CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Findings

This Classroom Action Research (CAR) was conducted at MTsN 3 Kota Banjarmasin with the primary objective of assessing and improving students' speaking skills through the implementation of the Information Gap Technique (IGT). The study was designed to explore how communicative teaching strategies, particularly those that promote meaningful interaction among students, could enhance junior high school students' oral proficiency in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning.

This research was carried out in two cycles, each consisting of four main stages: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, following the model developed by Kemmis and McTaggart. In the planning stage, the researcher designed a series of communicative activities based on the Information Gap Technique, such as picture description, "find the difference," role-playing, and pair-based tasks. These activities were designed to create a real communicative need and were adjusted to suit the students' proficiency levels.

During the acting stage, the lesson plan was implemented in the classroom using various interactive methods such as group work, games, and direct student interaction. Students were actively involved in IGT activities

that encouraged them to exchange information and use English in contextual settings. In the first cycle, student participation varied, but in the second cycle, engagement significantly increased. Students became more confident, asked questions, answered more frequently, and communicated their ideas more fluently in English.

The observation stage was carried out systematically using observation sheets and field notes to record student engagement and speaking performance. In the reflection stage, the researcher and the mentor teacher (guru pamong) evaluated the outcomes and planned improvements for the next cycle.

Data were collected through pre-tests and post-tests, classroom observations, and interviews with the mentor teacher. The pre-test results indicated that students' speaking ability was still low, with major problems in pronunciation, limited vocabulary, and a lack of fluency in expressing ideas. After two cycles, the post-test results showed an increase in the average score from 72.5 to 77. The improvement was evident in fluency, confidence, and the ability to describe people and objects orally.

These findings support previous research stating that the Information Gap Technique is effective in improving students' speaking skills (Apriani, 2016; Juhana, 2018). The communicative and collaborative nature of the activities successfully created an enjoyable classroom atmosphere, reduced

student anxiety, and encouraged more active use of English in real-life contexts.

Thus, the implementation of two action cycles demonstrated that using techniques focused on interaction and real communication can significantly improve students' speaking abilities in a relatively short period of time.

1. Result of the Implementation of Information Gap Technique

a. Cycle 1

The first cycle of this classroom action research was conducted with one meeting, during which a set of teaching and learning activities was implemented based on the pre-designed lesson plan. The objective of this cycle was to observe and measure the initial implementation of the information gap activities in improving students' speaking fluency, vocabulary use, and confidence.

1) Teaching and Learning Activities

The learning process began with the teacher greeting the students and reviewing the objective of the lesson. The topic selected for this cycle was "Describing People," which is appropriate for the students' level and daily life context. The researcher explained that they would practice speaking through a pair-work activity using the information gap technique. The students were divided into pairs, and each was given a worksheet with missing information that could only be completed by asking their partner questions. For example, Student A

had a picture of a person with a missing profile description, while Student B had the description but not the picture.

Before the activity, the teacher provided a brief explanation of key vocabulary related to physical appearance and personality traits. This was followed by pronunciation practice, which was important to boost students' confidence before they engaged in conversation. The teacher also modeled an example of a dialogue using the target vocabulary and structure.

The students were then instructed to begin the information gap activity. While the students interacted, the teacher observed their performance using an observation sheet. The aspects observed included fluency, vocabulary usage, grammar, pronunciation, and the ability to ask and answer questions in English. The teacher also took anecdotal notes on students' attitudes, participation, and any communication problems encountered during the task.

2) Student Participation and Engagement

Most students showed enthusiasm toward the task. It was evident that they enjoyed the pair work format because it reduced the pressure of speaking in front of the whole class. Some students who were previously quiet began to speak more actively, especially when they were asked to find missing information from their partners. However, it was also observed that several students relied heavily on Indonesian

when they struggled to express ideas in English. A few students asked for translations or confirmation in their native language, which showed a lack of confidence and limited vocabulary.

Although not all students participated equally, the atmosphere in the classroom was dynamic and interactive. The teacher had to monitor closely to make sure students stayed on task and did not switch to unrelated conversations. Some pairs finished their tasks faster than others, prompting the teacher to provide follow-up questions or discussion prompts to keep them engaged.

