

The Using of Interpersonal Dialogues as a Method for Improving Students' Speaking Skills

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Abstract

This research discusses the problems students face in speaking English along with the techniques used to improve their speaking skills. The technique studied in this research is interpersonal dialogue. This research is a qualitative research using semi-structured methods such as in-depth interviews, focus groups, and participant observation. From this research, the authors found several problems faced by students that made them unable to speak English fluently. The first major problem relates to students' fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary. The second major problem relates to student self-confidence. The researcher also found that interpersonal dialogue helped students improve their speaking skills.

Keywords: *speaking skills, teaching speaking, learning English, interpersonal dialogue*

INTRODUCTION

In the process of communication, especially communication using language. Speaking ability is an important skill to master. However, although it is important, speaking skills are not mastered by most students. This condition makes most students at school tend to be shy and rarely use English to speak. Students tend to speak their mother tongue, regional language, or Indonesian even though they are in the process of learning English. The problem of why students avoid speaking English may be different for each student.

One of the problems that causes students to lack the courage to speak English is a lack of vocabulary. If we are aware of this condition, a big question arises: "Why can something like this happen?" As we know, speaking English has been taught since students were still in elementary school, some have even received speaking skills teaching while still in kindergarten. The method used is generally the same, namely repeating what the teacher said. The teacher says a word or a line of sentences, followed by students. But whether we realize it or not, in fact learning habits like this have the risk of

leading to situations that can limit students' speaking abilities. In addition, this makes students unable to speak freely and correctly.

Teachers as facilitators of learning English at school have been using the same method for teaching speaking for a long time. The main common mistake teachers make is when they have to greet students and encourage students to answer their greetings. Teachers tend to repeat the same questions while students tend to answer questions with the same answers every time they start a lesson. The teacher himself hopes that the students' answers will vary, but the problem is that students are sometimes confused about how to answer these easy greetings. The success of teaching and learning activities depends on how the teacher can provide interesting but creative media to raise students' awareness to speak English. If the teacher can awaken students' awareness, the class will be as interesting as they hoped.

This research was conducted to find creative ways to improve students' English proficiency. The researcher is interested in this topic because the researcher observes that students cannot

speak English fluently even though English has become a universal language. The students found it difficult to express their ideas using English. The students are not good in their vocabulary and grammar. Because students do not have both skills, they are not confident enough to use English to convey or express their ideas. Another reason is that they are too shy to speak for fear of saying the wrong words. They are afraid of being laughed at by their peers.

In line with the problems that arise, the researcher wants to know what creative ways can be used to improve students' English proficiency. One way to improve students' speaking skills is through dialogue. Brown (1994) developed several ways to improve speaking skills. One of them is interpersonal dialogue.

The researcher conducted this research with the assumption that interpersonal dialogue would be very helpful to improve students' English proficiency. The researcher conducted this undergraduate research by conducting experimental research in one of the classes in class X at SMK Setia Negara. By conducting this research, the authors hope that today's students will be more confident in speaking English in everyday life. Another hope is to help teachers have an interesting way of teaching speaking so that students can speak fluently and well in everyday life.

This research is expected to contribute to teaching and learning activities. It is hoped that this research can provide additional information related to speaking strategies in teaching and learning activities. It is hoped that the teachers will be more creative in arousing students' curiosity to speak English more often.

METHOD

The research design is communicative language teaching. Experimental studies are used in this research. The author uses the theory of

interpersonal dialogue on a class X student at SMK Setia Negara. One class is being observed by the author. The author controls the process of teaching and learning activities but students are still the center of the communication process.

Qualitative research is used in this research. One characteristic of qualitative research is the use of semi-structured methods such as in-depth interviews, focus groups, and participant observation. In collecting data, the author first prepares several different topics of discussion. The researcher then divided the students into several groups. The author also emphasizes the vocabulary used in applying interpersonal dialogue theory. Each student gets the opportunity to speak either in groups or in pairs. One group consists of four students. While the students were talking, the researcher observed and rated their performance to analyze the data later.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings in this section are divided into two parts; before and after applying the theory of interpersonal dialogue in teaching and learning activities. The first part is the findings before carrying out interpersonal dialogue. The second part is the findings after implementing interpersonal dialogue. The following table is a table that shows students' scores in speaking before implementing interpersonal dialogue.

