CHAPTER III
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the methodology of this research. It covers the statement of problems, the research design, the site and respondents, the data collection, the data analysis, and the reliability and validity.

1.1 Statement of Problems

This research is intended to answer the questions below.

1. To what extent can Theme-Based Teaching improve students' speaking skill?
2. What are the challenges faced by the teacher in implementing Theme-Based Teaching to teach speaking to young learners?

1.2 Research Design

Classroom Action Research (CAR) is employed as the design of this research. It is deemed suitable for this research since it allows the researcher to examine practically the improvement of students' speaking skill as a result of her own educational practice in implementing Theme-Based teaching in the second grade of Elementary school (Ferrance, 2000 and McNiff & Whitehead, 2002). This statement is supported by Hult and Lennung (1980) and McKernan (1991, pp. 32-33) as cited in Cohen, *et al* (2007, p. 299) who suggested that action research "seeks to improve the quality of human actions."

This research was conducted using Kemmis and McTaggart's model of action research that involves four stages in a cycle of research. The cycle consists of self-reflective spirals of planning, action, observation, and reflection. It is recursive in nature in which the cycle can be repeated until the researcher achieves a satisfactory outcome and feels it is time to end (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988 as cited in Burns, 2010). This model of action research is illustrated by the following figure.
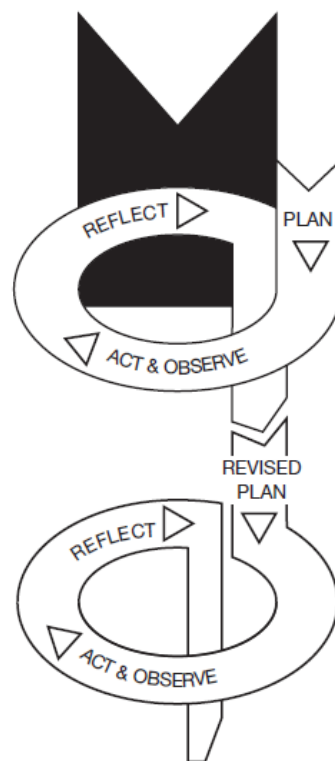
Figure 3.1. Action Research Spiral
(Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000 cited in Koshy, 2005, p. 4)

In action research, every personnel should have their own role and status (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Marshall & Rossman, 2006 as cited in Emilia, 2008). Hence, this research used participant observation where the researcher took role both as teacher and observer. It corroborates the function of action research which is designed to bridge the gap between research and practice (Somekh, 1995, p. 340 as cited in Cohen, *et al*, 2007). This statement is in line with O'Brien's view shared by Dick in Hien (2009) who says that action research is a natural way of acting and researching at the same time. Meanwhile, there was also second researcher provided in this research whose task was to observe the teaching learning process. This second observer was the previous English teacher of the respondents' class. Her existence in this research made non-participant observation took place since she observed the classroom activities without directly being involved in the situation being observed (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006).

In order to answer the problems of the research, a two-repeated cycle was conducted in this research. Each cycle consisted of some steps, including planning, actions, speaking assessments, observations, reflection. The details of the steps are explained specifically below.

1. Planning

Planning was the first step which was carried out before conducting the research. In this step, plans for actions were developed including selecting a theme, developing lesson plans and designing scoring system for the speaking assessments. In terms of selecting a theme, the SKKD given by the school was the main consideration in drafting some possible themes. Finally, "Best Friend" was assumed as the most appropriate theme for the reason that the materials could be accessed also from students' textbook.

After that, the lesson plan for each action was developed based on the selected theme, SKKD and students' textbook. The lesson plans were interrelated each other since they were designed based on sub themes taken from the main theme, that is "Best Friend". Those sub themes were including "He is tall", "He is seven years old", "He likes drawing", and "He lives in Bandung".

Lastly, for the reason that the speaking assessments were conducted along with the actions, the scoring system was also designed in the planning step. There were three aspects of speaking which were assessed to the students, namely *vocabulary, pronunciation* and *grammar*. The scoring system was adapted from Linse (2005) with some modifications in the criteria of the scores which were made based on students' real condition. (See table 3.3. to access the detail of the scoring system).

2. Action

In this step, the plans that had been developed in the planning step were implemented in the teaching and learning processes. The actions in this research were conducted twice in each cycle. The activities conducted in each action were divided into three steps, including pre activity, main activity and post activity.

