

GAP ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE ISLAMIC ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILL : CLASSROOM ACTION RESEARCH

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Abstract: *The purpose of this study was to determine whether there was a significant effect of the use of information gap techniques on improving the speaking ability of seventh grade students of SMP Negeri 6 Bengkulu City. The method used in this research is classroom action research. The sample of this study was 28 students of class VII SMP Negeri 6 Bengkulu City. The instrument used in this study was documentation and a test about students' speaking ability which was declared valid. Data analysis technique, the researcher used SPSS version 16.0 to determine the mean between pre-test and post-test. Data analysis techniques are Normality Test and Paired T-Test. Based on the results of data calculations, after learning to speak English using the information gap technique on students' speaking skills, it can be concluded that the Paired Samples t-Test was used because the data of English Speaking Skill (Pretest) and English Speaking Skill (Posttest) were normally distributed. It can be seen that the value of the Paired Samples t-Test (t-count) is 10.380 and the t-table is 2.056 with a p-value of 0.000. Because the value of t-count > t-table or p value < 0.05, it is said that there is an average difference between English Speaking Skill (Pretest) and English Speaking Skill (Posttest). This means that the information gap activity method is significant to improve the speaking skills of class VII student of SMP N 6 Bengkulu city in the 2021/2022 academic year.*

Keyword: *English Speaking skill, Information Gap Activities Technique*

I. INTRODUCTION

Language is a system of arbitrary conventionalized vocal, written, or gestural symbols that enable members of a given community to communicate intelligibly with one another (Hutasoit & Tambunan, 2018). It means the ability to speak English is a very important skill to be mastered by students because the unwritten convention to choose English as an international language has serious consequences for people in many countries those who survive in the international world must be able to communicate in English. Mastering English allows Indonesians to participate in the global economy. The ability to speak and write English in business and commerce allows them to form and maintain positive relationships with their coworkers. Mastery of English has a positive impact on tourism, not only in terms of commerce and trade, but also in terms of opening up new

opportunities for Indonesian to promote their country as a tourist destination. They can also use manuals published in English and instructions presented in English if they have a good command of the language. In the realm of education, various high-quality sources are provided in English for these Indonesian students and teachers to develop solid English abilities. English is used in books, essays, and international publications.

Although the 2013 curriculum should focus on the four language skills, teaching English in junior high schools tends to emphasize speaking skills. But some students feel bored in learning to speak. They often feel sleepy in class so they don't pay attention to the teacher's explanation.

The teacher's material also affects the motivation in students' English speaking skills because motivation is the strength of the conditions contained in a person that drives him to do certain activities in order to achieve a goal (Amin et al., 2022). In this case the teacher only uses materials that are only stated in one book and does not consider whether it is feasible for students or not. Errors in choosing speaking material can make students bored and have difficulty in pronouncing sentences. That is why talking material must be authentic and interesting for students.

In fact, according to the Ministry of National Education teaching English in junior high schools is expected to enable students to reach a level of functional literacy, where they can communicate orally and in writing to solve everyday problems. In addition, it supports communicative competence which can be defined as competence in understanding or producing spoken texts that are used to respond or create discourse in society. Mastery of speaking is a priority for many foreign language students (Richards, 2002). Therefore, students sometimes reflect their success in language learning based on how much they have improved in speaking. However, the importance of speaking is not always supported by students' speaking skills in real life. This condition also occurs in SMPN 6 Bengkulu city.

Based on the observations made by the author, the writer concludes that students still have difficulty expressing their ideas orally in English this could be because they always use their mother tongue during the learning process to speak English so they are not accustomed to using English. in speaking class and students can also be confused because they don't know what to say, it can mean that students are lacking in vocabulary. Then, students seem less confident when speaking English and students also seem unmotivated to learn to speak English in class, this can be seen during the learning process to speak English students seem bored and don't pay attention to the teacher and are busy with

themselves such as chatting with classmate. This problem can not only be related to students' personal factors but also to the type of teaching techniques used by the teacher in delivering the material.

Based on an interview with an English teacher at SMP Negeri 6 Bengkulu City, it was found that grade VII students found English learning difficult, especially in speaking material. Meanwhile they are expected to get a score of 75 (KKM Class VII SMP Negeri 6 Bengkulu City). It means students are not able to get their target in English subject. Thus it can be said that students find and still experience difficulties in English subjects and are included in speaking skills. Although the English teacher at SMP Negeri 6 Bengkulu City made various efforts and persisted to improve the quality of students' English speaking skills, Like: give motivation, equip school facilities, and develop many various methods and techniques in teaching. However, the results are still unsatisfactory. Given the problems above, the author tries to propose an alternative technique, namely through communicative activities in teach speaking skills. Such as role play, simulation, storytelling, jigsaw, and information gaps activity. In this study, the authors chose to use information gap activities as a technique to improve speaking skills because English teachers still have not used this method. Where, information gap activities provide some problem solving activities or information gathering. Each partner has an important role because the task cannot be completed if the partner cannot provide information to others. The use of information gap activities allows students to express their ideas freely because they are not restricted in their production their own sentences.

