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**IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL OF THE FIFTH GRADERS IN  
SD INSAN AMANAH MALANG THROUGH DRAMA METHOD**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study aims to provide a problem-solving about students' reluctance in speaking activities to express thoughts and feelings in SD Insan Amanah. There were several problems that inhibit the students' speaking skills, namely fear of expressing, difficulties in facing many people (stage fright), wrong perceptions, and lack of contextual understanding. The drama method is impressive since it attracts people, which may encourage an unpredictable power when people perform it together. During the process, the students were expected to increase speaking skills; namely, the students are capable of speaking with proper pronunciation, intonation, and expressions. The research data source was the students' work in the form of structural cards and drama scripts. The data collection in this study was employed through observation format, field note format, structural cards, and drama scripts. Meanwhile, the data analysis was implemented through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. Peer observation and examination were conducted to test the data validity. Based on the research findings, in general, it can be concluded that the speaking skills learning through drama method of the fifth graders in SD Insan Amanah Malang were proved to increase. In Cycle I, only 35% of students succeeded. However, in Cycle II, there was an increase in 90% of students who succeeded in Basic Competence of "playing the drama role with proper pronunciation, intonation, and expression," meanwhile 10% of students had not succeeded.

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**INTRODUCTION**

Language functions as a means to express an idea, deliver an opinion, message, purpose, and intention, evoke memory and acknowledge someone's behavior. As a matter of fact, speaking skill is regarded as the most complex skill since it comprises not

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only verbal language produced by articulator influenced by language techniques but also non-language factors which cause verbal language is short and consisting of small units, which is often incomplete and less grammatical.

School-Based Curriculum (*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan-KTSP*) clearly states that learning a language is learning to communicate. The statement implies that anyone who studies a language is essentially learning to communicate. Consequently, language teaching is directed at the skill of performing and realizing speech acts, speech function, and language function. It is intended so that the speaking skill learning is not only directed at a theme of "talking about something," but it changes into "speaking with language" (Ministry of National Education, 2003: 18).

Based on the researcher's experience while teaching Indonesian language subject at SD Insan Amanah, the problem of learning speaking skills that often occurs is that it is still directed at learning of "talking about something." Besides, the obstacles that arise in speaking ability are (a) students are not/less courageous to express, (b) students are difficult to deal with many people (stage fever), (c) wrong perceptions about something, and (d) less context understanding.

The number of teaching methods that have been applied by teachers (at the place where the researcher teaches) is only limited to lecturing, questions and answers, demonstrations, assignments, discussions, and socio-dramas. Hence, this study aims to improve the speaking skills of the fifth graders in SD Insan Amanah Malang through drama method focusing on basic competency "playing drama role with proper pronunciation, intonation, and expression."

Speech success, besides being influenced by the ability to understand the subject matter, is also influenced by verbal and non-verbal language skills. Verbal language is defined as delivery or expression of ideas or intentions through spoken language or articulation. The articulation or spoken language is meant to describe processes, actions, or circumstances characterized by the use of the verb. Nevertheless, the non-verbal language includes intonation and pronunciation. In addition, body language functions to clarify and support the delivery of the messages.

Furthermore, regarding the drama method, Alan Maley and Alan Duff propose a limitation that drama is not merely a show in front of passive listeners; nonetheless, this activity value lies in "not in what they lead up to but in what they are, in what they bring out right now" (Maley and Duff 1984: 6). This understanding can be interpreted as the value in performing language actions and imaginative activities, and not merely as a performance.

Drama is an effective technique for teaching pronunciation because various components of communicative ability (discourse intonation, pragmatic awareness, non-verbal communication) can be practiced in an integrated manner. The statement is in line with Abdulhak Halim Ulas (876-880, 2008) who state that the primary influence of significant drama is obtained in improving/developing the speaking skill.

### **Stages in the Drama Method Implementation**

There are several stages in the drama method implementation to learn speaking skills, namely preparation, observation, mime, sound, words to sentences, and texts.

