

**“THE CONTRIBUTION OF OPEN TASK IN IMPROVING STUDENTS’
SPEAKING SKILL: AN EXPERIMENTAL STUDY AT MAN 1 PRAYA
ACADEMIC YEAR 2013/2014”**



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Pembimbing I

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**”THE CONTRIBUTION OF OPEN TASK IN IMPROVING STUDENTS’ SPEAKING
SKILL:
An Eexperimental Study at MAN 1 Praya in Academic Year 2013/2014”**

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ABSTRACT

This study is aimed to figure out the contribution of open task in improving students’ speaking skill. It was conducted at MAN 1 Praya in academic year 2013/2014. The method used in this research was experimental design in which the writer took two classes which were almost homogenous as the sample of this research. Two sample classes were decided to be experimental class and control class. In this study, the writer utilized cluster random sampling in which all of the classes have the same chance to be chosen as the sample of this research. Then XI IA 1 and XI IA 3 were selected as sample. The result of this research showed that open task has a significant effect on students’ speaking skill. It was indicated by the increase of students’ speaking skill in terms of comprehension (30.51%), fluency (27.01%), and vocabulary (26.54%). Besides, the mean score of experimental class was higher than control class. It was also showed by the value of t-test. The score of t-test was 5.55 while t table in degree of significant 5% and 1 % was 2.021 and 2.704. it means that the students’ score in t-test was higher than t- table or in other words H_a was accepted. Thus, there was a significant contribution of open task in teaching speaking.

Key words: speaking skill, open task, debate.

ABSTRACT

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan pengaruh dari open task dalam meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa. Penelitian ini diadakan di MAN 1 Praya pada tahun akademik 2013/2014. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah experimental design dimana peneliti mengambil dua kelas yang hampir homogen sebagai sampel penelitian. Kedua sampel tersebut kemudian dibagi menjadi experimental grup dan control grup. Dalam penelitian ini, penulis menggunakan cluster random sampling dimana semua kelas mempunyai kesempatan yang sama untuk dipilih sebagai sampel dalam penelitian ini. Akhirnya, kelas XI IA 1 and XI IA 3 terpilih menjadi sampel. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa open task memiliki pengaruh yang sangat besar dalam meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa. Hal ini dibuktikan dengan peningkatan kemampuan berbicara siswa dalam hal comprehension (30.51%), fluency (27.01%), and vocabulary (26.54%). Selain itu, rata-rata nilai siswa pada experimental grup lebih tinggi daripada nilai rata-rata siswa di control grup. Hal ini juga ditunjukkan dengan nilai t-test. Nilai dari t-test adalah 5.291 sedangkan dalam tingkat 5 % dan 1 % adalah 2.021 dan 2.704. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa nilai t-test lebih tinggi dari nilai t-tabel dengan kata lain H_0 diterima. Dengan demikian, terdapat kontribusi yang signifikan dari open task dalam meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa.

Key words: speaking skill, open task, debate.

1. Introduction

Developing interactive teaching English strategy is very important in creating meaningful communication. In this case, teaching speaking is seen as the most important part of second language learning because it clearly and efficiently contributes to the success of the learners in school and their life (Pierce and Kayi, 2006). However, it is against the condition of English learners at MAN (Islamic Senior High School) 1 Praya since many of them regard that speaking is the most difficult subject to be learned. This problem can appear by some factors: students themselves, the facilities or the teachers. Usually, students feel insecure about their level of English and have less confidence to express their mind on their own words because they are afraid of making mistakes. As a result, they tend to be silent and do not show active participation in speaking lessons. Second, this problem may be caused by the lack of facilities that the students' need in learning speaking such as books and library. Furthermore, the problem is caused by the teacher, the methods or strategies that she/he applied in teaching speaking sometimes are not suitable enough with the material. In addition, the assignment given to the students is not really appropriate with the learning subject and students ability. There should be therefore an appropriate approach implemented in the process of teaching learning speaking.

One alternative approach, which is possible to apply for the sake of enhancing the students' speaking skill, is the task-based approach. In this case, using open task is important to improve students' speaking ability. Open tasks are those for which there is no one correct answer or answers; everyone can have their own opinion. An answer is neither right nor wrong; it depends on one's point of view or experience (Jacobs, 2000). In addition, using the task, each student should get the opportunity to express their mind since the task provide them to learn language freely in which by putting them in a situation; therefore, they can decide alone the way of expressing and accepting experience of using the target language.

