Application of Readers Theatre Strategy and School Literacy Movement to Improve Speaking Skills

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Abstract— **Retelling fiction in Indonesian language lessons is one of the topics which grade 7 students' do not like very much. The students' often feel unconfident, reluctant, unenthusiastic when they have retelling activities. This condition affects the teaching and learning process and their learning achievement. This research aims to improve Bahasa Indonesia teaching quality in terms of the process and achievement by applying the Readers Theatre Strategy and the School Literacy Movement. This research is classroom action research. The student speaking skill improves after the application of the Readers Theatre Strategy and the School Literacy Movement in three cycles. The success indicator of the teaching process is the students' positive attitude toward retelling activities when they attend Bahasa Indonesian lessons. The indicator of student learning achievement is the increase in the students' average score, which reached 75 or exceeding the minimum mastery level. The result of this study shows that there has been an improvement in the students' retelling skill, attitude toward retelling activities, and speaking skill. It can be concluded that the Readers Theatre Strategy and the School Literacy Movement can be used for improving students' storytelling skill.**

Keywords: *Readers Theatre, school literacy movement, story telling*

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the challenges faced by Indonesian language teachers at junior high school is the teaching of speaking skill especially storytelling. Speaking skill is defined as oral communication to other people. Through speaking, one is able to express idea, suggestion, criticism, response, rebuttal, feeling, and information. Speaking is an act of producing language to communicate and it is a basic skill in language learning (Suharyanti, 2011).

The teaching of speaking is aimed to improve students' speaking skills, build courage and confidence, and teach manners. In the level of junior high school, the teaching of speaking covers storytelling, role play, speech, discussion, storytelling through media, interview, debate, and master of ceremony.

Based on experience, it is more difficult to teach speaking than writing. The researcher finds that the grade VII students' of State Junior High School 3 Panggang are not enthusiastic during the teaching of storytelling. The

observations are made by teachers to look for obstacles related to learning storytelling skills. The obstacles include low enthusiasm, lack of motivation, low confidence, laziness, sense of inferiority, misunderstanding on the methods of storytelling, and low score. The teacher obtains the data from pre-cycle actions that have been taken before the research. Pre-cycle research uses a questionnaire and an observation sheet of speaking skills.

The obstacles need to be solved so that the aims of teaching can be achieved. In this study, the teacher targets that students are able to increase self-confidence, to have high motivation, to be enthusiastic, active, and courageous, to be able to tell stories, concentrate, appreciate other groups that perform, to be able to improvise, master storytelling competencies, enjoy learning, broad-minded, and achieve high scores.

This study focuses on the skill of storytelling. Storytelling learning that is learned in class VII is listed in *Permendikbud* (Minister of Education and Culture Regulations) Number 37 of 2018 on basic competence 4.3 which is *to retell the contents of narrative texts (fantasy stories) that are listened and read orally, written, and visually.* It is expected that the students are able to have more knowledge on fantasy stories, explore the ability to tell stories, train courage, improve confidence, practice fluency, and increase vocabulary mastery.

Readers Theatre and School Literacy Movement are chosen to improve the quality of speaking skill teaching for grade VII students. Readers Theater is a form of drama presentation done in groups. It is usually in the form of oral reading and dramatic interpretation of literary work (fables, short stories, tales, and many others). Each group consists of 2 to 12 students who perform in front of audience in the classroom (Donoghue, 2009).

School Literacy Movement as thorough efforts to create learning organization at school in which the members are literate (Retnaningdyah et al., 2016). The School Literacy Movement aims to foster student character to become lifelong learners, increase the capacity of citizens and the school environment for literacy, make schools a fun and child-friendly learning park, and maintain the sustainability

of learning by presenting a variety of reading books and accommodating various reading strategies.

The questions of the research are: (1) Are the implemented strategies of readers theatre and School Literacy Movement able to improve the teaching of storytelling to grade VII students of State Junior High School 3 Panggang Gunungkidul?, (2) Are the implemented strategies of readers theatre and School Literacy Movement able to improve the storytelling skills of grade VII students of State Junior High School 3 Panggang Gunungkidul?

This is an action research type of study. It aims to improve the teaching quality for grade VII students of State Junior High School 3 Panggang Gunungkidul. It is expected that the study can broaden the teachers and the students' knowledge on storytelling skills, implement readers theatre strategy in teaching and learning, improve reading interest, better the writing skills, train listening concentration, and improve speaking skills.

