

THE USE OF READING ALOUD TECHNIQUE TO REDUCE STUDENT'S SPEAKING ANXIETY

Classroom Action Research of the Eighth Grade Students at SMPN 3 SAWIT in the Academic year of 2022/2023

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Abstract

The study aimed to find out whether the Reading Aloud technique can reduce the students' speaking anxiety during English learning. This research was quantitative research. The participants of this research were 32 students of eighth grade of Junior High School 3 Sawit. Data collection was carried out using the pre-tests, post-test, interviews and checklist observations. The checklist observation was used to find out the factors that cause students' anxiety in speaking performances. While, the interviews were conducted to determine their anxiety level. The use of the reading aloud method was accompanied by providing motivation, assignments and reinforcement to support its application. The final result of data processing was calculated from the percentage of how many students who courage to speak up and their enthusiasm without being forced or pointed before and after the technique was applied. The final results confirmed that the technique of reading aloud was effective in reducing the anxiety of students in speaking English.

Keywords: speaking anxiety, reading aloud, classroom action research

Introduction

Student's anxiety of speaking is a form of social anxiety that affects students especially when asked to speak in front of others. This includes speaking in front of the class, participating in group discussions, and even talking one-on-one with the teacher and her. Students who are nervous about speaking may feel nervous and anxious and may experience physical symptoms such as sweating and shaking.

A various of factors can contribute to students' fear of speaking. One of the most common causes is fear of making mistakes. Students may worry that they are saying something wrong or using incorrect grammar, which can lead to embarrassment and

loss of confidence. Another factor that causes fear of speaking is a lack of confidence in one's language skills. Students who feel their language skills are not good may become nervous when speaking in front of others, especially for fear of being judged or criticized.

Often students are afraid before trying, which can limit their learning development. It is necessary to do activities that can motivate them to be more courageous. This reading aloud technique can trigger students' confidence to speak first. This activity requires repetition several times because to foster self-confidence requires effort that is not the same between one student and another. After students have enough courage and confidence, then

improve things related to correct speaking rules.

Anxiety usually refers to a physiological state of arousal characterized by transient emotional response intensity and sensations of discomfort, as well as increased nervous system activation. It is also a state that can have negative and positive effects and promotes infrastructure and disruption of cognitive activity in learning. Syahrozi et al. (2018) mentioned that the causes of anxiety in English learning were studied by international students in the Philippines. It was found that its use enables learners to take control of their learning as it is their basic aid in learning the target language.

Anxieties need to be addressed by English teachers and English-as-a-foreign-language learners as early as possible. Awareness of understanding students' anxiety earlier can improve English teaching and achieve the goal effectively. Students can overcome and control their learning anxiety in different ways, and teachers can minimize their students' learning anxiety with different learning methods.

Anxiety among students can have a profound impact on their ability to learn and succeed academically. When students experience anxiety, it can hinder their cognitive functioning, hinder concentration, and impede their overall learning process. As educators, it is crucial to recognize the signs of student anxiety and implement strategies to support students in managing and overcoming these challenges

Ur (1996:121) says there are four problems that arise in speaking classes: (1) Inhibition or worried about making mistakes or fearful of

criticism or losing face, or simply shy of the attention that their speech attracts. (2) They have nothing to say or cannot think of anything to say. (3) Low or uneven participation because of the tendency of some students to dominate, others speak very little or not at all. (4) Mother tongue use. Learners prefer to use their mother language than the target language in class or at any time.

Cultural differences can also affect a student's fear of speaking. Students in cultures that value respect for authority may feel uncomfortable speaking in front of a teacher or in a group. An important factor is lack of exercise. Students may not have enough opportunities to speak English outside the classroom, especially if they live in a non-English speaking country. Additionally, the pressure to do well in exams and homework can also increase anxiety levels.

The student's fear of speaking can have a significant impact on a student's ability to learn and language learning success. Students who are afraid to speak may avoid participating in classroom discussions or choose to remain silent during group activities. This can lead to a lack of involvement in the learning process and ultimately lead to lower grades and less ability to communicate effectively in English. By understanding the causes of fear of speaking and implementing strategies to address it, teachers can create a supportive and encouraging learning environment in which all students thrive.

