

ENHANCING STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY: THE ROLE OF THE CUBING TECHNIQUE

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Abstract

This study addresses the issue of students dealing with verbal expressiveness and speaking difficulty. It looks examines how the Cubing Technique affects the speaking abilities of eleventh-grade students in a senior high school. A total of 69 students from various classes were divided into two groups: experimental and control. The experimental group was taught the Cubing Technique, while the control group was taught by the technique that is usually used by the teacher, the Mind Mapping Technique. Pre- and post-tests used a quantitative research method and a quasi-experimental design to assess five criteria: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. The Cubing Technique had a substantial influence (Sig. 2-tailed = 0.001) on students' speaking abilities in the first semester of eleventh grade, according to an independent t-test done in SPSS 16. This study adds to our understanding of effective language teaching approaches, specifically the positive impact of the Cubing Technique in a senior high school in Purbolinggo in the 2023/2024 academic year.

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INTRODUCTION

The achievement of English language skills is a fundamental aspect of the Indonesian education system, comprising several components such as listening, speaking, reading, writing, as well as language elements including vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation (Brown, 2001). Notwithstanding the significance of these skills, the ability to effectively articulate oneself verbally in English, particularly in the context of speaking, continues to pose a noteworthy obstacle for eleventh-grade students in Purbolinggo. The difficulty is further intensified by a restricted lexicon, as emphasized by Choliludin in 2014. Initial investigations conducted at a local secondary educational institution revealed that students had challenges pertaining to grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, resulting in a dearth of self-assurance while articulating their thoughts and emotions verbally.

In order to tackle these concerns, this research offers the Cubing Technique, a collaborative learning approach based on the theoretical frameworks proposed by Axelrod, Cooper, and Charles (2010). In contrast to any other methodologies, Cubing offers a comprehensive exploration of a topic by

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employing six distinct perspectives: description, comparison, association, analysis, application, and argumentation (Nazario, Borchers, and Lewis, 2013). Cubing is a pedagogical approach that is specifically designed to improve oral communication abilities. Its primary objective is to cultivate critical thinking skills and facilitate a more profound comprehension of the target language.

This study makes significant contributions to both the theoretical and practical aspects of the field of education in English. Theoretical in nature, this study provides insights into the impact of the Cubing Technique on speaking ability, thereby elucidating the theoretical foundations that contribute to its success. The primary objective of this study is to offer concrete advantages to the field of education by employing the Cubing Technique as a means to enhance students' oral communication skills, utilizing pamphlets in a novel manner. The research not only facilitates the identification and resolution of speaking issues among students, but also acts as a significant resource for future scholars engaged in further investigations within this domain. The primary objective of this study is to improve English language instruction by integrating theoretical knowledge and practical application through the utilization of the Cubing Technique.

METHOD

The researchers employed an experimental design for this quantitative study, aiming to assess the impact of the Cubing Technique on students' speaking abilities. A quantitative approach was chosen to enable the measurement of observed phenomena, converting them into numerical data for subsequent statistical analysis. In the quasi-experimental research design, the researchers played an active role, aligning with Arikunto's definition of experimental research, which explores causal relationships between treatment and untreated comparison groups. According to Ary, Jacobs, and Sorensen, quasi-experimental designs can be categorized into pre-test, post-test and post-test-only varieties (2010). This study utilized a pre-test and post-test approach within a quasi-experimental design. The pre-test assessed students' speaking abilities before treatment, while the post-test evaluated the impact of the Cubing Technique, implemented through pamphlets. The study comprised an experimental group, receiving Cubing Technique instruction, and a control group, taught with the Mind Mapping Technique using pamphlets. Content validity is ensured by adapting the test to class materials and consulting with an English teacher for alignment while construct validity means assessed through consultation with an English teacher to ensure congruence with syllabus criteria. The research design can be presented in the following table:

Table 1. Design of the Research

Class	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Experimental (Y)	Pre-test	Treatment by using cubing technique by pamphlet as a media	Post-test
Control (X)	Pre-test	Using mind mapping technique with pamphlet as a media (technique used by the teacher)	Post-test

A pre-test was administered to assess the students' speaking abilities before to the implementation of the treatment. The examination was conducted by oral test. The subject of the pre-test involved the researchers' request for students to provide an explanation of the written message from the pamphlets. The students were allotted a duration of 4-5 minutes to carefully examine them. Subsequently, a designated time frame of 5 minutes was allocated for students to present the information contained inside the pamphlet to their peers in a classroom setting. The evaluation criteria encompassed in the assessment include pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension (Brown, 2004). The test results have been recorded in the assessment column on the paper. Here were the sample of the pamphlets:



Figure 1.
Political Pamphlet



Figure 2.
Commerce Pamphlet



Figure 3.
Educational Pamphlet



Figure 4.
Activity Pamphlet

In this study, the researchers employed an independent simple t-test to examine potential differences between two variables. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17 for Windows was utilised to do the calculations for the independent sample t-test. The utilisation of the cubing technique has a notable impact on the speaking ability of eleventh-grade students at one of senior high schools in Purbolinggo in the first semester of the academic year of 2023/2024.