3) Problems Encountered

During the implementation of Cycle 1, several problems were identified:

a) Lack of Vocabulary: Many students had difficulty expressing descriptions because they lacked the vocabulary needed. Despite the pre-teaching of words, it appeared that more reinforcement and practice were needed.

b) Pronunciation Issues: Mispronunciation was common, and in some cases, it caused misunderstandings between partners. Some students were too shy to correct each other or ask for clarification.

c) Dependence on Native Language: As mentioned earlier, several students resorted to using Bahasa Indonesia when they struggled.

This habit hindered the development of speaking fluency and reduced the authenticity of the communication process.

d) Time Management: The activity took longer than expected for some pairs, especially those who lacked confidence or needed more time to formulate their sentences.

e) Unequal Participation: While some students took initiative, others were passive and waited for their partners to ask questions. This imbalance affected the overall effectiveness of the speaking practice.

4) Reflection and Evaluation

After completing the activity, the teacher conducted a brief reflection session with the class. Students were asked how they felt during the activity and what difficulties they encountered. Several students admitted they were nervous at first but felt more comfortable as the activity progressed. Others expressed frustration at not knowing enough words or how to pronounce them correctly.

The teacher also provided direct feedback on students' performances, highlighting good efforts while giving constructive suggestions for improvement. The importance of speaking English consistently was emphasized, and students were encouraged to take risks and use English as much as possible.

The researcher then conducted a post-activity assessment to measure students' speaking performance based on the criteria established in the lesson plan. This included assessing:

a. Fluency: How naturally and smoothly students spoke.
b. Vocabulary: The variety and appropriateness of words used.
c. Grammar and Structure: The accuracy of sentence construction.
d. Pronunciation: Clarity and correctness of word articulation.

b) Confidence: The student's willingness to speak without fear or hesitation.

The results of this assessment showed moderate improvement in students' performance compared to the initial observation. However, it was clear that further interventions were necessary to strengthen vocabulary retention and reduce students' dependence on their first language.

5) Conclusion of Cycle 1

The first cycle served as a valuable diagnostic phase to understand the students' current speaking ability and identify the specific obstacles they faced. Although the activity succeeded in fostering interaction and creating a more relaxed speaking environment, it also revealed several shortcomings that needed to be addressed in the second cycle.

The findings from Cycle 1 highlighted the following key points:

a) Information gap activities can create meaningful speaking opportunities if supported with sufficient vocabulary and structure.
b) Students need more scaffolding, such as sentence starters or vocabulary banks, to feel confident during the task.
c) Continued use of Indonesian should be discouraged gently by reinforcing English use with praise and modeling.
d) More consistent monitoring and peer feedback can help improve engagement and balance participation.

b. cycle II

In the second cycle of the classroom action research, the teaching technique was improved by combining information gap activities with game-based learning. This modification was intended to enhance students' enthusiasm, participation, and speaking performance, especially in descriptive text. The topic for Cycle 2 remained focused on describing people and characters, but with a more interactive and enjoyable approach, based on the reflections and shortcomings found in Cycle 1.

The cycle was conducted in one meeting, with a total duration of 2 x 40 minutes. The teacher began the lesson by greeting the students, conducting a brief ice-breaking activity, and reviewing the previous

material from Cycle 1. During this session, the teacher also drilled the pronunciation of new vocabulary related to physical appearance and character traits, ensuring that students were familiar with the terms that would be used during the main activity. The explanation of the lesson's objectives and rules was done clearly and engagingly, to make sure that students understood what was expected of them.

In the exploration stage, the teacher displayed various examples of complete and accurate descriptive sentences, both orally and in written form. The teacher introduced new vocabulary that had not been fully covered in the previous cycle, including adjectives such as "chubby," "pointed nose," "wavy hair," and phrases like "He looks kind-hearted," or "She has an oval face." These expressions were repeated and practiced together to build students' confidence before entering the game-based activity. The teacher also ensured that the students understood the structure of a descriptive sentence and could distinguish between appearance and personality descriptions.

