



IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL THROUGH DEBATE TECHNIQUE

Jonris Tampubolon
Universitas Prima Indonesia, Medan, Indonesia
John89tpb@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Speaking is considered as a necessary skill because of its essential role in facilitating students to master English. It enables students to express themselves creatively, imaginatively and to communicate with others effectively. To master speaking ability, students must be trained to use English in communication orally. One of the appropriate and comprehensive strategies for teaching speaking is Debate Tehnique. The objective of this study is to find out whether the students' speaking skill improves after being taught through Debate Technique or not. The strategy applied in this study was the aspect of speaking and debate technique. This study was conducted by using Quantitative Research. This study was done at SMA Dharma Pancasila Medan. There were 40 students taken as the sample in this study. The data were collected by giving speaking test to the students. The result of the test showed that the mean of score of the post-test was higher than the mean score of pre-test that was from 70 become 78.75. This means students' speaking skill was improved after being thought by using Debate Technique.

Key words: Speaking Skill and Debate Technique

I. INTRODUCTION

In some learning contexts, it is clear why students need to learn to speak English. Students need to get involved in lessons which have a variety of activities. Every student is expected to be active in practicing their speaking skills. Speaking is considered as a necessary skill because of its essential role in facilitating students to master English. It enables students to express themselves creatively, imaginatively and to communicate with others effectively. To master speaking ability, students must be trained to use English in communication orally. The frequency in using the language will determine the success in speaking ability. Without

implementing the experience of learning the language in the real life, it is difficult for the students to master the speaking ability. Hence, speaking competence can be accomplished by practicing it orally. According to Mc Donough and Shaw in Nunan (2008:52), in many context, speaking is the skill upon which the person is judged at face value. In other words, people may often form judgements about our language competence from our speaking rather than from any of the other language skills. Many teachers have already been very good at teaching vocabulary and order to translate texts and prepare students for examinations. However, organizing lessons to practice speaking English can be a big challenge for both teacher and students. The goal of teaching speaking skill is to make the learners communicate effectively. Students should be able to make themselves understand and use good communication with others. They should try to avoid confusion in the message due to the problems of pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary. The students should know how to observe the social and cultural rules applied in each communication situation. As the matter of fact, Somantri (2003) in his research finds that most students fail to speak English well. They are still not able to communicate and give arguments in English well. In spite of learning English from the first grade of junior high school until senior high school, the students still get difficulties in using English language well. They have not been able to use English as the tool of communication. These failures are influenced by many factors. The research was done at SMA Negeri Yogyakarta. There were 240 respondents from 6 classes. From the research, it was found that 63 students (26,25%) can not answer the teacher's questions well, 57 students (23,75%) are nervous to answer the teacher's questions, 18 students (7,5%) sometimes understand what the teacher asks, 28 students (11,67%) can not answer teacher's questions at all, 15 students (6,25%) do not give any respond to the teacher's questions, 1 student (0,42%) is confuse and 2 students (0,84%) can not answer anything. There were 56 students (23,33%) who can answer the teacher's questions well. The research shows that most students are still not able to communicate in English well. According to Zamroni in Somantri (2003), it happens because the education system at school just transfers the knowledge where the knowledge is separated from the application. It makes student passive in learning English and not able to communicate in English well. Besides, the students are not encourageous to develop their critical thinking skill. Another fact, the English instruction in some Senior High Schools does not demonstrate a satisfactory result. Many students fail to reach the goal of the English teaching. They are not able to communicate with the language either orally or in written form although they have learned English for many years (Lestari, 2000:27). Many of the learners in a speaking class are reluctant speakers. This reluctance is partly due to their prior learning experience. Many of them were educated in a large class in schools situated in noisy neighborhoods where opportunities to speak are severely limited. Others were taught in schools where speaking was simply not encouraged. And based on experience of the writer when doing a class observation at Dharma Pancasila Senior High School and also doing such approaching to the students and to the teacher in order to gain information about their teaching and learning process especially in speaking activity, the writer found out some problems related to the instructional activities in this school. Those problems are that: 1) the students have low speaking ability; 2) the students have low motivation in learning English; and 3) the teacher still uses monotonous and inappropriate teaching techniques. Considering the condition above, English teachers need to provide better strategy for helping students improve their ability in speaking. The students also need to increase their critical thinking skills in speaking. One of the appropriate and comprehensive strategies for teaching speaking is Debate Tehnique. By using debate tehnique, the teacher and students discuss how to communicate effectively and give any

arguments and idea. The students will also develop their critical thinking skills and be ready to follow Senior High School Debating Competition. So the objective of this study is to find out whether the students' speaking skill improves after being taught through Debate Technique or not. The strategy which was applied was the aspect of speaking and debate technique.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Speaking Skill