Fundamentally, the speaking skills of a child develop through time; it is started from the ability to listen and then continued to the ability to speak. Tarigan (2015) proposes the concept of speaking, i.e. one's ability to pronounce articulating sounds, or words used to express, state, and deliver opinion, idea and feeling. In this case, speaking is related to a system of signs that can be heard and seen.

The ability to speak is one the special abilities of human. Akhadiah (1988) explains that speaking is a complex skill in language mastery. It is not only about pronunciation and intonation but also the use of idiom and other components of language.

In the case of Indonesian language teaching, teacher teaches the speaking skills for communication activities, i.e. interview, discussion, speech, debate, drama, and storytelling. Thus, one of the aims of the teaching process is to train students' ability to retell stories. It is taught in the first semester of grade VII. It is mentioned in 4.3 basic competences, i.e. retell fictional stories that are read and listened to.

This research focuses on one of the genre of children literature, i.e. fantasy stories. The genre is chosen as it is considered interesting, easy to understand, and in line to children's imagination.

Telling stories or tales is closely related to the teaching of speaking. It is regarded as a fun activity as students are able to expand their imagination, obtain knowledge, explore the characters' personality, understand the life of the characters, build courage, train improvisation, and practice speaking skills. Ampera (2010) states that in storytelling, one of the most common works to retell is tale. Tales are fictional stories in the society.

Children stories are believed to have great impacts on children's mental and emotional development as well as attitude. Teachers, parents, storytellers do not simply tell stories; they also deliver message and character education to children. Such stories have great benefits if delivered through media and examples.

Musfiroh (2008) proposes several benefits of children stories i.e. to build one's character and morale, enhance the imagination and fantasy, strengthen children's verbal skills, stimulate children's reading interest, stimulate children's writing interest, and broaden children's knowledge.

The skill of speaking (storytelling) is planned to be improved through reader's theatre and School Literacy Movement (GLS) strategies. The strategy of Readers Theater is implemented in the classroom. Students practice reading and interpreting several literary works. The works can be in the form of illustrated story books, children novels, folk tales (fable, myth, and legend), poems, and songs, short stories, even nonfictional books (Cox, 1998).

A. Readers Theatre Strategy

Readers Theater is a strategy that can be used to improve reading, writing, listening, speaking, role-play, and presentation ability. This strategy can also be used to improve students' cooperation and collaboration skills. It is true that students' performance in role-play is important, yet students' active participation in literary teaching is also significant in improving students' learning process (McKay, 2008).

In presenting readers theatre, students are required to carefully choose the works of literature, practice presentation, and perform well (Tompkins & Hoskisson, 1995). *The script selection stage*, students can begin this step by selecting interesting stories, reading, marking dialogue, developing stories, selecting narrators and players, composing scripts, editing, and duplicating scripts. *The practice stage,* after the script is ready, the next step is the characterization practice. The role-playing practice is done by students by reading the script over and over, practicing acting characters, and expressing character dialogue. *Staging stage,* staging is an activity of presenting story scripts in groups. The participants did their work according to the division of roles; there was a child as the narrator and the character of the story. Performances can be performed in the classroom, hall, or outside the classroom. Story presentations can be done sitting in a chair or standing in front of other students.

The benefits of using readers theatre strategy in teaching are proposed by Ludolph (2013), i.e. it can involve students in reading, increase students' motivation, better students' understanding, improve students' fluency through repeated storytelling, and integrate four language skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking). So, this readers theatre strategy is very important to be applied to improve students' language skills and motivation in learning.

B. School Literacy Movement

Other than reader's theatre, School Literacy Movement is also used to improve students' speaking skills. The movement is aimed to build students' character as lifelong learners, create literate society, create schools as pleasant learning centers which are suitable for children, provide books, and propose many reading strategies. Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, and count using printed and written sources related to many contexts (Montoya, 2018). The targets of School Literacy Movement are all school members, i.e. the headmaster, teachers and students.

Retnaningdyah et al. (2016) explain that the movement covers several phases, i.e. habituation, development, and teaching. *The habituation stage,* this activity includes two types namely reading silently and reading aloud conducted by the teacher. These two reading activities aim to increase the love of reading outside of class hours, the ability to understand reading, foster self-confidence, and expand knowledge. *The development stage,* aims to hone students 'ability to respond to enrichment books verbally and in writing, build student interaction with books read, hone students' ability to think critically, analytically, creatively, and innovatively, and encourage students to look for relevance between books and the surrounding environment. *The learning stage*, at this stage the activities are more complex. Students are required to read nonfiction books. The teacher can give bills in the form of assignments to students. The aim is to equip students with insight and knowledge.

