

**Improving students' speaking proficiency  
through contextual teaching and learning approach  
(A Classroom Action Research at SMP Negeri 2 Ngadiluwih – Kediri , 2009)**

**By**

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**CHAPTER 1**

**INTRODUCTION**

This introduction presents and discusses the background of the research, problem statement, objective of the research, benefit of the research.

**A. Background of the Research**

Teaching and learning process at SMP Negeri 2 Ngadiluwih, especially English subject, has not been successful. It is indicated by the average of English score for national final exam is only 5.09 from the benchmark of 5.25 in 2005/2006 academic year. Many students failed in the exam because their scores in English were less than minimal score standardized. There were 127 students of the total 256 students who joined the final exam in 2005/2006 academic year failed. Seventy nine students of them failed because their English scores were less than 4.25. This condition also happens in 2007/2008 academic year. There were 35 students of the total 289 students who joined the national final exam this year failed. Unfortunately, there were 15 students whose English scores were less than 4.25. The students who failed in the exam had to wait the next exam scheduled in the following year or join the program of *Penyetaraan Kejar Paket B* conducted by *Dinas Pendidikan Nasional*.

Most students of class IX E of SMP 2 Ngadiluwih whom the researcher teaches English have the same condition like the previous students. Their English proficiency is also substandard. It can be seen from their average mark for mid-semester test is 5.4 and for semester test 5.1

These problems call for immediate action. Based on the preliminary observation of the students of IX E, it shows that they lack of speaking proficiency. This difficulty is indicated when the teacher asked them to practice speaking in groups, many students just kept silent and the others enjoyed speaking in their mother tongue. This finding is supported by the result of the questionnaire which the researcher distributed to them last March. The result of the questionnaire shows that the students have more difficulties with their speaking than the three other skills, listening, reading, and writing as shown in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Rank of English Skill Difficulties  
Class IX E of SMP Negeri 2 Ngadiluwih in 2007/2008 Academic Year

No	The English Language skills	Number of Students	Percentage (%)
1.	Speaking	15	39.5 %
2.	Writing	12	31.6 %
3.	Listening	7	18.4 %
4.	Reading	4	10.5 %

Table 1.1 shows that speaking is regarded as the most difficult skill among of the other skills. It is 39.5 %. Writing, listening, and reading follow each other successively. One of the students of IX E said:

*“Ketika guruku menyuruhku untuk berbicara di depan kelas, saya tidak tahu harus bilang apa dan saya takut dan malu bila salah omong. Pasti ditertawai teman-teman. Tapi terkadang saya mengerti kalau ada teman yang berbicara pakai bahasa Inggris.”*

The lack of speaking proficiency is shown through the following indicators: first, they are unable to express ideas easily; second, most of them are unable to produce meaningful sentences orally; third, most of them are unable to produce accepted pronunciations; and many of the students are unable to use language functionally. Speaking proficiency is a competence in which speaker has to be able to express or communicate opinions, feeling, and ideas orally by

considering linguistic competence, such as: pronunciation, intonation, stress, rhythm, range of vocabulary, and grammar and discourse competence including feasibility and appropriateness with the context.

Based on the of preliminary observation on the language teaching and learning process at SMP Negeri 2 Ngadiluwih, the researcher has found some factors considered as the sources of those problems. Firstly, the English teacher doesn't provide students with sufficient time for speaking practices. The teacher focused more on doing the exercises of the students' worksheet and text books. The teacher helped his students translate meaning of the difficult words of conversational text given. One of the researcher's colleagues once said:

*“Menurut saya sulit sekali mengajar apalagi menyuruh siswa untuk berbicara dengan bahasa Inggris. Jumlah siswa dalam kelas terlalu besar dan mereka sulit untuk diatur. Daripada suara saya habis, saya lebih suka menyelesaikan latihan-latihan dari teks percakapan. Apalagi ketrampilan berbicara untuk tingkat SMP kan belum di UANkan”*

Secondly, the spoken exercises given are taken from text books. It means students just read and must memorize the materials which are strange and abstract for them. Thirdly, there is lack of media to practice with, and the last is that the learning process takes place in the same class with the same situation. As a result, when the English class is going on, the students get bored and feel sleepy easily. Even some of them like to leave their class. Due to the facts, it is necessary to make an attempt to improve students' speaking proficiency by applying other teaching technique.

