EMPLOYING TALKING STICK TECHNIQUE TO DEVELOP SPEAKING ABILITY OF EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

This study set out to find out if grade 8 students at SMP Negeri 19 Palu could talk more fluently after using the Talking Stick Technique. This is a quantitative research study that evaluates the growth of students' speaking abilities using a quasi-experimental design with a pre-and post-test. The Talking Stick Technique significantly improved the students' speaking abilities, according to the results. The gathered data was statistically analyzed to identify any noteworthy variations between the experimental and control groups. According to the results, the experimental group's mean posttest score (60.26) was greater than that of the control group (47.70). Furthermore, the analysis of hypotheses showed that the T-test > Table (2.262 > 1.676). This demonstrates that the study's hypothesis was verified. In conclusion, eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 19 Palu can improve their ability to speak by using the Talking Stick technique.

INTRODUCTION

One of the four language skills that learners need to acquire is speaking. According to Thornbury (2005), speaking is the actual action used to communicate ideas and engage with listeners. It is therefore a necessary skill for learning English. Teaching speaking is a crucial subject to which language teachers must give careful consideration. Teaching speaking involves imparting the knowledge and skills necessary for students to use language effectively for communication, expression of ideas, and sharing of information. According to Tarigan (2008), the goal of teaching speaking is to equip students with the ability to communicate efficiently.

Students can use English to share ideas, experiences, interests, opinions, and points of view with teachers, classmates, and others, based on the Merdeka Curriculum for Grade 8 Students (Level D). They can comprehend the essential points and pertinent specifics of talks or presentations on a wide range of widely discussed subjects. When they engage in conversations, they voice their thoughts, draw parallels, and declare their preferences. They use basic verb tenses and sentence structures to elaborate on and clarify their responses.

Preliminary research in the eighth grade at SMP Negeri 19 Palu revealed that many students struggle with speaking. Their limited vocabulary makes it challenging for them to express their ideas. Additionally, some students are too shy to speak in class due to fear of making pronunciation mistakes or being mocked by their peers. These issues contribute to their reluctance and lack of enthusiasm for speaking English. This indicates a need for effective teaching techniques to boost students' confidence and competence in speaking English.

Sawyer (2004) recommends that teachers use creativity to make classroom material more understandable and lessons more engaging for students. There are many kinds of techniques to motivate students in speaking class, one of them is using the Talking Stick technique. A study conducted by Ananda (2017) found that using the Talking Stick technique might inspire students to speak and assist them in resolving any speaking-related issues they may be having.

According to Kurniasih and Sani (2015:82), the Talking stick technique is a cooperative learning approach that involves sticks. Students are required to respond to questions posed by the teacher while holding the stick. Huda (2015) explains that many Native American tribes have used Talking Sticks for centuries to ensure fair and impartial hearings. These sticks are typically used in council circles to indicate who has the right to speak. When an important matter is brought to the council, an elder leads the discussion. After speaking, the elder raises the stick, allowing others to speak in turn. The stick is passed from one person to another until everyone who wishes to speak has had their turn, and then it is returned to the elder for safekeeping.

The Talking Stick technique fosters an engaging and lively learning environment in addition to encouraging pupils to speak up. Therefore, it can be concluded that the Talking Stick is a technique that gives students a standardized chance to organize their thoughts and develop their speaking ability. This study aimed to demonstrate that employing the Talking Stick technique develops the students' speaking abilities of grade eight at SMP Negeri 19 Palu.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

In this study, the researcher used a quantitative method with a quasi-experimental design. First, a pre-test was administered to evaluate the student's speaking abilities before the treatment. Next, the researcher applied the Talking Stick technique as the treatment for the students. Finally, a post-test was conducted to assess the technique's effectiveness. The study population consisted of 114 eighth-grade students from SMP Negeri 19 Palu, divided into four classes (A, B, C, and D), with each class containing 25-30 students.

The researcher used cluster random sampling to select the sample for this study, choosing two classes for this purpose. These classes were divided into an experimental group (class A) and a control group (class D). An oral test was used as the instrument for data collection. This instrument, specifically an oral test, was employed to evaluate the student's speaking abilities or performance.