The researcher proposes a gap information technique that can be used by English teachers as a way of teaching speaking for junior high school students. Researchers believe that using information gap activities is useful because it is very meaningful; all students are involved in the process equally and they are all moving towards a certain goal. Each student has the task of finding certain information, therefore they must find ways to ask for that information. This activity usually increases student motivation. They also help students move from working in a structured environment to being more communicative they are expected to use multiple target languages, and in the process find where they have gaps. Knowing the gaps gives them direction for improvement. A clear explanation of the rules of not using any other language except English aims to train students to use their English. In addition, it also helps them to reduce their anxiety in speaking English. Therefore they have to find a way to ask for that information. Information gap activity is an activity where learners are missing the information they need to complete a task and need to talk to each

other to find it.(Nasution et al., 2019)

Information gap activities are useful for many reasons. They provide opportunities for extended speaking practice, they represent real communication where motivation can be high, and they require sub-skills such as clarifying meaning and rephrasing. Information Gap demands teachers to be skilful in controlling the class. The more students there is, the more difficulty controlling the class and, therefore, more chances of problems. In addition, there is, of course, a greater likelihood of excessive noise which can mask bad behaviour and use of the first language . They enable students to use linguistic forms and functions in communicative ways. This activity brings language to life for students. Grammar is no longer a difficult concept for them to apply in speaking. Students have many opportunities to use the language they are taught to speak in the target language this can also help them to reduce their anxiety in speaking English. Common types of information gap activities that may be encountered include “distinguishing differences”, “talking and listening”, and “separate dictation”. By using the information gap technique, the teacher is able to improve the students' speaking ability because it is an effective technique to be applied in the classroom. Students become comfortable to talk about everything. The teacher only gives a simple explanation of the activity and reviews the vocabulary needed for the activity. Students, in turn, get the opportunity to develop their communicative competence more freely. Practically, this research is expected to have a positive effect for teachers to empower teachers' knowledge about how to apply types of teaching techniques in teaching speaking, so that speaking classes will not be in a monotonous atmosphere and automatically students will have high grades and enthusiasm in learning. To Students, results this research is also expected to help and be useful for students in finding effective ways or techniques to overcome their difficulties in developing speaking skills. For other researchers, this research is expected to provide valuable things in developing researchers' knowledge about the development of various teaching methods applied in teaching English to high school students and developing other research.

II. METHOD

This type of research is action research. Action research is an action taken primarily by teachers in order to improve the teaching and learning process in the context of their own classroom. Action research consists of several stages that reflect the action process. In this study, the researcher formulated problems related to students' speaking

skills. Then, take action to solve the problem. This study used the Kemmis and McTaggart's model. The researcher and the English teacher worked together in collecting input about the obstacles and weaknesses of the English teaching and learning process related to the students' speaking skills. After finding all the problems, the parties planned the action. The actions were planned to be done in two cycles. Since in the end of the second cycle the research has met its objective, it ended immediately. After finding all the problems, the parties planned the action. The actions were planned to be done in two cycles. Since at the end of Cycle II the research has met its objective, it ended immediately.

After planning the actions, the parties carried it out. During the implementation of the actions, the researcher taught the class while the English teacher observed the English learning and teaching in the class. Then, an evaluation and reflection were done at the end of the cycle. By doing the reflection of Cycle I, the researcher could see whether there were some aspects that were needed to be improved. Therefore, the researcher revised the plan and prepared for the next cycle.

The subjects of this study were students of class VII SMP Negeri 6 Bengkulu City. The researcher choose VII as the subject because the English teacher said that student VII had problems in speaking because this concern was a consideration for the researcher to involve the VII grade students of SMP Negeri 6 as research.

Instruments are tools needed in data collection to support research. According to Gomez (2010 p. 2) research instruments are tools or facilities used by researchers in collecting data so that their work is easier and the results are more systematic so that they are easier to process. The instruments used in this study were tests and documentation. The students' speaking score is known by giving a test where the speaking test is used as an instrument. The research instrument uses tests and documentation. Documentation is used as additional data to support the research.

The data analysis technique used in this study is the first, Normality test is a test that determines whether a data set is distributed in a normal curve or not. The Kolmogorov Simonov normality test was used by researchers in this study. The Kolmogorov Simonov method was used to determine sample fit and other distributions. This test compares the mean score and standard deviation of a group of sample data with a normal distribution. Based on the statistical normality test is $\alpha = 0.05$.

