

IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING USING GUESS THE MYSTERY OBJECT GAME IN DESCRIBING THINGS

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Abstract

This research was aimed at improving the students' speaking in English, especially in accuracy, fluency, and their encouragement to speak English by using Guess the Mystery Object game technique. The participants were the VII-A grade students of MTs Al-Irsyad Pontianak consists of 36 students. The method of this research was classroom action research (CAR). It was conducted in two cycles. The data in this research was gathered qualitatively by using observation checklist, field notes, and a camera; and was analyzed in a descriptive way. The result of this research showed that the students' accuracy, fluency, and encouragement in speaking English have improved. The implementation of Guess the Mystery Object game encouraged the students to speak English and helped their friends to speak as well. The result of the students' speaking performance was also increased. The students can finally speak English in describing things around school better. In addition, there were 31 students from 36 students who successfully improved their accuracy and fluency of speaking.

Keywords: *speaking, accuracy and fluency, guess the mystery object, classroom action research.*

INTRODUCTION

The primary goal in speaking skill is to communicate effectively where students can talk as much as possible through English fluently and accurately. Communication is important in order to give or receive information. Therefore, to communicate directly to others, students need the speaking skill mastery. In this 21st century, students-centered technique has been applied in schools. That means students must communicate more and take initiative themselves in the learning process. However, it is not easy for them to speak English constantly followed by the speaking aspects; fluency and accuracy.

As the result of the researcher's observation at the seventh grade students of MTs Al-Irsyad Pontianak who sit in class A, most of the students admitted that they have difficulties in speaking English. They often mispronounce English words, use the wrong

vocabulary, speak ungrammatical English, and make gaps when speaking English. Thus, they did not comfortable and were afraid of making a mistake when speaking English, so they prefer to use their mother tongue instead. Based on those problems, the researcher interested using a type of games called Guess the Mystery Object as an alternative technique to solve the students' problems and to help them improve their English speaking skill.

By using games in the classroom, the students can be more enthusiastic in learning process. Students can relax and enjoy using the language when games are implemented in English class (Zhu, 2012). Games are considered as a good way in improving various skills. It is supported by Chen (2005) who argued that using guessing game in language learning can promote communicative competence, create a meaningful context for language use, increase learning motivation, reduce learning anxiety,

encourage creative and spontaneous use of language. Thus, the use of games can also promote the students' fluency and accuracy in communication.

There were ten types of guessing games according to Pesce (2016), but in conducting this research, the researcher used one of the types called Guess the Mystery Object. In implementing this game, the students have to describe some things in school that they brought in front of the class without mentioning the names, and others have to guess the things. The students worked in group which was expected to help the students monitoring, correcting, and assessing each other.

Everyone may familiar with guessing game and thought that it was just for fun but it was actually adaptable for classroom use. Guessing game created a challenging, competitive, and exciting situation in the classroom (Cohen and Cowen, 2007, p. 267). The use of guessing game is also expected to encourage and motivate the students to speak English confidently.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher used guessing game called Guess the Mystery Object as an alternative way to improve the speaking skill, especially in fluency and accuracy, and the encouragement in speaking English of the seventh grade students of MTs Al-Irsyad Pontianak Academic Year 2020/2021. This research was a classroom action research which tried to solve the students' problems in speaking English.

RESEARCH METHOD

Since the purpose of this research was to find out whether teaching English speaking by using Guess the Mystery Object technique can improve the speaking skill of the seventh grade students of MTs Al-Irsyad Pontianak and to encourage them to speak English, the researcher used classroom action research (CAR) which was considered as an appropriate method to be used to solve the problem of students in the classroom. Classroom Action Research is a research carried out in the classroom by the teacher of

the course, mainly with the purpose of solving a problem or improving the teaching/learning process. According to Kumar (2011), CAR is a means of action, whether to improve the practice or to take action to deal with issues of problems. O'Byrne (2016) also argues that CAR integrates research, action, and analysis. The action includes the development and implementation of plans or strategies to address the focus of the research. The research includes building a knowledge base to understand the effectiveness of the action or plan being considered.

For the process of conducting classroom action research, there are four steps originally stated by Burns (2010, p. 19): planning, action, observation, and reflection. The researcher conducted two cycles in this research for about four meetings.