The terms 'speaking', according to Brown (1999:267), is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and receiving and processing information. Its form and meaning are dependent on the context in which it occurs. We generally use speaking as a means of communication in daily interaction. The presence of speaker and listener is a must to build up a mutual communication in speaking activity. Thus, speaking is considered to be inseparable to something we call communication. Communication is the way individual can show the feelings, tell the thoughts, ask questions, ask for help, argue, persuade, explain, and give order each other. In speaking, it is very important for student to acquire the ability to express their ideas and opinions. Consequently, this competency should be mastered by learners of language. Following are the elements of speaking ability according to Harmer (2001:269-271), a. Language features such as the connected speech, expressive devices, lexis and grammar, and negotiation language. Joanne Baker (2003:5) states that there are some very educational reasons to practice speaking during a lesson. Speaking activities can reinforce the learning of new vocabulary, grammar or functional language. Speaking activities give students the chance to experiment with language they have already known in different topics.

Techniques to the Teaching of Speaking Skill

Dobson (1987) says that there are some effective techniques for teaching speaking can be applied in classroom such as:

- 1) *Dialogues*. A short conversation between two people presented as a language model-the dialogue-often receive top billing in the manipulative phase of language learning. In repeating dialogue, the students practice pronunciation and memorization and it can help the students develop fluency in English.
- 2) *Small-group discussion*. Small-group discussion is excellent way to give students opportunities to speak English.
- 3) *Debate*. Debate helps students speak more fluently and during a debate they can represent their feelings on an issue.
- 4) *Song*. Singing is a popular activity throughout world and the students often delight in learning English songs. In teaching an English songs, it can help students to improving aural comprehension, group spirit is fostered through singing, singing allows the students a chance to relax from the pressure of conversation, reinforce the students' interest in learning English.
- 5) *Games*. Language games can add fun and variety to conversation sessions if the participants are fond of games. Games are especially refreshing after demanding conversational activities such as debates or speeches. A game can help the students to stimulus in additional conversation.

Debate Technique

People have always argued. From the ancient polis to the modern pub, differences of opinion have been a central part of how men and women define themselves and interact with others. Whether for self-expression in social arena or as the prelude to a duel, words have always had bite. They can resolve disagreements and they can accentuate them. According to Harvey-smith (2011:1-2), debate is a particular form of arguments. It is not a way reconciling differences-that is a misconception. Debate is a way of arbitrating between differences. Debate recognizes that people are capable of disagreeing on everything about which it is possible to hold an opinion. It relishes those conflicts and provides a means by which to agree on common action. A debate also differs from a public speaking competition. In public speaking, an individual tries to move an audience with the power of her oratory. This is part of debating-but only a part. A debate witnesses a progression of ideas, with each speaker having an important role to play in ensuring that the subject under discussion gets full and deep analysis. Maryadi (2008:16) states that debate can motivate student's thinking, moreover if they must defend their stand or opinion which is in contradiction with conviction themselves. Debate can influence students to be more active in speaking and improves their critical thinking skills. There are many kinds of debate which used in the world. All forms of debate, whether consciously or not, make certain assumptions about argumentation theory. The core concept of argumentation theory is the notion of advocacy. In most cases, at least one side in a debate needs to maintain the truth of some proposition or advocate some sort of personal or political change or action. A debate could also potentially be between two or more competing propositions or actions. Or debate also could be a purely performative exercise of charisma and emotion with no assumption of fixed advocacy, but it would possibly lose much of its coherence.

American Parliamentary Debate

There are as many different ways to debate as there are topics to debate. This research, however, concentrates on one basic style on debating, known as the parliamentary debate format. Parliamentary debate is the most popular and fastest growing form of debating in the world. There are, in fact, many kinds of debate that go under the name "parliamentary debate". In the USA and internationally, the fastest growing style of parliamentary debate is the four-person, or "American" format. The eight-person British format, which is often called "World Style" debate is another popular style of debating. One of the best features of parliamentary debate is that there are very few official rules that constrain debate and the creativity of debaters. The rules govern four basic areas: a. Number of teams and debaters, b. Order of speeches, c. Limits on speaking time, d. Decision making procedure

