TASK-BASED LEARNING TEACHING METHOD IN ENHANCING STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILL AT POLITEKNIK UNGGUL LP3M MEDAN

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Abstract

The objectives of the study were to determine the process and the result of students' increasing English speaking ability at Politeknik Unggul LP3M Medan. This study used qualitative and quantitative approaches through task-based learning. The research methodology used is an action-research developed by Cohen et al., 2018 with the spiral model by phases: planning, action, observation, and reflection. The population of the research was the 3rd semester students of Accountancy study program in academic year 2023/2024. There were 60 students of 2 classes involved in the study. Data collection techniques in this study conducted by observation, field note of the researcher/collaborator, and photos as documentation. Meanwhile, for quantitative data is gathered by test (the pre-test, the evaluation of group discussions cycle 1, cycle 2, and cycle 3, and the post-test). The results showed that there was a significant increase in the ability of students in speaking English after attending the subject of speaking II in semester III through task-based learning. Based on the test results of students English speaking ability of the three aspects assessed: accuracy, fluency, and pronunciation showed that the pre-test average student score = 17%, cycle 1 = 20%, cycle 2 = 67%, cycle 3 = 81% and post-test = 84%. Therefore, the study concluded that the students' speaking ability at Politeknik Unggul LP3M can be enhanced through task-based learning approach.

Keywords: learning english, speaking skill, tbl teaching method

1. INTRODUCTION

English plays an important role for communication in the world, it is used as an international language. Moreover, it is used to relate two or more countries which have different language, so it is important for us to learn it. English is compulsory subject from Elementary up to the University. Even though English is taught for many years at the school and university. It seems that the result of the teaching is still far from being satisfactory at all levels. According to Bagea (2023) to communicate in daily interaction, speaking as one of language skills has an important role to help English language learners to be a good reader and writer. Furthermore, (Ellis, 2020) said that the main purpose of someone learns English as a foreign language (EFL) or second language (ESL) is to achieve personal purpose in career.

Problems in teaching and learning EFL related to both teachers and students. This problem is partly affected by teaching methods. Another obstruction to EFL learners acquiring English is that teachers mainly employ the traditional teacher-centered approach in which teachers monopolize the learning and teaching process East, (2021). In this case, some of the learning problems are influenced by the methods used by teachers in teaching. stated that almost all foreign language teachers teach the language using the lecture method and focus their teaching on grammatical rules rather than teaching the use of the language itself. In fact, according to Ellis, language teaching is more effective if students learn language from context and meaning.

The problem faced by students in learning English as a foreign language is that lecturers or instructors mostly use traditional methods in the learning process. In learning speaking at Politeknik Unggul LP3M Medan, English lecturers

still often apply teacher-centered learning methods or teacher talking time (TTT) in teaching *English Conversation I* course so that it appears that lecturers dominate the class more than students in the learning process. Many students who are studying speaking cannot use English effectively in conversation or correspondence among them. In fact, according to East (2021), students do not like teachers who dominate classroom learning using the lecturing method because this method makes them unmotivated to learn. Students don't like to be passive in class. The consequence of student passivity results in low knowledge (input) obtained by students in the learning process.

Wentzel & Kathryn L, (2014) said that learning a language is like the blooming of colourful flowers that grow in a fertile garden. A positive environment and providing opportunities for students to communicate using the target language in authentic situations are part of the process of success in learning a language. Therefore, Nur et al., (2020) suggested replacing traditional teaching approaches with communicative language teaching (CLT). The communicative language teaching approach recommends teaching English through a variety of fun activities. This approach gives students the opportunity to express their ideas while practicing and using the language they are learning. There are several approaches that have been developed to improve students' abilities in English, including task-based learning, game-based approaches, camp-based approaches, and others.

In connection with this research, the author conducted a study on one of these approaches, namely the task-based approach. This approach is a practical approach to the learning process that has various activities and challenges students to think freely and improve their abilities. In a study, Muller (2006) introduced task-based learning to small classes whose English skills were still weak in Japan. In this research, students were given more opportunities to speak English by adapting vocabulary from the textbooks they had been using. Assessments are taken from production, practice and presentation (PPP) carried out during classroom learning. Muller in this study adopted the stages used by Willis, as follows: presenting a communicative task, reporting the performance plan that has been displayed, and reporting the results of the task to the class.

