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# Learning to Speak English Through Task-Based Approach

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**Abstract**— Problems in learning and teaching are closely related to teachers and students. In this case part of the learning problem is influenced by the method used by the teachers. The present study aimed at describing the effectiveness of Tasks Based Approach in teaching English speaking. This is an action research that is observing the teaching and learning process in three cycles. It shows that the first observation was 48.33%, the second observation was 72.33%, and the third observation was 80%. The students responded positively on the task-based learning activities. Students have mastered the flow of speaking learned through task-based learning approach and learning stages. They did not waste time asking a lot of questions, but they do exercises both in pairs and in groups.

**Keywords**— bridge graph, metric dimension, caterpillar, cycle graph learning, speaking, task-based approach

## I. INTRODUCTION

This paper is motivated by the inconsistency of Indonesian government programs in the field of education which emphasizes work and work into the nation's work with the spirit of student learning, even though the work spirit becomes a culture in building a better education in the future. One of the activities supported to be realized in motivating student learning is the appropriate tasks which are prepared by lecturers with the theme of learning.

The situation of the low participation of English students in speaking English becomes a sad portrait which is considered an ordinary problem in the process of daily learning. When communicating with native English speakers it seems that non-English students more fluently and accurately communicate English.

The ability to speak in English depends not only on linguistic abilities, but also on the understanding of culture, strategic functions and interactional use of language in social contexts because success in communicating abilities depends on how the components are integrated. For this reason, Savigno suggested that communicative abilities in teaching English must be developed by giving students as much time as possible opportunities to respond, listen, think that grammatical mistakes made by them as a natural teaching and learning process, and do activities in context that include their feelings and overall involvement [1]. Meanwhile, speaking is not as simple as learning a certain part in a language or dialect, but it also involves how to use language in certain settings and situations in the language community

being studied [2]. Furthermore, Bygate [2] divides the oral language proficiency has two integrated elements namely relative accuracy and relative fluency. Scrivener asserts that the characteristic of a successful and productive conversation in a foreign language is if someone who speaks meets accuracy and fluency [3].

Meanwhile, Cohen [4] judges that speakers who are fluent in a language can use vocabulary and internal structures that fit the communication situation. In addition, Krashen [5] state that in fact of the ability to speak is integrated with the ability to listen. A person who can speak fluently in a second language occurs after receiving effective and comprehensive input. Paulston state that in communicating, speakers must interact by following social rules that is a speaker when delivering a message must choose and use the appropriate language to their listeners [6]. Valette called this term social skills [7]. Even, Ur says that knowing a language means being considered a speaker of that language [8].

Specifically, in the context of teaching, that teaching speaking skills, as stated by Nunan, is teaching English students so that they can (1) produce sound patterns and speech sounds in English, (2) use sentence and word stresses, intonation patterns, and the rhythm of the English language, (3) choosing words and sentences that fit to social context, the listener, and the subject matter, (4) organizing the mindset meaningfully and logically, (5) using language as a tool to express values and express opinions, and (6) use language quickly and confidently without much pause [9].

If this situation is to be seen in the classroom, the success of speaking activities is characterized by (1) the amount of students talking, in the sense that speaking activities with most of the time allotted to the students; (2) all student actively participation, in the sense that all students have the opportunity to speak and give the contribution to achieve the objectives of the activity; (3) the high motivation of students, which is marked by their interest in the topic of activities and has something new to say; and (4) the acceptance of the language used, in the sense that between one student and another uses expressions that are relevant and mutually understandable [8].

In short, a person's ability to speak starts from the ability to communicate with a variety of information smoothly and accurately, including a speaker being able to choose and use

the right vocabulary and the right structure. There are many studies conducted by others researcher shows that there is a significant influence of the tasks prepared by the teacher/lecturer in an effort to improve students' ability to speak English. However, there is still no standardized task offered to the speaking course. For example, research conducted by, Rattanawong [10], Wijitpaisarn [11], Yooyong [12], Gunawan [13], and Amrullah [14]. Generally, research studies conducted by those researchers above are still limited to providing recommendations on the importance of a task-based learning approach to be applied in class.

The concept of task has become an important element in labus design, classroom teaching and student assessment. Task-based learning has gone through various modifications in recent years and has been recommended as a way of communicative language teaching. There are many descriptions of expert definitions of tasks, illustrations of how they are used, and mention their pedagogical assumptions. Prabhu defines "task" as an activity that requires students to achieve the results of the information provided through several thought processes that allow teachers to control and regulate the process [15].

