IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY THROUGH SCAFFOLDING TECHNIQUE

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IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY THROUGH SCAFFOLDING TECHNIQUE

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ABSTRACT

Students often got congused and felt hesitant when they speak English. This situation had caused poor speaking ability, which then lead to serious problem in the eaching-learning process. The application of scaffolding technique in the EFL learning might be the ideal solution; it had some principles that could improve the students' speaking ability. This research is aimed at finding out the effect of the implementing Scaffolding Technique towards the students' speaking ability. Participants were 50 (27 males and 23 females) third-semester students, enrolled in a three-year diploma program in Travel and Tourism Business, State Polytechnic of Bali in 2017/2018 academic year. The students in the experimental group were given communicative activities such as brainstorming, business games, simulation, WebQuest, problem-solving, which were carefully designed to necessitate the implementation of the scaffolding technique. The students in the control group were taught by the deductive method of the lesson book. The students' performance in the post-test was compared for both groups in order to determine whether there were significant differences between the groups in relation to the treatment. Significant differences occurring in the ex 19 rimental group's post-test speaking performance when compared to the pretest indicate that the implementation of scaffolding technique can improve students' speaking ability. The result of this study indicates scaffolding technique has the potential for use in promoting students' speaking ability.

KEYWORDS: sc affolding technique, speaking ability.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching English as a foreign language in Indonesia demands methodological training and innovative strategies to bring effectiveness in learning. Teachers have attempted to apply a number of approaches in the classroom. Among the approaches, it can be said that there are two of them well recognized on the part of the teachers. They may first present the students with new key language items based on the situational or functional context and then they give the students an opportunity to practice them (a deductive approach) or the students may practice a set of patterns and then be led to derive at their own generalization (an inductive approach). Even

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though both approaches represent different philosophical positions about the nature of learning teachers should adapt techniques from each of them since it is also considering the characteristics of students in one class are so heterogeneous.

The teaching-learning method in English subject matter of third-semester students Travel and Tourism Study Program Bali State Polytechnic so far is in accordance with the chronicle order of the learning book in which the stages of learning are deductively started from the presentation of language structures and functions before doing practice and communicative activities. This method of teaching is obviously seen as the application of the deductive method as it is preceded by a general explanation of the teacher on the situational and functional notion to lead the specific things. In this case, the teacher is more dominant in delivering language expressions, grammatical rules, making a generalization of sentence patterns before giving the students an opportunity to practice them. By using this method, it can be found some problems like students are less interested in following this subject since they feel overwhelmed by the various kinds of linguistic expressions and the so complicated grammatical rules.

To overcome this problem the writer attempts to introduce teaching-learning method which is oriented on the learning process and student-centered instruction in the class. By this method of learning, teachers try to set up such activities which promote a student-centered style as group discussion, language games, simulation and the like. The role of a teacher here is as a learning facilitator and mentor's assistance" in supporting learners to carry out tasks successfully. The teacher's assistance here is a special kind of help that assists learners in moving toward new skills, concepts, or levels of understanding. However, the assistance is temporary by which the teacher helps students know how to do something so that the students will later be able to complete a similar task alone. It is future-oriented and aimed at increasing a learner's autonomy. The mentioned method of learning, especially in the present research is called 'Scaffolding Technique'. The main content of this learning technique is learning by the inductive process and the term scaffolding here is temporally assistance that leads the learners to the process of drawing a conclusion to new language items through language activities such as pair work, group discussion, business games, simulation and some other related activities.

On the basis of the above problems and regarding the complexity of classroom interaction, a classroom action research is conducted which is aimed at enhancing the students' speaking ability

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in using English of the third-semester students in Travel and Tourism Study Program of Bali State Polytechnic by using Scaffolding Technique.

Research Questions

This study aims to investigate the effects of using scaffolding technique on students' speaking ability in Travel and Tourism Business, State Polytechnic of Bali. It seeks to answer the following questions:

- 1. Will there be a significant improvement in the students' (of both control and experimental groups) performance in the post speaking test?
- 2. Can the students be actively involved in the classroom interaction by using scaffolding technique?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Learning English with scaffolding technique is an appropriate solution to be implemented. The term scaffolding was first used by Wood, Bruner, and Ross in 1976 in their examination of parent-child talk in the early years (Gibbons, 2002). Gibbons states that Scaffolding is a temporary structure that is put up in the process of constructing or repairing a building, as each bit of the new building is finished, the scaffolding is taken down. The scaffolding is temporary, but essential for the successful construction of the building. Alshumaimeri (2012) states that scaffolding is not simply another word for help. It is a special kind of help that assists learners in moving toward new skills, concepts, or levels of understanding. Scaffolding is thus the temporary assistance by which a teacher helps a learner know how to do something so that the learner will later be able to complete a similar task alone. It is future-oriented and aimed at increasing a learner's autonomy.

