

## Puppet As Media In Improving Young Learners' Participation In Conversation

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**Abstract:** This action research aimed to improve students' participation in English conversation. The participants were 38 of the fifth grade students of SD Muhammadiyah 2 Pontianak. Observation and fieldnote were used to collect and analyze the data. The research findings showed that the use of puppet as media can improve students' participation in English conversation. In the first cycle, the percentage of the students' participation in English conversation was 53%: 11 students participated in asking question, 6 students participated in answering questions, and 3 students participated in giving opinions. In the second cycle, the students' participation improved to 61%: 14 students participated in asking question, 8 students participated in answering question, and 4 students participated in giving opinions. Finally, in the third cycle, the percentage of students' participation was 74%: 14 students participated in asking questions, 11 students participated in answering questions, and 5 students participated in giving opinions. Cycle two and three showed improvement on the students' participation in asking questions, answering questions, and giving opinions when being taught by using puppet. Hence, Puppet as media can improve students' participation in English conversation.

**Keywords:** Puppet, Young Learners, Conversation

### Research Background

Learning language are any efforts to master the language itself. Speaking skill is the measurement of how many the students master the language. How well the students master English can be seen on how much they are able to speak. One of speaking activities is conversation. Conversation is the key of transferring information in English communication. To be able to communicate effectively, students have to know how to converse in the target language. Conversation is the simple form of learning speaking at the early stage. Therefore, teacher is required to get the students skillful in conversation to achieve the goal of learning speaking.

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To make students participate actively in English conversation is by practicing the language. As Tong (2010) stated that language learning is more effective when target language is used, particularly in regard to understanding the language in general and enhancing their skills. In fact, it is found that students are lack of participation in the classroom learning which makes them do not practice the target language.

Based on the result of researcher interview with the teacher that the fifth grade students of SD Muhammadiyah 2 Pontianak have a problem in participation in English conversation. The teacher said that students in 5D were the students with the lowest participation among the other classes (5A, 5B, and 5C). Low participation was influenced by feeling shy to speak in the front of the class, and feeling afraid of making mistakes. The teacher said that she already used film and song in order to improve students' participation, but the progress was not too significant.

In line with the problems found, the researcher conducted an observation in order to ensure that students in 5D were the students with the lowest participation among other classes. The researcher used some criteria to categorize students as participated students or non participated students cover asking questions, answering questions, and giving opinions. As Green (2008) stated that participation as the act of being involved in the class such as an active intervention by providing either spontaneous or unsolicited contributions, such as giving opinions, answering questions, making comments, talking about a topic, participating in group discussions, reading, and asking questions. Based on some considerations from the interview and observation class, the researcher decided that 5<sup>th</sup> grade students of class 5D as a target class in this research.

To solve this problem, teacher can start thinking about what media is appropriate to use. Recently, the media used by the teacher is only in the form of visual and audio-lingual. Students need new learning media so the teacher can bring the moving things to stimulate them to practice. According to Scott & Ytreberg (2004), there are some techniques to present new language through conversation they are through using puppet, using a mascot, drawings and silhouettes. In this case, the researcher assumes that puppet can be a good media to create active learning in the classroom. The media is appropriate by considering that student will do some practices in their speaking by conversing using puppet

A similar research finding conducted by Hayati (2009) entitled the use of puppet as a media in teaching conversation for young learners. It was found that the media was effective to be used because it influenced the students' behavior. It is seen from the classroom activity where the students are more

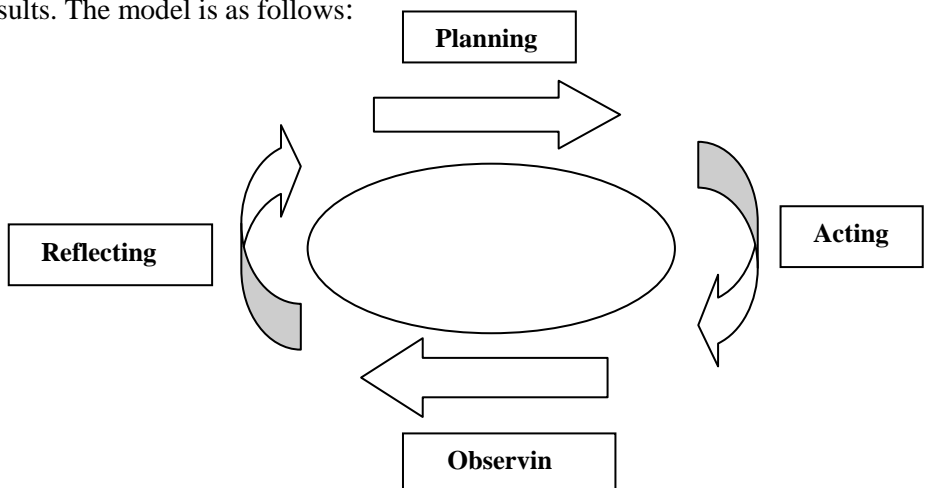
active in conversation. It means that the puppets can enhance students' participation in learning English because it is interesting, attractive and interactive.

