Improving Speaking Skill through Information Gap Activities at Second Semester of Management Study Program at Panca Marga University in 20212022 Academic Year

by Siti Masluha

Improving Speaking Skill through Information Gap Activities at Second Semester of Management Study Program at Panca Marga University in 2021/2022 Academic Year

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Abstract

Speaking is the highest target in English language because speaking as the basis of communication which becomes a function in learning. There are many kinds of technique to improve speaking skill, such as information gap technique. The researcher wants to find out the atmosphere and improvement of speaking skill by using information gap activities This research used collaborative classroom action research and composed or three cycles following the procedures of action research. The researcher uses instrument of observations, lists, tests, and questionnaire to collect the data. The data obtained was presented in two ways, they are qualitative and quantitative. The findings showed that IGT activities were effective to improve the speaking skill of the learners in class activities. In the first cycle, the students' mean scores in the test result is 59,8 The second cycle is 69 and the third cycle is 81,8. Instead, the improvement also based on the result of the observation that showed positivity and good responses from the learners. The questionnaire result is 3,72 for the mean scores of the students' perception. It means that they give positive response for the implementation of this technique.

Keywords: Improving speaking skill, Information Gap Activities, Classroom Action Research

1. INTRODUCTION

English as a speaking is one of the productive activities in daily life of learning language. This performance is more directly observable (Brown 2007). It is becoming the main skill needed to carry out a conversation, instead an interactive process for constructing and receiving information. The mastery of speaking is a priority for students in schools and universities. Therefore, English teachers and lectures should pay great attention for teaching speaking instead of leading the students to learn grammar by memorizing. English teachers and lectures should provide a rich environment where meaningful communication takes place.

However, from the interview with the lectures before this study, it was found that there are several problems that are faced by the lecture and the learners at management study program at Panca Marga university. Firstly, the lectures only use the text book and she does not approach or media to help them in teaching and learning process so that the student's desire and motivation in learning English, especially speaking class is not satisfactory. They feel reluctant and fear to join speaking class. Secondly, the learners feel that speaking class is very difficult, such in pronunciation and spell it. Thirdly,

the lecture mostly uses the same technique in presenting materials so that the students are getting bored easily. In order to solve the problems above, the writer does the study dealing with the use of technique to support the speaking class and learning process in management study program.

Based on the phenomenon above the writer interested in conducting of the use information gap activities to improve the students in speaking. Considering the problem above, the writer interested in a study entitled Improving Speaking Skill Through Information Gap Activities at Second Semester of Management Study Program at Panca Marga University in 2021/2022 Academic Year.

Information Gap Technique

Definition of Information Gap Technique (IGT) challenge students to exchange information in order to complete a lesson plan activity. Most IGT work is done in pairs where each student has a part of information on a task to be done. According to (Afrizal 2015), IGT is a good strategy for learning ESL because the activities provide good practice for using sentences which the students have just learned. It also gives the students chances to speak, interact and exchange information amongst them instead the lesson easy to understand and they will speak more than their teacher does. In addition, (Kayi 2006) mentioned that IGT are learning activities in which each student has a duty to work with his/her partner. One student has certain information which the other student does not have. Each student has different information. In this way, the students have to exchange information in order to complete the missing one or to fill in the gap.

Using IGT Activities in the Speaking English Class

Activities in IGT are useful for the speaking class. In an activity, one student has information that have to share with the others in order to gues and solve a problem, gather information or make decisions (Neu and Reeser 1997). They will say comprehensible to other in order to accomplish the task (Neu and Reeser 1997). (Ur 1996) list the characteristics of a successful speaking activity:

a. Learners talk a lot: in this occasion, they will talk too much to fill this activity.

b. Participation is even: classroom discussion is not dominated by a minority of talkative participants; they will get the same chance to speak and contribution in this activity.

c. Motivation is high: the learners should be motivated to speak up by giving interested in the topic. We should push them to say something new.

d. Language is of an acceptable level: in this occasion, we give chance for them to express themselves in utterances which is easy comprehensible and acceptable level of language accuracy.

