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Pair Taping for Undergraduate EFL Students' Speaking Fluency and Self Confidence

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Abstract

The need for speaking mastery in English has been dramatically increasing because of the confirmed position of English as a language for international communication. Unfortunately, most of students get less of appreciation in classroom speaking activities. Therefore, to establish a natural approach where students could develop L2 fluency more effectively than what has occurred inside the classroom, the researchers tried Pair Taping (PT) in their Speaking Class. A number of studies have indicated that using PT facilitate students' fluency and confidence (Washburn & Christianson: 1996, Kubo:2009, Kluge & Taylor: 2000 and Nguyen: 2012). This current study attempted at answering the questions related to: 1) the potential benefit of PT upon the students' speaking fluency, 2) the students' perspectives on their English speaking performance, and 3) the students' attitudes toward PT. The findings revealed that pair taping could be conducive to promote students' speaking fluency along with developing their knowledge of language. It also advances our understanding of how pair taping makes contribution to foreign language learning and provide useful insight to teachers, lecturers or course designers in designing speaking course. The implementation of this study was found to be helpful in building up students' speaking skills by offering innovative learning experience to students.

Keywords: Pair Taping, Fluency, Self Confidence

INTRODUCTION

The need for speaking mastery in English has been dramatically increasing because of the confirm position of English as a language for international communication. The major goal of teaching English in Indonesia is on how the students can communicate effectively and accurately (Depdiknas, 2003). Learners should be able to make themselves understood using their current proficiency to the fullest (Hien: 2003). This vision has also become the main goal of English Department at Mulawarman University.

Students of English Department at Mulawarman University are demanded to speak English well; when a person learns a language, he intends to be able to speak the language (Pattison: 1992). They are being prepared to be English teacher and or other professions, passions that need English as the main ability they should have. Therefore, the issue of how to speak English fluently has also gained much concern in recent years in almost all level of educations. It converses with others, much more than the ability to read, write, or comprehend oral language. However, students have to face many difficulties to manage this skill (Hien: 2003).

According to Kubo (2009), Most of students attribute their inability to speak English fluently and confidently to the lack of speaking experience and/or opportunities to engage in English Conversation outside the classroom. It is important in addressing the need to put attention to conversation outside the classroom due to it is difficult for students to practice L2 speaking in large size classes (of over ten). When they are not constantly monitored, they often revert to their first language (L1)

Moreover, many students are less of appreciating the inability in classroom speaking activities. Even those who possess these abilities sometimes feel self-conscious when classmates do not put attention and listen to them speak English, which effected lower level speakers from speaking in class. Most advanced students sometimes hid their actual ability by remaining silent, or took the role of spokesperson for the entire class. In short, conventional classroom speaking activities can be unproductive and difficult to manage (Kubo: 2009).

Drawing on those considerations, the researchers goal, therefore, is to establish a natural approach where students could develop L2 fluency more effectively than what has occurred inside the classroom. The researcher decides to introduce *Pair Taping (PT)* (Schneider: 1993,2001, Kluge & Taylor: 1998, Kubo: 2009, Nguyen: 2012), a method designed to engage students in extensive, natural, and meaningful fluency practice outside the classroom.

Based on the explanation previously mentioned, this current study attempted at answering the questions related to: 1) the potential benefit of Pair Taping upon the students' speaking fluency, 2) the students' perspectives on their English speaking performance, and 3) the students' attitudes toward Pair Taping.

METHODOLOGY

This research was a pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design with explanatory mix method. It involved both quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study. The consideration of conducting a mix method were first, mix method research can help to clarify and explain relationship found to exist between variables. Second, it allows researcher to explore relationship between variables in depth. In this situation, qualitative methods may be used to identify the important variables in an area of interest (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012: 558). The use of both methods would provide a more comprehensive understanding than the use of either approach alone (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012: 557).

Moreover, the purpose behind the use explanatory design was to flesh out the result of the quantitative study (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012: 561). Therefore, the researcher first carried out the quantitative method and then used a qualitative method to follow up and refine the quantitative findings. The two types of data were analyzed separately, with the result of the qualitative analysis used by the researcher to expand upon the result of the quantitative study.

This study used one-group pretest-posttest design which means a single group was measured or observed not only after being exposed to a treatment of some sort, but also before (Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun, 2012: 265). The researcher conducted a speaking test to get the students' word count both immediately before and after the 4-week period. Regarding to the ideas, the researcher chose Class B-Regular to represent the sample. There were 28 students lectured by the same lecturer at Speaking-One Course. Most of them were in beginner level with sprinkling of intermediate. One of reasons to choose this class was also to see their speaking improvement at Speaking-Two compare to Speaking-One course.

