

STUDENTS TALKING TIME (STT) TECHNIQUE TO ELEVATE SPEAKING SKILLS IN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Muhammad Ilham Ali¹, Ismail²

Universitas Negeri Manado^{1,2}

ilhamali@unima.ac.id¹, ismail@unima.ac.id²

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Abstract

This study investigates the efficacy of the Student Talking Time (STT) technique in enhancing the speaking skills of second-year senior high school students. Employing a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach based on Kurt Lewin's cyclic design, the study comprises four phases: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Data collection methods include observations, questionnaires, and tests. The findings indicate successful implementation of the STT technique, meeting predefined criteria for success. In the diagnostic test, 12.5% of students achieved the minimal mastery level criterion of Indonesian school, rising to 43.75% in the first cycle's post-test and a remarkable 75% in the second cycle's post-test. Observations reveal increased student confidence and active participation in class discussions and conversations, reflecting improved speaking skills. Questionnaire results indicate high student interest (69.68%) in using the STT technique for speaking practice, with students acknowledging enhancements in their speaking abilities. In conclusion, this study demonstrates the effectiveness of the STT technique in enhancing the speaking skills of senior high school students, as evidenced by improved test scores, heightened confidence, and strong student interest in this teaching approach.

Keywords: *Senior High School Students, Speaking, Student Talking Time.*

Introduction

Effective communication through speaking is not only vital for daily interactions but also plays a pivotal role in education. As elucidated by Razmjoo & Ardekani (2011), human communication is a multifaceted and intricate process, serving as the conduit for expressing thoughts and sharing information. Language, as a tool for communication, is harnessed to achieve specific objectives (Hasanah & Ali, 2022; Rahman et al., 2022). This universal need for communication underscores its paramount importance in human interactions, which occur incessantly and

ubiquitously. The act of speaking, in particular, serves as the primary vehicle for conveying ideas and messages verbally. To foster English language proficiency among students, it is imperative that we immerse them in authentic communication experiences, urging them to actively engage in the language acquisition process (Hidayu et al., 2022).

Unfortunately, despite the paramount significance of speaking skills, they often receive inadequate attention within the realm of language education. Consequently, there is a compelling need to equip students with the requisite tools for effective verbal communication, particularly in the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL). As Stroupe (2012) apply asserts, among the four primary language skills, speaking occupies a position of eminence and deserves unwavering prioritization in the teaching process. However, instructing English speaking skills to the language of EFL learners presents a formidable challenge for educators. This challenge emanates from the unique status of English as a foreign language, which is not as widely spoken or employed in daily interactions among these learners. Consequently, teachers are compelled to continually explore innovative teaching strategies to address the intricacies associated with fostering proficient speaking abilities in the classroom.

According to Florez, n.d., there are some problems with speaking skills that teachers can come across in helping students to speak in the classroom. These are performance conditions, affective factors, listening skills, feedback during speaking tasks, inhibition, lack of topical knowledge, low participation, and mother-tongue use. The last problem related to speaking ability is that when some learners share the same mother tongue, they try to use it in the speaking class because it is very easy for them. Eiadeh (2016) stated that learners have low oral skills due to the absence of authentic language learning situations outside and inside the classroom. Additionally, he explains that several factors influence the learning of speaking skills for instance use of mother tongue outside and inside the classroom environment, low status of English in a country, learners' negative attitude towards the English language, use of mother tongue by teachers to explain a difficult concept, use of teacher-centered methodology and passiveness of learners in the classroom.

Based on the problems above, it needed some effective learning strategies, especially in terms of speaking. There are some strategies usually used by English teachers to develop the speaking skills of the students. Based on the argument above, the strategies usually used by English teachers in teaching speaking classes are role-playing, song, and discussion. The role-playing technique used theory proposed by Syakur et al. (2020) who states that role-playing gives a way to involve the whole class, encouraging the students to speak up without worrying about set patterns, getting them to use their imaginations, and creating an amusing atmosphere that would make them forget that they are in the classroom. The role-playing technique is a teaching technique by shows the student's problems, and how to show it to 13 students the problem of guiding social relations is dramatized by students under the leadership of the teacher.

