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The Study of Conducting Collaborative Action Research in Learning Process

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the use of collaborative action research in EFL classroom. Therefore, this is an action research which is analyzed qualitatively. The research is conducted in Kish Way Language Institute. Because of the nature of the study, the participants of the study consist of teacher, researcher, and students; and speaking skill is considered as the context of the study. Research findings show that students' speaking skills have improved in terms of abilities such as answering teacher questions, identifying words and grammar used in the phrase, constructing sentences using appropriate grammar and vocabulary, and expressing their idea. In addition, the class situation is more vivid in terms of student activity. The study of action research is a valuable and inspiring experience that gives new knowledge to the researcher. It is hoped that research can be conducted by other researchers to achieve a better teaching and learning process.

Keywords: Action research, Collaborative action research, Learning process, Speaking proficiency

Introduction

Using action research as a tool for professional development and improving classroom learning is nothing new [1]. Numerous studies have highlighted the benefits of teachers as researchers for focusing on teaching practices and skills in their classrooms [2]. According to Carr & Kemmis [3], action research involves cycles of self-criticism and reflection processes that teachers learn about their classroom environment and teaching methods. An important element in teacher action research is the reflection stage, during which teachers have the opportunity to consider their teaching methods to find solutions to problems that need to be addressed.

Over the past ten years, teacher research in English language teaching (ELT) has been advancing internationally, and now extensive networks of classroom physicians are sharing their accounts, ie stories of their research activities Which is often part of their institutions. Professional Development Program. The usefulness of class-based research in the development of specialist knowledge, the Second Language Acquisition Theory (SLA), is still a matter of debate because academics sometimes question the value of such a question by pointing to teacher limitations [6].

Collaborative action research is a type of action research that involves professionals working to improve their educational performance in research. Like action research, participatory research requires teachers to take a critical, self-reflective, and systematic approach to evaluating their educational backgrounds. However, unlike action research, collaborative research action involves teachers working with colleagues during the systematic and contemplative implementation of their practices as a tool to generate meaningful knowledge about the state of education and the challenges teachers face [7]. Collaborative action research recognizes the main role of teachers in decision making by being in the specific needs and conditions of students and schools [8].

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It has been found that teachers 'involvement in action research in a participatory environment has a measurable and direct effect on students' progress, behavior and the performance of school colleagues and teachers [9].

Research shows that teachers are deeply committed to reviewing, evaluating and underestimating their performance. Thus, collaborative action research has the potential to open channels of communication between teachers that can be used to explore and challenge the teaching practices and beliefs that underlie teaching strategies. The empowering nature of collaborative action research has the potential to transform education, making it very useful for professional development [10].

The role of the researcher in collaborative action research is different from many other qualitative research projects because the researcher is challenged to build an equal relationship with physicians. This is not an easy task, as physicians tend to treat researchers as more specialized than they possess. However, the role of the researcher in collaborative action research has not been widely discussed in the previous research literature [11].

Review of Literature

In the field of English language teaching, action research is sometimes seen as part of a more general movement towards teacher research, where different types of approaches and terms can be found [12].

As the term implies, action research focuses on practice and research simultaneously [13]. The action research requires some kind of planned intervention, which deliberately places specific strategies, processes, or activities in the field of research. Considering the interventions in practice in response to an issue, puzzle or question, it is understood that people in the social context want to improve or change it in some way.

Language teachers are increasingly required not only to teach in the classroom but also to do research. While teachers are knowledgeable about teaching, many of them may not be knowledgeable enough to do research. Action research is becoming a tool for school reform. Some useful aspects of teacher action research are that the scale is localized on a small, textual, scale to detect, develop, or monitor procedural changes [14]. In action research, language teachers understand their students' insights by observing their behavior. Reflective teachers analyze student behavior, identify potential problems, modify their teaching methods, and evaluate results. However, language teachers involved in action research are developing their professional judgment and independence, encouraging new teaching equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to improve performance, conduct research, identify learners 'needs, and increase teachers' awareness and strategies and inducing another way to generate knowledge [15].

