

THE USE OF UPS AND DOWN GAMES TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL

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Abstract: This article discusses: First, the class situation when the ups-and-down game is implemented in teaching speaking. And second, to what extent students' speaking skill can be improved by using Ups and Down games. The Classroom Action Research was carried out in April 2013. The subject was the students of class VII H of a private junior high school in Surakarta in the academic year 2012/2013. The qualitative data were obtained by questionnaire, observation and photographs of all activities in the teaching and learning process, whereas the quantitative data were obtained by conducting pre-test and post-test. The research result shows that: (1) the ups-and-down games could give improvements on the students' speaking skill. They could speak up more actively in speaking class. They could use grammar and pronunciation better, have more vocabulary, speak more fluently, and could arrange idea better. (2) The Ups-and-Down Games gave positive impacts in the teaching and learning process. The students were motivated to speak and enjoyed the lessons. They were more active through speaking up in speaking class. They were also very enthusiastic in speaking class because they found good atmosphere in class for speaking provided by ups-and-down games.

Keywords: *ups-and-down games, speaking, students' speaking skill*

INTRODUCTION

English competence consists of four languages skills of reading, writing, listening and speaking. Speaking is in an important skills in teaching English. People learning English expect to be able to use it for talking to each other. Therefore, they should practice the language as often as possible. Byrne (1997: 9) defines speaking fluency as the ability to express oneself intelligibly, reasonably accurately and fluently. According to Tiedt (1967: 101), the ability to speak effectively can differ between lack of success. Then verbal facility can cover an individual's deficiencies. It shows

that someone's ability to speak will determine his/her success in life. Speaking seems a simple thing but it is also quite difficult to do. It involves many aspects like cognitive, psychological and psychomotoric aspects. Furthermore, Gower, Philips, and Walters (1995: 100) state that speaking fluency is the ability to keep going when speaking spontaneously. It means that a speaker can be called a fluent speaker if he or she can speak smoothly without broken off from the beginning until the end of speech.

Unfortunately, not all teachers realize the importance of teaching speaking. In teaching speaking, there are

some teachers that just say “Please turn to page 34. Read the passage and answer the questions.” The teachers who start the lesson in this way are hardly likely to motivate students to speak more. It can make students just read the text and do not practice the text; while in the competence standard, it is stated that students have to practice in speaking class.

Expressing one’s idea is related to speaking skill is according to Underwood (1996: 11). She believes that speaking is a creative process where speakers are almost always in the position of formulating what they are saying as result of the behavior of their listeners or as a result of added thoughts of their own. It means that a person can speak because he listens to other who speaks to him. The wrong sound heard will cause the wrong production speech.

Every teacher can run teaching and learning process well. But not all teaching and learning process can be categorized as affective teaching. The process of teaching and learning which is able to achieve the intended goal is the best one and it can be said as effective teaching. As stated by Sudrajat (2007) effective teaching is achieving goal, facilitating the students to get through the material, and optimizing a short time to achieve much intended result of teaching and learning process.

In speaking class, the students need other ways to provide themselves speak more to drill their speaking skill. Rockler (1988: 93) states that simulating or gaming is a powerful teaching device. He adds that the use of this can achieve the usual outcomes of teaching: content, concepts, skills, attitudes. From his argument, games are believed as a mean that could help the teacher to teach his or her students. Sriningsih (2008: 95) says that media

game of snakes-and-ladders can be provided to children from the age of 5-6 years in order to stimulate various areas of development such as cognitive, language and social skills. Language skills that can be stimulated with games are vocabulary up and down, forward and backward, up and down, etc. Social skills are trained in this game include the willingness to follow and obey the rules of the game, played in turn. In addition, Mulyati (2008) states that Ups-and-Down has several advantages such as:

- a. It can create a fun learning atmosphere (fun).
- b. It stimulates students' individual learning activities or groups.
- c. It can develop creativity, independence, students create mutual communication and can build student responsibility and discipline.
- d. It maintains students' cognitive structure as a result of the process of improving students' speaking skill. This will enable the student to remain what he had learned when students are faced with a problem. The knowledge contained in the memories (thoughts) can be recovered at any time. Results showed that the ups-and-down game has highly motivated and made students enthusiastic to speak more and after the experiment, their score were significantly higher.

This article discusses the findings of an action research at SMP Bintang Laut Surakarta which answers the questions: (1) how is the class situation when the ups-and-down game is implemented in speaking class? (2) To what extent can students' speaking skill be improved by using Ups and Down games?