All of the criteria above give satisfactions. It can make easy for the lecture to explains and reviews their vocabulary without bother their concentration to complete the task. The activities of IGT need to work team because every participants plays an important roles. These activities are highly motivational because of the nature of the tasks. It requires the solving problem or mystery are especially effective. We should know whether an activity is an acceptable level of difficulties of them. The learners will prepare for the activities if the level of language is acceptable. Instead, these activities reinforce their vocabulary and kind of grammatical structures taught in class. They will have chance to use linguistics forms and function in a communicative way through building blocks of the language to speak in the target language.

Teaching of the Speaking

Speaking as one of important skills in learning and teaching English as Foreign Language (EFL). In doing process of learning and teaching speaking skill, we often face some difficulties to make them interactive in speaking class. In fact, most of English lecture have continued to teach speaking through memorization of dialogue without concern the goal of speaking. As the lecture and practician, we should be creative and innovative to improve their speaking skill. Instead, the goal of speaking is achived. (Brown 2007; Burns and Joyce 1997) stated that speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information. In addition, (Nunan 1991) speaking in an interactive process of constructing meaning orally. (Richards 2008) stated 'oral skills have hardly been neglected in EFL/ESL courses (witness the huge number of books on conversation and other aspects of speaking on the market), even the approach of this skills has been focused of methodological debates'.

In addition, (Lado 1964) specifies that learners must use their language until they can speak well in order to measure their improvement of their language. He added that the learners will know their abilities of speaking if they can speak it clearly and be understood, the alternative or very good rule is 'learn what you can use and use what you learn'. Communicative competence is the goal of teaching speaking in universities. The learners should able to speak English with communicative competence. (Richards 2005) stated that there are some aspects of language knowledge in communicative competence, they are:

a. Knowing how to use language for a range of different purposes and function.
b. Knowing how to vary the use of language according to the setting and participants.
c. Knowing how to produce and understand different types of the texts, such narratives, reports, interviews, and conversation.
d. Knowing how to maintain communication despite of limitation in one language, such using different kinds of communication strategies.

Through learning these aspects, it will give chance to the students for expressing their thought, ideas, and feelings. Since this can bring learners to be creative and expressive to express what they are speaking about, it is considered important in terms of teaching.

Some Difficulties in Teaching Speaking

Teaching speaking is not an easy thing to apply in the classroom. Being creative and innovative lecture is needed in order to motivate the learners to speak. (Bowen, Madsen, and Hilferty 1985) suggest that using a waiting time until the spirit moves someone to utter word, phrase, or sentences. For example, we give some games such as guessing the word or mention the vocabularies (classify the animal, fruit, part of bodies). By giving the notation, they are not allowed to mention the same name or word (animal or fruit).

Stated the difficulties of speaking are caused by what he calls affective factors and interaction effects (Brown 2007). Affective factors refer to anxiety of the learners over the risk blurting things out that are wrong, silly and or comprehensible. In this case, most of the learners are fear of mistake, such as fear about pronounciation, fear about the spell, and fear about their ego (e.g: psychology, performance, and confidences). Based on the tittle, the writer tries to elaborate some theories related to objective to the study. They are Afrizal and Firmansyah:

Conducted a study entitled Classroom Action Research: Improving Speaking Skills Through Information Gap Activities (an action research in English Department at Almuslim University). He focused on the atmosphere in the improving of speaking skills through Information Gap Activities. His finding showed that IGT activities were effective in improving the speaking abilities of the students in class. the students give positive responses for these activities in class (Afrizal 2015).

Conducted a study entitled Improving The Students' Speaking Skill Through Debate Technique (an action research at SMK fajar Kencana). He focused on classroom situation when the debate technique is implemented in speaking class. His finding showed that debate technique can improve students'speaking interest and speaking classroom into a better situation (Firmansyah and Vegian 2019).

