

Information Gap Activities Through TPS Strategy Improved Students' Speaking Skill

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Abstract

Based on the preliminary stage of the research, the problem that exists in the classroom was students score below the standard minimum score. The students were lack of vocabulary and afraid to speak up, so they cannot express their idea. To solve the problem, information gap activities and think pair share cooperative learning model strategy implemented in the research. This research tries to prove how the information gap activities through think pair share cooperative learning model strategy can improve students' speaking skill at the 6th grade Muhammadiyah 5 Elementary School of Malang. Classroom action research was the research design of this research. The research was design to solve and improved students speaking skill. Two cycles consisting of three meetings were conducted in this research and two extra meeting for each cycle only for the student's final test. The research procedures of this research were planning, implementing, observing and implementing. Observation checklist, field notes, interview, questionnaire, and students score were the instrument of this research. The result of the research was in cycle one 66.67% and, in a cycle, two 76.67%.

Keywords: *information gap, think pair share, speaking skill*

Everybody needs to know and learn English to follow the developments because English is an international language. There are a lot of tools around us presented English. Teaching English for the younger generation is a must to give a basis knowledge. Teaching speaking is not easy as it is, according to Brown (2001) speaking skill is difficult language skill to learn because it covers performance variable, stress, a rate of delivery, intonation, interaction, etc.

Muhammadiyah 5 Elementary School of Malang is an Islamic primary school. Here, the research focus on Muhammadiyah 5 Elementary School of Malang. Muhammadiyah 5 Elementary School of Malang add English as an extracurricular. The vision and mission of the school are providing basic knowledge to prepare the students faced more complicated English material in junior and senior high school since it will be one of a national examination subject. Muhammadiyah 5 Elementary School of Malang applied curriculum KTSP 2004 since curriculum 2013 do not provide English anymore. The school policy determined the standard minimum score of English was 65 in range 1 until 100.

According to the observation and preliminary stage in this research that held in Muhammadiyah 5 Elementary School of Malang at 6th grade of students. As a result, firstly, the students had a problem to express their idea by using English. They did not have opportunities to convey their minds but it was hard for them to speak up because the students were lack of vocabulary. Secondly, from the observation, the teaching and learning technique or activities was monotonous. The students were asked to read aloud some text and they felt bored unmotivated in the teaching and learning process. It can be shown that some of them were busy and did not concentrate on teaching and learning materials. Thirdly, the students afraid to speak up because they were afraid to state wrong vocabulary, pronunciation, or sentences. Fourthly, the students did not have any confidence to speak English. It is known that teaching speaking to the students at elementary school is a difficult skill to teach. The researcher needs to find meaningful activities that able to invite students to speak up.

(Basturkmen, 1994; Brown, 2001; Harmer, 1991; Nue& Reeser, 1997; Raptou, 2001; Scrivener,2005; Sasson, 2008; Ur, 1996) states that IGA has some advantages to improved students speaking skill, enjoyable, and reduce nervousness. Since the elementary students waste a lot of time if the students were work alone, the researcher tried to find a learning strategy that students able to work and sharing their idea. (Brown, 2001; Killen, 1996; Kagan, 2001; Lyman, 1981; Roswati, 2014; Slavin, 2005 and Usman, 2015) states TPS cooperative learning able to improve learning style and students speaking skill. Since there was any previous research conducted research using information gap and think pair share cooperative learning, the researcher implemented the strategy to 6th-grade students of Muhammadiyah 5 Elementary School of Malang. The research question of this research was how information gap activities through TPS strategy to improve students speaking ability at 6th grade of Muhammadiyah 5 Elementary School of Malang.

The aim of the research was to know that information gap activities through TPS strategy improve students speaking skill at 6th grade of Muhammadiyah 5 Elementary School of Malang. The research expected give students and teacher knowledge about teaching and learning way. It focused on student's fluency, accuracy, and confidence based on the curriculum 2004 that used in the school. The students score analyzed by using O'Malley and Pierce (1996) scoring rubric. Two cycles conducted in this research. Each cycle has different material and applied different information gap activities which spotting the difference, describing and drawing, and rearranging text.

Speaking was really needed in order to interact with other people. Richard (2008) and Thornbury (2005) stated the function of speaking was interaction, transaction and oral performance of an idea. Bashir (2011) mentioned that speaking was a message delivered through words of mouth. Brown (2001) speaking is a difficult skill to master, the speaker challenged to clustering, redundancy, reduce form, perform variable, colloquial language, expression, a rate of delivery, pronunciation, and interaction in order to deliver the message.

