

**IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING COMPETENCE THROUGH
SIMULATION**

(A Classroom Action Research in SMA Al-Islam I of Surakarta, 2010)

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APPROVAL

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ARIFAH WIJAYANI ANR, S200060064. *Improving Students' Speaking Competence Through Simulation in SMA Al Islam I Surakarta Academic Year 2009/2010*. Thesis. Surakarta, English Department of Post Graduate Program, Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, 2012.

This research aims at observing the implementation of simulation teaching technique to the teaching of English Speaking at SMA Al Islam 1 Surakarta and its affect upon students' learning. The research was conducted at the first grade students of SMA Al Islam 1 Surakarta 2008/ 2009 academic year. In this research, the problem refers to the first grade students in learning English especially their speaking competence which is still low. The writer proposed simulation technique to solve students' problems. The research was a classroom action research.

The research method included setting and time of the research, the subject of the research, the method of the research, the procedure of the research and technique of collecting data. The writer divided the action into three cycles and carried out in four steps namely action plan, action implementation, observation, and reflection. The cycles were determined at the time of implementation in which after looking at the result of the first cycle, then followed by the next cycles to see the consistency of the significant data.

Based on the result, the writer drew a conclusion that the use of simulation technique really improved the students' achievement in learning English especially in speaking English. The improvement was quite significant which was reflected from the progress of students' score from one cycle to another. It also can be seen from their increasing motivation and interest.

Speaking is one of the manifestations of communicative competence.

Hughes (1989: 101) as quoted by Yulia (2005: 179) stated that speaking is an interactive process in which an individual alternatively takes the role of speaker and listener. It is involved comprehension and production. As the result in speaking there will be at least two persons involved.

As a teacher who transfers knowledge to the students (especially in formal school), he or she cannot give the students material based on her own perspective.

The fact shows that most of the first grade students of SMA Al-Islam I of Surakarta have problems. It can be seen from their poor responses when the researcher came for the first time to the class and gave several questions to each student about their personal identities and their daily activities.

The condition that they have problems was also shown when the researcher doing a pre-test to the students. The aim of the test is to know the students' skill to discuss some themes (daily activities, like-dislike and past experiences). The score of the test was taken from some skills namely; pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. The data showed that their average of pre-test was poor, it was 51. The highest score is 71 and the lowest score is 18. The average of their pronunciation is 2,5, the average of their grammar is 14,6, the average of their vocabulary is 13,6, the average of their fluency is 7,47, and the average of their comprehension is 12,7. About 82 % of the students did not achieve the passing grade of the test (See table 1). It means that the class did not achieve the target of minimal passing grade, where the minimal score is 63 (See table 6). The class also did not achieve the minimal of class passing grade rule of Al Islam 1 Senior High School, where it can be said that a class will completed the target if 85% of the members passed the minimal score. Most of the students have the same problems. Most of the students afraid to speak what in their mind. They also

shy to say something. They are afraid of making mistakes. That because they rarely have chance to speak in their daily class. Students are also not accustomed to listen to the speaker directly. In other word it can be said that the students have low risk taking factor, a factor which will be very significant in mastering second language acquisition (Brown, 2000: 149). The students are also uncomfortable and boring with the condition in the classroom which is always centered to the teacher.

The problem statements of this research are as follow:

1. Can Simulation improve students' speaking competence in SMA Al Islam 1 of Surakarta? If it can, how effective is the improvement?
2. How effective is the teaching learning process when using Simulation to improve students' speaking competence?

. Based on the condition above, the researcher concluded that the students need warm condition or classroom circumstances which can make them really enjoy the topic being discussed. They also need more fun classroom with more enjoyable and fun teachers and teaching methods.

That's why the teacher proposed simulation teaching technique to solve students' problems in learning speaking English. It is student 'simulate' a real-life encounter (such as a business meeting, an encounter in an airplane cabin, or an interview) as if they were doing so in the real world, either as themselves in that meeting or airplane, or taking on the role of a character different from themselves or with though and feeling they do not necessarily share (Harmer, 1999: 274). So they will step by step lose their fear of

speaking English. Simulation allows students to express themselves to their peers in a group setting, groups comprising usually three or four (<http://uk.cambridge.org/elt/ces/methodolgy/simulation.htm>). It is a media to involve to the communication. By those ways students' fear and shy will be lost. And hopefully their problems can also be solved.

