

ENRICHING STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY THROUGH FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION TECHNIQUE

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Abstract

This research aimed to investigate whether focus group discussion enriches students' speaking abilities. This research was conducted using pre-experimental research, with 40 students in the eleventh grade (second grade of senior high school) participating in this research. The result of this research was obtained from two tests (pre-test and post-test). The pre-test revealed that there were 36 students classified as very poor and 4 students classified as fair. The post-test showed that only 15 students were classified as very poor, 12 were classified as poor, 6 were classified as fair, 3 were classified as fairly good, and 4 were classified as good. In addition, the mean score from the pre-test (24.90) to the post-test (51.40) improved. The findings of this study showed that focus group discussions could enrich students' speaking abilities. Therefore, the focus group discussion technique, which has been widely used in the world of work and organizations, has also proven to be a good method of teaching English, especially speaking.

Keywords — *Focus Group Discussion, Speaking Ability, Students.*

INTRODUCTION

The name in the citation is only the last name. Speaking is a tool to communicate or transfer ideas to other people. Even though speaking is a very important skill to master, especially in the process of transferring information, most people, including students, find it difficult to master it. Speaking is an ability that is considered the foremost troublesome to master since it requires five aspects of speaking terms mastering vocabulary, grammar, fluency, pronunciation, and comprehensibility. As Astiti (2012:2) state two factors cause students to have difficulty in speaking namely internal (from inside) and external (from outside) factors. The internal factors are convinced weakness which include incorporate need for self-assurance and deficiency of enthusiasm which can trigger students to feel embarrassed to speak, and afraid to make errors. Meanwhile, the external factor is connected to the teacher. The teachers

are projected to use a suitable approach that is able without a doubt work to satisfy learners' necessity for English communication.

The methods of teaching speaking abilities are pretty varied and many teachers have used those techniques. Role-playing and storytelling are examples of innovative techniques typically applied by teachers in teaching speaking. Role Playing has the advantage of training students' creativity and cooperation, as well as helping students learn certain expressions. However, this method also has weaknesses in the use of relatively large amounts of time and the number of students who are awkward or even refuse to perform certain scenes (Andra, 2010). Storytelling is quite often used and has advantages in training students to speak in public. Besides the advantages, this method has disadvantages in the form of meaningless or sometimes the stories they convey do not present a special meaning or message to be conveyed, besides this method also requires quite a lot of time (Musfirah, 2008:161-170).

Focus group discussion is a speaking learning technique that can cover up the weaknesses of role playing and storytelling techniques. This technique has advantages to be used to accomplish communicative skills including the ability to speak. The classroom should be a place where students can create their knowledge and the teacher should be the facilitator of instruction. This fits perfectly with the use of focus groups. The teacher is the facilitator of discussion, but not a participant. It is up to the students to have these discussions.

Based on the background above, the research question of this research can be identified as follows: Can the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) technique enrich students' abilities to speak English? Related to this research, the researcher chooses some literature about the previous researchers that are relevant to the research.

Hanafi (2013) researched the use of small group interaction to improve speaking ability. To find out whether the use of small group interaction improves speaking ability, she chose SMAN 2 Watampone as sample research.

Another research is also conducted by Khosidah (2017). She researched improving her speaking ability through focus group discussions. The result of the research showed that through Focus Group Discussion (FGD), students' speaking abilities became better.

The relation of the research above with this research is that they all discuss group discussion techniques to improve students' speaking ability, and there is also research used pre-experiment as a research method. Besides that, there are the differences between them. The differentiation of this research with the previous findings above is the object of the

research. In addition, most of previous researches used small group discussion types. Meanwhile in this research, the researcher uses Focus Group Discussion type. A group can be interpreted from various points of view, but in short, the group can be interpreted as a two or more people who have one relationship or connection about something and have a few recognizable solidarities.

