

# Improving Students' Speaking Skills Through Storytelling in Junor High School

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## Abstract

The purpose of this research was to improve students' speaking skill through storytelling at ninth grade of SMP Nabil Husein Samarinda in Academic year 2015/2016. In this research, the researcher used storytelling as a method of learning English speaking to find out, what this method can improve speaking skills through storytelling at the ninth grade of SMP Nabil Husein Samarinda. Thus, the students can speak English in telling a story with the style and expression of each student, and can pronounce the words in English. Thus, by using storytelling as a learning aid students can improve their speaking ability. Research design of this research is Classroom Action Research (CAR). Subjects examined were 27 respondents from students of the ninth grade (F). This research has been carried out by using a two cycle. Which consists of; planning, action, observation, and reflection. The research instrument used by the researcher are (1) a test, (2) observation checklist, (3) an observation sheet and (4) documentation. The research finding indicates that the success criterion has placed students' second work on the procurement cycle. Assessment result is achieved in excess of 70% as a normal score of "Good". As many as 23 students successful scores above 70, so the final result is found that 92 % of the students succeeded in improving students speaking skill by using storytelling.

**Keywords:** Speaking Skills, Storytelling, Classroom Action Research

## A. INTRODUCTION

Language is a system for the expression of meaning. Its primary function is for interaction and communication.<sup>1</sup> Language is a tool that is very important for everybody to share information around the world. People use language to explain about anything that they want to explain. Language is a guide to social reality and that human beings are at the mercy of the language that has become the medium of expression for the society. It is one of the most important ways of expressing

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<sup>1</sup> Jo Mcdonough and Christoper Saw, *Materials and Methods in ELT : A Teacher's Guide*, (UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2003, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed, p. 135

our love or our hatred for people; it is vital to achieving many of our goals and our careers.

English is one of important languages. Brown stated that English is not frequently learned as a tool of understanding and teaching United States or British cultural values. Instead, English has become a tool for international communication in transportation, commerce, banking, tourism, technology, diplomacy, and scientific research. In Indonesia, English has been chosen by Indonesian government as the first foreign language English is taught at school and considered as a major subject for the students. In Indonesian, English is taught in junior high school and senior high school even in elementary school.

In learning English, there are four skills that need to be mastered by students. They are listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening and reading are receptive skills and speaking and writing are productive skills. The four skills are important. But, all of the four skills, speaking seems intuitively the most important.<sup>2</sup> In the process of teaching and learning English, speaking ability is the most difficult and complicated language skill to be learned almost by the students in every level of education. There are various difficulties in teaching and learning English for the teachers and students, it causes many kinds or types to solving the problem. Because of many types that introduce to solve problem and various characteristic, students' motivation, interest and style in learning language make the teachers are confused to choose compatible strategy in teaching language, especially in teaching English as foreign language. More teachers complain about the match strategy to manage their class when teaching English in classroom. Besides that, students are confusing in the class when teaching English in classroom. Besides that, students are confusing in the class when teachers teach English by their style that not match with their motivation, interesting and style in learning.

Speaking means a lot in communication. Because through speaking, people can communicate directly and others can grasp and give response in a short time. In addition, Nunan states that people must master the art of speaking is the single most important aspect of learning a second or a foreign language, and success is a measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the target language. Generally, the people cannot have our lives without doing some speaking activities with others.<sup>3</sup>

Based on preliminary observation and interview of researcher with the teacher and some students at SMP Nabil Husein Samarinda, the result of students' studying at SMP Nabil Husein Samarinda is under minimum criteria. The

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<sup>2</sup> Jack C. Richards and Theodore S. Rodgers, *Approaches and Methods in language Teaching*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 147

<sup>3</sup> Nunan, David, *The learner Centered Curriculum. A Study in Second Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997.

researcher finds the standard score of criteria for minimum completeness (KKM) is 70, when they are studying speaking from 27 students, there are 20 students or 67.75 % who get score under 70 and there are 7 students who got score above criteria for minimum completeness. Because of that, the researcher would like to purpose 70 % as criteria of success for students based on KKM from the school. The students' difficulties occur when they speak English, this is caused by students' limitation is mastering the component of speaking. Beside it, students practice speaking English rarely. They only have a little chance to practice speaking English out of class because most of their friends speak Indonesian. When we look at teacher side, the teachers are still using conventional teaching method and the technique is monotonous.

Storytelling is the conveying of events in words, and images, often by improvisation or embellishment. Storytelling has some the purpose, they are Arouse imagination, Provide context for introducing new language and create an interesting reason for listening.

