

Enhancing Elementary Students' Opinion Expression Skills Through the Discussion Method in Indonesian Elementary Schools

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to enhance students' ability to express opinions through the application of the Discussion Method in 5th grade of SD Inpres Tavanjuka. This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) based on the Kemmis and McTaggart model, which consists of four stages: planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The research was conducted over two cycles. Data were collected through observation and tests administered at the end of each cycle. The findings showed that the classical absorption rate (CAR) for expressing opinions in Cycle I was 71.95%, with a classical learning completeness (CLC) rate of 78.26%. In Cycle II, the results improved, with a CAR of 76.73% and a CLC of 91.30%. Based on the percentage of learning completeness in Cycles I and II, a significant improvement was observed, with an increase of 4.78% in CAR. Thus, it can be concluded that learning through the application of the Discussion Method effectively enhances the ability of 5th grade students at SD Inpres Tavanjuka to express their opinions. The action hypothesis in this study is therefore accepted.

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INTRODUCTION

Education is an effort to enable individuals to develop their potential through the learning process. Learning becomes meaningful for students when teachers understand the subject matter to be taught, enabling them to deliver the material optimally during the learning process. This principle also applies to Indonesian language learning, where teachers must comprehend the unique characteristics of Indonesian language instruction. In Indonesian language learning, various skills must be mastered by students, as these skills are essential not only in the field of education but also in everyday life (Kartini et al., 2019; Prihatin, 2017; Suyitno et al., 2019).

However, in practice, the use of the Indonesian language remains imperfect and often does not adhere to established norms or standards. Many Indonesians, particularly students, lack an adequate understanding of proper Indonesian usage. The implementation of Indonesian as the sole medium of instruction across all types and levels of education in Indonesia still poses challenges that demand greater attention. Proficiency in proper Indonesian usage can be enhanced through educational programs in schools, especially within the Indonesian language subject (Solikah, 2019).

Efforts to develop language skills in line with their functions are carried out through education in schools. Specifically, Indonesian language learning at the elementary and secondary levels is directed towards the mastery of linguistic skills. Among these skills, the ability to speak is one of the most crucial potentials to be developed, as it serves as the foundation for effective direct communication (Pamuji & Inung Setyami, 2021; Purnamasari et al., 2023; Susanti, 2016). In various situations, particularly in schools, both teachers and students are expected to communicate effectively. The primary requirement is the ability to articulate thoughts and ideas through spoken language.

Speaking is the most dominant and essential form of communication in society. Speaking skills are productive language skills that involve generating, conveying, or delivering messages. Speaking is not merely about producing sounds or uttering words. As an aspect of linguistic competence, speaking is the skill to articulate thoughts and convey feelings through spoken language, either orally or through speech. Speaking is not just about the rapid production of words but also involves the orderly presentation of ideas in various language forms suitable for communication purposes (Suleman, 2024). Therefore, developing speaking skills requires consistent and effective training.

Based on preliminary observations and interviews with teachers at SD Inpres Tavanjuka, Tatanga District, it was found that in the teaching of the Indonesian language, many students struggle to express their ideas or opinions verbally. Furthermore, the application of varied teaching methods is minimal, as teachers predominantly rely on conventional or lecture-based methods due to a lack of familiarity with alternative instructional strategies.

When students were asked to provide opinions on an image, less than 50% were able to respond confidently, while most refused or remained silent when asked to express their opinions. This situation underscores the need for improvement in the learning process through specific actions, making it suitable for classroom action research.

Referring to the aforementioned background, the research problem is: Does the application of the discussion method improve students' ability to express opinions in the Indonesian language subject in 5th grade at SD Inpres Tavanjuka? Based on this research problem, the objective of the study is to enhance students' ability to express opinions in the Indonesian language subject in 5th grade at SD Inpres Tavanjuka.

METHOD

This study employed Classroom Action Research. According to, classroom action research has the following characteristics: (1) it is based on problems encountered by teachers in instructional activities, (2) it involves collaboration in its implementation, (3) the researcher acts as a

practitioner conducting reflection, (4) it aims to improve the quality of instructional practices, and (5) it is conducted in several iterative cycles.

Classroom action research arises from teachers' self-awareness that learning practices carried out in the classroom often have problems that need to be addressed. This class action research was conducted at SD Inpres Tavanjuka, Tatanga District, in the second semester of the 2018/2019 school year. The subjects of this study were all 23 students of 5th grade SD Inpres Tavanjuka, consisting of 8 male students and 15 female students. The object of this research is the ability to express opinions of 5th grade students.