In parliamentary debate, one side makes a case for the proposition, while the other side opposes the proposition team. For this reason, we call one side the proposition side and the other side opposition side. The proposition team always opens the debate by delivering the first speech. Debate is centered on the motion for debate;thus, it makes sense that the proposition team starts the debate by advocating adoption of the motion (Meany, 2003:36-37). American parliamentary debate is a formal contest of reason, wit and rhetorical skill which simulates debate in a theoretical House of Parliament. Two teams, the Government and the Opposition, of two debaters each, consider a resolution proposed to the House. A different resolution is

proposed each round. The debate is moderated by a Speaker of the House, who will also serve as judge for the round. In parliamentary debate, emphasis is placed on quick thinking, logical argumentation and analysis, an command of rhetoric over extensive research or collection of evidence. Accordingly, no recorded evidence or other outside written material may be consulted during the round. A debate round has two teams with two debaters each and a Speaker. The Speaker serves as both the judge and arbiter of the rules during the round. Note here that "Speaker" always refers to the judge from this point forward. One team represents the Government, while the other represents the Opposition. The Government team is composed of a Prime Minister, who speaks twice, and a Member of Government, who speaks once. The Opposition team is composed of a Leader of the Opposition, who speaks twice, and a Member of the Opposition, who speaks once. The Government proposes a specific case statement, which the government team must demonstrate to be correct. The Opposition does not have to propose anything, but must demonstrate that the case statement is not correct. The Speaker decides at the end of the round, based on the arguments made in the round, whether the Government has proved its case or whether the Opposition has disproved it. The team which met its burden more convincingly wins.

How to Conduct Debate Technique in Speaking Class

Debates can be an effective method of enabling students to take an active part in their own learning through the preparation and presentation of their own work and that of their peers. This supports pedagogic theory which proposes that students learn effectively when they learn cooperatively, through interaction with others, and when they develop critical thinking. According to Shilo Dawn Goodson (2008), there are some ways in teaching debate in speaking class. Firstly, a teacher has to ablish rules when the students present their debate. Secondly, a teacher allows students to pick topics. A teacher can have the students suggest the topics for the class and have the whole class vote on which ones they like most. Thirdly, a teacher makes sure sides are complete. The sides are affirmative side and negative side. Fourthly, a teacher requires a research. A teacher should remind the students to do the research and bring some sources. Holding a debate class is one of the lessons that can be highly satisfying. It is adventageous to have a pre-debate class where the teacher goes over the appropriate rules and guidelines of the debate. The teacher and students should enjoy the difference of opinion. Debating helps the students to encourage the value of different opinion. Some of the best ideas are the results of debate and discussion. This is valuable skill for students to learn. The best way to hold a debate class is usually to hold a class discussion. The students should be the ones doing the searching and the teacher should be guiding them in the right direction to discover. Debating gives the students a chance to voice their opinions, to create logical arguments and to develop their critical thinking skills. It even helps with speaking skill. Debating is a great way to get the entire class totally involved. Besides, the teacher should assign the topic to argue aboutl, split the students in to two groups; affirmative and negative, tell the students to get into their groups, and brainstorm about the issue, set the debate and praise the students for their hard work.

A. Choosing a Topic

Students are more likely to be motivated by a debate topic when they have previous experience on which to build. For this reason, where possible students should be given the opportunity to be involved in the choice of debate topics, since they will favor topics they have

had to face in real life. One method is for the instructor to create a variety of topics and then allow the class to vote for the ones they are the most interested in. Example of some motions are listed below:

1. This house would prohibit producing and trading cigarretes
2. This house would stop the National Final Examination
3. This house would stop entering English subject into Elementary Student Level
4. This house would stop trading fast food
5. This house believes that social network such as facebook and twitter give bad impact to the users
6. This house would prohibit bringing handphones during learning and teaching process at school
7. This house would let students bring their phones during have a class at school

B. Managing Debate Technique

In the next stage, the students managed their debating skills by understanding the mechanism in debate. The students should know about the overall structure, such as; the rules of the debate, speaker's role, the understanding of making the outline of a topic or motion. They are led by the teacher in order to make them easily hold the debate. There are several steps to get all students involved in the debate. Firtsly, the students will be devided into some groups. Each group consits of three members. Secondly, each debate round is followed by two groups, affirmative and negative group. It means that there will be six students in one debate round. The other students who do not follow the debate round will watch the debate round and give some opinions about the debate. Each debate round consists of 6 speakers, 3 speakers in proposition team and 3 speakers in opposition team. The teacher will finally give the assessmens to the students. The assessments are matter (the content of the speeh), manner (the presentation of the speech), and method (the response to the dynamics of the debate). The teacher will use the adjudication sheet for the assessment. The evaluation will also be delivered in verbal adjudication. After doing the debate, the students are expected to have more improvement in speaking and analyzing cases critically.

