**IMPROVING STUDENTS’ ABILITY TO USE MODAL AUXILIARIES THROUGH PEER CORRECTION TECHNIQUE AT GRADE X OFFICE ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT**

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Abstract

*The objective of this research is to find out whether the use of Peer Correction Technique can improve students’ ability to use Modal Auxiliaries of the Grade X students or not. This research employed pre-experimental research design. The population of this research is the Grade X students that consisted of 6 classes. The sample was drawn by applying purposive sampling technique. The data were collected by using pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was conducted to measure the students’ ability in using Modal Auxiliaries before the treatment while the post test was conducted to measure the students’ ability in using modal auxiliaries after the treatment. The result of the data analysis show that there is a significant difference between the result of the experimental group and the control group. By applying two-tails test at 0.05 level of significance with 26 degree of freedom, the result of t-counted (4.968) is higher than t-table (2.052). It is concluded that the hypothesis is accepted. Hence, Peer Correction Technique has improved students’ ability to use Modal Auxiliaries.*

*Keywords: Improving, Ability, Modal Auxiliaries, Peer Correction Technique*

**INTRODUCTION**

In Indonesia, English teaching has two purposes, they are English for general purposes and English for specific purposes (Manurung, 2006). Vocational High School students study English for specific purposes since they are divided into various departments that require them to be able to implement their ability to speak English in the community and work field related to their specification of departments. For instance, the students of Office Administration Department are provisioned with materials or terms which are frequently used in the office. They are gradually introduced the field of offices in order to make them accustomed to work field of offices.

Nevertheless Indonesian students have been learning English since they are in elementary level, they still encounter difficulties in it. One of the difficulties in learning English is on structure, particularly in using Modal Auxiliaries. The students often find it difficult to understand. Moreover, they sometimes get confused to use language function, not only in writing, but also in speaking.

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As a fact the language skills and components support each other. Teacher needs to provide the students with sufficient materials, including English structure in order to achieve the integrated target of learning English subject. Besides, the teacher also needs to apply various kinds of strategies in teaching English to students and learn which of the strategies is appropriate to apply when learning certain skills or components of English.

Many teachers apply reading material with a sequence of questions without discussing about the language function related to Modal Auxiliaries found in the passage. Teaching practice and teaching experience are conducted by the researcher have showed that the students still lack to practice when learning English structure.

Based on the teaching experience at the Office Administration Department of Vocational High School on PPLT, there were some problems in mastering Modal Auxiliaries such as: they had difficulty how to use Modal Auxiliaries and how to differentiate. For example, *can* and *will* in past form as follow: “*I can make some cakes a few months ago*” the correct sentence is “*I could make some cakes a few months ago*”. “*I said I will do that*” the correct sentence is “*I said I would do that*”.

In accordance with the background above, the researcher has conducted research on the influence of Peer Correction Technique to the students of the Grade X in learning Modal Auxiliaries. The experience of teaching some students of Vocational High School and their difficulties in comprehending the use of Modal Auxiliaries are the reasons to choose Modal Auxiliaries as the discussion of this research and students of the school as the subject of the research. The researcher believes that the students still need more exercises to master the English structure to support their language skills.

In addition, they need to get accustomed to using English structure, which is still regarded as a difficult component of English. For example, they find it difficult to comprehend a text of reading or conversation of English which contains Modal Auxiliaries.

The students of Office Administration Department are required to be able to speak English correctly in terms of using Modal Auxiliaries. By doing more exercises, it is expected that the students’ to mastering Modal Auxiliaries can be improved.

Modal Auxiliaries are helping verbs that express a wide range of meaning (ability, permission, possibility, necessity, etc.); Most of them have more than one meanings (Azar, 1992:94). The key way to identify a modal verb is by its defectiveness (they have neither participles nor infinitives).

Modal Auxiliaries are *shall, should, will, would, can, could, may, might, had better, ought to, and must*. The following are not modal verbs, but may be used for a similar purpose: *used to, going to, have to, have got to, be able to, be supposed to*. They are also called phrasal modals, which have similar function or meaning to Modal Auxiliaries.

Generally, Modal Auxiliaries express speaker’s attitudes (Azar, 1999:151). One form of Modal Auxiliary can have more than one meanings or use. Speakers use Modal Auxiliaries to express various feelings or ideas. The use of Modal Auxiliary, for example *could*, can have various purposes. For instance:

- I *could* walk five kilometers when I was young.

- *Could* you please buy me some candies when you go shopping?

In the first sentence,*could* is used as ability and the second sentence *could* is used as permission and request form.