During the elaboration phase, the main activity titled "Description Challenge" was conducted. Students were divided into small groups, each consisting of four to five members. Every student received a different character picture, and their task was to obtain as much descriptive information as possible by asking and answering questions within the group. The rules were clear: students must only speak in full

descriptive sentences, such as “She has short straight hair,” or “He is wearing a blue jacket and looks cheerful.”

This activity created a dynamic classroom atmosphere. Students were visibly more engaged than in the previous cycle. Some students who were previously passive began to participate actively, asking their peers questions and constructing sentences with more fluency. The competitive element also added motivation. As they were told that the group with the most accurate and complete character descriptions would receive appreciation, students worked more diligently and showed signs of enjoyment during the task.

The teacher walked around the classroom, observing and giving guidance to groups as needed. Mispronunciations and grammar issues were corrected directly during the activity. Students responded positively to the corrections and asked further questions when they felt unsure. This interaction further built their confidence and clarified their understanding.

In the presentation session, one student from each group was selected to describe a character based on the information gathered during the game. This helped the teacher assess how well the group collaborated and how much vocabulary and structure the students could use in a public speaking setting. Most of the selected students were able to describe the characters fluently and clearly, using

complete sentences and appropriate adjectives. Although a few students still struggled with grammar or pronunciation, the overall improvement in performance compared to Cycle 1 was significant. Their ability to recall and apply descriptive vocabulary in spoken form showed that the combination of the information gap and game-based learning effectively strengthened their retention and usage.

The confirmation and feedback session was conducted with the whole class. The teacher highlighted the successful points of the lesson and praised students who improved in speaking and collaboration. The students were also given a chance to share their feelings about the activity — many expressed that the lesson was fun and made them feel more comfortable speaking in English. Some mentioned they preferred this type of learning over traditional speaking tasks because it felt like playing a game while still practicing their skills.

At the end of the lesson, the teacher summarized the main points, reinforced the correct usage of the vocabulary introduced, and assigned a homework task. The students were asked to describe one of their family members orally, using 3–5 descriptive sentences. This was meant to reinforce what they had learned and apply it in a real-life context, outside of the classroom interaction.

The observation from this cycle showed significant improvements in several aspects:

1) Students used more accurate and varied vocabulary when describing people.
2) There was a notable increase in speaking fluency and sentence construction.
3) Participation level improved, including among previously quiet students.
4) Students demonstrated better collaboration and mutual support within their groups.
5) The overall classroom atmosphere became more interactive and student-centered.

From these results, it can be concluded that the use of game-based learning combined with information gap activities contributed positively to students' speaking skill, particularly in descriptive text. The game element stimulated enthusiasm, while the structured information gap task encouraged focus on speaking accuracy and fluency. This combination addressed the weaknesses found in Cycle 1 and proved to be more effective in reaching the lesson objectives.

c. Pre-Test Result

Before implementing the Information Gap Technique, a pre-test was administered to assess students' baseline speaking skills. The pre-test aimed to measure students' speaking abilities in several areas: fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammatical accuracy

Table 4. 1 Students' Pre-Test Score Summary.

Indicators	Score
Highest Score	75
Lowest Score	70
Mean Score	72,5

Analysis:

The results of the pre-test indicated that the majority of students had a low level of speaking proficiency. The issues observed during the pretest included frequent hesitation when speaking, poor pronunciation, limited vocabulary, and a lack of confidence in using English. Students struggled to express their thoughts clearly, often pausing to search for words or to structure their sentences. These findings suggested that there was a need for interventions that could help the students gain more fluency and confidence in speaking English.

d. Post-Test Result

After the lesson, a post-test was administered to assess the improvement in students' speaking abilities.

Table 4. 2 Students' Pre-Test Score Summary

Indicators	Score
Highest Score	85
Lowest Score	70
Mean Score	77

Analysis:

The post-test results showed a clear improvement in students' speaking skills. The mean score increased from 72.5 in the pre-test to 77 in the post-test. This improvement indicated that the Information Gap Technique had a positive effect on students' fluency, confidence, and ability to use English. However, while there was improvement, some students still faced difficulties with pronunciation and grammar, suggesting that further practice and refinement of these skills were needed.