H₁: There is a significant influence in using cubing technique on the students' speaking ability at the first semester of the eleventh graders in academic year of 2023/2024.

H₀: There is no significant influence of using cubing technique on the students' speaking ability at the first semester of the eleventh graders in academic year of 2023/2024.

While the criteria for acceptance and rejection of the hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H_a is accepted if Sig. (P_{value}) < α = 0.05

H₀ is accepted if Sig. (P_{value}) ≥ α = 0.05

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the result of this research, we saw the influence of using cubing technique on the students' speaking ability. It was showed by students' mean score in the experimental class that was 77.78 which it was higher than the students' mean score in the control class that was 69.21. As we know, cubing technique was able to contribute to raise students' speaking abilities. Perez in Nulmi and Zaini (2018) mentions cubing is a technique designed to help students think about a topic or idea from

many different angles. It means that cubing technique help students more understand the topic using six different perspectives that are appropriate to the topic. According to Forget (2004), the six sides are describing, comparing, associating, analyzing, applying, and arguing. Cubing is useful for quickly exploring a topic, and probing it from six different perspectives. It means that by applying cubing technique students can develop their ideas about the topic. Furthermore, by using this technique, students also can analyze a topic in depth.

The teacher taught using cubing technique in the experimental class and mind mapping technique in the control class. It means in the experiment group are taught using the cubing technique with pamphlet as the media, while in the control group are taught using the mind mapping technique with the same media. She explained what cubing technique in the experimental class and explained what mind mapping technique was and their procedure before implementing the treatment in both classes. In the beginning of pre-test, the research was conducted on July 18 2023 for class XI IPA 4 as the experimental class and XI IPS 4 as the control class to knowing students' score in speaking ability before they would get treatment. Their mean was 46.56 for the experimental class and 41.21 for the control class, standard deviation was 6.839 for the experimental class and 8.336 for the control class. Data showed normal and homogeneous.

The first treatment was done on July 20th, 2023. Firstly, the teacher entered the experimental class beginning by greeting and praying and then introducing what the method would be used. At the first meeting she taught material of procedural text and gave examples of procedural text. Then students were divided into several groups, each group consisting of 4-6 people, students were given various pamphlets, then they observed the pamphlets. She guided students to express their ideas, provided opportunities to think about what will be discussed, based on the media provided. Students were observed pamphlets using the cubing technique, students discussed the topic of the pamphlets using the cubing technique using six perspectives: describing, comparing, associating, analyzing, applying, and arguing. Then students then discussed the contents of the pamphlet in front of the class. More than half of students were experienced confusion when speaking in the learning process, students were still using Bahasa Indonesia and distracting their friends who practicing English, furthermore they were nervous and anxious to use English. It was in line with interview of the English teacher in the preliminary research, she said that class XI students had limited knowledge of grammar rules, limitations in terms of vocabulary, limitations in pronunciation, so that students did not dare or lack confidence to speak and express their ideas and feelings. Then for some students who did not understand the correct use of vocabulary, so they chose the wrong vocabulary, they even did not know the function of the word itself. However, at the first meeting, they looked enthusiast and motivated to make their speaking better.

Second treatment was conducted on July 21th, 2023. Firstly, the teacher entered the experimental class, she then taught the procedure text material. At the second treatment, the students understood the technique which would be used. Therefore, she did not need to tell what the technique would be used anymore. In teaching process, the students minimized their anxiety to make the mistakes in their speaking, they tried to practice well although some of the boys still were shy to practice English in front of the class. Therefore, she asked them to practice to increase their speaking skills. Besides that, she also did treatment in control class with the same material but with different technique.