According to Saumell (2012) explained an easy step by step methodological framework for the implementation of scaffolding technique in the classroom language teaching. She mentioned one of the steps as observation and analysis of the language through guided questions. The teacher guides the observation and analysis of the language by drawing attention to the significant points he or she wants to present. This can be done through questions, by completing gaps in sentences or rules or by matching examples and rules. Learners' cognitive potential is put into play as they cooperate, analyze, hypothesize, compare, and construct and generate knowledge.

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Taking part in the learning process empowers them. This scaffolding step is essential to avoid learners reaching a wrong conclusion or misunderstanding the rule.

It can be concluded that scaffolding technique is aligned with more modern language learning theories that advocate student participation and the development of critical thinking skills and autonomy (Mansor et al, 2017). It relates to analytic learning and problem solving (Burt et al., 2008). It helps learners engage in the learning process and thus make personal connections that anchor their learning (Eison, 2010). It is a learner-centered approach that increases participation and fosters collaboration (Huang et al. 2012, Mathew, 2015). It empowers learners towards assuming responsibility for their own learning and becoming more autonomous (Slavin, 2010) It is, therefore, a valid and useful way of approaching language instruction at all levels of language ability (Saumell: 2012).

Krishnamurthi (2009) investigate scaffolding techniques for improving engineering students' writing skills. The results of the implementation clearly showed improvements in students' work and their feedback. The gradual approach to implementing scaffolds from easy to difficult concepts was successful and it helped students to gain confidence in their writing skills and increase their awareness of issues related to writing. The similar research was done by Walton Archer (2004). The study revealed that the effectiveness of the scaffolding provided by the course design had important connections between developing knowledge of academic discourse and successful academic use of the Web.

The research of improving students' speaking ability through scaffolding technique is very different as it is conducted in English for Tourism and Airlines Services subject as part of the English for special purposes in State Polytechnic of Bali.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study is conducted by using a classroom action-based research and uses a pre-test/post-test quasi-experimental nonequivalent control group research design. Classroom action research can be defined as the cyclic process of planning, action, observation, and reflection (Kemmis et al., 2013). Thus, based on this kind of research, the research involved three cycles in which each cycle was completed in two sessions.

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Subject of the Study

The study was conducted in Tourism Department State Polytechnic of Bali involving the third-semester students. The participants were 50 (27 males, 23 females) students in the Travel and Tourism Study Program in the 2017/2018 academic year. The students were selected using a random selection sample and two classes were chosen to participate. There were 25 students in the experimental group and 25 students in the control group.

Instrumentation

Instruments were used as a means of collecting the data. There were three kinds of instruments, which were used in the present study, namely teaching diary, observation sheets, and questionnaires. The teaching diary was used to observe the result of applying action, both on the daily performance of the students' class interaction and their speaking ability.

Data Collection Procedures

Since this present study used action-based research then its procedure consisted of planning, action, observation, and reflection. In the first week, both the experimental group and control group received 2 sessions teaching instruction. The materials that were used in the instruction taken from the lesson book provided for the students in which the learning method was mostly deductive, the topic discussions were set up in chronicle order from presentation, practices, and communicative activities. In the first week, both experimental and control groups received 2 sessions teaching instruction. The materials that were used in the instruction taken from the lesson book provided for the students in which the learning method was mostly deductive, the topic discussions were set up in chronicle order from presentation, practices, and communicative activities.

The speaking performance pre-test was administered to both groups to ensure that the subjects in this study were at the same proficiency level in speaking ability before the treatment was given. The treatment period was 3 weeks. During the treatment period, the experimental group received communicative activities and practices applied in scaffolding technique before doing presentations. Each activity and practice took two sessions a week. The control group received only the deductive instruction (presentation, practices, and communicative activities) without scaffolding technique in both practices and communicative activities. In week 5 after the treatments, both the experimental and control group students received the post-test.