The research model referred to the modified diagram developed by Kemmis and McTaggart, as cited in Taniredja et al. (2010). Each cycle consisted of several stages: (1) Planning, (2) Implementation, (3) Observation, and (4) Reflection. The data collection techniques used in this study included tests and non-test methods (observation and documentation). The types of data collected were quantitative data, in the form of students' test results in expressing opinions, and qualitative data, in the form of observations of teacher and student activities during the learning process. Quantitative data were obtained by calculating the percentage of students' success in completing individual evaluation tasks using the following formula (Source: MMC SD Inpres Tavanjuka).

Individual Mastery Learning (IML) is calculated using the formula:

$$\text{IML} = \frac{\text{Score achieved by the student}}{\text{Maximum score of the test}} \times 100$$

A student is considered to have achieved individual mastery if their percentage of individual absorption is $\geq 70\%$. Classical Mastery Learning (CML) is calculated using the formula:

$$\text{CML} = \frac{\text{Number of students who achieved mastery}}{\text{Total number of students}} \times 100$$

A class is considered to have achieved classical mastery if $\geq 80\%$ of students have reached mastery. The average learning outcome or Classical Absorption Rate (CAR) is calculated using the formula:

$$\text{CAR} = \frac{\text{Total score achieved by all students}}{\text{Maximum score of the test} \times \text{Total number of students}} \times 100$$

Qualitative data were obtained from observations of teacher and student activities through observation sheets, analyzed, and expressed as percentages (Depdiknas, 2014). The formula used is:

$$\text{Percentage of average score} = \frac{\text{Total Score}}{\text{Maximum score}} \times 100$$

Categories for average score:

$\geq 90\%$: Excellent

75% - < 90%: Good

50% - < 75%: Fair

30% - < 50%: Poor

10% - < 30%: Very Poor

This study is considered successful if $\geq 80\%$ of students have reached the Minimum Mastery Criteria (MMC) of 75.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this classroom action research were obtained from both test and non-test outcomes. The test results for Cycle I and Cycle II consisted of oral evaluations, while the non-test results for Cycle I and Cycle II were derived from observations made during the learning process. The non-test research findings from Cycle I and Cycle II are presented in descriptive and qualitative forms.

The pre-action phase is the stage conducted by the researcher to determine the initial conditions of students before any actions were taken in 5th grade at SD Inpres Tavanjuka (Karyadi & Jannah, 2023; Nuryati & Rangganis, 2022). Based on observations during the learning process, students showed a lack of enthusiasm when given the task of expressing their opinions. This was evident when one student shared their opinion, yet other students did not pay attention to their peer's thoughts and preferred to engage in other activities, such as disturbing their classmates, mocking them, and creating disruptions in the class. The results of the opinion-expression test during the pre-action phase can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Results of Analysis on the Ability to Express Opinions Pre-Action.

No	Category	Results
1.	Number of students	23
2.	Achieved minimum mastery criteria	15
3.	Did not achieve minimum mastery criteria	8
4.	Highest score	90
5.	Lowest score	50
6.	Classical absorption rate	71.30%
7.	Classical mastery learning	65.21%

Based on Table 1, it is known that from the 23 students in 5th grade who took the pre-test, 15 students achieved the Minimum Mastery Criteria (MMC) and 8 students did not achieve the MMC set by SD Inpres Tavanjuka, which is 70. This means that only 15 students were able to express their opinions. From the implementation of this pre-action, the classical absorption rate (CAR) was obtained at 71.30% with a classical mastery learning rate (CMLR) of 65.21%. This indicates that the ability of 5th grade students to express their opinions is still considered very low.

The test results were used to examine the issues in learning how to express opinions. Therefore, an effort to improve learning is needed so that students develop the ability to express their opinions, which will serve as a basis for the researcher to determine the plan for Cycle I action. In this case, an innovative learning method is needed to improve students' ability to express opinions. The innovation referred to is learning through the application of the Discussion method in Indonesian language lessons, specifically for expressing opinions in 5th grade (Anggreni, 2019; Putra et al., 2024; Wati & Utami, 2022). The pre-test was conducted on Tuesday, April 9, 2019.

This classroom action research has been carried out according to the stages and procedures established previously. The evaluation results obtained in Cycle I can be seen in Table 2.

Tabel 2. Results of the Analysis on the Ability to Express Opinions in Cycle I.

No	Category	Results
1.	Number of students	23
2.	Achieved minimum mastery criteria	18
3.	Did not achieve minimum mastery criteria	5
4.	Highest score	90
5.	Lowest score	50
6.	Classical absorption rate	71.95%
7.	Classical mastery learning	78.26%

Based on the analysis results above, the classical absorption rate (CAR) of 5th grade students has shown improvement from the previous results, where the classical absorption rate (CAR) was 71.30%, and then increased to 71.95% from 23 students. There were 18 students who met the Minimum Mastery Criteria (MMC) according to the standards set by Sekolah Dasar Inpres Tavanjuka, with the highest score of 90 and the lowest score of 50. Meanwhile, 5 students did not meet the criteria. Additionally, the classical mastery learning rate (CMLR) was obtained with a percentage of 78.26%.

