SPEAKING ACTIVITY OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM; A STUDY ON MULTIMEDIA SOFTWARE AS AN EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGICAL TOOL

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ABSTRACT

English speaking skill is needed for global world but has been undervalued. Teaching speaking can be implemented by making speaking as a habit. The use of technology then taking role in motivating students to speak more frequently. This study aims at investigating the response and influence of Speaking activities outside the classroom using multimedia software as an educational technological tool. The investigation covers the technique of using the software, the role of lecturer in giving language instruction in pre, whilst, and post activity, the evaluation of the whole activity based on students’ point of view, and the influence towards students’ speaking score. The qualitative descriptive method is used in this study. Observation, Documentation and Interview are the instruments. The data gained from observation is used to describe the technique of the activity and the way lecturer gives language instruction. Meanwhile, the data taken from documentation is used to reveal whether there is any improvement based on students’ speaking score in pre-test compared to post-test. And the data from interview is used to find students’ response toward the activity. The data was analyzed using statistical analysis and Triangulation method. Results indicated that 1086 students (56,47%), from 2098 students, are getting higher score in post test. It is expected that the findings will be insights for educators to implement speaking activity not only in the classroom but also outside the classroom. The recommendation for further research is suggested in order to have more beneficial sources for teachers in implementing speaking activity outside the classroom using multimedia software as a tool.

Keywords: Speaking Activities, Multimedia Software, Educational Technological Tool.

1. Introduction

For many years, teaching speaking has been undervalued and English language teachers have continued to teach speaking just as a repetition of drills or a memorization of dialogues (Kayi, 2006). It means, speaking has becoming the certain priority among other English skills. Today’s world requires that the goal of teaching speaking should improve students’ communicative skills, because, in that way, students can express themselves and learn how to follow the social and cultural rules appropriate in each communicative circumstance. In addition, according to DeRolf (1995), Language must be experienced before it can become a part of a person’s being. In order for a person to be truly skilled in a language it must become a part of his or her being or in other words, a person must live the language.
Teaching English is becoming more challenging nowadays as it is widely used in mass media and oral communication as a mean of exchanging information, including science and technology reasons. Harmer (2000, p. 1) stated that English has become a lingua franca. It means that English is a mean for people who have different language to communicate orally or written form. They use English to enable them to communicate and transfer information. In terms of oral communication, most people rely on the skill of speaking as the first gate of delivering their thought. Thus, it does not mean that other skills are neglected.

The revolution of technology and communication affects education field (Al-Saai 2011; Kaya 2002). The technology then becoming a mean on transferring knowledge to students. Students are getting easier to acquire and share information through technology such as computer, websites, internet, software, video and many others. It is stated that the educational technology tools are able to enhance students learning and develop career skills as shown in the previous researches (see: Clarke, Flaherty, & Mottner 2001; Hunt, Eagle, & Kitchen 2004; Kirkgöz 2011; McCabe & Meuter 2011; Young, Klemz, & Murphy 2003). Besides, it can give learners exposure to practice all four language skills, make them active in teaching and learning process, as well as create them to be independent learners since they enjoy the experience and activities (Dudeney & Hockly 2007; Suherdi 2012; Wright 2001).

Seeing the importance of technology as a mean of teaching, it is importune for teachers to accommodate the technology in its process (Suherdi, 2012). Many teachers want to develop students’ ability by depending only on the English study in the classroom. Teachers mostly depend on the transmission model which emphasis the teachers’ responsibility to deliver knowledge and correct errors made by students, whereas students simply accept and save the information (Nunan, 1999, p. 65). In addition, the materials in the classroom sometimes do not recover students’ needs in the real life, specifically practical usage, because it is mostly text book-based study. Besides, Shi (2006) stated that the present day engineering students are not giving enough encouragement to English language and they give prior preference to their specialized subjects. So they lack basic language skills, in particular, vocabulary, spoken skills and usage of grammar. As a result, they are unable to satisfy the interviewers in job interviews. Thus, the regular activity outside the classroom is needed to provide students a place they can explore their ability as well as giving students more meaningful and useful contents such as audio tapes, videos, computer software and other visual aids. It is in line with Kitao (1997) that beside textbooks, there should be a variety of materials available to learners and teachers.

