

## **Improving Speaking Skills Through Story-Telling Technique of Grade X DPIB 3 Students at SMK N 4 Semarang in the Academic Year of 2023/ 2024**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This paper point the study of researching the improvement of students in X DPIB 3 speaking skill using story-telling technique. The problem of this research was, firstly, the class was exposed using Indonesian or Javanese with little use of English. Secondly, the problems related to the students. They got difficulty to speak English fluently. Some of them said that the most difficult part in speaking was to find idea about what to speak. Thirdly, the problems related to teaching media. It didn't enhance students' speaking skill or give the students opportunity to practice their skill on speaking English with good pronunciation and fluency. Finally, students didn't have the place and media to practice their speaking skill. This study was established with 36 students of X DPIB 3 SMK N 4 Semarang. The data were employed from observation, interview, and action. The finding shows that there are improvement in students of X DPIB 3 speaking skill after learning the material using story-telling technique. Although the improvement is in the intermediate level, but there are an improvement.*

**Keywords:** *story-telling, speaking skill, teaching speaking, learning speaking*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Due to globalization, the importance of the English language, has become more abundantly clear. In English, there are four crucial skills that should be mastered by students. As Sadiku (2015) stated, as time has passed, the role of language plays is immense. The four skills are: reading, writing, listening, and speaking. They become the pillar of the English language, where each skill has their own role. In order to communicate properly and effectively with others, those four skills are needed by learners to perceive and generate spoken language. They're all intertwined to the point where a lack of competence in one will have a direct impact on the others (Christopher, 2016).

Despite the importance of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, speaking skill generally takes priority over the

others since speaking or, in other words, communication occurs frequently in one's everyday life, both in formal and informal contexts. Speaking ability is just as vital as other abilities that must be improved in order to improve communication among target language learners. In recent years, the importance of speaking skill in English both in educational and corporate areas has drawn our attention to the development of this skill. According to Angga Gunantar (2016), people are becoming more conscious of the importance of English not just for education, science, or technology but also because they understand that English may help them advance in their careers. It is due to the global trend of internationalization, English speaking skills is mandatory for being employed in a high competitive multi-national companies. In their learning

process, students are encouraged to collaborate and communicate with peers or teachers. As a result, in the educational policy, the ultimate goal for many national governments to ensure that students can speak more effectively in order to generate competent English speakers.

This will enable them to compete globally (Arif and Amin, 2021). The ability to communicate in English is needed as an essential skill. (John, Vega, & Amuthu, 2020) consider that in most of the cases, people express themselves by oral language and therefore, speaking is considered as the principal and productive language skill. According to Florez (as cited in Hadijah, 2014) the interaction process that involves producing, receiving, and processing information to develop meaning is called speaking. Speaking is as one of four basic skills, which is need to be understand because the main purposes of learning a language is to be able to communicate orally (Ananda, 2021). By having good English Speaking skill will be useful for the speaker in many situations and places in this era. Such as in the school education, apply to get the job, or when someone goes to the other country, because English is an international language (Arifin, 2017).

The ability to speak skillfully, provides the speaker with several distinct advantages. English Speaking skills are needed for both students and alumni. For students, it is used in performing their presentations when asking and answering questions or information, and delivering speech in an occasion or a ceremonial event, and so on. For

graduates, the speaking skill plays main role in doing the business communication or for having a good career as staff-workers in a multinational factories or companies.

The mastery in presenting the information in English will give the essential opportunities to workers to be succeed in their job at international relations-factories. It helps them to communicate in a clear manner of the important messages inside and outside of the companies or organization. It is prominent since the business works deals with asking and giving information or questions, stating the needs of the companies, representing position on an issue and building consensus. Therefore, knowing how to communicate in English is a must because it is needed to inform, to persuade, or to convince others in order to realize the goals for their companies' business. According to Rao (2019), there are several advantages of speaking skill: 1. To highly motivate and attract the customers in buying the products. 2. To improve the overall development of the speaker's personality. 3. To get better employment opportunities all over the world. 4. To interact with people all around the world. 5. To boost up the speakers' self-confidence. 6. To communicate effectively with others. 7. To pursue higher studies in foreign country. 8. To perform well in the job interviews. Mastering English will help them to understand the information being exposed in English. Having a good English can create enormous opportunities for innovation and healthy competition among students, which primarily put

fluency in English as the first priority.