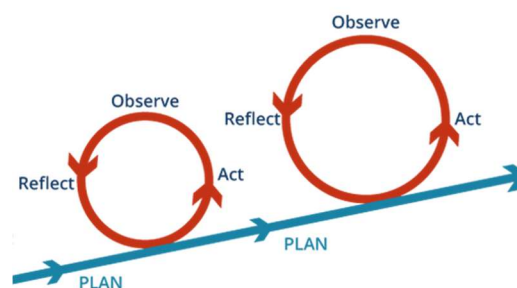


Figure 1. Steps of an action research designed by O'Byrne (2016)

In order to make clear the cycle above, the researcher explains those steps below:

1. Planning. This step included problems and situation analysis, preparation of the material for teaching and instrument to collect the data.
2. Acting. This step was the implementation of guess the mystery object and all the plan that the researcher and the teacher made to solve the problems. Here the researcher as an observer and was helped by a collaborator while the teacher was teaching the students.
3. Observing. In doing observation, the researcher as the observer used observation checklist and field notes to document the students'

performance in the classroom. Speaking rubric or the scoring table was also be used to assess the students' speaking ability right away.

4. Reflecting. In this step, the teacher recalled all of the materials that have been done in the classroom and asked feedbacks of the students. It was aimed to find out the students' improvement in each cycle. The feedback was also important to do re-planning the next cycle. The result of reflection can change a certain action or add some more actions in order to improve the teaching learning process.

The participants of this research were the seventh grade students of MTs Al-Irsyad Pontianak. It is located in Jl. Tanjung Raya 2, Saigon, East Pontianak. There were three classes for the seventh grade students, class A until C. The researcher chose the students who sit in class A which consists of 36 students because they have problems in speaking English.

In obtaining the data of this research, the researcher used observation, measurement, and taking documentations as the techniques of data collecting. For the measurement, the researcher assessed the students' speaking performance by giving them score based on the speaking aspects; fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. The tools used by the researcher to collect the data were observation checklist, field notes, and a camera.

After collecting the data, the next step was analyzing the data that has been obtained from the data collection. Based on the data collection, there were two forms of data in this research: qualitative data and quantitative data. In analyzing the qualitative data, the researcher took the data that has been obtained through observation checklist, field notes, and documentations. Then analyzed the result in a descriptive way. In analyzing the quantitative data, the researcher gathered the students'

scores with the help of scoring table and speaking rubric that consisted of speaking aspects. Students' individual score was quantified by using the following formula:

$$X = \frac{\Sigma S}{Max\ Score} \times 100$$

Where: X = Students' individual score
 ΣS = Sum of each students' score
 Max Score = Maximum Score

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

This research was conducted in two cycles and four meetings. Each cycle consisted of four steps, which were planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. In the first cycle, the acting stage was conducted in one meeting that was on Tuesday, January 14th, 2020 at 12.30 p.m. The time for English subject was 80 minutes. There was no student absent in the first cycle. In the second cycle, the acting stage in one meeting that was on Tuesday, January 21st, 2020. The time for English subject was 80 minutes. There was no student absent in the second cycle.

The research findings were gathered based on the implementation of the cycles conducted in the classroom. It was aimed to answer the research questions, they were (1) How does guess the mystery object improve the fluency and accuracy in speaking skill of the seventh grade students in MTs Al-Irsyad Pontianak Academic Year 2020/2021?, and (2) How does guess the mystery object encourage the students to speak English in the topic of "Describing Things in School"?

The first question can be answered by analyzing the data that has been collected by the researcher through the students' performance in implementing Guess the Mystery Object. It was proved that the students can finally speak English fluently and accurately in describing and guessing the things. They worked in group, helped and shared to each other which made them learned

more vocabularies by asking to their friends in group about the appropriate words to be used in describing things, pronounce the words better by listening to their friends utterances and trying them too, and arranged their speech in describing the things well by interacting with their friends.

Based on the result of quantitative analysis, there were 31 students from 36 students who considered successfully improved their fluency and accuracy in speaking about "Describing Things in School." In conclusion, there were only five students who were considered still remained in their speaking skill. The second question in this research can be answered by analyzing the qualitative data that has been collected by the researcher as an observer through observation checklist, field notes, and documentations taken by the collaborator.

1. Observation Checklist

In the first cycle, the students did not work cooperatively during the game where they tend to think by their own without sharing and helping each other. They did not speak spontaneously in describing and guessing the things and there were gaps in their speaking because beside the lack of vocabulary, they also felt difficult in understanding the description to guess the things. The students also were not confident to speak English in front of the class because they speak in a low voice.

Meanwhile in the next cycle, the students became more cooperative in the group work. They helped and corrected their friends in the team during the game. The vocabulary they produced also increased. Those made them speak spontaneously in describing and guessing the things because they already mastered the names, the adjectives and the function of the things. They participated in the game enthusiastically because all of them played and got involved in it

2. Field Note

There were significant changes in the students' participation during learning process and the classroom situation from the first into the second cycle. To summarize the notes, the researcher came to the conclusion that in the second cycle, the classroom situation was getting better.