No	Name	Gender	Score
1	Adila Febriana	F	88
2	Akbar Rizki Fadilah	M	64
3	Alwi Yahya Muhaimin	M	66
4	Annisa Titis Salashi Azzahra	F	80
5	Arif Fajarudin	M	68
6	Asriningsih Wijiastuti	F	80
7	Berliana Putri Maisyita	F	76
8	Crisna Putra Wira Perdana	M	82
9	Diah Ayu Lestari	F	72
10	Dinda Lutpi Anggi	F	94
11	Farhan Aprisandi	M	82
12	Giovanny Berly Putri	F	70
13	Harutoushi Samna	M	78

14	Ichsan Mohammad Hafidz	M	52
15	Jawari Samosir	M	78
16	Kiki Desitarahma Rismawati	F	84
17	Khrisna Setiyani	F	84
18	Maharani	F	82
19	Maham Ridwan	M	98
20	Martino Ibrahiem Armando	M	76
21	Mohamad Raihan Prestasi Sukri	M	74

From the first observation, the researcher finds that there are some significant problems in students' ability. Therefore, the researcher discusses the problems that arise and ways to improve what students need to improve.

The first major problem relates to student self-confidence. The researcher found that the students were so shy that they could not express what they were thinking freely. The students are still unsure whether they will be able to speak English fluently or not. They tend not to express themselves casually. When the researcher asked some of them about what they were doing, most of the students just kept quiet because they didn't know how to answer that simple greeting. Some of the others only answered with a short answer "okay ms." Others tend to just smile rather than answer questions.

Apart from being hesitant, most of the students looked nervous when asked to speak in English. The students tend to speak more using their mother tongue, namely Indonesian. Most of the time, students choose to use Indonesian rather than English to express their ideas or thoughts. Some other students need more time to think about grammatical concepts so they are quite slow in speaking. The intention to carry out good oral communication with good grammatical concepts makes students slow to speak because they think too much.

The second main problem is their vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency. In terms of fluency, the researcher found that the students were not fluent enough. From

the example of the conversation between the author and Hafids as a student, it can be seen that Hafids is not fluent. Hafids tends to pause every time he tries to answer a question.

Because students are still distracted by using their mother tongue, they feel more comfortable using Indonesian rather than English. This affects the way students answer questions fluently. Students tend to think in Indonesian before translating these words into English. For the most part, they didn't translate but immediately answered in Indonesian. Whenever students speak the English, it shows that they think of sentences in the Bahasa and then translate them into English. The way of thinking must be changed.

In terms of pronunciation, the students made some big mistakes. They often mispronounce words. The most common mispronounced word is 'preferred'. It should be pronounced /laɪkt/, but most students pronounce it /laɪkted/. They don't know if words ending in 'd' after 'k' are pronounced as 't'. They think it's the same as when they pronounce 'ed' as in 'wanted'. Another mispronounced word is found when there is an "s/es" ending; like a watch. Students tend not to say "s/es". Instead of saying /wɒtʃes/, students pronounce the word as /wɒtʃ/. Another example is the word sleep. The students tend not to pronounce the 's' ending.

In terms of vocabulary, students have difficulty finding suitable vocabulary to represent their ideas. Because the students lacked their vocabulary, they could not express what they wanted to talk about comfortably. From the first example, the student doesn't seem to know the word 'carry a conversation' or even the simplest word 'speak'. Instead of answering using these two words, students answered by 'talking-talking'.

The third major problem is with grammar. From the first example it is stated that the student answered 'I am having a conversation with you.' From this sentence

it can be seen that after using *am* it is not followed by *is*. Here the students used *are*. This may be due to their habit of always giving after class.

The teacher initially sets up a situation for the two students to talk about their plans for the weekend. However; Turns out they were talking about their plans after school. The grammatical errors found here are:

- a) Its use is after each sentence. "How are you?", "Yes, I'm fine."
- b) The use of Bahasa in almost every dialogue. This shows that the students' vocabulary is not as much as expected.
- c) Use of the auxiliary verb "do, does" before not. From the example above, it can be seen that students do not know the use of "do and does".

Based on the findings above, the authors found that almost all students were not good at conveying their ideas or thoughts in oral communication. There were long pauses between conversations indicating they were stuck. The topic given was actually the simplest but the two students could not have a dialogue smoothly. Their English is not fluent enough.

The vocabulary used is also limited. The students need to enrich their vocabulary so they will be more confident to express their ideas. By having a varied vocabulary, students will be able to apply the vocabulary in their speeches. It will make their dialogue more sophisticated and meaningful. It can also make conversations livelier too.

In addition, students need to practice a lot in their pronunciation so that their fluency will also increase. The researcher saw from the two dialogue examples above, the students made a few words that were wrongly pronounced. They are:

- 1) Great. It was supposed to be pronounced /greIt/ but the students pronounced it as /great/. They tended to pronounce the word they don't know how to pronounce using Bahasa.