In this research, data were collected using pre-tests and post-tests. The tests were administered twice: once as a pre-test and once as a post-test. The pre-test was conducted before the treatment to assess the students' initial speaking abilities. Following the pre-test, the researcher implemented the treatment. After the treatment, a post-test using the Talking Stick technique was given to evaluate the students' speaking improvement. The post-test was identical to the pre-test.

Furthermore, the rubric score that was used is an oral rating scale adapted from Heaton (1988:11). Ratings 6, 5, and 4 were not included in this study as the research was unsuitable for students in eighth grade. In the case of the native speaker, it was suitable. As a result, the scoring system, which ranged from 1 to 3, was as follows:

Table 1. Rating Scale

Rating	Fluency	Comprehensibility
3	Has to work hard most of the time. Frequently needs to look for the intended meaning. The speech was somewhat sluggish and fragmented. restricted modes of communication.	While the listener can grasp most of what is said, many of the speaker's words are beyond them, and they are forced to ask questions all the time.
2	Extended stops while trying to find the right message, which is frequently communicated haltingly and fragmentarily, sometimes almost hopelessly, with a restricted range of expression.	An experienced listener may understand only a limited portion, usually consisting of brief statements and phrases, and only then after some effort.
1	Full with very lengthy pauses. incredibly erratic and disjointed delivery. They occasionally give up trying. There are very few ways to express yourself.	Even if the listener makes a concerted effort to stop the speaker and is unable to provide any context for what he seems to be saying, very little of what is spoken can be understood.

The data obtained during the test was then analyzed using a few basic statistical tools. To figure out how well the students' speaking abilities, the researchers first used a formula suggested by Arikunto (2006:308) to figure out each participant's score:

$$\sum n = \frac{x}{N} \times 100$$

Where:

∑ = Standard Score

X = Total Correct Answers

N = Maximum Possible Score

100 = Fixed Score

Next, after obtaining the students' standard scores from the pre-tests and post-tests, the researcher calculates the mean score for each group using the method proposed by Arikunto (2010:313).

a) The formula for the experimental group:

$$Mx = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

b) The formula for the control group:

$$My = \frac{\sum y}{N}$$

Where:

Mx   = Mean Deviation Score of Experimental Group
My   = Mean Deviation Score of Control Group
$\sum x$ = Total Score of Experimental Group
$\sum y$ = Total Score of Control Group
N   = Number of Students

The researcher next used Arikunto's formula (2010:312) to calculate each group's square deviation.

a) The formula for an experimental group:

$$\sum x = \sum x^2 \frac{\left(\sum x\right)^2}{N}$$

b) The formula for the control group:

$$\sum y = \sum y^2 \frac{\left(\sum y\right)^2}{N}$$

Lastly, the researcher used Arikunto's Formula (2010:301) to apply the t-test formula to figure out whether the pre-and post-test findings from the experimental group and the control group showed any notable differences.

$$t = \frac{Mx - My}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{\sum x^2 + \sum y^2}{Nx + Ny - 2}\right)\left(\frac{1}{Nx} + \frac{1}{Ny}\right)}}$$

Where:

t   = Important Diversity between the Experimental Group and Control Group
Mx   = Average Deviation Score of Experimental Group
My   = Average Deviation Score of Control Group
$\sum x^2$ = Square Sum of Deviation of Experimental Group
$\sum y^2$ = Square Sum of Deviation of Control Group
Nx   = Total students in Experimental Group
Ny   = Total Students in Control Group

Researchers contrasted the t-counted value with the t-table value to ascertain the test's efficacy. The researcher's hypothesis (Ha) is accepted if the t-counted

value is higher than the t-table value. Conversely, the researcher's hypothesis (Ho) is disproved if the t-count value is less than the t-table value.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The pre-test mean score result indicated, according to the data analysis, that students were still having difficulties speaking. They cannot express their ideas because lacking vocabulary, are afraid to make mistakes and feel shy. Their ability to make sentences and express ideas was limited.