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The students' speaking scores were based on the calculated judgments for assessing speaking. The description of the students' speaking scores was a modified form of scale 0-100 which included 5 speaking components, namely grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and pronunciation.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed in two ways, namely quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative data were analyzed base on the speaking performance done by the students during the action. Here it measured about the achievement of the students who had been given action/treatment. The data collected in the preliminary observation was analyzed using SPSS and a t-test was computed to ensure the group's equivalence. While the data collected after the treatment was again analyzed using SPSS. Then, paired sample t-tests were computed for the results of both groups to investigate the differences between the pre-test and post-test in speaking performances

Meanwhile, the qualitative data were analyzed based on the result of the observation conducted after the action applied, and the result of the questionnaires. Here, the condition and the situation of the class during the teaching-learning process took place, the interaction, the motivation, the attitude, and the interest of the students in doing the communicative activities and practices given by the researcher were analyzed to know the effectiveness of the learning method applied. In addition, to know the problems that might be faced by the students during the teaching-learning process, which caused they could not improve their speaking ability.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After doing the action in the 3 learning cycles, this part discusses findings of each cycle done before. There were 15 topics discussed in the semester and each topic consisted of two teaching sessions in a week. 3 topics were chosen to be applied in experimental and control groups. The lesson was conducted in 3 weeks with 2 meeting sessions every week and each topic consisted of two teaching sessions as the learning method applied (scaffolding technique) in experimental groups was also consisted of two actions (communicative activities and practices) in every discussed topic. To ensure that the subjects in this study were at the same proficiency level in speaking performance, an oral presentation pre-test was assigned to both groups. The results of

the pre-test show that the mean averages of the subjects' grades on the pre-test were very similar (see Table 1). These results were computed through Independent Samples Test (t-test) and revealed at the p<.05 level in scores for the two groups [t = -.238, p = 0.814].

Table 1. T-test results for the groups' equivalence

Group	No	Mean	St. deviation	t Value	Sig. (2 tailed)
Control	25	54.96	6.34	238	0.814
Experimental	25	55.24	5.26	1236	0.614

The result of the preliminary-test showed the poor result. The mean scores of the students after being given an oral test by using a deductive method were only 54.96 in control group and 55.24 in the experimental group. These mean scores were categorized into low beside that the students seemed not focused, uninterested, and often getting prone during the teaching-learning process.

Base on the result of the preliminary observation, the research was started for the first cycle. In the planning step the researchers concerned on improving the students' speaking ability on the English subject matter using scaffolding technique in the experimental group. In this stage, the instructional planning or teaching-learning scenario and the instruments were prepared. After the planning step then it was conducted the action in which the treatment of brainstorming, group discussion and pair work were given. The students performed the speaking activities and their performances were recorded in the observation form. At the end of the meeting session, the speaking test was conducted to assess the students' speaking ability based on their performance in presenting dialogues and making a generalization of specific details from the discussed topics. On the other hand, the control group was not given any treatments, they remained to be taught using the previous method (presentation, practices, communicative activities).

From the action given in the first cycle, then it was done an observation as the next step of this research. A descriptive analysis and paired samples t-tests were used to investigate any statistically significant differences in the results of the posttest compared with those of the pretest for both groups. For the control group, Table 4 below reports the paired samples t-test results for speaking performance scores.

Table 2. Paired t-test results for the control group (differences between pre- and post-test)

Group	Variable Variable	Test	No	Mean	St.	t value	Sig. (2-
					Deviation		tailed)
Contr	ol Speaking	Pre	25	54.9560	6.34236	-6.923	.000**
	Performance	Post	25	66.2200	7.36840		.000

^{**} significant at .14 level

Table 2 shows that the performance of the students in the control group improved significantly in speaking performance scores [t = -6.932, p=.000]. There are significant differences between the two performances in favour of the post-test scores at the level of p<.01. These results might be due to the exposure of explicit functional and grammatical rules more intensively than in the previous learning so that they had a better experience in doing the practices and communicative activities. However, this speaking performance was remaining stagnant in the next cycle of learning. This might happen because there was no variation in learning instruction received by the students as it was done in the experimental group.