The second, Paired T-Test is a parametric test that can be used on two paired data. The purpose of this test is to see if there is a difference in the mean between two samples that are paired or related.

The researcher used SPSS version 18 to calculate the data. The basis of decision making in the homogeneity test:

If the significance value < 0.05 then the data is not homogeneous

If the significance value > 0.05 the data is said to be homogeneous.

third, T-test is the result of students' writing achievement broken down by ability using paired sample t-test to see if there is a substantial difference between pre-test and post-test to see if there is a significant improvement in student achievement. Indonesia after introducing mixed learning with an enhanced virtual model.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to improve students' speaking skills by using information gap activities. The action was carried out in two cycles starting on June 8th 2022 and ending on June 17th 2022. Based on the results of the actions in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2, the researcher decided to end the research. The information gap activity has been successfully implemented and the research objectives have been achieved. Research findings will be determined from quantitative and qualitative data collected during the action. Qualitative data were obtained from classroom observations and interviews with English teachers and students. Quantitative data were taken from students' speaking scores on the pre-test and post-test.

1. changes due to Cycle 1 and Cycle 2.

The researcher presents the following table to show the changes as a result of Cycle 1 and Cycle 2

Table 1: The Comparison of Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 after the Implementation of Information Gap Activities

The Actions	Cycle 1	Cycle 2
a. Using classroom English during the teaching learning process	In general, students begin to recognize and get used to English classes. They can understand and then respond to the target language. The use of classroom English also	Students understand the use of class English very well. They have know instructions and more language class. Students understand the use of class English very well.

	increases students' confidence and motivates them to speak in English.	They have know instructions and more language class.
b. Applying information gap activities	implementation of Information gap activities can increase student engagement in speaking classes. Even though students are still confused with information gap activities at the beginning, they finally got more opportunities to talk and interact with their friends by using information gap activities. There are also some problems related to class and time management which cannot be controlled by the researcher.	They confident and no longer ashamed to express their ideas and to tell stories. Thus, researchers are able to manage time and also minimize noise so that the classroom situation becomes better and conducive to the learning process.
c. Improving students' vocabulary	The students were good enough in understanding the material of vocabulary and pronunciation. They found it helpful to get more vocabulary and be familiar with the right pronunciation of the words. The students got new words with the right pronunciation of the vocabulary.	Students are able to increase their vocabulary. They understand words and their meanings well. Thus, students used the words they had known to retell the story.
d. Giving rewards		The rewards were

to the best performance		effective to make the students motivated and more enthusiastic in doing the activities. They were more competitive and wanted to be the best among the other students and groups.
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2. The results of the pre-test and post-test

In addition, to determine the improvement of students' speaking skills, the researcher also assessed the students' speaking performance on the pre-test and post-test. The results of the pre-test and post-test are presented below.

Table 2: The results of the pre-test and post-test

No	Name	Pre-test	Post-test
1	Adma Noverin	60	90
2	Ahmad Pendi	40	80
3	Amanah Tasya	60	100
4	Ardiansyah	10	60
5	Amanda Wulandari	70	90
6	Ando Saputra	40	80
7	Beram	10	40
8	Cahaya Suci R.	60	70
9	Danu Rapanca	70	90
10	Denia Putri	40	80
11	Fira Satria	60	80
12	Faredi	20	60

14	Habibi Ramadhan	30	50
15	Kheyza Aurel Salsabila	20	50
16	Lienchi Shelsa	80	90
17	Marsella	50	70
18	Murti Ima	50	70
19	Muhamad Ridho	70	80
20	Muhammad Alfa	40	60
21	Nur Aulia D.P	60	80
22	Rahmat Rafi	20	70
23	Raymond	30	70

(Continued)

(Continued)

24	Satria	60	100
25	Sintia Lupita	60	70
26	Tri Novita Lestari	100	100
27	Wahyuni Rina	40	80

In the pre-test, students have low speaking ability. They cannot convey their biodata or information smoothly. Almost all of them hesitate to speak in English. They have low vocabulary with poor pronunciation. Many of them still use Indonesian and English in retelling the story. The students also cannot retell the story without using notes or doing rote memorization all the time. They are also shy and do not have the confidence to express their ideas.

Thus, the implementation of information gap activities in cycle II succeeded in improving students' speaking skills. This increase can be seen from the results of the students' speaking ability in the post-test. Based on the post-test, the students' retelling skills were getting better. Many students can retell the biodata well. They don't use notes or memory all the time. They are able to convey biographical information by using the right

vocabulary. Thus, their pronunciation also gets better. They are also actively involved in the discussion. They can express their ideas well, although sometimes they still use Indonesian to say it. Thus, they are more confident and are no longer ashamed to appear in front of the class.

