
**IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING PROFICIENCY
THROUGH COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING AT
THE FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS OF
SDN KEMBANGRINGGIT I**

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Abstract Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kemampuan siswa kelas lima di SDN Kembangringgit I dalam berkomunikasi secara lisan dengan menggunakan bahasa Inggris melalui pengaplikasian Communicative Language Teaching approach yang merupakan pendekatan dalam pengajaran yang menekankan pada peningkatan kemampuan dalam berkomunikasi. Penelitian ini berbentuk Classroom Action Research yang diimplementasikan dalam empat tahap yaitu perencanaan, implementasi, observasi, dan refleksi. Ada beberapa instrumen yang digunakan dalam mengumpulkan data, antara lain interview, observasi, dan spoken test. Semua data yang terkumpul akan dianalisa dalam bentuk qualitative dan quantitative. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya peningkatan kemampuan berkomunikasi secara lisan pada anak-anak, motivasi belajar mereka meningkat. Murid-murid lebih antusias berpartisipasi dalam kegiatan speaking.

Kata Kunci: Communicative Language Teaching, Improving, Speaking Proficiency.

Introduction

Mastering speaking in English is essential in facing the global era. It facilitates communication in various sphere of international contact, such as in politics, economy, academy, technology, and science (Nirmala & Mary, 2010). Therefore, speaking is given to the students

from their early stage. According to Krashen cited by Gursoy (2011), there is period of time when native speaker ability is easier to achieve. It is critical period hypothesis. The time is limited by the age of the learner, that is before their puberty, it is about twelve years old. In order to make the students easier to achieve their speaking proficiency, the existence of appropriate

approach is needed. One of these approach is Communicative Language Teaching Approach.

Savignon as cited by Wood (2011) said that, the central theoretical concept in communicative language teaching is “communicative competence”. It makes use of real-life situations that necessitate communication. According to Larsen – Freeman as cited by Nirmala & Mary (2010), Teacher in Communicative classroom will find themselves talking less and listening more becoming active facilitators of their students’ learning. The teacher is a creator which sets up a situation that students are likely to encounter in real life. Chang (2011) said that the students can develop their language as social skills when they doing interaction with their friend. The real life simulation can be changed from day to day in order to make the students interested and enjoy speaking activities. The students’ motivation to learn comes from their desire to communicate in meaningful ways about meaningful topics.

Communicative language teaching has changed our

perception about language learning. Widdowson as cited by Essossomo (2013) views that language learning not merely as acquiring the knowledge of the theoretical aspects of language, but also as acquiring the ability to use language to communicate in concrete situations. It means that language learning is not only in the terms of learning about structure, but also in the terms of using the language in communication in real life. According to Littlewood as cited by Chang (2011), Communicative Language Teaching provide the students with chance to improve their ability to use English in real contexts. Ganjabi (2011) said that it is important for the teacher to include discussion about the nature of language learning as regular part of their instruction to make the students aware about their intention in learning language because effective language teaching is not limited only in aspects of language teaching and learning such as grammar teaching, error correction, target language use, culture, etc, but it involves many other aspects that need to be researched such as the emphasis on the different language

skills, teaching some language learning strategies.

Chang (2011) underlined that Communicative Language Teaching creates a non-threatening language environment which reduce the students' anxiety in making mistake and error during communicative activity. Dornyei as cited by Tsiplakides & Keramida (2010) said that it is important to create a classroom atmosphere in which language error are considered a natural part of the process of learning foreign language. If errors are ridiculed, some students may lost willingness to communicate in the target language. In line with Keramida, Hue (2010) noted that if the students feel a sense of support from their teacher and peers, they will be more willing to speak in the target language. It is very important because the target of learning language is learning to communicate with the other through the language itself. Ding (2013) stated that Good teaching theory and practice can only be proved in real teaching practice. Communicative Language Teaching classroom considered appropriate approach in this case.

It provide ample opportunity to practice speaking.

Moreover, there are many kinds of activity can be implemented in Communicative language teaching classroom, such as role play, games, group discussion, story telling, etc. Shreehari (2012) said that it is important creating variety classroom activities. It can make the students more interested in every speaking activity, therefore it is important for the teacher to make preparation, such as preparing rich materials before teaching in the classroom because a good classroom environment and rich materials make teaching and learning process enjoyable for the students(Chou & Kuo, 2012).