The modal verbs are not followed by any suffixes. For example, in the form of simple present tense, the subject *she, he, it* must have final -s or -es for their verbs as Azar (1999:151) states that Modal Auxiliaries do not take final -s or -es even though the subjects are the third person singular; *she, he, or it*. For examples, *She will spend her weekend time in Bandung, instead of, She wills spend her weekend time in Bandung, or She will spends her weekend time in Bandung*

Moreover, Modal Auxiliaries are followed directly by the simple form of a verb, instead of the preterit or past participle form of verb. For examples, *We will conduct the TOEFL test next week, instead of, We will conduct the TOEFL test next week, or We will conduct the TOEFL test next week.*

There is only one exception, *ought* is followed by an infinitive (to + the simple form of a verb). For example, “*They ought to attend the drama class this afternoon*”. The sentence means they are expected to be present in drama class this afternoon.

By applying Peer Correction Technique in this research, the researcher can contribute significantly to helping the students to achieve the curriculum objectives and be able to practice using Modal Auxiliaries in their daily communication in various fields.

According to some experts, there are some definitions of Peer Correction. According to Richards ( 1999:268): Peer Correction is an activity in the revising stage of writing in which students receive feedback about their writing from their friends or their peers. Typically, students work in pairs or in small groups, read each other’s compositions and ask questions or give comments or suggestions. Hefernik (1983) mentions Peer Correction as learning and teaching instrument for teachers and learners because students can have helpful feedback.

Furthermore, as stated by Mangelsdorfin (1992:92) that Peer Correction is an activity that the student’s diverse perception about their topics as well as foster the ideas and make them more clearly in the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) writings. In addition, Harmer (2004:19) stated that Peer Correction is a technique where the students learn from their mistakes and provide feedback to their classmates. Therefore, the writer concludes that Peer Correction is a technique which used to learning process where the learners correct each other.

People use Modal Auxiliary as a part of discussion of English structure. It is widely used in spoken language in various work fields. Oral communication often requires many expression using Modal Auxiliary forms. For example, people use modal forms of *‘would’* to show Self-Intention or an offer and so on.

The numerous numbers of Modal Auxiliary forms and functions, sometimes, have the students confused to comprehend. Furthermore, they need various proper techniques to learn it. Peer Correction is expected to be able to contribute a significant outcome to help the students learn Modal Auxiliary effectively. It is also expected that the student has great desire to improve their speaking and writing abilities in English after conducting peer correction continuously and making it as their habit.

In applying Peer Correction Technique, teacher needs to embed the competitive desire to the students. Beside for fulfilling the curriculum standard and achieving the lesson objectives, the students are expected to have great Self-Motivation to know and gather the knowledge they need. Not only working on the exercises provided by the teacher, in developing their English structure, but the students also need to find exercises to do from another source such as English books in library, articles in newspaper or internet, and so on, and we begin to make it as training for themselves conducting and solving the problems found in the materials or exercises.

In using Modal Auxiliaries, there are several procedures which are done by the researcher as a teacher in the classroom. The procedures are as follows:

Before teaching, the researcher prepares the material of Modal Auxiliaries *can* in expressing ability and expressing past ability. In the presentation, the researcher makes some explanations and provides some examples of Modal Auxiliaries through simple sentence.

Examples:

a) Bob *can* play the piano.

b) You *can* buy a screwdriver at a hardware store.

c) I *can* meet you atTed's tomorrow afternoon.

*Can* is used as Modal Auxiliaries to negative sentences in simple present tense. The negative form of can may be written *can't, cannot,* or *can not*.

Examples:

a) Bob *can’t* play the piano.

b) You *cannot* buy a screwdriver at a hardware store.

c) I *can not* meet you at Ted's tomorrow afternoon.

The researcher explains how to use Modal Auxiliaries. *Can* in simple past we use *could.*

Examples:

1. Our son *could* walk when he was one year old.
2. He *couldn't* walk when he was six months old. (in negative form).
3. You *could not* buy a screwdriver at a hardware store yesterday. (in negative form).

After presenting the material, the researcher as the teacher asks the students to do the task. Then the researcher asks them to make peer correction task, the forms of peer correction are varied based on the situation. Before the real peer correction, the researcher designs some exercises to introduce the way to check a task. They are guided to focus on some discrete mistake such as items are subject, the Modal Auxiliaries, verbs, spells, and tenses. Next, the students are asked to comment their friend’s mistake. Finally, the researcher collects the task which the students have been checking or discussing the task with the students.

