

IMPROVING FOURTH GRADERS STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY THROUGH MEANING-USE-FORM FRAMEWORK

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Abstrak. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk 1) mengetahui peningkatan kemampuan berbicara siswa, dan 2) mengetahui perilaku siswa dalam kegiatan belajar-mengajar. Desain penelitian yang digunakan adalah kuantitatif-kualitatif. Subjek penelitian ini adalah 36 siswa kelas empat di SDIT Bustanul 'Ulum Terbanggi Besar. Selain itu, tes berbicara dan lembar observasi digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa metode ini dapat meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa dan mendorong siswa untuk menjadi siswa yang aktif selama kegiatan belajar-mengajar berlangsung. Pembelajaran menggunakan metode ini disarankan bagi para guru karena memfasilitasi siswa untuk meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara mereka.

Abstract. The aims of this study were 1) to find out the difference of students' speaking ability after they are taught through MUF Framework, 2) to investigate the students' engagement in the teaching learning activity of MUF Framework. The design was quantitative-qualitative research. The subjects of this research were 36 students of the fourth grade of SDIT Bustanul 'Ulum Terbanggi Besar. Speaking tests were administered and observation sheets were filled to collect the data. The results show that MUF Framework significantly improves students' speaking ability and the students were active during the teaching learning activity through MUF Framework. This indicates that MUF Framework facilitates students to improve their speaking ability.

Keywords: MUF Framework, speaking ability.

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a way to express, communicate, or show opinions, feelings, ideas by talking, and it transfers the information of what the speaker wants.

According to Jones (1917), in speaking we tend to be getting something done, exploring ideas, working out some aspects of the world, or simply being together. Meanwhile, Littlewood (1981) says that speaking is communicating effectively to a partner and producing certain language forms in an acceptable way. Penny Ur (1991) states that speaking seems to be the most important goal of learning a foreign or second language is to gain the ability to communicate using the target language.

The students should be made aware that the language they are studying is a tool of communication. Students do not truly realize that foreign or second language is even spoken and exist outside the classroom. The communication is effective if the speakers can express themselves clearly, fluently, and accurately. Therefore, learning a language is learning how to speak the language.

From all methods used, the grammar-translation-method is one method used in teaching English as the second language in Indonesia. Grammar-translation method, which is categorized as the “traditional method” does not involve students’ opportunities as the active learners to use language that they have learnt. As the consequence, they become passive learners and reluctant to speak English. Grammar-translation

method also put emphasis on the grammar translation and grammar accuracy without providing contextual and meaningful learning methods. That traditional method focuses on grammatical rules as the basis for translating from the foreign to the native language, memorizing vocabulary, translating the texts, and doing written exercises (Brown, 2007).

Considering the fact the students need something contextual and meaningful in their language learning which cannot be achieved by learning through the grammar-translation method, many researchers have developed several methods to solve the problem served above. One of the alternative methods in teaching English is Meaning, Use and Form (MUF) Framework.

METHODS

The design was quantitative-qualitative research. The subject was 36fourth grade students of elementary school. The instruments were speaking test, and observation sheet. In administering the treatments, three meetings were implemented in implementing the MUF Framework.

A valid instrument will have a high validity. Test validity is defined as the degree to which a test measures what it claims to be measuring (Brown, 1990: 101). The researcher use content and construct related validity.

A test must produce consistent result whenever it is administered again. It is the concept of reliability. According to Hatch &, Farhady

1982: p.244, reliability is the extent to which a test produces consistent results when is administered under similar conditions. The data gained in the research is using quantitative and qualitative description. Before scoring the students' speaking ability, it was important to make sure that both raters used the same criteria of scoring; Jacobs et al (1981), and the research used *Rank-order Correlation* to measure the reliability of the scoring.

RESULTS

After the implementation of MUF Framework, there is a significant improvement of students' speaking skill. This finding is proven by the average score of post-test which is higher than pre-test score. Each aspect of speaking skill also improved after the implementation of MUF Framework that can be seen in table 1. and 2.

