A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN INFORMATION GAP TASK IN PAIR AND SMALL GROUP WORK OF STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY

Ni Made Anggi Arlina Putri, Hery Y, Rosita.
Email: anggimade@yahoo.com
Institution: Universitas of Lampung

Abstract: The purposes of the qualitative research were to find out the significant difference of students' speaking ability between students who are taught through information gap task in pair and small group work and to determine which pattern is better in getting students to talk at second grade of SMAN 1 Seputih Raman. The study focused on pattern that is used in information gap task. The participants were the second grade of SMAN 1 Seputih Raman. The data were recorded and analyzed by using Independent group t-test (SPSS version 20). The data shows that there is significant different result in between pair and small group. Small group work has better pattern that encourages students to talk in information gaptechnique.

Keywords: information gap, pair, small group, speaking ability

A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN INFORMATION GAP TASK IN PAIR AND SMALL GROUP WORK OF STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY AT SECOND GRADE OF SMA N 1 SEPUTIH RAMAN

Ni Made Anggi Arlina Putri, Hery Y, Rosita.
Email: anggimade@yahoo.com
Institution: Universitas of Lampung

Abstrak: Tujuan penelitian ini adalah (1) untuk menemukan apakah ada perbedaan yang signifikan antara siswa yang diajarkan menggunakan informasi gap berpasangan dengan siswa yang diajarkan informasi gap dalam kelompok kecil terhadap kemampuan berbicara siswa (2) untuk menemukan pola kerja mana yang lebih baik dalam mendorong siswa agar berbicara dalam bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini terfokus pada pola kerja yang digunakan dalam teknik informasi gap. Subjek penelitian adalah para siswa kelas dua SMA N 1 Seputih Raman. Semua data telah direkam dan dianalisis menggunakan Independent T-test (SPSS versi 20). Data hasil menujukkan bahwa ada perbedaan hasil yang signifikan antara penggunaan teknik informasi gap dalam pola kerja berpasangan dan kelompok kecil. Kelompok kecil merupakan pola yang lebih baik digunakan dalam teknik informasi gap untuk mendorong siswa berbicara dalam bahasa Inggris.

Kata kunci:berpasangan, informasi gap, kelompok kecil, kemampuan berbicara.

INTRODUCTION

According Widowson (1994), speaking is the active production skill and use of oral production. Rivers (1981: 161) explains that students study a foreign language in high school with strong conviction that language means something spoken. The students are often discouraged and lose interest when they find that foreign language study is just like other subjects, learning the book only without any practice. That some problem that faced by students in school. Referring to the description above, information gap technique was an appropriate to solve the problem and increase the students' speaking ability. Information gap is one of the tasks that may encourage the students more actively to speak English because it provides more opportunity for students to talk in order to complete their information. Theoretically, Pica and Doughty (1986) state that information gap tasks cope the students to talk more with a number of communication strategies used. Information gap is the activity in which the students are given different information. By sharing the separate information they can complete a task. The researcher tried to find out the better patternfor information gap in order to encourage students to talk.Meanwhile, the context material of the teaching learning was understanding and using transactional dialogue in short conversation. The topics had chosen arekitchen and crossword. Brown (1994: 103) states that speaking is one of the basic skills that requires communicative competence, pronunciation (intonation, stress, and pitch), grammar, vocabulary, fluency, accuracy, comprehension and gesture improving, in order to build a good communication. These elements are needed to measure the capability of the students in speaking using appropriate technique. Brown also says that speaking is

a skill in producing oral language. It is not only an utterance but also a tool of communication. It occurs when two or more people interact with each other aiming at maintaining social relationship between them.

Based on PPL experience in SMP N1 Sidomulyo, the writer found that students faced difficulties in understanding and using spoken language because most of them could not produce short dialogue fluently when practicing speaking in class. The students' average score of speaking is about 60 point. Speaking seems to be the most difficult skill for those students. These facts are caused by many factors that have been discussed by some English experts.

There are several tasks that the students can speak such as by using information gap, role play, discussion, completion, and so on. But, not all of the types may encourage the students to keep stimulating to speaking to speaking English. Information gap is one of the tasks that may encourage the students more actively to speak English because it provides more opportunity for students to talk in order to complete their information.