Harris (1989) information gap activities can provide good practice in speaking and give a chance student to speak, interact and exchange information among them. Kayi (2006) state the information gap as a learning activity where the students have a duty to work with his/her partner. Liao (2001) mention information gap gives opportunities to the students to modify their interaction. The strategy is communication exercise which done by two students must exchange information to fill the gaps information they have. Goh as cited in Brogan (2006) people need to communicate in order to get and exchange information.

According to Neu and Nesser (1997), the information gap is extremely effective in an English classroom. The activity gives the student the opportunity to speak up. The students able to produces more word than they would otherwise. Brown (2001) states information gap activities should be implemented via some strategies to extend teaching and learning activities in order to give extra time, effort and attention. Information gap served many purposed such as solve a problem, collect information, exchange information etc. Information gap will be more effective if the activities combined with another teaching and learning strategy such as think pair share cooperative learning, etc.

Based on Kagan (2001) cooperative learning is a group of students who working together to reach a common goal in learning activities. Kagan (1994) states TPS was one model of cooperative learning that the students think together, and sharing their ideas in pairs. Lyman (1981) states think pair share is a strategy that able improves student's communication and increases their sense of involvement in the classroom.

(Afrizal, 2015; Almira, 2017; Defrioka, 2016; Ismaili, 2016; Rahimi, 2016; and Watamni, 2012) in the previous study, the IGA able to improve students reading and speaking. Brown (2001), information gap activities can implement via some teaching-

learning strategy to improve the success rate. Here, I combined information gap activities with a think pair share a cooperative learning model strategy.

Research Methodology

According to (Arikunto, 2018; Burns, 1999; Borgia, 2003; Mills, 1997; McKay, 2008; and Nunan, 1992) states classroom action research is the best research design to solve the problem that happened in the classroom because the research design increased the quality of teaching and learning process. In conducting the research, I carried out the action 2 cycles considered three meetings cycle 1 and three meetings cycle two. I designed the plan and observed the teaching and learning activities by myself because I am an English teacher at Muhammadiyah 5 Elementary School of Malang.

I implementing this design to improve students speaking ability of the sixth-grade students at Muhammadiyah 5 Elementary School of Malang. This research adopted the Kemmis and McTaggart's classroom action research root model as cited in Burns (2010) which consists of four steps which are planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. The number of cycles depends on the result of reflection in a cycle. If the first cycle failed to solve the problem, it needs to revise the planning stage and the strategy based on the result of the reflection to avoid the same problems happen in the next cycle and implement it in the next cycle.

The setting and subject of the research were 6th-grade students of Muhammadiyah 5 Elementary School of Malang in the first semester academic year 2018/2019. English scheduled two meetings per week and the time allotment for each meeting was 2 x 35 minutes. There were 28 students in the classroom in the 6th grade. The preliminary test conducted before implementing the strategy, the result of the preliminary stage, it was found that the students score 17.86% out of 28 students were in the "poor" category, 39.28% of them were in the "fair" category, 35.71% out of 28 students were in the "good" category, and 7.14% of them were in the "very good" category.

The lesson was scheduled for 6 meetings that 3 meetings were for cycle 1 and 3 meeting was for cycle 2 in implementing the strategy, and 2 extra meeting only for the final test. The schedule of teaching and learning process before and after implemented the strategy is in the table below.

No.	Date/Time	Activities	Notes
1	July 23 rd – August 4 th 2018	Preliminary Research	Observation
2	August 11 th 2018	Observation & Preliminary Test	Interview, Questionnaire, Telling story
3	August 15 th 2018	Cycle 1	1 st Meeting Material 1 Spot the Difference
4	August 18 th 2018	Cycle 1	2 nd Meeting Material 1 Describe & Draw
5	August 25 th 2018	Cycle 1	3 rd Meeting Material 1 Re-arrange Text
6	August 29 th 2018	Final Test of Cycle 1	5 th Meeting Presenting the Work
7	September 1 st 2018	Cycle 2	6 th Meeting Material 2 Spot the Difference
8	September 5 th 2018	Cycle 2	7 th Meeting Material 2 Describe & Draw
9	September 8 th 2018	Cycle 2	8 th Meeting Material 2

The researcher acted as a teacher and observer. The researcher taught the classroom and observed everything that happens in the classroom. The instrument of the research was an interview, questionnaire, field notes, observation checklist, and students speaking score. The criteria of success of the research were 70% out of 28 students achieved scores higher than equal to 65 and at least 70% of student's response was good. The data collected from student presentation and discussion. There were two speaking scores collected at the end of each cycle.

Finding and Discussion

Based on the findings, it was found that information gap activities through a cooperative learning model think pair share was very effective to improve students speaking skill in the classroom. The variety of information gap task gives a powerful impact on students. I used some variations of information gap activities implemented in the research which are spotting the difference, describing and drawing, and rearranging text. There were different materials applied in cycle one and cycle two.

