

IMPROVING SPEAKING SKILL THROUGH INFORMATION GAP TECHNIQUE

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Abstract

This research aimed to improve the speaking skill through information gap technique. The population of this research was the grade XI students of SMA Negeri 1 Toinasa. The researcher employed pre-experimental design. It involved one class. It was selected by using total random sampling. The result of the data analysis showed that the t-counted value of (14.83) was greater than t-table value of (1.729) by applying 0.05 level of significance and the degree of freedom (df) 19. It means that the application of information gap technique can improve the speaking skill of grade XI students of SMA Negeri 1 Toinasa

Key words: Speaking Skill; Improving; Information Gap Technique.

INTRODUCTION

Language as a means of communication plays a very important role in social relationship among human beings. English as one of international languages is very important since it requires as a bridge of communication. In Indonesia, English is one of the compulsory subjects which is taught in junior high school, senior high school and university as the first foreign language. In learning English, there are four skills that should be mastered by the students. One of them is speaking.

Speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols. Speaking is a crucial part of foreign language learning and teaching which plays an important role for human beings. As Clark (1977:23) states,

Speaking is a fundamentally an instrument act. A speaker talks in order to have some effect on his/her listener. She/he asserts things to change their state of knowledge. He

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ask them question to get them to provide information. He request things to get them to do thin gs for him.

According to the above statement, speaking is how a speaker put their ideas into sentences and produce it in a proper speech in order to affect a listener. Therefore, the world nowadays requires that the goal of teaching speaking should improve the students' communication skills so that they can express themselves and learn how to use the language.

Based on the KTSP academic curriculum, the goal of language learning is to enable students to communicate the language. The main purpose of learning is aimed to improve the students' skills in communicating English well. Furthermore, the students should master all of the components of speaking, they are fluency, accuracy, and comprehensibility.

Moreover, developing speaking skill among the students still can be a big problem. Especially in SMA Negeri 1 Pamona Barat, there are several reasons why this happened. First, they did not practice the lesson after they learned from their teachers. Next, the teachers gave them a little chance to explore their ability in the class. In addition, When teaching in the class, the teacher did not know what kind of problem that faced by their students in learning English. As a result, the teacher only came to the class to fill the attendance list. Besides, the method that teacher used in teaching English speaking is still conventional method such as; teacher examplizing, describing and dominating the lesson. Meanwhile, the students just sit down and listened to what was explained by their teachers.

There are many techniques which may be used by English teachers in helping the students to improve their speaking skill. One of them is information gap technique. Harmer (2007:275) says "information- gap activities are those where students have different pieces of information about the same subject and have to share this information (usually without looking at what their partner has got) in order for both of them to get all the information they need to perform a task". According to Corbett (2003:22) in his following statement,

The information gap or information transfer task became the archetypal communicative activity. Typically leaner would be given access to information that was denied to another learner. Then, in pairs or groups, the learners would exchange the information.

Based on the definitions stated above, it may be concluded that information gap is an activity which requires at least two different versions of material. Students work together in pairs and each student has different information on their card, hence they have to talk each

other by using the target language in order to complete it. For example completing a task by obtaining missing information, conveying telephone, and expressing opinion. It sets up practicing on specific item of language. It is like more drill than real communication.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher formulated the research problem: *Can the speaking skill of the grade XI students of SMA Negeri 1 Pamona Barat be improved by using Information gap technique?* The objective of this research is to find out whether the information gap technique can be used as a technique in improving speaking skill of the grade XI students of SMA Negeri 1 Pamona Barat or not.

METHODOLOGY

In conducting the research, the researcher used pre-experimental design. It means that there was only one class. It was the eleventh year students of SMA Negeri 1 Pamona Barat. The research was conducted base on one group pretest-posttest designed by Hatch and Farhady (1982:19) as follows:

Experimental group T1 X T2

Where:

T1 = pre-test

T2 = post-test

X = treatment

The population was needed in conducting a research. As Gay (1992:124) states “The population is the group of interest to the researcher, the group of she or he would like to results of the study to be generalizable.” Then, the reseacher decided the population of this research was the grade XI students of SMA Negeri 1 Pamona Barat. The grade XI students of Pamona Barat were divided into two classes, they consisted of 63 students. The distributions of each class can be seen as follows:

Table 1: Students Distribution Table

No.	Class	Number
	XI IPA	20
	XI IPS	43

Sample is a small part of population that is investigated. Cresswell (2005:146) defines, “A sample is a sub-group of the target population that the researcher plans to study for generalizing about the target population.”

