

## Improving Speaking Skills Using the Gallery Walk Technique

Caroline V. Katemba and Randison Buli

### Abstract

The purpose of this study was to find out whether use of the Gallery Walk technique could improve students speaking skills. The participants were 40 second-year students (grade 8) at Public Junior High School #1 (Sekolah Menengah Pertama Negeri – SMPN), Parongpong, Bandung Barat, Java, Indonesia. One experimental group was used in the study. Pre- and post-tests were done in association with applying the Gallery Walk technique. Based on the interpretation of p value (Sig.)  $\leq \alpha$  (0.05) then  $H_A$  was accepted and  $H_0$  is rejected. After calculations, it was found that students' interactive speaking achievement was improved significantly after using the Gallery Walk technique.

**Keywords:** *Speaking skills, gallery walk*

### Introduction

Speaking has been considered as one of the most important roles in human's life. Speaking is a process of expressing ideas. One of the most well-known spoken languages is English. Students learning English need to speak the language well in order to reduce the difficulties with the language. In Indonesia, students have difficulties in expressing themselves in the English language. This is due to the fact that the teaching of English consists mainly of learning correct grammatical structures or forms, increasing vocabulary, working on exercises at the sentence level, and asking students to repeat similar structures over and over (Katemba, 2013). It is therefore hard for students to speak English. It is for this reason that we focused this study on improving students' speaking skills.

Tuan and Tran (2015) highlighted three factors in teaching speaking:

1. Teachers need to generate students' ideas by using mind mapping and giving them enough time to express their thoughts.
2. Teachers need to make students feel comfortable by developing friendships and cooperative behaviors in order to overcome shyness.
3. Teachers should simplify the topic given in the textbook to help students understand the lesson more easily.

English as a Second Language teachers need to enhance these three factors connected with teaching speaking in order to improve students speaking skills. One effective technique in teaching speaking skills is Gallery Walk.

Gallery walk is an interactive technique that helps students improve their speaking ability because students leave their seats to walk around the classroom, talk with each other, and exchange information with their friends. It is one of the most versatile learner-centered activities. The gallery connects learners to each other and, in turn, connects the learner to the training topic in a number of interesting, interactive ways (Bowman, 2005).

This study intended to answer the following question:

*Is there any significant difference between students' speaking ability after using the Gallery Walk Technique in grade 8 at SMPN 1 Parongpong?*

This study focused on the following speaking skills: Proficiency of grammar, proficiency in choice of words, proficiency of comprehension, and fluency in speaking. The respondents were eighth-grade Junior High School students from SMPN 1 Parongpong. This study used a quantitative method with a pre-experimental design and with one group pre- and post-test. The research material that was given to the students was adopted from "English in Focus for Grade VIII Junior High School" written by

Wardiman, Janur, and Djusma (2008) and modified by the researchers. It was limited to three topics: (1) Technology; (2) Teenagers and their Lifestyles; and (3) Social Life.

## **Review of Related Studies and Literature**

### ***Speaking Skills***

In interacting with others, speaking skills have the most important role in order for us to transfer our thoughts, and for others to gain information through our speech. However, people feel worried to practice or exercise their speaking ability because of internal factors like motivation, lack of confidence, and low ability (Anwar, 2015). Four elements of speaking contribute to students speaking ability: proficiency of grammar, choice of words, comprehension, and fluency.

### ***Challenges in Utilizing Gallery Walk***

Gallery Walk is a technique just like any other teaching strategy that has its own weaknesses and strengths. Majiasih (2012) stated that the Gallery Walk is a technique in which the teacher needs to expend more energy to control and monitor learners' movement; it is also time consuming. Therefore, the teacher will be challenged to control the students' movement, making the technique particularly suitable to the elementary level, where students tend to move around.