The aim of literacy movement in the context of multiliteracies is to help shape students' four multiliteracy skills which include (Morocco, 2008), i.e. reading for deep understanding, writing to build and express meaning, accountable talk, digital and media fluency.

The benefits of literacy for students are such as to broaden knowledge, build critical thinking skills, help students learn the moral values of life in story books, improve writing and role play skills (Agosto, 2016).

Bromley (2019) conducts a research to develop storytelling and literacy in many ways.The activity of storytelling (with or without visual aids) helps better students' narrative structure. Practicing to tell stories before the presentation helps improve students' understanding on the story.

Readers theater strategy and the School Literacy Movement have several positive benefits when applied in learning. Readers theater can be applied to language learning that studies fiction and nonfiction texts. Teachers can also take advantage of literacy activities to increase student knowledge. Students who are knowledgeable are expected to be able to face challenges and can be used as provisions in the future.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

Action research method in several cycles was implemented in this research. Each cycle consisted of 4 phases, i.e. planning, implementation, observation and reflection. The research was conducted in the first semester of 2018/2019 academic year in October 2018.

The object of the research was students' ability in telling stories. The subjects were grade VII students as many as 27 people. After preliminary observation, it was revealed that the students' participation in storytelling teaching was low. In the pre-cycle activities, the average score of students' speaking skills is 57,16. The score of 57.16 has not reached the minimum completeness score of the storytelling material taught. The minimum completeness value of the storytelling material is 75. Meanwhile, the achievement of the learning process of speaking skills in pre-cycle activities is 50%. It shows that learning to tell stories in pre-cycle activities has not reached 75% success.

The data of the research was obtained through observation, assignment, questionnaire and video recording. The instruments of the research were observation sheets, storytelling skill scoring guidelines, questionnaire, students' reading journal, and documentations.

To analyze the data, qualitative descriptive and quantitative descriptive analysis technique were implemented. Numeric data was obtained through assignments on storytelling skills. Meanwhile, the data on storytelling skill score was obtained through storytelling skill scoring guidelines. The analysis focused on the average increase of each aspect and cycle. Verbal data was obtained from observation sheets, pre and post action questionnaire, daily reading journal, and documentations. The verbal data was analyzed through descriptive analysis. Meanwhile, the data from post action questionnaire was also analyzed through descriptive analysis.

The indicator of success was determined based on the process and product. The process was considered successful if there was an increase in the students' storytelling skills. It was observed on the changes of activities in relation to the implementation of readers theatre and School Literacy Movement strategies. Meanwhile, the product was regarded as successful if the students' score and storytelling skills increased.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Improvement on the Process and Result of Speaking Skill Teaching through the Implementation of Readers Theatre Strategy

The teaching of speaking skills covering the basic competences 4.3 is conducted through 3 cycles and 1 pre-cycle. Each cycle consists of two meetings. The research takes quite some time as after two cycles, the result is not optimum. Thus, the strategy is improved in the third cycle.

The pre-cycle is conducted to introduce the storytelling materials to the students. The materials are specified in the 3.3 basic competences, i.e. identifying the elements of narrative texts (fantasy stories) which are read and listened to. The students are asked to read a fantasy story, analyze the intrinsic elements, and identify the interesting parts of the story. In cycle 1, cycle 2, and cycle 3, the teaching of speaking skills involve readers theatre strategy. The teaching of speaking on basic competences 4.3 is observed in regards to the process and the result. The teaching process of nonverbal aspects includes enthusiasm, motivation, confidence, engagement, and courage. Meanwhile, the result is related to students' skills in speaking.

The storytelling activity helps improve students' academic performance, especially on reading and writing skills, role play ability, and increase on motivation in learning process (Miller & Pennycuff, 2008).

Based on the findings of the research, the data on the improvement of teaching process (nonverbal aspects) in pre-cycle, cycle 1, cycle 2, and cycle 3 is obtained. The data is presented in the following table.

