The use of an action learning strategy in teaching speaking at the eleventh-grade students of MTS MIM Langsa

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Abstract

This study describes the implementation of an action learning strategy in teaching speaking to eighth-grade students of MTs MIM Langsa. It applies Classroom Action Research (CAR). The research subject was 30 students of eleventh graders in the academic year of 2020/2021. This research was conducted in two cycles consisting of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Data were collected through observation and tests. The finding shows that the application of active learning strategies helps the students to improve their speaking skills. This was identified by the result of the mean score of the second cycle was 73.16. This showed that the score was improved than the first cycle. The percentage of students who obtained >71 points also increased. Test of the cycle I indicated that only about 8 students obtained scores>71 (26.66%). While in cycle II, those who obtained scores>71 was 72% or about 24 students. This indicated that the score reached the KKM and it was concluded that the students' speaking ability was increasing. They were also more active and participative in the teaching and learning process.

Keywords: Action learning; Speaking; Strategy

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mendeskripsikan penerapan strategi pembelajaran tindakan dalam pengajaran berbicara pada siswa kelas VIII MTs. MIM Langsa. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK). Subjek penelitian adalah 30 siswa kelas sebelas tahun ajaran 2020/2021. Penelitian ini dilakukan dalam dua siklus yang terdiri dari perencanaan, tindakan, observasi, dan refleksi. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi dan tes. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan strategi pembelajaran tindakan membantu siswa untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara mereka. Hal ini diidentifikasi dengan hasil skor rata-rata siklus kedua adalah 73,16. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa skor tersebut meningkat daripada skor rata-rata siklus pertama. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa skor tersebut meningkat dari siklus pertama. Persentase siswa yang memperoleh nilai >71 juga meningkat. Tes siklus I menunjukkan bahwa hanya sekitar 8 siswa yang memperoleh nilai >71 (26,66%). Sedangkan pada siklus II, yang memperoleh nilai >71 adalah 72% atau sekitar 24 siswa. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa nilai tersebut mencapai KKM dan disimpulkan bahwa kemampuan berbicara siswa semakin meningkat. Mereka juga lebih aktif dan partisipatif dalam proses belajar mengajar.

Kata kunci: Berbicara; Strategi; Tindakan pembelajaran.

Introduction

Speaking is an important language skill that enables an individual to express him or herself to communicate and develop social relationships with others. Nunan (2003) defines speaking as a productive oral skill that involves the production of systematic oral expressions to convey meaning. In the context of foreign language learning, it is an essential skill for students to learn to acquire the ability to communicate in the target language. Although the significance of acquiring skills is obvious, many students find learning communicative skill challenging. One of the most common problems students' experiences is anxiety (Wati & Afrida, 2022). They tend to hinder speaking practice as they cannot express their thoughts in English fluently and clearly and are afraid of making mistakes. The need for more vocabulary often generates these.

Furthermore, another factor that triggers the problem is the monotonous learning activities the students experience at school. For example, in most classes, students read English passages and accomplish drills. Teachers also rarely apply particular strategies to stimulate students' enthusiasm to learn. Those often lead students to be demotivated. Preliminary research conducted at a junior high school in Langsa, Aceh, showed that the teacher focuses more on the teaching of grammar, especially about tenses, rather than allowing the students to do more practice using the language communicatively.

Regarding this problem, the researchers suggest the implementation of active learning strategies. Action learning is a learning strategy that applies the themes and content of the materials learned. Participants have the opportunity to have hands-on life experience. They may discuss the content to comprehend the material and directly practice them. Thus, this study aims to describe the implementation of an action learning strategy and how it contributes to developing students' speaking skills.

Action learning is a teaching strategy that enables learners to experience real-life situations. Learners learn in the group during a class, encouraging active learning participants. Action learning helps participants learn by solving real-world problems in workplaces. It allows one to work together on a small, regular basis to solve problems, take action, and simultaneously learn individually or in teams. It derives from the word Action, which means to perform and learn. Action learning is a method that indicates learning by doing an action. This learning method allows students to see reality. In this concept, there is a moderator responsible for developing action-learning models in various instructional activities presented in the form of dialogue. Among the advantages of implementing active learning strategy as it allows students to apply knowledge they gain (Gleason et al., 2011), active learning promotes critical thinking (Walker, 2003), and it also effective to improve students speaking skill and reduce anxiety a and allow them to speaks freely without afraid of making mistake (Putra, Solekhah, Agustina, & Siborov, 2021).