He concluded that the application of a task-based learning approach in this research did not meet the expected criteria. Researchers emphasize that the task-based learning approach cannot be applied completely at all levels, especially in lower grades. Because according to Muller, students develop gradually and at each stage of development they have different abilities in the ability to complete assignments, plan reporting, and provide reports on each assignment that has been completed.

Rahadianto at all (2022) examined the effects of task repetition and task type on fluency, accuracy, and complexity. The results and analysis of variance showed that task repetition and task type, as well as the interaction between these variables, resulted in significant differences in the subjects' oral discourse in terms of fluency, accuracy and complexity. The findings of this study indicate that researchers tend to encourage teachers to implement a task-based approach in their classes. This is because teachers feel comfortable and can fulfill the basic conditions for learning a second language, namely exposure, meaningful use, motivation, and language analysis, as recommended by Willis.

Meanwhile, East (2021) stated that there are at least two advantages of a task-based learning approach in teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL). First, this approach provides language learning experiences in the classroom and second, the task-based approach focuses on learning to use language naturally with a set of tasks that are done together in pairs and groups. Ellis said that other advantages of this task-based learning method include; This approach is very

appropriate to the cognitive process in second language acquisition, students feel a very strong sense of togetherness, and the assignments given are designed according to the level of needs of language learners.

This is no exception when it comes to speaking skills in speaking courses, a lecturer must look for and find more effective methods, approaches and techniques. By applying a variety of techniques, lecturers can make learning more interesting for students and help stop uninteresting lessons. Regarding speaking skills, Ur (1996), et al stated that someone is said to be able to speak if they fulfill three components: (1) accuracy, (2) fluency, and (3) pronunciation. Realizing the problems and importance of improving students' English-speaking skills, researchers consider it necessary to look for alternative approaches in an effort to improve students' English-speaking skills at Politeknik Unggul LP3M Medan. The alternative approach that the researcher is referring to is a task-based learning approach. So that this research is more focused, the main focus of this action research is improving students' English-speaking skills at Politeknik Unggul LP3M Medan. Meanwhile, the sub-focus of the research is: (1) the process of improving students' English-speaking skills through a task-based learning approach, and (2) the results of improving students' English speaking skills through a task-based learning approach.

In general, this research aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the process of improving students' English speaking skills at the Superior Polytechnic LP3M Medan.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This research uses the action research method developed by Cohen (2018) is a spiral model with stages: planning, action, observation and reflection with a task-based learning approach. Qualitative data collection techniques in this research were obtained by observation, field notes, and documentation in the form of photographs of the learning process in class. Meanwhile, quantitative data was obtained using tests (pre-test, evaluation of group discussions in cycle 1, cycle 2, cycle 3, and post-test).

Next, the data was analysed in two ways, namely qualitative data analysis and quantitative data analysis. Qualitative data analysis is analysing data that occurs in the learning process by implementing speaking learning through a task-based learning approach. Since initial observations, researcher/collaborator field notes, and other documentation (photos and video recorders) of learning activities in the classroom have begun. Meanwhile, quantitative data analysis was carried out on the results of speaking ability during the pre-test, evaluation cycle 1, cycle 2, cycle 3, and post-test.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of student activities during the pre-test (pre-observation) can be seen from the results of the analysis as follows: of the 60 students in this pre-test, there were 2 students in the very good (VG) or 3% criteria, there were 5 students or 8% in good criteria (G), 4 students or 7% of students with fair criteria (F), 4 students with poor criteria (P) or 7%, and 45 people with very poor criteria (VP) or 75% %. This can be seen in the following graph:
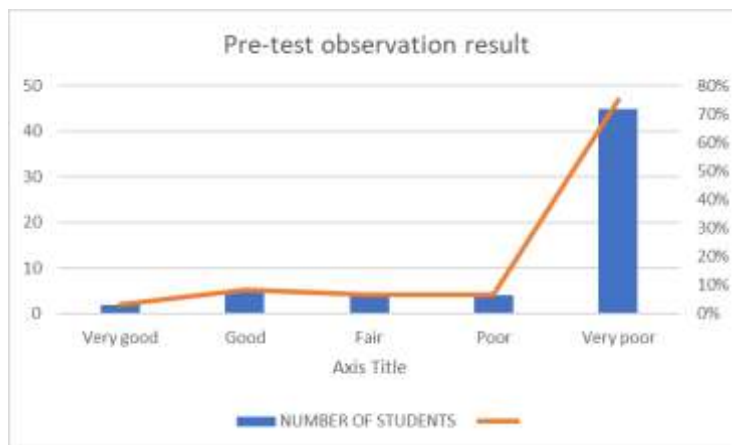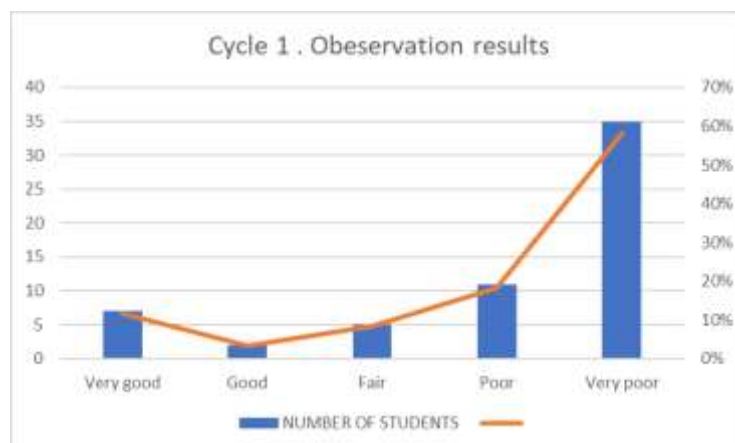
Graph 4.1: Pre-test observation results