### **Drama Method Procedures**

The drama method procedures in speaking skill learning generally include three points, namely (1) planning, (2) implementation, and (3) assessment. Nonetheless, before carrying out the action, a preliminary study was conducted to identify what and how the learning problems of the speaking skills faced by the teachers and the fifth graders in SD Insan Amanah. The preliminary study in the form of reflection and

contemplation of the researcher as the teacher of the Indonesian Language was carried out through identifying and analyzing the obstacles of the peer teachers and students in the learning process. It was conducted by (a) observation, (b) interview, and (c) documentation study.

### **Class Action Planning**

From the preliminary study results and language skills researches that had been carried out, a problem-solving action employed in learning speaking skills through the drama method was generated. Class action planning comprises of several activities, namely (1) determination of the speaking learning purpose, (2) materials selection, (3) learning scenarios development, (4) learning resources preparation, (5) evaluation formats development, and (6) learning observations development.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative research approach with Classroom Action Research (CAR). The research was located in SD Insan Amanah at Griyashanta Executive Blok M (Jl. Soekarno Hatta) Malang. There were 504 students in SD Insan Amanah who divided into 18 classes starting from class 1 to 6. Especially for the fifth graders, there were 92 students categorized into three classes, namely class 5A of 32 students, class 5B of 28 students, and class 5C of 32 students.

Based on the information obtained from the Indonesian language teacher, there was one class that had a lower speaking ability than the other classes, namely class 5B (28 students). More than 50% of students had a speaking score below the Minimum Standard Mastery. Therefore, the researcher decided to conduct research in this class.

The research data was in the form of observations, interviews, field notes collection, and documentation of each corrective action employing technical strategies to improve drama learning with accurate pronunciation, intonation, and expression. In addition, the drama resulted in inaccurate pronunciation, intonation, and expressions right after the action was carried out at the end of each cycle.

The data source of this study was the fifth graders and Indonesian peer teachers in SD Insan Amanah Malang. Students were selected as the primary data source since the researcher focused on increasing the students' ability to play drama characters, meanwhile, the teacher was regarded as the supporting data source because the teacher, as the technical implementer, applied drama method to improve speaking skills. In addition, teachers' activities were also observed. It became one of the factors in learning success.

Furthermore, the data collection was conducted before and after providing treatment to the students. 1) Direct observation, namely implementing actions, observing the action, and recording/collecting data on the learning process. Observations were implemented to obtain preliminary data on the speaking learning implementation in presenting the research results before performing the action. During the action implementation, the observation was administered by observing the teachers' and students' activities.

The interview was performed to inquire about the teachers' and students' opinions regarding the actions that had been applied. Meanwhile, documentation was employed during and after the learning process. The documentation during the learning was utilized to obtain the record of the students' and teachers' activities in the form of video recordings. Meanwhile, the documentation after learning was in the form of recordings and photographs.

Moreover, field notes contained activities record during the learning process and changes that occurred in the students' and teachers' activities. It includes recording specific things of interest during the research.

In the early stages, the students were invited to discuss drama to motivate understanding and equalize understanding of drama and the drama characters. The next stage was practicing observation. These exercises were carried out by the students in classical and individual guided by the teacher. Language aspects that were trained include (1) intonation which included (a) pauses and (b) tempo; and (2) pronunciation which consisted of (a) articulation, (b) clarity, and (c) fluency. In addition, expression aspects included (1) eye gaze and (2) gesture.

The next stage was playing the drama characters. The construction phase from various training acquired by the students in the previous stages was projected in the form of dramatic behavior. At this stage, the students constructed the drama scripts communication to produce reasonable communication based on the context built.

During this study, the researcher collaborated with the fifth-grade teachers of Indonesian Language in SD Insan Amanah Malang. The researcher discussed with peer teachers about the drama methods implementation to improve students' speaking skills, especially in playing drama characters with appropriate intonation, pronunciation, and expression. Afterward, the researcher applied it to the learning, while peer teachers conducted an observation during the learning process. After acknowledging the factors of successes and obstacles in the Cycle I, the researcher and peer teachers worked together to design lesson plans that would be applied in the next cycle. The activity in the Cycle II was a continuation of the success in Cycle I. This cycle continued until the research problems had been solved and the research objectives had been reached or if the indicators of research objectives had been met (Akbar, 2008: 37).

