

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GROUP DISCUSSION TECHNIQUE IN TEACHING LISTENING

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ABSTRACT

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis masalah yang dihadapi siswa ketika belajar mendengarkan dengan diskusi kelompok dan aspek keterampilan mendengarkan yang lebih baik dari keterampilan yang lain. Penelitian kualitatif ini dilakukan di kelas VIII F. Peneliti memperoleh data melalui kuesioner, pre-test dan post-test. Data dianalisa dengan cara menginterpretasi, menghitung nilai rata-rata dan membandingkan nilai siswa antara keterampilan macro dan micro di pre-test dan post-test. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat lima masalah utama yang dihadapi siswa yaitu, mengobrol saat berdiskusi, teman yang tidak berkontribusi, teman yang mendominasi, teman kelompok, tidak ingin menjadi ketua kelompok. Kesimpulannya, masalah dalam diskusi disebabkan oleh kondisi diskusi yang tidak mendukung dan keahlian makro bisa tampil lebih baik karena adanya *schemata* di proses *top-down*.

The aims of this research were to analyse the problems faced by the students when studying listening in group discussion and to analyse which particular aspect of listening skill performed better than the other skill. This qualitative research used class VIII F. The researcher gained the data from questionnaire, pre-test and post-test. The data were analysed by interpreting, calculating the average, and comparing of students' answer both macro and micro-skills in pre-test and post-test. The results showed that there were five major problems faced by students they were: chatting another topic while discussing, not-contributing member, dominant friend, group-mate, willingness to be a leader of discussion. In listening skills, the students performed better in macro-skills than in micro-skills. In conclusion, problems in discussion can be caused by the imperfect condition of discussion and macro-skills can perform better because of the existence of *schemata* in the *top-down* process.

Keywords. group discussion, listening, macro and micro-skills

INTRODUCTION

English is one of the languages in the world that is used for international communication. However, in Indonesia, English is taught in schools and it is not the main medium of communication. Communication comes out not only through speaking rather it can be mediated through listening. Listening is the first skill to acquire language. A person is not able to recognize how the words are pronounced if he/she never listens how to say them. According to Hornby (1985:523) as cited in Putra (2012:8), hearing is about remembering the sound that is sent from the source of sound. Gebhard (2000:144) describes that listening process has two steps, such as bottom-up and top-down. Bottom-up procedure is deciphering meaning process where listener receives something through sounds, words, and grammar. Top-down procedure is involving schemata to comprehend the meaning.

Listening activity has two skills that cannot be separated; they are macro and micro-skills of listening. Macro-skills are big skills in listening that are easy to understand. Macro-skills are about understanding of what the speaker said (Antonjjansen, 2012). Micro-skills have meaning small parts of listening. They are more complicated to understand because they are not only understanding what people said, but also they have to understand the choice of vocabulary, deeper meaning, intention of delivering message, attitude and many more (Antonjjansen, 2012).

Brown (2007) provides simple list of macro and micro-skills for conversational listening which has revised Richard's list of aural taxonomy. The macro-skills

concern with discourse level of organization, while micro-skills concern with sentence level.

In this research, besides focusing on listening, the researcher also focused on group discussion. Group discussion is meeting of group of people talk informally and based on topic. In discussion the members or participants will activate their listening and speaking skills. Group discussions, as usually practiced, are a middle-of-the-road teaching technique for instructors wanting moderate levels of student participation (Zander, 1979).

Discussion, somehow, might be unpredictable. Through discussion which provides wide chance to explore and discover new things, it really needs teacher who function as an instructor. Teacher can overcome problem that usually comes in group discussion, such as students who are shy and dominant. Immerwahr (2011) states dominant students can make problem for the other members. Problems can also appear from inappropriate material. If the material chosen is inappropriate for the students, the students are not interested to (Immerwahr, 2011).

Based on the explanation above, the researcher analysed problems faced by the students of second grade of SMP Negeri 3 Terbaggi Besar when studying listening in group discussion, and which particular aspect of listening skill performed better than the other skill.

METHODS

This research implemented descriptive qualitative. Descriptive research is a research method which involves observation and description of the subjects'

behaviour without any interference in any way. The researcher used one class at the second year of SMP Negeri 3 Terbanggi Besar at even semester in academic year 2013/2014. The research was conducted in class VIII F as the subject because they had problem in listening section.