The participants got one and a half hours of English speaking class. The fluency practice with pair taping was carried out as part of course requirements. They engaged in fluency practice for about 6 weeks. The implementation of this study was under supervised by the speaking lecturer to avoid bias during the data collection.

In this research, the quantitative data was obtained from pre-test and post-test to collect, while the qualitative data was obtained from students' self-report, and questionnaire. A speaking test was given to the students at the first meeting before participating in pair taping. They were asked to make a self-taping talking about 'TRENDS' for at least 3 minutes speaking. This topic was given considering the students experience on their daily life seeing what's 'in' or what most people talk about nowadays. By given this topic, they were intended to speak easily, naturally based on their interest and background knowledge. The same topic was given at the last meeting to compare the difference with the prior tape.

A self-report and a questionnaire modified from Song (2009) were used to collect the qualitative data. As for the former, the participants were asked to describe what they felt about their English speaking fluency in the posttest compared with the pretest, and this was done immediately after taking the posttest. Mclaughlin (1999) points out that a self-report reflects the judgment of the participants on the spot when they need to use information that is accessible from memory at the time. They were also asked to answer the questionnaire which was designed specifically to investigate their attitudes toward the pair taping.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

Data set one: the word per minute and speaking duration

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 4	Pretest	105.7500	21.97073	4.15208
	Posttest	94.5714	15.36574	2.90385

Table 1 Paired Samples Statistics of Word per Minute (WPM)

	Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 3	Pretest	3.3843	.73568	.13903
	Posttest	5.0011	.71659	.13542

Table 2 Paired Samples Statistics of Speak Duration

As showed in Table 1, the result of the student's Words per Minute (WPM) decreased from 105 more words into 94 words/ minute in the post-test. This result indicated that the

Pair Taping for Undergraduate EFL Students' Speaking Fluency and Self Confidence

Syamdianita, Nurhijrah Ismail, Dedi Rahman Nur

pre-speaking test, as the students did not have a great deal of speaking practice contributed to the quality of their speaking fluency; this point will be explained latter in discussion. The bigger amount of WPM in pretest was not guarantee for the better fluency. Contrary, they spoke more natural in posttest and most of them were improved their speaking time from the average of 3 minutes into the average of 5 minutes as presented in Table 2.

Data set two: total number of words

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 2	Pretest	357.1071	28	108.40710	20.48702
	Posttest	473.8214	28	105.65705	19.96730

Table 3 Paired Samples Statistics of Number of Words

	Paired Differences					T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 2 Pretest - Posttest	-116.71429	114.72216	21.68045	-161.19890	-72.22967	-5.383	27	.000

Table 4 Paired Samples Test of Number of Words

As presents in Table 4 there were significant mean differences for the pre and post speaking tests in terms of the total number of words [$t(df=27) = -5.383$, Sig. (2 tailed= .000)]. The mean of the total number of words was from 357.1071 to 473.8214, an increase of 116.71429 (Table 4.3). This shows that the participants on average spoke about 473 more words per 5 minutes in the post speaking test.

Data set three: the result of performance score

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Pretest	56.9196	28	13.53785	2.55841
	Posttest	64.0625	28	14.39612	2.72061