Assessment of the students' basic competency was based on indicators. In this assessment activity, there were two critical components, which include: (a) valuation techniques, and (b) instrument form.

### **Assessment Techniques**

Assessment is a series of activities to obtain, analyze, and interpret the process and results of student learning, which is carried out systematically and continuously. As a result, it becomes meaningful information in decision making to determine the success rate of achieving specified competencies.

### **Instrument Form**

The instrument form chosen must be under the assessment technique. Therefore, the instruments forms developed could be in the instrument form classified as techniques: observations employing observation sheets, practical tests/performance in the form of performance/skills test, individual or group assignments. In fact, many methods of playing drama can be implemented to improve speech, with consideration of purpose, material, and time.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

The Cycle I consisted of three meetings. The Cycle I implementation comprised of (1) information on the preliminary study result, (2) lesson plans designing, (3) implementation of the Cycle I learning, (4) learning evaluation, (5) learning reflection, and (6) Cycle I findings.

The Cycle I learning was carried out on Monday, January 16 to Wednesday, January 18, 2012. The learning on Monday, January 16, 2012, was started at 07:15 and ended at 8:25.

### (1) Respiratory Training

Objective : To help students to control their breathing; to improve concentration and serenity.

Time : 5 minutes

Procedures :

- 1) Students sought a spacious place to stand, and then they stood up straight with their eyes closed.
- 2) By the teacher's guidance, the student took deep inhale. After that, they exhaled slowly and regularly.
- 3) Students continued for ten breaths. Every time they breathed in, they had to hold the air as long as possible before exhaling. They also had to exhale it slowly. The teacher could help students by counting aloud: Inhale - two, three, four; hold - two, three, four; exhale- two, three, four; inhale - two, three, four, five, and so on.
- 4) Then the teacher asked the students to sing something (Aaaaah, Uuuu, Oooooh, etc.) when they exhaled. This method was repeated several times.
- 5) After the activity in step 4 was conducted several times, the students repeated step 4 but in different ways. When the students breathed out, the sound had to be very loud and gradually disappeared as the breath ran out.
- 6) The students formed two groups with the same number. When exhaling, one group began chanting very loudly and gradually disappeared. In contrast, the other group chanted with a very soft voice and ended very loudly at the end.

### (2) Practicing pronunciation

Back writing

Objective : To express words aesthetically and encourage visualization/imagery.

Focus : Producing a familiar vocabulary.

Level : Basics and above.

Time : 10 minutes

Procedures :

- 1) Students worked in pairs. One student stood back the others.
- 2) Students who stood behind made word trace or short messages on their partner's backs with their fingertips. The partner tried to interpret the writing. They exchanged place after that.
- 3) After both students tried, they changed their partner and repeated the activity.

At the end of this session, the students were still in their initial group. The teacher shared a drama script entitled "*Hikmah Semangkuk Mie*." The teacher asked the students to read the dialogue with appropriate articulation, word clarity, and the fluency of each sentence in the dialogue. The exercise ran well. The students did the task enthusiastically and excitedly. Sometimes, they corrected their friends' reading, for example, by saying "the articulation is improper," "those words are not pronounced clearly," or "you are not fluent when reading it," etc.

On the other hand, Cycle II learning was carried out on Monday, January 16 to Wednesday, January 18, 2012. The learning on Tuesday, January 17, 2012, was begun at 07:15 and ended at 8:25. The core activities implementation of learning speaking skills through the drama play method included (a) the teacher instructed to practice respiratory training and students followed it, (b) the teacher trained intonation employing the drama method, and (c) the students played drama using correct pronunciation;

## **Preparation Stage of Training Implementation with Drama Method**

The learning developed by the teacher in the speaking skills practice through the drama method is as follows.

