

Friendship helps: The Role of the Community as a Platform for Increasing Students' Speaking Skills

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Abstract

The main objectives of this research are to assess the proficiency of seventh-grade junior high university students in spoken English. To achieve this, the researcher employed the Learning Community method as the research methodology. The study was conducted at Universitas Tama Jagakarsa, involving a total population of 130 students from various classes. The findings of the research revealed that students made several errors in vocabulary usage, grammar, and other aspects of spoken English. In light of these findings, the writer proposes several suggestions to enhance students' speaking skills. Firstly, facilitators should pay close attention to the specific errors that students commonly make, in order to facilitate their improvement in spoken English. Secondly, facilitators should provide clear explanations of the errors and offer ample exercises to ensure students grasp the concepts effectively. Lastly, it is recommended that further research be conducted by other resources to address the specific weaknesses observed in students' fluency in spoken English. By implementing these suggestions, it is anticipated that students will make significant progress in their spoken English abilities.

Keywords: *Role of community, vocabulary, grammatical error, fluency*

INTRODUCTION

In the Indonesian curriculum, English is a compulsory subject in university. The English teaching and learning process focuses on developing the four major language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These four skills are referred to as the "macro-skills" and are essential for complete communication. Unlike the "micro-skills," such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling, the macro-skills involve more than just basic language knowledge (Mante-Estacio, *et al*, 2018). Students typically learn their native language by first listening, then speaking, reading, and finally writing.

The ability to speak or communicate in the target language is one of the language skills that foreign language learners must master. Speaking is a crucial skill that measures the success of learning a language (Darmuki, *et al*, 2017). Without it, learners cannot communicate with

others effectively. Speaking is an interactive process that involves constructing meaning through producing, receiving, and processing information. Developing speaking skills requires learners to think of what they want to say, choose the right words, use proper grammar, convey emotions and thoughts, and more. Students from non-English speaking backgrounds or ESL students may find it challenging to speak English because it is a foreign language. However, good speaking skills are essential to understand spoken language from people with different backgrounds.

Listening and speaking are the most important skills in oral communication, with listening comprising fifty percent of communication. Receptive language or understanding what the other person says is essential to reply to them effectively (Sreena & Ilankumaran, 2018). Listening comprehension difficulties can stem from a limited vocabulary, poor

syntax, and the speed at which others speak. Communication difficulties can limit social interactions with others. Learning English requires a positive mindset, motivation, and happy emotions. Negative thinking can hinder learning.

Many students find it difficult to learn English, despite having taken English lessons from elementary school to university. Limited time to practice English in class and a lack of encouragement to practice outside the classroom are common problems (Songbatumis, 2017). Additionally, the environment (people around them) does not support them. They may not receive good responses when speaking English, which may discourage them from using the language. Fear of making mistakes is a significant challenge for students when speaking English.

Facilitators, students, material, and media are all essential components of teaching and learning. Media plays a crucial role in delivering materials from facilitators to students, and facilitators must use media effectively to make the teaching and learning process engaging and interesting (Saykili, 2018). Learning is a process that requires hard work and can be frustrating and boring at times, leading to a loss of attention. Facilitators must choose appropriate methods to achieve the desired learning goals.

Despite learning English for years, students may not see significant improvements in their speaking skills. They often lack confidence to speak up in class due to fear of making mistakes and may miss out on the opportunity to speak their minds effectively. Students often feel more comfortable using their mother tongue because it feels natural. However, with the Learning Community method, students are encouraged to be more active in speaking English by engaging in conversations, sharing ideas and information, and correcting each other's errors (Wu, *et al*, 2017). This method creates a classroom environment that

stimulates students to practice their English speaking skills.

Drawing upon the aforementioned issues, the researcher has formulated two distinct inquiries for investigation. The first research question aims to explore the potential impact of implementing the Learning Community method on the enhancement of students' speaking skills (Voelkel Jr & Chrispeels, 2017). The second research question focuses on assessing the broader effects of the Learning Community method on students' overall achievement.

METHOD

The research employed an experimental method to investigate the effectiveness of the learning community method in improving fluency and speaking skills. The experimental design involved the manipulation of the research object, with two classes being selected as the experimental and control groups (Bloomfield & Fisher 2019). In the experimental class, the learning community method was implemented, while the control class followed the conventional method prescribed by the National Education Ministry, which typically emphasizes rote learning and convergent responses, focusing on information retention.