Teaching speaking in formal classroom can be assisted by implementing a regular activity outside the classroom since students are having more time to explore. However, to attract their interest, the package of the activity should be interesting. That is why the use of multimedia software considered as a tool that can attract them since it presents and integrates many information through text, graphics, images, audio and video (Mayer 2001, p. 55). Multimedia software also offers many benefits, among them are having a well-structured information, utilizing several representation to improve memory, encouraging actively, and presenting more knowledge at once (see: Ainsworth (1999, p. 145); Larkin and Simon (1987p. 65); Penny (1989 p. 398); and Sweller, (2005 p. 38).

This study is designed to investigate students’ responses and motivation toward the implementation as well as its influence toward their speaking skills. It was conducted in Engineering Faculty, Telkom University. The results of this study are trying to discover whether students’ response and motivation toward the implementation is positive or not as well as showing the influence of the activity toward students’ speaking score.
2. Speaking as a Habit

There are many ways done as the attempts to classify the functions of speaking in human interaction. Brown and Yule (1983) made a useful distinction between the interactional functions of speaking and transactional functions. Interactional functions relate to the social relations which means serving to establish and maintain the relation. Besides, the transactional functions relate to the exchange of information. There are expanded three-part version of Brown and Yule’s framework (after Burns, 1998; and Jones 1996): talk as interaction; talk as transaction; talk as performance. Each of these speech activities is quite different in terms of form and function and requires different teaching approaches.

The mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many second-language or foreign-language learners (Richards, 1990). Consequently, learners often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency. Even speaking skills is very important, it does not mean that other skills are fully neglected. However, it just somehow have different purposes. The different purposes for which spoken and written language are used were reflected by the advances in discourse analysis, conversational analysis, and corpus analysis in recent years which have revealed a great deal about the nature of spoken discourse and how it differs from written discourse (McCarthy and Carter, 1997).

In making students to be able to speak English well and appropriately, the plans of teaching English needs to be well-considered. It is supported by Tsang and Wong (2002) that there are two core issues need to be addressed in planning speaking activities for English class, determining what kinds of speaking skills the class will be focus on and identifying teaching strategies to ‘teach’. The first point means what kind of speaking skill will becoming the main focus such as the focusing on pronouncing words or others as well as there is any possibility of different understanding among students. The second point means that providing opportunities for learners to acquire each kind of talk is very important.

Preparing students with the ability of speaking is not merely making it perfect in terms of planning and preparation, but also in creating the habits of practicing the language. Creating the habit aims at naturalizing students’ speaking skills since they used to practice it. There is a marked feature of conversational discourse in the use of fixed expressions, or “routines,” that often have specific functions in conversation and give conversational discourse the quality of naturalness. One way to apply the naturalness is through ‘routine’ activity, as Wardhaugh (1985, p. 74, cited in Richards, 1990) observes:

There are routines to help people establish themselves in certain positions: routines for taking off and hanging up coats; arrangements concerning where one is to sit or stand at a party or in a meeting; offers of hospitality; and so on. There are routines for beginnings and endings of conversations, for leading into topics, and for moving away from one topic to another. And there are routines for breaking up conversations, for leaving a party, and for dissolving a gathering. It is difficult to imagine how life could be lived without some routines.

Wardhaugh stated that it is hard to imagine the life without routines. It means that routines can be one way to make students used to practice English so they use English related to their own experience. Besides, recognizing the differences of speaking functions and purposes in daily communication is very important as it helps students in choosing which words are appropriate to be spoken. Habit in practicing English can create the appropriate style of speaking in particular circumstances for students. Different styles of speaking reflect the roles, age, sex, and status of
participants in interactions and also reflect the expression of politeness. According to Brown and Levinson (1978) it is essential for harmonious social relations to manage the speech style to create the sense of politeness. It means that students are able to choose certain expression in certain situation to gain the success of communication.

In making speaking activity as a habit, motivation plays important role there. Richards (1990) defines motivation as the factor that determines a person’s desire to do something. In second language and foreign language learning, learning may be affected differently by different type of motivation. Two types of motivation are sometimes distinguished: (1) Instrumental motivation: wanting to learn a language because it will be useful for certain “instrumental” goals, such as getting a job, reading a foreign newspaper, passing an examination. (2) Integrative motivation: wanting to learn a language in order to communicate with people of another culture who speak (de Bot, Lowie and Verspoor, 2005, p. 72).