In line with Prabhu, Lee defines tasks as class activities or exercises that have objectives and can be obtained only by interaction between participants, structuring mechanisms, sequence of interactions, and focus on the exchange of meaning [16]. According to Breen, tasks are structured plans that provide opportunities for students to perfect their knowledge and improve student abilities in new languages learned then the language is used during communication [17]. According to Willis, tasks are activities in which the target language is used in communicative purposes to achieve an outcome [18]. Nunan uses the word 'task' instead of 'activity'. He defines communicative tasks as part of class work that involves students in understanding, manipulating, producing or interacting in the target language while their attention is focused on meaning rather than form.

Currently, most English teachers agree that students learn to speak English by interacting. Interactive language teaching is based on real situations that require communication. In short, English teachers should create a classroom environment where students can communicate in real life of communication, authentic activities, and meaningful tasks that can increase the use of oral language. It can happen when students collaborate in groups to achieve goals or complete the tasks.

Based on the researcher experience and observation, there are several reasons for the low ability of English students in speaking English. First, the lecturer has not optimally prepared a set of assignments {individual tasks, pair works, and group works} during the learning process. Secondly, lecturers do not give many opportunities for students to practice their English when learning speaking courses take place in class. Third, strict rules are not enforced so that students use more Indonesian or regional languages than English in the classroom. Some previous studies also related to task-based learning showed relative similar results [10], [11], [13]-[15], that the assignments prepared by lecturers are very important in improving students' abilities.

The researcher believes that by preparing the right tasks is very helpful in forming students in developing their cognitive processes, creative thinking, and problem-solving skills through learning to speak English with task-based

approach. Hence, this paper aims to answer the following questions, "How are the results of student learning English speaking by using task-based learning given by lecturers?"

## II. METHOD

Based on the objectives, this research is an action research which refers to the action research design proposed by Kemmis. According to Kemmis, action research means trying ideas in practice as a means of improving and increasing knowledge about the curriculum, teaching methods, teaching and learning process which results in the improvement of what happens in the classroom[19].

This study used three cycles. In applying the actions in each cycle, researchers used a task-based learning approach to improve students' English-speaking ability. The data in this study were obtained from observations of the implementation of learning from the 3 planned cycles. The instrument used in collecting data was an observation sheet of the learning process using task-based learning.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Observation results of the first meeting learning

The observations result of student activities during the learning process indicates that students were still not long interest to respond the tasks given by the lecturers. It can be seen in the following table below:

TABLE 1. OBSERVATIONS RESULT OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES

| No | Components are Observed   | The Appearance | Percentage (%) |
|----|---|----------------|----------------|
| 1  | Students use English when doing assignments   | 14             | 46.66%         |
| 2  | Students respond to assignments given   | 15             | 50%            |
| 3  | Students have the confidence to use English when communicating among themselves   | 14             | 46.66%         |
| 4  | Students come up with their ideas when learning takes place   | 14             | 46.66%         |
| 5  | Students ask several questions related to the work done   | 7              | 23.33%         |
| 6  | Students make corrections themselves to the mistakes of English they say  | 14             | 46.66%         |
| 7  | Students use long sentences in English  | 13             | 43.33%         |
| 8  | Students have problems with the speed of their English due to their problems as learners of English as a Foreign language | 27             | 90.00%         |
| 9  | Students use the right vocabulary and idioms when communicating   | 13             | 43.33%         |
| 10 | Students pronounce English sentences clearly  | 13             | 43.00%         |

Based on the data presented above, out of 10 behavioral components that were assessed from the observation of student activities, there was 1 which was identified as many, namely students responding to tasks in class (point 2) that is 50% while the rest had not been seen in students. In the case of students having problems with the speed of their English (no. 8), it was 90%. While the low interest in asking students

(no.5), it was 23.33% because students were still confused by the workings of this task-based learning approach.

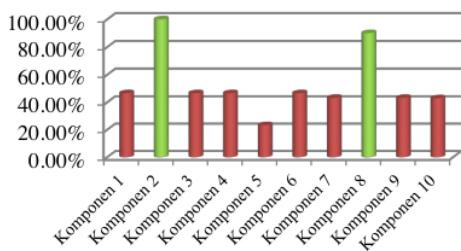


Fig. 1. Students activities

The graph above, it seems clear that students showed their activities that were not optimal in the first learning. It is seen that from the 10 types of behaviour that are averaged the number of behaviours identified during the observation was only around 48.33%. The researchers' good performance at the first meeting has not been able to deliver optimal learning on the part of students

**B. Observation results of the second meeting learning**

The observations result of student activities during the learning process showed an increase in student interest in trying to respond the tasks given by the research lecturer. From the observation sheet of students responds, it can be seen in the following table below:

TABLE 2.OBSERVATIONS RESULT OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES

| No | Components are Observed   | The Appearance | Percentage (%) |
|----|---|----------------|----------------|
| 1  | Students use English when doing assignments   | 25             | 83.33%         |
| 2  | Students respond to assignments given   | 27             | 90%            |
| 3  | Students have the confidence to use English when communicating among themselves   | 25             | 83.33%         |
| 4  | Students come up with their ideas when learning takes place   | 24             | 80.00%         |
| 5  | Students ask several questions related to the work done   | 5              | 16.66%         |
| 6  | Students make corrections themselves to the mistakes of English they say  | 21             | 70.00%         |
| 7  | Students use long sentences in English  | 23             | 76.66%         |
| 8  | Students have problems with the speed of their English due to their problems as learners of English as a Foreign language | 17             | 56.66%         |
| 9  | Students use the right vocabulary and idioms when communicating   | 23             | 76.66%         |
| 10 | Students pronounce English sentences clearly  | 24             | 80.00%         |

Based on the data presented above, from the 10 items of behavioural components of student activities that were assessed, it found that table no. 2 was identified as the

highest percentage at 90% or 27 people of 30 students. The table no. 2 is related to students responding to tasks in the class. Next is the sequence starting from the highest to the lowest percentages: 1, 3, 4, 10, 7, 9, 6, 8, and 5. The further detail information can be seen in the following graph below:

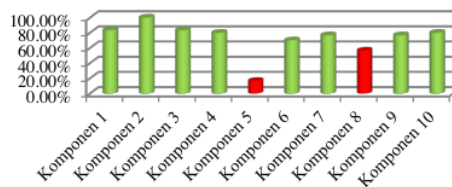


Fig. 2. Students activities in second meeting

From the graph above it is clear that students show optimal activity. It is seen that from the 10 types of behaviour that are averaged the number of behaviours identified during the observation was only around 72.33%. The performance of the research lecturer is good in implementing this task-based learning that has been able to deliver optimal learning to the students.

**C. Observation results of the third meeting learning**

The observations results of student activities during the learning process indicated the there was strong interest of students to respond the tasks given by the research lecturer. From the observation sheet of the students responds, it can be seen in the following table below:

| No | Components are Observed   | The Appearance | Percentage (%) |
|----|---|----------------|----------------|
| 1  | Students use English when doing assignments   | 25             | 83.33%         |
| 2  | Students respond to assignments given   | 30             | 100%           |
| 3  | Students have the confidence to use English when communicating among themselves   | 25             | 83.33%         |
| 4  | Students come up with their ideas when learning takes place   | 24             | 80.00%         |
| 5  | Students ask several questions related to the work done   | 5              | 16.66%         |
| 6  | Students make corrections themselves to the mistakes of English they say  | 21             | 70.00%         |
| 7  | Students use long sentences in English  | 23             | 76.66%         |
| 8  | Students have problems with the speed of their English due to their problems as learners of English as a Foreign language | 17             | 56.66%         |
| 9  | Students use the right vocabulary and idioms when communicating   | 23             | 76.66%         |
| 10 | Students pronounce English sentences clearly  | 24             | 80.00%         |

Based on the data presented above, from the 10 items of behavioural components of student activities that were assessed, It found that table no 2 which was identified as the highest percentages, 100% or 30 people {all students}. The table no. 2 is related to students responding to tasks in the class. Next is the sequence starting from the highest to the lowest percentages: 1, 3, 4, 10, 7, 9, 6, 8, and 5. For the



further detail information can be seen in the following graph below:

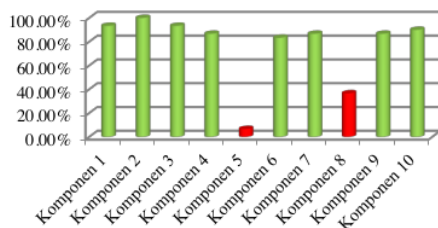


Fig. 3. Student activities in third meeting

It is clear in the diagram above that participants generally showed optimal activity in the third cycle and there was a significant increase with an average of 80.00%. Of the 9 types of behaviour observed, item 3 is still lacking because there are already no questions from students. From the results it is known that the lecturer has compiled a good instrument and implemented the learning well. It would have a good significance if there was any students follow up to discipline on speaking courses, so that three aspects of mastery can be achieved. Without continuous practice what has been learned will be forgotten.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Positive responses of students to the learning process by using a task-based learning approach as shown in the results of the first, second and third observations can be improved from each stage of observation that has been done. Students have mastered the flow of speaking learned through task-based learning approach and learning stages. They did not waste time asking a lot of questions, but they focus on doing exercises both in pairs and in groups.

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