Nevertheless, there are various kinds of open task: free conversations, debates, discussions, making choice, etc. In this study, the writer is interested in using debate to be applied in improving students' speaking skill at MAN 1 Praya. Using this task, the students can present their ideas or opinions which two opposing parties try to defend their ideas or opinions. Krieger (2007) says that debate is an excellent activity for language learning because it engages students in a variety of cognitive and linguistic ways. Furthermore, Halvorsen (2005) says that debate forces students to think about the multiple sides of an issue and it also forces them to interact not just with the details of a given topic, but also with one another.

The results of this study attempts to answer some research questions: (1) Is there any significant contribution of open task in improving students' speaking skill at MAN 1 Praya? (2) How far is the contribution of open task in improving students' speaking skill at MAN 1 Praya?

Based on the research questions, this study aims to:

- a. To observe whether there is a significant contribution of open task in improving students' speaking skill at MAN 1 Praya.
- b. To know how far the contribution of open task in improving students' speaking skill at MAN 1 Praya.

The results of this study are expected to:

- a. The result of this study is expected to be able to add several concepts in developing interactive teaching strategy in teaching speaking.
- b. This research can be implemented in building the appropriate learning tasks that relevant to the students' needs.

- c. This research can be employed by the teachers to design teaching and learning process in the classroom effectively through the meaningful speaking task.
- d. Learning speaking can be developed through performing a series of activities as steps towards successful task realization.
- e. Every language teacher can manipulate the tasks: open task, so it can help the students to understand the language in context and to use it in situations in real life.

2. Review of Related Literature

This study is covered by some theories that relate and support the data such as the nature of speaking, teaching speaking, teaching speaking using open task, a form of open task, and the strengths and weaknesses of debate in speaking class.

Speaking skill is an ability to express opinion, thought, and feeling to other people both directly and indirectly. Speaking is the same as oral interaction which are conventional ways of speaking information, expressing our idea, and thought have in our mind” (Nunan in Malilah, 2010). In the line with Malilah, Oktarina (2002) says that speaking skill is the ability of arranging sentences since communication happens through the series of sentences constructing in performing the various behavior from various society.

According to Hornby (1995) teaching means giving the instruction to (a person): give a person (knowledge skill, etc). While speaking means to make use of words in an ordinary voice. Therefore, teaching speaking is giving instruction to a person in order to communicate.

Task, according to Bygate, Skehan, and Swain, (2001) could be simply as defined as “an activity which requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective.” Why it is good to choose the open task? Open tasks are those that are loosely structured and have less specific goals. Learners are aware that there is no certain outcome that they have to achieve.

One of the forms of open task is debate. Debate is an effective pedagogical technique because of the level of responsibility for learning and active involvement required by all student debaters” (Gene, 2001). Hornby (2000: 340) defined debate as “a formal discussion of an issue at a public meeting or in a parliament, and it is an argument or discussion expressing different opinion”. Moreover, it provides an experience by which students can develop competencies in researching current issues, preparing logical arguments, actively listening to various perspectives, differentiating between subjective and evidence-based information, asking cogent questions, integrating relevant information, and formulating their own opinions based on evidence.

Barkley, *et al* (2005: 192) defined that there are three benefits of debate for students. First, debate can improve students’ motivation to practice their spoken language. Second, it can encourage students’ in critical thinking, and develop students’ speaking proficiency in communication. Third, it grows and develops students’ tolerance and appreciation to the their friends’ point of view. According to Lockett (2006: 119) there are great advantages of debate toward students. First, the students become more active in small-group and class discussion. Second, it will improve students confidence while they are giving academic presentation. Finally, it is one of the effective way for training both linguistic and intellectual abilities.

According to Malley and Pierce in Rubiati (2010: 20) there are several weaknesses. First, debate technique only can be used for specific subject, such as subject that related with agreeing and disagreeing and giving argument. Second,

debate needs long times and preparations. Students should prepare their arguments before debate to make them easier to attack the opponent's opinion. Finally, it makes the students' emotional in defending their argument.

3. Research Method

The method used in this research was experimental design. Sandjaja & Haryanto (2006) briefly stated that an experimental research is aimed to observe the cause-effect correlation between variables. The experimental design must have two groups: an experimental group and the control group.

- **Population and Sample**

In this research, the populations of the study were all of the XI grade in the second semester of the students at MAN 1 Praya that consists of six classes (240 students).

In this study, the writer takes the samples randomly using cluster random sampling, in which all of the class have the same chance to be chosen as the samples of this research. Thus, the writer chooses two classess of the eleventh grade in the second semester of the students at MAN 1 Praya: XI IA 1 and XI IA 3.