In Cycle I, the learning process with the application of the Discussion method has not fully achieved the success indicators set. This is due to some students still facing difficulties in expressing their opinions, as they have not yet gained the confidence to speak in public or in front of the class. Therefore, it is necessary to proceed to the next cycle, Cycle II, which is an improvement from the implementation of Cycle I.

To determine the amount of improvement that occurred from the pre-action to Cycle I, it can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Comparison of the Results of the Analysis on the Ability to Express Opinions: Pre-action vs Cycle I.

No	Category	Pre-action	Cycle I	Difference
1.	Classical absorption rate	71.30%	71.95%	+65%
2.	Achieved minimum mastery criteria	65.21%	78.26%	+13.05%
3.	Did not achieve minimum mastery criteria	34.78%	21.73%	-13.05%

The success of the research is also obtained based on the results of the student activity observations made by colleagues, showing the total score obtained from all the assessment items is 49 out of 80 total points, with an average percentage of 61.25%, qualifying as "satisfactory" according to the percentage standards set by the Ministry of National Education in the curriculum.

The results of the teacher activity observations show that the total score obtained is 58 out of a maximum score of 72, with a percentage of 80.55%, qualifying as "good." The results have met the indicators that were set, although there are still some areas that need further improvement. The shortcomings found in this cycle need to be minimized in order to achieve better results in the next cycle (Kock et al., 1995; List, 2006).

Based on the observation results during the action implementation process, the researcher gained information that further improvements are needed in the teaching activities, as there are still students who experience difficulties and feel bored with learning. This is because some students are less active in the learning process, for example, when the teacher conducts a question-and-answer session and the students do not perform the tasks they should. The reasons for this may include students not enjoying the lesson, having personal problems, or facing other issues that distract their focus from the learning process.

Additionally, motivation is essential for students in learning because motivation causes a change in the energy within the students to act or do something. The more appropriate the motivation provided, the more successful the learning will be. Motivation can be understood as

the overall driving force within students that generates, ensures continuity, and provides direction for learning activities, with the aim that the goals desired by students can be achieved. Motivation is an energy change within the person characterized by affective arousal and anticipatory goal reactions. Moreover, there are also students who are less cooperative with their groupmates. Cooperative learning makes students actively involved in the learning process, which has a positive impact on the quality of interaction and communication, and can motivate students to improve their academic performance (Johnson & Johnson, 1999, 2018).

In addition to these issues, the researcher's performance as a teacher still requires improvement in several aspects that were rated as satisfactory during the teaching process. The researcher has not yet maximized the creation of an active, enjoyable, and motivating learning process, and has not been able to optimally reprimand (firmly) students who are distracted and not paying attention to the researcher's explanations. As a result, these students still face difficulties in expressing their opinions according to the criteria for expressing opinions. This is reflected in the student evaluation results, with the class completeness percentage achieving the MMC at 78.26%, which can serve as feedback for the teacher to improve and refine the learning program and activities. From these reflections, it can be concluded that teaching Indonesian, specifically expressing opinions using the Discussion method, has not yet shown optimal success. Therefore, the researcher must find solutions to address the issues hindering the smooth learning process. The following actions can be taken: 1) Make better and more optimal lesson planning, 2) Conduct enjoyable lessons so that students do not feel bored and remain happy, 3) The teacher explains clearly and systematically how to express opinions so that students can follow and execute the lesson properly, 4) During the lesson, the teacher provides more optimal guidance and direction to ensure all students can effectively participate in the Discussion method, 5) The teacher should provide firm but polite reprimands when students make mistakes and offer praise and reinforcement when students perform well, 6) Provide rewards (such as stationery) for students who actively participate in the learning process and show improvements in their learning outcomes. The evaluation results obtained in Cycle II can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of the Analysis of the Ability to Express Opinions in Cycle II.

No	Category	Results
1.	Number of students	23
2.	Achieved minimum mastery criteria	21
3.	Did not achieve minimum mastery criteria	2
4.	Highest score	95
5.	Lowest score	50
6.	Classical absorption rate	76.73%
7.	Classical mastery learning	91.30%

Based on the analysis results, the Classical Absorption Rate (CAR) of 5th grade students showed further improvement from the previous results, increasing to 76.73% from 23 students. There were 21 students who reached the learning completion or met the Minimum Mastery Criterion (MMC), with a Classical Learning Completion (CLC) rate of 91.30%. Meanwhile, 2 students did not meet the MMC. This indicates an improvement in the ability to express opinions among students compared to the previous cycle. The highest score in this cycle was 95, and the lowest score was 50. These results show that in Cycle II, students have completed the learning process at a classical level, as they achieved a Classical Learning Completion (CLC) rate of 91.30%, which is higher than the target of 80%.

