

The Use of Work in Pairs Strategy with Picture Media to Enhance Students' Speaking Ability

Lailia Dwi Khasanatin¹, Sukma Nur Ardini², Nularsih³

¹PPG Prajab Gel. 2, Pascasarjana, Universitas PGRI Semarang, Jl. Lingga Raya No.8 Semarang, 50232

²PPG Prajab Gel.2, Pascasarjana, Universitas PGRI Semarang, Jl. Lingga Raya No.8 Semarang, 50232

³Guru Bahasa Inggris, SMPN 6 Semarang, Jl.Pattimura No 9 Semarang, 50123

E-mail: ppg.lailiakhasanatin91@program.belajar.id

ABSTRACT

This Classroom Action Research (CAR) is applied to enhance students' speaking skills at SMPN 6 Semarang. The subjects of this research were 32 first-semester students in 9th grade. Two cycles were applied to complete the procedures for action research, namely planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. Classroom observation, document analysis, pre-test, and post-test are used by the researcher to collect data. The findings showed that the Work in Pairs method with picture media can enhance students' speaking skills in class. This can be seen from the improvement of students' speaking skills in pre-test and post-test at each cycle. In pre-test, the students got 68.7. Meanwhile the average in 1st cycle is 74.3 and in 2nd cycle is 80.1. Therefore, the gained scores of students' speaking skills in pre-test to 1st post test is 5.6 and 5.8 from post-test 1 to post-test 2.

Keywords: *speaking, work in pairs, pictures.*

1. INTRODUCTION

There are four skills in English that everyone should master, namely speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Gynan and Baker in Marsevani & Habeebanisya, 2022)). Speaking is one of the language skills that important because speaking as a primary tool to communicate each other. It is supported by (Darmuki et al., 2018) that by speaking, a person is expected to communicate, convey ideas and messages, interact, and share information with others to be understood by the other person. In the other hand, most of students get difficult and afraid to speak English or share their opinion to each other. It caused by some factors, those are; motivation, interest, teaching strategy and using teaching media Nagauleng et al. (2021). One of strategy that can be used in speaking is Work in pairs. Achmad and Yusuf (2014) said that Work in pairs is one of the interaction patterns used in language classes. Work in pairs can create an interaction to communication between two people or more. It is related with Tubbs and Moss in

Munawarah & Novianty (2020) stated that communication is the process of forming meaning between two or more people. Achmad and Yusuf (2014) stated that after implementing Work in pairs strategy in the class, students' speaking anxiety was lower than before applying Work in pairs strategy. Then, it also increased students' confidence in speaking English. It is also supported by Dalisa et al. (2015). It found that the Work in Pairs method can reduce students' anxiety in learning English. Based on the previous studies, it can be seen that a few researchers tried to improve students' English skill using work in pairs.

Besides that, the use of media in teaching speaking can support to gain the learning objectives. By using teaching media, teacher can increase the students' motivation and create an interesting learning atmosphere and alternative way to create suitable and interesting techniques related to students' condition (Nagauleng et al., 2021). Wulandari (2012) said that delivering materials in the teaching learning process accompanied by media will be clearer, more meaningful, and more

interesting for the students than the one using nothing. Based on observation conducted in 9th grade students of SMPN 6 Semarang, it found that the students' speaking skills were relatively low. They had difficulties in expressing ideas and opinions orally as they were afraid of making mistakes and not confident to speak English. They also had difficulties in pronouncing certain English words. Therefore, most of them preferred to be silent and not fully participate in classroom activities. To help the students organize their thinking and focusing their idea, the researcher used picture as a media in applying Work in pairs strategy. Picture is a general verbal communication that can be understood and available everywhere. Pictures give real description of an object which are portable and can be used anytime and help an understanding on objects which are difficult to be observed (Wulandari, 2012). There are 2 types of pictures in two cycles that applied in this research, they are a picture and pictures strip story. Nurdini (2018) stated that pictures can be employed for very creative use in communicative language teaching. Using pictures as an aid in English speaking can help students to produce and memorize more ideas so it can make their speaking skills increased. Kosdian (2017) also explained in his thesis: Improving Students Speaking Skill by Using Pictures Strip Story. It found that the first-year students of SMA 1 Luragung could improve their speaking skills through pictures strip story. Therefore, the students' ability in speaking will improve because they would be help by Work in pairs strategy using the pictures.