In the pre activity, students were prepared before starting the lesson. The teacher checked students' attendance and asked their condition. In the first meeting, students and teacher made a regulation together about what they should and should not do during the learning process. While in the next three meetings, students were reminded about the regulation they had made. After that, they were invited to sing a song entitled "good morning song" for the reason that the lesson was started in the morning. Singing activity helped teacher and students to create pleasurable atmosphere in the classroom. To finish, students were told about the material of the day.

Next, main activity was divided into three parts, namely exploration, elaboration and confirmation ("Peraturan Menteri", 2007). In exploration, students were given a context in order to create meaningful learning which is one of the principles of Theme-Based Teaching (Brown, 2001). They were familiarized to the theme of the lesson by doing brainstorming activity with the teacher. It was intended to connect students' prior knowledge with the material. This brainstorming activity resulted the key words and expressions they would use during the lesson. Then, teacher guided the students to drill the key words and expressions. Afterwards, the elaboration was started by playing games which required the students to speak up using the key words and expressions introduced before. The games were group work in the first cycle. However, due to the fact that there were some challenges occurred by doing group work, in the second cycle students were asked to work in pair. Finally, in the confirmation, teacher asked students to describe their friend using the key words and expressions they learnt individually.

The last activity of the action is post activity. At this point, teacher and students reviewed the material together and discussed about students' favorite activity. Then, teacher ended the lesson by greeting the students. (See appendix I to access the detail of lesson plans).

3. Speaking Assessment

The next step is speaking assessment. The speaking assessments in this research were conducted every meeting together with the actions at the end of the teaching and learning processes. Students were asked to describe their friend orally and individually using the key words and expressions they learnt. Then, the teacher with the assistance of second observer gave score for students' performance using the scoring system adapted from Linse (2005). The speaking assessments were done in order to measure students' speaking improvement toward the implementation of Theme-Based Teaching.

4. Observation

Observation was conducted where the action and speaking assessment were in progress. In this step, the action and speaking assessment were recorded using video recorder and field notes. It was conducted with the intention of observing the implementation of the plans made in the planning step. The focus of the observations was on the challenges occurred in the implementation of Theme-Based Teaching in teaching speaking to young learners. (See appendix III to access the detail of video transcription and appendix IV for the field notes).

5. Reflection

The last step is reflection. In this step, the data gathered from the previous steps were analyzed to find out whether there should be any changes and revisions for the next cycle.

The steps explained above were repeated in the second cycle of this research. The process of conducting the research was done in two months from August to September 2013. The schedule of the research is presented in Table 3.1. below.

Table 3.1. Time Schedule

No	Cycle	Plan Activity	Time (Month & Week)							
			August '13				September '13			
			1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1.		**Classroom Observation**		x						
2.	CYCLE 1	**PLANNING**								
		Choosing a theme: Best Friend			x					
		Choosing sub-themes: - He is tall - He is seven years old			x					
		Designing lesson plans using Theme-Based Teaching approach			x					
		Preparing instruments and instructional media for the teaching process			x					
3.		**ACTION AND OBSERVATION**								
		Action 1 & Speaking assessment 1				x				
		Action 2 & Speaking assessment 2					x			
4.		**REFLECTION**					x			
5.	CYCLE 2	**PLANNING**								
		Choosing new sub themes from the previous theme (Best Friend): - He likes drawing - He lives in Bandung					x			
		Designing lesson plans using Theme-Based Teaching approach					x			
		Preparing instruments and instructional media for the teaching process					x			
6.		**ACTION AND OBSERVATION**								
		Action 1 & Speaking assessment 1					x			
		Action 2 & Speaking assessment 2						x		
7.		**REFLECTION**							x	
8.		**Interview**								

In addition to the time schedule above, the details of the materials delivered in each cycle is presented specifically in the following table.