Role-playing strategy according to Tavil (2010) has some weaknesses most of the students who don't play their drama become less creative, and a lot of time-consuming both the preparation time in the context of understanding the contents of the lesson material and the performance, requires a fairly large place if the playing space becomes less free, usually other classes are interrupted by the voices of the players and the audience who sometimes clap and so on, this method requires perseverance, accuracy, and a lot time and teachers who are less creative usually have a hard role in imitating social situations/behavior which also means that this method is very ineffective for the students.

Another technique is the song technique uses the theory proposed by Gasser and Waldman in 1990. This strategy has a target to ensure the pedagogical value of the song, the EFL teacher should be able to use it to teach grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and culture. The tune should be simple and easy to learn. It helps if the lyrics are representative. If they are not, it helps if the song has a chorus which is easy to learn. In this way, even the slowest students can master at least part of the song relatively quickly. The lyrics should be as 6 representatives as possible of standard, spoken English (Ilyas & Kaniadewi, 2023). Even so, these techniques have several weaknesses including difficulty when used in large classes, the result will be

less effective in children who are quiet or do not like singing, and due to the crowded class atmosphere, it can disturb other classes (Prabawa, 2016).

The last technique that the writer found is discussion technique. It used the theory proposed by Harmer in Cárdenas, n.d. states that, the problem in conducting the discussion is the students' reluctance to give opinions in front of their friends. Gudu (2015) defines the discussion technique as a teaching technique that is very closely related to problem solving. This technique is also commonly referred to as group discussion and socialized recitation. However, this technique has some weaknesses like this technique cannot be used in large groups, participants in the discussion receive limited information, can be mastered by people who like to talk, and usually people want a more formal approach (Esfandiari & Knight, 2013). So, we need a technique that can improve students' speaking skills in English. The technique offered by the author is Student Talking Time (STT) technique.

Method

This research employed the Class Action Research (CAR). A method which is derived from the root an action research (Meesuk et al., 2020). Because it occurs in the classroom frame, it is called CAR. Qualitative data are usually collected by observation, questionnaire, and Speaking Assessment Test by Heaton (Sumarni et al., 2016). This research was conducted in second-grade students of class A Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Belang-Belang Maros. The researcher gathered data from students who used Bilingual (English – Indonesia) in learning English in the academic year 2019/2020. The researcher used a cluster random sampling technique in which one class of the population was chosen as the sample and class XI A consisted of 16 students.

Results

1. Diagnostic Test

The diagnostic test was done before the classroom before Classroom Action Research. The observer conducted it on Thursday November 5, 2020. It started at 09:00 A.M. until 10:00 A.M. (Sixty minutes of meeting). The diagnostic test was in interview form. Then, the scores were taken in five criteria as stated by Heaton, which

are the scores of Accuracies, Fluency, and Comprehensibility.

Based on the result of a diagnostic test, the data showed that the mean score of the diagnostic test was 62.12. It means that the students' speaking mean score before using Student Talking Time or before implementing CARis 62.12 two students passed the KKM and 14 students were still below the KKM. From the diagnostic test result, it could be seen that the student's speaking ability was still very low.

2. Post-Test Cycle 1

The action of cycle 1 was done on November 13 and 18. In the acting phase, the teacher implemented a lesson plan that had been made before. Here, the teacher conducted STT by using the 'Discussion group system' in which the class will be divided into two groups. Every group will discuss the topic that the researcher provides. First, the teacher introduced the material by giving a topic about the tourist attractions in your region. Thus, the researcher gives two locations in Maros Regency that become the destiny of tourists when they holiday there. There are 'Rammang-Rammang and Grand Mall Maros'. Second, the teacher explained to the students about the situation and condition when using expressions of asking and giving opinions.

Third, the researcher wrote some examples and demonstrated how to pronounce it. Fourth, the teacher divided students into groups of two and gave them topics which one the topics they had chosen. Next, students need to discuss the description or the point about those places (The interesting fact, description, the location, etc.) then they should explain in front of the class. Other groups are open to asking, giving some critiques, or suggestions. This learning uses 60 minutes in the class. Then, the researcher gave the general conclusion that is about material that had been done by students during their discussion time using the Student Talking Time strategy.