Based on the previous studies above, the researcher applied Work in pairs with pictures media to enhance students' speaking ability on "Agreement and Disagreement Expressions" in 9th grade of Junior High School in Semarang. By using the strategy, the students will be able to learn English speaking effectively because

they can practice with their pairs cooperatively.

2. METHODOLOGY

Classroom Action Research (CAR) is used in this research. According to Gasperz & Utkolseja (2020) Classroom Action Research (CAR) is reflective research by taking certain actions aimed at improving learning practices in the classroom professionally and has an essential role in scientific research because it determines the quality of research results. Therefore, the researcher would use the Classroom Action Research to help students improve their speaking skills by solving their speaking problems. Classroom Action Research (CAR) was conducted in four steps: (1) Planning, (2) Implementing, (3) Observing, and (4) Reflecting. This research was carried out in junior high schools in Semarang, 9th grade with 32 students in one class. The CAR is applied in the 1st semester with the topic of "Agreement and Disagreement Expressions".

Before the cycles was implemented in the research, an observation is firstly used to find problems faced by the students in speaking English. To support the finding, the recap document of the students' score was analyzed. Then, the students were given a pre-test to know their average grade. After that, 1st cycle by using the Work in Pairs strategy with a picture was applied to improve students' speaking skills. Then, the students were given a post-test to know their result. Next, 2nd cycle was applied by Work in Pairs strategy with picture strips story. After that, a post-test was shared to the students to get their average and then the result will be analyzed to find the improvement of their speaking. In addition, the score of students' speaking skills was measured according to Brown (2004), those are grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and pronunciation as the following table.

Table 1. The Indicator of Students' Speaking Skill

Speaking Aspects	Very poor (10-39)	Poor (40-60)	Quite good (61-70)	Good (71-80)	Very good (81-100)
Grammar	No correct grammar	Makes a lot of mistakes in grammar	Makes several mistakes in grammar	Makes a few mistakes in grammar	No mistakes in grammar
Vocabulary	Produces no vocabularies	Produces few vocabularies	Produces several vocabularies	Produces many vocabularies	Produces all vocabularies needed
Fluency	No speaking produces correctly	Doesn't speak fluently, thinks too long	Speaks rather fluently	Quite fluently, sometimes stops a moment	Speaks fluently
Pronunciation	No correct pronunciation	Makes a lot of mistakes in pronunciation	Makes several mistakes in pronunciation	Makes a few mistakes in pronunciation	No mistakes in pronunciation

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Finding

The first thing to do in this research is observation. Based on the observation, it showed that the students' speaking skill in the 9th grade SMPN 6 Semarang was low. The class situation was boring and not active therefore the class became ineffective. In addition, the students felt anxious or afraid when speaking in class. It is supported by the results of their average in pre-test is 68.7. The result is obtained by analyzing the document containing the grades of students that not applied the Work in pairs strategy previously. After that, the researcher applied 1st cycle and 2nd cycle and found the following result:

a. Applying Work in pairs strategy.

Applying Work in pairs strategy in a speaking class were successful to attract the students' interests and attention in learning. In 1st cycle, the researcher applied Work in pairs strategy by grouping the students in pairs based on their abilities which have been obtained through diagnostic tests. The result showed that through Work in pairs, the students were motivated and stimulated to speak English. Besides that, the students had pronounced some vocabularies better. The students' grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and pronunciation improved better in 1st cycle than in the preliminary test. It is shown in their

gained between pre-test and post-test 1 is 5.6. However, there are still some students had difficulty to pronounce some words and had no bravery to speak loudly. Therefore, the researcher determined a different treatment in the 2nd cycle. The researcher freed students to choose their partners so that the students feel more comfortable and confident with friends they liked. Almost all of them chose their seat mates because they felt close and understood each other. From the rearrangement treatment in 2nd cycle, it caused an increase in students' speaking abilities. This is proven by the results in post-test 2, namely 80.1. The distance from post-test 2 to post-test 1 is 5.8. The students who had experienced difficulties also decreased. The students felt confident in producing sentences that will be spoken. In addition, the students are also able to speak louder than before.

b. Using pictures as the media in Work in pairs strategy.