In the diagram below, it can be seen that the students' learning completeness score in pre-test speaking II with 60 students taking the test was 11 students or 18% had completed (C). Meanwhile, there were 49 students who had not completed (IC) or 82%. The completeness result can be seen in the following graph.
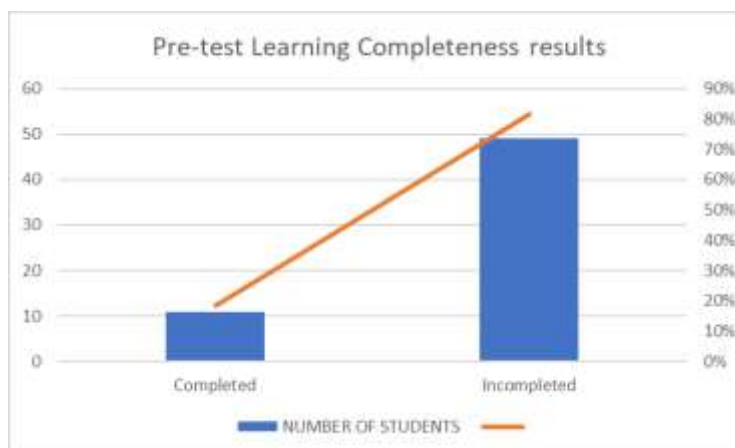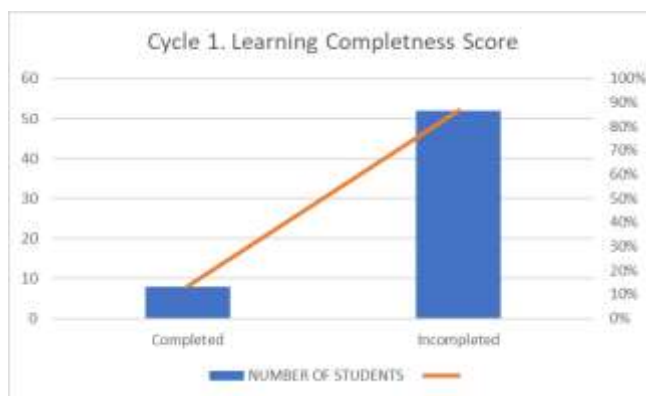

