

PROMOTING MIDWIFERY STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY USING COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

Speaking is the way to convey the information that students must acquire. Consequently, this study aimed to see whether Communicative Language Teaching could promote midwifery students' speaking ability or not. A quasi-experimental method was employed using a nonequivalent groups design in conducting this research. The sample taken was the second-semester student midwifery from STIK Bina Husada, consisting of 38 students. To gather data, the oral test was employed. The speaking test was considered valid in terms of content validity and reliability. The reliability of the trial was measured using inter-rater reliability. The results revealed that the t-obtained (5.42) was higher than the t-table (2.02) at the significant level of $p < 0.05$. It can be concluded that Communicative Language Teaching could promote students speaking ability. Communicative Language Teaching could motivate students to be brave and self-confident in speaking performance and more active in using English as their spoken language in-class activities.

Keywords -- Speaking; Communicative Language Teaching; Speaking

Introduction

As a tool of communication to convey information, speaking skill is necessary to be learned. Speaking, according to Fulcher (2003), is the spoken use of language to communicate with others. Furthermore, Rizkiah (2014) adds that speaking is the activity of sharing information and saying sense. By speaking, we produce something meaningfully to the other listener to have message and feedback. The ability to speak is very important in conveying information. Furthermore, Santoso (2017) explains that speaking as an interactive action of meaning construction needs outcome, reception, and processing of data. When it comes to build forms and meanings, it relates to the situation of conversation takes place, which includes the speakers, their experiences, the physical surroundings, and the purpose of speaking. If a person can foresee and produce the patterns required in a given discourse context, he is said to be able to speak.

Speaking is one of the key parts of communication, according to Richard and Renandya (2002, p.210). Al-Roud (2016) adds that speaking is the most common medium of communication. Furthermore, speaking ability is the ability to communicate with others using moral language to investigate thought, purposes, emotions, and feelings in order to ensure that the message is given and received correctly.

However, the ability to speak for some people is very difficult, especially using a foreign language. Al Hosni (2014, p. 28) also states that learners are unable to communicate in English due to a lack of necessary vocabulary, grammar, and sentence formulation skills, resulting in the use of their home tongue. The results also revealed that students consider pronunciation, grammar, and fluency to be extremely challenging while speaking English. Besides, according to Tuan and Mai (2015), students have difficulty speaking due to a variety of

reasons, including confidence, listeners' support, students' listening abilities, and the pressure to do well. These variables influence their decision to speak English, particularly in class. The audience is then polled to see if their attention, respect, and appreciation influence pupils' ability to speak English fluently. When learners begin to speak their mother tongue, they simply talk without considering how the words sound or are created; it is a natural process (Fata, 2014). Heriansyah (2012) also states that students have difficulty speaking due to nonlinguistic issues such as stress, fear, shyness, lack of enthusiasm, and low-class engagement, among others. It can be stated that students tend to have difficulties in expressing something due to some factors such as fluency, structure, pronunciation, lack of motivation, worry, afraid, and shyness. Due to those problems, students sometimes are reluctant to speak English in class. As a result, students' speaking ability does not improve.

There are several strategies that teachers can use in teaching speaking, one of them is Communicative Language Teaching (henceforth, CLT). CLT has been recognized as one of the teaching methodologies by many language teachers for its primary focus on enhancing learners' communicative skills (Diana, 2014). CLT is the single method to develop a learner-centered teaching in the classroom. Its basic principle underlying communicative method is that learners must not only study structure or grammar in English but must also improve to be able to use the language to get things done or to express something correctly and appropriately (Priyanto, Asrori, & Pudjobroto, 2016). Saputra and Wargianto (2015) also add that students' speaking skills improved significantly when they were taught utilizing Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). To summarize, CLT is an excellent strategy for teaching the subject to talk.

Some studies had investigated Communicative Language Teaching to develop students' speaking ability. However, this study concerned on the use of a reasoning gap in Communicative Language Teaching to promote midwifery students' speaking ability compared to students who were taught using conventional method.

Literature Review

Speaking

Speaking is a way of interacting between communicators and listeners where the communicator conveys messages or ideas in verbal form. Speaking, according to Keyi (2006), is a process of gathering and communicating knowledge through both verbal and nonverbal means. Nunan (2004) states that speaking is an oral ability and contains a systematic verbal message in conveying information and messages.