III.RESEARCH METHOD

This study belongs to the One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design which part of Experimental Quantitative Research. The one-group design usually involves three steps: 1. Administreting a pretest measuring the dependent variable; 2. Applying the experimental treatment X to the subjects; and 3. Administreting a posttest again measuring the dependent variable. Differences attributed to the application of the experimental treatment are determined by comparing the pretest and posttest scores.

Pretest	Independent Variable	Posttest
Y_1	X	Y_2

Where: Y_1 : The score of the subjects in pretest

Y_2 : The score of the subjects in posttest

X : The independent variable of the study; the debate technique

To get the data of this study, the research procedure was started by giving pretest to the students. The score of the students in pretest is a measurement of their competence in speaking. The pretest was applying before giving treatment. After getting the score of the students in pretest,

the writer gave treatment to the students in order to improve the score in pretest. The procedure of giving treatment was started by giving motivation and brainstorming about the material. After that, students were given explanation about speaking, debate technique, and how to apply debate technique in speaking. Then, students were divided in some groups and asked to give arguments related to the motions given. After discussing and fixing the motion, the students practiced how to debate by using American Parliamentary Debate. In scoring the test, the writer adapted the test scoring categories for speaking from Brown (2001, 406-407) as seen as follow;

Scores	Fluency	Pronunciation	Grammar	Comprehension
1	(No Specific fluency description. Refer to other to four language areas for implied level of fluency.)	Errors in pronunciation are frequent, but can be understood by a native speaker, used to dealing with for engineers attempting to speak his language.	Errors in grammar are frequent, but speaker can be understood by a native speaker used to dealing with foreigners attempting to speak his language.	Within the scope of his very limited language experience, can understand simple questions and statements if delivered with slowed speech, repetition, or paraphrase.
2	Can handle with confidence but not with facility most social situations, including introductions and casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family, and autobiographical information.	Accent is intelligible though often faulty.	Can usually handle elementary constructions quite accurately but does not have thorough or confident control of the grammar.	Can get the gist of most conversations of non-technical subjects (i.e., topics that require no specialized knowledge).
3	Can discuss particular interests of competence with reasonable ease. Rarely has to grope for words.	Errors never interfere with understanding and rarely disturb the native speaker. Accent may be obviously foreign.	Control of grammar is good. Able to speak the language with sufficient structural accuracy to participate effectively in most formal and informal conversations on practical, social, and professional topics.	Comprehension is quite complete at a normal rate of speech.
4	Able to use language fluently on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs. Can participate in any conversation within the range of this experience with a high degree of fluency.	Errors in pronunciation are quite rare.	Able to use the language accurately on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs. Errors in grammar are quite rare.	Can understand any conversation within the range of his experience.
5	Has complete fluency in the language such that his speech is fully accepted by educated native speakers.	Equivalent to and fully accepted by educated native speakers.	Equivalent to that of an educated native speakers.	Equivalent to that of an educated native speakers.

Table of Scoring Categories for Speaking by Brown

The total score of speaking for each student was counted by summing up the four aspects of speaking (fluency, pronunciation, grammar & comprehension). And then the total score was multiplied by 5. Hence if a student has a total score 20 (5 for each aspect), then the students' score for speaking aspect is 100 (for 20 was multiplied by 5).

IV. DISCUSSION

The data of this research were taken from the result of speaking test by answering questions from the researcher orally. The questions were about debate and several motions. From the students' answers the teacher marked their scores one by one. After the writer gave the treatment, the students were divided into several groups to do the debate. And after 3 months of giving treatment, the students were tested to find the post test scores. Below are shown the results of pre-test and post-test.