Table 1. Students' Speaking Achievement in the Pre-test and the Post-test

No.	Students' score	Pre-test		Average for Pre-test	Students' score	Post-test		Average for Post-test
		Freq.	%			Freq.	%	
1.	0 – 65	34	94.44 %	61.67	0 – 65	4	11.11 %	72.71
2.	66 – 70	2	5.56 %		66 – 70	11	30.56 %	
3.	71 – 75	0	00.00 %		71 – 75	13	36.11 %	
4.	76 – 80	0	00.00 %		76 – 80	8	22.22 %	
5.	81 – 85	0	00.00 %		81 – 85	0	00.00 %	
Total		36	100.00 %		Total	36	100.00 %	

From Table 1, it can be seen that the average score of the students' post-test is higher than the pre-test. The maximum score that students get after following the Framework is higher than before following the Framework, although the minimum score obtained by the students before and after following the Framework is scored nearly the same. This proven

that the score of the post-test after following the Framework shows improvement.

In addition, the speaking aspects were also analyzed to find out which speaking aspect improved the most. In analyzing the speaking aspect, the data were analyzed using Ms. Excel.

Table 2. The Students' Score for Each Speaking Aspect

No.	Component	Pre-Test	Post-Test	Improvement
1	Fluency	15.97	17.36	1.39
2	Pronunciation	15.56	19.17	3.61
3	Grammar	15.14	18.82	3.68
4	Vocabulary	15.00	17.36	2.36

From Table 2 can be seen that the average of achievement of students' speaking skill for each aspect after following the Framework is higher

than before. In addition, the average of speaking skill aspects will be described as follows. Thus, the answer of the first research question

is answered, and the component of speaking which improves significantly is grammar, pronunciation, followed by

vocabulary, while the least improve component is fluency.

Table 3. The Number of Percentage of the Students' Level of Engagement in the Teaching Learning Activity of MUF Framework

No.	Level of Engagement	Number of the Students	Percentage
1.	Actively Engaged	32 students	88.89 %
2.	Passively Engaged	2 students	5.56 %
3.	Challenging Behavior	2 students	5.56 %
Total		36 students	100.00 %

As seen on the table, from the total sample of 36 students, it is found that there are 32 students actively engaged in the classroom, 2 students passively engaged in the classroom, and 2 students with challenging behavior in the classroom. From the statistical analysis, it can be seen that students actively engaged in the classroom dominate the sample.

DISCUSSIONS

The finding of this research shows that there is a statistically significant improvement of students' speaking skill also each aspect of it after the implementation of MUF Framework. This means that MUF Framework can be a choice of the framework to be implemented beside scientific approach which was proposed by the education ministry for 2013 curriculum, that it is also able to increase students' English proficiency; in this case, especially students' speaking capability. An improvement of 4.96 points on Z_{count} which is higher than Z_{table} on Wilcoxon testing proves that there is a significant progress of students' speaking ability after the implementation of MUF Framework

at the fourth grade students of elementary school.

This finding is similar to the finding of a study done by Hermyati (2014). The findings of her research show that the use of M-U-F framework was effective to improve students' scores in speaking. The two means were obvious significantly different, as also proved by the result of the Independent t-test. Furthermore, the result of the Dependent t-test and the effect size test strengthened the conclusion that the treatments worked for improving students' achievement in speaking. Thus, it can be stated that the null hypothesis was rejected. From the questionnaire, most of students show their interest to the way the researcher teaches them. They like learning by using the new method than the previous method that their teacher is used.

Another research comes from Fatallah (2012), the result of the t test of his research showed that the experimental group A's post test score increase after the teacher give a treatment which used MUF framework in teaching speaking then compared with the students A's post score of control group. It means that

the treatment that was given have significant effect when using Meaning, Use and Form in speaking ability of the seventh grade students in MTs As – Sholihin Sugerkidul Jelbuk Jember in the Academic Year of 2012/2013.

Those two previous researches confirmed this research that MUF Framework can be used in school to improve students' speaking capability. Speaking demands students to be well in four language features namely fluency, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. As MUF Framework has several procedures in teaching, it might help the students to mastering all four components in speaking. MUF Framework can summarize what aspects of speaking skill can be improved through it.