Actions may be taken individually, in groups, or across broader organizational clusters. Teamwork has the obvious advantage of being able to create others at different stages, share and discuss ideas or findings, plan new actions, talk about data collection methods, and compare results [16]. The research component of action research means the systematic collection of data on planned actions, the analysis of what they show, the reflection on the consequences of data, and the formulation of alternative programs and actions based on data analysis. Improvement and participation are the two pillars that underlie action research. Table 1 shows the different axes, goals and results in different approaches to research. The research process is less predictable than other research approaches because it is characterized by a spiral of cycles that involve at least planning, action, observation, and reflection, although like other forms of research, the reality is much worse. [17].

Lopez-Pastor et al. [18] suggested that collaborative action is the result of a research study conducted at various stages and is very useful for PD. Thus, collaborative action research is research that engages teachers in work teams and allows them to reflect on their teaching practices.

Vaughan and Burnaford [19] reviewed graduate teacher education programs to examine the goals, problems, policies, and implications of AR. This review includes articles published between 2000 and 2015. The findings indicate a willingness in teacher education programs to use an integrated theoretical and practical action research approach. The researchers concluded that action research in a teacher education program has three goals: action researches reflection, action research as participatory, and action research as preparation for teacher leadership.

Chen et al. [20] conducted a systematic review to retrieve empirical research articles on action research from 2000 to 2014. The findings showed different action research paradigms, data collection and analysis methods used by researchers. They categorized data collection tools into tools used by researchers, participants, and both. They also identified six types of data analysis methods.

Burns and Westmacott [21] also point to the use of action research in teacher collaboration through peer observations, for example, to solve problems that challenge the teacher and learner in the classroom context. Thus, action research not only solves problems but also enhances teaching skills [22].

Vaughan [22] stated that in the case of teacher professional development, action research is done to perception. These studies reported teachers' experiences in performing action research and examined their perceptions of research-based cases.

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Methodology

This is an action research. Various definitions of action research have been proposed by some experts.
Kemmis, as quoted by Hopkins [24] defines the action research as a self-reflective question asked by participants in a social situation to improve rationality and justice (a) their social or educational performance, (b) their understanding of these actions, and (C) the situation in which the actions are performed.
According to Mills [17], action research is any systematic research conducted by teacher researchers, principals, school counselors or other contributors in the teaching / learning environment to gather information about how their particular schools are performing, how they are being conducted. They teach and how well their students learn. In addition, Nunan [25] argues that research has the distinctive feature that individuals affected by planned change have the primary responsibility for deciding on courses of fully conscious action that seem to lead to improve and evaluate the results of strategies tested in practice.
Burns [26] describes some of the characteristics of research that have been taken from the definition of some experts as follows:

1. Textual action research is a small, local scale. Identifies and examines these problems in a specific situation.
2. It is being evaluated and reflected because its purpose is to bring about change and improvement in practice.
3. It is collaborative because it provides collaborative research by teams of colleagues, physicians and researchers.
4. Changes in practice are based on the collection of information or data that motivates change.

Based on several definitions given by some experts, it can be concluded that action research is any systematic research conducted by participants in a social situation (including education) in order to better understand and improve practices. These are the actions. The model of classroom action research used in this study is based on the following steps:

a. Planning
Developing a well-informed action plan to improve what is happening right now. Here the researcher prepares everything needed for the research, for example the curriculum used in the speaking class, the material used in the practice, and the assessment to measure whether speaking skills are improving.

b. Action
By planning for action, the author implements the activity of learning English using games. In this study, the author plays games, that is, he guesses the sand story games. He also gives students pre-tests, exercises and post-tests.
c. Observation
The researcher observes the effects of conscious critical action in the context in which it occurs. In addition, the observer fills in the observation sheet about the teaching and learning process. By doing this, the researcher can document and reflect on the interaction and events that occurred.
d. Reflection
After performing the action, the researcher continues to the stage, ie reflection. At this stage, the researcher reflects on the process of teaching and learning. Performance reflects the strengths and weaknesses of the action. The researcher evaluates the test result as well as the observation made by the researcher and the supervisor during the training and learning process.