Based on the situation, the researcher formulates a classroom action research to reduce student English speaking anxiety using reading aloud technique. By reading

aloud regularly, students gain confidence in speaking English. By repeating English words and phrases, learners become proficient and fluent in oral communication. Increased confidence in using the language has a positive impact on students' overall language skills and encourages them to actively participate in classroom discussions and conversations.

If students have the opportunity to practice reading aloud regularly with appropriate support and feedback, their anxiety about speaking English will decrease and their fluency will improve. Appropriate support and feedback, both from teachers and peers, also play an important role in helping students overcome their anxiety and improve their speaking skills. So that it can be seen how the reading aloud technique can reduce students' anxiety levels in learning English speaking and increase their self-confidence both in front of their friends or in front of the teacher. It hoped the students will be more comfortable and improve their self-confidence in pronouncing vocabulary.

The conversations between students and with teachers can run better and more easily understood. So, the students will be easier to learn English further. Then, for the teachers are they will get new techniques as a tool to improve student's pronunciation. This technique can be applied not only in junior high school but also in the higher level.

Methodology

This study is classroom action research (CAR). The subject of this research are thirty two students of VII B grade at SMPN 3 Sawit which consisted of tenth female students

and twenty two female students. The reason for choosing this class is because in this class there are several students who actually have potential in speaking skills but their confidence level is relatively low.

In this case, CAR was used to decrease students' speaking anxiety using the reading aloud technique. The study was conducted in two cycles. The two cycles were referred to as cycle one and cycle two. First, a pre-cycle was conducted to determine the students' speaking ability before using the reading aloud technique. Second, the first cycle is used for the initial treatment of the application of the reading aloud technique. The last cycle is the second cycle used for the final treatment.

The model of classroom action research by Kemmis and Mc Taggart used in this research. This model provides a structured and systematic framework for improvement and development in the classroom context. The model allows teachers to take on the role of researchers in their own teaching and encourages deep and sustained reflection in teaching practice.

It also emphasizes a continuous cycle of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Teachers using this model can iteratively implement corrective actions based on reflection and evaluation, and continuously improve their teaching practices. This helps students feel more engaged and responsible for their own learning. It consists of four main stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting.

1. Planning

- Identifying an area of concern or a research question.

- Developing a plan of action, including strategies, methods, and resources.
 - Defining the criteria for success and setting goals.
2. Acting
- Implementing the planned actions and interventions in the classroom.
 - Collecting data and evidence to document the process and outcomes.
 - Keeping records of the actions taken and any modifications made during the implementation.
3. Observing:
- Collecting data through observations, interviews, surveys, or other methods.
 - Analysing and interpreting the data to identify patterns, trends, or changes.
 - Reflecting on the collected data to understand the effectiveness of the implemented actions.
4. Reflecting:
- Engaging in critical reflection and analysis of the data collected.
 - Evaluating the effectiveness of the implemented actions and interventions.
 - Identifying strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.
 - Modifying or adapting the actions based on the reflections.

Data collection is carried out using the pre-tests, post-test, interviews and checklist observations. Pre-test and post-test are used to find out the data that can be used to measure the impact of using reading aloud techniques is on student's anxiety. The checklist observation is used to find out the factors that cause students' anxiety in speaking

performances. While, the interviews are conducted to determine their anxiety level.

The checklist observation is done by going around observing students in a learning process. The researcher uses presentation activities to find out how the attitudes and responses of students are when asked to read the results of the presentation. From the movements of the students, researcher can find out how the original students' attitudes changed in getting along with their friends and when facing English learning which requires speaking. All students were given a questionnaire containing several causes of anxiety in speaking English. If the factors listed match what they experienced, students were asked to give a tick or checklist.

Then, the interview process is carried out by asking students one by one about things that make them not confident in speaking based on the pre-test that has been given before. This interview aims to find out more about what causes their anxiety.