Before applying the procedures of the research, the researcher did some planning, they were: determining the subject of the research, preparing the materials, and making lesson plan. The first day of research, the researcher administered try-out test in class VIII C in order to know the quality of the test. The test consisted of 50 questions with four options of answers (a, b, c, and d), time allocation was 80 minutes to answer all the questions. In collecting data the researcher did administering the pre-test, post-test, and giving questionnaire. The pre-test was administered in class VIII F before being taught in group discussion. The post-test was administered in class VIII F after the researcher, as the teacher, giving treatment of listening by implementing group discussion to the students. The last section was giving questionnaire to the students. It was in the closing section of research.

The instruments of this research have content and construct validity. Content validity is needed that covers all points of the question of the test. Meanwhile, construct validity means the test concerned with the connection between the instrument and theory of the language that was going to be assessed. Construct validity was needed for assessment tool which had some indicators in assessing one aspect or construct. Reliability of the test used split half technique to calculate the reliability of the test, while to assess the reliability of the test, the researcher used coefficient of the reliability between odd and even group by using Spearman

Brown Formula. Then, the researcher used Spearman Brown's Prophecy Formula to find out correlation of coefficient of the full items.

The next step after collecting the data was analysing them. The researcher collected and interpreted the data from questionnaire. Then, the researcher analysed the data from both the pre-test and the-post test by tabulating, measuring the average, comparing, and describing the data. The last step was used triangulation method to make conclusion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

To get the data the researcher administered pre-test, post-test, and questionnaire. The pre-test was needed to know basic comprehension of the students in listening section before conducting treatment. The post-test was needed to know students' comprehension in listening section after conducting treatment. Questionnaire was needed to get the data about students' problems when studying listening through group discussion.

Students' Responds of the Questionnaire

Based on the students' respond of questionnaire, students' problems can be divided into five main problems. First problem is the students who were dominant in group. Second problem was friend who did not give any contribution. Third problem was group-mate. Fourth problem with willingness to be a leader of discussion, and the last, chatting another topic while discussing.

The following table shows the students' respond of questionnaire:

| No. | Statement | Respond | |
|-----|---|---------|----|
| | | Yes | No |
| 1. | I feel unhappy to ask to my friends in my group discussion | 6 | 25 |
| 2. | I feel unhappy to speak to my friends in my group discussion | 8 | 23 |
| 3. | I always feel happy to ask to my friend in group discussion | 12 | 19 |
| 4. | I always feel happy to speak to my friend in group discussion | 8 | 23 |
| 5. | I don't like if one of my friends dominate the discussion | 21 | 10 |
| 6. | I don't like if one of my friends doesn't give any contribution in discussion | 24 | 7 |
| 7. | I feel inconvenient with my friends in group discussion | 19 | 12 |
| 8. | I don't like doing a task by group discussion | 3 | 28 |
| 9. | I always want to be a leader in group discussion | 2 | 29 |
| 10. | I don't want to be a leader in group discussion | 22 | 9 |
| 11. | I always being passive member and depend on my smart friend to finish my work | 5 | 26 |
| 12. | I will not defend my argument if my friends don't like it | 11 | 20 |
| 13. | I usually talk about another topic to my friend while discussing | 15 | 16 |

From the data above there were five main problems faced by the students. First problem, students did chatting while discussing. It could be caused by selecting the material. Inappropriate material can cause problem for students if it is too difficult or too boring. The students consider that chatting can reduce their boredom of the material. In line with Immerwahr (2011) who says that inappropriate material makes the students not interested in.

Second was problem with not-contributing member. The neglect from friends can affect students' contribution in discussion. This reason will not support theory from Zander (1979) who states that the teacher expects that there is students' participation in group discussion. Because she/he is unhappy or unwilling to ask and to speak, she/he will be considered by her/his friends as member who just wants to get score without working and count on the other group-mates. In other

side, she/he can act like that because being neglected by her/his group-mate. In the end, she/he will be passive and lazy member.

Third is the problem with dominant student. Even though smart students needed to finish the task soon, they will become problems to the other members if they pretend to be smart, too selfish, and too bossy. It can be concluded that that student dominates or monopolizes the discussion. Immerwahr (2011) also states that dominant students can be a problem for the rest of member.

Fourth, being neglected and not-contributing-member also become one of the reasons why some students feel inconvenient with their group-mate in discussion. In some condition, group-mate is arranged by the teacher, thus, there will be mixture among male and female students. It also caused problem for some students because they will feel “click” if their group-mate is the same gender as them, e.g. all males group or all females group. In line with Reineke (2014) who states that sometimes students will consider the selection of group is based on gender and will feel comfortable to communicate with.