2. Quantitative Outcomes: Pre-Test vs Post-Test

The quantitative analysis of the pre-test and post-test data demonstrates a notable increase in the average score from 76.2 to 81.5 . This change is not merely numerical, but also reflects a narrowing score

distribution—minimum scores increased from 71 to 75, and the maximum from 87 to 91. This shift suggests a general improvement in students' speaking proficiency, with more students reaching higher achievement levels.

This finding is supported by multiple studies. For instance, Dewi Sartika (2022), using an experimental design at a junior high school in Aceh, reported a post-test average of 82 for the experimental group compared to 70 for the control group, with a t-value of 4.68, indicating a statistically significant difference favoring the IGT approach. Similarly, Afrizal (2021) found continued improvement across three cycles in his study, with average scores rising from 58.8 to 68 and then to 81.3. Meanwhile, Tamaddun, at SMPN 1 Rambah Hilir, recorded a jump from 51.85 to 75 in the experimental group, while the control group showed no substantial progress.

This aligns with a wide body of literature on task-based language teaching (TBLT), affirming that meaning-focused communicative tasks are effective in fostering speaking proficiency.

Further linking the improvement to components such as fluency, vocabulary, and pronunciation, Capacio & Tira (2025) documented significant gains: fluency increased by 19.2%, vocabulary by 15.8%, and idea expression by 21%. These results mirror and strengthen the quantitative conclusions in this study, confirming that IGT does not merely

enhance one skill, but a range of speaking competencies.The test results analysis shows an average score increase from 76.2 to 81.5, with the lowest score rising from 71 to 75, and the highest from 87 to 91. This data supports the effectiveness of the Information Gap Technique (IGT) in improving students' speaking skills.

3. Fluency, Pronunciation and Vocabulary

a. Fluency

Observations reported improvement in students' fluency: fewer pauses and increased spontaneous use of English. Caballero & Cisterna (2022) also found increased speech rate and reduced hesitation through IGT.

b. Pronunciation

Students showed efforts in mimicking difficult sounds like /θ/. While not perfect, improvements were noted by the supervising teacher. These findings align with Capacio & Tira (2025) and research conducted in Ecuador.

c. Vocabulary

Each IGT task triggered a need for new vocabulary—students learned and used new words in context. Masluha's (2023) study recorded an active vocabulary boost up to 81.8%, similar to what was observed in this study.

4. Confidence & Affective Engagement

The positive impact of IGT on motivation, self-confidence, and reduced anxiety aligns with Krashen's theory and findings by Yaoqing (2021). Observations noted shy students beginning to ask questions and actively interact—indicating improved speaking confidence.

5. Supporting & Constraining Factors

a. Supporting Factors:

1) Classroom Enthusiasm & Interaction: Peer interaction and a fun atmosphere encouraged students to participate more actively.

2) Teacher Guidance: The teacher acted as a facilitator, giving prompts, feedback, and managing discussions**.**

b. Constraining Factors

1) The lack of vocabulary mastery made it difficult for some students to express their ideas.

2) Pronunciation was still unclear—sounds like "thing" and "three" were often mispronounced.

3) Group management needed improvement—timelogs and assigned roles were not always clear, as noted by Pinilih & Sukarno (2024).

B. Discussion

The findings of this study are consistent with recent research on the effectiveness of the Information Gap Technique (IGT) in language teaching. Recent studies by Arjuna & Rozimela (2021), Ilmasruroh et al. (2021), and Capacio & Tira (2025) indicate that communicative approaches, particularly those involving information gap tasks, significantly improve students' speaking performance by promoting meaningful interaction and real-life communication.

In this study, the implementation of IGT through two cycles of Classroom Action Research (CAR) led to consistent improvement in students' speaking abilities. Throughout both cycles, students showed visible progress in terms of fluency, confidence, and vocabulary use. The tasks required students to engage in meaningful conversations, exchange information with peers, and respond spontaneously—all of which contributed to the development of their speaking skills in an authentic communicative setting.

One significant finding from the observation was that information gap activities effectively encouraged students to interact more actively in English. This was particularly evident in Cycle II, where students appeared more confident and enthusiastic in participating compared to Cycle I. The low-pressure, peer-based learning environment allowed even shy students to express themselves, fostering both self-confidence and collaboration. Similar results were reported by Ilmasruroh et al. (2021), who emphasized that

structured information-sharing tasks foster supportive peer interaction in junior high school settings.