In the second and third meeting, the researcher gave the posttest 1 at the end of the cycle 1. It was in discussion form and conducted in a group. The students created ideas or descriptions about the location or place they chose and then each group performed in front of the class and the other group gave some suggestions or critiques. Posttest 1 is carried out to measure how well student achievement in speaking improved.

3. Post-Test Cycle 2

The action of cycle two was done on November 27 and 25, 2020. In this meeting, the researcher asked about the difficulty in using Student Talking Time in using discussion techniques. The researcher tries to review the suggestions or criticisms from students about our previous class. Here, the researcher made some modifications to conduct Student Talking Time. The researcher brought some pictures (related to the material given) that were "asking, giving, and declining an opinion" such as pictures of animals. Each student will count 1-4 and each number will have the same with the card or picture that the researcher provided. There are four cards and four different pictures of animals.

They will describe the characteristics, habits, features, etc of those animals. Thus, each of them will speak about what they get from the description they made. Then, the researcher will ask each group one by one about their argument. In cycle 1 the researcher conducted Student Talking Time through discussion technique, whereas in cycle 2 the researcher conducted Student Talking Time by describing pictures and information to stimulate students to be more active and creative in a class of speaking. After the researcher divided the cards or pictures into each group, students created a text description or point about the animal picture that they received and each of the groups explained what they got in front of the class. After finishing the performance, each student has been given feedback. In the second meeting, the researcher gave the posttest 2. It was in Student Talking Time form and conducted in four groups. The students describe the picture based on the card and then explain in front of the class.

Discussion

1. The interpretation of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire distributed to the students of class XI A Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Belang-Belang Maros was to know whether they were interested or not in learning to speak by using the student talking time strategy. The questionnaire was answered individually based on the students' opinions after having the treatment. Based on the analysis of the questionnaire items, the mean score of the

questionnaire was 69.68 classified as high interest. It means that the students were highly interested in learning to speak by using the Student Talking Time strategy through discussion, describing pictures, and information techniques. It shows that there were 2 students (12.5%) classified as Very High Interest, 5 students (31.25%) were classified as High Interest, and 9 students (56.25%) were classified as Moderate. The result shows that most students were classified as moderate but with a mean score of 69.68, which is classified as High Interest and had a positive statement in the use of the Student Talking Time strategy in learning to speak.

2. The Interpretation of the Observation Checklist

Based on the result of the student's participation in speaking class through the observation checklist, it was indicated the students' participation gradually increased from the pre-observation into the second cycle the students' participation improvement in speaking class can be seen in the following table:

Table 1. Interpretation of the Observation Checklist

Skills	Pre- Observation	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Improvement
Participation in class	25%	62.5%	87.5%	62.5%
Participation in conversations	25%	68.75%	87.5%	62.5%
Participation in discussions	31.25%	68.75%	93.75%	62.5%
Giving presentations (perform)	18.75%	50%	68.75%	50%
Pronunciation	18.75%	31.25%	68.75%	50%
Fluency	12.5%	31.25%	62.5%	61%
Feeling confident about speaking	25%	68.75%	87.5%	62.5%

The explanation of the table above is as follows: first, the improvement in the student's participation during CAR is 62.5%. second, the improvement of the student's participation in conversation during CAR is 62.5%. third, the improvement of the students in class discussion during CAR is 62.5%. fourth, the improvement in the student's performance during CAR is 50%. fifth, the improvement of the students' pronunciation is 50%. Next, the improvement of the students' fluency is 61%. Lastly,

the improvement of the students' confidence to speak in the front of class during CAR is 62.5%. The improvement of the students' skills above means that the implementation of Student Talking Time in speaking class has successfully improved the student's participation in speaking class.

3. The Interpretation of the Verbal Transcript.

The writer interprets 3 aspects of speaking skills in students' classes A Madrasah Aliyah Belang-Belang, Maros. Heaton (1988) stated that three elements are used in assessing speaking skills, accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility. Accuracy is achieved to some extent by allowing students to focus on elements of phonology, grammar, and discourse in their spoken output. In other words, accuracy is the quality of being accurate, exact, or correct in pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar.