Additionally, the assessment in the control class consisted of traditional paper and pencil tests with single correct answers. To measure the impact of the learning community method on fluency and speaking skills, a standardized test was administered to both the experimental and control groups, ensuring consistency and reliability in the data collection process (Stritch, *et al*, 2017). This experimental study aimed to compare the outcomes between the two classes and determine the efficacy of the learning community method in enhancing students' speaking abilities.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Data of Teaching Speaking by Learning Community Method: The Description of Data

In order to determine the test outcomes, the researcher organized the scores of the students into a table for each group. The experiment group's results were then tabulated and calculated, as presented in Table 4.1. To collect the data, the researcher administered an achievement test specifically to the experiment group. The table reveals that the highest score achieved in the experiment group was 94, while the lowest score was 70. The cumulative score of the experiment group amounted to 2620, with a mean score of 79.39.

A comparison between the experiment group and the control group indicates that the experiment group yielded higher results. The cumulative score of the experiment group reached 2620, surpassing the total score of the control group which amounted to 1954. Furthermore, the mean score of the experiment group was 79.39, while the control group's mean score stood at 61.06. Consequently, the disparity between the experiment class and the control class amounts to 666.

No	Name	Final Score (X ₁)
1	Student 1	70
2	Student 2	85
3	Student 3	85
4	Student 4	80
5	Student 5	85
6	Student 6	75
7	Student 7	75
8	Student 8	80
9	Student 9	75
10	Student 10	85
11	Student 11	80
12	Student 12	70
13	Student 13	85
14	Student 14	75
15	Student 15	80
16	Student 16	85
17	Student 17	80
18	Student 18	70
19	Student 19	75
20	Student 20	85
11	Student 11	80
21	Student 21	85

22	Student 22	80
23	Student 23	85
24	Student 24	70
25	Student 25	85
26	Student 26	90
27	Student 27	85
28	Student 28	75
29	Student 29	75
30	Student 30	80
31	Student 31	70
32	Student 32	85
33	Student 33	75
Σ		2620

Table 4.1 List of students speaking value for experiment class

No	Value of Variable X	Deviation from Mean (X ₁ - \bar{x})	Deviation from Mean (X ₁ - \bar{x}) ²
1	70	-9.39	88.17
2	85	5.61	31.47
3	85	5.61	31.47
4	80	0.61	0.37
5	85	5.61	31.47
6	75	-4.39	19.27
7	75	-4.39	19.27
8	80	0.61	0.37
9	75	-4.39	19.27
10	85	5.61	31.47
11	80	0.61	0.37
12	70	-9.39	88.17
13	85	5.61	31.47
14	75	-4.39	19.27
15	80	0.61	0.37
16	85	5.61	31.47
17	80	0.61	0.37
18	70	-9.39	88.17
19	75	-4.39	19.27
20	85	5.61	31.47
21	85	5.61	31.47
22	80	0.61	0.37
23	85	5.61	31.47
24	70	-9.39	88.17
25	85	5.61	31.47
26	94	14.61	213.45
27	85	5.61	31.47
28	75	-4.39	19.27
29	75	-4.39	19.27
30	80	0.61	0.37
31	70	-9.39	88.17
32	85	5.61	31.47
33	75	-4.39	19.27
	Σ	4.13	1188.69

Table 4.2 Data analysis for an Experiment class

The Table of Frequency Distribution Data
Description of Frequency Distribution Data of Increasing students' speaking skill by using Learning Community method.

score achieved in the control group was 79, while the lowest score recorded was 50.