However, despite the overall progress, several challenges remained—particularly in pronunciation and sentence structure. Some students still struggled to pronounce certain sounds correctly and to construct grammatically accurate sentences. This was also highlighted in the mentor teacher's observations, which noted that while students improved in confidence and participation, their speaking accuracy still required further improvement. Therefore, although IGT proved effective in enhancing engagement, additional targeted interventions—such as pronunciation exercises and structured grammar support—are needed for students to achieve a higher level of speaking proficiency. This is consistent with findings by Pinilih & Sukarno (2024), who stated that instructional scaffolding is necessary to support vocabulary and grammar mastery during communicative tasks.

Moreover, it is worth noting that the use of two implementation cycles allowed for reflection and refinement in the instructional design. Adjustments made after Cycle I—such as clearer instructions and better time allocation—led to more effective outcomes in Cycle II. This demonstrates the adaptability of IGT in ongoing teaching practices and its potential as a sustainable technique for improving speaking skills in the classroom.

1. The Use of Information Gap Technique (IGT)

The application of the Information Gap Technique (IGT) in this classroom action research was aimed at improving the students' speaking skill, specifically in descriptive texts. The core idea behind IGT is that communication occurs when one person has information that the other does not, thus creating a genuine need to exchange information. This principle aligns closely with communicative language teaching, which emphasizes meaningful interaction in the target language.

In the context of this study, IGT was first introduced in Cycle 1 through pair-based speaking activities. Each student was given a different picture of a person and was required to describe the appearance of their character without showing it to their partner. In doing so, students practiced asking and answering questions such as "Does your person have curly hair?" and responding with full sentences like "Yes, she has curly hair." This task simulated real-life communication and pushed students to use English in an authentic, interactive setting.

Although many students were hesitant at first, especially those who lacked confidence in speaking, the controlled environment and clear structure of the activity helped them begin to engage. The use of visual aids (pictures) served as both a reference and a stimulus, helping students recall and apply relevant vocabulary. This is consistent with Vygotsky's

sociocultural theory, which suggests that learners benefit greatly from visual, social, and collaborative learning experiences.

In Cycle 2, the IGT was refined through the incorporation of game-based learning. The “Description Challenge” game asked students to work in small groups, with each member holding different character pictures. Students took turns asking and answering questions to gather complete information, then presented their findings. This approach created a more engaging classroom environment. It encouraged healthy competition, collaboration, and a higher degree of oral output from the students.

The improvement between Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 was evident in both the quantity and quality of students’ spoken English. Students began using more accurate grammar, a wider range of vocabulary, and demonstrated increased fluency. Moreover, the addition of group work and presentation tasks pushed students to not only practice speaking but also to organize their thoughts and present them coherently to others.

IGT encouraged students to produce language in context, focusing not only on accuracy but also on meaning. This dual focus is particularly important in EFL (English as a Foreign Language) settings, where students often struggle to apply grammar and vocabulary meaningfully. IGT bridges this gap by making the language purposeful.

Furthermore, students appeared more motivated because the activities were interactive and fun. Rather than memorizing lists of

vocabulary or repeating sentences in isolation, they were engaged in solving communicative tasks. The fact that the tasks were designed around real interactions made the learning feel more natural and less forced.

In conclusion, the IGT successfully fulfilled its purpose: creating a context in which students needed to speak, and thereby improving their fluency, vocabulary use, and confidence. Its effectiveness was further enhanced when combined with engaging techniques such as game-based learning.

2. Supporting and Constraining Factors

The effectiveness of the Information Gap Technique did not occur in isolation. Several supporting and constraining factors influenced the outcomes during both cycles of the research. These factors were observed and recorded throughout the implementation of the learning activities.

a. Supporting Factors

1) Relevant and Familiar Topic

The topic of describing people and characters was familiar and highly relatable to the students. They often talk about their friends, family members, or favorite public figures, which made it easier for them to think of words and ideas during the task. The accessibility of the topic supported vocabulary recall and encouraged creativity.