The researcher believes that by giving them such story then the student ask to retell a story. Meanwhile the students are speaking. The student will express the idea in speaking form easily and their piece of speaking will be better organized.

Based on problems which are faced by students of the ninth grade, students' need creative and innovative technique to improve their speaking skill. Because of that the researcher purpose to use storytelling to improve students speaking skill. Story telling is a method to tell a story to the audience, either in the form of words, images, photographs, and sound. Storytelling has some purpose, they are arouse imagination, provide context for introducing new language and create an interesting reason for listening. Storytelling is valued can solve students problem in speaking because the activities are various and students will be more active in the class.

Based on the background above, the researcher conducts a research with title "Improving students' speaking Skill through storytelling at the Ninth Grade Students of SMP Nabil Husein Samarinda in Academic Year 2015/2016".

## **B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The design of research of this study is classroom action research. According to Harmer, action research is the name given to series of procedures teachers can engage in either because they wish to improve aspects of their teaching, or because they wish to evaluate the success and or appropriacy of certain activities and procedures.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Jeremy Harmer, *The Practice of English Language Teaching*, (England: Longman, 2003), p. 344

Arikunto stated that action research is one of the type investigation that has characteristic reflective participative, collaborative, and spiral that have purpose to repair and to increase the system, method, process, substance, competence, and situation.<sup>5</sup>Kemmis and Mc. Taggart add in Nunan book explain that action research is a group of activity and a piece of descriptive research carried out by teacher in his or her own classroom, without the involvement of others, which is aimed at interesting our understanding rather than changing the phenomenon under the investigation that would not be considered by these commentators to be 'action research', the essential impetus for carrying out action research is to change the system.<sup>6</sup>

From all the definitions above, the researcher concluded that classroom action research is a classroom action in a research, which can be done by teacher, researcher and teacher with his or her colleague, etc with involves a group of students to improve teaching and learning process or to enhance the understanding of the students to the lesson, this research the researcher conducts a classroom action research to improve students' Speaking skill through storytelling.

This research is conduct at SMP Nabil Husein Samarinda. The subjects of this research are students at the ninth grade students of SMP Nabil Husein Samarinda in the first semester that consists of 27 students, all of students is female. SMP Nabil Husein Samarinda is located on Jalan Rapak Indah RT 38 No 1 Kel. Karang Asam Ulu Kec. Sei Kunjang Samarinda Kalimantan Timur.

There are four components in one cycle for conducting classroom action research. There are of planning, action, observation, and reflection. The four phases of the classroom action cycle were conducted integrated like spiral. Each phase was concluded based on the previous one and the next. It means that the activities in the classroom action research were based on planning, action, and observation, then, the researcher could make a reflection to determine the next cycle. In implementing the Classroom Action Research Procedure was adapted from Kemmis and Mc Taggart.<sup>7</sup>

The data analysis is a process of searching out and arranging systematically the observation checklist, documentation, test, and other materials or the collected data. It is done to make it easier for the researcher to understand and write the research report. Then, in analyzing the data of this research, there are two phases

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<sup>5</sup>SuharsimiArikunto, et. al, *PenelitianTindakanKelas*, (Jakarta: PT BumiAksara, 2008), P. 104.

<sup>6</sup> David Nunan, *Research Method In language Learning*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p.18

<sup>7</sup>Kemmis and Mc Taggart, *The Action Research Planner*, (Australia: Deakin University Press, 1988) p. 11

of data analysis to be applied. First, data analysis will done during the activities of collecting data in the field. Second, data will conduct after collecting data in field.

The analysis of data in this study are descriptive qualitative data and quantitative data. Descriptive qualitative data obtained from the observation and analysis of quantitative data are obtained from the test result and observation. The data is analyzed in this study is to improve students speaking skill through storytelling to review the results of the test scores based on rubric of speaking and criteria of success.

### **C. RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The findings of this research are discussed based on the result of the cyclical steps of the classroom action research conducted by researcher. These findings will be interpreted and discussed more detail on the sub chapter below.

#### **1. Interpretation of The Result Obtained From The Cycle**

The research was conducted two cycles, it consisted of five meetings. The researcher had already found a clue that the method used through storytelling which was applied to improve students' speaking skill especially in narrative text at the ninth grade (F) of SMP Nabil Husein Samarinda ran well. It is proved by the progress of the students' speaking skill while the method was being applied. The students were able to speak English in telling story during the teaching and learning process. But some students were difficult to tell a story using the English language even though they know about the content of the story.