Thus, it is crucial for students to acquire speaking skills for the purpose of communicative purposes (Iman, 2017). However, speaking English is not easy because English is a foreign language for Indonesian people. In the research conducted by Rahayu (2015), she states that students are finding it hard to speak English. As a matter of fact, It may not be easy for beginners to speak English particularly EFL learners. In addition, speaking has a crucial role in conveying messages which shows different characteristics from the written one. These could be seen from voice potentials, facial languages, signs, pitch, articulation, stress, rhythm and stopping.

There are some factors to measure the oral or speaking proficiency including accuracy, complexity, and fluency (Spring et al., 2019). Huges (as cited in Rahmawati, 2018) state that pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, fluency and comprehension are element of speaking. Fluency is the ability to keep the conversation going by expressing their ideas or messages without spending a lot of time searching for the vocabulary items needed, is the objective of many language learners.

Indonesian government makes English as a compulsory subject right from the elementary up to senior level or even tertiary university level in order to gain this aim. Meanwhile, pronunciation is one of the most important and problematic areas faced by learners while learning English despite the amount of training in classes (Gilakjani as cited in Celik and Kocaman,

2016). Referring to it, teachers are highly enhanced to design better learning materials and learning activities. Further, the learning activities include drill practice and game-based practice (Young & Wang, 2014). In order to reduce the problem of speaking, there are some techniques that can be used by EFL students. First, regular desensitization includes lessening, deep inhalation, conception, and so forth (Tsai, 2018). Second, strategy training involves learning and practicing skills focusing on developing individual speaking behavior. It can be conclude that the best way of mastering English is emphasizing on learning process, such as doing exercises, discusses, and debates. Then, the students will be actively involved in presenting their opinions or ideas freely according to the real condition.

SMKN 4 Semarang is one of vocational high schools in Semarang that taught English. In speaking performances, many students of X DPIB 3 Class of SMKN 4 Semarang had relatively low speaking skills. Regarding this matter, the researcher conducted observation to the X DPIB 3 class in the academic year of 2023/ 2024 to determine problems in students' speaking skills. Based on the observation and an interview with the English teacher, the researcher found some problems. Those problems were related to teaching and learning process, and students' speaking performance. Concerning students' problem in speaking skills, the researcher tried to solve those problems. Regarding the benefits of using story-telling technique and students' problems in speaking, the researcher and the English

teacher agreed to use story-telling technique to improve the students' speaking skills of Grade X DPIB 3 at SMKN 4 Semarang in the academic year of 2023/ 2024.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

This research aims to investigate the improvement students of X DPIB 3 speaking skill after the implementation of story-telling technique in Talking about Entertainment material. In this study, the subjects were 36 students. Observations were made to see the difficulties faced by students when speaking English. Then, to find out more in-depth student perceptions, interviews were also given to the English teacher who teaches X DPIB 3 and some of students in X DPIB 3. The participants of this study were thirty six students, aged 15-16 years, majoring in DPIB SMK N 4 Semarang. The procedures of action research are as follows:

### **a. Identifying the Problem**

Before planning the action, the researcher identified the problem faced by the students. The problems were identified by using some techniques, such as observation, interview, questionnaire, and pre-test. The researcher also did pre-interview with the teacher and some of the students. The interview with the teacher was aimed to know the teacher difficulties in teaching speaking, while interview with students was aimed to find the students' difficulties in speaking, their opinion according to the teacher' method, and their feeling during speaking class. The result of interview will be strengthened by the questionnaire data. Meanwhile, pre-test is done in order to know students speaking competence.

### **b. Planning the Action**

After identified the problem, the researcher prepared everything related to the action that would be implemented in the classroom. It consisted of some steps, as follows:

- 1) Making the lesson plan, preparing the material, and students' worksheet.
- 2) Preparing teaching aids, such as video, laptop, LCD, etc.
- 3) Preparing a sheet of paper to record classroom situation during the method is applied.
- 4) Preparing camera to take pictures of the teaching and learning process.
- 5) Preparing the instrument and scoring rubric.

In this research, the collected data involved two kinds of data: quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data was gained from test. The researcher gave the students tests in order to know the result of the technique that was used to improve students' speaking skill. There were pre-test and post-test which were used to collect the data of the improvement. The pre-test and the post test data were collected using speaking project. The students were instructed to make a video of them talking about entertainment. Therefore, the pre-test was given before the action was applied. Later on, the result of students' speaking skill analysis will be used to measure the improvement of their speaking skill. For collecting qualitative data the researcher used interview, observation, and documentation.