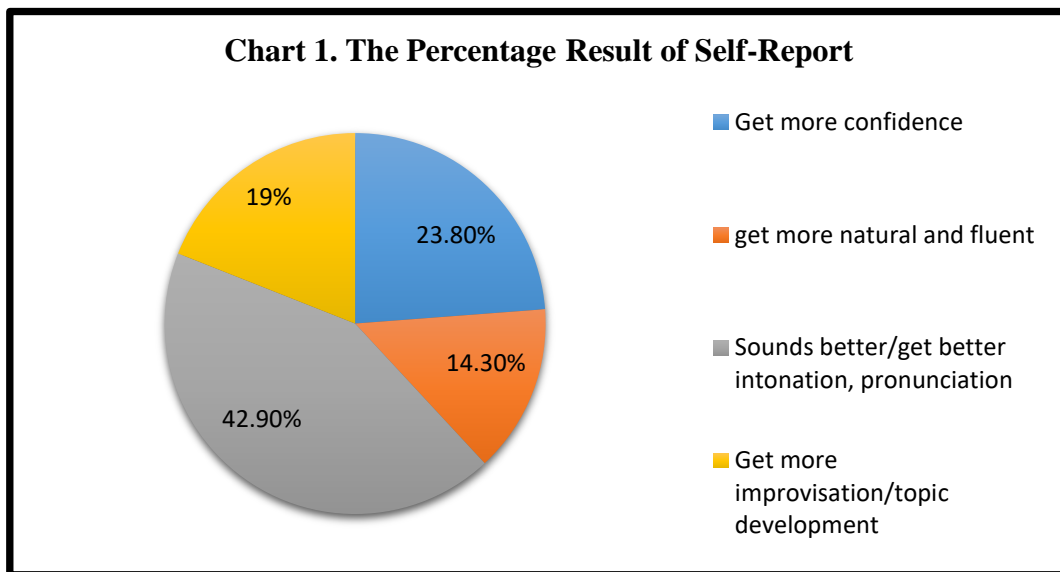
Table 5 Paired Samples Statistics of Performance Score

	Paired Differences					T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Pretest - Posttest	-7.14286	5.02145	.94896	-9.08997	-5.19574	-7.527	27	.000

Table 6 Paired Samples Test of Performance Score

As shows in Table 5 and 6, there was a statistically significant mean difference for the pre and post speaking score [t(df=27= -7.527, Sig. (2 tailed= .000)]. The mean of the score was from 56.9196 to 64.0650, an increase of 7.14286. This improvement seemed to suggest that using pair taping practice may be useful to improve the general English speaking fluency of learners.

Data set four: the result of self-report



The participants were asked to write a self-report which was designed to examine what they felt about their English spoken performance in the posttest compared to the pretest. The responses were mostly positive toward fluency practice with pair taping and with regard to their English speaking ability. These findings were similar to most of the favorable responses in the questionnaire, which will be explained later. However, the following points concerning the self-report were more specific about the positive attitude of the students toward the English speaking after their practice with pair taping.

Data set five: the result of questionnaire

The following section sets down the results of the 9 items questionnaire which was administered to examine the attitudes of the participants toward the use of pair taping technique to practice their speaking fluency. 7 items of the questionnaire were multiple choices, and the rest 2 items were close-ended question that will be presented each for the comprehensive analysis. In accordance with the increased English speaking performance of the posttest, and the mostly positive responses to the self-report noted earlier, on the whole, the students showed positive reactions toward the questionnaire concerning the pair taping.

Multiple choices questions

	Summary of statement	Very much	Much	Little	Not at all
1	To have previous English speaking practice	0 (0%)	7 (25%)	20 (71.40%)	1 (3.60%)
2	To improve speaking ability	9 (32.10%)	18 (64.30%)	1 (3.60%)	0 (0%)
3	To increase interest in English speaking	7 (25%)	21 (75%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
4	To decrease the anxiety toward English speaking	5 (17.90%)	17 (60.70%)	5 (17.90%)	1 (3.60%)
5	To be motivated by seeing or listening to other student speaking practice	9 (32.10%)	18 (64.30%)	1 (3.60%)	0 (0%)
6	To have a helpful partner	7 (25%)	15 (53.60%)	6 (21.40%)	0 (0%)
7	To continue with the oral English diary practice	5 (17.90%)	14 (50%)	8 (28.60%)	1 (3.60%)

Table 7 The Participants' Reaction toward the Pair Taping

Close-ended questions

Questions			Responses
8. The advantage of the practice (59 Responses)	17	(28.80%)	To improve speaking skills
	15	(25.40%)	To learn from partner/get and give feedback and error correction
	13	(22%)	To get more confidence, comfortable and motivated in speaking English
	9	(15.30%)	To help practice speaking more
	5	(8.50%)	To increase knowledge/learn new words
9. The advantage of the practice (31 Responses)	7	(21.20%)	Sometimes occur technological error
	4	(12.10%)	Spending more time to repeat the wrong taping
	3	(9.10%)	Has a limited time to collect the assignment
	5	(15.20%)	Can't make a good coordination with partner
	3	(9.10%)	Student can read script
	1	(3%)	Get more assignment
	8	(24.20%)	Other personal emotional expression
2	(6.10%)	Not to mention any disadvantages	

Table 8 Summary of the close-ended Questions

DISCUSSION

The first research question asked the effect of pair taping technique upon the students' speaking fluency. The result of quantitative has given evidences that proved this learning tool come to be a very useful practice in improving the students' fluency in speaking English. The main data of quantitative were the pretest and posttest recording. The word per minute (WPM), speaking duration and total number of words were counted to know the fluency. They were also assessed and scored to know how the students' holistic speaking performance.