Based on the problems that are faced by the students and the way to solve them, the researcher formulated a research question as follows: *Can the use of Peer Correction Technique improve students’ ability of grade X of Office Administration Department of Vocational High School to use Modal Auxiliaries?* Subsequently, the objective of the research was to prove whether or not the use of Peer Correction Technique can improve the ability of Grade X in Modal Auxiliaries.

**METHODOLOGY**

In conducting this research, the researcher applied pre-experimental research design. It means that there is only one class as research object without using control class or control group. The class is called experimental group. The researcher gave pre-test, treatment, and post-test to the experimental group. The research design is Best’s (1981:85) model as follows:

|  |
| --- |
| O1 X O2 |

Where:

O1 : Pre-test

X : Treatment

O2 : Post-test

In conducting this research, the researcher only used test as the instrument. There are two kinds of test. They are pre-test and post-test. The pre-test was held before the application of the treatment and the post-test was conducted after the treatment. It consists of 30 items of questions, which were divided into three types: 10 items of multiple choice, 15 items of completion test, and 5 items of essay test. The multiple choice and completion test items are scored one for number, and essay test items are scored two for each item. Therefore, the total score of the questions is 35.

The data of this research were analyzed statistically. There are four steps which the researcher uses to analyze the data.

Firstly, the researcher computed the individual score of the students by using as follows: The result of standard score was the distribution between obtained score and maximum score, and then multiplied by one hundred (Arikunto 2006:276).

Secondly, the researcher computed the mean score of the students in pre-test and post-test by using as follows: The result of mean score of pre-test/post-test was the distribution between total amount of the students score and total number of the students (Arikunto 2006:306).

Thirdly, researcher computed the mean score differences of pre-test and post-test by using as follows: The result of mean deviation was the distribution between the sum of deviation and number of the students (Arikunto 2006:307).

After that, the square deviation was computed by using as follows: The result of the square deviation was the sum of deviation quadrate that lessened by the result of distribution between the sum of deviation quadrate and number of the students (Arikunto 2006:308).

Last, the researcher computed t-counted in order to analyze the effectiveness of the treatment by using as follows: The result of t-counted was the distribution the mean deviation of pre-test and post-test (post-test – pre-test), the result of the division of the square deviation and the number of students is reduced by a constant number and multiplied by number of students (Arikunto 2006:306).

**FINDINGS**

In collecting the data of the research, the researcher used test to the sample of this research. the researcher gave two tests, they were pre-test and post-test for the experimental group to find out the effectiveness of the treatment of Peer Correction Technique. In order to improve the student’s ability to use Modal Auxiliaries. In the application of the technique, the researcher used two ways to apply the technique.

The first was pair form; the researcher applied Peer Correction Technique in the second, fifth, and sixth meeting. The second was group form; the researcher applied Peer Correction Technique in the third, fourth, seventh, and eighth meeting.

After the treatment, the researcher gave the post-test. The main reason to test the students was to ensure and verify whether the use of Peer Correction Technique can improve the students’ ability to use Modal Auxiliaries at Grade X of Vocational High School or not.

The data was gotten by tested experimental group which were before and after the treatment. The pre-test was conducted to know the students’ ability to use Modal Auxiliaries at the first meeting. The post-test was conducted to know the students’ ability to use Modal Auxiliaries at the ninth meeting.

By knowing the effectiveness of the treatment, the researcher conducted the pre-test for the experimental group class X Office Administaration sixth of Vocational High School. The formula stated in methodology is used in analysing the result both of the tests, (pre-test and post-test) and deviation score of experimental group.

The result of the pre-test for experimental group was completely presented in the table 2 :

Table 2. The Result of Pre-test

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No | Initials | Obtained Score | Maximum Score | Standard Score |
|
| 1. | AGB | 15 | 35 | 42 |
| 2. | ADK | 13 | 35 | 37 |
| 3. | AND | 15 | 35 | 42 |
| 4. | ANS | 17 | 35 | 48 |
| 5. | ARD | 13 | 35 | 37 |
| 6. | ASRN | 21 | 35 | 60 |
| 7. | ASTRD | 22 | 35 | 63 |
| 8. | BELLA | 19 | 35 | 54 |
| 9. | CINDY | 20 | 35 | 57 |
| 10. | DEA | 13 | 35 | 37 |
| 11. | HNA | 21 | 35 | 60 |
| 12. | JSCCA A | 21,5 | 35 | 61 |
| 13. | JSCCA T | 20,5 | 35 | 58 |
| 14. | KMNG | 13 | 35 | 37 |
| 15. | FIRZA | 19 | 35 | 54 |
| 16. | BNTNG | 18,5 | 35 | 53 |
| 17. | IKBL | 19 | 35 | 54 |
| 18. | NURMLA | 21 | 35 | 60 |
| 19. | NRL | 13 | 35 | 37 |
| 20. | NRL ANSA | 13 | 35 | 37 |
| 21. | HDYTI | 21 | 35 | 60 |
| 22. | NURVNA | 17 | 35 | 48 |
| 23. | PAOLINA | 16 | 35 | 46 |
| 24. | IDRA | 13 | 35 | 37 |
| 25. | RMDNI | 20 | 35 | 57 |
| 26. | SYRF | 14 | 35 | 40 |
| 27. | WDIA | 15 | 35 | 42 |
| Total | | 463,5 |  | 1318 |