From the action given in the first cycle of the experimental group, then it was done an observation as the next step of this research. The test achieved by the students in this cycle was 68.50 showed that there was a good improvement if it was compared with the result of the pretest that was only 55.24. Although the achievement of the students in this cycle higher than the pre-test, the whole observation of this cycle it was found that the students still feel not too confident and the slow students also found themselves still difficult to adjust with others in the group discussions. Knowing the weakness found in cycle 1 and then it was done a reflection as the last step of this cycle. As the reflection, it can be stated that the students needed facilitation during the process of exploration that could release the factors that cause the learning security in presenting the language activities and practices. The researchers thought that language games and role-plays could be the solution.

Similarly, with the previous cycle, the second cycle was started with the planning in which the researcher planned to apply business games and role play in the communicative activities and practices in order the students felt comfortable in the discussion and then it was followed by preparing the teaching-learning scenario. The action then was conducted in which the researchers asked the students to work in a group of 5 or 6 persons and they did the communicative activities with business games and practices with role plays. In the observation step of this cycle, it can be

stated that the students began to feel comfortable. They became more active to participate in the group discussions and they were keen to perform actions in the role-play practices as the result of their speaking ability was improved with the mean score of 78.86. There was an improvement from the mean score of the students in the cycle 1 which was only 68.50. At the reflection step, it can be described as there were some students who often borrow their friends' works in their respective group prior to well understand to be able to present orally at that time. This problem is known as short-term utility learning. That was why for the next cycle every student was given a web-based activity (WebQuest) as a project task that was completed in small groups so that they had more interaction and could jointly evaluate the information they found on a given website. The task included questions that involve some degree of higher-level thinking, so having the students working in groups was a good way to generate a level of involvement and topic discussion that they would not encounter when working by themselves. Besides the tasks, the students were also given problems to solve and each group of the students was encouraged to present different solutions.

In the planning step of the third cycle, the researchers designed the communicative activities and practices to be given to the students and then preparing the teaching-learning scenario prior to give the action. The action was given in the form of communicative activities with WebQuest tasks and open-ended problems and then the students presented the topics they worked on the WebQuest orally and solution to the problem-solving. In the observation step, it was found that the students were active in doing the communicative activities and practices. The students' mean score in this cycle was 84.36 which was the highest one. For the reflection of this cycle, it can be stated that the students were highly motivated in learning English. However, this present study only consisted of three cycles, so the research was stopped.

Based on the scores achieved by the students in cycle 3 as the last cycle of learning in this study, then it can be reported the paired samples t-test results for speaking performance in table 3 below.

Table 3. Paired t-test results for the experimental group (differences between pre- and post-test)

Group	Variable	Test	No	Mean	St. Deviation	t value	Sig. (2-tailed)
Experimental	Speaking Performance	Pre Post	25 25		5.26015 4.46169	-25.185	.000**

**significant at .143 level

Table 3 reveals that the experimental group improved significantly in speaking performance [t = -25.185, p=.000] at the level of p<.14 in favour of the post-test results. These results were due to the effectiveness of applying scaffolding technique in the communicative activities and practices before they presented the functional and grammatical rules which were shown by their speaking performance.

The result of the students' achievement in the experimental group as it was stated in the pretest and the three cycles could be shown in the following table.

TESTS	MEAN SCORES
Pre-test	55.24
Cycle 1	68.50
Cycle 2	78.86
Cycle 3	84.36

Table 4. The students' achievement in the pre-test, cycle 1, 2 and cycle 3.

From the table above, it could be seen that the students' achievement in the tests given by the researchers increased from 55.24 at the pre-test, that was categorized into low, then it increased into 68.50 at the cycle 1,78.86 at the cycle 2, and 84.36 at the cycle 3. The result of the last cycle was categorized into very good. Based on the improvements stated above, the students' improvement in each cycle conducted could be shown in the following diagram.

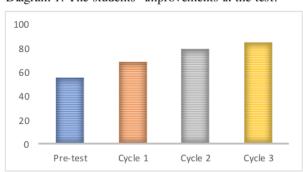


Diagram 1. The students' improvements in the test.

0 - 90 = Mean Score

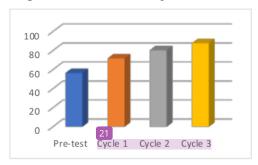
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From the result of the pre-test to the result of the test in cycle 1, it showed rather an extreme improvement that was from 55.24 to 68.50. The advantages of the technique applied in cycle 1, which was facilitated with brainstorming, group discussion, and pair works in the communicative activities and practices, could be stated as the students performed actively like questioning, responding others' and the teachers' questions. However, this technique was still not contributing an optimal result in which the students became not too confident in asking and responding to questions needed in the brainstorming. This condition happened because they still thought about mistakes of expressing the language items to be made in speaking, besides that some of them were still insecure working in a group, especially the slow students who were still hesitant to learn from others.