The researcher also finds other researches related to the implementation of MUF Framework and other skills in English. MUF Framework itself has been examined not only speaking skill but also the writing skill. It was Amida (2014) proving that the MUF Framework improve students' writing ability of X-6 students of SMAN GedogKubus of the Academic Year 2014/2015. There were 1 cycle of the research; the cycle improved from 69.87% to 75.12%. Thus, it can be concluded that the implementation of MUF Framework can lead the students to be more proficient in English.

The answer of the first research question can be further described by comparing four components in speaking and the improvement of each component of it. The finding shows grammar is a speaking

component which gets the highest improvement; 3.68 points. Pronunciation follows behind with 3.61 points, followed by vocabulary with 2.31 points, while fluency gets the lowest improvement which is 1.73 points. Grammar and pronunciation only differ 0.07 points that it both increased most.

As we can see in the table, students' vocabulary in pre-test achieved the lowest score (15.00). According to the scoring criteria, 15 means "speaker has inadequate speaking vocabulary to express anything but the most elementary needs", and the students' average score is exactly on it, so it means that students' vocabulary is acceptable that they are still in elementary level.

Meanwhile, the other three components are getting more than 15 points (15.14 – 15.97). Consistent with the scoring criteria, the 20 points mean that speaker has sufficient speaking vocabulary, speaker can handle elementary construction quite accurately, the accent of the speaker is intelligible though often faulty, and the speech is frequently hesitant. However, students' speaking performances are still well and understandable for elementary grade students.

Despite having the second lowest achievement in pre-test, grammar managed to score the highest in the post-test. The improvement of grammar aspect could reach approximately two to three times bigger than the other three components.

This finding is similar to what Xenia (2014) found out. She used jumbled-

sentence game to improve students' ability in grammar of SMA Santo Mikael Sleman –which was also one of the steps used in MUF Framework- and she finds out that this game helped the students to write simple sentences correctly since those motivated the students to learn and increased the students' interest. As a result, they were willing to think and learn the language in enjoyable learning and more than half of the students improved their ability to construct simple sentences. It means that the jumbled-sentence game also help students in improving their grammar as it is increased in the implementation of MUF Framework where grammar is one of the aspects improved in it.

The statistical difference of students' speaking ability after the students are taught through MUF Framework is affected by three steps done in MUF Framework. In meaning step, the students are listening to teacher's story and they will list new vocabularies they found in the story. After that, they will be asked to pronounce the new vocabularies they found in the story together. After pronouncing words, students will be asked to play pair games of introduction; they will be asked to introduce themselves to their pair. It comes to use step, after playing the pair games, students will again asked to play plays of introduction to with their classmates. At the end, in form step, they will pair the questions and the answers prepared before to learn the form of the language.

All the steps done in the Framework implemented to the students help them to improve their speaking

ability. Students are asked to follow all steps done by the researcher; listen to teacher's story, list the new vocabularies, pronounce the vocabularies, play game through plays, play plays with classmates, and play game of connecting questions and answers jumbled before. Students are improving their aspects of speaking through the steps; first, students need to be introduced a new language in meaningful contexts to help them understand the meaning of the language they are learning. Meaning can be created through situations that are related to their life. After that, students need clear objectives when learning so that they know the reasons of using the language. In this step teachers have to help students mastering English vocabularies. Teachers also have to assist students to learn how the words are pronounced through meaningful activities. In order to get the expected output, repetition of activities is essential, though it has to be administered in interesting ways, not boring ones. Then, students are exposed to English language through the situations manipulated by the teacher, and students also need opportunities to use English to communicate with others (their classmates). They may use the language to play or to act in plays. Students will subconsciously notice forms of language (grammar). They tend to use language naturally in accordance with their need. Therefore, teachers have responsibilities to attract students' attention to language forms during English lesson. This does not mean that children are taught grammar explicitly. Instead, teachers make children aware of accurate language

use both orally and written. In accordance with building students' awareness of accurate language use, students need certain conditions to make them understand meanings of English vocabularies and to use the language in natural contexts. If teachers do not do as suggested—for instance, introducing students to language forms without meaningful contexts; the output will not meet teachers' expectation. In other words, students notice the forms before they produce the language. To make it worse, they will not be motivated to use English.

