Developing EFL Learners' Speaking skill via Dictogloss Technique

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Abstract: Dictogloss is a language learning technique that can be used in English language learning as a foreign language (EFL) classrooms. This technique may be effective if the learners face difficulties in speaking skill and performing conversations. The method of the study is quasi-experimental design with a pre and pot-test. The research sample comprised 50 intermediate learners who were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups after taking a pre-test. Intervention for the experimental group was to participate in class activities based on dictogloss activities including listening to key words, note taking, sentence construction, performing plays with the words, rephrases the words in new sentences. The control group read their text book, did the exercises orally, summarized and retold the textbook passages. Finally, they took a speaking posttest and data were analyzed to compare their pre and post-test differences in mean scores. Results indicated that the participants in the experimental group passed the control ones.

Key words: dictogloss, speaking skill, sentence reconstruction

I. Introduction

Dictogloss as a classroom dictation is an activity that the teacher read a passage and students listen and note down key words. Then the learners work together to create a new version of the original text (Harmer, 2001; Onovagh, 2018). For instance, the teacher explains the dictation task with the subject of animals. Then learners listen to their teacher who reads a story about animals. The story is read twice. First, the learners just listen and the second time the teacher reads again and the learners take notes. Finally, the learners then reconstruct the text. Learners are required to reconstruct the original story either by play the roles, retell it or discuss it. Thus, dictoglass is a multiple skills and systems activity. Learners practice listening, speaking, writing and in small groups while using vocabulary, grammar, sentence reconstruction and discourse systems in order to complete the task (Eka, 2013; Jacob & Small, 2003; Vasilijevic, 2014). Cook (1996) has affirmed speaking difficulties may be caused not by lack of knowledge, but by lack of memory or vocabulary treasure in use.

Dictogloss is a language learning technique with creative class activities. It is a classroom activity where the teacher reads a short text when the students just listen and take notes. Then, the teacher reads again and let the students check their notes. This phase is to enable the learners to write key words, the main points, and the important phrases of the text on a piece of paper. Then the teacher divides the students into several small groups of 5 to 7 and guide them to play based on topics and new words they heard from the text. Every group starts to perform or to reconstruct the text with their own words based on their ability (i.e., summarizing, paraphrasing, retelling the story by language of their own). Teachers encourage the groups to perform better comparing to others. This may be a challenge of speaking for each group.

Speaking skill process that happens in ultimate time with no chance for repetition means that what is said may be heard only once in daily situation, unless the listeners ask the speaker to say it again and it is repeated (Brown, 1990; Essberger, 2000; Nunan, 2003). Thus, this is the speaker who determines the speed of the speech; therefore, the listeners, most of the time, is unexpected to listen to the message twice (Buck, 2001).

Wanjnryb and Malay (1990) noted that dictogloss is designed to attract the learners' attention to language form and it promotes the role of meaning as well as negotiation of language. In this case, students can discuss the material with their friends either in pair, group or other activities during the process of learning speaking skill. The main objective of learning a language is to be able to speak in a community. One is able to relate with others, receive and give information. This is occurred between a decoder and encoder. The basis of any communication is to listen and then speak in a communicative process which determine the success of students in learning speaking skill. Listening skill is also related to speaking skill (Cameron, 2001; Onovagh, 2018). These two skills are necessary and they are needed for effective communication. Therefore, we have to listen well and understand to realize what is happening around us (Tsou, 2008). On the other hand, speaking is an act of collecting information and explaining one's feeling in speech. Speaking skill is a process in which, learners not only know how to make different points of the heard language such as grammar, but also that they understand when, why and in what ways to produce language (Wulandari, 2017). The application of dictogloss

to improve students' achievement in analytical audio text based on writing. Oral practicing could become meaningful to students when they have to pay attention to what they are hearing or saying. Thus, the students can learn better how to gain the ability in conversing and expressing what they heard.

Literature shows that there are researchers (e.g., Cardona, 1981) who have studied the of dictogloss in teaching listening skill; however, rare studies have conducted a research on the use of dictogloss in other language skills. The present study has reviewed the literature to the methods related to the listening ability or skill. It has discussed the learning of speaking through listening based on dictogloss Dista, 2012). Thus, in order to measure the effect of dicto-gloss on the learners' specking performance, the following research questions were addressed:

RQ1.To what extent does dicto-gloss technique affect EFL learners' speaking skills?

RQ2. Is there any difference between the groups with dicto-gloss and non dicto-gloss technique in learning speaking skills?

II.   Method and procedure

The design of this study is a quasi-experimental study with a pre and posttest in two groups of experimental and control. The effect of dictogloss activities was assessed among the intermediate EFL learners. Participants of the study are 186 second year university students who were voluntarily participated in this study. Then they took CEFR as a standard test for placement of learners' language proficiency. 50 learners who gained B1 level were selected as the participants and randomly assigned into two groups of experimental (Dictogloss) and control (traditional).

Pre and posttest included five topics that were selected from 10 passages of the learners' textbook that was used as a coursebook. The students took the pretest of speaking that was giving lecture on one of the given topics in three minutes. They worked on each passage in two sessions weekly. In the experimental group, the teacher read the passage and learners take notes, write down key words, and specific structures and patterns. Then in small groups of five discuss their understanding, ideas, key words, and new terms they learned. Finally, they perform presentation of the themes in small groups collaboratively. The control group involved in the same materials and time allocation. The only difference was the teaching technique dealing with working on the key words, definitions, explanation, summarizing and discussion. After 20 sessions of treatment, both groups sat for the posttest of speaking including five topics selected from the coursebook. They should talk about each topic in three minutes in front of the class while their voice was recording.