BP-BLTM in TESL Journal, Vol. XII, No. 11 defines some benefits of implementing Simulation in the speaking class such as:

- 1). gives students the chance to carry out a task or solve a problem together;
- 2). removes error correction from the equation at the time of the exercise;
- 3). allows students to experiment with new vocabulary and structures;
- 4). gives students the freedom to make their own choices and decisions;
- 5). allows students to base their choices and decisions on their own experience;
- 6). allows teachers to monitor progress and participation unobtrusively.

While Roestiyah (2001: 22) describes how useful Simulation is. She stated:

Teknik Simulasi baik sekali kita gunakan karena:

- 1). *menyenangkan siswa*
- 2). *menggalakkan guru untuk mengembangkan kreativitas siswa*
- 3). *memungkinkan eksperimen berlangsung tanpa memerlukan lingkungan yang sebenarnya*
- 4). *mengurangi hal-hal yang verbalistik atau abstrak*
- 5). *tidak memerlukan pengajaran yang pelik dan mendalam*
- 6). *menimbulkan semacam interaksi antar siswa, yang memberi kemungkinan timbulnya keutuhan dan kegotong-royongan serta kekeluargaan yang sehat*
- 7). *menimbulkan respon yang positif dari siswa yang lamban/kurang cakap*
- 8). *menumbuhkan cara berpikir kritis*

9). *memungkinkan guru bekerja dengan tingkat abilitas yang berbeda-beda*

From those statements above, it is hopefully simulation is able to improve students' speaking competence.

This research was carried out in SMA Al-Islam I of Surakarta. It is located in Jl. Honggowongso No. 94 Surakarta. Its phone number is (0271) 713342 and the website is www.smalsa.co.id. The research was conducted from August to may 2009.

Subject of this research is the first grade students of SMA Al-Islam I of Surakarta, especially X8 class. This class consists of 40 students: 18 male and 22 female. Most of them come from middle - lower economic background and from ordinary social background. Most of their parents are entrepreneur, especially batik convection. They have high motivation in studying, but they have a problem in communicating their own English orally. While the writer here is one of their English teacher.

As one of the English teacher in SMA Al Islam I, the researcher has to be responsible on the quality of English teaching learning process. One of the researcher efforts is by understanding what the students' problem and how to solve it. A classroom action research is as the way the researcher solve the students' problem.

In this research, the researcher uses the action research as the method. The reason why the researcher uses this method is because the problem which is found is dealing with classical problem. The problem was found when the researcher did a teaching learning in a classroom. This problem is owned by

almost all the member of the class. That is why the researcher used action research as the method of research.

There are some characteristics of action research which Nurkamto (2009: 3) added,

1. *PTK adalah suatu penelitian tentang situasi kelas yang dilakukan secara sistematis, dengan mengikuti prosedur atau langkah-langkah tertentu.*
2. *Kegiatan tersebut didorong oleh permasalahan dalam kelas yang dihayati oleh guru dalam pelaksanaan tugas sehari-hari sebagai orang yang berupaya membelajarkan siswa.*
3. *Tujuannya adalah untuk memecahkan masalah yang timbul dalam kelas dan/atau meningkatkan kualitas situasi kelas tersebut, termasuk praktek-praktek yang ada di dalamnya.*
4. *Upaya pemecahan masalah dan/atau peningkatan kualitas tersebut dapat dilakukan oleh satu orang, yaitu guru kelas itu sendiri. Namun, upaya tersebut akan lebih berhasil guna apabila dilakukan secara kolaboratif oleh suatu tim yang anggota-anggotanya terdiri atas orang-orang dari dalam sekolah itu, atau secara bersama-sama antara orang-orang dari sekolah tersebut dengan pihak luar.*
5. *Ukuran keberhasilan PTK didasarkan pada kemanfaatannya memecahkan masalah yang timbul di dalam kelas dan/atau meningkatkan kualitas sistem dalam kelas itu serta praktek-praktek yang ada didalamnya.*
6. *Kredibilitas 'teori' atau 'hipotesis' ditentukan oleh kemanfaatannya dalam memecahkan persoalan praktis. Oleh karena itu validitasnya diuji melalui praktek di lapangan, tidak melalui uji kebenaran ilmiah.*