In this case, the researcher assumed that storytelling as Method in teaching and learning process was proved to be able to improve students' speaking skill. Researcher conducted action research in two cycles, because the previous class has never been a teaching of speaking by using storytelling. So, when given a speaking test on the first cycle only a few students who got good grades by predicate "average". Then, researcher gave tests speaking at the second cycle and only two students got bad scores by predicate "average".

#### **2. Research Cycle**

In this cycle, the researcher has implemented the concept through storytelling in teaching speaking for the Ninth grade in SMP Nabil Husein Samarinda. The main focus was to find the students' speaking skill. It conducted in four steps; those are planning, implementation, observation, and reflection.

##### **a. The first step (Planning)**

In this step, the researcher drew the plan or determined the method that should be applied to solve the problem. First, the researcher collected the data interviewing the students about what the students' difficulties or what the students' problems in speaking. Based on the result of interview, that related to students speaking skill on storytelling. The researcher concludes that the problem

was their speaking score is low. First, the students get trouble how to talk by using storytelling. They are confused about how to tell a story so listeners can understand easily by using the English. Then, how they tell a story in chronological order or sequence and how they talked in English using simple language. In addition, teachers are still focused on the old teaching methods; students just read a story and answer questions from a narrative text.

So, in this step, researcher prepared the strategy to be implemented. Those are designing Strategy, through storytelling designing lesson-plan, procedure of assessment, data and data source, research instruments and data collection, and preparing the criteria of success.

After getting information about the problem faced by the students, the researcher decided to apply storytelling method to improve the students' speaking skill.

#### **b. The second step (Implementation)**

This step is implementation of planning. Here the researcher had two different roles as a teacher and as the researcher as well. It took place in the classroom where the teaching and learning process was conducted. Researcher applying storytelling methods for two cycles of five meetings, the first cycle conducted three meetings and two meetings of the second cycle; on the first cycle was done in September 09<sup>th</sup> 2015 at 11.00 am, September 10<sup>th</sup> 2015 at 01.00 am, and September 17<sup>th</sup> 2015 at 01.00 am; the second cycle on September 22<sup>th</sup> 2015 at 09.00 am, and September 29<sup>th</sup> 2015 at 09.00 am. The implementation was described as follow:

##### **1) The first meeting**

The first meeting was conducted in September 09<sup>th</sup> 2015. The English subject was held at 11.00 am to 12.00 am. In this case, the researcher divided it into three phases, they were; pre-activity, whilst-activity and post activity.

*Pre-activity.* In this part of all, the teacher greeted the students and the students replied it. The greeting was expressed by the teacher was the simple one in which the students had been familiar with it. After greeting the students, the teacher gives the motivation of learning English, learning English there are four skills. The four skills that are models of learning fun in learning English easily. In this case the teacher explains about speaking skills by using storytelling. After the teacher asked a question related to the topic they know of storytelling. They learned the material text, then they recount text. The students looked enthusiastic to know what the teacher said. The teacher began the conversation and tried to make an enjoyable class. After that the teacher explained the content of the story.

*Whilst-activity.* Before giving the details information about lesson of storytelling, using narrative text the teacher gave stimulation by asking then some questions

based on the topic. It was done to aim the students to the material that would be given in the next section. Before the teacher explains about the material, the first teacher explained about three narrative structure of the text. After giving about the material to the students, the teacher distributed material of narrative text. Then the teacher began to explain it. The students listened to the teacher. After explaining the material, the teacher asks the students prior to reading the story. Next, the student must interpret the story into Indonesian, so they understand easily about the content of the story. Finally, the teacher instructed the students to find difficult was from the story they are think it is difficult to understand.

*Post-activity.* The time showed that 10 minutes left so the teacher tried to close the meeting. Before closing the meeting, the teacher reminded to the students that for tomorrow as the next meeting to prepare for some tests, so the teacher asked them to study hard at home.

## **2) The second meeting**

At the second meeting of this first cycle, researcher asked students to look back sheet the preview material distributed story yesterday by researcher. After which researchers practice and tell the story in front of the class, students are very enthusiastic and listened. Researchers tell and explain the content of the story by asking the students about what is in the story.

After that, the researcher instructed the students to write the generic structure of the story so that students can distinguish what are orientation, complication, and resolution in a story. Then, researcher informed students to learn and understand the contents of the story in order to retell the story in front of the class at the next meeting using their own sentences.

## **3) The third meeting**

The first cycle of was the last meeting on September 17<sup>th</sup> 2015. Actions carried out in the classroom simply because researcher at this meeting there is no learning process. Researcher called the one by one in front of the class to retell the story without looking at the text (previous text that they had learned). In addition, the test at the second meeting of this, researcher continued to observe the development of the students in the current implementation of the test in the classroom.