The following section mentions some information about the background of

the research. This includes the research subject, the teaching problems and the proposed solution for the problems.

However, based on the observation conducted in the seventh grade students of SMP Bintang Laut Surakarta, it was noticed that the students had low speaking. It can be seen from the result of the pre-test in the pre-research observation; the mean score of pre-test was 2.3 from the maximum score of 4. This was the mean of 2.2 for vocabulary, 2.35 for grammar, 2.4 for pronunciation, 2.25 for fluency, 2.3 for idea organization.

Moreover, the result of interviews also showed that a number of students were less motivated to participate in the speaking class. In their opinion, the process of teaching and learning is not effective, The teacher does not invite his students to practice speaking English.

In addition, the result of questionnaire also showed that they had low motivation to speak up in speaking class. They felt bored in speaking because the teacher usually used books for teaching speaking. They always had monotonous activities in speaking class. As a result, they got difficulties in vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and arrange the idea organization.

Furthermore from teaching learning process, it was noticed that the teacher dominated in the class activity which made the students had low participation in class. She also always built the monotonous activity based on book. She just asked the students to read a text and answer the following questions. As a result, the students had low motivation in speaking because they did not find enjoyable atmosphere for speaking in class. Moreover, the teacher did not explain speaking strategies for learning

speaking that made the students got difficulties in vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and arrange the idea organization.

One of the ways or solutions to improve the students' speaking skill is the use of ups-and-down game. The game ups-and-down allows students to interact directly between students and any nearby objects, can raise students' learning motivation, can create a fun learning atmosphere in speaking class, can more motivating and stimulating students to learn, and also can stimulate aspects of cognitive development, language, cognitive and social. UDG can stimulate students talk and to answer any challenge, also can help to manipulate individual or team of student's speaking ability. By applying the ups-and-down game in process of teaching and learning, the students' difficulties in speaking can be solved.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research was carried out at Private junior high school in Surakarta in April 2013. The subject of the research was the students of class VII H in the academic year 2012/2013. The research method was Action Research. According to Mills (2000: 6) says that action research is any systematic inquiry conducted by teacher researchers, principals, school counselors, or other stakeholders in teaching or learning environment, to gather information about the ways that their particular schools operate, how they teach, and how well their students learn. Suyanton (1997) also argues that "action research is reflective action through doing some intended activities in order to repair and increase the process of teaching and learning in class professionally.

Moreover, Kemmis and McTaggart in Nunan (1992: 17) suggest that the three defining characteristics of action research are that is carried out by practitionerz (for our purposes, classroom teachers) rather than outside researcher; secondly, that is collaborative; and thirdly that is aimed at changing things.

From the definitions above, it can be assumed that action research is a systematic research done by teachers, researchers, principals, school counselors, administrator or other educational professionals to solve problems in order to get better improvement in process teaching and learning.

In this research, the researcher varies the types speaking skill to solve students' difficulties in speaking. The researcher will collaborate with the English teacher in implementing the action research. She discusses with the teacher about the topic, the tasks, and the test items. The teacher watches and observes the way of teaching and learning process. The practical action the researcher used is technique using ups-and-down game.

The research was conducted in two cycles. The procedure of this research consisted of planning, action, observation, and reflection. There were two types of data in this research namely qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data were obtained by making notes, giving questionnaire and photographs of all the activities in the process of teaching and learning. Quantitative data were obtained from the students' scores of pre-test and post-test.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this research the writer implemented ups-and-down game to improve student's speaking skill. The implementation of the research was conducted in two cycles. The writer planned 3 meetings in cycle 1. In conducting the lesson the writer used the procedures were implementing the action, observing the action, and reflecting the action, in which within implementing the action the researcher would use of ups-and-down game.

In implementing the action, the writer conducted 3 functions of ups-and-down game. First, she introduced and aroused students' interest to topic by brainstorming some questions about the topic. Second, she motivated the students to more speak up by applied that game in speaking class. Finally she provided some language preparation for the students in order to more speak up by teaching difficult vocabularies in context, given the right pronunciation and grammar, also given strategies of arrange idea organization which became the indicators of each meeting.