Steps in carrying out this method include; (1) Introducing the topic to students by providing background information through lessons based on short lectures and class discussions. (2) Explain to the students that you will allow them to experience the topic by visiting a field trip in a natural environment. (3) Dividing the class into small groups of four to five people and asking them to develop a list of specific questions or items they should look for during practice. (4) Asking subgroups to ask questions related to the material (Nurhadi & Tuti, 2016).

Nguyen & Borrego, M., Finelli, (2021) study provides strategies to help teachers to implement the active learning strategy based on categories including providing students with explanation for applying active learning strategies, facilitation strategy which is working with students and ensuring that the activity functions as its plan, and planning strategy which involve working outside of the class to develop active learning strategy.

Action learning deals with problem-solving without judgment but with as many questions about the problem as possible. In learning by doing, the best way to solve problems is by analyzing them. In comparison, the best analysis is to ask as many questions as possible. Not only problem solving but Action learning also helps someone learn. Therefore, the element of learning by doing becomes something significant. Furthermore, six components of action learning. They are six components (1) a problem must be significant, and the team is responsible for solving it. Action learning is problem-centered, the problem must be significant and urgent, and the team's responsibility to solve under the material provided by the teacher. (2) An action learning group Ideally consists of 28 people, as the essence of action learning is a learning group. A team ideally consists of 4 to 8 individuals actively solving problems. (3) The process of insightful questioning and reflective listening. Action learning emphasizes problems by asking questions to reveal the exact nature of the problem; action learning focuses on what is known, and the action focuses on dealing with problems by first asking questions to clarify the exact nature of the problem. Reflecting and identifying possible solutions, and finally taking action. Questions build dialogue and cohesiveness, generate innovative audit systems thinking, and enhance learning outcomes. After reflecting and validating possible solutions, the action is executed.

For action learning, action is needed to be taken for a problem a group is working on. The following are some recommendations to acquire the skill: efforts to learn to solve organizational problems, which offer the company immediate benefits. More excellent long-term strategic value for an organization is the learning gained by each group member and group-wide and the application of learning throughout the organization. Second, an action learning coach or the teacher's class helps the members reflect on how to solve the problem. The coach allows members of the group to ponder how they capture problems. It then restructures the issue and provides feedback on how the team plans and collaborates. Action learning coaches also help teams focus

on the hiring processes that they find challenging and the impact of these processes on what they achieve.

Action learning strategy has many advantages. Some are learner-centered, focused on gaining knowledge, and adapted to existing knowledge that the students can adapt. Every material provided by the teacher can certainly be absorbed and received well by them because the system solves the common problem earlier. However, among the disadvantages of active learning strategies is that learners need help orienting their thoughts when not with their educators. It is difficult for them to learn independently without the teacher on their back (Agustina, 2016).

METHOD

This study applies Classroom Action Research (CAR). Classroom action research is an inquiry activity aiming at solving learning problems. It utilized a model constructed by Kemmis and McTaggart, consisting of four stages: plan, act, observe and reflect (Rochiati, 2006). The Kemmis & McTaggart model of action research is an evolution of the Kurt Lewin model. In Kemmis & McTaggart, the components of the action (action) and observations (observations) are combined into a single unit. It is because it is impossible to separate the implementation of action and observation. These two operations are carried out at the same time. The four components of the Kemmis & McTaggart model are considered a cycle, in this case, a cycle of activities involving planning, observation, and reflection.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings

The implementation of each cycle is described as follows:

1. **Cycle I**

a) Planning; The researchers prepared lesson plans, materials, and tests at this stage.

b) Action; Action indicates the implementation strategy based on the planning. The researcher applies steps in teaching speaking by using an action learning strategy. The activities include; the teacher is explaining the topic of the learning material, she groups the students into five teams, she invites the students to review some vocabulary before starting speaking, and asking the students to practice speaking by using the given vocabulary.

c) Observation; The teacher evaluated to find out the students' progress. The teacher observes the implementation of the learning strategy during the teaching and learning process, aiming to capture the situation during the implementation of the action.

d) Reflection; Reflection is carried out based on observation data analysis and evaluation activities. Reflection was carried out to find out the extent to which the strategy could improve the student's speaking skills and find out the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching and learning process that had been implemented.