The students' motivation and encouragement in learning process has increased. All of the students got involved in the game and did the describing and the guessing of things in school. They played and practiced through the implementation of guess the mystery object because they were having fun, and they tend to help and share to each other.

3. Documentation

In the documentations of the first and the second cycle, there was a significant difference in the students' enthusiasm in the classroom. The capture of the classroom situation in the first cycle seemed unpleasant. The students also seemed uninterested and confused.

Meanwhile, it was different with the second cycle. The classroom situation was fun and energetic during the implementation of guess the mystery object game. All of the students were enthusiastically involved in the game. They competed to raise their hand in guessing the things that was described by their friends.

First Cycle

In the first cycle, the acting step was conducted on Tuesday, January 14th, 2020. The teacher did the conventional teaching started from greeting, praying together, checking the students' attendance, explaining the material, until the implementation of Guess the Mystery Object. After the teacher did the teaching, and the students did the game, the researcher then quantified the students' score into the qualification. All those

steps were done to obtain the research findings. During the implementation of guess the mystery object, the researcher was being an observer who paid attention to the students' performance, helped by a collaborator. To observe what actually happened in the classroom, the researcher used observation checklist and field note.

In doing guess the mystery object, the students were given cards contained of things in school pictures by the researcher. Then, two of the students as *describers team* described the things, while the other two as *guessers team* guessed the things. Based on the result findings and the data analysis of the first cycle, the researcher and the teacher concluded that the procedure of guess the mystery object using cards and divided the students in one group to describe and guess the thing were not effective enough to help improve their speaking skill. There were some weaknesses that can be found in this cycle, as follow:

1. The students lowered their voice and seemed unconfident when speaking English in front of the class.
2. The students were difficult to express their ideas through English so that there were many gaps in their speaking.
3. The students kept using their mother tongue in describing the things because they did not master enough English vocabulary.
4. There were mistakes in the students' pronunciation in mentioning the name of things around school.
5. When one student in the team describing and guessing the things, another one just stood still rather than helping and became passive.
6. The students who sit in the back and have not got their turn to perform seemed unenthusiastic and just played along because they were not involved in the game.

As the data collected, the researcher and the teacher agreed that the students were having some difficulties when they trying to speak English not only at the speaking aspects, but also their encouragement and confidence to speak in front of the class. The teacher and the researcher came to the conclusion that the procedure of the game in the first cycle was not effective enough for the students' speaking improvement, so that the purpose of this research was not achieved yet. That was why the researcher and the teacher planned to conduct another cycle in order to achieve the objectives of this research by seeing the students' improvement and encouragement in speaking English.

To conduct the next cycle, the researcher together with the teacher planned to change the way or the procedure of implementing guess the mystery object technique. The researcher and the teacher also planned that the explanation of the describing things in the conventional teaching will be emphasized more on the adjectives. By that, the students will have a bigger chance to remember and comprehend the adjectives for describing the things. There were no more cards in the next cycle but realia or the real things around the school.

Second Cycle

Based on the weaknesses or problems drawn in the previous cycle, the researcher and the teacher agreed to conduct another cycle. The acting step of the second cycle was conducted on Tuesday, January 21st, 2020. First of all, the teacher just explained more about adjectives that were used to describe things around school. After the teacher's explanation, the students were divided into 9 groups, same with the previous group in the first cycle, to play guess the mystery object. The difference was the students were not divided into 2 teams anymore and all the members described the things to their friends who took a role as the participants. Every group brought at least five things to the front

of class and described just two of them to the participants.

After all the groups got their turns, the teacher gave the assessment to the students. It was writing a description about things in school based on the characteristics and the function. The assessment was aimed to analyze the students' understanding about the topic "Describing Things in School."

In the classroom, during the activity of Guess the Mystery Object game, the teacher directed and controlled the students' performance while the researcher observed the students' response, participation, and achievement in the teaching learning process and collected them in the field notes and observation checklist. After the class was over, the teacher and the researcher discussed about the result and the process of this cycle. It was concluded that the students' speaking skill was way better than the previous cycle, *"even than before"* added the teacher. All of the students also participated in the activity because they got involved in it. It was rare to find their difficulty in producing vocabulary such as adjectives and the name of things in school when performed the game. The reflection was also based on the observation checklist and the field notes taken by the researcher, as follow:

1. The students became more enthusiastic to speak English because they have participants to guess the things they were described.
2. The students started to use the appropriate adjectives in describing the things around school they brought in front of the class.
3. Their pronunciation has increased because if they mispronounce the words, the participants protested and asked them to repeat.
4. Most members of the groups became active. They encouraged their team to describe the things, so that the participants can guess.
5. The participants were motivated to guess the things in English by raising their

hands. It made them learn many vocabularies too.