In cycle 1, the writer found the students' progression in speaking English. First, they were able to get fun atmosphere in speaking class. Second, the students' difficulties in vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and idea organization decreased. It could be seen from the mean score of post-test 1 that was 2.71 from maximum score of 4. The score in details can be described as follow: The mean score of the students' vocabulary was 2.5; it means that the students use variety, but make some errors in word choice. The mean score of the students' grammar was 2.75, it means that the

students use a variety structures but make some errors. The mean score of the students' pronunciation and intonation was 2.9, it means that the students pronunciation and intonation are usually clear and accurate, some problems areas. The mean score of fluently was 2.6, it means that the students speak with some hesitation, do not usually interfere with communication. The mean score of idea organization was 2.8, it means that the students' meaning and information are organized, but need more development.

Furthermore, there were many improvements in teaching and learning process when ups-and-down was implemented in speaking class. The use of ups-and-down game could motivate the students to speak English more and create enjoyable lesson. They were very enthusiastic in speaking class because that game create fun atmosphere in.

Besides, the students become more active in speaking class because they work together with their friends to share their ideas and find the answer. The students also become more confident in speaking class when applied Ups-and-Down Games. It makes the students not afraid to make mistakes.

However, the writer observed that the students still got difficulties in speaking English. They still got difficulties in fluency, idea organization, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. It could be seen from the mean score of pre-test still was low.

Meanwhile, it was hard for the writer to group the students during cycle 1. She made the group randomly but some students complained about that. They want choose the member of groups by themselves. They said that form the

member of groups randomly sometimes could not be cooperative in a discussion.

From the result of cycle 1, the writer decided to conduct cycle 2 which consisted of 3 meetings. In cycle 2, the writer planned to give the students more strategies in identifying difficulties that faced the students in speaking class in the first cycle, so the students could face their problems such as: grammatical error, mispronunciation and lack of vocabularies. Furthermore, the writer would give drilling to the students in order to speak more and confident, so they not afraid to make mistakes when speaking in front of the class.

In addition, she planned to determine the leader and the member of group in every meeting so that the students would not have monotonous group. Then, she would ask the passive students become the leader of each group so they would be more active because they got more responsibility.

Besides focusing on improving the students' speaking skill, the writer also would reinforce the students' speaking skill in vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluently, and idea organization.

In cycle 2, the writer found that the improvement of students' speaking skill, students spoke actively and confidently in presentation and discussion, students' grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation were being well overcome, improvement of students' motivation, classroom conditions becomes more alive and the students were more enthusiastic and motivated in joining the lesson, and the students looked so confident and spoke naturally. It could be seen from the mean score of post-test 2 that 3.39 from the range score 1 - 4. The improvement score

in details can be described as follows: the mean score of students' vocabulary was 3.27, students' grammar was 3.3, students' intonation and pronunciation was 3.45, students' fluency was 3.34, and the mean score of students' idea organization was 3.48.

The students got easier in speaking English when applied Ups-and-Down Games in speaking class was getting better than before. The class situations were more interested to students. It can be students were highly motivated and more confident in speaking. In speaking post test 2, the students' ability on grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and comprehension were improved.

The differences between cycle 1 and cycle 2 were found. The selection of appropriate strategies, activity and tasks used in cycle 2 made the students more active to learn speaking and pay attention toward the lesson. In addition, there was

good cooperation among the members of the groups. Most of the students were involved in the learning activities, the passive students began active. From the result of cycle 1 and 2, the writer concluded that the use of ups-and-down game was an appropriate technique to improve students' speaking skill. Therefore, she decided to stop the research in SMP Bintang Laut Surakarta because all of her aims had been reached.

Based on the research findings above, it showed that the use of ups-and-down game could improve the students' speaking skill. It could be seen from the students' achievement in the class whether in classroom activity, tasks or in tests done. From the pre-test 1, the mean score was 2.3. In post-test 1 of the first cycle, the students' mean score was 2.71 and in last post-test (post-test 2) conducted on the second cycle, the mean score was 3.39.

Table 1: The Result of Pre-Test, Post-Test 1, and Post-Test 2

No.	Indicators	Mean of Pre-Test	%	Mean of Post-Test 1	%	Mean of Post-Test 2	%
1	Vocabulary	2.2	53.44%	2.5	62.51%	3.27	81.57%
2	Grammar	2.35	58.13%	2.75	67.82%	3.4	85%
3	Intonation and Pronunciation	2.4	59.07%	2.9	71.57%	3.45	86.25%
4	Fluency	2.25	53.32%	2.6	64.69%	3.34	83.44%
5	Idea Organization	2.3	56.88%	2.8	69.69%	3.48	86.88%

From the table above, the researcher conclude that the students' speaking skill when Ups-and-Down Games was applied in speaking class was getting better than before. The class situations were more interesting to students. This happened when students were highly motivated and more confident in speaking.