Awalia (2009) speaking is a collaborative process that builds meaning focusing on generating information and receiving information, in which the speaker must understand grammar, how to pronounce and understand when, why and how the language is used. In speaking, there are five types of speaking, namely imitating, intensive, responsive, interactive and extensive (Brown, 2004) that are explained as follows.

- a. Imitation; a very restricted portion of speaking time in class can truly be used to pronounce "human tape recorder" sounds, where, for instance, students are practicing or trying to demonstrate certain vowel sounds.
- b. Intensive; goes one step beyond imitative to participate in any speech designed to practice some aspect of phonology or grammar.
- c. Responsive; good student speech in class is an abbreviation that applies to questions or comments initiated by teachers or students.
- d. Broad (monologue); a monologue that is extended in the form of an oral report, or it may be brief in short.
- e. Interpersonal (dialogue); rather than delivering facts and information, it is performed out for the goal of sustaining social interactions.

Communicative Language Teaching

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is a foreign language teaching approach involving the concept of interaction, both in the learning process and in educational goals. The

combination of functional and structural components of language is the most distinguishing feature of CLT. According to Richard (2006), communicative language teaching encompasses the ideas of language teaching aims as well as how students learn the language. It stresses how the language is used, whereas CLT highlights the language's structure or rules structurally. The objectives of CLT are to use language as a medium to communicate, express, and use language expressions in communication appropriately.

Teachers, according to Jeyasala (2014), should incentivize students' communicative competence and provide a better chance to communicate with others or partake them in answering questions that will increase their ability to use the target language, despite their limitations in using it fluently and accurately. Teachers should give authentic communicative situations for pupils since they can transmit substantive explanation and language and phrases. Pupils must also be introduced to the language in a variety of settings; the linguistic information they obtained should provide them with opportunity to develop and apply the language in a variety of circumstances; consequently, motivating learners to speak vocally is crucial.

According to Richards (2006), there are six principles of CLT, mainly create the real communication which focus on language learning, give the chance the learner to experiment and try their knowledge, be tolerant to the mistaken of learner or error during the process communicative, give the chance to develop their accuracy and fluency, link all the sub skill such as reading, writing, listening and speaking at the same time, and explore the grammar rules. Richards and Rodgers (2014) identify three characteristics of learning theory in various communicative language teaching strategies. The first part is the communication principle, that deals with behaviors that highlight real communication. On the other side, the task principle emphasizes the utilization of language to do interesting work. The third point is the meaningfulness principle, which stipulates that the language chosen must have meaning for the learner.

Several activities use communicative processes like information sharing, meaning negotiation, and interaction to try to develop learners' communicative competence. Similarly, games, role plays, reasoning gaps, simulations, and task-based communication activities are necessary in classrooms that adopt the Communicative Language Teaching paradigm (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). Furthermore, Abe (2013) claims that group activities and individual growth, as well as conversations and presentations, are advantageous in schools where the CLT technique is implemented. This study only used the thinking gap as a way to improve speaking abilities of midwifery students.

The stages of teaching speaking skills using Communicative Language Teaching with *Reasoning Gap*

1. Ask students to watch a video about “Indonesia to start human trial of possible Covid-19 vaccine”
2. Ask questions to students, for example, If you were offered to participate in the trial, what would you do and why?
3. Give students time to write their opinion.
4. Ask students to present their opinion individually.
5. Ask students to make a group consisted of 3 or 4 students.
6. Instruct students in groups to share their opinions, and the other members of the group to comment and ask questions about their peers' opinions.
7. Ask each group to offer their viewpoint to the other groups.
8. Give feedback to students' presentation.

Research Method

This study used a non-randomized pre-test and post-test design with a quasi-experimental approach. The students in this study were second-year midwifery students, and there were 38 of them. The population as a whole was used to construct the sample. The 19 students in each group were categorized into two groups: experimental and control. The experimental group got CLT approach, which was a reasoning gap, whereas the control

group received traditional instruction. Both groups learned speaking subject using CLT approach, that was reasoning gap and conventional method for 10 meetings. Before treatment, both groups were given pre-test and after the treatment, both groups were also given post-test.

The data collection taken was using oral test. The students selected one topic out of five topics about health and midwifery and presented it orally. The results of students' speaking test were judge based on speaking rubric. By comparing the speaking test to the midwifery English curriculum and the table of specifications test, the content validity of the speaking test was verified. Interrater reliability was used to assess the test's reliability, and two raters who met the criteria were chosen. As a result, the speaking exam was deemed valid and reliable (more than 0.70). The t-test was used to assess the data.