- 2) Talking. It was supposed to be pronounced /tɔ:k/ but instead of pronouncing that way, the students pronounced it as /talking/ exactly the same pronunciation when they speak using Bahasa.
- 3) Conversation. This word might be new for the students so that's why they made a mistake in their pronunciation. It was supposed to be pronounced /kɔnvəsəlʃn/ but the students pronounced it /kɔnvərsetʃn/.

Considering the facts mentioned, the researcher concludes that students need to be taught more in their vocabulary and pronunciation. The researcher made several plans to help students improve their speaking ability. The researcher uses interpersonal dialogue to help students in this case. The researcher first helps students by teaching them more new words to enrich their vocabulary. Later, the researcher taught them to pronounce the words correctly. In addition, the researcher also teaches them how to actively respond to others during oral communication.

In teaching dialogue, the researcher provides several examples of good dialogue for students to learn. The students try to read and understand the main concepts of the dialogues. Then students are encouraged to carry out dialogues in their groups or with their partners. By conducting dialogues, the teacher implicitly teaches students how to pronounce words correctly. The researcher wrote down the words that were mispronounced and then asked the students to read them again. The researcher then gave the students the correct pronunciation. The researcher then asked the students to repeat the words. At the end, students are asked to say the words themselves.

In addition, the researcher also provides some useful expressions in oral communication. This is done so that students know how to respond well to others. Some common useful expressions that the authors provide are:

- 1) In a situation where there are people who give greetings; Instead of just saying "I am good", students can say "I am fine today", "I am not good today" in case they are not feeling well because it is okay to state their condition. , "I've been having fun lately" and more. Useful phrases like these can be used in response to the simplest of greetings.
- 2) In situations where students are in a party or a new environment; instead of just asking "How are you?", they might ask "Are you all right?", "It was a nice birthday party, wasn't it?", "I'm a newbie here, do you mind if I join you?" and etc. The students need to change about how they greet others for the first time or whenever they meet their friends or even their family. By asking such questions, the listener will find that the speaker is quite interesting and the rest of the conversation can be carried on with fluent.
- 3) In situations where students are asked to tackle multiple plans over the weekend. Students might ask questions like "What are you going to do this coming weekend?", "Are you free this coming weekend?", "Do you mind if I drop by your house this coming weekend? ", "There is a football game coming up Saturday, would you like to go with me to the game?" and many other types of questions that can be asked. On the other hand, a listener might reply something like this, "I think I'll be free next weekend. Do you want to go somewhere?", "You can go to my house if you want and we can play together or even we can do our homework together", "I'm afraid you can't stop by my house for the weekend because I going to go with my parents but you can come next week (in case the listeners have anything else to do)", "It's a great idea to watch the football game. What time does it start?" etc.
- 4) In asking for help, students may ask "Can you help me?" or "Would you mind helping me?"

The above are examples of useful common expressions that students can use. The author in this research encourages students to practice making questions and answering questions using these expressions.

After teaching some important grammar to the students, enriching the students' vocabulary and giving the correct pronunciation, the researcher then made a second observation. The steps that the author takes are the steps of implementing interpersonal dialogue. Students are encouraged to talk more and ask lots of questions so that the conversation becomes livelier. The students will find that speaking is not boring but interesting. It is hoped that through this kind of dialogue, students will apply spoken English not only in class but also outside of class.

The second part deals with the findings after implementing interpersonal dialogue. The following table is a table showing student scores after implementing interpersonal dialogue.

Students can express their ideas well. They kept asking each other. Even though it is seen that students still make some grammatical errors, it can be assumed that students feel more relaxed when they have to carry out the dialogues. It can be seen that the students' vocabulary has increased. They are able to use a varied vocabulary in asking and answering questions.

At first the researcher found that the students were nervous but from the second observation, the researcher found that the students were not nervous. They feel comfortable using English in speaking. The use of Indonesian has decreased. Most of the time, the students have used English. They are quick in expressing ideas and thoughts. They take very little time to think about grammar and vocabulary. They spontaneously communicated in English.

The second main problem faced by the students before was their vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency. The students were not fluent enough with their verbal communication. The students often mispronounce the words. The students have a limited vocabulary. After being taught and applying the lessons learned, students improve. The students were quite fluent in expressing their thoughts in groups and even when they had to speak only with their single partner. Previously it was difficult to get them to speak even the simplest English introduction in front of the class. However; students can introduce themselves without difficulty in front of the class. They are also able to speak English fluently.