Fifth is unwilling to be a leader of discussion. The leader has big responsibilities, most students do not want to be the leader in group. They consider that it will be difficult to be leader and think if they are not capable enough to be the leader. Another reason comes up if becoming a leader has big possibility to finish the task alone because sometimes the members will hand-over the responsibility to the leader.

The major problems above can affect listening section. Group discussion is basically sharing with group-mates, ideas and role. Listening section, however,

will be distracted and do not optimally run if the condition of group is not good. Likewise, the student cannot focus on the task because of student's inconvenient with the group.

Macro and Micro-Skills

Results of macro and micro-skills were gained from pre-test and post-test. After that, the researcher counted the average score of macro and micro-skills in each tests. Then, the researcher compared between both skills in each tests. Here are the table of comparison:

| LISTENING SKILL | TYPE OF TEST | |
|-----------------|--------------|-----------|
| | PRE-TEST | POST-TEST |
| MICRO-SKILLS | 8.4688 | 10.4839 |
| MACRO-SKILLS | 10.75 | 14.3226 |
| GAIN | 2.2812 | 3.8387 |

The table shows that there was difference between macro and micro-skills in each test. In pre-test, macro-skills were performed better than micro-skills which the gain was 2.2812. In post-test, the gain was 3.8387 where macro skills were also better than micro-skills.

According to the data of the result starting from pre-test until post-test, one of the listening aspects performed better was macro-skills than micro-skills. Macro-skills mean big portion of listening aspects which require the students to understand based on the discourse level of the text. It is in line with Brown (2007) who considers the macro-skills concern with discourse level. Antonjjensen (2012)

states that macro-skills are easy to understand because those only understanding what the speaker said. On the other hand, micro-skills mean small parts of listening. Antonjensen (2012) states that those are quite complicated to understand because the listener has to understand not only what people said, but also choice of vocabulary, deeper meaning, etc. Brown (2007) states that micro-skills concern with sentence level. Therefore macro-skills performed better than micro-skills.

The result can also be explained from the process of listening point of view. Gebhard (2000:144) states that there are two listening process, such as top-down and bottom-up process. In top-down process the listener focuses on the big portion of the information or has relation to macro-skills. In this process also, the listener involves schemata to comprehend the meaning of information. Schemata means the way of remembering knowledge stored in long-term memory in brain.

Schemata, or usually called as background knowledge, give significant contribution in comprehending the material which make the material easier to be understood. The more schemata build in brain, the more comprehension of material (Ya-Jun, 2007). When the listener hears some information the listener does not directly get the meaning of it, the listener uses background knowledge to comprehend it; type of information, who the speaker is, where the place is, etc. Even before the information is coming to the listeners, they activate the background knowledge about what they experienced.

Linking back to the process of listening which is top-down process schemata can make macro-skills acquisition easier. Top-down process relies on the usage of

schemata that focus on processing information into main idea of the information. Meanwhile, another process of listening, bottom-up, focus on the processing of information which identifies the grammatical structure, sound, phrases, etc. Therefore, the result showed that macro-skills performed better than micro-skill. Those affected by the existence of schemata or background knowledge which also affected the process of listening.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of this research, the researcher draws the conclusion as follows:

1. There are five main problems faced by the students, first the students have problem with learning material so that they prefer to chat another topic while discussing, second, problem with friend who does not give any contribution, third, problem with dominant friend, fourth, problem with group-mate, and the last problem with willingness to be a leader of discussion. The problems faced by the students were caused by the imperfect condition of group discussion.
2. The students have better understanding on macro-skills than micro-skills in listening. Based on the findings and discussion of this research, macro-skills were performed better than micro-skills, both in pre-test and post-test. Macro-skills could be performed better because easy to understand and the existence of schemata which affects the top-down process of listening. Therefore, students' comprehension was better in macro-skills than micro-skills.

Based on the conclusions above, the researcher proposes some suggestions:

1. Before teaching listening, it is better for the teacher to wake students' consciousness and activate students' schemata. It is an obligatory for the teacher to compose appropriate material for the students, avoid too easy, too boring, and too difficult material.
2. The teacher should develop more practice in micro-skills. The teacher should give more exercise in micro-skills. In making the test or material the teacher should include listening aspects, macro and micro-skills, proportionally.
3. The teacher has to be more aware towards students' problems in group discussion. The teacher should give strict rule to avoid dominant students and passive students in group. The teacher should also give good basic explanation toward the aim of discussion.
4. It is possible for the next researcher to do deep analysis and focus on students' activity in group discussion or focus on particular listening aspect, either macro-skills or micro-skills.

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