Table 3.2. Lesson Schedule

| Cycle | Actions | Sub-themes | Learning Objectives | | Vocabularies |
			Communication Objectives	Language Objectives	
1	Action 1 (27-8-2013)	He is tall	1. To mention at least four keywords related to physical appearance correctly; 2. To use expressions "He is... / She is..." correctly.	• He is... • She is...	Tall Short Slim Fat
	Action 2 (3-9-2013)	He is seven years old	1. To mention at least four keywords related to physical appearance correctly; 2. To mention at least ten keywords related to numbers correctly; 3. To use expressions "He is... (years old) / She is... (years old)" correctly.	• He is... • She is... • He is... years old. • She is... years old.	**Recycled vocabularies:** Tall, Short, Slim, Fat **New vocabularies:** One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven, Eight, Nine, Ten, Eleven, Twelve.
2	Action 1 (7-9-2013)	He likes drawing	1. To mention at least four keywords related to physical appearance correctly; 2. To mention at least ten keywords related to numbers correctly; 3. To mention at least five keywords related to hobbies correctly; 4. To use expressions "He is... (years old) / She is... (years old) / He likes... / She likes..." correctly.	• He is... • She is... • He is... years old. • She is... years old. • He likes... • She likes...	**Recycled vocabularies:** Tall, Short, Slim, Fat One – Twelve. **New vocabularies:** Singing Dancing Drawing Reading Swimming
	Action 2 (11-9-2013)	He lives in Bandung	1. To mention at least four keywords related to physical appearance correctly; 2. To mention at least ten keywords related to numbers correctly; 3. To mention at least five keywords related to hobbies correctly; 4. To use expressions "He is... (years old) / She is...(years old) / He likes.../She likes.../He lives in... / She lives in..." correctly.	• He is... • She is... • He is... years old. • She is... years old. • He likes... • She likes... • He lives in... • She lives in...	**Recycled vocabularies:** Tall, Short, Slim, Fat One - Twelve Singing Dancing Drawing Reading Swimming

1.3 Site and Respondents

This research was conducted in a primary school located in Bandung. This school was chosen as the site of the research due to the fact that it has a good partnership with Indonesia University of Education (UPI). A number of 32 students of Class 2B of this school were chosen as respondents of this research. They belonged to younger children group in pertain to their age, which were 7 to 8 years old (Harley *et al.,* 1995 as cited in Cameron, 2001) and were in the concrete-operational stage as suggested by Piaget as cited in Nunan (2011). Additionally, the students of this grade had learnt English in the previous level. It was supposed that they had been ready to be introduced to the activities that could improve their speaking skill.

Furthermore, the students' previous English teacher was interviewed in order to get the specific information about their prior speaking skill. The results of the interview are explicated below.

1. The students had recognized the English alphabets from A to Z;
2. The students had recognized the English numbers from zero to twenty;
3. The students had basic vocabularies related to animals and colours;
4. The students had not learnt about simple language features such as "I am..., this is..., that is..."
5. The students had not recognized teacher's instructions such as "Stand up" and "Sit down"

1.4 Data Collection

With the intention of gathering objective data, this research applied triangulation to combine some instruments in collecting the data. It was chosen to enable the researcher to compare, contrast and cross-check if the data from one source was backed up by other evidence and construct a more reliable picture (Burns, 2010 and McNiff & Whitehead, 2002). Furthermore, according to Campbell and Fiske (1959, as cited in Cohen, *et al*, 2007, p. 141), "triangulation is a powerful way of demonstrating concurrent validity, particularly in qualitative

research." Thus, the instruments utilized in this research were observations, speaking assessments, and interview.

3.4.1 Observations

Observation is an important instrument both in qualitative and quantitative research method. It was conducted in this research in order to enable the researcher to gather data directly at what is taking place *in situ* in a natural way and appraise educational experience first-hand rather than depend on the information stated by the respondents (Cohen, *et al,* 2007 and Scott & Morrison, 2006). Additionally, according to Hatch (2002, p. 72), observation also enables the researcher to understand the culture, setting, or social phenomenon being studied from the perspectives of the participants.

3.4.1.1 Video Recording

Video recording was used in this research in order to gather the real and authentic data related to students' participation and attitudes during the observation (Koshy, 2005). Additionally, as stated by Hatch (2002), video recording can be used to ensure the accuracy of the data since it can be replayed over and over again. By means of employing this instrument, the researcher was able to examine the improvements of students' speaking skill on the use of Theme-Based Teaching and discover the problems that occur in the process of teaching learning in the classroom.

In this research, the video recording was conducted in every meeting of the cycles, including actions and observations. The data was transcribed to reduce the process of analyzing data. (See Appendix III to access the details of the video recording transcription).

3.4.1.2 Field notes

In view of the fact that one of the aims of this research was to identify the problems that occur in teaching speaking by using Theme-Based Teaching, the researcher made use of field notes to make the process of collecting data easier. It

is in line with Cohen, *et al* (2007) who state that field note is one of some techniques that can be used to gather data. As the video recording and observation forms, the field note was also used in each meeting of the cycles in this research. The field note focused on two main points, including problems and recommendations. Furthermore, the information taken from field notes was used to support the data from other instruments of this research. (See Table 3.3. to access the example of the field notes).