Gilakjani (2016) defined discussion is a process of talking thing over among two or more persons, preferably face to face. In classroom-use from idea paper discussion is define as two ways, spoken (English) communication between the teacher and students, and more importantly among the students themselves. So, can be concluded that Focus Group Discussion is a discussion activity between two or more people regarding a particular topic or problem. This discussion allows the audience (students) to express their opinions or thoughts clearly and freely.

METHODS

Methods In conducting research, it is imperative for the researcher to decide the inquiry strategy that the analyst would like to utilize. The inquiry about the plan of this think about is a pre-experimental inquiry about utilizing one Pre-test and Post-test plan by Sugiyono (2013). In the implementation, the researcher experimented on samples by providing treatment using the FGD technique to improve students' speaking ability.

In conducting scientific experiments or research, the research setting is an important component of the methodology. According to IGI Global Publisher of Timely Knowledge, the research setting is the social situations in which the researchers develop their fieldwork. The researcher conducted the research in MAN 1 Makassar which is located in Jl. Talasalapang No.46, Gunung Sari, Kec. Rappocini, Kota Makassar, Sulawesi Selatan. The researcher conducted observation at the grade eleventh (specifically XI MIA 2). The population of this research was taken from Eleven Grade students of MAN 1 Makassar in the academic year 2021/2022. The number of populations is 440. The number of the sample is 40. In this research, the researcher used purposive sampling in order to reach a targeted sample rapidly. Variable is key term of research. Variable is a characteristic being measured that varies among the persons, places, or object being studied. Charles (1995: 29) point out that variable is the characteristic that tend to differ from individual to individual, though any two more individuals may have the same variable trait or measure.

The variables of this research are as follows:

1. Independent Variable: Independent variables are variables that affect or cause deviations in the factors leisurely or selected by a researcher in find out the relationship between the observed phenomena. Independent variable in this research is Focus Group Discussion technique.
2. Dependent Variable: The dependent variable is what is measured in the experiment. Dependent variable in this research is Students' speaking ability.

Operational variables refer to how the researchers defined and measure a specific variable as it is used in the study. The variables in this research are focus group discussion technique as independent variable and Students' speaking ability as dependent variable and.

In this study, the researcher used oral test (interview) as an instrument. The researcher holds the test twice.

1. Pre-test is test which held before giving treatment. This test was used for pre activity, to know the students' skill in speaking before using focus group discussion technique. The test was oral test, consists of 5 questions.
2. Post-test is test which held after giving treatment. This test was used for post activity, to know the students' speaking ability after using focus group discussion technique. The test was oral test, consists of 5 questions.

In this research, the researcher used a test to collect data and used communication practice as a treatment. The data were analyzed using statistical descriptive technique.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results and Discussions contain results obtained by the author during the research activities. The score range of students' pre-test and posttest are as follows:

Table 1. Students' Score

Classification		Frequency	
		Pretest	Posttest
95-100	Excellent	0	0
85-94	Very Good	0	0
75-84	Good	0	4
65-74	Fairly Good	0	3
55-64	Fair	4	6
45-54	Poor	0	12

<44	Very Poor	36	15
Total		40	40

From the table 1 above, it can be seen that the students' speaking ability before the treatment is very lacking. The table shows that from 40 students as a sample in this research, there are 36 students classified with very poor score, 4 students classified with fair, and none of them classified as poor, fairly good, good, very good or excellent scores.

Meanwhile in the post-test, even though there is no student classified with an excellent or very good score, the table still shows a great movement in the students' score, their score is increasing. From 40 students, there are 4 students classified with a good score, 3 students classified with a fairly good score, 6 students classified with a fair score, 12 students classified with a poor score, and 15 students classified with a very poor score. The result of T-test is shown in the following table:

Table 2. T-Test

Paired Samples Test									
Paired Differences		t		df		Sig. (2-tailed)			
Mean		Std. Deviation		Std. Error Mean		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
		Lower		Upper					
Pair 1	Pre-test - Post-test	-25,600	11,124	1,759	-29,157	-22,430	-14,555	39	.000

The table 2 above shows the result of the T- Test of the students' score in pre-test and post-test. It shows that the probability value (.000) is minor than the level of significance (0.05). Therefore, it can be determined that there is a significant difference between the students' scores on pre-test and post-test.