Graph 4.2: Pre-test Learning Completeness Score for English Speaking Ability

The results of observations of student activities during cycle I can be seen from the results of the analysis as follows: in cycle I, students with very good assessment criteria (VG) were 7 students or 12%, with good criteria (G) were 2 person or 3%, with fair criteria. (F) 5 people or 8%, those with poor criteria (P) were 11 people or 18%, and those with very poor criteria (VP) were 35 people or 58%. This can be seen in the following graph:
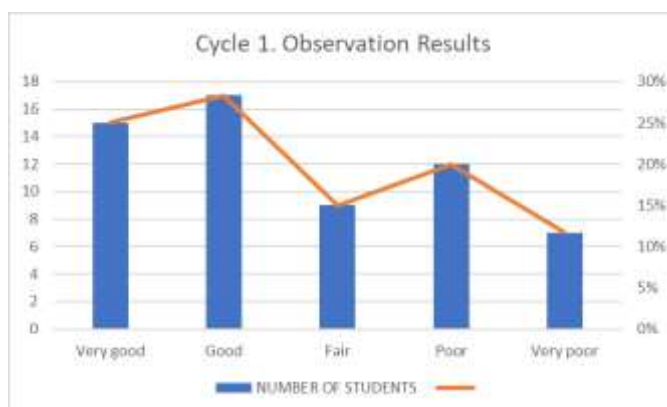
Graph 3: Cycle 1 observation results

In the diagram below, it can be seen that there were 3 students' learning completeness scores in cycle I with 60 students taking the pre-test or 13% complete (C). Meanwhile, students who have not yet completed (NC) are 52 people or 87%. The completeness score can be seen in the following graph:
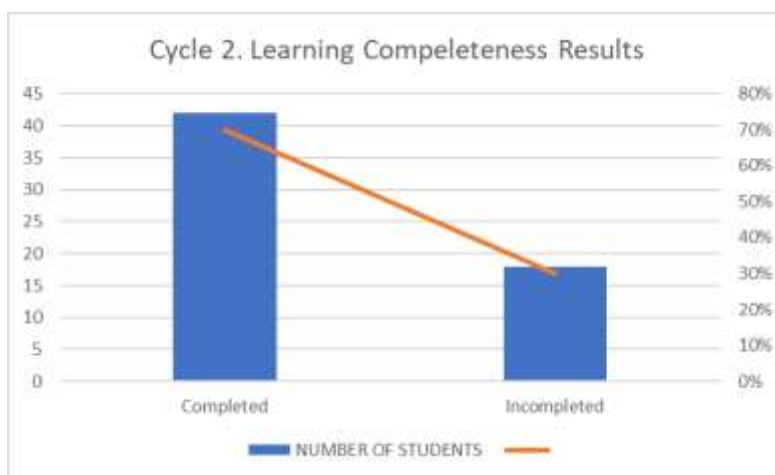

Graph 4: Cycle 1 Learning Completeness Score

The results of observing student activities during Cycle II can be seen from the results of the analysis as follows: students with very good assessment criteria (VG) were 15 people or 25%, with good criteria (G) 17 people or 28%, with sufficient criteria (F) were 9 people or 15%, with less criteria (P) is 12 people or 20%, and with very less criteria (VP) is 7 people or 12%. This can be seen in the following graph below:
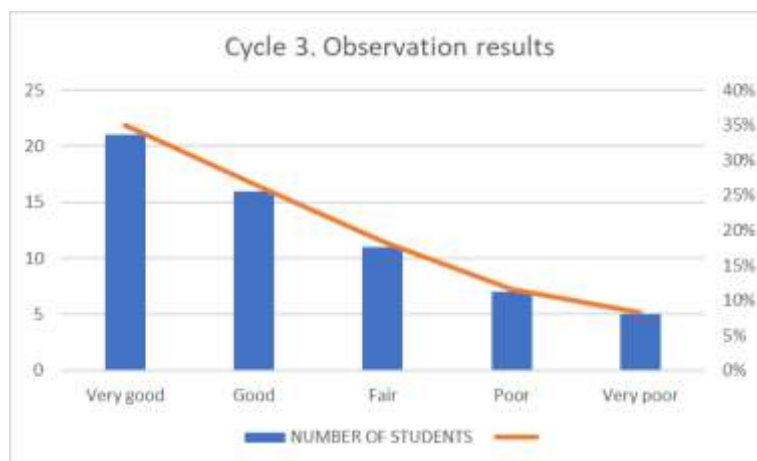