The Procedure of Action Research

For a deeper understanding of the method of this action research, detailed explanations are as follows:

1. Identifying the problem
First of all, the problem is identified. The problems refer to the students' speaking skill that is still low.
2. Conducting action research

a. Planning
At this stage, the researcher creates a lesson plan related to a specific topic, content, media, time, schedule and observation tools.
b. Implementing
At this stage, the researcher performs the activities written in the lesson plan
c. Observing
At this stage, the researcher records important events during the teaching-learning process after the lesson. The colleague also helps her observe the students' activities during the teaching process. Therefore, he can provide input or suggestion. He points out the weaknesses and weaknesses of the implementation of the curriculum using games.
d. Reflecting
After completing the training steps using the game, the researcher recounts the occurrence in the classroom as a reflection of the action. He evaluates the process and outcome of playing games in English teaching. The data for each step is analyzed, and the data is used to determine the next step in the next action or cycle to achieve an unspecified goal. The whole process of conducting the research can be seen in this Table.

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Table 1
Process of the research

Steps of the Research	Aims	Notes
Pre Research	Identifying and focusing the problems during TL process	Observing TL process
	Identifying and confirming teacher's technique and teacher's difficulties in teaching speaking	Interviewing the teacher
	Identifying students' speaking proficiency	Conducting pre-test
Research implementation	Conducting each cycle based on the procedure of AR, that is: planning, implementing, observing, reflecting and revising and analyzing each procedure phase	Implementing the action plan in two cycles, each cycle consist of two meetings. **Cycle 1** Meeting 1: teaching the expression of asking and giving information Meeting 2: implementing guessing games **Cycle 2** Meeting 1: teaching recount text Meeting 2: implementing story games
Post Research	Identifying the students' opinion after implementing the research	Collecting the students diary

In this action research there is a standard for stepping the cycle. This cycle stops when students are able to meet accuracy criteria such as correct use of structure, correct use of words, and fluency markers, including relatively fast speaking speed and only a few pauses and "ums" and "ers".

Data Collection

In this class action research, the data collected by the researcher use qualitative method. The data is obtained in the form of a qualitative method from the observations made by the teacher during the educational learning process about the whole activities and behavior of students. Observation is done by taking notes on the activities of the teaching-learning process. In addition, observation is also supported by taking pictures during the training learning process and interviews are conducted after the training learning process.

In this research, the researcher performs a pre-test at the beginning of the learning process and a post-test at the end of each cycle.

1- Preparation of test materials: speaking materials,
2- Performing the test
3- Checking the test result based on the pre-determined aspects and scores

The test result is analyzed in each process to see how well the student is speaking. The program data set used for this study is summarized in the Table:

Table 2
Table of collecting data

Steps of the study	Participants	Technique	Data
Pre-research	Teacher Researcher Students	Interview Observation Pre-test	Transcript of interview result Observation report Students' pre-test score
Implementation	Teacher Researcher Observer Researcher	Observation Audio recording Photograph Document analysis	Field notes and research diary Record of the research implementation Photograph of the TL Photograph of TL process, Lesson plan, lesson task, list of students pre-test and post – test, answer sheet.
Result discussion	Teacher Students	Interview Students' diary	Transcript of the interview result. Transcript of students' diary

Technique of Analyzing of the Data

In the qualitative data analysis, the researcher analyzed the results of the observation made during the TL process using the fixed comparison method proposed by Glaser and Starus [27]. The process of data analysis from the fixed comparison method consists of four stages as follows:

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1. Comparing usable events for each category
This begins with encoding each incident in the data in the largest possible category of analysis. Some categories are generated, some language and research status data.
2. Merging categories and their properties
Fixed comparison units change from incident-to-accident comparisons to incident comparisons with class characteristics resulting from the initial comparison of incidents. Diverse properties begin to merge.
3. Delimiting the theory
Here, the theory is further distributed and generalized, which is followed by continuous comparisons. The number of categories is reduced. Then, the researcher only needs to code enough code to realize the properties of the categories. By moving to new comparison groups, categories are evaluated and theory emerges.
4. Writing the theory
The researcher has encrypted data, a series of notes and a theory. The discussion in this memo is the content behind the categories that become the main themes of this theory. The result of the learning learning process is used to analyze the data. To compare students' speaking skills before and after the operation or the result of pre-test and post-test is done.

Findings

This section shows the research findings. Findings are taken from pre-research conditions, research implementation and research results.
Prior to the research, the teacher was informed that this was an action research. He was interested in it because he wanted to know the progress of the students through research. I acted as an instructor or teacher because he thought I knew a lot about this research, while the English teacher was an observer.
To find out about the pre-research situation, I made an observation, interviewed the teacher and gave the students a pre-test. The pre-survey status can be seen in the following Table.