In the same respect, Cohen (1998: 18-19) reports that there are many methods that can be used to improve student's speaking skills. These methods must be interesting. One of them is by giving students information – gap activity which might make the students interact easily in speaking activity.

According to Kayi (2006), there are many activities to promote speaking. One of them is information gap activity which can be an alternative to make the students easy in using spoken English because the oral fluency activity increases the

opportunity for meaningful individual students practice. Information gap activity is the activity in which the students are divided into pairs where one student has the complete information while the other partner does not have. One student is the describer and the other is the information seeker. The information seeker asks some questions to the describer in order to complete the task and the describer gives the information needed. This kind of activity can stimulate the interaction among students.

Information gap activities involve the learners in sharing the information that they have in order to solve a problem, gather information or make decisions (Rees, 2005: 156). So, English language learning students should be involved in as many situations as possible where one of them has some information and another does not, but has to get it. In other words, situations containing an information gap between the participants are very useful.Students need more opportunity to practice English and use it communicatively inside and outside the language classroom. Florze & Burt (2001) emphasize that pair and group work activities can provide learners with opportunity to share information and build a sense of community. As Cook (1996: 90) suggests, such activities "force the students to use communication strategies whether they want to or not".

Some studies also show that learning arrangement can cause different pattern of interaction. As Emayuta (2011) has qualitatively found that small group has higher number of interaction than pair work conducted by second year students of SMK Karya Pembangunan Gajah Mada Metro.

In addition, small group work is a process in which members working cooperatively rather than individually, formulate, and work toward common objectives under the guidance's of one or more leaders. It is also found that small group work techniques makes the students interact one another to solve the problem assigned although the individual brings his/her own personality, the students have a single purpose in group in pursuit of which they need each other's help. And the time which is in small group work is efficient because students can help one another in overcoming their problem during teaching and learning process. So by using this way, the students can share their knowledge and they can help each other in how to apply their speaking skill.

In other hand, pair work is like interaction which is working and learning on two to solve problem. As Foster (1998:4) says that pair set-up is better in getting students to talk than group. It means that pair work can make students more speaking using English. Concerning with the problem above, the objectives of this research are to find out whether there is a significant difference of students' speaking ability between students who are taught through information gap task in pair and small group work at second grade of SMA N1 Seputih Raman or not and to determine which one of that pattern is better pattern in encouraging the students to talk at second grade at SMAN 1 Seputih Raman.

METHOD

The research was experimental method. The researcher used Static Group Comparison Design (Setiyadi, 2006: 143). This experimental method deals with two groups; one is an experimental class 1 and the other as experimental class 2.

Each group received pre-test, treatments, and post-test. Furthermore, on experimental class 1 got treatment through *information gap task in pair* and experimental class 2class got treatment through *information gap in small group.* The design of this research could be represented as follows:

G1	T1	X1	T2
G2	T1	X2	T2

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this part, the researcher analyzed the result of pre-test and post-test in order to compare pair and small group pattern. The total score is 2296.67 for experimental class 1, the means score is 65.62, the highest score is 75 and the lowest score 60. The median score is 65.33 and the mode is 64.67 because there are 4 students who got 64.67. Meanwhile, in experimental class 2, the total score is 2276.67, the mean is 65.04, the highest 70.33 and the lowest is 60. The median score is 65 and the mode score is 60 because there are 3 students who get 60. As presented in table above, pre-test shows that in experimental class 1, the means score is 65.62 Meanwhile, in experimental class 2, the mean score is 65.05. It means that both classes were the same in level of ability although it had small difference.In the experimental class 1, the total score is 2387.67, the mean score is 68.21, the highest score is 77.33, and the lowest score is 62.67. The median score is 68.00 and the mode score is 64.33 because there are 4 students who get 64.33. The mean score of experimental class 1 only increased from 65.33 to 68.21. Meanwhile, in experimental class 2, the total score of posttest is 2512.67, the mean 71.79, the highest score is 75.00 and the lowest score is 70.00. The median score is 71.33

and the mode is 70.00 because there are 16 students who get 70. The mean of experimental class 2 increased from 65.04 to 71.79