TABLE I.   IMPROVEMENT ON THE TEACHING PROCESS ON STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL BEFORE AND AFTER THE IMPLEMENTATION OF READERS THEATRE STRATEGY

No	Nonverbal Aspect	Pre-Cycle	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
1	Enthusiasm	49%	57%	80%	94%
2	Motivation	53%	70%	84%	94%
3	Confidence	41%	65%	84%	95%
4	Engagement	54%	64%	88%	94%
5	Courage	52%	70%	88%	93%
	Average	50%	65%	85%	94%

Information:
81-100%: Very Good
41-60%: Fair
61-80%: Good
21-40%: Poor
≤ 20%: Very Poor

As presented in the table 1, it can be concluded that:
a) There has been an increase on the nonverbal aspects of pre-cycle activity, cycle 1, cycle 2, and cycle 3. In average, the 50% score of pre-cycle learning process is in the category of fair and it has not reached the authorized minimum mastery criteria. In the pre-cycle, readers strategy is not implemented yet.
b) The average score of cycle 1 learning process is 65% which is in good category, however the minimum mastery criteria is not achieved yet.
c) The average score of cycle 2 learning process is 85% which is in very good category and passes the minimum mastery criteria.
d) The average score of cycle 3 learning process is 94% which is in very good category and fulfills the minimum mastery criteria.

Based on the findings, it is clear that there is an increase on students' speaking skills. The skills are closely related to verbal aspects, i.e. pronunciation, vocabulary, sentence structure, materials, fluency, and students' storytelling style. The information on verbal aspects is obtained from the observation sheet in pre-cycle to cycle 3.

The main component in the implementation of reader's theatre is manuscript rereading process. The students are happy and entertained. They practice their speaking ability by reading the manuscript several times. They also develop their reading and storytelling skills. The activity also helps increase motivation, confidence, pride, and fluency. Reader's theatre strategy is an effective strategy to motivate students in practicing their language skills (Clementi, 2010).

The teaching of storytelling is related to a study conducted by Isbell (2002) which proves that stories help strengthen students' intimacy and enrich their experience. Storytelling activity also helps build character, thinking framework and vocabulary in developing stories. Retelling stories is an effective practice to encourage students' understanding and verbal skills. The results on students' speaking skill achievement are presented in table 2.

TABLE II.   IMPROVEMENT ON THE TEACHING RESULTS ON STUDENTS SPEASKING SKILL IN PRE-CYCLE, CYCLE 1, CYCLE 2, AND CYCLE 3

Cycle	Aspect						Score	Grade
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
Pre-Cycle	3.07	2.67	2.67	3.30	2.96	2.48	17.15	57
Cycle 1	3.63	3.48	3.63	3.81	3.41	2.89	20.50	68
Cycle 2	3.78	3.93	3.93	3.96	3.48	2.96	21.89	73
Cycle 3	4.19	4.00	4.00	5.00	4.07	4.44	25.70	86

Information:
Aspect 1 : Pronunciation   Aspect 4 : Material
Aspect 2 : Vocabulary   Aspect 5 : Fluency
Aspect 3 : Structure   Aspect 6 : Style

As shown in the table 2, it is clear that the score of students' speaking skills in pre-cycle, cycle 1, cycle 2, and cycle 3 increases. The average achievement of speaking skills is 86 which is in good category. It has fulfilled the minimum mastery criteria. The implementation of readers theatre strategy is ended in cycle 3 as it has met the target. The implemented strategy of reader's theatre helps change students' attitude; previously they are not motivated and afterwards they become motivated. Other than motivation, the students' enthusiasm also increases (Young & Rasinski, 2009).

The reader's theatre strategy has several benefits for the students. In general, the students respond positively to the strategy. It can also help reduce students' anxiety. Further, the strategy provides pleasure and education. In the observation, the teacher notices that students' enthusiasm, commitment, motivation, confidence, and fluency are visible. The students are also able to increase their oral language mastery (Drew & Pederson, 2010).

B. Improvement on the Process and Result of Speaking Skill Teaching through the Implementation of School Literacy Movement

Other than improving the speaking skills of grade VII students of State Junior High School 3 Panggang through reader's theatre strategy, the School Literacy Movement is also implemented. Students are given 15 minute to read and summarize their readings. It is done in 30 minutes on Tuesdays. In this research, the storytelling activity is conducted in 3 cycles. The research focuses on the improvement on the process and results of the activities.

Literacy is important to hone students' speaking skills. Literacy activities that are done to support learning to speak are to familiarize students with reading fiction (fairy tales, short stories, fantasy stories, and fables), summarizing stories, and story presentations. If students read a lot of fiction stories are expected to have extensive knowledge and insight so they are able to develop stories. Reading habits will affect students' writing, listening and speaking abilities.