Table 3
Situation prior to the research

Problem identified	- The students' speaking proficiency was still low - The classroom atmosphere was not alive during TL process
Indicators	The students' speaking proficiency was still low - rarely answered the question given by the teacher orally - spoke with a lot of pauses - difficulties to find the appropriate words to create sentences or expression - difficulties to recognize the words and grammatical used pre-test score was 4.08
	The classroom atmosphere was not alive during TL process - students were not active in answering the teacher 's questions - looked tired and just listened to the teacher without doing the speaking task - some of them were busy talking to their friends - seemed to be bored in following the TL process
Causes	- The teacher's material was less creative - Low of grammar and vocabulary mastery - Limited time and teaching materials - Using LKS worksheet

As can be seen in the above Table, speaking problems are due to students' ability to speak and class status. Based on the observation and the result of the interview, the problems can be identified as follows: 1) Students' speaking skills in comprehending spoken content were still low. 2.) The classroom space was not alive during the TL process.
The results of observation and interview in the pre-research showed that in teaching English, the teacher uses the Student Worksheet (LKS) and then teaches all learning activities to students. In speaking teaching, he read the phrase in LKS, then asked students to make predictions and asked them to fill in the blanks. He did not give them a specific task before speaking. As a result, students' vocabulary was still low, they had difficulty understanding the meaning of phrases, were confused by speaking, and had difficulty speaking on a task. The situation in the classroom was not alive either. They were speaking to their friends, confused, and asking the teacher about problems because they did not know what to ask them, and they were bored and did not participate in the speaking class.
These problems arose due to some cases. They came from students, teachers and materials. Students were not active during the TL process because their abilities

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were still low, the teacher was less creative in teaching In addition, the speaking pre-test showed that students have low speaking skills, because the average test score was 4.08, ranging from 1-10. For these reasons, the teacher and I decided to work on games to improve students' speaking skills and change the classroom atmosphere during the TL process.

The teacher and I did the research after learning about the pre-research situation. I did this by teaching the students to use the game, and she observed the situation in the classroom. She also assisted in the preparation and collection of materials. Classroom speaking, and the material used was uninteresting. action research consisted of two cycles. Each cycle consisted of five steps, which included: action planning, action implementation, action observation, reflection of the observation result, and revising the plan. A summary of the research can be seen in the following Table. Each cycle was held in two sessions and each session lasted about 40 to 80 minutes. The topics discussed in the first and second cycles were describing things around the class, asking questions and giving information and telling stories based on pictures.

Tables 4

Summary of research implementation

Problem Identified	- Low of students' speaking proficiency - The classroom atmosphere was not live
Proposed Solution	Using games in teaching speaking
Implementation Cycle 1	Two meetings
Planning Action	Teacher and I prepared the materials, lesson plan, students' worksheet and everything related to the topic
	- I proposed the topic of describing things around the classroom and expression of asking and giving information - I used guessing games to teach the materials - I gave post-test 1 to the teacher
Observation	The observation result were two kinds: The positive result: - The students more focused on their speaking activities - Some of the students could pronounce the English words correctly - Four students asked the teacher to repeat the explanation of the lesson - Some of the students asked difficult words from the worksheets - The students seemed to enjoy participating actively in the lesson - The students look enthusiastic during games activity - Competition happened when the students participated in games activity. The negative result: - Some of the students still had difficulties in implementing the expression of asking and giving information - Some of the students were noisy and they were bored with the materials - Some of the students still had difficulties in making the dialogue with their partner - There were some students who did not participate actively in games activity - During the implementation of games, only the leader of the each group who looked to speak actively
Reflection	The reflections were: - Some of the students still had difficulties in implementing the expression of asking and giving information - Five of the students did not pay attention to the teacher and they were noisy - The students' willingness to answer questions individually or by coming forward in front of the class to practice their task were still low The students' mean score of post-test 1 is 5.08
Revising the plan	The next cycle was focused on: - Provoking passive students to be more active - Giving more time and chance to the students to speak individually - Teacher and I provided different topic and different task to the students - I would give intention to the students who often made a noisy during the lesson
Cycle 2	Two meetings
Planning	Teacher and I prepared the materials, lesson plan, students'