From the findings, it appealed that the students' WPM in posttest was definitely decreased. Surprisingly, after evaluating their pre-speaking test, it turned out that every student wanted to make their best recording. However, they were failed to speak smoothly at

appropriate speed with natural pauses. This is an area that is often misunderstood by students to mean that fluency is they just talk as fast as they possibly can or talking without pausing. If we listen to how native speakers talk, they don't normally talk very fast and there are plenty of pauses (Jones, 2007). This is totally acceptable; they just don't want to pause more than normal. However, after engaging in pair taping, they had more opportunities to practice their speaking thus led them to speak more natural in posttest. Thus confirms brown (20011) that lecturer can help students become more fluent speakers by providing opportunities to practice speaking and then stepping aside, thus fostering the automatic needed to explore their abilities.

Although an accepted measure of spoken fluency is word count (Schneider: 1993, Kubo: 2009), but the students speaking duration is also need to be considered and appreciated. The findings showed that students were improved a little or a lot in posttest. They were able to speak along 5 minutes in average which means asking them to record their voice has given them an important benefit where they can practice, improve and evaluating their performance in that they were able to communicate in English fluently. In regard to the improvement of their speaking time, the number of word they produced was definitely increasing.

To know the holistic performance of the students, the pre and post test were assessed in terms of the general description, how the students delivered the topic (fluency), and how they developed it. When the scores from the students' pre and post test were compared, it can be seen that a considerable progress has been noted for each student. Almost all students got better score. They used a wider range of vocabulary, notably extending their topic.

The second research question asked the student perception of their pre and post speaking performance. In general, all students' response positively toward the fluency practice they have experienced in that they were able to speak better on the last recording project. The results indicated that most students acknowledged that recording their speaking was a real challenge for them. It can improve their speaking skills and self confidence; where listening and evaluating their recordings increased their awareness of their own mistakes, as well as enabling them to trace their own progress. This confirms Willis and Willis's (2007) argument that taking the task as a starting point, learners are encouraged to deploy whatever language they already possess, build upon it, improve and expand their capabilities.

The third research question aimed to know the students attitude toward the pair taping. In the close-ended question they were asked to write down the advantages and

disadvantages of pair taping. The results revealed that engaging in pair taping practice has allowed them to increase their knowledge, to help them practice their English more, motivate them to speak by seeing their partner; they can get the same spirit to be more confident and learn each other in which confirming Skehan and Foster's (2001) argument 'students acknowledged that through collaboration, they gained useful insights from their fellow friends.' Most importantly this practice allowed them to improve their speaking skill in general.

However, this practice was not without limitations. The students complained that a technological error may appear to impact the process of the project due to they have to send the recording files into email; that sometimes they got a problem with the internet connection, and of course the version of recoding tools would also determine how clear their speaking were.

Another noted important remark was not all students in this project can make a good coordination with their partner; that caused them stacked with their own obstacles; they mentioned their personal feelings like they cannot speak English, they were lazy to record their voice, they feel nervous and better to talk without partner. One of possible reasons was they were not given opportunity to change partner so that it come to impact their willingness to communicate. In his study, Kubo (2009) said that the self confidence, interpersonal motivation and attitude of the L2 students would depend with whom, at what time, and in what situation the learner was to enter into the learning process.

CONCLUSION

This study reported on design and implementation of pair taping to know whether this technique could affect the speaking fluency of students attending Speaking-Two Class in English Department Mulawarman University as well as to figure out both positive and negative remarkable experiences that the students have been through.

Findings of this study were significant in contributing to the related literature due to the result indicate that pair taping could be conducive to promote students' speaking fluency along with developing their knowledge of language. It also advance our understanding of how pair taping makes contribution to foreign language learning and provide useful insight to teachers, lecturers or course designers in designing speaking course.

The implementation of this study was found to be helpful in building up students' speaking skills by offering innovative learning experience to students. They were able to

Pair Taping for Undergraduate EFL Students' Speaking Fluency and Self Confidence

Syamdianita, Nurhijrah Ismail, Dedi Rahman Nur

engage in meaningful interaction, and improve in the areas where they saw an important need for improvement.

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