

# **Improving Students Speaking Ability Through Information Gap Teaching Technique (A Classroom Action Research at The Second Grade Students of MTs Al-Muhajirin Pacitan)**

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## **Abstract**

This study is aimed at describe the implementation of Information Gap teaching technique, describing whether or not Information Gap technique improves the students' speaking ability and describing the students' response on Information Gap teaching technique in teaching speaking. The study was implemented in MTs Al Muhajirin at the second grade, using action research. The researcher took 40 students as the subject of the research. The researcher teaches speaking English using Information Gap method. To find the results, the researcher got the information from the students' answers on oral test in the form of pre-test and post-test. The result of the research using information gap shows that, the researcher used the CAR (Class Action Research) principle to collect the data. The study consist of two cycles with each cycle consist of four elements. By implementing Information Gap technique in teaching speaking, the students have chance to be active and cooperative in teaching speaking. The mean of pre-test is 68,7, post-test is 71,6 and the improvement result of the implementation is 2,9. The students' responses are positive. Most of the students said that they great this technique. They could easily learn English speaking. The students admitted that their speaking was improved.

**Keywords:** Information gap technique, Speaking ability, Class room action research, Teaching speaking, High school student.

## A. Introduction

Learning as a psychological activity that holds in active interaction with the environment, which produces many changes of knowledge, skills, and attitude<sup>1</sup>. Learning is a changing process as a result of the interaction with the environment to fulfil the needs in life<sup>18</sup>. The changing is not only in increasing knowledge, but also skill, attitudes, the way of thinking, interest, adaptation, and the others. Learning is an activity done by everyone that can be hold anywhere and anytime.

From those definitions, apparently, learning is an activity done by human being as an effort to get knowledge (cognitive) , to create attitudes (affective), and to raise concept and skills (psychomotor) as a result of the interaction with the environment. In learning process, the dominant activity is the interaction between teacher and the students<sup>19</sup>.

The same as learning, teaching is a process. There are processes of controlling, organizing, motivating, guiding, facilitating, and giving feedback to the students in process teaching and learning<sup>20</sup>. Teaching process is not only putting premium on product, but also on learning process. So, teacher needs teaching methods that can be used to all of students' learning process step by step.

Speaking is one of the important and essential skill that must be practiced to communicate orally. By speaking people are able to know what kinds of situation the world. People who have ability in speaking will be better in sending and receiving information and message to another. Speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non verbal symbol in various contexts.

Speaking refers to gap between linguistic expertise and teaching methodology<sup>21</sup>. Linguistic expertise concern with language

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<sup>18</sup> Slamet. *Belajar dan Faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi*. (Jakarta : Rineka Cipta, 1995). 2

<sup>19</sup> A.M. Sardiman. 1986. *Interaksi dan Motivasi Belajar Mengajar*.(Jakarta : CV. Rajawali). 170

<sup>20</sup> Djamarah. *Strategi Belajar Mengajar*. (Jakarta : Rineka Cipta, 1995). 45

<sup>21</sup> Stevick in Fauziati Endang, *Teaching of English as a foreign language*.(Surakarta : Muhammadiyah University Press, 2002). 126.

structure and language content. Here, the reason of the researcher choosing speaking learning as a objectives of the study are because teaching speaking is not like listening, reading and writing. It needs habit formation because it is a real communication. Speaking needs practicing as often as possible. It is not writing or reading but it must be practiced directly in full expression.

In teaching speaking, the teacher should be able to make interesting topic and apply suitable technique. This can motivate them to speak more because speaking skill more emphasizes students ability to speak as much as possible. Interesting topic can relate to their environment and life besides teacher has to instruct them but teacher does not give correction to their speaking directly. It fosters them to be confident to explore their idea so that the student are not afraid of making mistakes in speaking classroom In teaching speaking teacher also has to teach meaning fully. So the researcher interest to research it.

The researcher determines the school that will be used to do research. The researcher choose MTs Al -Muhajirin Kalak, Pacitan as the place of this research because MTs Al -Muhajirin which is located in rural areas and it is a private school that still uses the traditional method in teaching speaking and just one english teacher here.

There are many problems in teaching speaking. First, the students always do the mistakes in grammar and pronunciation aspects. Basically they only speak English. They do pay attention to the sentence structure and correct pronunciation. Second, the student are afraid of making mistakes in speaking English. It indicated that the students have limited vocabulary. Third, the teacher only given materials, like completing ,reading dialogue and written from handbook. And the last, the teacher dominantly teaches the students using Indonesians so it can not increase the students' speaking ability. Those problem are found by the researcher when doing an observation at MTs Al-Muhajirin Kalak, Pacitan. Therefore, the process of improving students speaking ability are quiet difficult.

Based on the problems above, the researcher used Information Gap technique to overcome the problems. The Information Gap

technique is a kind of structure output activities. These are like completing a task by obtaining missing information, conveying telephone message and expression an opinion. Information gap set up practicing on specific items of language. Information gap more like drills than real communication. Structured output activities lead the student to practice features of language and brief sentence, not in extended discourse. It can form an effective bridge between instructor modeling and communicative output because they are partly authentic and partly artificial. By Information Gap, the teacher is able to improve the students speaking ability because it is an interesting technique to apply in classroom. The student become comfortable to speak everything. The teacher only gives simple explanation about the activity and reviews the vocabulary needed for the activity. The student get opportunity to develop their communicate competence more freely.