The result shows that the students' score after the implementation of MUF Framework is statistically different with the students' score before the implementation. Comparing with four aspects the researcher put, it is found that each step in MUF Framework helps the students in improving their speaking proficiency.

From the findings and the discussion of the first research question, the researcher could conclude that the process of learning speaking with the implementation of MUF Framework is able to give statistical difference of students' speaking ability.

The finding of the research based on the second research question is seen from the different levels of engagement of the students in the teaching learning activity of MUF Framework. According to the theory, the concept of students' engagement typically arises when educators discuss or prioritize educational strategies and teaching techniques that address the developmental, intellectual, emotional, behavioral,

physical, and social factors that either enhance or undermine learning for students. It should be noted that educators may hold different views on student engagement, and it may be defined or interpreted differently from place to place. For example, in one school observable behaviors such as attending class, listening attentively, participating in discussions, turning in work on time, and following rules and directions may be perceived as forms of "engagement," while in another school the concept of "engagement" may be largely understood in terms of internal states such as enthusiasm, curiosity, optimism, motivation, or interest.

In this research, the researcher chose actively engaged, passively engaged, and challenging behavior which is categorized from what students do in each step implemented in the classroom.

In her research in SDIT Bustanul 'Ulum Terbanggi Besar, the researcher could find all the three levels of engagement of the students. The actively engaged level seems to be a category which appear most (88.89%), followed by passively engaged (5.56%), and challenging behavior (5.56%). Generally speaking, from the Framework implemented, the researcher finds that there are thirty students of actively engaged students, two students of the passively engaged students, and two students with the challenging behavior.

However, the researcher also divided the levels based on the three steps of MUF Framework and also the specific steps of it. On meaning step,

there are thirty three students (91.67%) categorized as the actively engaged students. On use step, there are two students (5.56%) categorized as the passively engaged students. Last, on form step, there is one student (2.78%) categorized as the student with challenging behavior.

Specifically look at the steps in meaning, use, and form, the researcher also find out the levels of engagement of the students. On meaning step, there are four specific steps; students listen to teacher's story has thirty six (100%) actively engaged students with zero (0%) passively engaged student and zero (0%) student with challenging behavior, students lists the new vocabularies found in the story has thirty two (88.89%) actively engaged students with two (5.56%) passively engaged student and two (5.56%) student with challenging behavior, students pronounce the lists of the vocabularies has thirty four (94.44%) actively engaged students with one (2.78%) passively engaged student and one (2.78%) student with challenging behavior, and students play pair games through play has thirty two (88.89%) actively engaged students with three (8.33%) passively engaged student and one (2.78%) student with challenging behavior. On use step, there is a step of students play the plays of introduction with their classmates that show there are thirty two (88.89%) actively engaged students with two (2.78%) passively engaged student and two (2.78%) student with challenging behavior. Last, on form step, where students pair the questions with the correct answers, show that there are twenty nine (80.56%) actively engaged students

with five (5.56%) passively engaged student and two (2.78%) student with challenging behavior.

In her research, the researcher puts her attention in implementing the framework she designed adapted from the original one. There are several steps done in the framework; when telling the story, the researcher use a doll to get students' attention; in listing the new vocabularies found in the story, the researcher play games that it will eager students to be brave to mention the new vocabularies they found in the story; in pronouncing the lists of new vocabularies, the researcher get the students know the pronunciation by following the researcher's pronunciation together; in playing pair games, the researcher gives feedback to the students; in playing plays of introduction, the researcher also play a fair game to choose those will present in front of the class; and last in pairing the questions with the correct answer, the jumbled one, the researcher divided the classroom into two groups which then competing in answering the questions.

The students seem very actively engaged in listening to the story the researcher are telling, and start to lose their engagement when they have to do the steps by themselves; playing plays. Since the research is also done nearly to rest time, the students known as the "trouble maker students" are completely lose their concentration and not following the rest of the research. There are also students with a good personality affected by those who are not which then in some steps of the research lose their concentration and then become non-engaged.