- **Method of Data Collection**

- ✓ Kinds of data

The kind of data used in this research was quantitative data that was the result of the student's test.

- ✓ Source of Data

The sources of data of this research were the students of MAN 1 Praya: XI IA 1 and XI IA 3.

- ✓ Data Collection Technique

The technique in collecting data in this research was test. The researcher had given the pre-test and post-test for both experimental and control class. After giving pre-test, the treatment was conducted by using open task that was debate for experimental class, but the control class was taught without debate. Then, in the last meeting, the students in experimental and control class done the post-test.

- ✓ Instrument in Collecting Data

The kind of instrument used in this research was speaking test by using open task. It designed in debate. The scores in speaking test were taken based on oral proficiency scoring categories that includes accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension (Hughes, 2003).

- **Data analysis**

In interpreting the data collection, the researcher was collaborated with an English teacher in MAN 1 Praya as an inter-rater. Interrater measures the consistency between different examiners (Hadley and Mort 1999). This may provide a clearer and fairer measure of the measuring oral communicative ability. Besides, it would avoid subjectivity in scoring the oral test.

The data of this study were analyzed on the basis of following procedures:

1. The writer converted the students' raw score into standard score for both experimental and control group. The formula used was as follows:

$$T = 50 + \frac{X - M_i}{SD_i} \times 10$$

Where:

T : t-score (standard score)

X : student's raw score

Mi : ideal mean score

SDi: ideal standard deviation

(Nurkencana and Sunartana, 1990)

2. The writer Figured out the mean gain score of the experimental group and control group using the formula:

The formula used for experimental group was as follows:

$$Mdx = \frac{\sum Dx}{Nx}$$

Where:

Mdx : The mean gain score of experimental group

dx : The gain score of pre-test and post-test of experimental group

N : The number of sample

Σ : sum of sigma

(Arikunto, 1998)

3. After getting the mean gain score from both groups, then we should compute the sum of square deviation score from experimental and control group through the following formula.

The formula below was used for experimental group was as follows:

$$\Sigma x^2 = \Sigma dx^2 - \frac{\Sigma(dx)^2}{Nx}$$

Where:

Σx^2 : the sum square of the deviation score from experimental group

Σdx^2 : the sum square gain of pre-test and post-test of experimental group

dx : the gain score of pre-test and post-test of control group

Nx : the number of sample of the experimental group

(Arikunto,1998)

Then, the formula used for control group was as follows:

$$\Sigma y^2 = \Sigma dy^2 - \frac{\Sigma(dy)^2}{Ny}$$

Where:

Σy^2 : the sum square of the deviation score from control group

Σdy^2 : the sum square gain of pre-test and post-test of experimental group

dy : the gain score of pre-test and post-test of control group

N_y : the number of sample of the control group
 Σ : the sum of ...
 (Arikunto,1998)

4. The writer computed the correlation coefficient of the two mean scores to know whether it is significant or not.
 The formula used was as follows:

$$t = \frac{Mdx - Mdy}{\sqrt{\frac{\Sigma dx^2 + \Sigma dy^2}{(Nx + Ny) - 2} \left(\frac{1}{Nx} + \frac{1}{Ny} \right)}}$$

Where:

t: test of significance

Mdx : the mean gain score of experimental group

Mdy: the mean gain score of control group

dx²: the square gain of pre-test and post-test of experimental group

dy²: the square gain of pre-test and post-test of control group

N_x+N_y-2: degree of freedom

N_x: the number of sample of the experimental group

N_y: the number of sample of the control group

Σ : the sum of ...

(Arikunto, 1998)

4. Findings and Discussion

In this chapter, the writer presents the result of the study by presenting the pre test and post test scores that have been gained by the students of the two groups.

The result of the students of pre-test and post-test both for the experimental and the control group was analyzed after the students' raw score converted into the standard score. The table bellow shows the computation of pre-test and post-test standard score of experimental and control group.

Table.4.1 The computation of pre-test and post-test standard score of experimental and control group

Experimental Group						Control Group					
Pre-test			Post-test			Pre-test			Post-test		
Mean	Highest score	Lowest score	Mean	Highest score	Lowest score	Mean	Highest score	Lowest score	Mean	Highest score	Lowest score
51	69.6	38	66	71.7	59	49	68.1	38	53	68.1	44

Based on the table above, it indicates from the standard score of pre-test in the experimental group, the mean score is 51 while in the post-test the mean score is 66. On the other hand, from the standard score of pre-test for control group, the mean score is 49 while in the post test the mean score is 53.