Based on the table 2, the highest standard score is 77, the lowest score is 37. After getting the total score of the students, the researcher then computed the students mean score. The mean score of the pre-test is 48.81.

After giving the pre-test, the researcher applied treatment for eight meetings. The reseacher found students' progress in using Modal Auxilaries. After that the researcher conducted the post-test to obtain the data. Whether the use of Peer Corretion Technique can improve students’ ability or not.

After giving the treatment, the researcher gave posttest to the students. The test was given to the students in order to prove whether the treatment is effective or not. The result of the test can be seen in the table 3.

Table 3. The Result of Post-test

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No | Initials | Obtained Score | Maximum Score | Standard Score |
|
| 1. | AGB | 27 | 35 | 77 |
| 2. | ADK | 28,5 | 35 | 81 |
| 3. | AND | 27 | 35 | 77 |
| 4. | ANS | 28,5 | 35 | 81 |
| 5. | ARD | 27 | 35 | 77 |
| 6. | ASRN | 26 | 35 | 74 |
| 7. | ASTRD | 27 | 35 | 77 |
| 8. | BELLA | 27 | 35 | 77 |
| 9. | CINDY | 27 | 35 | 77 |
| 10. | DEA | 26 | 35 | 74 |
| 11. | HNA | 30 | 35 | 86 |
| 12. | JSCCA A | 30 | 35 | 86 |
| 13. | JSCCA T | 26 | 35 | 74 |
| 14. | KMNG | 28,5 | 35 | 81 |
| 15. | FIRZA | 28,5 | 35 | 81 |
| 16. | BNTNG | 27 | 35 | 77 |
| 17. | IKBL | 27 | 35 | 77 |
| 18. | NURMLA | 27 | 35 | 77 |
| 19. | NRL | 29 | 35 | 83 |
| 20. | NRL ANSA | 26 | 35 | 74 |
| 21. | HDYTI | 27 | 35 | 77 |
| 22. | NURVNA | 30 | 35 | 86 |
| 23. | PAOLINA | 28 | 35 | 80 |
| 24. | IDRA | 27 | 35 | 77 |
| 25. | RMDNI | 27 | 35 | 77 |
| 26. | SYRF | 30 | 35 | 86 |
| 27. | WDIA | 26,5 | 35 | 76 |
| Total | | 605 |  | 2127 |

Based on the table 3, the highest standard score is 86, the lowest score is 74. These scores were compared to minimum mastery standard based on this school used of 75. The mean score of the posttest is 78.77. Thus, the total students categorized ‘pass’ were 24 students, while the remaining 24 students were categorized ‘fail’. From the calculation, the post-test is higher than pre-test. This shows that the Modal Auxiliaries of the students can be improved after the treatment.

Based on the result of pre-test and post-test, the researcher concludes that the students could improve their mean score. The mean score of pretest is 55.88 while the post-test is 78.77. It has proved that the students’ ability advances after the treatment.

After computing the mean score of pre-test and post-test, the researcher calculated the deviation. The researcher wanted to find the difference between pre-test and post-test scores in order to prove the significant result after applying Peer Correction Technique. After computing the deviation score of pre-test and post-test, the researcher computed the mean deviation of the students score. The result of mean deviation is 29.96.

Furthermore, the researcher needed to statistically analyzed the data in order to know the difference between the pre-test and the post-test. The result of statistically analyzed the data is 4.968 as t-counted.

To prove whether the hypothesis is accepted or rejected, the researcher needs to test it based on the result of the data analysis. Before testing, the researcher has stated the criteria of testing hypothesis. If the t-counted is higher than the t-Table, the hypothesis is accepted. However, if the t-counted is lower than the t-Table of the hypothesis is rejected or there is no progress in the student’s achievement.