In the meeting, one of the cycle one, most of the students just silent and some asked back about the meaning of my question. I answered the question of using code-switching. In this meeting, the students were asked to do the first information gap activities spotting the difference. A lot of students still confused about the instruction of the activity because it was the first time the students did the activities. In meeting two, the students were able to follow teacher instruction but most of the students were hard to understand what they will do. In this meeting, the students did the second information gap activities describing and drawing. In meeting three, the students were able to follow teacher instructions and able to do the information gap activities. Most of them were listening carefully to teacher instructions. In this meeting, the students did the third information gap activities re-arranging text. In meeting four, they were asked to present and discussed their work that has been done in the previous meeting. The researcher collected students speaking score during this meeting.

The student's score did not meet the criteria of success in the first cycle. I found that the result was not satisfactory because lots of students still got a score under the KKM. It happened because, first, the result of the student's achievement had not achieved mark higher than or equal to 65 based on the KKM (minimum standard of learning mastery in the school) or were in "good" category (passing grade of the score=9) in speaking level because only 66.67% from 28 students were passed the KKM. Second, the information gap task needs improvement in the material and instruction to increase students' interest. The students felt confused because this was the first time for them to do the information gap task. Moreover, the class becomes so crowded during discussion and presentation. Third, based on the observation checklist in the first cycle, the student's participation in teaching and learning was low because the students had difficulty in vocabulary. I drilled the students more in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency. I also needed to consider time management because information gap activity with a think pair share cooperative learning strategy is a time-consuming activity. Therefore, the researcher needed to conduct Cycle 2 because the result did not meet the requirement of criteria of success. The researcher revised the plan before implementing the strategy. The researcher changed the material theme, added warming up activities and drilling student's vocabulary.

In the meeting five of cycle two, the students were drilled in pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency. The students were felt readier to face information gap activities. The students did the information gap activities spotting the difference in this meeting. In meeting six, the students were more relaxed because of warming up activities. The students did the

information gap activities describing and drawing. In meeting seven, the researcher reviewed the last material in the previous meeting. The researcher showed the answer to information gap activities re-arranging text and after that, the students were asked to do the information gap activities re-arranging text. In meeting eight, I gave a final test of cycle two. The result showed students achieved the KKM in the school. According to the oral speaking test conducted on September, 12th 2018 it was found that no students score was in the “poor” category, 23.33% out of 28 students score were in “fair” category, 30% out of 28 students score were in “good” category, 36.67% out of them were in “very good” category and 10% out of 28 students score was an excellent category. It can be concluded that 76.67% or 23 students score from 28 students score passed the KKM.

Based on the findings, the strategy improved students speaking ability because it was facilitated the students find a lot of vocabulary that provides in the task and tried to pronounce it. Then, think pair share cooperative learning facilitated students to express their ideas, finding and opinion to other friends. The students were braver to speak up in front of the class because they were not present it alone. They were felt braver to speak up, to express their idea, comment, an opinion about something that they have found while they were doing the task. The strategy reduced student’s hesitation or embarrassed, and increased their confidence.

Conclusion

The finding in the current research regarding the use of information gap activities through think pair share cooperative learning model strategy indicated significant improvement on the students score and speaking ability. Hence, it can be concluded that the activities and the teaching and learning strategy are capable to improve students speaking skill. Information gap activities through think pair share cooperative learning model strategy were implemented to the 6th grader's students of Muhammadiyah 5 Elementary School of Malang. The information gap activities were combined with a think pair share a cooperative learning model strategy in this research. Information gap activities were used as the beginning activity, the students should find the information and answer in the task individually. Then, the students were sharing their answer or information to their pairs and exchange it. Think pair cooperative learning model strategy implemented after the students finished finds the right answer to information gap tasks. The steps of strategy were, they shared their ideas and thought together with the whole pairs in the classroom under group or pairs presentation discussion. Hence, the strategy gave opportunities to practice speaking ability by communicating certain information. It was also increased the students’ motivation and confidence to speak in English while group presentation and discussion. Hence, by using it continuously, they felt motivated and confident to speak in English.

This information gap activities through think pair share cooperative learning model strategy that implemented in this research has a weakness such as the strategy consumes much time, if the teacher does not have enough skill to control the class, the class will become crowded and uncontrollable, and the instructional must be understandable or the students will get misunderstanding about the task.

For the next researchers who are interested in taking a similar topic as the current research, they can take various kinds of information gap activities because there were still lots of activities. A further different researcher can use the information gap as a primary task and combine it with different teaching and learning strategy.

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