The score in Experimental Group

Calculating Range data with the formula:

$$R = H - L$$

$$= 94 - 70 = 24$$

Explanation:

H = Highest score

L = Lowest score

R = Range

2. Calculating classes (K) with the formula:

$$K = 1 + 3,3 \log n$$

$$= 1 + 3,3 \log 33$$

$$= 1 + 3,3 (1,51)$$

$$= 1 + 5.01$$

$$= 6.01$$

$$= 6$$

3. Calculating interval classes (I) with the formula:

$$I = \frac{R}{K}$$

$$= \frac{24}{6}$$

$$= 4$$

Table 4.3 Frequency of score in Experiment Group

Interval	F	CF
70 – 73	5	5
74 – 78	8	13
79 – 82	7	20
83 – 86	12	32
87 – 90	0	32
91 – 94	1	33
Σ	33	33

No	Name	Score (X ₁)
1	Student 1	55
2	Student 2	61
3	Student 3	60
4	Student 4	65
5	Student 5	65
6	Student 6	60
7	Student 7	70
8	Student 8	65
9	Student 9	67
10	Student 10	63
11	Student 11	60
12	Student 12	50
13	Student 13	65

The Data of Teaching Speaking by Using Conventional Method: The Description of Data

In this study, the control group, which utilized the conventional method, obtained a cumulative score of 1954, with a mean score of 61.5. Table 4.4 in the appendix provides a detailed breakdown of the control group's scores. The highest

14	Student 14	55
15	Student 15	63
16	Student 16	60
17	Student 17	50
18	Student 18	58
19	Student 19	56
20	Student 20	62
21	Student 21	65
22	Student 22	60
23	Student 23	73
24	Student 24	50
25	Student 25	63
26	Student 26	60
27	Student 27	63
28	Student 28	55
29	Student 29	55
30	Student 30	61
31	Student 31	60
32	Student 32	79
	Σ	1954

Table 4.4 List of students speaking value for control class

No	Value of Variable X	Deviation from Mean $(X_i - \bar{x})$	Deviation from Mean $(X_i - \bar{x})^2$
1	55;	-6.06	36.72
2	61	-0.06	3.6
3	60	-1.06	1.12
4	65	3.94	15.52
5	65	3.94	15.52
6	60	-1.06	1.12
7	70	8.94	79.92
8	65	3.94	15.52
9	67	5.94	35.28
10	63	1.94	3,76
11	60	-1.06	1.12
12	50	-11.06	122.32
13	65	3.94	15.52
14	55	-6.06	36.72
15	63	1.94	3.76
16	60	-1.06	1.12
17	50	-11.06	122.32
18	58	-3.06	9.36
19	56	-5.06	25.6

20	62	0.94	0.88
21	65	3.94	15.52
22	60	-1.06	1.12
23	73	11.94	142.56
24	50	-11.06	122.32
25	63	1.92	3.76
26	60	-1.06	1.12
27	63	1.94	3.76
28	55	-6.06	36.72
29	55	-6.06	36.72
30	61	-0.06	3.6
31	60	-1.06	1.12
32	79	17.94	321.84
	1954	0.06	1233.2

Table 4.5 Data analysis for a Control Class

The Table of Frequency Distribution Data Description of Frequency Distribution Data of Teaching Speaking by using Learning Community method.

The score in Control Group

Calculating Range data with the formula:

$$R = H - L$$

$$= 79 - 50$$

$$= 29$$

Explanation:

H = Highest score

L = Lowest score

R = Range

Calculating classes (K) with the formula:

$$K = 1 + 3, 3 \log n$$

$$= 1 + 3, 3 \log 32$$

$$= 1 + 3, 3 (1, 51)$$

$$= 1 + 4,96$$

$$= 5, 96$$

$$= 6$$

Calculating interval classes (I) with the formula:

$$I = \frac{R}{K}$$

$$= \frac{29}{6}$$

= 4.83
= 5

Interval	F	CF
50-54	3	3
55-59	6	9
60-64	14	23
65-69	6	29
70-74	2	31
75-79	1	32
Σ	32	32

Table 4.6 Frequency of score in Control Group

Mean, Median, Modus, Deviation Standard

Mean

a) Mean of Experiment class

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{x} &= \frac{\sum x}{n} \\ &= \frac{2620}{33} \\ &= 79.39 \end{aligned}$$

b) Mean of control Class

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{x} &= \frac{\sum x}{n} \\ &= \frac{1954}{32} \\ &= 61.06 \end{aligned}$$

2. Median (Me)

a) Median of Experiment Class

70, 70, 70, 70, 70, 75, 75, 75, 75, 75, 75, 75, 75, 80, 80, 80, 80, 80, 80, 80, 80, 85, 85, 85, 85, 85, 85, 85, 85, 85, 85, 85, 85, 85, 90