English teacher must be able to improve students' motivation to study English better by creating an interesting situation that makes students actively ask, discuss, and express their ideas and feeling. The teacher should not only transfer the information to his students but also facilitate his students to learn English. Beside the variety in teaching technique, the authentic materials should be applied in the learning process. One of the approaches which cover such kinds of those activities is Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL).

CTL is quite different from the traditional approach. The ultimate goal of CTL is to enable students to transfer knowledge to new situation. CTL provides an element to the learning

experience that has been proved to motivate students' interest, learning, and confidence (Crawford, 2001: 1). Meanwhile the traditional approach often leads to learning concepts without understanding. Bransford, *et al.* (in Crawford, 2001: 1) state that students who memorize facts and procedures without understanding often do not know when or how to use what they know beyond the test, which is designed around the facts and procedures.

CTL with its twenty characteristics offers teachers to teach more attractively and meaningfully. The four of those characteristics are: (1) Students are actively involved in teaching and learning process; (2) Students learn from his friends, discuss, and correct each other in groups; (3) Language is taught communicatively, that is students asked to use language in real contexts; (4) The teaching and learning process happens in various places, contexts, and setting. According to this approach, the teaching activities are not only in the classroom but also outside the classrooms. They can be in an office, a hospital, an airport, a market, a mall, a garden, or a place designed having atmosphere like those places. To acquire speaking proficiency, natural condition is preferable. There is a tendency towards a thought that children learn better if the condition around them is created naturally. CTL is one of approaches which promote an authentic material so it enables students to learn in natural situation.

Through this student-centered approach, CTL enables students to be more active in learning process, so it is not a passive process which just receives information about knowledge from teachers. If the learning does not give a chance to students to take part actively, of course, it is contrary to the essence of learning. The active role of students is very important in constructing a creative generation, having the ability to produce something for the sake of themselves or others.

By considering the characteristics of CTL, the researcher would like to implement CTL in teaching speaking in the hope to improve students' speaking proficiency of SMP N 2 Ngadiluwih.

## **B. Problem Statement**

From the description of the background above, the problems formulated in this research are:

1. Can CTL improve speaking proficiency of the ninth year students of SMP Negeri 2 Ngadiluwih - Kediri?
2. What happens when CTL is implemented in the speaking class of the ninth year students of SMP Negeri 2 Ngadiluwih - Kediri?

## **C. Objectives of the Research**

The carrying out of this classroom action research is expected to:

1. find out whether CTL can improve speaking proficiency of the ninth year students of SMP Negeri 2 Ngadiluwih - Kediri.
2. know what happens when CTL is implemented in the speaking class of the ninth year students of SMP Negeri 2 Ngadiluwih - Kediri.

## **D. Benefit of the Research**

Hopefully, this classroom action research can bring some benefits to the students, the researcher himself, and the school, SMP Negeri 2 Ngadiluwih.

1. The students
  - a. Being taught contextually, the students can improve their speaking proficiency since CTL is theoretically effective to improve students' speaking proficiency.
  - b. The students are more interested in studying English since the materials given are authentic. The materials relate to students' real life, not abstract. They are useful for students' real life. Moreover, CTL can improve the students' interest in studying English.
  - c. The teaching and learning process will be fun. The students are actively involved during teaching and learning process. The teaching techniques applied in the class vary. The class is not a teacher centered anymore.

## 2. The researcher himself

- a. By conducting this study, the researcher can improve his mastering in teaching English, especially speaking.
- b. He will know the approach which is appropriate to improve the students' speaking ability.
- c. He can also determine the contextual materials which relate to students' real life. So, what he gives to his students will be meaningful for their life.

## 3. The school

- a. When CTL is implemented at the school, the institution will be able to overcome the problems especially in teaching speaking.
- b. The institution can improve the quality of teaching. As a result, the out put and the achievement of SMP Negeri 2 Ngadiluwih will be better.
- c. Hopefully, the result of this research can be one of the school references in issuing policies.