### **1. Interview**

The interview was carried out to identify the students' problem before the researcher conducting the research. Moreover, it was aimed to get information from the students'

and the English teacher's idea about the use of the method in improving students' speaking skill, the strengths and weaknesses of the implementation of story-telling when they are used in teaching speaking. The interview covered their personal perception, experiences, opinion, and ideas related to this classroom action research. Tomal (2003, p. 36) states some steps in conducting interview, they are: 1) Prepare question, 2) Plan logistics, 3) State opening, 4) Establish rapport, 5) Obtain written consent, 6) Conduct question, 7) Record responses, 8) Summarize the sessions, 9) State the next step and 10) Thank the interviewee.

## 2. Observation

The observation is a technique of collecting data by closely watching and noticing events during the teaching-learning process in the classroom. In this research, the observation was carried out to cover the process of story-telling implementation in teaching speaking. The observation notices classroom events and interaction between teacher and students and among students in the classroom. Observation was conducted by the researcher and collaborator. The collaborator has a role to evaluate teacher or researcher's way of teaching in the teaching and learning process.

## 3. Questionnaire

Questionnaire is the technique in asking the students' feeling, opinion, or ideaby non face-to-face interaction. Researchers ask students to fill out 10 questions closed-ended questionnaire using

$$S = \frac{R}{N} \times SM$$

Likert Scale and 5 opened-ended questionnaire, the questionnaire aims to identify the difficulties they face when speaking English as well

as students' opinions about speaking English and story-telling.

## 4. Test

The test was conducted before and after the implementation of story-telling in the teaching learning process. According to Brown (2004: 3) a test is amethod of measuring a person's ability, knowledge or performance in a given domain. The goal in giving the test was to measure students' achievement on speaking.

In research, collecting the data plays an important role because the conclusion of the research is obtained from data. After collecting the data, the researcher classified the data into two groups as follows: (1) quantitative data and (2) qualitative data. In analyzing quantitative data, the researcher used descriptive statistics analysis. It is used to find means, percentage of students' achievement and so forth. The steps in analyzing quantitative data are as follows:

- 1) Checking the students' answer on the written test that is carried out the implementation of cycles whether they are right or wrong.
- 2) Computing the students' correct answers.
- 3) Calculating the students' score on speaking project is done as follows;
  - a) Calculating the percentage of the correct pronunciation, fluency, and clarity of each student by using percentage correction. The percentage is used to measure the students' speaking skill. The percentage formula that is used is:

Where:

S= the students' mastery in %

R = the students' right answer

N = the maximum number of the whole answer  
 SM = standard mark (100) (Arikunto, 1998: 38)

b) After analyzing the scores of the speaking project, the writer uses a statistical technique to find students' mean score. The researcher uses the following formula:

$$X = \frac{M}{N}$$

Where:

M = mean (the score)  
 X = the total score  
 N = number of students

Meanwhile, to analyze the qualitative data, the researcher used a technique developed by Miles and Huberman (see Sugiyono, 2012 p. 337) which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. The qualitative data that had been collected through the observations and interviews were reduced to find the relevant data needed. The scattered data in the observation and the interview field note were agglomerated into particular themes. Those data were correlated one another. Then, the data were displayed in narrative form with detail explanation and finally the conclusion was drawn. In the process, the stage might be different. It was possible to move back and forth until the conclusion could be drawn.

### 3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

On this part, the researcher presented the comparison between findings on Cycle I, and on Cycle II.

The discussion of the research was also presented on this part. Beside students' improvement on speaking performance in the teaching and learning process, quantitative data analysis also showed the students' improvement. To know if there was an improvement, the researcher compared the students' mean score from the pre-test to the post-test.

As shown on the table above, the students' score on all aspects increased from the pre-test to Cycle I, from Cycle I to Cycle II, and from Cycle II to the post-test. It proved that story-telling improved students' speaking performance. Those aspects were pronunciation, fluency, and clarity as proposed by Nakatsuhara (2007: 102). Students' mean of total score in the pre-test, Cycle I, Cycle II, and the post-test also indicated an improvement on their speaking performance. The table below is the evidence.