Fluency is the property of a person or of a system that delivers information quickly and with expertise. Simon and Schuster (1979) defined fluency as the quality of flowing. Freedom, expressiveness, readiness, or smoothness of speech. Comprehensibility is the ability to understand the written and interpret the spoken language or comprehensibility of the utterances sent by the speaker done by the listener. The listener can understand what they understand of the intention of the speakers.

The diagnostic test showed how the student's ability, especially in fluency, lacked words and still used their mother language to speak. From the conversation above, we've seen how this student didn't have many words to express his ideas. His fluency is on level 2 because he has a long pause while the student searches for the desired meaning, he is also more silent when the researcher asks him. He almost gives up making the effort at times and he has a limited range of expression. From his accuracy, his pronunciation is seriously influenced by the mother-tongue errors causing a breakdown in communication. Many 'basic grammatical and lexical errors like "*Tertarik kak*" and "*I from Bosowa*".

From his comprehensibility, he is hardly to be understood especially in anything that he is said. Even when the listener makes a great effort or interrupts, the speaker is unable to clarify anything that the speaker has said. Again he is still influenced by his mother language. He was given two minutes to speak then he *produced* 18 words

and he was mostly silent than response to the researcher.

After a few meetings, the researcher recorded again the conversation from the classroom meeting. From the post-test cycle 1, it showed how the student's ability especially in fluency, has to make an effort for much of the time. Her fluency is on level 3 because she often searches for the meaning even though she is quite good at delivering the message to the listener. She answers in common words but she does not in a long pause. Her accuracy is still in average. Her pronunciation is still influenced by the mother tongue but only a few serious phonological errors. She also still uses Bahasa in speaking English like "...hmmm, *the best apa kak? dari grand maros is the facilities and the playing zone. Thank you..*".

From her comprehensibility, the listener can understand a lot of what is said. But the listener must constantly seek clarification as to what she means. It also cannot understand many of the speaker's more complex or longer sentences. She was given two minutes to speak she just produced 49 words. After a few meetings, the researcher recorded the conversation from the classroom meeting.

From the post-test cycle 2, it showed how the student's ability especially in fluency, she speaks without too great an effort with a fairly wide range of expression. Her fluency is on level 6 because she searches for words occasionally but only one or two unnatural pauses. She responds to the researcher well and gives an excellent answer. Her accuracy is still in average. Her pronunciation is only very slightly influenced by the mother tongue even though she still makes two or three grammatical and lexical errors like "*saya sir, or Safah and Wahyu*" and "... *dan terakhir... I mean and the last the lion has a big and scary voice...*".

From her comprehensibility, the listener can understand a lot of what is said. But the listener must constantly seek clarification as to what she means. It also cannot understand many of the speaker's more complex or longer sentences. She was given two minutes to speak she just produced 49 words.

From her comprehensibility, when she is spean its easy for the listener to understand the speaker's intention and general meaning. She also has very few interruptions or clarification required. She was given two minutes to speak then she produced 97 words. From the interpretation of three aspects of speaking skills, the

researcher found that there is a significant improvement from the diagnostic test to post-test cycle 1 until post-test cycle 2. It means that this strategy works well to improve the student's ability to speak English.

Conclusion

Based on the research conducted in XI A class of Madrasah Aliyah (MA) Belang-Belang Maros, the writer concluded that the Student Talking Time activity can improve students' speaking ability as shown by the scores they get. Furthermore, from the students' response toward learning activity during CAR, it is proved that the response of the students toward teaching strategy and the student's interest in learning to speak using the Student Talking Time strategy is 69.68 which means it falls into the Very High-Interest category. It can beconcluded that the students like the Student Talking Time strategy. Moreover, the observation checklist showed that the students seemed brave and more confident in speaking. It is proven by their participation in class conversations and discussions, performance in front of the class, pronunciation, fluency, and confidence in speaking. In the future, the author hopes that the strategy from this research can be developed into a form that is more relevant to the use of artificial intelligence. In the future, the researcher hopes that this technique can also be used to students' writing, reading, and listening skills.

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