A Paper

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STORYTELLING IN IMPROVING STUDENTS’ SPEAKING SKILL

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A. Introduction

In this modern era, people demand to have more than one language. Language as a tool for communication takes an important role in our daily activities. Without communication, we will be left behind. Communication in foreign language is a bridge to get information, knowledge, and culture. Indonesia as a developing country has realized that English as an international language is needed to be mastered by Indonesian people.

English is essential to be taught for the younger people, for this case; students from the beginner up to senior high school. In developing the students’ ability in mastering English, it cannot be separated from speaking mastery, because it can be a measurement of students, understand in English. It is supported by Richards and Rodgers (1986: 110) in their book, “Speech was regarded as the basis of language”.

Speaking is an activity used by someone to communicate with other. It takes place everywhere and has become part of our daily activities. When someone speaks, he or she interacts and uses the language to express his or her ideas, feeling, and thought. He or she also shares information to other through communication. Speaking is one of the productive skills and a two-way process between speaker and listener.

Up to now, most of students in senior high school still have difficulties in learning speaking. They always think speaking is hard work and not enjoyable. So that, when the teachers ask them for practicing speaking, they do not brave enough to speak up, especially in front of the class. Sometimes, they also feel anxious and less confident about their speaking, pronunciation, or grammar.

Speaking can be increased by doing storytelling in the classroom. Storytelling is the interactive activity of using words and actions to reveal the elements and images of a story while encouraging the listener’s imagination.

Storytelling involves a two-way interaction between a storyteller and one or more listeners. It has many benefits in the class, such as building
students’ self confidence, building students’ communication skills, building students’ vocabulary, and building students’ ability to manage their ideas.

In this case, the writer minimalizes the benefits into the speaking skills. Storytelling can improve students’ speaking skills because it enhances verbal and non-verbal expression of ideas. It improves voice projection, articulation of words, fluency with language and persuasive speech. It is also easy to implement in the class with some easy steps.

From the introduction explained above, it is useful to implement storytelling technique in improving students’ speaking skill. By implementing storytelling, there are many benefits for teacher and students, such as improving students’ vocabulary, improving students’ self-confidence, improving students’ ability to pick appropriate words, etc. Hopefully, through this writing, teachers who are concerned with students’ weakness in their speaking can recognize the effective way to improving students’ speaking skill.

B. Problem Questions

Based on the introduction explained above, the questions of problem are:
1. What is speaking?
2. What are the components of speaking?
3. What is storytelling?
4. What are the objectives of storytelling?
5. How storytelling implemented in speaking class?

C. Discussion

1. The Understanding of Speaking

Speaking skills is an ability to say or state something so that people can get the idea or message that we deliver to. This activity at least involves two persons in which they are share any kind of information they have. It seems that there is a gap among the people that
encourage them to do an information exchange. This activity will help them to get any kind of information they need.

Speaking is one of the skills that have to be mastered by students in learning English. It is important for students to know the definition first. Many experts define speaking in different ways.

In our daily life, it cannot be separated with communication. The easiest way to communicate is by speaking. Everybody can speak to others by direct or indirect, such as by phone, by video-calling, etc. It is supported by Thornbury (2005: 1) in his book, “Speaking is so much a part of daily life that we take it for granted.”

The speakers say words to the listener not only to express what in his/her mind, but also to express what he/she needs. Most people might spend of their everyday life in communicating with others. Moreover, speaking needs right grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Thornbury (2005: 1) explain further about it in his book, “…the ability to speak fluently followed naturally from the teaching of grammar and vocabulary, with a bit of pronunciation thrown it.”

Meanwhile, Harris (1969: 81) states, “Speaking is a complex skill requiring the simultaneous use of a number of different abilities which often develop at different rates”. From this definition, it is clear that speaking needs other ability that just speak.

As the understanding of speaking explained above, it can be concluded that it is important for everything people want to say is conveyed in an effective way because speaking is not only producing sounds, but also a process of achieving goals that involves transferring messages across. Therefore, speaking process should pay attention to want and how to say as well as to whom appropriately.

2. The Components of Speaking

In speaking process there are at least five components that generally recognize mentioned by Harris (1969: 81-82), they are:
a. Pronunciation (including the segmental features vowels and consonants and the stress and intonation patterns)
b. Grammar
c. Vocabulary
d. Fluency (the case and speed of the flow of speech)
e. Comprehension

3. The Understanding of Storytelling

Storytelling has been used as a means of communication since earliest times. Stories create magic and a sense of wonder at the world. Stories teach us about life, about ourselves, and about others. Storytelling is a unique way for students to develop an understanding, respect, and appreciation for other culture.