## **4) The fourth meeting**

The fourth meeting of the second cycle was on September 22<sup>th</sup> 2015. The conducted by researchers at this meeting is cycled both repeat and explain again about the previous material. The second cycle meeting was held because of the tests carried out at the first cycled unsuccessful or did not reach the average.

Then in this meeting, researcher gave again a different story with the story of the first cycled. After that, the researcher asked the students to read and understand

the contents of the story, then the students write the generic structure of the story. Furthermore, the teacher asked the students to prepare to retell the story in front of for the next class meeting.

#### **5) The fifth meeting**

The second cycled the last meeting was on September 29<sup>th</sup> 2015. Actions carried out in the classroom simply because researchers at this meeting there is no learning process. Researcher asked the students one by one came forward class to retell the story they had learned in different story. In addition, the test at the second meeting of this, researcher continued to observe the development of the students in the current implementation of the test in the classroom.

#### **c. The third step (Observation)**

In this step, the researcher presented the same information as the first process of observation. As stated before the researcher presented the data, instruments for the data, instruments for data collection, sources of the data and technique for data collection. The quantitative data were obtained from the students' scores taken from the post test of the cycle. This score was used to analyze the increasing students' speaking skill through storytelling as method by comparing the scores from the pretest and the first cycle score and the second cycle score.

The qualitative data were obtained from the students' activities in the classroom. Instrument for data collection used observation checklist observations sheet, documentation and written test. The sources of the data were students, the teacher and also the atmosphere of the classroom. Also the technique for the data collection was observation.

#### **d. The fourth step (Reflection)**

Based on the observation the researcher took some conclusion related to the implementation of guided questions method to improve students' speaking skill for junior high school. It could bring progress to students speaking skill or not. Based on the data, finally, the researcher concluded that the method applied is storytelling can improve the students' speaking skill on the Ninth (F) grades of SMP Nabil Husein Samarinda. It could be proved by some considerations concerning the implementation of the method while the research was conducted.

The students full attention when the implementation of storytelling in studying English speaking. It was proved that they were involved and responded each activity actively. It could be said that by applying the method, the students were fun when the teacher asked the to retell the story using their own sentences in English speaking that related with the material they studied.

Therefore, it can be concluded that speaking through storytelling was not able to improve students' speaking ability of preliminary scores or pre-action for the first

cycle (action). The result showed that there are only 14 students got a score of more than 70 with scores varied.

Based on the results of the first cycle shows that through storytelling was not able to improve students' speaking ability. So, researcher need to study in the second cycle.

The result from the second cycle shows that the storytelling improving students' speaking ability of a score of the first cycle to the second cycle. An explanation of the percentage explained that there are 23 students got score more than 70 with scores of variations. Based on the last 92% of students who succeed and 8% of students were failed. It proved to be more than 70% of students succeed.

Based on research results from the second cycle showed that storytelling can improve students' speaking ability. It can be compared the difference between the value of the first cycle and the second cycle mean scores increased.

#### **D. DISCUSSION**

Conducting of the research was to answer problems of teaching English speaking in SMP Nabil Husein Samarinda. The students were familiar with the content of the story but the vocabulary of the students were poor. Then the difficulty students in organizing a sentence correctly in telling a story and how to pronounce English words. It was difficult ensure students to come forward in front of the class to retell the story. The majority of students was only score under SKKM (70). the activity in the classroom the teacher focus on classic teaching methods, the students were asked to read a story in a narrative text and answer the questions without guiding students the way how to comprehend the text easily, how to tell a story using their own language into English.

The researcher concludes that there are two main causes; from the teacher and students. Firstly, language learning still conduct in teacher centered. The students were confused because teacher always teaches same in ways. It showed by 70% students got score under SKKM (*Standar kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal*). Related to the problem that faced by students, writer gave limitation of theoretical background related to speaking through storytelling.

Speaking is the uniquely human act or process of sharing and exchanging information, ideas, and emotions using oral language. The goal of speaking is to achieve an interactive communication between the speaker and the listener. Teaching speaking is the activity where the teachers lead their students to improve their ability in expressing emotions, ideas or feelings orally.<sup>8</sup>

Based on the statement above it can be concluded that, students are called great in speaking if they can express their feeling, idea or emotion through verbal sense

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<sup>8</sup> Fulcher, G and Davidson, *Language Testing and Assessment: An Advanced Resource Book*, (USA: Routledge, F. 2007) p: 128.

effectively. Teacher as the guidance has a responsibility to help students in improving their speaking skill by making some corrections regarding to the problem in the teaching learning progress.