This study uses reading aloud technique. Students will be given dedicated time to practice reading texts in English out loud. This practice can be done individually or in small groups. Teachers provides feedback on pronunciation, intonation and proper use of vocabulary. The feedback should be positive and motivate students to continue improving their speaking skills. Teachers can create a safe and comfortable environment in the classroom, where students feel free to practice speaking English without fear of mistakes or negative judgment.

The reading materials used should be appropriate for the students' ability level, so that they can understand and pronounce them more fluently. Interesting and relevant materials can also increase students' motivation to practice reading aloud.

Apart from reading aloud, students also need to engage in other speaking activities, such as role-playing, group discussions or presentations in front of the class. This will help them apply their speaking skills in a more real-world context. After implementing these steps, students' anxiety levels and their speaking ability can be measured and compared to before. These data can be used to evaluate whether the read-aloud technique is effective in reducing students' anxiety in speaking English.

Finding and Discussion

Speaking English fluently at the junior high school level will help students prepare for higher levels of education, such as high school and college. Many high schools use English as a teaching medium, so the ability to speak good English will provide an advantage in understanding the lesson. English is an international language that is widely used in various countries. Having the ability to speak English will enable students to communicate more broadly, both in an international context and when interacting with foreign travellers or guests.

Many learning materials are available in English, such as books, articles and online resources. With the ability to speak English, students can access a wider range of learning resources, increase their understanding of various topics and

develop self-study skills. English is a highly valued skill in the world of work. Having the ability to speak good English can open up wider career opportunities, especially in multinational companies, the tourism, technology, communications and creative industries sectors.

English is a on of the way to other cultures in the world. By speaking English, students can better understand and appreciate cultural differences, improve their ability to interact with people from different backgrounds, and promote tolerance. Learning English involves critical thinking skills, such as analysing, comparing, and evaluating information. The process of speaking English actively strengthens students' critical thinking skills, improves their ability to solve problems and make good decisions.

Speaking English well helps students develop effective communication skills. They can express their thoughts and opinions clearly, present ideas in a structured manner, and participate actively in class discussions. Good communication skills will be beneficial in various aspects of their life.

In class VII B at SMPN 3 Sawit, for most students, speaking is one of the scourges that students avoid when learning English. So the researcher collaborated with the class teacher to find a solution. Based on the results of the pre-cycle, cycle one and cycle two, the following are the results of the activities that have been carried out.

1. Pre-cycle

In this phase, the researcher found several causes of students' anxiety in speaking English by looking at the

observation checklist that had been distributed to students to be filled in one by one. The researcher emphasized to students to fill in according to what they experienced when speaking English either with their friends or in front of the teacher. Based on the pre-test, observation checklist, and interview, the following data was obtained:

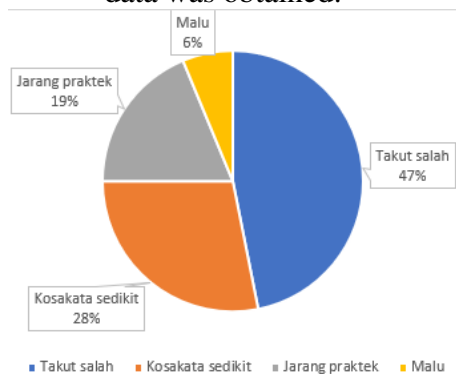


Figure 1 Student's speaking anxiety factors

It can be concluded that the majority of the causes of anxiety in speaking English are due to fear of being wrong.

2. Cycle one

In this phase there are two meetings of the learning process. The learning material used was descriptive text. The following are some of the procedures carried out by researchers in cycle one:

a. Planning

At this stage the teacher prepares the material and also the lesson plan. The material that will be used is about descriptive text. The teacher also prepared a learning video related to the material. The video shows an example of a student speaking aloud in

front of the class. This is to represent the reading aloud technique.

b. Acting

Begin by reading short and simple texts, such as children's books or graded readers. These materials are designed to be accessible and provide a gradual progression in difficulty. Starting with easier content will help build confidence and reduce anxiety.