Table 3.3. Field Notes

No.	Challenges	Challenges		
		Pre activity	Main Activity	Post Activity
1.	Students' ignorance			
2.	Students' selfishness			
3.	Students' curiosity			
4.	Students hyperactivity			

3.4.2   Speaking Assessments

Speaking assessments were applied in this research in order to record the data of students' speaking improvement. It is done in form of formative assessment since the data of students' score were used to check students' progress in mastering the aspects of speaking assessed, including *vocabulary, pronunciation* and *grammar* (Hughes, 2003). Additionally, according to Brown (2001, p. 402), formative assessment is assumed as "assessing students in the process of "forming" their competencies and skills in order to help them continue that growth process." It suits the purpose of the implementation of Theme-Based Teaching in this research, which is to improve students' speaking skill.

The speaking assessments in this research were conducted in every meeting alongside the actions. In order to avoid the subjectivity in collecting the data, the previous English teacher of the respondents and a colleague of the researcher were involved in the process of assessing students' speaking skill.

The aspects speaking assessed to the students were including vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar. The range of scoring system for each aspect was started from one to five points. It means the minimum score that could be achieved by students were three points and the maximum score were 15 points from the three aspects assessed. The scoring system of the speaking assessments was adapted from The English Learner Knowledge Base (2004) as cited in Linse (2005). (See Table 3.4. to access the details of the scoring system).

Table 3.4.
Scoring System Adapted from The English Learner Knowledge Base (2004)
as cited in Linse (2005)

Aspects	Criteria	Score	Notes
Vocabularies	Students cannot mention any single keyword at all	1	
	Mention at least one keyword with teacher's help	2	
	Mention more than one keyword without teacher's help but still misuse the words.	3	
	Mention and use the keywords appropriately with teacher's help.	4	
	Mention and use the keywords appropriately without teacher's help.	5	
Pronunciation	Students cannot say a single word clearly at all.	1	
	Very hard to understand because of pronunciation problems.	2	
	Mispronounce the words that lead to misunderstanding.	3	
	Pronunciation is intelligible although the listeners are conscious of a definite accent.	4	
	Pronounce the words without any mistakes and internationally acceptable.	5	
Grammar	Students cannot use any single language feature at all.	1	
	Grammar and word order errors make comprehension difficult. Must often rephrase and/or restrict him/herself to basic pattern.	2	
	Makes frequent errors of grammar and word order that occasionally obscure the meaning.	3	
	Occasionally makes grammatical and/or word order errors that not obscure meaning.	4	
	There isn't any error of grammar and word order.	5	

In addition to the scoring system above, the procedure of the assessment in each cycle is presented in detail below.

Table 3.5. Procedure of Speaking Assessments

Cycle	Assessments	Procedures
1	Assessment 1 (27-8-2013)	- The class is divided into eight groups - Students are asked to individually describe one of the members of a group they belong to. - Students are allowed to choose a group member they want to describe. - Students are required to describe the physical appearance of the group member they have chosen appropriately using the following vocabularies and expressions. **Vocabularies:** Tall, Short, Slim, Fat **Expressions:** • He is... / She is...
	Assessment 2 (3-9-2013)	- Students are asked to work in the same groups that had been made in the previous meeting. - Students are given worksheets to complete the information about the group members (physical appearance & age). - Students are asked to individually describe one of the members of a group they belong to using the worksheets they have completed. - Students are allowed to choose a group member they want to describe. - Students are required to describe the physical appearance and age of the group member they have chosen appropriately using the following vocabularies and expressions. **Vocabularies:** Tall, Short, Slim, Fat // One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven, Eight, Nine, Ten, Eleven, Twelve. **Expressions:** • He is... / She is...
2	Assessment 1 (7-9-2013)	- Students are asked to work in pair. - Students are given worksheets to complete the information about their pairs (physical appearance, age and hobby). - Students are asked to individually describe their pairs using the worksheets they have completed. - Students are required to describe their pairs using the following vocabularies and expressions. **Vocabularies:** Tall, Short, Slim, Fat // One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven, Eight, Nine, Ten, Eleven, Twelve // Singing, Dancing, Drawing, Reading, Swimming **Expressions:** • He is... / She is... • He likes... / She likes...
	Assessment 2 (11-9-2013)	- Students are asked to work in pair. - Students are given worksheets to complete the information about their pairs (physical appearance, age hobby, and address). - Students are asked to individually describe their pairs using the worksheets they have completed. - Students are required to describe their pairs using the following vocabularies and expressions. **Vocabularies:** Tall, Short, Slim, Fat // One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven, Eight, Nine, Ten, Eleven, Twelve // Singing, Dancing, Drawing, Reading, Swimming **Expressions:** • He is... / She is... • He likes... / She likes... • He lives... / She lives...