2. Cycle II

Cycle II is conducted to improve practice and to achieve teaching and learning objectives. The activity conducted in the second cycle are as follows:

a) Plan; The researchers re-plan for teaching and learning-the planning steps in cycle two were designed based on the activity outcomes in cycle I. The planning was constructed to improve practice. There were two meetings planned to carry out in this cycle. The topic of the first and the second meetings were daily routines. The planned activities steps were: (1) The teacher evaluates the results of the reflection, discusses and notes that the improvements will continue in the following learning process. (2) The teacher designed the lesson plan for the second cycle. (3) The teacher highlighted weaknesses in cycle two and improved practice. (4) The teacher prepared a test for the students.

b) Action; At this stage, the teacher implements the action learning strategy in the classroom. The Step is (1) the teacher gives the students feedback on their speaking performance in the first cycle. (2) The teacher provides dialogue and shares it with the students. (3) The students practice the dialogue in pairs on their seats. (4) They were then asked to practice the dialogue in front of the class.

c) Observation; The teacher observed the teaching and learning situation and the student's activities during the teaching process.

d) Reflection; The final stage is conducting reflection to evaluate action in the second cycle. The researcher gave a test at the end of the meeting, speaking about a given topic. She used the rating category as the standard to score data for the test. Each category has 50 points. For all categories, the students will obtain 100 points. Each aspect of speech is organized from 0 to 50. The categories are vocabulary, pronunciation, accuracy, and fluency. The researcher used a values category designed by M. Finocchiaro and Sako, as shown below:

Table 1. Marking Categories

No	Categories	Aspects	Range score
1.	**Vocabulary**		
	a. Dissatisfied	Minimal vocabulary makes it quite challenging to understand	1-6
2.	b. Fair	The frequent use of the incorrect voice is restricted to a simple vocabulary.	7-12
3.	c. Good	Sometimes they use inappropriate terms about language because they have an inappropriate vocabulary.	13-18

d. Very good	Seldom have problems	19-25
2. Pronouncation		
a. Unsatisfactory	Hard to understand because sound, accent, and pitch are challenging and need to be understood.	1-6
b. Fair	The error of basic pronunciation	7-12
c. Good	Few noticeable errors	13-18
d. Very good	Understandable	19-25
3. Accurancy		
a. Unsatisfactory	Usage is unsatisfactory; frequently need to rephrase, construct, or restrict their to the basic structure	1-6
b. Fair	Error to the primary structure, meaning obscured by grammatical error.	7-12
c. Good	Occasional grammatical errors which do not obscure meaning	13-18
d. Very good	No more than two errors /in speech are generally natural.	19-25

4	**Fluency**		
	a. Unsatisfactory	Speed of speech and length of utterances are below average, with long pauses, utterances left unfinished	1-6
	b. Fair	Some definite stumbling, but rephrase and continue.	7-12
	c. Good	Speech is generally natural.	13-18
	d. Very good	Understandable	19-25
	Total score		**100**

C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

a. The implementation of action learning strategies.

The teaching and learning activities were conducted in two cycles, each consisting of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. At the planning stage in the first cycle, the researchers developed lesson plans, collected sources for teaching materials, and designed tests. At the acting stage, the researchers applied the action learning strategy in learning speaking. They started the learning by informing the purpose of the study and the topic they will discuss. They grouped students into five teams.

They assigned each group a task to memorize vocabulary associated with the learning topic and begin conversation in-group. Then, the students were asked to practice speaking with the given vocabulary. Afterward, the students discussed and created topic-based conversations in pairs. The teacher then asked each pair to practice the dialogue in front of other friends. While the students were practicing, she took notes about mistakes the students

produced and corrected errors the students made afterward. The teachers finally invited the students to ask questions.