Francek (2006) explained several benefits of using the Gallery Walk:

1. It has more flexibility; it can be done with computer, a piece of paper on the table, or with posted chart paper.
2. There is a chance for the students to share ideas in an intimate, supportive setting.
3. For teachers, it is a chance to gauge the depth of students' understanding of a particular concept and to challenge misconceptions.

Based on that description, Majiasih (2012) concluded that Gallery Walks allow students to be more creative in making their galleries interesting. The teaching atmosphere is not very formal, so the students can have more freedom to speak and enjoy the speaking activity. Students who make slow progress in learning will be able to imitate the behavior of the teacher and their friends.

## **Methodology**

The strategies used are detailed together with an overview of the research design and methodology, including sampling, population, standards applied during and after data collection, formulas and the research instrument used, data gathering and procedures, and the statistical treatment of data.

### **Research Method and Design**

The research design used in the study was a pre-experimental design, with one group being subjected to a pre- and post-test design. According to Phakiti (2014), the pre-experimental design is an exploration facilitating making inferences about relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable. There is no randomization in a pre-experiment. In this study, the pre-test was given at the beginning of the study to determine respondents' ability before giving treatments, and the post-test was applied during the last meeting of the study to show differences from the pre-test. The purpose of the research design was to determine the improvement of students' speaking skills at SMPN 1 Parongpong after using the Gallery Walk method. The design table is shown below for one group participating in the pre- and post-test design.

## **Research Instrument**

The instrument used in the study was as follows:

### **1. Test Instrument**

The test used was a subjective test in the form of interview questions that were answered orally by the students. In this study, 25 questions were tried out in a Pilot test. Twenty valid questions were selected from these, which were then used for the pre- and post-test.

### **2. Interview**

An interview approach was used to collect data, where students' answers to the questions were recorded by the teacher. The data recorded was then transcribed and printed to give a speaking assessment grade based on the method developed by Brown (2004).

## **Procedures of Data Gathering**

The following steps were used in data gathering.

### **1. Preparation Stage**

We performed a preliminary study in order to form an impression of the research sample. Then lesson plans for eight meetings were prepared and permission was gained to conduct the research.

### **2. Data Collection**

The data was collected from March 6 to April 5, 2017 with several steps as follows:

- a. A pre-test was given before the treatment was implemented in order to determine the prior speaking ability of the students. The test was in the form of an oral interview with individual students. Students involved in the study were asked a series of 20 questions.
- b. The procedures used were those of Eller and Sheila (2009). However, Francek (2006) indicated that instruction is dependent on the goal of teaching. In this study, the goal was to build the students' self-confidence in speaking. Consequently, we followed Anwar (2015) where, for teaching instruction, information was collected relating to the topic, and the material needed was assembled—i.e., several papers with printed topics, glue, different colored pens and discussion questions.
- c. After preparation was completed, the procedures adopted in the classroom were as follows (allocated time was 40 minutes):
  - i. The teacher introduces the speaking skills and the objective of the lesson for the designated days.
  - ii. The teacher provides some materials needed, such as several sheets or cartoons, glue, different colored pens/pencils, and discussion questions.
  - iii. The teacher divides the class into groups of four or five students, and gives each group a different colored pen.
  - iv. Each group of students is given a certain topic on which to make their own gallery exhibit, and discuss what they have made by putting their ideas and knowledge together.
  - v. The teacher instructs each group to walk around to the next gallery. Every group has to review the task, discussion questions, and any answers recorded by previous groups. Then members of the group must add information or comments with a colored pen, which represents their own group.
  - vi. After an appropriate amount of time (about 3 minutes), the students move to another gallery until all the groups have visited each gallery.
  - vii. The students then return to their own gallery to prepare comments and a brief oral report to present in the larger class. These oral reports provide an opportunity for all students to check their own understanding.

- viii. The teacher gives comments and summarizes the discussion questions at the end of learning.
- d. A post-test was given after students' had participated in the Gallery Walk learning experience. The post-test was in the form of an interview that asked 20 questions, which were exactly the same as the questions asked in the pre-test.