In taking sample of this research, the researcher used total sampling technique where the researcher took one class as a representative of 2 classes population.

Variable is a variation object of the study. There are two types of variables: dependent variable and independent variable. Dependent variable is the response or the criterion variable that is presumed to be caused by or influence the independent treatment or independent variable. The independent variable is selected by researcher to determine the relationship with the dependent variable. Dependent variable in this research is the students’ speaking ability of eleventh grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Pamona Barat. Independent variable of this research is gap information as a treatment which is used by the researcher.

The data of this research were collected through observation and test. The purpose of this activity was to find out the actual data of the students during the learning process. There were two types of test used in this research: pre-test and post-test.

The researcher analyzed the data by using statistical analysis. It was used to analyze the test result (pre-test and post-test). He computed the individual score by using formula proposed by (Arikunto, 2006:308):

$$\sum = \frac{x}{n} \times 100$$

Where:

\sum = standard score
 x = students score
 n = maximum score
 100 = constant number

The researcher computed the mean score of the students in pre-test and post-test by using formula proposed by Hatch and Farhady (1982:55) as follows:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Where:

\bar{x} = mean scores

$\sum X$ = value achieved

N = total number of students

After getting the mean score, the researcher computed the mean score of the deviation.

The researcher used a formula proposed by Hatch and Farhady (1982:116) as follows:

$$S_D = \frac{\sqrt{\sum D^2 - (1/n)(\sum D)^2}}{n - 1}$$

Where :

S_D = deviation standard

$\sum D$ = the amount of square difference

n = number of students

The next step, the researcher computed the error standard by using formula proposed by Hatch and Farhady (1982: 116) as follows:

$$S_{\bar{D}} = \frac{S_D}{\sqrt{n}}$$

Where:

$S_{\bar{D}}$ = error standard

S_D = standard deviation

n = number of students

Then the writer analyzed the data in order to know the significant difference or testing hypothesis by using t-count formula as proposed by Hatch and Farhady (1982: 117) as follows:

$$t = \frac{x_1 - x_2}{S_{\bar{D}}}$$

Where :

t = volume of t-counted.

x_1 = the average of pre - test

x_2 = the average of post - test

$S_{\bar{D}}$ = error standard

If the value of t-observed is greater than t-table, it means that there was significant

difference between the score of pre-test and the score of post-test, although the value of t-observed was negative.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

To find out the result of the technique that the researcher applied was successful or not, he examined the students before and after treatment. The pre-test was used to measure the students' speaking skill before treatment. The post-test was given after both of classes got treatment. The test was focused on three components of speaking: accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility.

Table 2 : The Result of Pre-test

No.	Initial Name	Score's Criteria			Standard Score	Max. Score
		Fluency	Comprehensibility	Accuracy		
1	GKW	50	50	30	43	100
2	GMD	45	50	30	42	100
3	MP	30	45	20	32	100
4	KES	35	30	20	28	100
5	KMS	30	20	10	20	100
6	KSG	30	25	20	25	100
7	KEA	55	50	25	43	100
8	LAW	45	40	20	35	100
9	NPS	75	60	40	48	100
10	NKM	35	25	25	28	100
11	NSA	60	50	45	52	100
12	NPU	35	40	20	32	100
13	NMP	35	35	20	30	100
14	RAA	40	25	25	30	100
15	SFD	45	40	20	35	100
16	YP	50	45	30	42	100
17	MS	35	30	25	30	100
18	NLE	55	40	35	43	100
19	FRK	35	35	20	30	100
20	JNR	50	35	25	37	100
<i>Total</i>					705	

The pre-test data above shows that the students' skill in speaking is still low. It is showed through the scores which was gained by the students in each component of speaking.