Furthermore, different kinds of motivation are also proposed by Ur (1996) as intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation means the urge to engage in learning activity for its own sake. Besides, extrinsic motivation means motivation that is derived from external incentive. Thus, teacher’s responsibility in motivating students is crucial. As Girrard in Ur (1996) emphasizes that it is an important part of the teacher’s job to motivate learners. The more motivated the learner the better their learning process will be.

3. Multimedia Software as an Educational Technological Tool

The use of technology is now playing important role in preparing students for their future life. It takes place in teacher’s priority of choosing which technology is applicable to transfer knowledge. Creative teachers know how to deliver knowledge in an appropriate way. They will decide to use technology if it helps students in comprehending the information. A proper combination of multimedia and teaching method is important to arouse students’ interest during teaching and learning process (Acha 2009, p. 29).

Teachers can take benefits from the use of multimedia software. Some of the benefits are; teacher can ensure that students are provided with the chance to represent and express their knowledge, engage themselves in the activity rather than only becoming an observer, and encourage students’ deep reflective thinking. Besides, in the side of students themselves, the benefits of multimedia software are offered as it gives students a chance to be researchers (as they are prepared with the ability of analyzing and choosing important information), to be designers (they are selecting the appropriate media for learning), to be authors (as they have to be able to see points based on the view of audience), and to be writers (the ability of saving the information).

Multimedia softwares are designed in an easy to use style which combine text, audio, and animated graphics. Many teachers stated that the use of multimedia software makes English class become more interactive than in teacher-centered model (Yang and Fang, 2008, p. 137). It offers more goal oriented, more participatory, flexible in time and space, unaffected by distances, and tailored to individual learning styles and can increase collaboration between teachers and students. Multimedia enables learning to become fun and friendly, without fear of inadequacies or failure (Lu, Wan and Liu, 1999, p. 42).

This study investigates the use of a multimedia software named ‘Learn to Speak English’ in a regular English language program conducted in Telkom University Indonesia. The investigation covers the technique of using the software, the role of lecturer in giving language instruction in pre, whilst, and post activity, the evaluation of the whole activity based on students’ point of view, and the influence towards students’ speaking score.

The use of this type of multimedia software provides stimulus for students to speak up since it
offers some activities such as pronunciation practice, conversation practice and role play. It gives learner motivation to speak more and better because it gives them feedback on how they pronounced the words. It has a colored pointer which shows red for ‘non-native’, yellow for ‘native like’ and green for ‘native’. Students are also encouraged to have a conversation practice with the native in the software. There is a simulation of certain settings which place students in some roles. They have to be communicative in this practice. This software is giving a useful contribution for students’ speaking skills. It is in line with Warschauer & Healey (1998), that the reason to buy software is providing an integrated teaching that will provide realistic, native-speaker models of the language in a variety of media; offer a language learning curriculum; determine the best next step for the learner and provide practice with that skill area; record what the student has done, along with an evaluation; be available at any time and require no additional pay.

4. Theoretical Framework

Based on the objective of this study that is to investigate the influence and students’ response to the speaking activity outside the classroom using multimedia software as an educational technological tool, the figure of theoretical framework is described below:

![Theoretical Framework](image)

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework of the Study

5. Methodology

5.1 Sample and data collection method

This study is taking 2098 undergraduate students of engineering faculty, Telkom University Indonesia as the participant. They are chosen since they are taking English 1 course which requires them to join the regular speaking activity. And surely, they have experienced using multimedia software for at least 5 times. They will be evaluated based on their speaking score in pre and post test. Besides, 20 students were join the focus group discussion which discussed their response and opinion on the implementation. They are interviewed after joining the activity.

The data taken from observation is answering the technique of the activity and the way lecturer gives the language instruction. The gained data will be video recorded and transcribed. While the data taken from documentation i.e. Students’ speaking score both pre and post test will be analyzed using statistical analysis. It tries to see whether any improvement occur or not. In addition, the data found from the interview is recorded, transcribed, coded and categorized. The interview is conducted in form of focus group discussion which invites 20 students who joined the activity to give clear respond to the activity itself. The result of observation and interview then combined to describe the process and response.