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Median} &= \frac{80+80}{2} \\ &= 80 \end{aligned}$$

b) Median of Control Class

50, 50, 50, 55, 55, 55, 55, 56, 58, 60, 60, 60, 60, 60, 60, 60, 60, 61, 61, 62, 64, 64, 64, 64, 65, 65, 65, 65, 65, 67, 70, 73, 79

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Median} &= \frac{60+61}{2} \\ &= \frac{121}{2} \\ &= 60.5 \end{aligned}$$

3. Modus (Mo)

a) Modus of Experiment Class

$$\begin{aligned} Mo &= b + \left(\frac{b_1}{b_1 + b_2} \right) p \\ &= 82.5 + \frac{12}{14 + 8} \times 5 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} &= 82.5 + \frac{12}{22} \times 5 \\ &= 82.5 + 2.727 \\ &= 85.227 \end{aligned}$$

b) Modus of Control Class

$$\begin{aligned} Mo &= b + \left(\frac{b_1}{b_1 + b_2} \right) p \\ &= 59.5 + \frac{14}{14 + 8} \times 5 \\ &= 59.5 + 3.18 \\ &= 62.68 \end{aligned}$$

Explanation:

Mo = modus

b = lower limit of the class interval with the highest frequency

p = length of the class interval

b1 = the frequency of the highest frequency minus the previous class

b2 = highest frequency minus the frequency of the class afterwards

Based on the table 4.7. It has been known the result of $\sum X^2 = 206294$ and $\sum Y^2 = 144786$ the values of deviation standard of variable x and variable y are calculated by using this formula:

Deviation Standard

a) Deviation standard for Experiment Class

$$\begin{aligned} s &= \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}} \\ &= \sqrt{\frac{1188.69}{33 - 1}} \\ &= \sqrt{37.14} \\ s &= 6.09 \end{aligned}$$

b) Deviation Standard of Control Class

$$\begin{aligned} s &= \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2}{n - 1}} \\ &= \sqrt{\frac{1233.2}{32 - 1}} \\ &= \sqrt{39.78} \\ s &= 6.3 \end{aligned}$$

Results of the data obtained are:

No.	Kinds of Data	Experiment Group	Control Group

1.	Number of	33	32
2.	Samples (N)	79.39	61.06
3.	Mean (\bar{x})	85.3	62.68
4.	Modus (Mo)	80	60.5
5.	Median (Me)	6.09	6.3
	Deviation Standard		

D. Hypothesis Testing

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2}{\sqrt{\frac{s_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{s_2^2}{n_2}}}$$

$$t = \frac{79.39 - 61.06}{\sqrt{\frac{(6.09)^2}{33} + \frac{(6.3)^2}{32}}}$$

$$= \frac{18.33}{\sqrt{\frac{37.08}{33} + \frac{39.69}{32}}}$$

$$= \frac{18.33}{\sqrt{1.12 + 1.24}}$$

$$= \frac{18.33}{\sqrt{2.36}}$$

$$= \frac{18.33}{1.53}$$

$$= 11.980$$

Discussion of Results of Hypothesis Testing

The calculations conducted above yielded a t-value of 11.980, with 58 degrees of freedom and a significance level of 5%. Comparing this with the critical t-value of 2.001, we observe that the obtained t-value (11.980) is significantly higher than the critical t-value (2.001). Consequently, we reject the null hypothesis (Ho) and accept the alternative hypothesis (Ha). In conclusion, the findings indicate that students who are taught using a communicative approach demonstrate superior speaking abilities compared to those taught through conventional methods.

CONCLUSION

Based on the hypothesis testing results, it has been determined that there is a significant impact on students' speaking skills in the experimental class when utilizing the learning community method compared to the conventional classroom

approach. The data clearly indicates that the use of the learning community method yields greater outcomes in terms of students' speaking abilities. The statistical analysis confirms this, as the obtained t-value (11.980) is considerably higher than the critical t-value (2.0399), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (Ho) and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (Ha). In conclusion, there is a significant difference between students who employ the learning community method and those who do not at Universitas Tama Jagakarsa. Therefore, the adoption of the learning community method can be recommended as one of the effective instructional approaches for teachers aiming to enhance and develop the speaking skills of junior high school students.

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