Based on the above statements, it can be underlying that Communicative Language Teaching is appropriate approach in teaching speaking because it provides the students ample opportunity to practice in communicating. For these reasons, the researcher interested to improve the students' speaking proficiency through communicative language teaching on the fifth grade students of SDN kembangringgit I which most of

the students have poor speaking proficiency. There are some factors in this case, such as most of the students have low motivation in learning speaking. they fell awkward to speak in English because most of people around them speak in Indonesia as their native language. It makes them do not enthusias to participate in speaking activities. Moreover, lack of opportunity to practice speaking that given by the teacher make the students unaccustomed to use English to communicate orally with the others.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Communicative Language Teaching

Brown as cited by Wood (2011) gives his definition of CLT as “an approach to methodology that emphasizes authenticity, interaction, student-centered learning, task based activities, and communication for the real world, meaningful purposes”

In harmony, Chang (2011) said that Communicative Language teaching advocates teaching practices that develop learners’ ability to communicate in

a second language. It represent a change of focus in language teaching from linguistic structure to learners’ need for developing communication skills. The ability to use language in oral communication is the central intention of Communicative Language Teaching.

Brown cited by Langeveldt (2010) also offers four interconnected characteristics of CLT. They are: (1) Classroom goals are focused on all of the components of communicative competence and not restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence, (2) language techniques are designed to engage learners in pragmatics, authentic, functional use of language for meaningful purposes. Organizational language forms are not the central focus but rather aspects of language that enable the learner to accomplish those purposes, (3) Fluency and accuracy are seen as complimentary principles underlying communicative techniques. At times fluency may have to take on more importance than accuracy in order to keep learners meaningfully engaged in language use, (4) In the

communicative classroom, students ultimately have to use the language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts.

Nirmala & Mary (2010) stated that a classroom during a communicative activities is far from quite. However, The students do most of speaking, and frequently the scene of a classroom during a communicative exercise is active, with students leaving their seats to complete a task. It means that the students have to be active to participate during classroom activities. Therefore the teacher have to create variety of interesting activities in the classroom because it can make the students motivated and more enthusias to participate in speaking class. Bahaus & Nabhani (2011) said that motivating our students to learn the language should be the priority in language teaching. It can make the students successful in both their academic and professional lives. Attendance as also a major factor that plays a significant role in defining the students' final grade (Nasra, 2013). In harmony with Nasra, Chou & Kuo (2012) said that there is correlation between class attendance and class

performance. Variety kinds of interesting activities which are implemented in Communicative Language Teaching Classroom can make the students motivated to come in speaking class.

Based on the experts' opinions, the researcher conclude that communicative language teaching is approach to language teaching which amphasizes on communicative competence that is the ability to use language to communicate in real life. Communicative Language Teaching provide learner with ample opportunities to practice speaking. It is important to increase leaners' speaking proficiency.

The Advantages of Communicative Language Teaching

It is clear that communicative language teaching is one of approach in language teaching which emphasize on communicative competence. The applying of this approach during teaching and learning process give advantageous to the students. According to Larsen cited by Utami (2012) The goal of Communicative Language

Teaching is to enable students to communicate in the target language. It emphasizes on learning to communicate through interaction in target language, with the introduction of authentic and meaningful tasks into the learning situation. Communicative Language Teaching classroom is more student centered, Chang (2011) said that the learner centered approach gives students a sense of ownership of their learning and enhances their motivation. It allows them for more meaningful communication and more than often provides for practical linguistic skill building. In Communicative Language Teaching classroom, the students are equipped with ample opportunities to show their idea, opinion or suggestion about something.

METHODOLOGY

The Form and Strategy of the Study

The strategy used in this study was classroom action research. It was an action that was done to solve the problem in the classroom. Classroom Action Research activities involved repeated cycles. Each cycle

consists of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. The result of the first cycle was used to determine the need for the following cycle until the problem gets solved.

The Data Source

The data which was analyzed in this study consists of qualitative and quantitative data. The data was obtained by the researcher and the collaborator during the implementing of the research. The qualitative data were taken from interview and field notes, while the quantitative data were taken from the observation checklist and spoken test.

The Technique of Collecting the Data

During the process of collecting the data, the researcher used some instruments, they were: (1) Interview, (2) classroom observation, (3) spoken test. The researcher interviewed the students in order to know the students' thought and responses about approach and strategy used by the teacher during teaching and learning speaking process. The researcher conducted interview twice, they were before the implementing of Communicative

Language Teaching and after the implementing of Communicative Language Teaching.