Graph 5: Cycle 2 Observation Results

The learning completeness scores in cycle II of the second speaking course are as follows. Of the 60 students tested, 42 people or 70% were declared to have completed (C), while 18 students or 30% were incomplete (NC). Student learning completeness scores can be seen in the following graph below:
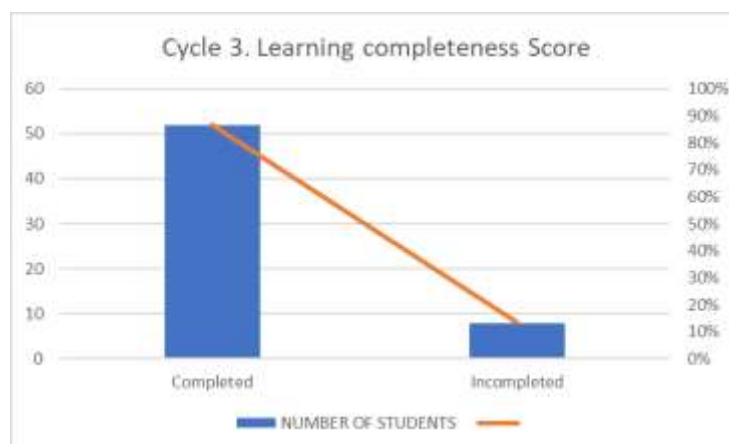
Graph 6: Cycle 2 Learning Completeness Score

The results of observations of student activities during cycle 3 showed that there was a significant increase in students' grades. Students with very good assessment criteria (VG) are 21 students or 35%, with good criteria (G) 16 students or 27%, fair (F) are 11 students or 18%, with poor criteria (P) are 7 students or 12%, and those with very poor criteria (VP) were 5 people or 8%. This can be seen in the following graph:


Graph 7: Cycle 3 Observation Results

In the diagram below, it can be seen that the student learning completeness score in cycle 3 with 60 students taking the test was 52 or 87% had completed (C). Meanwhile, there were 8 students who had not completed (NC) or 13%. We can see the completeness score in the following graph:

Graph 8: Cycle 3 Learning Completeness Score

The results of observing student activities during the post-test can be seen from the results of the analysis as follows: 22 of the 60 students who took the test, or 37%, had very good criteria (VG), 16 students or 27% had good criteria (G), 13 students or 22% had fair criteria (F), 5 people had poor criteria (P) or 8%, and 4 students had very poor criteria (VP) or 7%. We can see this in the following graph 9:
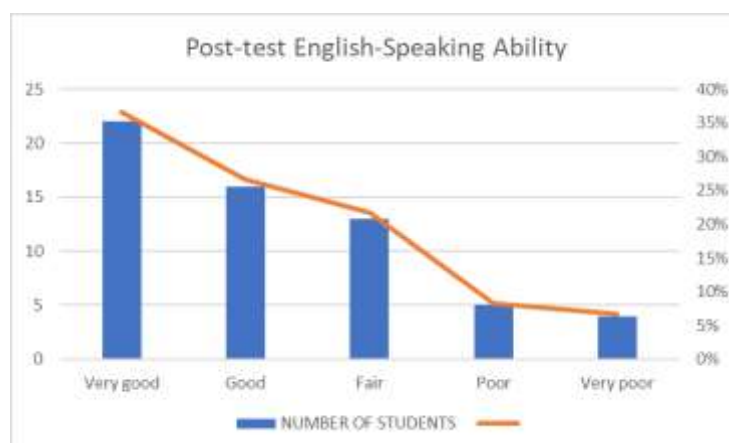
Graph 9: Post-test English Speaking Ability

From the graph 9 above it can be stated that after having the treatment through task-based learning approach, the students' ability in speaking English is significantly enhanced.

The skill of speaking in English is a language skill that needs to be mastered well, because this skill is the most important indicator for student success in learning a language. By mastering good speaking skills, students can communicate their ideas, both on campus and with foreign speakers and also maintain good relationships with other people.

In connection with the description above, Ur (1996) states that "If someone masters a language, intuitively he is able to speak that language". This expression clearly identifies that speaking skills show an indication that someone knows a language. Based on the results of ongoing observations carried out on students taking the Speaking 2 course in the English Language Education Department, it was found that students had inadequate speaking skills.

The problems found included accuracy, fluency and pronunciation. In matters of fluency and pronunciation, students tend to stutter or hesitate in expressing their ideas. When they are asked questions or asked to express their

ideas, they tend to remain silent for a long time and think about what and how to express these ideas. In matters of language accuracy, students often make grammatical errors by not paying attention to language rules. This concerns the use of tenses, such as I stayed here two days ago; everyday; plural, like all my friends like to have a party.