The researcher is interested to apply this technique so that the reseacher will conduct the research entitled "Improving Students Speaking Ability Through Information Gap Teaching Technique ( A Classroom Action Research At The Second Grade Students Of Mts Al Muhajirin Kalak, Pacitan)".

## B. Method

In this research, the researcher uses Classroom Action Research (CAR). Action research is a form of research which is becoming increasingly significant in language education<sup>22</sup> and action research is a form of self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in a social (including educational) situation in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social and educational practices as well as their understanding of these practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out<sup>23</sup>. It consist of planning, acting or implementing, observing and reflecting.

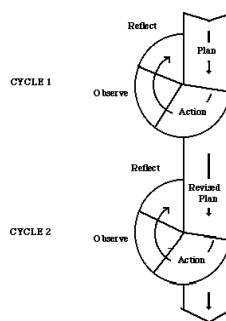
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<sup>22</sup> Nunan, David. *Research Method in Language Learning*. (New York : Cambridge University Press, 1992). 17

<sup>23</sup> Mc Niff in Arikunto, Suharsimi. *Prosedur Penelitian Suatu Pendekatan Praktik*. (Jakarta : Rineka Cipta, 2006). 102.

There are four characteristics of action research, firstly, the action research is carried out by practitioners rather than outside researcher. In this research, the classroom action research was carried out by the researcher and English teacher as the collaborator. Secondly, action research is the systematic study attempting to overcome real problems. In this research, the classroom action research was the attempts to overcome students problem in speaking. Thirdly, the action research is intended to change think to be better than before. In this research, the class action research (CAR) was intended to change the student ability in speaking to be better than before. Fourthly, action research is a kind of collaborative research, it means that the research take participants in the form of the team consisting of insider and outsiders<sup>24</sup>. Then insiders were some teacher who want to do action research and outsiders were the researchers in their field. In this research, the classroom action research (CAR) was done by the researcher and English teacher.

In this Classroom Action Research (CAR), the writer used the CAR principle to collect the data. The research consist of three cycles with each cycle consist of four elements. The researcher describes the cycles through the scheme of action research steps and each of the phases can be explained briefly as follows:



<sup>24</sup> Kasbolah, K. *Penelitian Tindakan Kelas Untuk Guru*. (Malang : Universitas Negeri Malang, 2001). 15-17

The cycle of Classroom Action Research based on Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1988)<sup>25</sup>

### **1. Planning**

In this phase, the researcher identify a problem or issue and develop a plan of action in order to bring about improvements in a specific area of the research context. In this phase, the writer use dialog, short paragraph, describe and draw material.

### **2. Action**

The teacher puts the class into four groups calling them A,B,C,D and E. To each group he gives one of the pictures. The students in the group have to memorize everything they can about the pictures, which's in them, what's happening etc. They can talk about the detail in their groups. The teacher now takes the pictures and asks for one student from each group (A,B,C,D and E) to form a new four person group. He tells them that they have seen different picture but that the pictures taken together. The task is for the student to work out what the story is. The only way they can do this is by describing their pictures to each other and speculating on how they are connected. The final stories may be different. The groups tell the whole class what their vision is and the teacher can finally re-show the pictures.

### **3. Observation**

In this phase, the reearcher observe the students response, participant and everything which is found during the teaching and learning process. In speaking learning process, most of the student are interested in information gap method. Sometimes, from one group to other group do a mistake, like misunderstand, inability to memorize the story.

### **4. Reflection**

After collecting the data the writer will evaluate the teaching-

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<sup>25</sup> Kemmis,S. and R. Mc Taggart,*Action Reasearch Some Ideas from The Action Research Planner, Third edition.*(Deakin University, 1988)

learning process. Then, the writer will reflect herself by seeing the result of the observation, whether the teaching learning process of speaking using information gap method is good to imply in teaching learning process at MTs Al-Muhajirin Kalak, Pacitan in 2011/2012 academic year the first plan is unsuccessful writer uses the diary and document as the instrument for gathering the data. Diaries contain personal accounts of the observation on feeling, reaction, interpretations, reflections, explanations and documents are used to provide information, which is relevant to the problem under investigation. The documents used by the writer are lesson plan and the sample of children's work. The successful used is still photography in the collection on information, when evidence is being collected to evaluate lessons. So, the writer includes the photography as the document too.

### **C. Result and Discussion**

Based on the method of collecting data, observation and interview. The researcher got finding research there is the implementation of teaching speaking using information gap that consist of the result of pre-test, explanation of first cycle and the result of post-test one and explanation of second cycle and the result of post-test two in second cycle.