After finishing the pre-test, the researcher applied the Talking Stick technique, following Huda's (2015) procedures, to the experimental group over six sessions. The same treatment was not provided to the control group. During the first session, the students using the Talking Stick technique felt panicked and stressed because they had to answer the teacher's questions when they received the stick. That was related to Shoimin (2014) who said that the Talking Stick technique disadvantages that the students will feel worried and panic because there is no preparation for students to answer the teacher's questions. Also, it was related to the previous study found by Marisa (2022) that when the students got the stick the majority of learners experienced awkwardness and anxiety before speaking.

Because of the repetition of this technique until the last meeting, students started to enjoy it and there was a development of students' speaking ability. They were able to speak confidently and express their ideas which made them active in speaking class. It also can be seen from the significant results of the pre-test and post-test of the experimental and control groups.
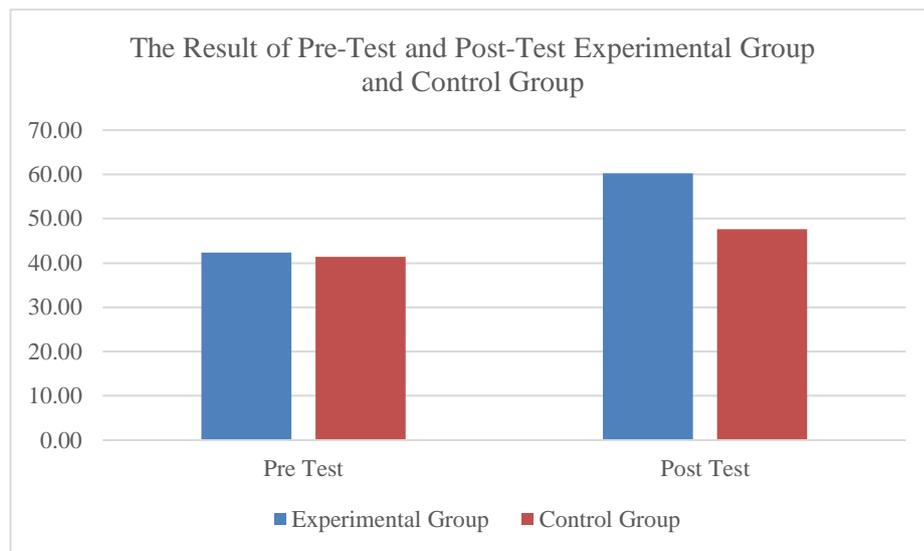
Chart 1. The Result of Pre-Test and Post-Test Experimental Group and Control Group

The mean deviation score was then computed by the researcher, yielding 17.95 for the experimental group and 6.32 for the control group. Subsequently, using the formula, the researcher computed the sum of squared deviations, resulting in a score of 4676.22. Finally, by application of the t-test formula, the researcher obtained a t-counted score of 2.262.

The final step was hypothesis testing to decide whether to accept or refuse the research hypothesis. Based on the key value of the student's t distribution, which can be computed as $Nx + Ny = 2$, researchers employ a significance threshold of 0.05. The t-table score resulted in 1.676. This indicates that the t-counted value exceeded the t-table value, thereby accepting the hypothesis of the research.

The researcher found that employing the Talking Stick technique developed students' speaking ability. Moreover, this technique brings enjoyment to the learning process because the act of passing the stick adds a physical element to the activity, which can make the classroom environment more dynamic and less monotonous. It relates to a prior study by Matondang and Nababan (2022), which found that teaching speaking to students with talking sticks can also increase their motivation, make learning fun, and minimize their feelings of boredom.

In the control class, the average score from the pre-test in the first session indicated that the speaking ability of learners was still low (41.38). Finally, during the last meeting, the researcher administered the post-test. There was no discernible

improvement in the learners' speaking abilities, as indicated by their average post-test score of 47.70.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, while the Talking Stick technique effectively develops students' speaking abilities, its implementation is not without challenges. By acknowledging and addressing these challenges through thoughtful pedagogical approaches, educators can optimize the technique's benefits, ultimately empowering students to speak confidently and fluently in diverse academic and social contexts.

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