	Mean	Maximum	Minimum
Pre-test	65	80	50
Cycle I	70	80	60
Cycle II	83	90	60

The students' mean of total score increased. In percentage, the students' score increased 7,7% in Cycle I compared to pre-test. In Cycle II, it increased 27,7% compared to the pre-test. It increased 18,6% in the post-test compared to the Cycle I. It proved that story-telling improved students' speaking performance. In addition, the improvements of students' speaking performance was also proved by using normalized gain score proposed by Hake (1998: 65). Normalized gain score was used to analyze the students' improvement in speaking performance.

$$= \frac{\langle g \rangle}{100 - \langle pre \rangle}$$

The result of normalized gain score was 0.52. It showed that the improvement of students' speaking performance was categorized a medium improvement according to Hake (1999:1).

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

The purpose of the research was to improve students' speaking performance by using story-telling. The subjects of this research were X DPIB 3 Grade students of SMKN 4 Semarang in the academic year of 2023/ 2024. The research was begun on July 28, 2023 and ended on September 18, 2023. The research conducted in two cycles because the objectives of the research were achieved in Cycle II according to a discussion with the English teacher as the collaborator in this study. Story-telling in Cycle I improved students' speaking performance with some additional actions. The actions were based on a discussion with the collaborator during planning stage. Those actions were: creating students' worksheet that promoted speaking activity, giving pronunciation drills, implementing brainstorming, and creating situation cards. However, there were still problems found in Cycle I to solve in Cycle II. To solve problems in Cycle I, the researcher and the collaborator agreed to conduct six revised actions in Cycle II. Those actions were: using interesting media, designing students' worksheet that contained more speaking activities compared with Cycle I, giving pronunciation drills, using situation cards with various expressions, and performing the story-telling. All the actions in Cycle II successfully improved students' speaking performance based on qualitative data analysis taken from field notes and interview transcripts.

Quantitative data analysis was taken from the results of the students' speaking assessment by the researcher and the collaborator based on the pre test, Cycle I, Cycle II, and the post-test. Compared with the pre-test result, the students' mean of total score increased 7,7% in Cycle I, it increased 18,6% in Cycle II, and it increased 27,7%. It proved that story-telling technique improved students' speaking performance. In addition, the result of normalized gain score was 0.52. It showed that students' speaking performance was improved. The improvement was categorized as a medium improvement.

#### **IMPLICATIONS**

The research proved that performing story-telling improved students' speaking skills. It also improved teaching and learning process of speaking, for examples: students got more courage to speak English, it allowed more chances to speaking activity, it made the lesson more interesting, and it increased their involvement in speaking activity. The researcher also believes that story-telling is suitable for students with low speaking skills. However, the researcher trusts that some actions should be conducted to make the story-telling run effectively in a class which the students have low speaking skills. Those actions are: creating students' worksheet that promotes speaking activity, giving a pronunciation drill, implementing brainstorming to help the students to share their idea, using interesting media, and creating situation cards.

#### **SUGGESTIONS**

After conducting the research, there are some suggestions for English teachers, students, and other researchers. Those suggestions related to how to implement story-telling technique efficiently and

effectively.

1. For English teachers  
First, they should plan the time allocation well before implementing story-telling technique. Firstly, using this technique requires teachers to give chances for all students to practice speaking several times before they perform the story-telling technique. In addition, the story-telling itself requires considerable length of time to make it works well for all students. Secondly, English teachers should give authentic models for the story-telling because students could learn how the language actually works in the real life. Thirdly, English teachers need interesting media to make the students perform the story-telling eagerly. There are many languages experiences that they need to understand. If they have lack of interest, story-telling would turn into a boring activity.
2. For students  
Firstly, they should have positive attitude towards the story-telling technique. If they do not think that the story-telling gives them useful skills, it would not work well. Secondly, they should practice various expressions outside the classroom. English is a foreign language in Indonesia and it is usually difficult to have a chance to speak English, so they should practice speaking with their friends. Thirdly, the students must not bored with practice speaking English. Note that to speak fluently and accurately, they have to practice regularly.
3. For other researcher  
Firstly, they should design the story-telling with topic familiar to the students and they should use relatively short and simple

monologues. Secondly, classroom management is important as there would be noises during story-telling, so they should know their students well. By knowing their characteristics, researchers should be able to decide the best way to manage them. Thirdly, as the Kurikulum Merdeka implemented scientific approach, the researchers should master this approach and integrate it on the story-telling technique.

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