Based on the results of observations, it was found that student motivation during the learning and teaching process was also not good. If they are not paying attention, they prefer to speak Indonesian or regional languages and what is generally discussed are topics outside the lecture. When one of them presents something in front of the class, the other students tend to pay less attention to the presentation. Researchers assume that this often happens, because the teaching methods and techniques used so far are still very conventional.

In connection with learning the speaking II course in order to improve students' English-speaking skills in Politeknik Unggul LP3M, the researcher chose to use a task-based learning approach. Task-based learning is a technique for teaching speaking skills that was developed from a communicative approach that emphasizes or is oriented towards the importance of tasks or communication goals in carrying out oral communication. According to Ellis (2020) implementing task-based learning, students carry out activities related to negotiating meaning, paraphrasing and conducting experiments which will lead students to successful language growth.

The principles of this task-based learning approach are also in accordance with the innovative learning concept that is currently being promoted. Assignments provide learners with several advantages that are very interesting to note. Tasks provide learners with input and opportunities for meaningful language use, which is of course seen as important for language acquisition. In addition, Assignments provide a linguistically rich environment that is essentially capable of activating learners' language skills. Assignments place a lot of emphasis on providing opportunities to produce language forcing learners to pay more attention to form and the relationship between form and meaning. Lastly, the relationship between form and function is easier for students to understand in learning-based learning.

Teaching English speaking with a task-based learning approach helps students to more actively express their ideas in class. The task-based learning approach adopts all thinking concepts that place the learner in the main position. This approach provides the opportunity: a) to use language contextually; b) explore the target language through situational activities; and c) experience learning that cannot be duplicated in the classroom. For this reason, the teacher's role becomes very central in the success of task-based activities in creating or stimulating student creativity and the types of situations that allow interaction to develop naturally. In task-based learning, one of the dominant things that is done is that students are designed to work on tasks, both tasks done in pairs (pair-work) and group discussions (group discussions) to increase interaction and collaboration between them. As the name suggests, tasks are activities that can stand alone as a fundamental unit and require understanding, production, manipulation and interaction in the language being studied. In this learning model, attention is primarily focused on meaning, not form.

Until the end of the implementation of the task-based learning approach, problems in the aspects of accuracy, fluency and pronunciation can be resolved. Students succeeded in achieving the minimum completeness set by the researcher, namely 75%.

Problems identified in reflection cycles 1, 2 and 3 can be resolved with good preparation from research lecturers and collaborators. Furthermore, an implication of the task-based learning approach is students' discipline to continue

practicing both on campus and at home. This is very important because the more often you practice and practice, the more habits you will create which of course can improve students' ability to speak English in speaking courses.

Even though this research is limited in time, it has a positive influence on the learning process in the classroom. Now that this research has been completed, the researcher hopes that the lecturers who teach the speaking II course will still apply this approach. Another limitation is that the findings of this study only looked at three components of students' speaking abilities (accuracy, fluency, and pronunciation). Therefore, further research is needed to look for findings in other aspects such as psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, and others.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings obtained from the research and discussions carried out, it can be concluded that students' ability to speak English can be improved through a task-based learning approach. Student response during the teaching and learning process is also very good. This can be seen from their enthusiasm and seriousness in learning, as seen in the results of observations, field notes, documentation (audiovisual), photos during the learning process in class, pre-test results, evaluation of each cycle, and pre-tests. The task-oriented learning approach is a modification of the model containing the steps: (a) introducing and demonstrating the use of new language expressions that will be used using a task and discussion-based learning approach, (b) discussing how patterns or words can be used. words that form these expressions, (c) practice to produce the expressions studied, (d) explain and ask students to look for information from other students regarding the topic of discussion, (e) report the results they get in front of the class, and (f) provide feedback about students' strengths and weaknesses in reporting by playing back the recorded results of their presentations.

Referring to the conclusion above, the following follow-up suggestions are proposed: 1) for lecturers who hold speaking courses to pay attention to and adopt a task-based learning approach because this approach is very effective and can be used to improve students' skills in speaking English; 2) so that the curriculum and syllabus for teaching speaking also pay attention to the findings of this research so that there is some kind of positive development in the existing curriculum or syllabus; and apart from that 3) for other researchers who are interested in researching speaking teaching to use the results of this research as further input in their studies.

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