Action research engages teachers in four steps process, namely:

1. Identify an area of focus
2. Collect data
3. Analyze and interpret data
4. Develop an action plan

The procedure of the action research consists of four stages as follows:

1. Planning

In this step, the researcher makes a lesson plan based on identifying problems referring to the teaching and learning process that will be researched in this study.

2. Implementing the action

Here, the researcher carries out the lesson plan in the classroom. She does step by step of the teaching learning activities based on his lesson plan. The steps are as follows:

- a. Opening
- b. Main activity
- c. Closing

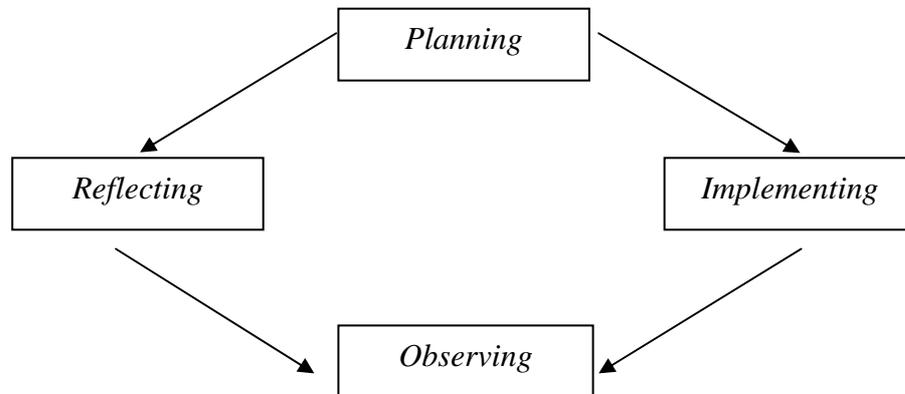
3. Observing

The activity in this step is the researcher observing the students during the action and making notes in observation sheets like; the students' feel and thinking or what the students do during the teaching learning process using simulation method.

4. Reflecting

In this step the researcher recites the occurrences in the classroom as the effect of the action. She evaluates the process and the result of the implementation of simulation in teaching English. The evaluation benefits to decide what the researcher should do in the next cycle.

The scheme of Action Research can be visually reflected as follows:



To collect the data accurately, the researcher uses some instruments as follow:

1. Observation

In this study, the researcher is a teacher who teaches speaking using simulation. She observes the students' activities while teaching learning process occurred. In this case, it is very important not only to know their own feeling about the English learning, but also how they think about their teacher.

2. Documentation

Here, the researcher gathers written information material or document as the indene of the research such as; planning documents, lesson plan, test result, etc.

3. Test

In this study the researcher uses oral and written test to measure the students' achievement in speaking competence. She gives pre-test and post-test to know the students' competence in speaking before and after teaching speaking using simulation. The aim is to know whether the students' speaking competence improves or not.

4. Interview

Here, the researcher interviews the students about the English teaching learning process. The researcher conducts it by asking some students after the teaching learning process.

The results of test were analyzed by finding the average mark of the students' speaking tests. The students' results were calculated in order to find out the mean of the data. The researcher calculated them using the following simple formula:

$$\text{Average mark: } \frac{\sum nx}{\sum n}$$

Where:

$$\sum nx = \text{sum of scores}$$

$$\sum n = \text{number of students}$$

While the qualitative data will be analyzed by using Constant Comparative Method as suggested by Strauss and Glasser in Moleong (2005: 288-289). They said that in general, the data analysis process includes data reduction, data classified, and data synthesis and ended by action hypothesis.

The data of mark report showed that their speaking competence was lower than the passing grade standard which determined by the school. It was 63 as the passing grade standard of the first grade students of SMA Al Islam 1 of Surakarta. From 34 students, those who got more than 63 were 6 students and the others were lower than 63. These data was got from the record which the researcher took from the pre test.