5.2 Instrumentation

There are three instruments used in this study; Observation, Documentation and Interview. The observation is conducted to see the technique of the activity; how it is implemented, and how lecturer give the language instruction to students in joining the activity. This data is answering the description of the implementation. Besides, the instrument of documentation is used to gain the data of students’ score in both speaking pre and post test. It is aimed at finding whether there is any
improvement or not. Finally, the interview is conducted to elaborate the response of students to the regular speaking activity outside the classroom using multimedia software.

6. Finding & Discussion
6.1 The Implementation and Response

In the very beginning of the activity, the lecturer or the instructor greeted the students with a warm welcoming like saying “Hello, Good day” etc. Since there were only 20 students in the room, lecturer was easily having a short friendly conversation pointing particular students, like asking “Hi Rudy, how was your weekend?” This question could attract some students’ attention as well as practicing their speaking skill in a simple way. This warm greeting got good responses from all students when focus group discussion was conducted, some responses could be seen below:

#Student 7: “I like the way the lecturer greet us in the very beginning. It was very warm, I was comfortable inside”

#Student 11: “at first, I was afraid of joining this multimedia activity, but the lecturer asked me about my health, I think she was really care, I was not afraid any more. I want to join again next”

#Student 19: “I don’t think that this activity is kinda boring. I think it was interesting. The lecturer even ‘hug’ us with smile”.

Based on the students’ discussion, we can see that starting an activity with a very positive manner can encourage, refresh and attract students to enjoy the activity so they put their all in it. It is true than that the first step in starting an activity influences the whole process of the activity itself. As supported by Abbot (1962) that greetings might just be an expression of friendliness, it is the attitude we respond to, it is a mark of warm to say “Good Morning” and “Hello”.

Next, the lecturer guided students on what activity they are going to do. The multimedia software was opened before students come into the multimedia room and the lecturer asked them to see on the screen and choose one particular topic which has been decided. For the very first time, the lecturer gave instruction in a very detail way. However, for the next use of the software, the lecturer only greet them and remind them to choose the topic of the day. The lecturer instruction got both positive and negative response from students:

#Student 12: “In the beginning, the lecturer guide us good enough on how to operate the software even there are some information I missed”

#Student 9: “The lecturer gave the instruction structurally. It made me easy to use the software”

#Student 15: “For me, the lecturer spoke too fast. I cannot catch some points. I missed it and got confused”

It can be seen that some students might feel uncomfortable with the way lecturer speak too fast since every student has different level of understanding English spoken words. However, they loved a structured instruction, it assisted them. In addition, one of lecturer’s role in communicative teaching based on Breen and Candlin (1980, p. 99) is as facilitator who guide and organize the activity in the classroom. In this activity, students operated the software by themselves. They followed the instruction from the software instructor. In this time, the lecturer’s role was to go around the room ensuring that all students practice the activity well. Based on the observation result, error might happen in the middle of the activity. Besides, going around also can be a good way to motivate students since we can say some positive words when students were confused. Some students response it positively:
#Student 20: “In the middle of the activity, I got confused because the color pointer did not move at all. The lecturer came close to me and he helped me. The error was occurred and solved quickly”

#Student 13: “The lecturer smile at me because I said that I just got red for many words I pronounced”

The first activity from the software was pronunciation practice. Students were asked to re-pronounce some words on the screen. There were red for non-native, yellow for native-like and green pointer for native. Students could repeat the words as much as they want. Making use of audio material on CD or software has also been conducted by Wells (2006) as it is aimed at bringing English intonation to life. This activity got many good responses from students. Some of them said that it was challenging since they were asked to repeat the words until they get yellow or green color. Besides, it was also motivate them to know their pronunciation quality. Some responses are shown below:

#Student 1: “Oh my, I got many red colors for my words. I have tried many times. It was hard but challenging. I love this activity”

#Student 6: “I like this activity because I could know how good my pronunciation. It helped me to practice pronouncing many words as I want”

#Student 13: “The color pointer really beat my heart. I got many green colors. I am happy”

#Student 8: “I asked the lecturer why I got many red colors. He asked me to try again and again until I can get at least get yellow color. It was really challenging”