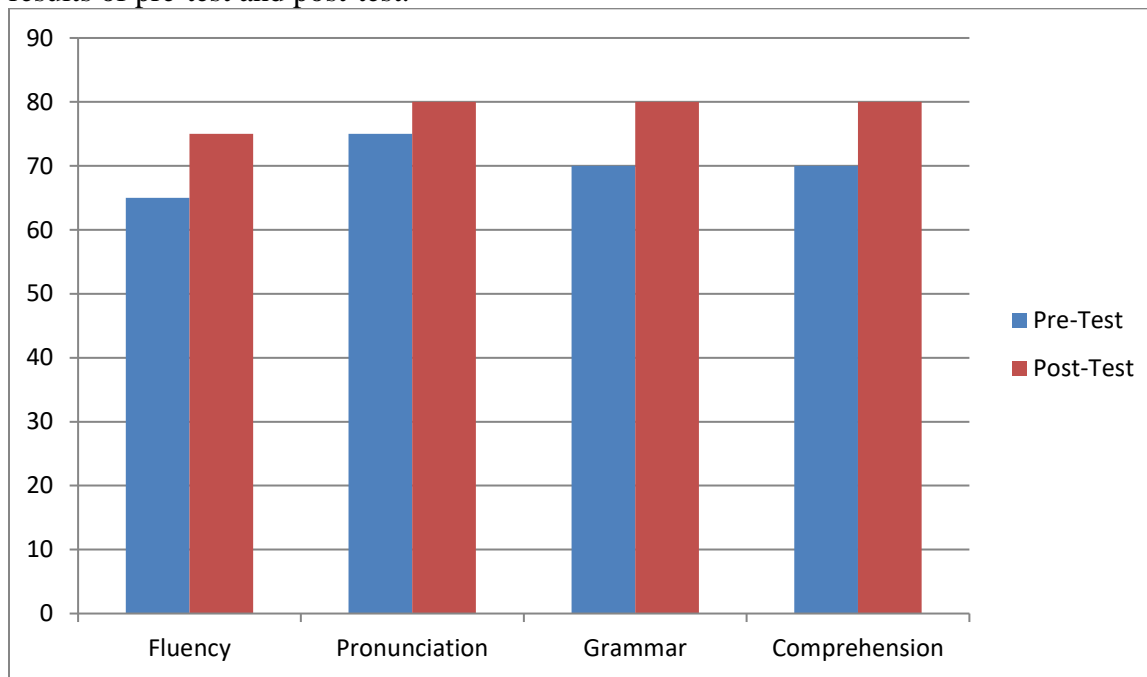


Table of Pre-Test and Post-Test Result

From the data on the table above, the writer finds that before applying debate technique as the teaching strategy the average score of students' speaking skill is 70. Then, after applying debate technique as the teaching strategy the average score of students' speaking skill increased into 78.75 which means the average scores jumped up for 8.75. The average scores were taken by summing up the total score of each speaking category before they were multiplied by 5. After each speaking category score was multiplied by 5, the score of the four speaking categories then was summed up and divided by 4 as many as the number of speaking categories which are fluency, pronunciation, grammar and comprehension.

From the research findings, it shows that the students' speaking skill in terms of fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and comprehension increased. The fluency of the students increased from 65 during pre-test to 75 on post-test which means there was 10 point-range of increased score. It happened because students were told to speak and express their ideas fluently during debate execution so they became get used to think fast and speak fast with meaningful

constructs. Besides that, asking students questions about motions on debate allowed them to think critically as well. Another speaking category which is pronunciation also increased from 75 during pre-test to 80 on post-test. It can be calculated that the increase of the average score of students' pronunciation was 5 points which slightly significant. The students already had quite good pronunciation therefore the increase of their score was not too significant. Nevertheless, they still got improvement in that area since they were forced to speak clearly and concisely during the debate, as it actually affected their performance while conducting the debate. Next speaking category which also increased after doing the debate is grammar. The average score of students' grammar on pre-test was 70. And it significantly improved after conducting the debate which reached 80. That means their grammar increased 10 points which was quite high. It happened because the students were taught and always reminded by the researcher for any mistakes they did during the debate. Therefore when it came to post-test, they could perform and use grammar in their sentences correctly most of the time. And the last speaking category was comprehension. This area also shows a good improvement which can be seen from the increase of their average score on post-test. On pre-test the students' comprehension was 70 by average while on post-test it jumped into 80 which means there was 10 points increased after being taught by debate technique. Their comprehension got improved because they were made used to understand the motions of debate before they started to elaborate and talk about them during the debate. It allowed them to think more and understand instruction before they do it or questions before they answer them. Therefore, during post-test the researcher found that the students could understand the instruction and questions quite well. Based on the analysis above, debate technique gives significant influence to the students' achievement in speaking. The students got improved in speaking after being taught with debate technique. Aside from that, the students also showed good interest and motivation during teaching and learning process.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the previous discussion, the writer gets the conclusion of this research as follows:

1. Debate technique is one of the ways that can be used to improve students' speaking skill in teaching and learning process, besides it also motivates and encourages them to deliver their arguments, ideas through critical thinking skill.
2. Time allocation affects the success of the debate technique application in teaching and learning process.

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