Based on the information from the students of Mts Al Muhajirin Kalak Pacitan , the students were not interested in learning English. They were difficult to learn the English lesson, especially speaking. Their score of the English test was poor. They felt the method to teach English was monotonous or not interesting. They needed a method to make them pay attention to the English lesson. They had limited vocabulary, they like to use their native language more than English to express their opinion, and they had less motivation in speaking activity. The teacher had some problems when she taught in class. The problem was the teacher also had a difficulty in handing the passive students during the teaching learning process.

To overcome the problem in that school, the researcher used information gap to support the teaching-learning process.

The researcher teaches the students using information gap as a technique of teaching the students. The topics used in this research were recreation and daily activities.

In this research implementation the researcher arranged pre-test and post-test orally. The test is aimed to measure the students' achievement in speaking. The test was telling a story or their experience in holiday and telling a picture. The students tell a story or their experience individually.

They come in front of class. Then, the students were divided into five groups, each groups must tell the picture and they have different picture. For example, in pre-test each of group must tell a story based on the picture. They must retell the story in front of class, and group two do this activity too and so on.

### **1. Pre-test**

Before doing the first cycle, the researcher conducted pre-test. It is to know the comprehension of students' speaking ability before the treatment in first cycle. Their speaking scores in pre-test were 68,7. After knowing that the students' speaking ability is still low, that can be seen in the result of pre-test score, the researcher prepare two cycles. Each cycles consist of four steps, they were planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting.

### **2. Post-test 1**

After doing the one lesson plan in first cycle, the researcher conducted post-test 1. It is to know the improvement of students' speaking ability after the treatment in first cycle. Their speaking scores in post-test 1 were 68,9.

### **3. Post-test 2**

After doing the one lesson plan in second cycle, the researcher conducted post-test 2. It is to know the improvement of students' speaking ability after the treatment in second cycle. Their speaking scores in post-test were 71.6. Based on the result of post-test, the researcher comes to the conclusion that by using information gap



in teaching speaking, students could improve their speaking ability.

#### 4. The Improvement Result of Student Achievement

To know whether the teaching speaking using information gap is successful or not and whether the score is significantly increased or not to the students of MTs Al- Muhajirin Kalak Pacitan , the researcher describes the result of pre-test and post-test.

By this result the researcher wants to know the result of teaching action to the students in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency. The data of the Pre-test and Pos-test scores can be seen in the table (see appendix...) and the result of research be based on the table data of Pre-test and Post-test as follows:

The Average of the students scores of pre-test:

$$\begin{aligned}\sum \text{Pre-test} &= 2748 \\ \text{Mean} &= \frac{\sum \text{pre-test}}{N} \\ &= \frac{2748}{40} \\ &= 68,7\end{aligned}$$

The Average of the students scores of post-test 1:

$$\begin{aligned}\sum \text{Post-test} &= 2758 \\ \text{Mean} &= \frac{\sum \text{post-test}}{N} \\ &= \frac{2758}{40} \\ &= 68,9\end{aligned}$$

The Average of the students scores of post – test 2 :

$$\begin{aligned}\sum \text{Post-test} &= 2869 \\ \text{Mean} &= \frac{\sum \text{pre-test}}{N} \\ &= \frac{2869}{40} \\ &= 71,6\end{aligned}$$

$$\sum \text{Post-test 2} - \sum \text{Pre-test} = 71,6 - 68,7 = 2,9$$

**Table 1** Standard of Performance

Score	Performance
3,6 – 4,0	Excelent
3,1 – 3,5	Very significant
2,6 – 3,0	Significant
2,1 – 2,5	Fair
0 – 2,0	Less Significant

From the statement above showed that the average score of pre-test is 68.7. In post-test, the average score is 71.6 The highest score is 87 (one student), and the lowest score is 55 (one student). And the improvement result of the implementation is 2.9 that means significant, we can said that 2,9 is significant be based on the table of standard performance above. The table of standard performance is a standard scores took from KKM in MTs Al Muhajirin Kalak, Pacitan. So, there is a significant improvement of the students' achievement in speaking. The result of pre-test and post-test indicate that teaching speaking using information gap is significant and very effective. Because in the post-test, students have significant improvement in speaking ability.

#### **D. Conclusion**

The result of the study shows that the use of information gap in teaching speaking can overcome the students' problem effectively. The conclusions drawn from results of the research are as follows: By implementing information gap in teaching speaking, the students have chance to be active and cooperative in speaking activity. Information gap is a different method that can be effective to teach the students in a big class. Finally, the students' speaking of MTs Al Muhajirin Kalak Pacitan is improved.

The improvement of students' speaking ability can be seen in the improvement of the students' scores. The result of the pre-test and post-test showed the significant improvement. The average of pre-test score is 68,7 (before treatment in first cycle), and average of post-test score is 71,6 (after being treatment in second cycle). And the improvement result of the implementation is 2,9. It showed that teaching speaking using information gap is significant. Thus, it can be said that the teaching English speaking by using information gap is successful.

The students' responses in learning speaking using information gap are positive. They do not feel bored, but more enthusiastic to follow the teaching learning process. The students look more confident to speak and easy to understand, easy to memorize, and express their feeling. They also admitted that they become active, enjoy, and full of concentration in the classroom.

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