While, classroom observation were used to collect the data about the condition of the students' speaking activities during the implementing of Communicative Language Teaching. Arikunto cited by Febrianty (2012) said that observation include not only eyes activity, but also the activity of concentrating on attention to certain object by using all sense. It means that observation was using all of our sense of view on a certain object. The observation instrument including checklist and field notes. The researcher used checklist for the teacher and students. The observation checklist was used to observe the teacher and students activities during teaching and learning process through Communicative Language Teaching. Meanwhile, the field notes were made to notice the additional information happened in the classroom. It recorded the students' responses and participations, whether the students were active during teaching and learning process through CLT or not.

Moreover, The spoken test was conducted after the implementing of the research. The spoken test was used to know the students' speaking improvement after the implementing of Communicative Language Teaching. According to Djiwandono cited by Wahyuni (2011), the scoring of oral test uses the analytic score that the test is evaluated separately based on language components, such as, fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension. In this study, the researcher assessed the students through spoken test or individual performance test.

Criteria of Success

In classroom action research, the criteria of success was needed to recognize the improvement in the classroom and to determine the characteristics whether the research was succed or failed. In this research, the researcher determines the criteria of success through three criteria.

First, the students were motivated in learning speaking. The researcher poin out the students' motivation in learning

speaking as the criteria of success because it was important in learning speaking. To know whether the students were motivated or not, the researcher determines some indicators of motivated students, such as, the students' interested in the topic discussion, The students feel enthusiastic during teaching and learning process that encourage them to speak up during speaking activities, the students are able to give response and answer to the teacher's instruction and question without any forces from the other during teaching and learning process.

Second, the students participate actively in teaching and learning process. During teaching and learning process through Communicative Language Teaching, each student is expected to be active learner. They have the same chance to participate and show their ideas during speaking activities. To know whether the students are active or not, the researcher determines the indicator of students' participation, such as, It can be seen from the quantity of students' responding, asking question for clarification, answering the teacher's

instructions and questions during teaching and learning process.

Third, students' achievement in spoken test. Regarding the students' speaking proficiency, the research would be considered successful if 80% of the whole students get at least 70 and the the mean of the students' score at least 70. The assessment used is spoken test. It is in the form of students' performance conducting speaking activities, such as, self introduction. If the result of spoken test is not meet the criteria of success, it means the research is fail.

Data Analysis

The data obtained by the researcher in the field notes and observation sheets were analized in discriptive form, while the data obtained by the researcher and the collaborator from the observation checklist and spoken test were calculated statistically. The data from observation checklist were calculated in percentage.

Meanwhile, conducting the spoken test, the result were calculated by scoring the students one by one. The spoken test was assessed by the researcher and the

collaborator. The data which were obtained from the spoken test were analysed quantitatively by using statistical calculation to measure the percentages of successful students in the classroom. The calculation of the data was to find out the mean score of the frequency.

The researcher assessed the result based on their pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. The research consider success if 80% of the whole students in the classroom get score at least 70. And the mean of the students' score at least 70. It was based on the standard minimum of graduation

Result and Discussion

Result

The researcher conducted two cycles in implementing Communicative Language Teaching in order to improve the students' speaking proficiency. These cycles were used to know the students' improvement in speaking proficiency through Communicative Language Teaching. Based on the result of observation during implementing of action in cycle I, the finding was

not satisfied enough because the criteria of success was not reached completely. Based on the result of observation, the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching to improve the students' speaking proficiency in cycle I was able to increase the students motivation in learning speaking, it also made the students more enthusiastic in learning speaking, but based on the result of spoken test, the students' spoken test obtained by the researcher and the collaborator did not meet criteria of success. Based on the finding of spoken test, the mean score of the students' spoken test obtained by the researcher and the collaborator was 70, 87. It met the criteria of success but the percentage of the students who got score at least 70 in spoken test is 69,6%. There were 16 students who got score at least 70. It did not meet criteria of success. The research considered success if the percentage. of the students who got score at least 70 is 80%. . Because all of the criteria of success in this research were not achieved successfully yet, the researcher revise the planning and continued to the next cycle.

Based on the result of the data collection in the first cycle,

the researcher revise the planning in order to overcome the problems which still emerged in the first cycle. Some of revising that made by the researcher including training the students by drilling to pronounce The English words, prepare the material and media which could be used to support activities during teaching and learning speaking process, gave more clear instruction and also used gesture during giving instruction to the students in order to make the students easier to comprehend the instruction, and the last in order to avoid the waste of time, the researcher managed the time and used the time based on the planning. In the second cycle, the researcher continued the meeting by changed the strategy and gave the students more materials that necessary in introduction.