The results of the student activity observations showed an increase in the score, which totaled 70 out of a maximum of 80, with a percentage of 87.5%, qualifying as "good" based on the percentage standards set by the Ministry of National Education in the curriculum. The results of

the teacher activity observations showed a score of 68 out of a maximum of 72, with a percentage of 94.44%, qualifying as "very good." These results indicate that the established indicators have been met, and no further cycles are needed. The improvement in these results is further clarified through the comparison presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Comparison of the Results of Expressing Opinions Ability Analysis: Pre-action, Cycle I, and Cycle II.

No	Category	Pre-action	Cycle I	Cycle II
1.	Classical absorption rate	71.30%	71.95%	76.73%
2.	Achieved minimum mastery criteria	65.21%	78.26%	91.30%
3.	Did not achieve minimum mastery criteria	34.78%	21.73%	8.69%

The development of the class absorption rate (DSK) for students can be seen in Figure 1.

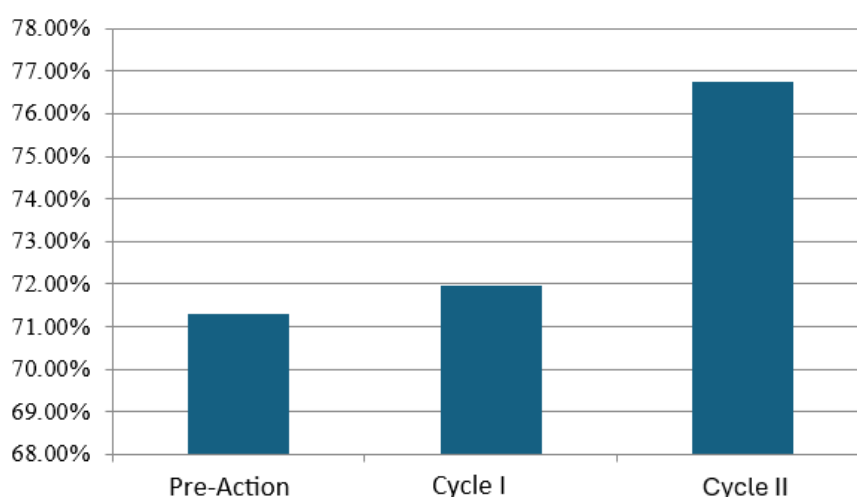


Figure 1. Improvement in Class Absorption Rate (CAR) for Pre-action, Cycle I, and Cycle II.

Based on Figure 1, it shows that there was an increase in the percentage of student learning outcomes from pre-action to Cycle II. Based on the observations made during the implementation of the action, the researcher found that as a teacher, they had maximized the execution of the Indonesian language learning activities, specifically in expressing opinions using the Discussion method. This can be seen from the student activity observations, where overall, students felt happy and did not experience significant difficulties in learning. The teacher also provided firm reprimands to students who were distracted and not paying attention to the teacher’s explanations. The data obtained from the reading comprehension evaluation analysis shows an improvement, with the class completeness reaching the Minimum Mastery Criteria (MMC) of 91.30%.

The teacher successfully motivated the students to be active in the learning process, guided the students evenly, encouraged cooperative learning as expected, created an enjoyable learning environment, improved the students' evaluation results, and most importantly, was able to effectively implement the Discussion method in teaching, which enhanced the students' ability to express their opinions. Based on this, the implementation of the Discussion method can be considered successful in improving students' ability to express their opinions (Rahman et al., 2011). Opinion is a result of human thinking expressed or articulated with words as a response to a problem. Overall, the application of the Discussion method has been able to improve students'

ability to express their opinions. The students were able to gather information, messages, and meanings from a reading, then express them verbally as opinions.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion presented previously, the following conclusions can be drawn: 1) The implementation of the Discussion method in teaching Indonesian has been successful in improving the process of teaching students in expressing opinions in 5th grade of SD Inpres Tavanjuka. The improvements include student learning activities, such as enthusiasm, activeness, concentration, and the teacher's performance throughout the learning process. 2) The results of the pre-action test, or the initial condition before the action was implemented, showed a classical absorption rate (CAR) of 71.30% with a classical learning completeness (CML) of 65.21%. In cycle I, the implementation of the Discussion method resulted in a classical absorption rate (CAR) of 71.95% with a classical learning completeness (CML) of 78.26%. In cycle II, the classical absorption rate (CAR) increased to 76.73%, with a classical learning completeness (CML) of 91.30%.

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