Divide long text into smaller sections or paragraphs. Concentrate on completing one section at a time before moving on to the next. This approach avoids excessive emotion and improves comprehension and speech intelligibility.

The researcher began to invite students to apply the read aloud technique. At the beginning of the activity, the teacher invited students to repeat what the teacher read and said. Repetition is done several times until all students in the class make loud sounds.

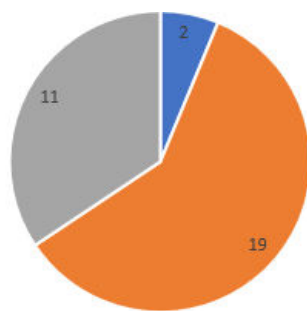
c. Observing

At this point, the researcher monitors how students follow the instructions given. How are the students' attitudes when invited to speak English. The teacher always directs students so that they can follow the instructions well. In

addition, the teacher also provides motivation so that students are more confident and able to increase the volume of their voices.

d. Reflecting

Based on the results of a series of activities in cycle one, students are still unable to bring out all their abilities in speaking aloud. Some students still chose to remain silent and did not follow the teacher's instructions. The teacher has tried to reprimand several times but when not supervised, students prefer to remain silent. Although students want to speak, their voices are soft and whispering. As shown in the diagram below, students who reached the target were only 59.3%.



■ Siswa diam ■ Siswa speaking keras ■ Siswa speaking lirih

Figure 2 The result of cycle one

3. Cycle two

The second cycle is performed to revise the failure of the first cycle. In the previous cycle, the researcher found several reasons that led to the failure

to achieve the indicators of success. For this second cycle, the researcher prepared several strategies to achieve better results. There were several activities carried out to improve the results in cycle two.

Teachers provide more optimal motivation. Besides giving appreciation, teacher gives fun ice breaking that contain body movements. Doing more repetitions related to reading aloud instructions. Not only the teacher who guides the reading, but also students who have high confidence are given the opportunity to guide in front of their friends. Increase the intensity of student supervision so that they do not ignore instructions that conducted. The implementation of the second cycle is explained below:

a. Planning

The teacher makes some revisions and improvements to the activities that has been carried out in cycle one. Some additional media and classroom organization are also implemented.

b. Acting

Several strategies are needed to be applied in the second cycle. It aims to improve students' speaking confident better. Some strategies such as first, the explanation of the material is explained more slowly and

stimulates students to ask again about the explanation that is not understood. Second, the division of groups is regulated by the teacher. Students who have better confidence in speaking are divided into groups that have been formed so that they can motivate their friends. They become a group leader. Third, the teacher did more repetitions with the command "repeat after me". After that, the teacher asks the group leader to guide their group members and finally, each group independently takes turns practicing speaking.

The teacher can demonstrate fluent reading by reading aloud a passage or text, emphasizing proper pronunciation, intonation, and expression. This serves as a model for students to follow and helps them develop a sense of what fluent reading sounds like.

Teachers can guide students through reading aloud exercises, providing support and feedback as needed. This can include correcting pronunciation errors, modelling proper intonation, and helping students understand and convey the meaning of the text.

Shared reading involves the teacher and students

reading a text together. The teacher can read aloud a sentence or a paragraph, and then invite students to repeat after them. This shared reading approach builds confidence, as students are not solely responsible for reading aloud and can rely on the support of their teacher and peers.

Choral reading involves the entire class reading a text together in unison. This technique can help alleviate individual performance anxiety as students feel more comfortable speaking in a group. Choral reading also promotes rhythm, pacing, and fluency.