Both pre and posttests of speaking were recorded and scored by two raters to measure the inter-reliability of each scoring. The reliability formula was Pearson Correlation Analysis that depicted the R value as .86 for the pretest and .91 for the posttest. Finally, data were collected and analyzed through paired and independent samples t-test to compare the learners' means in pre and posttests. IELTS speaking rubrics was used for scoring learners' speaking performance. It includes categories of fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, and pronunciation. It ranged from 0 to 9 for the levels of speaking proficiency.

III.   Results

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to measure the groups' means of pre and posttests. Research question one addresses the extent to which the dicto-gloss technique may affect EFL learners' speaking skills. Results indicated that the experimental performed better that the non dicto-gloss group in the posttest of speaking skill. Results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of pre and posttests (experimental and control groups)

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Experimental pre	2.9200	25	1.99833	.39967
	Experimental post	4.4400	25	2.14243	.42849
Pair 2	Control pre	3.0800	25	1.95619	.39124
	Control post	3.5600	25	2.14243	.42849

Table 1 represents the mean differences between the learners' scores of means in the pre and posttests. The difference between the pretest of both groups are very close in the pretest while the posttest shows a difference of the mean scores. Since the means cannot show the significant of difference between the groups, paired and independent samples t-test were run to measure the significant level of difference at p<0.05.

Table 2. Paired samples t-test (pre and posttest of each group)

		Mean	SD	SD E M	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Experimental pre. Vs. posttest	-1.52	1.96	.39	-2.32	-.71	-3.877	24	.001
Pair 2	contpre - cntpost	-.48	2.56	.51	-1.53	.57	-.935	24	.359

Table 2 depicts the significant difference between the pre ad posttest of the experimental groups while this difference cannot be seen in the control one pre and posttest. In other words, the experimental group outperformed the control one in the post test. To compare the pre and posttests of two groups, independent samples t-test was used as it can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Independent samples t-test (comparing pre and posttest of both groups)

	F	sig	t	df	Sig (2-tailed)	Mean difference	SD E M	Upper	Lower
Experimental vs. Control Post-test	.021	.885	-2.594	48	.013	-1.52	.58	-2.69	-.341
Experimental vs. Control Pre-test	.381	.540	-.827	48	.412	-.48	.58	-1.64	.68

Table 3 shows the experimental and control groups' means were not significantly different (p>0.05) while in the posttests of both groups the significant level of difference can be seen (p<0.05).

IV.   Discussion and conclusion

The results of this study are matched with other scholars' (eg., Dista, 2012; Eka 2013; Onovagh, 2018) findings who argued that the speaking and other skills are improved through listening. The learners of the reconstruction through dictogloss group after treatment outperformed the other group. The reasons for this result could be discussed in terms of the effectiveness of the reconstruction dictogloss in developing learners' speaking proficiency. This also agrees with Vasilijevic (2014) study which provides a direct evidence of this study that prior knowledge can significantly improve students' activation strategies. This knowledge provides the learners with background knowledge that is important for triggering speaking activities. They added by effectively selecting and applying instructional strategies to build and active a new knowledge, teachers can better support all students on their way toward speaking, in order to learn how to reconstruct to rebuild sentences with their own words. This agree with Nunan (2001, 2003) who proposed that for helping speaking, enormous listening helps speakers to improve their performance as a speaker and being hearer in initial helps the learner recognize and understand the difficulties existing in the task. Participants with their own background knowledge of grammatical competence, more authentic and relevant files and pleasure in which resulting from reconstruct what they were hearing may make them to produce and process language. Regarding the results of the post-test, which showed that the reconstruction Dictoglosss might, has positive effect on the skill during speaking.

Dictogloss calls for active participation in problem solving with speaking tasks and the students can be more active and increase their self-esteem to use English communicatively. They also can more easily understand the materials being taught. Moreover, the students may have more chance to practice English while learning since they are engaged in activities that stimulate them to use combination of classic teaching technique where speakers are required to reconstruct a text by listening and speaking tasks. Hence, the students are able to sharpen their English-speaking skills, by using this technique, it also motivates students to have a good attitude to learning speaking skills (Wulandari, 2017).

Based on the literature review and research findings, pedagogical implications may be suggested to EFL learners and teachers. Many language teachers in EFL contexts treat the speaking process in a conventional way of memorizing, role-play and giving the definition of new vocabulary, ignoring the glossing power and process of background knowledge efficacy in improving the different situation. In language classrooms, it is suggested that language teachers also familiarize their language learners with background knowledge affecting

sentence construction to improve their speaking skill. Language teachers can motivate the students to be good listeners enormous listening strategies and speak to reconstruct what they have heard.

Teachers may use other kinds of literature such as songs, poem, lectures and novels or other kind of glossing, videos, clips or Mp3 files can be used in future researches. Dictogloss is effective in all four skills; therefore, it is suggested to search and study this method on the teaching and improving other skills. As it was mentioned earlier dictogloss can be used in other fields of study rather than English or language teaching-learning. Dictogloss can be used in the elementary schools with the Iranian non-Persian students who are learning Farsi as their second language.

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