Furthermore, using the action strategy, the researcher observed students' behavior toward learning before, during, and after learning. It aimed to monitor students' behavior in the learning process. The researchers then reflect on the practice through observation analysis and evaluation activities. Reflection was carried out to find out the strengths and weaknesses of the teaching and learning activity, especially in the use of action learning strategy to improve practice and to overcome problems in the second cycle.

The second cycle began with the planning stage. The researchers continue to develop a lesson plan based on the outcome of activities in cycle I. The planning was developed to avoid the drawbacks and obstacles that arose in the previous cycle. At the action stage, the students continue to learn speaking using an action learning strategy. The activity began with a preview of the previous lesson. The researcher invited students to recall vocabulary they learned in the previous meeting, and they also invited students to practice conversation directly. Then, they introduced the topic and stated the objectives of the learning. The students were invited to pay attention to the material to develop background knowledge. They developed vocabulary and were asked to practice it in context with their partners. Afterward, they were asked to practice them in front of the class. The researchers assessed the students' speaking performance and provided feedback.

Moreover, the researchers observed the teaching and learning situation and captured the students' responses and learning during the teaching and learning process. At the reflection stage, the researchers reflect on notes from observation and the test results. It was to find out whether the students' met the success criteria. In the second cycle, the researchers concluded that the action learning strategy improved the students' speaking skills effectively, as most students met the minimum criterion score.

Result of the test

The tests were given to the students in cycle I and cycle ll. because the students' scores in cycle one did not pass the KKM (71). The student scores' results can be seen in the following table

Table 2. The students' scores at cy 1, cy 2.

No	Students' initial	Scores Cyle 1 test	Scores Cyle 2 test
1.	AM	62	74
2.	ASS	64	67
3.	DAP	63	73
4.	FRA	52	58
6.	FK	61	74
7.	MAF	62	82
8.	MFAH	59	71
9.	MGA	56	59
10.	MNP	55	59
11.	MZH	63	75
12.	NA	65	76
13.	PMA	67	72
14.	RSP	74	79
15.	RH	56	72
16.	RAS	57	57
17.	SSP	72	77
18.	TUK	78	81
19.	JS	56	74
20.	UJ	64	72
21.	WM	57	78
22.	FAP	69	85
23.	SUH	71	79
24.	RR	75	81
25.	YH	73	80
26.	AR	73	79
27.	BR	74	78
28.	FH	58	77
29.	ASA	69	76
30.	RM	70	72
	Total	**1930**	**2195**
	The mean scores	**64,33**	**73, 16**

Table 3. The students' Results of cycle 1

No	Students' initial	Scores Cyle 1 test	Criteria
1.	AM	62	Unsuccessful
2.	ASS	64	Unsuccessful
3.	DAP	63	Unsuccessful
4.	FRA	52	Unsuccessful
6.	FK	61	Unsuccessful
7.	MAF	62	Unsuccessful
8.	MFAH	59	Unsuccessful
9.	MGA	56	Unsuccessful
10.	MNP	55	Unsuccessful
11.	MZH	63	Unsuccessful
12.	NA	65	Unsuccessful
13.	PMA	67	Unsuccessful
14.	RSP	74	**Successful**
15.	RH	56	Unsuccessful
16.	RAS	57	Unsuccessful
17.	SSP	72	**Successful**
18.	TUK	78	**Successful**
19.	JS	56	Unsuccessful
20.	UJ	64	Unsuccessful
21.	WM	57	Unsuccessful
22.	FAP	69	Unsuccessful
23.	SUH	71	**Successful**
24.	RR	75	**Successful**
25.	YH	73	**Successful**
26.	AR	73	**Successful**
27.	BR	74	**Successful**
28.	FH	58	Unsuccessful
29.	ASA	69	Unsuccessful
30.	RM	70	Unsuccessful
Total		1930	
The mean score		64, 33	

Table 4. Description of students' speaking skill for cyle 1

	Criteria	Total of students'	Percentage
*P*1	Unsuccessful	22 Students'	73,33%
P2	Successful	8 Students'	26,66%

The table above shows the total number of students' scores was 1930. The proportion of students who successfully achieved the targe were 26 66%, and those who failed were 22 students' or about 73,33%. Moreover, the number of students who took the test was 30 students. Students' activities in cycle I considered unsuccessful. Therefore the second cycle was needed to increase the scores of the students. The following was the analysis of the cycle II.