Coming to the first step, meaning, there were four steps done. First, when listening to teacher's story, all students are leveled as the actively engaged students that the researcher used doll in telling the story to attract students' attention. Students were attracted to the story since the researcher told the story in an attractive way and using doll to support her. In listing the new vocabularies found in the story, the researcher found two passively engaged students, and two challenging behavior students. The students were asked to tell the new vocabularies they found in the story by raising their hand and listing the vocabulary that the passively engaged and challenging behavior students were free to do what they want. Some were blanking, and some were hitting desks and disturbing their actively engaged students. Next, dealing with pronouncing the vocabularies, there was one student passively engaged, and one student was leveled as the challenging behavior student. Students were pronouncing the new vocabularies together that the researcher found almost all students followed this activity. When playing pair game through plays, there were three students leveled as the passively engaged students, and one challenging behavior student. The researcher asked the students to practice the dialogue the students made with their friend; pairing. Almost all students can follow the instruction, but three of them were following only for formality, not get into the plays they should play. One of them was also be the troublemaker didn't follow the instruction.

On the next step, use, there is a step of students play the plays of introduction with their classmates that show there were two passively engaged students, and two challenging behavior students. The students were asked to act themselves as strangers that had to introduce themselves in front of the class and done in dialogue. Almost all students can do what the researcher told them to do, the two passively engaged students seemed lazy to follow the instruction, and the two challenging behavior students refused to do the instruction.

Last, on form step, where students pair the questions with the correct answers, shows that there were twenty nine actively engaged students with five passively engaged students and two students with challenging behavior. The researcher play jumbled questions and answers with the students that the students had to pick line to the most right answer for each questions. The researcher attracted students' attention to answer by doing game; the class was divided into two, then the researcher did 123 'dor! game' where students had to say 'dor' every calculation of three, quick counting game. Those who failed the game had to answer the questions prepared by the researcher before. All students seemed active in this last step, but some were not since the activity is done when the time of resting came that the 'troublemaker' students didn't follow the instruction and kept yelling that the time for resting came, and some were focusing their own 'world'.

Understanding the finding of this research, the researcher can conclude

that most students are actively engaged in the teaching learning activity of MUF Framework. The implementation of MUF Framework will lead students to be actively engaged in the classroom in order to improve students' speaking ability. For those who are still passively engaged or having challenging behavior, teacher can creatively increase their ability in teaching to improve students to be an actively engaged one.

CONCLUSIONS

After conducting the research at the fourth grade at SDIT Bustanul 'Ulum Terbanggi Besar and analyzing the data gained, the students' speaking ability improves. In relation to the research findings and discussion, it could be concluded as follows:

The implementation of MUF Framework with the right steps was successfully improved students' English skills particularly speaking skill. In some researches mentioned, the implementation of MUF Framework has also successfully engaged students' satisfactory achievement on listening skill, reading comprehension, and writing capability.

Can be seen from the different result of students' speaking achievement, students' engagement which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education is believed to have significant effect on English language learning. The level of engagement of the students is affecting their behavior in teaching learning activity. It proves that what makes successful language learners

is not only from external factors, like methods and media, but also from internal factors; one of these is their engagement in the teaching learning activity.

SUGGESTIONS

In reference to the conclusion above, the researcher recommends some suggestions as follow:

1. Teaching English as a foreign language is a challenging, yet rewarding career choice, especially in teaching young learners. As an English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher, teacher must learn to constantly adapt to the students' needs. A good ESL teacher must be able to recognize these common problems, and work to find solutions. Since the characteristics of young learners are unpredictable, the teachers have to be able to prepare themselves well in facing the students. Understanding that the engagement of the students to a framework is different depending on the students' characteristics which are unpredictable, the teachers have to be able to conduct the classroom very well.
2. Since the number of the subjects of this research is very small, there should be conducted further research concerning in the implementation of MUF Framework, and speaking skill with larger number of samples. Further research regarding other skills in English is also needed since there are chances of

improving students' capability not only in speaking skills.

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