appropriate vocabulary. They also able to make sentence in various words or not monotonous words.
- c. The students' content improved. It proposed by the increasing of the average score of content from pre- test and post-test. Practice and practice in telling the story make their competence in content more better.

- d. The students' pronunciation improved. It proposed by the increasing of the average score of pronunciation from pre-test and post-test. In pre-test some students could not pronounce some words that use letter 'r' but after post-test they able to pronounce the words like September, server, driver.
- e. The students' fluency improved. It proposed by the increasing of the average score of fluency from pre-test and post-test. Because the students were free in express their idea so they can telling the story fluently.

The strengthness of speaking using storytelling are the students feel that the teacher/lecturer is giving them something very personal, It is often easier to understand a story being told than one which is read aloud because storytelling give motivation, meaning, fluency, language awareness, and stimulus for the students speaking. Beside storytelling made them eagernes for the model and tried to tell the story. Despite having the strongness, storytelling also has weaknesses when it is applied in teaching language. The weaknesses are the teacher/lecturer must learn the story well enough to tell it without the book because he/she might some mistake in English and sometime the class need more time.

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