Based on the result of observation during implementing of action in cycle II, the finding was satisfied because the criteria of success was reached completely. Based on the result of observation, the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching to improve the students' speaking proficiency in cycle II was successful. The weaknesses in

cycle I were solved in cycle II. The implementing of Communicative Language Teaching increased the students motivation in learning speaking, It made them became active learner during speaking class. It also made the students more enthusiastic to participate in every speaking activity. Based on the data noted by the researcher in the field note, the students who were active conducting in speaking activities were increased in each meeting, The students' self confidence in answering teacher's questions and presenting their work by using English orally also clearly appeared. Those all were note as the students speaking improvement that made teaching and learning process more alive in speaking class. In the last spoken test, the average score of the students' speaking score was 73,49 the percentage of the number of the students who got score more than 70 was 82,61%. It meant the criteria of success were achieved completely.

Discussion

The implementation of Communicative Language Teaching in the classroom used any kinds of activities which gave

the students ample opportunities to practice their speaking. It was benefit to invite them to be active learner during teaching and learning speaking process. According to Howat cited by Mohammadzadeh & Jafarigozar (2012), language is acquired through communication. It means that the students is easier to achieve their speaking proficiency by practice it in everyday communication. Khazae (2012) said that class size can affect the participation of learners in class discussion, Therefore, kind of activities which applied during teaching and learning process should be able to increase the students' motivation to participate. Some of activities which used by the researcher in this research were interview, games, and reporting. All of these activities were able to improve the students' motivation in learning speaking. Before the implementing it also appropriate with the material given to the students and the finding these activities increased the students' motivation in learning speaking, they more enthusiastic to participate in speaking activities. The students' self confidence were increased, therefore their speaking proficiency was improved. In the

first meeting there were only five students who were active to give response to the teacher's question and instruction but after the implementing of Communicative Language Teaching, almost all of the students turned into an active learner.

Based on the finding of this study, the implementing of Communicative language Teaching has improved the students' speaking proficiency. It could be seen from the students' desire in learning speaking. According to Ur cited by Hertika, Apriliaswati & Sumarni (2013), a successful speaking activities can be seen from the condition of the learner who talk a lot, active participate in speaking activities, had high motivation in learning speaking, and their language were easy to comprehend. Before the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching, most of the students were not interested in learning speaking. They lack of self confidence, therefore they became a passive learner during speaking class. The limited chance given to the students made them unaccustomed to use English to communicate with the other. They felt shy and afraid of making

mistake conducting in speaking activities. All of these facts were changed after the implementing of Communicative Language Teaching.

The improvement of students' speaking proficiency also influenced by their motivation and self confidence. Therefore the researcher gave motivation to the student by telling the important of English for their future life. The researcher also give praised by saying "good", "excellent", and "very good" in order to increase the students' self confidence and the finding it worked successful. Moreover, the used of appropriate media also stimulated the students to focus and more interested on the topic discussion. The researcher used pictures, photograph, and card in this research.

The finding of the implementation of Communicative language Teaching had significance improved the fifth grade's students speaking proficiency at SDN Kembangringgit I. It caused the students were trained to practice their English in Every meeting through answering question, asking for something, asking for

clarification and giving clarification about certain information and through performing spoken test. Almost all of the students turned accustomed to use English to communicate with the others. It changed their thought about learning speaking. Before the implementing of Communicative language teaching, they thought that Learning speaking is something difficult but after the applying Communicative Language Teaching, Learning speaking become interesting activities.

Conclusion

The result of the research could be concluded that teaching speaking is different with teaching reading, writing, and listening. In teaching speaking, the teacher has to facilitate the students with ample opportunities to practice their speaking. The more the students practice their speaking, the easier they achieved their speaking proficiency. Communicative Language Teaching considered the appropriate approach to be implemented in teaching speaking. It facilitated the students with ample opportunities to practice their speaking. It stimulates the

students to be an active learner and accustomed to use English to communicate with the others.

In this case, the implementing of Communicative language teaching is able to improve students' speaking proficiency at the fifth grade students of SDN Kembangringgit I. It could be seen from the students' desire to participate in every speaking activity, It also can be seen from their enthusiastic in learning speaking. Moreover, the improvement also can be seen from the result of the students' spoken test which shown the improvement from cycle I to cycle

II. Where the mean score of students' spoken test in cycle I is 70,87, there were only 69,57% of the whole students who got the target score. Then, the result shown a significant progress on cycle II which the mean score of students' spoken test was become 73,49 or 82,61% of whole students who got the target score. It means, there was significant influence of using Communicative to improve the students' speaking proficiency. So, it can be concluded that teaching speaking through Communicative Language Teaching is quite success in improving students' speaking proficiency.

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