Encourage students to read aloud the same passage multiple times. Repetition helps build fluency, confidence, and familiarity with the text. With each repetition, students will become more comfortable and proficient in their reading. Encourage and praise students' efforts and progress in their reading aloud skills. Positive reinforcement helps students feel more confident and motivated to continue practicing. Specific and constructive feedback can also guide students in improving their pronunciation and fluency.

c. Observing

At this point, the researcher observes how the students follow the instructions given. How do the students behave when they are asked to speak English. The teacher keeps instructing the students so that they can follow the instructions well. In addition, the teacher motivates the students so that they will be more confident

d. Reflecting

After some improvements and additional more intensive activities. There was a significant improvement from phase one. The majority in class VII B, students' confidence in speaking English are increased. Reading aloud allows teachers to observe student responses, identify problem areas, and provide targeted support. Understanding students' individual needs enables teachers to address student fears and guide instruction through additional explanations, vocabulary support, follow-up activities, and more.

Teacher and students reflect on the learning that has been implemented. Students are welcome to ask questions about things that have not been understood. Based on the data in the table, the

success of achieving success indicators is obtained in cycle 2. In this cycle, as many as 90,6% of students succeeded in achieving the criteria for the value that must be achieved.

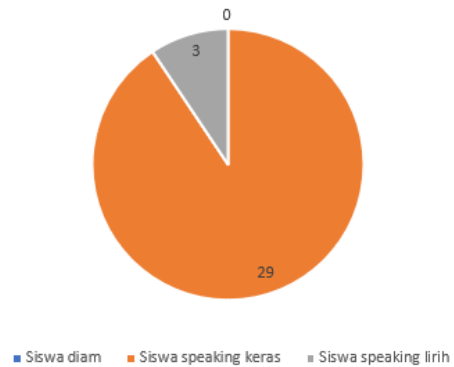


Figure 3 The result of cycle two

Based on the final results of the activities carried out in cycle one and cycle two, the following final data can be generated.

Siklus	Jumlah siswa mencapai target	Presentase
Siklus 1	19 siswa	59,3%
Siklus 2	29 siswa	90,60%

Figure 4 Final result

At the beginning of using the reading aloud method, students need to be given an initial treatment to make them relax first. Before entering the core activities, activities that can reduce their stress are needed. Based on the observation checklist filled in by students, they come to class with various factors that cause anxiety in speaking English. This needs to be reduced first so that students can be directed to the core learning activities. This factor is like a barrier that slows them down in following the learning process. For this reason, the teacher provides fun ice breaking

activities to make students more motivated and excited.

The technique of reading aloud requires repetition many times. Students who are shy and accustomed to reading softly are not easy to make to read more loudly. In addition to repetition, teachers also need to motivate students to continue to maximize their potential. In fact, the teacher must be assertive to trigger students' confidence even though at first they are forced to get used to it.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the reading aloud technique can help reduce students' anxiety in speaking English. Reading aloud is an effective way to overcome students' fears in the learning process. Educators by creating a safe and supportive environment, modelling language skills, improving comprehension, encouraging active listening, fostering interaction, encouraging imagination and fostering a love of reading can effectively counter students' fears and promote a positive learning experience. Reading aloud helps students overcome their fears, develop confidence, and embark on their journey to academic success.

When students read aloud, they can hear their own voices and notice their ability to pronounce English words. By practicing reading aloud regularly, they can improve their pronunciation and intonation, which in turn increases their confidence in speaking English.

By reading texts in English aloud, students can engage their brains more actively in understanding and producing the language. This helps strengthen the connection between

their mind and their voice in English, making it easier for them to speak more fluently and confidently.

When reading aloud, students can become familiar with new vocabulary and how it is pronounced. This helps them expand their vocabulary and improve their understanding of how words should sound in English. By having a richer vocabulary, they will feel more comfortable and confident when speaking.

For many students, anxiety in speaking English is often related to feelings of embarrassment or fear of making mistakes in front of others. By reading aloud regularly, students can overcome this social anxiety as they get used to practicing their speaking skills in front of others. The final results confirmed that the technique of reading aloud was effective in reducing the anxiety of students in speaking English.

In order to optimize the benefits of the reading aloud technique, it is important for students to get feedback from their teachers or peers. Teachers can provide guidance on correct pronunciation and provide positive encouragement, while practicing with peers can create a relaxed and supportive environment. In addition, other variables such as consistent practice and selection of materials appropriate to the students' ability level can also contribute to reducing anxiety and improving English speaking ability.

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