They were given a topic and the conversation went smoothly. In addition to fluency, students' pronunciation has improved greatly. The students have got the idea to pronounce the words correctly. Words like "like" and "watch" have been pronounced correctly. Most students have mispronounced words ending in "s/es", but in the end they have pronounced the words correctly. The last major problem is their vocabulary. Because students lack vocabulary, they cannot speak English. However; in the end after being taught, the students have enriched their vocabulary. They have expanded their vocabulary and it helps them speak English better.

No	Name	Gender	Score
1	Adila Febriana	F	96
2	Akbar Rizki Fadilah	M	90
3	Alwi Yahya Muhaimin	M	92
4	Annisa Titis Salashi Azzahra	F	92
5	Arif Fajarudin	M	94
6	Asriningsih Wijastuti	F	86
7	Berliana Putri Maisyita	F	92
8	Crisna Putra Wira Perdana	M	98
9	Diah Ayu Lestari	F	90
10	Dinda Lutpi Anggi	F	96
11	Farhan Aprisandi	M	84
12	Giovanny Berly Putri	F	94
13	Harutoushi Samna	M	98
14	Ichsan Mohammad Hafidz	M	94

15	Jawari Samosir	M	96
16	Kiki Desitarahma Rismawati	F	88
17	Khrisna Setiyani	F	96
18	Maharani	F	98
19	Maham Ridwan	M	98
20	Martino Ibrahiem Armando	M	90
21	Mohamad Raihan Prestasi Sukri	M	94
22	Muhamad Zikry Hamdi	M	90
23	Muhammad Alfin Nur Irfany	M	90
24	Nabila Putri Setiawati	F	88
25	Novita Dewi Ayu Pramesti	F	92
26	Nur Atthala Rizqi	M	92
27	Nur Hidayat Fanesa	M	90
28	Putri Siffa Amalia	F	80
29	Rachmah Fidiastuti	F	98
30	Ramatul Fitri	F	98
31	Ray Jansen Pogalamun	M	94
32	Rina Marsanti	F	92
33	Siska Eka Prianti	F	92
34	Sven	M	90
35	Yuli Suntantri	F	98
36	Zikri Rahmanto	M	94

The table above is the scores of students' speaking ability after applying interpersonal dialogue. The second observation was carried out by using interpersonal dialogue. Compared to the previous observation, this second observation is much better. The application of interpersonal dialogue has helped students a lot. After being taught, the students showed improvement.

Students are encouraged to use English to express their ideas or thoughts freely. The students are given a topic and they have to speak in their group or with their partner. From the data of student scores and the author's observations, it can be seen that students do not hesitate to use English in oral communication. They are willing to convey their ideas and thoughts in English. One of the topics given by the author is about their last vacation. The researcher hopes that by giving this topic, students can make the dialogue as interesting as possible.

The topic given was about the weather but it turned out that students

could talk about other things than just talking about the weather. From the data taken by the author, it appears that the student's score is good. Their speaking skills have improved. The students got good grades because they could do good verbal communication.

The second observation can be described better than the first observation. Most students expressed their thoughts that they felt more enthusiastic about using English orally if interpersonal dialogue techniques were applied during teaching and learning activities. The reason is simple because students are the center of teaching and learning activities. The teacher is only a helper and facilitator of the process.

The data shows that most students find themselves enjoying teaching and learning activities when teachers use interpersonal dialogue. Students gave a positive response during the activity. It can be concluded that the use of interpersonal dialogue has been successfully applied in this research. The reason for this success is that interpersonal dialogue provides new experiences for students.

Students tend to get bored when they have to just sit and listen to monotonous teaching techniques. Students tend not to increase their vocabulary because they are bored with teaching and learning activities. After the interpersonal dialogue was applied, the students felt that this was a new way to get them interested in speaking English. Students can express their ideas and thoughts freely with a varied vocabulary too.

From the data taken, it can be concluded that interpersonal dialogue helps not only the way students enrich their vocabulary and become more fluent but also students' self-confidence. Students experience an increase in speaking ability. Now they can speak more fluently with varied vocabulary and correct pronunciation.