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	worksheet and everything related to the topic
Action	- I gave the topic of telling the past event using picture and made a story using story games - I gave post-test 2 to the students
Observation	The observation results were: - The students became more active during teaching and learning process - Some of the students came in front of the classroom to give their answer orally - The students could do the task of telling the past event - The students' vocabulary increased - They looked enthusiast answering the teacher's questions - Every student got a chance to speak individually Using picture made the students easier to imagine and to say what their idea.
Reflection	The reflection was: - The students seemed enthusiastic and relaxed in following the lesson - Most of the students understood the material given by the teacher. - Their vocabulary was increased and their grammar mastery was better than the first cycle. - The students' willingness to express their idea orally was increased. - Most of the students answered the teacher's questions Most of the students joined in games activity. - The noisy happened during the games, but it could be control by the teacher.
Post-research	I distributed students' diary to identify their opinion about speaking and games
General Reflection	In general, it can be said that - Games could improve students' speaking proficiency - The atmosphere of the class became more alive - Each cycle of the research showed the improvement, even though there were noisy during the implementation of games in the first and second cycles, the teacher could handle it. - The students were actively involved in speaking activity - They could identify the vocabulary and grammar used - They could implement the expression - The students showed their enthusiasms answering teacher's questions - Students' pretest was 4.08, posttest 1 was 5.31, and post-test 3 was 6.05

The research findings include improving students' speaking skills, and improving the classroom atmosphere in the TL process and findings of teacher behavior.

Conclusion

In this study, collaborative action research was conducted using games. Prior to the research students' learning activities during the TL process and the teacher's method of speaking teaching were evaluated. Pre- research included interviewing an English teacher, observing the TL process, and conducting a pre-test for students.

During the implementation, the research was conducted collaboratively with the teacher. The purpose of this observation was to collect information about all activities during the learning process by implementing the game technique. This research is done in two cycles and each cycle consists of two sessions. Post-test of each course was performed to identify the development of students' speaking skills.

The research findings were in line with the research questions as the focus of the research, whether playing games can improve students' speaking skills, especially in accuracy and fluency, and knowing the classroom atmosphere when playing games.

Research shows that games can improve students' speaking skills and make the atmosphere of the TL process more lively. In addition to the findings, there is also the result of information about the teacher's behavior that he knows he knows another technique in speaking education.

Improving students' conversation skills is shown by improving their average grade. The mean pre-test score was 4.08. Most students scored 1 and 2 on accuracy and fluency because little English was produced. In fact, some of them did not produce language. They also had little contact. After post-test 1, the students' mean score showed improvement. Most of them scored 3 on accuracy and fluency, which indicates that they speak a

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significant amount of English, although they have made grammatical mistakes and speak their idea with skepticism. In post-test 2, the average score of students was 6.05. They sometimes had grammatical slips but a good range of vocabulary. They also communicated effectively in long turns and were able to use correct grammatical sentences. In addition, these improvements can also be trained during the learning process, meaning they can correct mistakes they have made themselves.

Implications

In language teaching and learning, it is necessary to implement the appropriate method and technique.
According to the findings, for the learning process to be successful, the teacher is not only the source of knowledge but also the master of the learning process. He or she must create the conditions for students to engage in the learning experience.
Based on the conclusion of this study, it can be shown that after conducting the research, students' speaking skills, students' behavior during the TL process and classroom space. The implications of this study include:
1. Collaboration in learning process increases the quality, teachers feel better when they see the cooperation of the learners in learning process.
2. Using games helps students understand vocabulary and grammar. Finally, they can use words, grammar and expression in real communication.
3. Games can make students think and focus on the learning process. By doing this, they can express their idea, think naturally.
4. Games increase creativity and courage. They have more discussions with their friends and it also increases their interest to ask the teacher about their problems.
5. Games create fun learning conditions, so students enjoy or are more involved in their learning.
This study can be used as a reference for teachers in improving quality in using effective techniques to improve students' learning motivation and progress in learning English.

Limitation

Through action research, teachers felt that they had to underestimate many of their previous actions. It was good in principle, but it had serious instability consequences. As a result, teachers felt they had to work on their own organization and individual practice, making joint meetings increasingly irrelevant. This work pressure creates another factor that may exacerbate feelings of insecurity and thus contribute to the prevention of over-discussion. As a result of the tensions created inside and outside the project, contrary to the initial commitment to a non-judgmental and non-hierarchical stance, group conflicts and hierarchies seemed to be highlighted.

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