Results and Discussion

Students in the experimental group received a minimum score of 60, a maximum score of 85, and an average score of 71, whereas students in the control group received a minimum score of 55, a maximum score of 75, and an average score of 67. Chart 1 shows the distribution of pre-test scores among students in experimental and control groups.

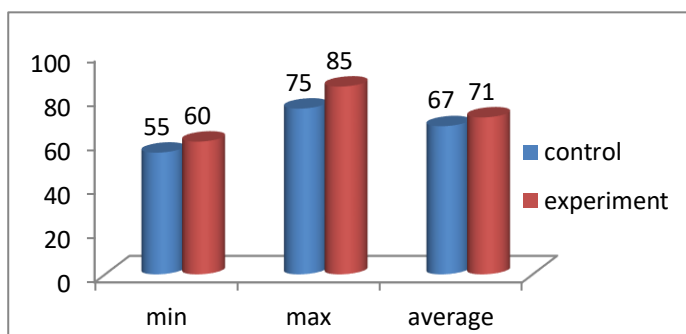


Chart 1. Result of Pre-test in Experimental and Control Groups

On the contrary, the results of students' post-test score experiment group obtained the minimum score was 65, maximum was 90 and the average score was 80. While, in the control group, the minimum score was 60, maximum was 76, and the average was 69. The students' score distribution of post-test in experimental and control groups can be seen in Chart 2.

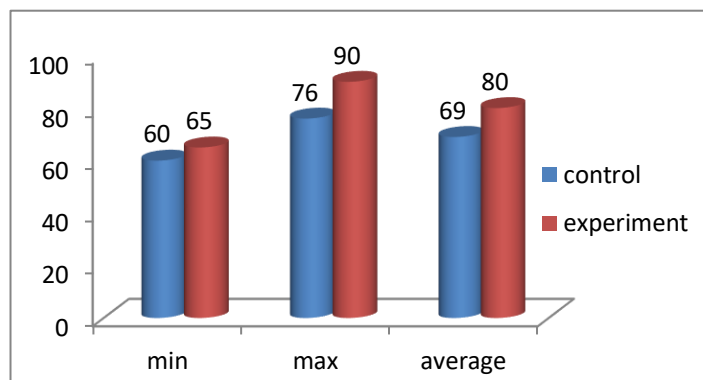


Chart 2. Result of Post-test in Experimental and Control Groups

From the students' pre-test and post-test scores of two groups showed that both groups had the same chance to develop their speaking ability.

To see whether Communicative Language Teaching could promote midwifery students' speaking ability or not. The mean difference between the two groups' post-tests was 12.88, the standard error difference was 1.68, and the t-obtained was 5.42, all with a p0.05 significance level. It may be determined that there was a significant difference between students who were taught utilizing Communicative Language Teaching and those who were not since t-obtained (5.42) was greater than t-table (2.02) and p-value was lower than α -values (0.05). It means that

CLT can encourage students to be more confident and daring when speaking in class, as well as to be more active in using English as their primary language. The use of CLT in the classroom can motivate learners who are not engaged in speaking, and this approach can lead to them being more attentive to their classmates and teacher. Bruner, Sinwongsuwat, and Radic-Bojanic (2015) claimed that CLT classes were focused on its use valuable communicative contexts that urged students to use English to share their opinion in authentic and real-world communication, that comments was essential in helping students improve their communicative skills, and that errors were considered acceptable as long as they did not interfere with the real message's meaning.

Conclusion

CLT is suitable for midwifery students to develop their speaking ability. The use of CLT that was using a reasoning gap could increase and motivate students to express their opinion based on the situation given. It can be seen based on the result of t-obtained (5.42) was greater than the t-table (2.02) and the p-value was less than 0.05, indicating the CLT could enhance students' speaking ability. In other words, learners who were given lesson to speaking those who were not. It can be viewed from the improvement of scores of students in pre-test and post-test that showed their ability to speak.

Since this study only applied the reasoning gap, it was suggested that lecturers could apply some activities that are connected to CLT such as games, role plays, reasoning gap, simulation, task-based communication activities, individual development, discussions, and presentations. By applying those activities, hopefully, midwifery students could have speaking performance well.

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