### **(1) Respiratory Training**

#### **a. Large conductor**

The student described himself as a great conductor. They stood in a balanced position. They exhaled deeply as they raised their arms at shoulder height. From the right and left side, they looked like a conductor in an orchestra which was ready to start. They breathed out slowly.

#### **b. Blowing the candle**

The students imagined a line of twelve candles in front of them. They took a deep breath and blew all the candles one by one. It aimed to make students have enough breath until the last candle. For students who were not too adult, they could imagine several candles according to their age.

All students together formed a large circle. The teacher gave instructions to take a deep breath through the diaphragmatic breathing and released by blowing. All the students were highly enthusiastic about carrying out this activity. They began to be capable of regulating the breathing and releasing it slowly and regularly.

### **(2) Listing**

The next exercise with the drama method is "listing." This method taught the students to read a list of words with several punctuations, such as full stop (.), question mark (?), and exclamation (!). For instance, the student read: Go.; Go?; Go!

All students took a turn to read the list. If there was one student who made a mistake in reading the list, another student would remind him/her. Most of the students did it correctly, even though there were still some students who had not performed it appropriately. The students who had not read it fluently had a low volume; hence, the students did not show different intonation in reading the words with different punctuations. There was no difference between full stop (.), question mark (?), and exclamation (!).

In addition, the Cycle I learning was conducted on Monday, January 16 to Wednesday, January 18, 2012. Meanwhile, the Cycle I learning on the third day was on Wednesday, January 18, 2012, which began at 09:15 and ended at 10:20.

The core activities implementation of learning the speaking skills through the drama method comprised of (a) the teacher gave instructions to practice respiratory training, and the students followed it, (b) the teacher taught expressions through drama, (c) the students played drama with proper expressions;

The preparation phase of the exercise implementation with the drama play method developed by the teacher to practice speaking skills is as follows.

### **(3) Directional Relaxation**

**Objective** : To provide students with a relaxed/peaceful state to prepare for the next activity.

**Level** : All

**Time** : 10 minutes

**Procedures:**

- 1) The students stood comfortably, spread the feet in shoulders length, and closed their eyes in a spacious place
- 2) The teacher pronounced these following words softly, slowly, and clearly. "You are full of tension. It is like a liquid in your body. You will empty it. Try to feel it in your head. This feeling flows very slowly, down through your neck, your chest. Feel

flowing on your arms, then go down ... down to your feet. Now, you have a small hole in each toe. Feel the tension flowing through the holes. Feel how now your body becomes light and relaxed. Now you will take power from the floor. When you breathe in, the feeling flows through the holes in your feet, go up... up to your head. Now feel that your body is full of energy and strength. When you are ready, open your eyes. How do you feel?"

(3) "Clap Around the Circle"

Objective : To develop reaction speed and to facilitate non-verbal contacts/relationships among the students. (warming-up)

Time : 10-15 minutes

Procedures :

- 1) The students stood in a large circle; if possible, the distance between each student was about one meter.
- 2) The teacher appointed one student to start. The student delivered a clap to the student on his/her right like throwing the clap, and another student caught the clap.
- 3) The student caught the clap by clapping and then turned right and clapped to the next student. The student, who caught this clap, turned right and threw one clap to the next student and so on, until surrounding the circle.
- 4) Next, if the clapped returned to the initial student, the direction changed.
- 5) If the movement returned to the original student, the teacher selected two students on the opposite side of the circle. A student would send a clap to the right, and another student to the left.
- 6) The teacher chose a student to start. The teacher clapped on a student by moving to the other direction at the circle. The teacher clapped this student when the student got the clap, then sent it to other students in the circle. A cross clap message occurred in the circle.
- 7) Similar to activity 3; however, the students added one short message when they clapped. For example A: "Hi! (name) catch this." B: "Thank you very much."
- 8) Instead of a clap, the students can throw an imaginary ball, a thing, or a small animal to another student. Every time one student gets anything, they have to change it to something else, something before throwing it. Teachers can vary this model by asking the students who throw to tell what object is thrown.