The literacy activity is somewhat new for the grade VII students. They are not used to read stories. Therefore, there are some obstacles. In cycle 1, several students do not have any reading texts, are reluctant to read, do not concentrate, and lack of focus. To improve the activity, the teacher provides guidance and encouragement for the students. In cycle 2, there have been some improvements although the minimum mastery criteria are not obtained. Another improvement is conducted in cycle 3. The improvement on literacy activity in relation to speaking skills is presented in the following table.

TABLE III.   IMPROVEMENT ON THE PROCESS OF SPEAKING SKILL TEACHING THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL LITERACY MOVEMENT IN CYCLE 1, CYCLE 2, AND CYCLE 3

No	Nonverbal Aspect	Cycle 1	Cycle 2	Cycle 3
1	Enthusiasm	57%	80%	94%
2	Motivation	70%	84%	94%
3	Confidence	65%	84%	95%
4	Engagement	64%	88%	94%
5	Courage	70%	88%	93%
	Average	65%	85%	94%

Information:
81-100% : Very Good
41-60%   : Fair
61-80%   : Good
21-40%   : Poor
≤ 20%   : Very Poor

As presented in table 3, the average score of literacy activity in cycle 1 is 38% which means that the minimum mastery criteria are not fulfilled yet. Meanwhile, the average score in cycle 2 is 57% in which the minimum mastery criteria are not obtained as well. Further, the score of cycle 3 is 79%. It means that the minimum mastery criteria are achieved. A teaching learning process is considered to achieve the minimum mastery criteria if the score is more than 75%.

Another significant thing to improve other than the process is students' storytelling skills. It is improved through the addition of fantasy story books, repeated reading, intrinsic element identification, discussion on the story content, and storytelling group (chain story telling). After the implementation of School Literacy Movement, there is an increase on students' speaking skills. The increase is presented in the following table.

TABLE IV.   IMPROVEMENT ON THE RESULTS OF SPEAKING SKILL TEACHING THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHOOL LITERACY MOVEMENT IN CYCLE 1, CYCLE 2, AND CYCLE 3

Cycle	Aspect						Score	Grade
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
Cycle 1	4.00	3.83	3.67	4.00	4.00	2.92	22.46	75
Cycle 2	4.00	4.00	3.85	4.05	3.85	3.05	22.80	76
Cycle 3	4.17	4.00	3.88	4.13	4.04	3.17	23.40	78

Information:
Aspect 1   : Pronunciation   Aspect 4   : Material
Aspect 2   : Vocabulary   Aspect 5   : Fluency
Aspect 3   : Structure   Aspect 6   : Style

As shown in table 4, it can be concluded that the average score of cycle 1 is 22.46 and the average grade is 75. It means that the minimum mastery criteria are achieved. It is true that the target is obtained. However, there are some things that need to be improved. There are only a few students brave enough to present in front of their peers, i.e. 12 students. Thus, the activity is reconducted in cycle 2.

The average score of cycle 2 is 22.80 and the average grade is 76. The minimum mastery criteria are obtained. The number of students who are brave enough to present is 20. However, there are some things to improve. Further, the average score of cycle 3 is 23.40 and the grade is 78. The grade reaches the minimum mastery criteria. The students who present stories are as many as 24 people. There are only 3 students who do not present in front of the class. The activity is ended in cycle 3 as more than 75% students pass the minimum mastery criteria.

A research conducted by Dunst et al. (2012) published in CELLreviews journal reveals that storytelling activities effectively improve literacy and language learning. It helps students better understand the content of the story, language, vocabulary and early literacy development. Therefore, it is important to conduct these literacy activities to help improve students' ability in understanding stories.

IV. CONCLUSION

One of the strategy that can be implemented in the teaching of speaking skills is readers theatre strategy. It is proved that the strategy can help improve students' verbal and nonverbal aspects. The implementation of readers theatre strategy in storytelling teaching also helps improve students' speaking skills. Other aspects that also improve are such as enthusiasm, storytelling skill, motivation, understanding, knowledge, storytelling fluency and the mastery of four language skills. The strategy can also be implemented in the teaching of other skills. The teacher is expected to always

innovate and be creative in helping improve students' ability especially in relation to storytelling skill, knowledge, and reading ability.

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