### Student Selection

One class of grade 8 in SMPN 1 Parongpong was taken as the experimental group. The class was comprised of 40 students, consisting of 5 males and 35 females.

### Statistical Treatment of Data

We used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 16 to analyze the data.

### Results and Discussion

Data relating to the research and its analysis are shown below in an attempt to answer the question "Is there any significant difference in improving students' speaking ability after using the Gallery Walk technique?"

### Description of Students' Speaking Achievement

Table 1 shows the improvement in students speaking ability after being giving the treatment. For example, student 1 had an improvement score increase from 105 to 217. Overall, the gain of the post-test over the pre-test was substantial. The formula for computing the normalized gain is shown below:

$$\text{Normalized Gain} = \frac{\text{Post test score} - \text{Pretest score}}{\text{Maximum Score} - \text{Pretest Score}}$$

According to Hake (1998), if  $0.30 < G \leq 0.70$ , it means that the improvement of students' performance after pre- and post-test is moderate. Since our observations showed  $0.30 < 0.60$ , it can be concluded that all the students speaking skills were improved.

**Table 1. Table of Pre-test, Post-test, Standard Deviation, and Gain**

	Sample Group	
	Mean	Standard Deviation
Pre-test	122.00	25.65
Post-test	288.87	48.31
Gain	0.60	0.17

The students' mean score on the pre-test was 122, but after using the Gallery Walk approach, the mean score on the post-test improved to 288.87, for a gain score 0.60. For the 40 students who were given this treatment, the average gain from pretest to posttest was 0.60, which is interpreted as moderate improvement. Data in Table 2 shows a significance level for the normality test of 0.60. If  $p$  value (Sig)  $\geq \alpha$  (0.05), it means that the data was distributed normally (Sianipar, 2014). Hence, based on the data in Table 2 with a p-value was greater than  $\alpha$  0.05, the data used in this study was distributed normally.

**Table 2. Normality Test**

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		GW
N		40
Normal Parameters <sup>a</sup>	Mean	.60
	Std. Deviation	.17
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.09
	Positive	.07
	Negative	-.09
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		.60
Asymptotic Significance (2-tailed)		.86

<sup>a</sup>.Test distribution is Normal.

### Summary and Conclusions

The title of this study is “Improving Speaking Skills Using the Gallery Walk Technique,” in which the research aim was to find an answer to the research question “Is there any significant difference in students’ speaking skills after using the Gallery Walk technique?”

This study was done in SMPN 1 Parongpong, Bandung, where the sample (n=40) was taken from second year Junior High School students as the experimental group. A pre-test was administered to the sample group at the beginning of the study, using some questions in the form of an essay that needed explanation. The students were asked to answer all the questions orally one by one, and the data was collected in the form of recordings that were transcribed in order to interpret the results. This experiment was implemented within a month, and was followed by a post-test to determine whether the treatment benefitted the students’ performance. The result shows that, for the subject group consisting of 40 students, the mean of the pre-test was 122 and the mean of the post-test was 288.875, which is significantly different.

### Conclusions

From this research study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The Gallery Walk is an effective method for improving students’ speaking skills.
2. From the researchers’ point of view, it was found that the second-year students in the study were motivated to share ideas and responded to each gallery while completing their activities as part of the learning process. Similar results were found by Francek (2006), who stated that the gallery walk is a discussion technique that gets students out of their chairs and into active engagement.

### About the Authors

Caroline V. Katemba is an Associate Professor of the School of Education and Director of Research and Community Service, Universitas Advent Indonesia (UNAI), Bandung, Indonesia. Corresponding author: [linakatemba@gmail.com](mailto:linakatemba@gmail.com).

Randison Buli, who was a research assistant for this study, is a graduate of the UNAI School of Education and a secondary school teacher in Bandung, Indonesia.

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