In order to achieve that competency, teacher should select the teaching method or technique that match the objective of English language learning because it is one of the factors that determines the success of a teaching learning process. An appropriate technique should be chosen for teaching a certain material because it is the bridge to attach students to an understanding. Moreover it should facilitate all students to explore English as a communication tool. One of the techniques that fulfill the requirements is storytelling.

Storytelling is a kind of teaching technique that has been used by our ancestors for thousands of year as a medium of handing down man's history from one generation to another. People tell stories for many purposes, for instance, for entertaining, teaching wisdom, moral or religion and etc. unfortunately, at present the respect for storytelling as a tool of learning is almost lost. At university level it is mostly used to teach speaking or listening class. But for secondary school level, it seems that this technique is ignored. The reason may come from the fact that storytelling is infrequently being introduced among English teachers. You may have already known about the technique but they are probably not aware of its benefits to learning. Another problem is the lack of teachers creativity and their awareness of the importance of their teaching quality.<sup>9</sup>

Storytelling is probably the oldest form of narrative in the world. And it was not the same with reading aloud because the interaction between a teller and his or her listener is direct or without any barrier, books in this case. Furthermore in storytelling, a teller will actively explore his or her ability to make his or her listener understand the story by controlling his or her voice, using body language and gestures or using props.

Through storytelling both the four language skills, namely speaking, listening, reading and writing and the language components i.e ; vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar can be developed. By using storytelling technique students will become familiar with English pronunciation and hopefully later they will be reinforced. Moreover, through stories students are stimulated to analyze and shape their mind to produce significant arguments. Their critical thinking, the ability to see a problem comprehensively is trained.

Based on the data presented, it was figured out that the implementation of storytelling method in teaching speaking was good progress. It can be implied that this method is a good in teaching English speaking.

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<sup>9</sup> Nuraeningsih, *Jurnal Vision*

file:///C:/Users/User/Documents/STORYTELLING%20MOTIVATION.pdf, Accessed on October 06<sup>th</sup> 2015

In order to know improving students' speaking skill, the researcher had reason why the students were active during the implementation of the method in this cycle caused by these reasons.

- The students could understand clearly with a story given. The students were relaxed and have more information from a story.
- The researcher always reminded how to telling a story in English with the understand content a story and know generic structure from a story.
- The researcher gave more guidance before the students did their exercise. This guidance made the students more motivated to their exercise.

The finding of the research showed that there was good progress of the application of storytelling to improve students' speaking skill. The students of the ninth grade had well motivation to study English speaking, because through storytelling in teaching English speaking in the classroom as learning fun, fresh, interest, and enjoy for them.

Finally, the researcher proved that the concept of storytelling able to give more motivation to the students. Also, most of students got score more than criteria for minimum completion (70). The result of the test was good because 23 students got score more than 70 with variation scores. Based on the last result that 92% of students were succeed and 8% of students were failed. The students who got good scores, those were: AML (85), AFQ (76), DSD (77), ERNW (85), EAI (78), IDL (90), JAGI (80), MRFH (76), NWUI (80), NMI (90), NWN (84), PTRI (76), PINU (84), RNSI (75), RPW (82), RDAI (86), SNA (80), SLA (86), TNAI (81), TWI (75), WAAI (81), ZNF (82), and ZDS (76). And the classroom activities were dominated by students that in teaching learning process could help students easier, clear, and interested in learning English speaking.

Storytelling is effective be used because it can attract the students and motivate them in studying speaking commonly and through storytelling, the students can get good stimuli. It is very useful for the students because mostly they cannot speak English fluently, especially on telling a story, if they did not be stimulated with interesting method. By through storytelling, hoping that they can speak English through storytelling by our language and with understand from a story on narrative text.

Based on the study, researcher concluded that the power of storytelling is a student more confidence to perform in front of other students to tell a compelling story and the listener can be motivated from a story. Then students can also train the ability to speak English, practice pronunciation of words in English and get a lot of vocabulary.

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## **E. CONCLUSION**

Storytelling method can improve students speaking skill. This research recorded some data about the storytelling in teaching speaking skill, it could be concluded that the research was successful to improve the students' speaking skill. This could be seen from the students' test result. It was supported by the significance result of the preliminary (63.2), Cycle I (57) and the assessment of the Cycle II (74). The students also enjoy studying writing in descriptive text. They are also active during the teaching and learning processes that were seen based on observation sheet and observation checklist result.

The improvement of students became more interested and enthusiastic in the speaking activities. They did not have any difficulties in understanding to speak especially speak in English through telling a story. They were motivated to follow all of the learning process. Speaking skill through the telling a story helped the students in speaking test activities.

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