The third part discusses the comparison between before and after

implementing interpersonal dialogue. The researcher compares the findings and analyzes them. The following comparisons were made:

No	Name	Gender	Score (pre-test)	Score (post-test)	Gain Score
1	Adila F	F	88	96	8
2	Akbar	M	64	90	26
3	Alwi Y	M	66	92	26
4	Annisa	F	80	92	12
5	Arif	M	68	94	26
6	Asri	F	80	86	6
7	Berliana	F	76	92	16
8	Crisna	M	82	98	16
9	Diah	F	72	90	18
10	Dinda	F	94	96	2
11	Farhan	M	82	84	2
12	Giovann	F	70	94	24
13	Harutoushi	M	78	98	20
14	Ichsan	M	52	94	42
15	Jawari	M	78	96	18
16	Kiki	F	84	88	4
17	Khrisna	F	84	96	12
18	Maharani	F	82	98	16
19	Maham Ridwan	M	98	98	0
20	Martino	M	76	90	14
21	Mohamad	M	74	94	20
22	Muhamad Zikry	M	72	90	18
23	Muhammad Alfin	M	86	90	4
24	Nabila Putri	F	80	88	8
25	Novita D	F	84	92	8
26	Nur Atthala	M	76	92	16
27	Nur Hidayat	M	42	90	48

28	Putri S	F	84	80	-4
29	Rachmah	F	76	98	22
30	Ramatul	F	84	98	14
31	Ray Jansen	M	80	94	14
32	Rina	F	78	92	14
33	Siska E	F	86	92	6
34	Sven	M	74	90	16
35	Yuli S	F	80	98	18
36	Zikri R	M	58	94	36
			$\sum y^1 = 2768$	$\sum y^2 = 3334$	$\sum y = 566$
			$M_{y^1} = 76,88$	$M_{y^2} = 92,61$	$M_y = 15,722$

The table above shows the pre and post-test results taken by students. The pre-test results obtained ranged from 42 to 98 and the average score was 76.88. While the post-test results obtained ranged from 84 to 98 and the average value was 92.61. The results of data analysis can be concluded as follows:

SPEAKING FLUENCY	
PRE-TEST	POST-TEST
$M_{x1} = 76,88$	$M_{x2} = 92,611$
$\sum x^1 = 2768$	$\sum x^2 = 3334$
$N_{x1} = 36$	$N_{x2} = 36$

After getting the results of the pre-test and post-test scores obtained, the researcher calculates them based on the following t-test formula:

$$a. \quad t_o = \frac{MX2-MX1}{\sqrt{(\sum y1 + \sum y2) \cdot (NX1 + NX2)}} \\ (NX1 + NX2 - 2) (NX1 \cdot NX2)$$

$$t_o = \frac{92,61-76,88}{\sqrt{(2768+3334) \cdot (36+36)}} \\ (36 + 36 - 2) (36 \cdot 36)$$

$$t_o = \frac{15,73}{\sqrt{(87,17) \cdot (0,05)}}$$

$$t_o = \frac{15,73}{4,36}$$

$$t_o = \frac{15,73}{2,09} = 7,53$$

$$b. \quad df = N1 + N2 - 2 \\ = 36 + 36 - 2 \\ = 70$$

- In degree of significance 5 % from 70 in $t_t = 3,50$
- In degree of significance 1 % from 70 in $t_t = 0,70$

The researcher compared to t_o table that if $t_o > t$ table it means that H_o is rejected and H_a is accepted, but when to $< t$ table it means that H_o is accepted and H_a is rejected.

to : $t_t = 7.53 > 3.50$ in degree of significance 5%

to : $t_t = 7.53 > 0.70$ in degree of significance 1%

To get the answer of question, the researcher proposes alternative hypothesis (H_a) and null hypothesis (H_o) as below:

- H_a = "There is a significant difference between the students' speaking scores using interpersonal dialogue",
- H_o = "There is no significant difference between the students' speaking scores using interpersonal dialogue",

The criteria for presenting the hypothesis state that: If $t_o > t_t$ H_a is accepted and H_o is rejected; and if $t_o < t_t$ then H_a is rejected and H_o is accepted. As the problem statement mentioned in chapter I is whether Interpersonal Dialogue helps students to improve their oral communication skills or not; based on calculations it is known that the statistical value of the t-test on the post-test results is

7.53, while the critical value of the t-table with a significant level of 0.05 and 70 degrees of freedom is 3.50. This means that the value of the t test statistic is greater than the critical value of t table ($7.53 > 3.50$). It can be concluded that there is a significant difference in scores between the scores obtained before and after implementing student interpersonal dialogue.

CONCLUSION

The researcher found that interpersonal dialogue has helped students to be more actively involved in teaching and learning activities and made the class come alive as well. The way students appear in front of the class without hesitation shows that interpersonal dialogue has helped them. The fluency shown by students also shows that this technique has been successfully applied in the classroom.

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