Testing Hypothesis

The hypothesis testing was used to see whether the hypothesis was accepted or not. The hypothesis test was then analyzed by comparing the two means from both classes.After gaining the data, both from experimental classes, the researcher calculated the data using SPSS version 20. The hypothesis of the test was described as follows:Based on the finding it can be seen that the two tailed significant is 0.000. It means that two tailed significant (p) is less than α or significant two tailed (p) < α; ($p<0.05$, $p=0.00$). It can be concluded that H_1 is accepted and H_0 is rejected. In other words, there is a significant difference of posttest score between the both classes.By seeing means in both experimental classes, the researcher concluded that there is a significant different between students who are taught through information gap in pair and those who are taught through information gap in small group. The result posttest in experimental class 1 has mean only about 68.22 but in experimental class 2, mean score is about 71.79. It means that small group work is better pattern encourage students to talk at second grade in SMA N 1 Seputih Raman.

There were same researches that focus on information gap tasks by Septirina, Emayuta, and Irawan but they only focused on the students' production of utterances, negotiation of meaning and students'' interaction. So, the different finding between their research and this research is this research gives the qualitative data about the difference of using pair and small group work in

information gap task for students' speaking ability. They did not find out the difference of using pair and group work to increase students' speaking ability through information gap. After administering the pretest, the researcher conducted the treatment twice. The researcher applied information gap task in pair in experimental class 1 and information gap task in small group in experimental class2. Aftertreatments have done, the last activity was giving post-test. This result was obtained by examining the hypothesis of this research and increase of students' mean score in pre-test and post-test. Based on the first until tree treatmentsthat was conducted by the researcher, she found out the problems the students faced in teaching learning process of speaking through information gap technique.

The problems are as follow:Some of students were still memorized the conversation when they practiced in front of the class, the students' pronunciation was still influenced by their mother tongue and there was grammatical error that they made. It might be because the students seldom pronounce the words in English class during teaching-learning process.Some students did not work well this way, shy students found it hard to share their opinion, whereas aggressive students tried to take over.

After practicing the conversation, the students gradually started to pronounce the difficult wordsand they could practice to spell them correctly. They also gradually started to practice speaking usingEnglish. Thus, in the last meeting of the treatment, the students felt enjoy practicing speaking activities using information gap technique. Pair and small group work in this technique were concluded to be

similar methods since they had been developed based on the similar principle; *active learning*, even though they had different patterns. Both had similar impacts in increasing students' speaking ability. Since, the students who were taught by information gap in small group work in experimental class 2 gave higher result than pair work in experimental class 1; it was considered that small group work was better than pair work encourage students to talk using information gap technique.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

1. There is a significant difference of students' speaking ability between students who are taught through information gap task in pair and small group work at second grade of SMA N1 Seputih Raman. It can be seen from comparing the mean of both classes, in experimental class 1 (pair work), the increase of students' speaking ability is 2.6. Meanwhile, in experimental class 2 (small group work), the increase of students' speaking ability is 6.74. Here, experimental class 2 (small group work) is able to increase students' speaking ability higher than experimental class 1 (pair work). The score difference is 4.14. It proves working in group by applying information gap task is better than working in pair in increasing students' speaking ability.
2. Based on the explanation above, small group work is a better pattern in encouraging the students to talk at second grade at SMAN 1 Seputih Raman.

Suggestions

Based on the finding, the researcher will state the suggestion as follows:

1. The teacher should be creative in designing the tasks in order to make the students more enthusiastic in practice speaking in small group. The topics can be related to their closer information which can be designed in the form of interesting pictures, charts or puzzles. The teacher also should manage the class well when implementing information gap tasks in speaking classroom by preparing suitable material before teaching, giving update information so the students will give their attention to the lesson.
2. Information gap tasks are applicable to be conducted in speaking class. For further researcher on the same field, it is suggested to apply information gap tasks at any different level of education by using more interesting tasks design which can stimulate the students' interaction and having longer period of time. Because in learning language there is a process which might influence the achievement like habit, the learners' character, motivation, learning strategies, etc

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