Table 5. The results of students' speaking skills on cycle ll

No	Students' initial	Scores Cyle 1l test	Criteria
1.	AM	74	**Successful**
2.	ASS	67	Unsuccessful
3.	DAP	73	**Successful**
4.	FRA	58	Unsuccessful
6.	FK	74	**Successful**
7.	MAF	82	**Successful**
8.	MFAH	71	**Successful**
9.	MGA	59	Unsuccessful
10.	MNP	59	Unsuccessful
11.	MZH	75	**Successful**
12.	NA	76	**Successful**
13.	PMA	72	**Successful**
14.	RSP	79	**Successful**
15.	RH	72	**Successful**
16.	RAS	57	Unsuccessful
17.	SSP	77	**Successful**
18.	TUK	81	**Successful**
19.	JS	74	**Successful**
20.	UJ	72	**Successful**
21.	WM	78	**Successful**
22.	FAP	85	**Successful**
23.	SUH	79	**Successful**
24.	RR	81	**Successful**
25.	YH	80	**Successful**
26.	AR	79	**Successful**
27.	BR	78	**Successful**
28.	FH	77	**Successful**
29.	ASA	76	**Successful**
30.	RM	72	**Successful**
Total		**2195**	
The mean Score		**73, 16**	

The above table showed that students' speaking skills achieved the standard criteria, which the mean score was 73.16 % and the Minimum Mastery Criteria was 71. The total score was 2195. The analysis above showed an improvement. The students' mean score were 73,16.

Table 6. The distribution of students' speaking skill of post-test ll

	Criteria	Total of students'	Percentage
*P*1	Unsuccessful	6 Students'	18, 18%
P2	Successful	24 Students'	72,72 %

The above table shows that the students' speaking ability has increased. The Mean score was 73,16, and 24 students passed with a score of 72,72%. In addition, only six students failed at the second cycle test, which was about 26.66%. It can be concluded that the speaking test was thriving at the second cycle. This indicated that the ability of students to speak categorized as good after learning it by using action learning strategy. The results showed an increase in students' scores from cycle test 1 to cycle ll. There were 26.66% or 8 students obtained points >71, 24 students, or 72.72% obtained >71at the second cycle. While only six students failed, or about 26.66%. It can be concluded that the action learning was effective to teach speaking skill at MTs MIM Langsa. The learning strategy has been applied successfully.

B. Discussion

The findings indicated that the use of action learning strategy increased students' speaking skills. The mean score of the cycle II was 73.16. This showed that the score was improved. The percentage of students who obtained >71 points were also increased. In the test of cycle l, only 8 students scored >71 (26.66%). Students' speaking ability increased per cycle and they performed better in speaking activity.

The researcher also analyzed all the data and showed that students cooperated and were involved in teaching and learning. Based on the results of both data, it can be concluded that action learning strategies improved students' speaking skills, especially in unconducive class. This research was conducted to determine the improvement of students' speaking skills in English lessons by using an action learning strategy.

Action learning strategies are among the strategies that teachers can use in teaching English to improve students' speaking skills and effective in increasing the student's ability to speak. It also helps quiet students and lead them to be active. Students are encouraged to speak in English. Moreover, it helped them to reduce their nervousness or worried when the teacher asked them to practice in front of the class. Research conducted by Armasita at the MTS PAB 1 Helvita showed the similar that action learning strategies improve the students' speaking skills. She found that there was an improvement in students' speaking skills.

The purpose of this study was to determine the speaking ability of students, which focuses on vocabulary and pronunciation, by using the action learning strategy at VIII MTs Muhammadiyah Limbung. Action learning strategy improved the students' speaking ability and it worked effectively and efficiently to help the students' speaking ability. It can be concluded that the learning has been successfully implemented and improved students' ability in speaking. Moreover, the researchers found in the current research showed that action learning strategy was effective and applicable to teach speaking. In addition, this strategy also helped students to understand the subject matter easily.

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