In this research, the researcher focused on teaching conversation in English by using puppets. The researcher conducted this research to students of SD Muhammadiyah 2 Grade 5 class 5D in academic year 2014/2015 because the students in this class has the lowest participation in English conversation. The researcher wanted to find out how the process of using puppet improve students' participation in English conversation and how the result of using puppet in improving students' participation in English conversation.

### Research Methodology

The researchers used Classroom action research as the method of research. Cohen et al (2005) said that classroom action research may be used in any setting where a problem involving people, tasks, and procedures cries out for solution, or where some change of future results in a more desirable outcome. It means that classroom action research focuses on seeking solutions to problems.

Cohen, Marion, Morrison (2005: 232) suggests that action research is a collaborative, critical and self-critical that is done by the practitioners, and they also divide the action research into a cyclical process: (1) strategic planning; (2) action, that is implementing the plan; (3) observation, evaluation and self- evaluation; and (4) critical and self- critical reflection on the results. The model is as follows:



**1. Planning**

In this stage, the researcher firstly identified students' problems referring to teaching- learning process in classroom. Then, the researcher prepared the material, made lesson plans, prepared observation sheets to record students' activities, and prepared teaching aids and instrument for testing. During this stage, the researcher also investigated the students' problems, indicators of the problem, the causes of problems, and proposed solution of the problems.

**2. Acting**

In this stage, the researcher acted to implement the action. The lesson plan was carried out in the classroom, and the teaching activities were conducted step by step based on the lesson plan. The researcher used puppet as media to improve students' participation in English conversation.

**3. Observing**

The researcher observed the implementation helped by collaborator. They observed students' activities during the teaching learning process. The collaborator noted the strengths and weaknesses of the lesson plan implementation using puppet as media in improving students' participation in English conversation.

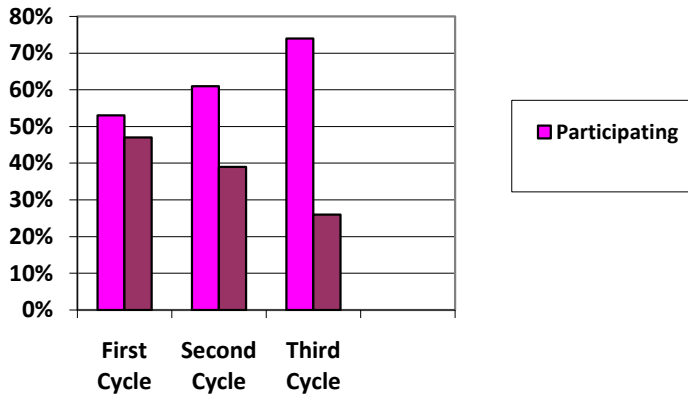
**2. Reflecting**

The researcher and collaborator evaluated the process and the result of the implementation of the use of puppet as media in improving students' participation in English conversation. The evaluation is a consideration in deciding the next cycle. The researcher and collaborator revised the plan to overcome the problems that were not successfully solved in the cycle before. The rest of the problems were overcome in the next cycle.

**Research Findings**

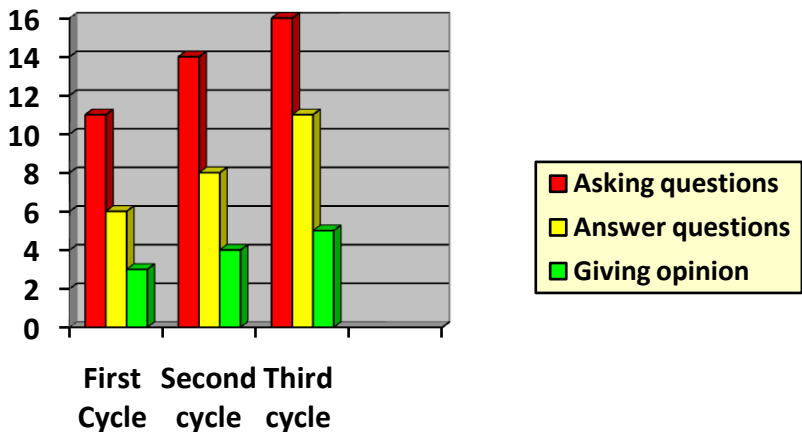
The research was conducted in three cycles. Through the cycles, the researcher had found a significant improvement in the students' participation. It is shown in the chart below:

**Figure 1**  
**The students' improvement of participation in each cycle**



Cycle to cycle showed improvement. The numbers of students in the classroom were 38 students (100%). In the first cycle, the students' participation was 53% while non participated ones were 47%. In the second cycle, the percentage of students' participation improve to 61%. At last, the third cycle showed the improvement of students' participation 74%.