**(5) Practicing Expressions**

Purpose : Introducing mime/imitation as a form of expression

Focus : Describing ongoing activities, for example, "You are fishing," with more detailed response expressions, for instance, "Yes, but where am I fishing? What am I trying to catch?"

Time : 15 minutes

Preparation: Creating a card so that each student got one card. Box 3 and 4 provided several examples of cards for basic and advanced groups.

Procedures :

- 1) The students worked in pairs. Each student was given a card, which could not be shown to their partners/friends.
- 2) Students imitated (copied) movements like on their card in turns. It was the job of the partner/friend to interpret it as carefully as possible and asked to clarify which parts were not clear.

There is a practice method of playing drama with expression, namely the teacher asked the students to pair up with their friends and face to face. The two students would express their imitations according to the card with facial expressions and proper

exercise. Meanwhile, when one student performed a demonstration/imitation, the partner must be able to guess the expressions. After going through the expression training session, the students began to play drama.

Cycle II of learning is carried out on Monday, January 23 to Wednesday, January 25, 2012. The learning on Monday was conducted on January 23, 2012, started at 07.15 and ended at 8:25. The learning and activities in Cycle II were not significantly different from the Cycle I. It was only different in the warming-up stage. In addition, at this stage, there were differences in pronunciation training.

Cycle II learning was carried out on Monday, January 23 to Wednesday, January 25, 2012. The learning was conducted on Tuesday, January 24, 2012. It was started at 07:15 and ended at 8:25. In this second cycle, all students had a turn to read the list. The average number of students had performed it correctly and accurately. Some students who were not fluent were caused by their low volume. Therefore, the punctuation marks of a full stop, question mark, and exclamation were not clearly heard.

Cycle II learning was carried out on Monday, January 23 to Wednesday, January 25, 2012. The third lesson was administered on Wednesday, January 25, 2012. It was begun at 9:15 and ended at 10:20. The teacher only provided the right model for several students to do expression exercises correctly, especially about facial expressions and proper body language. The students, together with their group, read the dialogue alternately with the right expression.

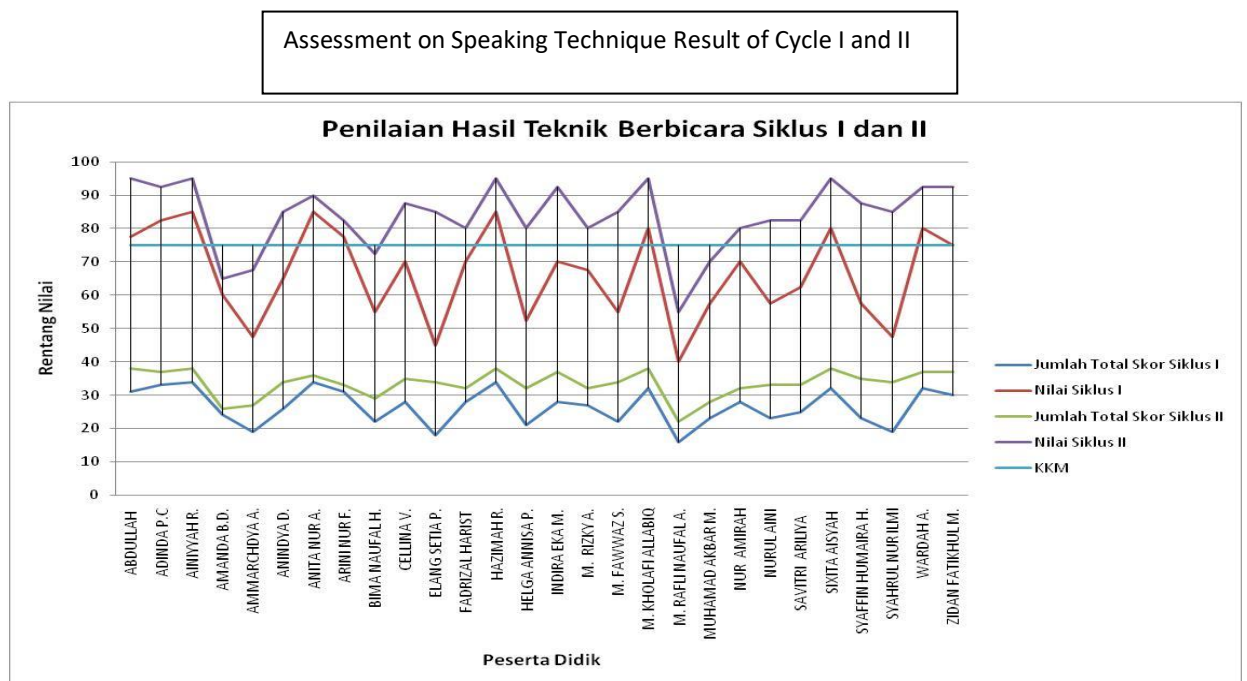
From these results, a temporary conclusion was obtained. The success rate of the Cycle I only reached 35%, in which the students reaching the Minimum Standard Mastery score (75) amounted to 10 students. Meanwhile, the students who did not reach the Minimum Standard Mastery were still 65%, as many as 18 students. Thus, Cycle I was declared unsuccessful. Nonetheless, after Cycle II was implemented, it began to identify a significant increase. There were 90% of students, or 25 students reached the Minimum Standard Mastery score (75). On the other hand, the students who did not reach Minimum Standard Mastery were only 10%, as many as three students. Hence, Cycle II was confirmed successfully because only 10% of students who did not succeed. There was an increase between Cycle I and Cycle II. The following is a statistical calculation of 35% of students who succeed.