3.4.3 Interview

Interview was incorporated in most qualitative research alongside the other data collection methods in order to explore more deeply participants' perspectives on the focus area (Burns, 2010 and Hatch, 2002). Besides, Koshy (2005) claims that "in some cases, adults and children give more honest responses in a one-to-one situation."

This research used *semistructured interview* with the aim of gathering the additional information from students. The researcher prepared a list of questions to ask but did not stick with them. This type of interview allowed the researcher for flexibility to probe beyond the protocol according to interviewee's responds (Burns, 2010 and Lodico, *et al,* 2006).

The interview consisted of some questions related to students' points of view toward the implementation of Theme-Based Teaching in their class. The following list is the outline of the interview.

1. Do the students feel the improvement in their speaking ability after learning English using Theme-Based Teaching?
2. What are the evidences of students' speaking improvements? (Asking students about the lesson that had been taught)
3. What makes them interested or uninterested in learning English using Theme-Based Teaching?
4. What kind of learning activity they like the most?
5. Do they concern about others in learning? (Asking students their favorite way of learning (group, pair or individual)
6. What are students' opinions about the media?

The interview involved 5 students from the total of 32 students. With the intention of avoiding misunderstanding among the researcher as interviewer and the students as interviewees, the questions were delivered in *Bahasa Indonesia*. It also comforted students in responding each question. The researcher recorded the interview process to capture the detail information from the interviewee and simplify the process of data analysis. (See Appendix III to access the details of the interview transcription).

1.5 Data analysis

The data in this research were gathered through observations, speaking assessments, and interview. In the preparation of analyzing data, the researcher needs to ensure that the data are in a form which is available to be analyzed and can be communicated to others (Hatch, 2002 and Lodico, *et al*, 2006).

Miles and Huberman (1994 as cited in Koshy, 2005) suggested a model of data analysis which can be used for qualitative research to both make sense of the data and to share the researcher's interpretations with the audience. This model consists of three steps which are interrelated each other; those are *data reduction, data display,* and *conclusion.* The followings are the descriptions of each component of this model.

3.5.1 Data Reduction

In this step, the unnecessary data which did not have relation to the research questions were reduced to simplify the analysis process. It is supported by Koshy's (2005, p. 113) believe which says that "data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data that appear in the written up field notes or transcriptions."

After selecting the significant data related to the research questions, the data were coded into some groups. The transcription of the video recording were analyzed and coded based on the theory of young learners' characteristics by Pinter (2006). (See table 3.6. to access the details of transcription codes and Excerpt 1 for the example of video transcription.

Table 3.6.
Transcription Codes Based on Young Learners' Characteristics Theory by Pinter (2006)

Characteristics	Categories	Codes
Students have lower levels of awareness about themselves as language learners as well as about process of learning.	- Students ignore teacher's instructions.	Ss' ignorance
Students are more concerned about themselves than others.	- Students want to do certain things only for their sakes.	Ss' selfishness
Students have a limited knowledge about the world.	- Students are curious to something new in the learning process.	Ss' curiosity
Students enjoy fantasy, imagination, and movement.	- Students give irrelevant responses. - Students move around the class. - Students overact teacher's instructions.	Ss' hyperactivity

Excerpt 1
(Example of Video Transcription)

(Action 1, Cycle 1)

T : So, stand up please! Stand up! You know stand up? Like me, stand up. Stand up. **Berdiri, berdiri.** [*Stand up, stand up*]

(Some students stand up on their chairs)

T : No, no, no. **Bukan di atas bangku, di lantai.** [*Not on the chair, on the floor.*]
No, Dzaky no.

(Some male students stand up in front of the class)

T : No, **di tempat kalian masing-masing. Di tempat masing-masing berdiri.**
[*in your own position. In the place where you are standing up*]
Stand up in your place!
Ssstt... Hello.

> Students' ignorance

......