After analysing the data of the test, the result of data analysis shows that the t-counted is 4.968 By applying 0.05 level of significance with the degree of freedom (df) 27 2.052. The researcher found that the t-counted 4.968 is higher than the t-Table 2.052.

**DISCUSSION**

Based on the result of the test given, there are some points that needed to be discussed about the finding of the research. The researcher has conducted the research at Vocational High School. The researcher used pre-experimental research design and gave treatment by using Peer Correction Technique.

After doing the treatment, the researcher concludes that the Grade X students are very smart. It is not difficult for them to catch the intention of the teacher. When the teacher gave them the explanation of the material, they have more attention and feel enthusiastic to the teacher questions. If the students found any difficulties in understanding some words, the teacher could use gesture in order that the students had challenge in learning and the students did not get bored in learning English. Like Agredo (1988:10) argues, you can talk, write, draw or use your body to tell your thoughts because before there were alphabets with letters, people drew picture and used sign to tell their thoughts.

The researcher also took notes during the treatment, the pre-test and post-test processes, the result of student’s ability by using Modal Auxiliaries in pre-test has shown that most of them were confused in using the Modal Auxiliary verbs such as in expressing ability “*can”* in past tense form. For example: *He can walk when he was six months old*. The correct sentence should be *He could walk when he was six months old*.

After giving the pre-test, the researcher conducted the treatment for eight meetings. The treatment was conducted from the second meeting until the ninth one. At the second meeting, the researcher applied Peer Correction Technique which occurs in pair form, teaching the students about reservation by using Modal Auxiliary verbs.

While, in the third meeting, the researcher applied Peer Correction Technique in a group form. In engaging the students 6 groups, students could be firmed and interested in learning process. In this meeting, the students learned about giving and responding invitation. The researcher tried to encourage the students should give and respond invitation. Then, the teacher asked the students to make dialogue by using Modal Auxiliary verbs. At this meeting, the students were highly interested to learn. In the third and fourth meeting, the students able to express their ideas.

However, in the fourth meeting, the researcher administered Peer Correction Technique in a group form. In this meeting, the students were taught about who is speaking, please?. The objectives of the learning were that students should be able to use Modal Auxiliaries in communication by making telephone call partners, including opening, responding and closing expression appropriately.

Furthermore, the researcher applied Peer Correction Technique in a pair form in the fifth and the sixth meeting. In this meeting, the students were taught about suggestion and advice.

Last, the researcher applied Peer Correction Technique in a group form in the seventh and the eighth meeting. In this meetinng, the students were taught about guest handling.

After the treatment, post-test was given to the experimental class in order to measure the students’ ability in Modal Auxiliaries. The post-test was given by the researcher in ninth meeting. Based on the results of the post-test, it was found that from 32 students’ score 25.84 % students’ error in essay test, 9.92 % students’ error in completion test, and 14.81 % students’ error in multiple choices. By seeing the data percentage above, the students have low number of error rate percentage. The result had led to one conclusion that the implementation of Peer Correction Technique was quite influence to the students’ ability to use Modal Auxiliaries.

To sum up, the result of post-test is higher than the result of pre-test. In other words, the treatment was successful to build motivation of the Grade X students of Vocational High School in learning Modal Auxiliaries. Besides, the various form of Peer Correction Technique could be applied in order to make the students can not get bored in learning English, especially Modal Auxiliaries.

**CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

After discussing and analysing the data in the previously, the researcher concludes that the use of Peer Correction Technique can improve students’ ability to use Modal Auxiliaries at the Grade X students of Vocational High School. The result of the data analysis shows that the t-counted(4.968) is greater than the t-table(2.052). By looking at the result of t-counted and t-table, it can be concluded that there is a significant improvement of the students’ achievement. Therefore, the use of Peer Correction Tehcnique has impact in improving the students’ ability to use Modal Auxiliaries at the Grade X students of Vocational High School.

After conducting the research, the researcher would like to offer some suggestion that might be important for improvement. First, the students should increase their willing and motivation to learn English.

Second, for the English teacher should concentrate on teaching activity which will enable pupils to properly understand the concepts taught in class. And then English teacher should apply an interesting strategy when teaching modal auxiliaries so that students understand the material given and enjoy the teaching and learning process.

Finally, for other researchers who are interested in conducting futher research, they can use the output of this study as reference of their research. Moreover, the researcher hopes that there are more explanation about Modal Auxiliaries. For the next researchers those who take the same research should be more creative to find out some ways to make this research maximally progress in the future, and if they want to prove the result of this research, the researcher suggests that they take Peer Correction Technique as a technique in their research.

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