Wilson (2002: 5) explains that storytelling is an activity that can be defined very simply as that which is done by storytellers. As human being, people usually tell their story to other. They tell other about their feeling, opinion, ideas, or even anything happened in their lives. It is very simple to tell story to other, as simple as expressing what is on mind.

As people like to share their stories or experience, it is explained further on the book of Wilson (2002: 5), “Storytelling is thought of as something belonging to a pre-industrial or mythical past”. Stories have been shared in every culture as a means of entertainment, education, cultural preservation, and instilling moral values. Crucial elements of storytelling include plot, characters, and narrative point of view.

Lipman (1999: 11) explained that storytelling has been discovered as an art form and professional tool. It is a tool in various kind of work, as therapists, teachers, community organizers, lawyer, etc. From this explanation, it is clear that storytelling can be implemented not only in speaking class, but also in various kind of work. Teacher can take this as a creative way in the class to take ‘job’ as its storytelling’s topic.
As the understanding of storytelling explained above, it can be concluded that actually storytelling is an activity to share what is on mind. It has many benefits, such as for entertainment, education, cultural preservation, and instilling moral values. It is also has elements that have to be noticed, they are plot, characters, and narrative point of view.

4. **The Objective of Storytelling**

According to Ellis and Brewster (1991: 1-2), there are some objectives in doing storytelling technique in speaking class. The first objective is to motivate students to develop positive attitudes towards the foreign language and language learning. In every story, there will be a moral message can be taken, whether it is negative or positive. If it is negative, teacher must tell the students not to copy, but if it is positive, teacher must tell the students to do so.

The second objective is to exercise students’ imagination. Students can become personally involved in a story as they identified with the characters and try to interpret the narrative and illustration. They also can link fantasy and imagination to their real world. This imaginative experience helps to develop their own creative powers to make sense of their everyday life.

The third objective is to increase students’ ability to share social experience. Storytelling is not only enjoyable, but can help build up students’ confidence and encourage social and emotional development. It provokes a shared response of laughter, sadness, excitement, and anticipation.

The fourth objective is to allow teacher to introduce or revise new vocabulary and sentence structures. It can be done by exposing the students to language in varied, memorable and familiar contexts. It will be enrich their thinking and gradually enter their own speech.

The fifth objective is to improve students’ other skills in some aspects, such as listening, grammar, vocabulary, and concentrate. In
using storytelling technique for speaking class, the teacher must be fair in choosing the storyteller. The storyteller must be chosen in rotation, so every student will get their turn to be storyteller. There will be also listener who can improve listening, grammar, vocabulary, and concentrate through the storyteller.

From those five objectives of storytelling, it can be concluded that storytelling gives many benefits besides improving speaking skills. Other skills that can be improve through storytelling, such as listening, grammar, vocabulary, and concentrate. Storytelling also is a convenient activity to improve speaking skills because students can express their experience, opinion, ideas, hopes, etc.

5. The Implementation of Storytelling in Speaking Class

In implementing storytelling, it’s important to look in the procedures. The procedures of conducting storytelling for teaching speaking are as follows:

1. Giving a story to the students as example.
2. Finding some topics for storytelling.
3. Ordering students to make a story from the topics they have chosen.
4. Sharing some vocabulary or the story to the students that can give them inspiration.
5. Giving at least 15-20 minutes to prepare the storytelling.
6. Performing the storytelling by the student.
7. Discussing the story that has been told, it could be as question-answer activity.
8. Finding another student to perform.
D. Conclusion

From those five problem of questions discussed above, the writer concluded that storytelling is very useful for improving students’ speaking ability. It is useful to convey words and images. Storytelling is accessible to all ages and abilities. As a learning tool, storytelling can encourage students to explore their unique expressiveness and can heighten students’ ability to communicate thoughts and feelings in an articulate.

Storytelling has many benefits as it is mentioned on the objectives of storytelling. There are five objectives of implementing storytelling in speaking class, they are motivating students, linking students’ imagination, increasing students’ ability to shared social, leaning new vocabulary and sentence structure, and the last objective is improving students’ other skills.

Storytelling is an easy way to implemented in speaking class. To implement storytelling in speaking class, it is good to understand the procedures. There are eight easy way to follow as mentioned on the last discussion. Teacher may add some creative steps to make the class’ atmosphere convenient.

E. References