3. Frequencies of Pre-Test and Post-test

Table 3: Frequencies of Pre-Test and Post-test Statistics

Statistics		English Speaking Skill (Pretest)	English Speaking Skill (Posttest)
N	Valid	27	27
	Missing	0	0
Mean		48.15	75.19
Median		50.00	80.00
Mode		60	70 ^a
Std. Deviation		21.845	15.534
Variance		477.208	241.311

(Continued)

(Continued)

Range	90	60
Minimum	10	40
Maximum	100	100
a. Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown		

The table above describes the value of the Average (Mean), Median, Mode (Mode), Standard Deviation (Std. Deviation), Variance (Variance), Range (Range), Smallest Value (Minimum) and Highest Value (Maximum) for each each variable.

4. Normality Test

a. The Results of Normality Test Pre-Test and Post- Test Score

In analyzing the normality of the pre-test and post-test scores, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test sample was used. The normality of the pretest and post-test values can be seen in table 4.4

Table 4: The normality test of post-test scores

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test			
		English Speaking Skill (Pretest)	English Speaking Skill (Posttest)
N		27	27
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	48.15	75.19
	Std. Deviation	21.845	15.534
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.151	.147
	Positive	.109	.119
	Negative	-.151	-.147
Test Statistic		.151	.147
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.118 ^c	.139 ^c
a. Test distribution is Normal.			
b. Calculated from data.			
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.			

The table above describes the results of the normality test of the English Speaking Skill (Pretest) and English Speaking Skill (Posttest) data using the Kolmogorov Smirnov Test. From the table, it is known that the p value (Sig.) for the English Speaking Skill (Pretest) is 0.118 and the p-value (Sig.) for the English Speaking Skill (Posttest) is 0.139. Because

all p values > 0.05 , the data for English Speaking Skill (Pretest) and English Speaking Skill (Posttest) are said to be normally distributed.

5. T-Test

Table 5 : Paired Samples Statistics

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	English Speaking Skill (Posttest)	75.19	27	15.534	2.990
	English Speaking Skill (Pretest)	48.15	27	21.845	4.204

The table above describes the average (Mean) and Standard Deviation (Std. Deviation) values for English Speaking Skill (Pretest) and English Speaking Skill (Posttest). From the table, it is known that the English Speaking Skill (Posttest) with an average value (Mean) of 75.19 and a Standard Deviation value (Std. Deviation) of 15,534, while the English Speaking Skill (Pretest) with an average value (Mean) of 48.15 and the value of Standard Deviation (Std. Deviation) of 21.845.

Table 6: Paired Samples Statistics

Paired Samples Test		
		Pair 1
		English Speaking Skill (Posttest) - English Speaking Skill (Pretest)
Paired Differences	Mean	27.037
	Std. Deviation	13.535
	Std. Error Mean	2.605

	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	L o w e r	21.683
		U p p e r	32.391
t			10.380
df			26
Sig. (2-tailed)			.000

The table above describes the results of the average difference test between English Speaking Skill (Pretest) and English Speaking Skill (Posttest) using the Paired Samples t-Test. Paired Samples t-Test was used because the data for English Speaking Skill (Pretest) and English Speaking Skill (Posttest) were normally distributed. From the table, it is known that the Paired Samples t-Test (t-count) test value is 10.380 and the t-table is 2.056 with a p-value of 0.000. Because the value of t-count > t-table or p value < 0.05, it is said that there is an average difference between English Speaking Skill (Pretest) and English Speaking Skill (Posttest). This means that the information gap activity method is significant to improve the speaking skills of class VII student of SMP N 6 Bengkulu city in the 2021/2022 academic year.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study was conducted in June 2022. This study aims to improve the speaking ability of grade VII students, which this study uses information gap activities. Based on the findings in the previous chapter, it can be stated that the use of information gap activities succeeded in improving students' speaking skills. Information gap activities are carried out in pairs or groups. Therefore, this activity can provide more opportunities for students to

practice speaking and communicating with their classmates. In this activity, it can also increase students' self-confidence and be able to motivate students. This can be seen from the beginning of this activity starting until this activity is completed, there is an increase in the confidence of students who were previously shy and in the end students are more confident to speak English in front of the class. This is also because researchers always emphasize students to communicate using English so that they are able to make students more accustomed and motivated to speak English.

Second, improvement is also reflected in the teaching and learning process. The students were more active in speaking class. They discuss well by actively asking and answering questions. In addition, the students also understand the English class very well. They are able to understand the target language spoken by the teacher. Third, students are able to increase their vocabulary. The students get exposure that allows them to get a lot of new vocabulary related to the material they are studying. The use of information gap activities in speaking class also facilitates students to interact with others by asking and providing information in the target language. Thus, the implementation of information gap activities is believed to be able to improve students' speaking skills..

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