Based on the calculations above, the alternative hypothesis (H_a) of this research is accepted. This means that the Focus Group Discussion Technique can enrich students' speaking ability at MAN 1 Makassar.

In conducting this research, there were five aspects of speaking that the researcher focuses on; vocabulary, grammar, comprehensibility, pronunciation, and fluency.

1. Vocabulary is an important aspect of speaking because if the speaker wants to say or transfer their thought, they have to know the right words to be able to make a clear speech. So, in other words the more vocabulary you know, the more you will be able to improve all aspects of speaking. In the pre-test of this research, the lack of students' vocabulary makes it difficult for them to express their opinion on the questions posed by the researcher. It causes a lot of pauses while they were speaking. In addition, not a few students are forced to use words to complete their sentences. For example, when one student said "...because...can make dunia lebih bersih" or "I just like swimming, because...itu membuat saya happy". The students usually could not find the right word to complete their sentence in English, therefore they were trying to complete it with an Indonesian word.
2. In English, including speaking, grammar is an important factor in conveying the speaker's opinion so that it can be understood well by listeners. In this research especially in the pre-test, the students made some basic grammatical errors. For example, when the student said, "Because I'm hobby" that should be "because my hobby", or "I like is reading ..." that should be "I like reading...". According to the findings in the previous section, the result exposed that in the pre-test, the students' speaking grammar was classified into very poor, some got fair, and none of them classified into fairly good, good, very good and excellent. While in the post-test, although there was no student classified as excellent and very good, some students were classified as good and who got fair score also increase. It can be determined that the students' speaking grammar had enriched in the post-test.
3. Comprehensibility denotes to the ability of the speaker to understand the gist of what is being said and how understandable the speech of the speaker is. In the pre-test, in the pre-test, most students did not understand the questions asked in English so the researcher repeated the question using Indonesian to make the students understand the meaning of the question itself. When the students finally answered, they just answered it with a short answer, produced words one by one, and with an uncompleted sentence. For example, when the researcher asked about what the students think about their hobby, one student just said "I like...bisa buat tinggi and happy". This sentence actually

was unclear but the researcher understood what the student tried to say. But in the post-test, after having the treatment for three meetings using Focus Group Discussion, most of the students could understand about the researchers' questions and also, they try to make complete sentences to answer all of the questions. Pronunciation is one of the most important factors in English, especially speaking. To make the listener understand what is being said, the speaker should have good pronunciation so that there is no misunderstanding of meaning. In the pre-test, most of the students still made mispronunciations even for simple words, for example, the word "because" which should be pronounced as "bi'kəz" they pronounced "bikaus". Also, the word "opinion", should be pronounced as "ə'pinyən" but the students pronounced it with "opiniyon".

4. In speaking, fluency refers to the ability to speak quickly, spontaneously, and without any hesitation. However, in the pre-test, the researcher found that the students face difficulty with fluency. They took long pauses just to find the right word to complete their sentences. For example, when one student said, "Reading, hmm...because...if some people have hobby are reading...ehmm...they can be ...a smart people.". Most of them did the same mistake. There were many unnatural pauses by saying "ehmm", "hmm" or just being silent and thinking about the right words.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, the researcher concludes that the application of Focus Group Discussion (FGD) for the eleventh-grade students of MAN 1 Makassar enriches students' speaking abilities. After using focus group discussion (FGD), the students' talking capacity is way better. They are more likely to speak up within the lesson. Center Gather Dialog (FGD) too makes the circumstances of the lesson more dynamic. It is revealed by the pre-test and post-test increments. The pre-test score of the pre-tests is 24.90. In the interim, the pre-test score of the post-tests is 51.40. In addition, students' scores in each angle of talking progressed. The researchers' investigation indicates that the talking capacity of the understudies moved forward.

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