T : Sit down please. Girls... Girls...
Okay, now, **sekarang Miss mau bagi kelompok. Satu kelompok empat orang.**
[*Now, I want to make groups. One group consists of four persons*]

Ss : **Aku sama ini...** [*I am with her...*] *(overlapping)*

T : **Bisa bagi sendiri atau Miss yang bagi?** [*Can you make it or Miss will make it (the groups)?*]

> Students' selfishness

Next, the field notes were analyzed to discover the challenges faced in the process of teaching and learning. Then, the data from the achievement speaking assessments were analyzed using the scoring system adapted from The English Learner Knowledge Base (2004) as cited in Linse (2005). To finish, the interview transcripts were used to complete data from observations and speaking assessments.

3.5.2 Data display

As this research is qualitative, the result of the data analysis were mostly described in form of text using descriptive technique in order to ease the researcher in describing the data and avoid the misinterpretations of the audience. However, some data were also presented systematically using charts to serve clearer description of the data. (See Chart 3.1. to access the example of charts presented as data display)

Chart 3.1.
Students' Mean Score in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2
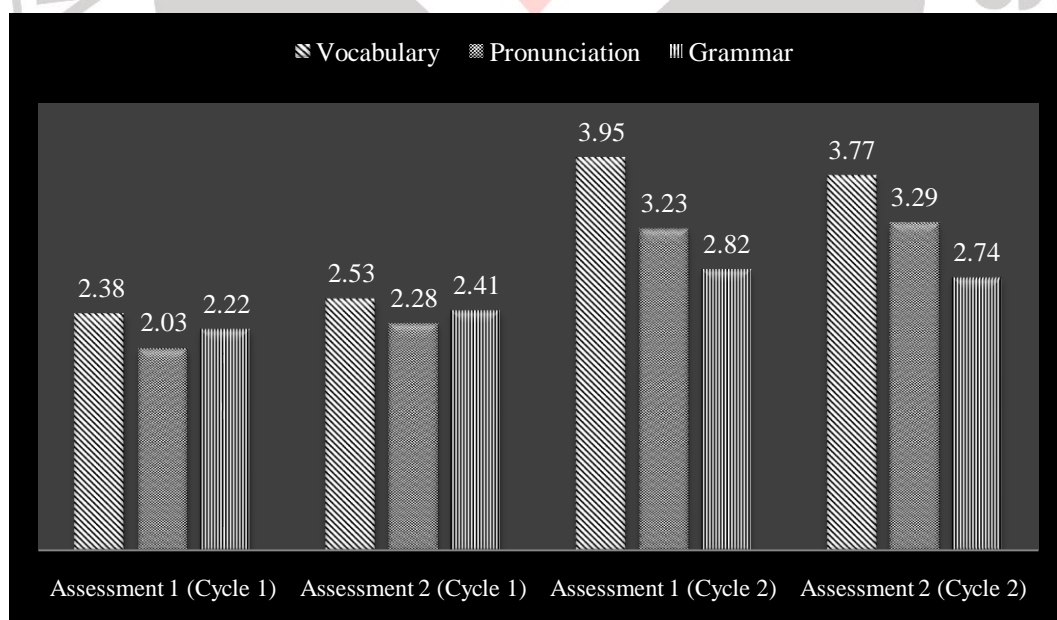
3.5.3 Conclusion

The last step of this data analysis was drawing conclusion from the obtained data that had been analyzed in the previous steps. The conclusion was taken based on the findings related to the research questions; (1) to what extent can Theme-Based Teaching improve students' speaking skill?; and (2) what are the challenges faced by the teacher in implementing Theme-Based Teaching to teach speaking to young learners?

1.6 Reliability and Validity

In accordance with Bogdan and Biklen (1992, p. 48 as cited in Cohen, *et al,* 2006), the reliability in qualitative research can be regarded as a fit between what researchers record as data and what actually occurs in the natural setting that is being researched. On the other hand, Cuba and Lincoln (1985 as cited in Scott & Morrison, 2006) interpreted reliability as dependability and confirmability. However, the reliability of this research was determined by observing and describing the data in depth without manipulating anything.

As this research uses classroom action research design, validity is attained by a sound and robust data collection and the compromise of accurate interpretations (Koshy, 2005). The use of triangulation in qualitative research is claimed as a powerful way of revealing concurrent validity (Campbell & Fiske 1959 as cited in Cohen, *et al*, 2006). This research made use of triangulation by correlating three instruments, including observations, speaking assessments, and interview. By employing triangulation, this research is expected to have the precise interpretations of data.

1.7 Concluding Remark

This chapter illustrates the statement of problems, research design, site and respondents, and also the process of collecting and analyzing the data and the reliability and validity. The following chapter will illustrate the findings and the discussion of the research.