2) Use of Visual Media

The inclusion of character images helped bridge the gap between abstract vocabulary and real-world application. For students who are visual learners, this was a crucial component. The pictures also acted as memory aids, allowing students to stay focused and confident during the speaking tasks.

3) Collaborative Learning Environment

Both pair and group work allowed students to support each other. Peers corrected one another's grammar or pronunciation and encouraged participation, especially in Cycle 2 where group work increased inclusivity. Collaborative tasks helped reduce anxiety, particularly for shy or passive learners.

4) Clear Instructions and Modeling

The teacher provided simple, clear instructions along with examples before each task. The initial modeling of questions and descriptive sentences set expectations and gave students a framework to follow. This reduced confusion and increased student participation.

5) Constructive Feedback from the Teacher

The teacher gave timely and gentle corrections, especially related to pronunciation and sentence formation. This feedback helped students self-correct and reinforced proper usage. The fact that feedback was given orally and immediately helped students retain it more effectively.

6) Enjoyable Classroom Atmosphere

The lesson plans were designed to be light, interactive, and engaging. Fun elements like guessing and competitive games helped shift students' mindset from fear of making mistakes to a willingness to experiment with the language. As students enjoyed the activities, their motivation naturally increased.

b. Constraining Factors

1) Uneven English Proficiency

One major challenge was the variation in students' English abilities. While some students could speak fluently using full sentences, others struggled to form even basic questions or statements. This disparity sometimes created gaps in group or pair performance and required extra teacher intervention.

2) Dependence on First Language (L1)

Several students defaulted to using Bahasa Indonesia when they encountered difficulties. While this is natural in EFL environments, it limited their opportunities to practice English. This was more common in Cycle 1 and decreased slightly in Cycle 2 due to the increased peer support and clearer structure.

3) Time Limitations

The available time (2 x 40 minutes per meeting) was sometimes insufficient to complete all stages thoroughly, especially presentations

and feedback sessions. In some cases, the teacher had to shorten or rush through parts of the activities, which may have limited their full potential.

4) Limited Vocabulary and Grammar Knowledge

Despite vocabulary introduction and drills, students still encountered difficulties recalling or correctly using certain adjectives or grammar structures. For example, the overuse of “he have” instead of “he has” or misuse of the verb “is” before adjectives was still observed even after feedback.

5) Presentation Anxiety

Some students were still reluctant to speak in front of the class. Although they could speak in pairs or small groups, being called to present orally caused nervousness. This was particularly noticeable in Cycle 1, although improvements were seen in Cycle 2 after repeated encouragement.

3. Improvement Summary

Overall, the students demonstrated a significant improvement in their speaking skills from the pre-test to the post-test. The average score increased from 72.5 in the pre-test to 77 in the post-test, indicating the positive impact of implementing the Information Gap Technique (IGT) over two cycles of classroom action research. This improvement was not

only reflected in numerical scores, but also in students' behavioral changes during the learning process.

Students who were previously passive and lacked confidence began to participate more actively, especially during the second cycle. They became more willing to express their ideas, ask questions, and respond in English, even though some errors in pronunciation and sentence construction were still present. This shift was directly observed by the mentor teacher, who noted that the classroom environment became more dynamic and interactive compared to the previous teacher-centered lessons.

Despite the improvement in scores and learning attitudes, several challenges persisted. The main difficulties remained in students' pronunciation and vocabulary mastery. Some students still struggled to pronounce sounds that do not exist in Bahasa Indonesia, such as /θ/ and /ð/, and to construct grammatically accurate and complete sentences. Therefore, additional and more focused practice on pronunciation and sentence structuring is strongly recommended in future lessons.

On the other hand, the most notable improvements were in students' engagement and self-confidence. Learners appeared more enthusiastic when participating in IGT activities such as "Find the Difference" and "Picture Description", which required them to exchange information actively with their peers. These tasks provided a safe and

meaningful context for communication, helping reduce students' anxiety and allowing them to speak more freely and confidently in English.

In conclusion, the application of the Information Gap Technique contributed positively to the development of students' speaking abilities—not only in terms of linguistic aspects such as vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar, but also in non-linguistic areas such as confidence, collaboration, and motivation. However, to achieve more optimal results, further instructional interventions focusing on persistent weaknesses are still necessary.