In implementing Work in pairs strategy, the researcher used pictures as media to help students to practice English speaking. According to the observation and pre-test result, the students tend not to be fluent in speaking practice and are still confused about what they are going to say. The students are also confused about

memorizing sentences or vocabularies that will be produced when speaking. Therefore, using picture media in Work in pairs, it will help students to practice English speaking, especially in terms of producing the vocabularies and their fluency. In 1st cycle, the research used a picture as media when students practiced speaking in pairs. The pictures are presented in printed form and each pair has 1 picture with the same topic. The picture in 1st cycle is about the atmosphere of the Independence Day competition at school. The students were asked to practice a dialogue about "Agreement and Disagreement Expressions" related on the picture in front of the class for collecting their scores. Based on their results, the students experienced an increase of 5.6 from pre-test. The students showed that the picture helpful in determining and remembering what they will talk about in post-test. Besides that, there were some of students who felt they are not optimal in their practice because they are confused about the story that will be developed from one picture that has been given. Therefore, the researcher used different pictures in 2nd cycle. The researcher applied pictures in picture strips form. Picture strips are a series of illustrated stories. The picture strips used by the researcher are about the students' activities in the library who want to borrow books. This was chosen so that it would be easier for students to determine which dialogue to practice because it is related to their activities at school. In addition, the use of picture strips can make the students easier to remember vocabularies and determine ideas that will be put into speaking practice. It is in line with the result of post-test 2 is 80.1 from post-test 1 is 74.3.

- c. Giving feedback on students' performance.
Giving feedback by the researcher as a teacher to students' speaking performance was very influential on subsequent results. The feedback that given can be some correction of

mistakes made by students during speaking. Delivering feedback must also be with appropriate intonation and not offend students, so that students would be able to gain meaningful understanding from what the researcher conveyed. In 1st cycle and 2nd cycle, the researcher provided feedback using an interpersonal approach to each pair who has done practice, not in front of the class. Therefore, the students felt comfortable and were not afraid when they made mistakes. Besides that, in 2nd cycle, the researcher added to gave praise and motivation to students, so that they felt encouraged to do better in speaking. Then, it was proven by the average of the students' speaking that increased in cycle by cycle.

- d. Accustoming students from accessing a dictionary.

Using a dictionary in English is important, especially for students who are studying English as a foreign language. They need a dictionary to explore many appropriate and desired vocabularies. In the 1st cycle and 2nd cycle, the students were allowed to open an electronic dictionary to help them find the right vocabularies for speaking practice. They collected the vocabularies first through dictionaries and then discuss it with their pairs. The researcher as a teacher was responsible for monitoring and checking students' progress. Not a few students also actively asked questions and discussed with the teacher regarding appropriate vocabularies and grammar. In the other hand, because there were so many students want to consult, so the class became crowded. Therefore in 2nd cycle, the researcher asked the students to practice pronouncing the correct vocabularies by imitating from an electronic dictionary. This way could minimize the mistakes that they made during speaking practice, especially vocabularies, grammar and pronunciation. This was showed in the students' average in post-test 1 and post-test 2.

Below is the summary of the students' average scores obtained from pre-test, post-test 1 and post-test 2:

Table 2. The students' average scores in Pre-test

No	Aspects	Pre-test scores	Category
1	Grammar	66.8	Quite good
2	Vocabulary	70	Quite good
3	Fluency	71.2	Good
4	Pronunciation	66.8	Quite good
Average		68.7	Quite good

Some students were still hesitant to speak during the pre-test because they lacked confidence and were worried about making mistakes. They frequently relied on their notes or perhaps just read out their dialogue. Most of the words were pronounced wrongly, and most of the pronunciations were incorrect grammatically. Additionally, their utterances were not linked perfectly to one another. This is related on the table 2, it is showed that the average of the students' speaking is in category of "quite good" with 68.7 points which it is needed a good treatment to enhance their category.