As the cycle continued, the students' interactions were getting better in which they were challenged to be active in learning due to the technique applied in cycle 2 facilitated with business games and role plays in the communicative activities and practices. As a result, the students became more actively participated in the learning since they found learning was fun and interesting. In addition, they could release their tension and stress in learning and they could also freely express their ideas in the activities besides that they could also share ideas with others in the group. Even, the slow students they could learn here from others and they got phrases, sentences, and grammatical points from their friends, which were used for oral presentation. Finally, in the cycle 3 in which facilitated with WebQuest and problem-solving in the communicative activities and practices. In doing tasks with topics which were specially designed for the WebQuest, the students could get engaged in collaborative activities, shared learning experiences and new knowledge. They also tried to interact maximally in order to get a better solution for the problems. These activities and practice were intended to stimulate their speaking creativity. So here, it could be clearly seen that the students' participation in the teaching-learning process improved well. It also meant that the students enjoyed the class, which makes them be able to use their English. Consequently, their speaking fluency is improved significantly from 56.45 in pre-test to 71.75 in cycle 1, 80.36 in cycle 2, and 87.68 in cycle 3. Meanwhile, the number of mistakes in pronunciation and grammar could be reduced too. In addition, the three aspects of speaking ability (fluency, pronunciation, and grammar) were also supported by the other two aspects such as using more word choices and idioms (vocabulary) in expressing their ideas and their ability to understand others in speaking English (comprehension). The description

of achievement score which included the 5 components of speaking ability conducted in the 3 cycles could be shown in the diagram below.

Diagram 2. The students' improvement in the speaking fluency.



0 - 100 = Mean Score

From the diagram above it could be clearly identified that the students' speaking ability was significantly improved as the cycle continued. In accordance with the improvement, the communicative activities and practices applied to facilitate the learning activities were also created an active classroom interaction. In addition, the thing that could be reported based on the result of the application of scaffolding technique here was the strategy of learning was also able to ma long last practice their English lively and the generalization they made through the process of exploration would long last in the sense that it was not easy to forget. Consequently, it was hoped that their English would become better as it was expected in the overall goal of the curriculum. Beside that the performance indicator which targeted the score of the students' English proficiency (TOEFL Like) ≥450/TOEIC ≥500 would be achieved and the students' grade performance score (GPS) would increase too.

The students' responses toward the application of the scaffolding technique in the English subject matter showed positive indication. The evidence of this statement could be seen as the result of the application of the questionnaires. Some students (30%) felt less confident in speaking English because they were afraid of making mistakes in grammar and pronunciation. In addition, they lack vocabularies and expressions in producing utterances and, they found it difficult to understand other students' utterances during the presentation. Meanwhile, most of the students (90%) said that the scaffolding technique could minimize the problems faced by the students. It was due to the reason that communicative activities were carried out excitingly, and could release such feelings as boring, hesitate and afraid of learning. In addition, one important thing said by

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the students was that the language items that had been learned were not easy to forget as they found them through the learning process and not merely been told by the teachers

15 CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the findings and discussion stated earlier, it can be concluded that the application of scaffolding technique can improve the speaking ability of the third-semester students of Travel and Tourism Study Program, State Polytechnic of Bali. The improvement achieved by the students here is also supported by the fact that the application of that learning method can also improve the students' learning motivation and interest so that they can interact actively during the entire process of learning. The result of questionnaires distributed to the students after being given communicative activities and practices that facilitated their presentation in performing the speaking activities showed good findings in relation to the students' attention and response towards the application of the communicative activities and practices in the class. They felt that they could release the factors that cause unsecured learning in which often make them fail in using their English in the class. The integrated communicative activities and practices are really needed to be applied to the students so that they can practice their ability in English, especially in speaking skill.

Considering on the conclusion formulated above, the essence of scaffolding technique can be used as an alternative technique or activities in English class. The teacher should be active in facilitating the learning so that the exploration process prior to the stage of inquiry can be created. The teacher's creativity in designing fun and lived communicative activities and practices will be able to stimulate their learning interest and motivation.

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