Then, to find mean score of pre-test, the researcher applied the formula as stated previously. The mean calculation is as follows:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

$$\bar{x} = \frac{705}{20}$$

$$\bar{x} = 35.25$$

The mean of pre-test is **35.25**

Table 3: The Result of Post-test

No.	Initial Name	Score's Criteria			Standard Score	Max. Score
		Fluency	Comprehensibility	Accuracy		
1	GKW	75	70	55	73	100
2	GMD	65	70	40	58	100
3	MP	60	70	40	57	100
4	KES	65	55	45	55	100
5	KMS	65	55	40	53	100
6	KSG	65	55	40	53	100
7	KEA	75	70	50	65	100
8	LAW	75	65	40	60	100
9	NPS	80	75	60	72	100
10	NKM	65	50	40	50	100
11	NSA	80	60	50	63	100
12	NPU	60	55	45	53	100
13	NMP	70	55	55	67	100
14	RAA	65	50	50	55	100
15	SFD	65	55	45	55	100
16	YP	70	65	55	63	100
17	MS	65	55	45	55	100
18	NLE	60	55	50	55	100
19	FRK	60	55	45	53	100
20	JNR	55	50	40	47	100
<i>Total</i>					1162	

The post-test data above show that there is a significance progress in speaking skill after the researcher applied the technique in improving students speaking skill. It is showed through the score which was gained by the students in the post-test. Based on the scores in each components of speaking, The progress is almost 50 %.

Then to find mean score of post-test, the researcher applied the formula as stated previously. The mean calculation is as follows:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

$$\bar{x} = \frac{1162}{20}$$

$$\bar{x} = 58.1$$

Before analyzing the data by using t-test formula, the researcher computed the standard deviation of pre-test and post-test stated in the following ways:

Table 4: Result of Pre-test and Post-test

No.	Initial Name	Standard score		Differnce (D) (T2-T1)	Difference squared(D) ²
		Pre-test (T1)	Post-test (T2)		
1	GKW	43	73	30	900
2	GMD	42	58	16	256
3	MP	32	57	25	625
4	KES	28	55	27	729
5	KMS	20	53	33	1089
6	KSG	25	53	28	784
7	KEA	43	65	22	484
8	LAW	35	60	25	625
9	NPS	48	72	24	576
10	NKM	28	50	22	484
11	NSA	52	63	11	121
12	NPU	32	53	21	441
13	NMP	30	67	37	1369
14	RAA	30	55	25	625
15	SFD	35	55	20	400
16	YP	42	63	21	441
17	MS	30	55	25	625
18	NLE	43	55	12	144
19	FRK	30	53	23	529
20	JNR	37	47	10	100
<i>Total</i>				$\sum D = 457$	$\sum D^2 = 11347$

Before calculating the standard deviation, firstly the researcher calculated the difference score between the pre-test score and the post-test score by formula T2-T1. Then to gain the difference square, the reseacher quadrated the score in different table.

Then, the researcher computed the standard deviation used the following mean formula:

$$\begin{aligned}
 SD &= \sqrt{\frac{\sum D^2 - (1/n) (\sum D)^2}{\sum n - 1}} \\
 SD &= \sqrt{\frac{11347 - (1/20)(457)^2}{20 - 1}} \\
 &= \sqrt{\frac{11347 - (0.05)(208849)}{19}} \\
 &= \sqrt{\frac{11347 - 10442}{19}} \\
 &= \sqrt{\frac{905}{19}} \\
 &= \sqrt{47.63} \\
 &= 6.901
 \end{aligned}$$

The standard deviation is 6.901

After getting the standard deviation, the researcher continued calculating to get standard of error by using formula as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 S_{\bar{D}} &= \frac{SD}{\sqrt{n}} \\
 &= \frac{6.901}{\sqrt{20}} \\
 &= \frac{6.901}{4.472} \\
 &= 1.54
 \end{aligned}$$

Furthermore, the researcher needed to analyze the data in order to know the significant progress between the pre-test and the post-test. The computation is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 t\text{-obs} &= \frac{X_1 - X_2}{s_{\bar{D}}} \\
 &= \frac{35.25 - 58.1}{1.54} \\
 &= \frac{-22.85}{1.54} \\
 &= -14.83
 \end{aligned}$$

Determining t – table

The researcher found 19 for the degree of freedom and then checked across to where 19 intersects with the column labeled one – tailed 0.05. The t-value at the intersection is 1.729

$$\begin{aligned}
 d.f &= (n - 1) \\
 &= (20 - 1) \\
 &= 19 \\
 \alpha &= 0.05 \\
 t\text{-table} &= 1.729 \\
 t\text{-observed} &= 14.83
 \end{aligned}$$

DISCUSSION

In doing the research, the researcher focused on three components of speaking. They were accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility. Then, the researcher needed to test the students to know their speaking skill whether they can pass the passing grade (65) or not.