The Ups-and-Down Games also create conducive situations when implemented in the teaching learning process. It can be seen in improvement of the class situation as follows: (1) The students got adequate opportunities to practice speaking because the teacher gave enough times to practice speaking. (2) All of the students got chances to practice in

the class. All of them used those chances to speak up during the speaking class. (3) All of them participated and paid attention during the speaking class. Ups-and-Down Games attract the students' interest to join the speaking lesson. They looked more relax and enthusiastically joined Ups-and-Down Games learning. (4) The students were more active and more cooperative during the speaking class. (5) UDG provides cooperative atmosphere and teamwork is needed in order to accomplish the goal. It can be supported by I KetutWahya, it can be concluded as follows:

- a. That learning strategies through technique ups-and-down game in English lessons was able to improve the communicative competence and academic achievement.
- b. Through the ups-and-down game students feel good about English lessons are indicated by the seriousness students follow the learning process, thus improving motivation to learn.
- c. With the ups-and-down game students can use the phrase fluently communicative, spontaneous and natural, self-confidence increased in an effort to improve students speaking skills.

From the discussion on findings, one can conclude that the use of ups-and-down game have positive effect on students' speaking skill in speaking class. The use of the game in activities is classified as easy, moderate, and difficult (Sachiyo Tanaka: 1995) in Faby (2010). Game equipment prepared by teachers should be varied according to the degrees of difficulty. Game equipment is prepared by the teacher to be selected by the

children in various activities will increase interest in students.

Moreover, ups-and-down game also gave positive impact in the teaching and learning process. The classroom situation began to be active. The students were noisy but very active in speaking class. Media ups and down game disclosed by Mulyati (2008) has several advantages such as: It can create a fun learning atmosphere (fun), more stimulate students' individual learning activities or groups, it can develop creativity, independence, students create mutual communication and can build student responsibility and discipline, students' cognitive structure obtained as a result of the process will be stable and meaningful learning relevant arranged so that will be maintained in memory. This will enable the student to remember what he had learned when students are faced with a problem. The knowledge contained in the memories (thoughts) can be recovered at any time. From the discussion above, it can be seen that ups-and-down game can give fun class activities for the students. The situation can stimulate the students' motivation to speak more and also don't worry to make mistakes. By such situation, the students' speaking ability to learn and master the materials given will improve and they can get the best result in learning speaking.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that ups-and-down game is very necessary in teaching speaking. The students' score of speaking was increased. The students' speaking difficulty in using grammar decreased. The students' speaking difficulty in pronouncing words decreased. The ups-and-down game improves the Students'

Speaking Skill. The improvements of Students' Speaking Skill includes: The students' vocabulary mastery increased. The students' fluency improved. The students' speaking scores were improved. Beside the improvements of students' speaking skill can be seen from the difference of mean score of speaking test before and after action research. Ups-and-down game also created the situations became more conducive after the action research had been conducted. In detail, the improvement is as follows: The students got adequate opportunities to practice speaking because the teacher gave enough times to practice speaking. All of the students got chances to practice in the class. All of them used those chances to speak up during the speaking class. All of them participated and paid attention during the speaking class. Ups-and-Down Games attract the students' interest to join the speaking lesson. They looked more relax and enthusiastically joined Ups-and-Down Games learning. The students were more active and more cooperative during the speaking class. Finally, UDG provides cooperative atmosphere and teamwork is needed in order to accomplish the goal.

In the end, the writer proposes some suggestions related to this research. First, for the students especially the students of class VII H SMP Bintang Laut Surakarta, they have to be active and motivated in learning English. They also should like speaking and brave to speak up in English.

Second, in the teaching and learning reading, the teacher should motivate the students to speak English more not just to answer the questions following the text without practice it. The teacher should give them a various method to motivate them in speaking and create

enjoyable classroom activities. The teachers can use games as a teaching technique for teaching speaking. The teachers can use games to make the condition of class are more alive and more interesting. The teachers can use games as reinforcement, review, and enrichment. . Ups-and-Down game can be used by the teacher as an alternative teaching method in speaking.

Third, for the institution of education in this case SMP Bintang Laut Surakarta has to give more attention for the students, especially in realizing the importance of speaking for the students. The institution has to be aware about the importance of giving some facilities which can support the teaching learning process.

Finally, it is hoped that the result of the study can be used as an additional reference for further research in improving students' speaking skill by using other techniques. Doing this research can also be a valuable experience for the research in the future.

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