However, in this study the writer studies the same object, but in different subject, the study focuses on improving the students' speaking skills through information gap activities at second semester, students of management study program in Panca Marga University academic year 2021/2022.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The design of this research is Classroom Action Research (CAR) program which is intended to make a contribution to the improvement of lectures'' knowledge, style, technique and method in the classroom, and to give insight into the behavior of both lectures and students in applying the IGT. The study

was done at Management study program, Economic faculty, Panca Marga University, Probolinggo. It uses an action research design in order to answer the research problem. In addition, the primary aim of the research is improving the quality of teaching and learning in speaking classes. This study tries to describe the implementation of IGT to provide an improved way for lectures to teach speaking. This CAR employs a collaborative research design. The researcher and her collaborative classroom lectures directly conducted the study. To cope with the problems found in the classroom in teaching speaking, the researcher applied IGT during the teaching and learning processes. The researcher acted as the practitioner who taught the students with IGT to practice speaking English.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The materials were provided to meet certain vocabularies and grammatical target in the implementation of IGT. This implementation allows the learners to discuss the topics with their friend in order to compose dialogue. They were given different topics with their friend in order to compose dialogue. The students were given different topics with some suitable vocabularies, such sport, hobbies, profession in each meeting.

The implementation of IGT, classroom interaction had contributed students to the automatic knowledge in starting and building. The writer also used motivating techniques to push them to speak each other. The lost control and the selected correction provided during the practices process were believed as the real determinants in promoting the confidence and participation spirit. These notions had contributed some interference in the classroom such as laughter, local language expression used and less focus. The spontaneous communication is happened, they did not apply their monitor utterances control.

This implementation was carried out with very less control of grammatical correction. It can make students to focus on meaning negotiation and forgot the formal language patterns. Instead, the student's achievement dropped in the aspect. It could force the writer to pay more attention to the field. In the third cycle, implementation by asking the students and monitoring their ability in speaking such as grammar and vocabulary has begun by the writer. The writer also started to provide grammatical input and new vocabulary as the responses to the student's mistake. Doing correction when the activities did not bother them and the classroom activity had been working well. The correction of grammar and vocabulary had increased the student's achievement in aspect as well as made them to pass with better scores than the last cycle.

During the IGT activities, the writer used and modified the materials to meet the level competence of students. The material will suite when the learners introduced some new vocabularies, accelerated the learning process as they could understand more about the topic. The introduction to a large number of new words, either new in terms of pronunciation could contribute

to the impairment of drill process. It will make them to keep asking and confirming lecture about the new words. This phenomenon was emerged the cycle one and cycle two. In order to solve this problem, the writer reduce the number of new lexes in those materials for the next meeting.

Instead, the implementation of IGT at Panca Marga University had contributed successful improvement in speaking class of Management study program. The main factors in this improvement are the lecture performance, classroom atmosphere, instructional planning, and teaching materials. These factors should be integrated to allow learners to be comfortable during they interact in classroom. The learners felt free to make their own conversation they would fully participate in the classroom activities. This condition would be easily to stimulate and drag to meet the instructional goals.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the finding and discussion of this study, it will describe some conclusions. The firs, there was improvement in the students' score during the teaching process, starting from 54.6% in the pre-test to 72.3% after stage 1 and to 98.4% after the stage 2. The second, focus on the improvement, the improvement can be seen in the scores from test from 46%, to 69.4% at the end. The third, score of the students' perception toward the implementation of IGT was 3.618 which belongs to the criteria of 'strongly agree' with the implementation of IGT. Based on the analysis above, it can conclude that the implementation of information gapactivities has a statistically significant effect on speaking class.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

The authors confirm contribution to the paper as follows: study on information gap activities design. A.I and M.A; data collection and interpretation of results. S.A; draft manuscript preparation. All authors reviewed the results and approved the final version of the manuscripts.

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