In giving the pre-test related to the three components of speaking, the researcher presented the result of pre-test in the following table:

Tabel 5: Students' Percentage in each Components of Speaking

Components of speaking	Number of students	Percentage	Passing grade
Fluency	1	5%	65
Comprehensibility	20	0%	65
Accuracy	20	0%	50

Based on the table above, only 5% of students could pass the passing grade of fluency, 0% of students could pass the passing grade of comprehensibility and accuracy. It means that the students' speaking skill before having given the treatment was very poor.

After knowing the students' score in the pre-test, the researcher gave the treatment to the students by using information gap to improve their speaking skill. In giving the treatments, researcher divided several steps. Firstly, he divided class into five groups. Each group consisted of four students.

Secondly, each group was given card containing a picture. The researcher asked the students to find their partner who had the same picture by asking the characteristic of the picture. The researcher did not allow them to show their card to others.

Thirdly, after getting all the information about the picture that needed, the researcher asked students to guess the kind of picture in their partners had. If they had not found yet the same picture as they had, they were asked again by other friends but still in one group until they found the partner who had the same picture.

Fourthly, after finding the partner who had the same picture, the researcher instructed to students to make simple description about their picture that they got from their partners. Finally, the students showed their performance after writing a simple description about their picture. Then, they had to perform the simple description about their picture in front of the class.

After conducting the treatment, the researcher gave the post-test to the students. The result of post-test is presented in the table below:

Tabel 6: Students' Percentage in each Components of Speaking

Components of speaking	Number of students	Percentage	Passing grade
Fluency	15	60%	65
Comprehensibility	7	35%	65
Accuracy	8	40%	50

The result of post-test above shows that there is a significant progress between the result in the pre-test and the result in the post-test after they were given treatment by using information gap technique. It is showed by the number of students who can reach the passing grade or more than that. In fluency the percentage increased from 5% in pre-test to 60% in post-test. The increasing number can be seen in the comprehensibility and the accuracy which is increasing from 0% in the pre-test to 35% in comprehensibility and 40% in accuracy.

After comparing the result in the pre-test and in the post-test, the researcher concludes that there is a significant progress in improving students' speaking skill by using information gap technique. It means that the information gap technique can be used in improving students' speaking skill.

The research about information gap technique in improving students' speaking skill had been conducted by many researcher previously, one of them was Dewi (2013) who conducted the research in Mts Al-Mujahirin Riau which entitled "Improving the Speaking Ability of the Second Year students of MTS Al-Muhajirin Tapung by Using Information Gap Activities". The reseacher basically focused on the effectiveness of using information gap technique in improving students' speaking skill. The result of her research showed that the information gap technique can improve students' speaking skill. In her research, she said that the activities which was offered by information gap technique were relevant to the characteristics of students with achievement motivation. Meaningful, situations were established using pair work and group work, both important features of communicative language teaching in the classroom. By understanding the research above, the researcher tried to apply this technique in SMA Negeri 1 Pamona Barat. Yet it was different from the previous research, the researcher emphasized on the use of information gap technique, whether it can be used or not in teaching speaking.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

After applying the treatment and comparing the students result before and after the treatment, the researcher concludes that:

The mean score of post-test is greater than the mean score of pre-test. The t-counted value of 14.83 is higher than t-table value of 1.729. It means that there was a significant difference between the pre-test and the post-test. This shows that the speaking skill of grade XI students at SMA Negeri 1 Pamona Barat can be improved through information gap technique.

The researcher also would like to give some suggestions as in the following:

1. The students should study hard and feel motivated to develop their speaking skill. They should practice speaking both inside or outside of the class without hesitating and being afraid of making mistakes.
2. The teacher should provide the students with more chance to speak so that the students get more speaking practice in class. The teacher should facilitate the students if they are getting difficulties in learning English.
3. Information gap technique “find your partner” is one of many techniques which can be used in teaching speaking and very useful in motivating the students to develop their speaking skill.

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