After the teaching-learning process was over, the researcher together with the teacher did the evaluating the students' speaking performance through Guess the Mystery Object. It was aimed to find out the students' improvement in each cycle. By evaluating the students' score in each cycle, the researcher found that from 36 students, there were 31 students who considered can improve their fluency and accuracy in the second cycle successfully. By analyzing the observation checklist and field note collected by the researcher, it can be concluded that there was significant improvement in the students' motivation and encouragement in the learning process, especially in the implementation of Guess the Mystery Object. In the beginning, most of the students were being passive during the speaking performance and just watched their friends who tried to describe and guess the things rather than helping them. Therefore, in the next cycle, the students became more cooperative in their group because they tend to help their friends in describing the things. The students also became more active to speak English and enthusiastic in the game because all of them got involved in it, and it raised their enthusiasm to participate in the game.

Discussion

In conducting the first cycle, there were weaknesses in the teaching learning process and its result. The weaknesses were students who have not got their turns yet were just playing along and not paying attention to the performers because they did not involve in the game. Their speaking skill also has not met much improvement yet such as gaps in their speaking, difficulty in expressing ideas/vocabulary, and mispronunciation of words. For instance in the first cycle, the word 'square' was read by them as 'skuar', the word 'round' as 'roun', 'brown' as 'bron', 'tiny' as 'tini', 'put' as 'pat'. Most of the students were being passive during the speaking

performance and just watched their friends who tried to describe and guess the things rather than helping them.

That was why the researcher decided to conduct another cycle. The researcher and the teacher agreed to change the procedure and the media used in Guess the Mystery Object for the students in the next cycle. As a result, the students' speaking skill especially in accuracy and fluency has improved as well as their encouragement to speak English. In this cycle, the students were given more time to practice describing things and the adjectives. By that, the students can pronounce the vocabularies correctly. They also reduced the gaps in describing the things because they also helped by their friends in group, so that they can correct themselves, learn more vocabulary, and be more encouraged to speak English. Those made them became more cooperative in the group work. The students also became more active to speak English and enthusiastic in the game because all of them got involved in it, and it raised their enthusiasm to participate in the game.

By seeing the results above, it was proved that Guess the Mystery object game as the technique can help the students improve their speaking and their encouragement as well in speaking English. Therefore, the researcher determined that this research was satisfactory. The students' speaking ability especially in accuracy and fluency, and their encouragement to speak English has improved by implementing guess the mystery object game. It was in line with the previous study that had been done by Yunita in 2017, which found that the students' grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency get promising in each cycle by using guessing game or guess the mystery object game. By that, the researcher has concluded the action hypothesis which states that guess the mystery object game can improve students' speaking ability of the seventh grade students at MTs Al-Irsyad Pontianak in Academic Year 2020/2021 is accepted.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

Based on the research findings and the data analysis, it can be concluded that Guess the Mystery Object technique can help improve the speaking skill of the seventh grade students in MTs Al-Irsyad. It was proved by the result of the observation checklist and field note from the first cycle and the second cycle. The students became more active and cooperative in the teaching-learning process of speaking. The result of the students' speaking performance was getting better, especially in fluency and accuracy from the first cycle to the second cycle. The students also improved their team work and encouraged each other to speak English in describing and guessing the things in school, which affected their fluency and accuracy better. It was proved by the result of the notes taken by the researcher and the documentation taken by the collaborator. The implementation of Guess the Mystery Object can encourage the students to speak English and help their friends to speak as well. It also can maximize the students' motivation and at the same time it can provide many opportunities to students to speak during the activity.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the research findings, the researcher would like to give suggestions to be considered by English teachers and other researchers. The suggestions are defined as follows (1) Since Guess the Mystery Object game needs students' participation, they have to be active in teaching learning. It has been proven that this technique can improve the students' speaking skill in accuracy and fluency. Besides, they should courage themselves to learn more, to ask what they do not know, and to learn as much as possible; (2) This research can be a source or reference for other researchers to conduct further research that relevant to the problems. It can also be used as a reference to do other researchers dealing with improving students' speaking

skill by using guessing game. Since this research was conducted in Madrasah Tsanawiyah or Junior High School especially at the seventh grade students, it is suggested for other researchers to do this research in Junior High School at eighth or ninth grade students. They can also conduct the research in Senior High School or Vocational High School.

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