Besides, we can also figure out the highest score of the experimental and control group. The highest score in the experimental group is 71.7 and the lowest score is 38.

Meanwhile, the highest score in the control group is 68.1 and the lowest score is 38. Furthermore, we can also find out the range score (highest score-lowest score) for the experimental group is 33.7, in which the highest score is 71.7 and the lowest score is 38, while the range score for the control group is 30, in which the highest score is 68.1 and the lowest score is 38.

Furthermore, to interpret the contribution of the open task in improving students' speaking ability, the researcher calculated the value of t-test. The calculation score gained from the statistic indicates that the value of t-test was 5.291. the table below shows the comparison between t-test and t-table.

Table 4.2 The comparison between t-test and t-table

t-test	t-table		
	df (the degree of freedom)	0.05	0.01
5.291	48	2.021	2.704

It was clear that the score of t-test was higher than t-table which indicated that open task has a significant contribution in improving students' speaking ability.

To see more detail about the difference improvement of each group, the table below shows the percentage in each criterion of speaking test in experimental and control class.

Table 4.3. The Increasing Percentage of the Pre-test and Post-test

Criteria	The Increasing Percentage	
	Experimental Class	Control Class
Accent	8.02	11.32
Grammar	7.89	10.53
Fluency	27.01	26.49
Vocabulary	26.54	24.22
Comprehension	30.52	27.42
Total	100	100

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that in some criteria, the experimental class has more significant improvement. In experimental class, the most increase percentage happens on students' comprehension (30.51%), students' fluency (27.01%), and students' vocabulary (26.54%). Meanwhile in control class, the students' improvement on accent was 11.32 %, grammar 10.53 %, fluency 26.49 %, vocabulary 24.22 %, and comprehension 27.42 %. It was happened because of the students in experimental class was taught using open task since it provides the learners with some opportunities to make them use language freely; therefore, the students in this class were active in practicing speaking during the teaching and learning process. In the treatment, they always practice to give their opinion about the topics given. In speaking fluency, the experimental class has higher improvement which was 27.02% than the control class which was 26.49. It happened because in experimental class, all students have more chances to practice their speaking skill. As Stoneham (2000), states that debate is a good lesson for developing English language fluency and persuasive techniques, so the students who practice speaking in debate can improve their fluency in speaking.

Furthermore, the vocabulary and the comprehension were also increased. The improvement of vocabulary in experimental class was 26.54 % and in control class was 24.22 %. It was occurred because in experimental class, the students got some new vocabularies when they practice speaking English using debate. They were also tried to

find new vocabularies to support their opinion. In addition, the improvement of comprehension in the experimental group which was 30.51 % while the control group was 27.42 %. It was caused in debate, the students were required to understand the conversations while debating. They also should comprehend every content of debate when they were engaged in the discussion; therefore, the debate process can be executed.

However, in the criteria of accent and grammar, the control group has higher improvement with 11.32 % in accent and 10.53 % in grammar. Meanwhile, in the in experimental group, the students gained low improvement since the activity was not focused on the structure but the content as what Bygate (2001) states an activity which requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective. Besides, Jacobs (2000) also notes that open task are those for which there is no one correct answer or answers; everyone can have their own opinion. An answer neither right nor wrong; it depends on one's point of view or experience. The focus is on the task outcome rather than on accuracy of language forms.

5. Conclusion

The result of this study answer the research question.

First, it could be concluded that there is a significant contribution of open task in improving students' speaking skill. It was indicated by t-test score obtained. The students' score in t-test was higher than t-table or in other words H_0 was failed to be rejected. The score of t-test was 5.291 while t-table in degree of significant 5% and 1 % was 2.021 and 2.704. Thus, there was a significant contribution of open task in teaching speaking. Besides, it was indicated by the mean score of experimental group (XI IA 1) which was taught by open task: debate compared with the control group (IX IA 3) which was not taught with debate technique. The mean score of experimental group was 66 and the mean score of control group was 51.3. It means that open task has a significant contribution in improving students' speaking ability.

Second, the result of the data analysis indicated that the students' speaking skill in terms of fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension has increased from pre-test to post-test. In experimental class, the most increase percentage happens on students' comprehension (30.51%), students' fluency (27.01%), and students' vocabulary (26.54%). Meanwhile in control class, the students' improvement on accent was 11.32 %, grammar 10.53 %, fluency 26.49 %, vocabulary 24.22 %, and comprehension 27.42 %.

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