**Figure 2**  
**Aspects of participation on each cycle**



The chart above shows that in the first cycle, 11 students participated in asking question, 6 students participated in answering questions, and 3 students participated in giving opinions. In the second cycle, 14 students participated in asking questions, 8 students participated in answering questions, and 4 students participated in giving opinions. Meanwhile, in the third cycle, 16 students participated in asking questions, 11 students participated in answering questions and 5 students participated in giving opinions.

In addition the students’ problems and their improvement during the process in each cycle are described in the following table:

**TABLE 1**

Cycle	Problems / reflection	Students’ Participation	Planning to solve the problem
1 <sup>st</sup>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The students did not listen to teachers’ instruction so the class was noisy during the teaching and learning process.</li> <li>2. The students did not know how to use puppet.</li> <li>3. The students asked and answered question and gave opinions in Indonesian because they had problem in vocabulary and pronunciation.</li> <li>4. There were many students asked and answered the questions which were irrelevant to the material.</li> </ol>	53 %	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The teacher attracted the students’ attention by giving more examples and involved the students to practice the conversation using the puppet.</li> <li>2. The teacher gave explanation how to use puppet more clearly.</li> <li>3. The teacher translated what students said in Bahasa Indonesia to English language to make the students know how to pronounce the words in English.</li> <li>4. The teacher led the students to participate on relevant material.</li> </ol>
2 <sup>nd</sup>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. There were still some students had problem in pronouncing words in English.</li> <li>2. There were some students still asked and answered the questions that were</li> </ol>	61%	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The teacher translated in English language when the students participate in Bahasa Indonesia in order to make the students know how to pronounce it in English.</li> </ol>

	irrelevant to the material.		2. The teacher led the students to participate on relevant material.
3 <sup>rd</sup>	There was no major problem in third cycle although there were some students who still asked and answered the questions which were irrelevant to the material.	74%	

**Discussion**

There were three categories of students’ participation: asking questions, answering questions, and giving opinions. As Green (2008) stated that participation as the act of being involved in the class such as an active intervention by providing either spontaneous or unsolicited contributions, such as giving opinions, answering questions, making comments, talking about a topic, participating in group discussions, reading, and asking questions. In this case the researcher limited the aspect of students’ participation into asking questions, answering questions, and giving opinions.

In the first cycle, the researcher found that several students still had problem in using puppet, speaking English instead the spoke Indonesian, and doing conversation. Besides, some students asked and answered questions and gave opinions which were irrelevant to the material. The percentage of students’ participation in English conversation the first cycle was 53%. Then, in the second cycle, the percentage of the students who asked and answered questions which were irrelevant to the material decreased from 47% to 39 %. The students who answered and asked questions which were irrelevant to the material were categorized as non participated students. In line with that Roka (2010) stated that participation also has been defined as the number of unsolicited responses volunteered and it can come in many different forms, including students’ asking questions, answering questions and comments or opinion in relevant material. Finally, in the third cycle, the percentage of the non participated students decreased more from 39% to 26%

The improvement of the students’ participation improved from cycle to cycle. The improvement that happened in the classroom was considered as the result of action that using puppet to improve students’ participation. As Gronna et al cited in Khameis (2006) believed puppets can be used to teach language function and the social skill of greeting responding to the conversation in order to make students participate in teaching and learning

process. Therefore, puppet is good teaching media to improve students' participation in English conversation.

Description above showed that using puppet is one of appropriate teaching media to improve students' participation in English conversation.

## Conclusion and Suggestion

### • Conclusion

The use of puppet as media can improve students' participation in English conversation. Each cycle showed the improvement of the students' participation in English conversation. In the first cycle, the percentage of the students' participation in English conversation was 53%. Then, in the second cycle, it improved to 61%. Finally, in the third cycle, the percentage improved to 74%.

### • Suggestion

Puppet can be used as one of media to improve the students' participation in English conversation since the research findings showed that the use of puppet as media can improve students' participation in English conversation.

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