### Assessment Difference in Speaking Skill Improvement through Drama Group Statistics

CYCLE		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean					
ASSESSMENT DIFFERENCE OF CYCLE I										
DRAMA SKILL IMPROVEMENT IN CYCLE II										
Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
ASSESSMENT DIFFERENCE IN DRAMA ABILITY IMPROVEMENT		4.349	.042	-5.493	54	.000	-7.000	1.274	-9.555	-4.445
DRAMA				-5.493	50.526	.000	-7.000	1.274	-9.559	-4.441
									Lower	Upper



From the output above, it is identified that the average score of drama ability improvement in Cycle I was 26.54, and Cycle II was 33.54. From the T-test column, it demonstrates that the P-value was 0.000 for the 2-sided test. The P-value was smaller than  $\alpha = 0.05$ ; hence, the  $H_0$  is rejected. It can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference in the average assessment of the drama ability between Cycle I and II.



The graph above illustrates that the drama method is capable of improving the speaking technique of the fifth graders in SD Insan Amanah. It is proven by the number of students in Cycle I having a score below Minimum Standard Mastery was still 65%; nevertheless, in Cycle II, the students whose score below the Minimum Standard Mastery was only 17%.

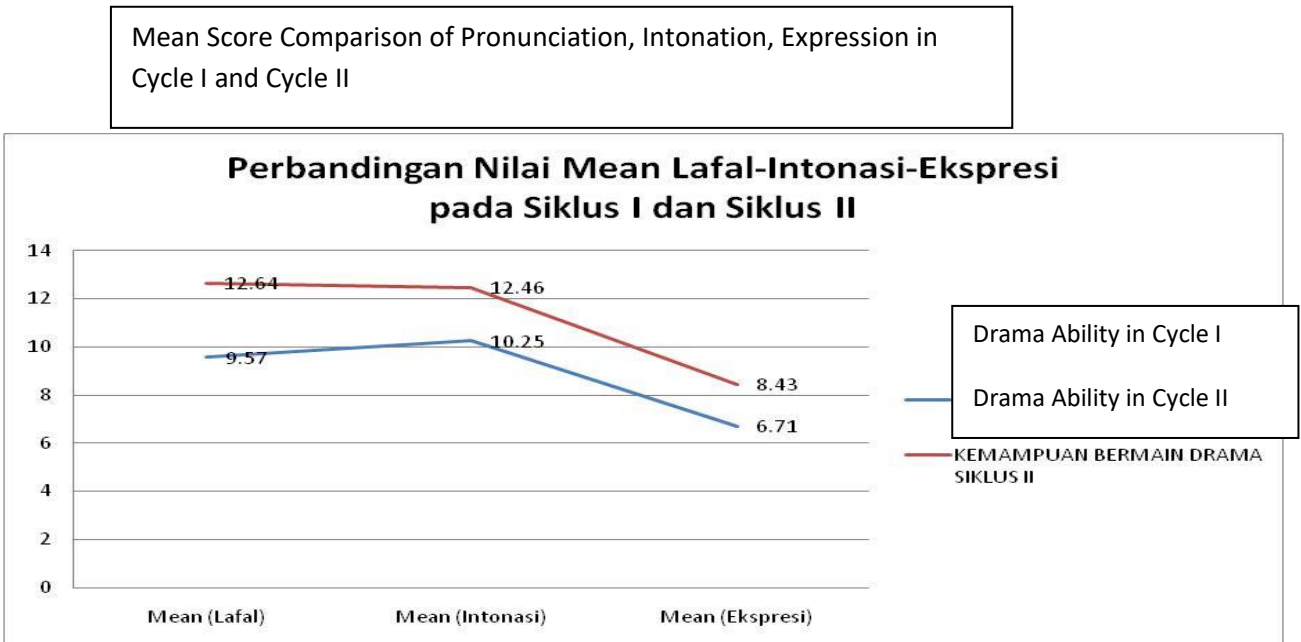
## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on this research finding, in general, it can be concluded that the speaking skill learning through the drama method of the fifth graders in SD Insan Amanah Malang proved to increase. Specifically, the increase in speaking skills focused on pronunciation, intonation, and expression. The following are the final conclusions and research results based on the research objectives. First, there was a significant increase in pronunciation in playing the drama role of the fifth graders in SD Insan Amanah Malang. Second, there was a considerable improvement in intonation in playing the drama role of the fifth graders in SD Insan Amanah Malang. Third, the expression of the fifth graders in SD Insan Amanah Malang improved in playing the drama role.