In the last meeting, the teacher took score for measuring students' speaking in the post-test, as theory of Brown that criteria of students' speaking score which can be measured by five criteria: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. It was held on July 27th, 2023 for

the experimental class and control class. The resulting of the post-test was increasing, and the result of pre-test and post-test showed us that there were significant in applying cubing technique in the experimental class. Students in the experimental class could develop their ideas to the fullest and students were could also analyzed a topic in depth. In fact, students in the control class were not enthusiast using the learning techniques given because they were only given material by the teacher and asked to draw their mind maps on a sheet of paper before presenting their ideas in front of the class. It had impact to their competitiveness which it was being less in the control class. Then, we could look at the data which mean of pre-test and post-test in the experimental class was 46.56 and 77.78, and the pre-test and post-test for the control class was 41.21 and 69.21. It means that it had increasing in the experimental class. It might due to in cubing technique they were highly involved in speaking process to explored various dimensions of a topic to understand a deeper understanding. Students could review the information they discussed and clarify main points helping students created a structured outline for the speaking assignment.

This research is not the inaugural investigation of its nature on a global scale. Numerous scholars have previously conducted studies of such issues. Nevertheless, the researchers want to distinguish themselves from previous studies by focusing on many aspects such as the research object, subject, time frame, and geographical location, among others. The majority of prior research indicates employing the cubing strategy has a positive impact on enhancing students' learning abilities. In addition to achieving accomplishment while carrying out the research, the teacher encountered several challenges when teaching speaking skills through the implementation of the cubing technique. One initial obstacle that arose was the students expressed confusion in comprehending the practical use of the cubing technique. Subsequently, she proceeded to provide students with a detailed elaboration of the cubing technique, reiterating the explanation repeatedly. The teacher proceeded to clarify the six perspectives of the cube components individually, specifically delineating them as follows: describing, comparing, associating, analyzing, applying, and debating. This comprehensive explanation was provided to the students. Another challenge that emerged was the students' limited vocabulary. It impedes the students' ability to engage in extended discussion. The students expressed significant concern regarding the potential for making errors over oral communication. This resulted in a decrease in their level of participation in the language learning process. Despite their continued insufficient vocabulary at the subsequent meeting, the matter was effectively addressed through the use of a dictionary. Consequently, they gradually gained confidence in effectively expressing their thoughts before the class. In addition to that, the researchers did not experience many issues during the research phase.

In conclusion, the researchers determined that the implementation of the cubing technique resulted in enhanced comprehension of the material presented in the pamphlets and increased engagement in oral communication among the students. In addition, a thorough understanding and familiarity with the cubing approach procedure can aid pupils in comprehending and enhancing their ideas pertaining to a given issue. The cubing technique promotes a comprehensive understanding of the pamphlet, encompassing its content and the procedural implementation of the cubing technique to facilitate in-depth analysis of a given topic. Therefore, it is imperative that students possess a comprehensive understanding of the cubing procedure. The utilization of the cubing technique has the potential to enhance students' speaking ideas. This is due to the fact that the cubing technique allows students to engage in a process where they can critically evaluate and consolidate the information they have discussed. By doing so, students are able to establish a well-organized outline, which serves as a foundation for the development of their ideas in the context of a speaking assignment. This research exhibits uniqueness in comparison to prior studies that have been

undertaken, as evidenced by various earlier research. The originality of this study is evident in its research focus, which encompasses a wide range of variables, media utilization, research methodologies, and research outcomes. Previous studies have examined the development of students' writing skills through the implementation of the cubing technique. However, it is worth noting that these studies did not employ pamphlets as a medium for instructional purposes. This observation aligns with the findings of Resi, Sudarsono, and Ikhsanudin (2018) and Cholidah (2019).

CONCLUSION

The research findings yield numerous recommendations. English educators are recommended to familiarize themselves with the cubing technique and provide students with comprehensive explanations before implementing it. Creating an environment that fosters a favorable atmosphere for students to engage in introspective thinking before participating in hands-on tasks promotes the cultivation of ideas. It is essential for students to possess a thorough understanding of the cubing technique, along with efforts to enhance their vocabulary and develop a strong command of grammar rules. The provision of opportunities for students to independently employ the cubing technique has the potential to augment their proficiency in oral communication. It is advisable for future studies to give precedence to the element of clarity when explicating the cubing technique, to ascertain the validation of students' knowledge, and to deliberate on the prospective expansion of its application to other language proficiencies. The results of the study hold considerable importance for the domain of language learning. The implementation of the cubing technique has been seen to exert a notable and favorable impact on the development of students' oral communication abilities, thus solidifying its value as an effective teaching technique. The utilization of this technique by teachers specializing in English may yield improved levels of student engagement and reduced levels of anxiety when engaging in English language communication. This study lays the groundwork for future investigations into the broader applications of the cubing technique in improving speaking ability, which could have a substantial impact on language learning techniques.

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