The next activity from the software was a game. According to Langran and Purcell (1994, p. 12-14) teaching students through game is very important for several reasons, those are it is fun and can help students to be more active than before, it involves students’ emotional because language should be emotionally used, and it is good for shy or low confidence students. In this activity, the game was in the form of vocabulary practice. Students were asked to match pictures with words. This part made students to be able to retrieve the words they have pronounced in the first practice. The most interesting part of the game was remembering the words and the meaning which was shown through pictures. Some students response to it positively:

#Student 2: “The game part was very attracting. I can match all pictures and words correctly”

#Student 4: “I repeated the game part twice. It was very interesting”

The last practice of the software was conversation practice. Students were encouraged to response to the questions delivered by the native speaker in the software. The conversation topic is based on the topic has chosen in the beginning. At the end of the activity, the lecturer’s role was evaluating students’ performance as well as asking students’ opinion on the activity. Students paid attention to the lecturer well. They response interactively.

6.2 Students’ speaking score improvement

This part is answering the influence of speaking activity outside the classroom using multimedia software based on students’ pre and post test score. The following table is the description of statistical analysis of the collected data. The whole data is 2098 students for both pre-test and post test. The result of the statistical analysis on the data shows that 175 data are invalid (8,3%) while 1923 data are valid (91,7%). Based on the interview result, the invalid data are caused by students who did not join either pre-test or post-test or both pre-test and post-test.
Table 1 Valid and Invalid Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases</th>
<th>Valid</th>
<th>Missing</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre_Test</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>91.7%</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post_Test</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>91.7%</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next analysis is conducted to the valid data (1923). It is gained that the lowest score from both pre and post test is 1.00 while the highest score is 4.00. The average of pre-test is 2.5844 while post-test is 2.5866. It is found that there is an improvement from pre to post test, i.e. For 0.0022 or 0.085%.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistics</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre_Test</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>2.5844</td>
<td>.73767</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post_Test</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>2.5866</td>
<td>.75624</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To ensure the normality of the data, test of normality is used. Here is the table that describe the normality of the data:

Table 3 Tests of Normality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tests of Normality</th>
<th>Kolmogorov-Smirnov&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Shapiro-Wilk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statistic</td>
<td>df</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre_Test</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post_Test</td>
<td>.107</td>
<td>1923</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on the test, the result is 0.00 (<0.05) which means the data is not normally distributed. Many people believe that data should distributed normally. However, Buthmann (2012) was against this argument. He stated that normal distribution does not happen as often as people think, it is not a main objective, it is a mean to an end, not the end itself. There are some reasons on the occurrence of non normal data, those are; extreme values, overlap of two or more processes, insufficient data discrimination, sorted data, values close to zero or natural limit, or data follows a different distribution. The extreme values was seen as the reason why the data was in non normal distribution. That is why, the alternative way for analyzing is using the Wicoxon test. The Wilcoxon test is utilized to reveal the significant difference between pre and post test.

According to the result using Wilcoxon test, it is gained that 736 students, (38.27%) from all data, are having lower score in post test. While 1086 students, (56.47%) from all data, are having higher score than before. And 101 students (5.25%) from all data, stay the same in both pre and post test.
Table 4 Ranks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranks</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Rank</th>
<th>Sum of Ranks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative Ranks</td>
<td>736a</td>
<td>1059.68</td>
<td>779926.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Ranks</td>
<td>1086b</td>
<td>811.07</td>
<td>880826.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ties</td>
<td>101c</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Post_Test < Pre_Test  
b. Post_Test > Pre_Test  
c. Post_Test = Pre_Test

The table below is the statistic test on whether there is a significant different between students’ speaking score in pre-test and post test:

Table 5 Wilcoxon Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Test Statistics</th>
<th>Post_Test - Pre_Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td>-2.247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.025</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test  
b. Based on negative ranks.

The result of Wilcoxon test is $Z = -2.247$ with p-value or Asymp. Sig (2-tailed) = 0.025. Since it is found that sig 0.025 < 0.05, so it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between students’ speaking score in pre-test and post test.

7. Conclusion and Future Recommendation

In conclusion, the findings showed significant influences on students speaking score between pre and post test as well as gained students’ responses on the implementation of the multimedia software used outside the classroom. However, further research is still needed to enrich the educational literatures more specifically on the use of multimedia software as an educational technological tool.
References