Through a comparison of Cycle I with Cycle II, an increase in speaking skill of the fifth graders in SD Insan Amanah Malang was obtained through the drama method. In Cycle I, only 35% of students succeeded in achieving the Basic Competence **“Playing the drama role with the proper pronunciation, intonation, and expression,”** meanwhile 65% of the students had not succeeded. However, in Cycle II, there was a significant increase in which 90% of the students succeeded, while 10% of them had not succeeded.

Students who had not succeeded tend to be introverted, closed, diffident, unable to communicate, and less motivated.

Based on the Cycle I and Cycle II, the conclusion obtained that among the increase scores of pronunciation, intonation, and expression, intonation is identified as having the highest score. It, then followed by pronunciation, and the last is the expression. A more detailed data illustrated in the following graph



The pronunciation's mean score in Cycle I reached 9.57 and increased in Cycle II to 12.64. In addition, the intonation's mean score in Cycle I was 10.25 and increased in Cycle II with 12.46. Meanwhile, the expression's mean score in Cycle I amounted to 6.71 and it raised in Cycle II into 8.43. This data exhibits that expression learning is the most difficult aspect. Accordingly, it is suggested for Indonesian teachers to focus on expression in teaching drama. Practicing expressions tends to be more difficult since students are likely to be shy and unconfident to perform. Therefore, the teacher must always give an example and enthusiasm to the students to be more confident and animating the script.

After conducting the research in two cycles, several new alternatives on learning method which are not boring, not monotonous and not student-center were identified. Accordingly, there are a number of suggestions that can be conveyed here, namely: (1) curriculum developers at higher education institutions in Elementary School Teacher Study Program (*Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar-PGSD*) should convey Classroom Action Research (CAR) as a compulsory subjects so that future PGSD graduates can solve practical problems in learning, (2) elementary school teachers are advised to implement this research result as an alternative strategy for speaking skill learning, or can even be tried for other skills learning, and (3) other researchers are suggested to be capable of designing a research related to the drama method in speaking skill for other aspects development in the speaking concept.

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