The students' speaking abilities improved when Work in Pairs with the

picture as the media is applied in the class. The outcomes of the students' performance on the post-test showed this improvement. They made fewer grammatical mistakes and had better pronunciation in the post-test. Additionally, their vocabularies were varied. The students were more confident and fluent in practicing the dialogue. Besides that, the facial expressions and gestures were used by them. In addition, the delivery of the dialogue was equipped with correct conjunctions which linked their ideas well. The findings of the students' averages score in pre-test and post-test are presented in the table below:

Table 3. The students' average scores between Pre-test and Post-test 1

No	Aspects	Pre-test	Post-test 1	Category	Improvements
1	Grammar	66.8	71.2	Good	4.4
2	Vocabulary	70	75.6	Good	5.6
3	Fluency	71.2	75	Good	3.8
4	Pronunciation	66.8	75.6	Good	8.8
Average		68.7	74.3	Good	5.6

After conducting Work in pairs with a picture and it was succeeded in 1st cycle with average 74.3 which it had "good" category. It was an improvement from "quite good" to be "good" category with a difference scores 5.6 from the average of 68.7. Then, the researcher applied a different treatment in 2nd cycle. It used Work in pairs with pictures strips. The 2nd

cycle was succeeded to apply the strategy. The students' speaking ability increased in grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and pronunciation. All of the categories had a "very good" scores except in grammar category, it had "good" category. The result is explained on the table below:

Table 4. The students' average scores between Post-test 1 and Post-test 2

No	Aspects	Post-test 1	Post-test 2	Category	Improvements
1	Grammar	71.2	76.2	Good	5
2	Vocabulary	75.6	81.2	Very good	5.6
3	Fluency	75	83.1	Very good	8.1
4	Pronunciation	75.6	80	Very good	4.4
Average		74.3	80.1	Very good	5.8

Table 4 showed that the average post-test scores are higher than the average pre-test score. The gain score of the students' speaking ability in pre-test to post-test 1 is 5.6 and in post-test 1 to post-test 2 is 5.8 showing that there is an improvement of students' speaking skills.

Discussion

Based on the observation, the students' speaking ability was quite low. It is supported with the result of pre-test. Therefore, the researcher applied Work in pairs strategy with pictures as media to improve their speaking ability. Work in pairs is one of the appropriate techniques to help students achieve their speaking abilities. It is in line with a research by Alejos (2017) that Work in pairs can improve the classroom's situation, increases students' motivation and concentration in speaking class. It is also supported with the value of students that became greater than before in cycle by cycle on this research. In pre-test, the students' average is 68.7. Then, it increased in the students' post-test by 5.6 after implemented Work in pairs with a picture as the media in 1st cycle. The students' average in post-test 1 is 74.3 and it is categorized a "good" criterion. In 2nd cycle, the students' average also got improvement when learning using Work in pairs with the pictures strip media. The average is 80.1 in post-test 2 with "very good" criteria. The difference in value between pot-test 1 and post-test 2 is 5.8.

The finding of this research is in line from Jatmiko (2017) that Work in pairs could improve students' speaking ability in

term of raising students' achievement in the case of fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar and content. Ahsanah & Utomo (2020) also supported that using group work activities could make the students speaking accuracy consisting of vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar and fluency was effectively improving in speaking skill than using conventional method. Work in pairs allowed students to correct each other about their progress. They also discuss with each other to find the right solution to their problems during the speaking practice. That is why Work in Pairs is the right method used to improve students' speaking skills because the method requires students to interact with their partners (Mulya, 2016).

The use of pictures as media that applied in the Work in Pairs strategy really helped students to speak English. Manurung (2023) explained that the use of picture affected on students' speaking skills. The students could express their ideas easily and they become brave to deliver their speaking in front of class. Using picture method is suitable method of teaching English speaking skills because pictures can help students to develop students' English speaking skills (Manurung, 2023). In this research, the researcher applied the pictures while implementing Work in pairs strategy. In 1st cycle, the researcher used a picture. It helped students to create a story line with "Agreement and Disagreement" topic. The student's ability got an improvement, it can be seen on the students' score in 1st cycle. Meanwhile in 2nd cycle, the researcher changed the picture into pictures strip.

Pictures strip can be a media that support the students speaking mastery more than using one picture (Turnip et al., 2020). It made the students easier when they practiced English speaking. It is proven with the students' result in post-test 2, there was an improvement on the scores. According to Turnip et al. (2020), the pictures strip story had a positive effect on students' speaking like it can stimulate the students to express their ideas and maintain the students' fluency in speaking. Therefore, the combination of Work in pairs and picture as media can solve the students' speaking problems like lack self-confidence, felt embarrassed to speak English, got anxiety, and had low speaking skills in English.