One of the causes of the students' failure was derived from the teacher. In this case, a teacher had a very important role to support the students' English achievement in teaching learning process. Based on the researcher's observation, what the teacher did in the classroom was that she still taught with the routine activities without considering that it would make them bored and lost their attention on teaching and learning process. Consequently, the students would not able to catch the lesson easily because their lost interest and participation. As stated by Douglas "Routine activities in learning can make the students bored. As a result, their motivation and participation in learning will decrease" (1987: 48).

Meanwhile, Richards and Renandya say (2005: 213) that the teacher is the sole source of input and feedback and often a dominating participant in the practice, exemplifying a typical pattern of teacher stimulus followed by student response, further followed by teacher evaluation of the students' response.

In English teaching learning process, teacher has to be able to choose and use not only the appropriate approach but also teaching technique which is

suitable with their assumption related to the nature of language and teaching learning process. He/she is not only able to know how well to teach but also to create the appropriate context and make the students active in joining the class. So that the students will not only be able to understand what they are learning in the class but also express their own English orally. Here, the teacher has very important role in managing and creating the class lively and meaningfully.

To solve the above problem, the researcher should apply the right teaching technique which increases the students' interest to the learning process in the classroom. For this purpose it is necessary to use simulation as the teaching technique that is expected to help the students to understand the lesson easily especially English speaking competence.

Simulation was chosen as one of the task in teaching learning activities to create a situation for learners to actively interact in the language, thereby making the language learning more meaningful. At the same time, the learners are introduced to different styles of listening, remembering, discussing, writing, and presenting.

Having carried out the research in which the teacher use simulation teaching technique in teaching English to the secondary students, their English achievement in English speaking competence are increased. The following is the table describing the students' score result of each test which is taken from the end of each cycle.

The students' pre-test and post-test result

	Pre test	Cycle one	Cycle two	Cycle three
Total Score	1734	2028	2247	2430
Mean score	51	59,65	66,09	74,53

The researcher also makes some efforts to solve the students' problems. Its description is as follows:

The students' problem and its solution

Students' Problem	Solution
A little passive	Give a high motivation, fairly approach to support their spirit.
Doubt to express the mind	Support them not to worry to make mistakes, give strong motivation
Mispronouncing the word(s)	Lead them to pronounce the difficulty word(s) many times, give some more exercises
Misuse the structure of the word(s) or sentence(s)	Explain the right structure and give some more explanation and exercises
Speaking in low sound	Support them to express more loudly, remind not to be afraid to make mistakes
Feel inferior	Support them to behave commonly, give comprehending about the existence of the students in the school, etc.

Based on the above table, the researcher sees that the results from the first cycle until the third cycle always get a better progress. It means that the students' achievement improved significantly. Then the influences of the action or the process effects using simulation teaching technique are as follows;

1. The class activities have been more and more active because willy-nilly the students have to prepare their turning as well as possible before doing simulation.
2. The students' motivation has increased. It can be seen from their striving to perform the practicing as well as possible
3. The students' interaction has also enhanced. Those who used to be shy, nervous, inferior, and afraid to make mistakes began to have bravery to ask and respond someone else's questions and statements.
4. The cooperation among the students seemed to be more tightly than before because they often discuss together to prepare their turning.
5. They are fun and comfortable. It can be seen from their expressions in learning English freely. It means that the class atmosphere really makes them learning freely although it also makes a little noise but it's positive activity and product able.

Having been given some solutions as mentioned above, it has been a better progress from the implementation of the cycle two to cycle three. It means that the quality of teaching learning activity was significantly increased. The students who were usually not active in the previous time, they

began to be more active participating in the teaching and learning process. For example; when the teacher explained the teaching materials, all students paid much attention to the teacher's explanation; when the teacher asked some of them to practice in front of the class as a model, they were very excited to do it; and when the teacher gave them a chance to quest their difficulty, they also used it to ask their problems bravely.

Based on the data, the researcher concludes that teaching technique using simulation really gives a high contribution in improving and enhancing the students' English achievement especially English speaking competence.

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