4. CONCLUSION

The result of this research is very important in teaching and learning speaking. The research results indicated Work in Pairs strategy with pictures media positively affected students' speaking skills in English. Work in pairs with pictures media is a suitable strategy and effective in speaking skills. This method can improve students' English speaking in 9th grade SMPN 6 Semarang. This is evidenced by the increasing results of the pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2 and the supported previous researches.

REFERENCES

- Achmad, D., & Yusuf, Y. Q. (2014). Observing pair-work task in an English speaking class. *International Journal of Instruction*, 7(1).
- Ahsanah, F., & Utomo, D. T. P. (2020). The Use of Digital Comic in Developing Student's English Competence. *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 8(2), 373–383. <https://doi.org/10.24256/ideas.v8i2.1660>
- Alejos, H. (2017). No Title ..الابتزاز الإلكتروني.. جرائم تنغذى على طفرة «التواصل ال. *Universitas Nusantara PGRI Kediri*, 01(May), 1–7. <http://www.albayan.ae>
- Brown, H. D. (2004). Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practices. H. Douglas Brown. In 2004.
- Dalisa, Y., Apriliaswati, & Husin. (2015). Reducing anxiety in speaking English through pair work. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran Khatulistiwa*, 4(2).
- Darmuki, A., Andayani, Nurkamto, J., & Saddhono, K. (2018). The development and evaluation of speaking learning model by cooperative approach. *International Journal of Instruction*, 11(2). <https://doi.org/10.12973/iji.2018.1129a>
- Gasperz, S., & Utkolseja, L. J. (2020). The Use of Serial Picture Media to Improve English Speaking Ability at SMP YPK Syaloom Klademak Sorong City. *Interaction: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa*, 7(2).
- Jatmiko, J. (2017). The Implementation Of Pair Work To Improve Students' English Speaking to The Second Semester at Pharmacist Program of Health Sciences Faculty of Kadiri University. *English Education: Journal of English Teaching and Research*, 2(1). <https://doi.org/10.29407/jetar.v2i1.733>
- Kosdian, O. (2017). Improving Students' Speaking Skill by Using Picture Strip Story. *Indonesian EFL Journal*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/10.25134/iefj.v2i2.642>
- Manurung, F. W. (2023). The Effectiveness of Using Picture as Media Towards Students' English Speaking Skills. *Education & Learning*, 3(1), 20–25. <https://jurnal.medanresourcecenter.org/index.php/EL/article/view/725>
- Marsevani, M., & Habeebanisya. (2022). a Classroom Action Research: Improving Speaking Skills Through Work in Pairs Technique. *E. TLEMC (Teaching and Learning English in Multicultural Contexts)*, 6(1), 16–22.
- Mulya, R. (2016). Technique, teaching speaking by applying pair work. *English Education Journal*, 7(1).
- Munawarah, M., & Novianty, R. (2020). Interpersonal Communication Between Lecturers and Students in Influencing Student's Learning Motivation. *MaPan*, 8(1).

<https://doi.org/10.24252/mapan.2018v8n1a11>

- Nagauleng, A. M., Saini, F., Saud, I. W., & Mamonto, H. z. (2021). Improving The Students Speaking Skills Through Picture at The Eight Grade Students of Mts Negeri 1 Bolaang Mongondow TIMUR. *British, Jurnal Bahasa Dan Sastra Inggris*, 10(1), 89–106.
- Nurdini, R. A. (2018). The Use of Picture to Improve Students' Speaking Skill in English. *IJET (Indonesian Journal of English Teaching)*, 7(2). <https://doi.org/10.15642/ijet2.2018.7.2.157-162>
- Turnip, E. C., Purba, A. P., & Sitompul, E. N. (2020). The Effect of using Picture Strip Story on Students' Speaking Skill. *Linguistic, English Education and Art (LEEA) Journal*, 3(2), 308–315. <https://doi.org/10.31539/leea.v3i2.1015>
- Wulandari, R. (2012). *The Use of Pictures to Improve The Students' Speaking Ability of XI Is 2 Of Sma N 1 Kasihan In Presented as Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Attainment of a Sarjana Pendidikan Degree in English Language Education ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.*