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การพัฒนาความสามารถในการพูดภาษาอังกฤษผ่านการทำซ้ำโดยใช้เทคนิค 4/3/2 ในกิจกรรมการพูดในที่สาธารณะ

Enhancing English Speaking Ability through Task Repetition Using the 4/3/2 Technique in Public Speaking Activities

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บทคัดย่อ

การศึกษาครั้งนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาผลของการทำซ้ำโดยใช้เทคนิค 4/3/2 ในกิจกรรมการพูดในที่สาธารณะต่อความสามารถการพูดภาษาอังกฤษของนักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาตอนปลาย กลุ่มตัวอย่างของงานวิจัยนี้คือ นักเรียนชั้นมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 6 จำนวน 13 คน ที่กำลังศึกษาอยู่ในโรงเรียนรัฐบาลแห่งหนึ่งในกรุงเทพมหานคร ในภาคการศึกษาต้น ปีการศึกษา 2560 เครื่องมือวิจัยในการศึกษาครั้งนี้ ได้แก่ แบบประเมินการพูดและเกณฑ์การให้คะแนนด้านเนื้อหาในการพูดในที่สาธารณะ การวิเคราะห์ข้อมูล ใช้ one-way repeated measures ANOVA เพื่อตรวจสอบความสัมพันธ์ของการพูด 4 นาที 3 นาที และ 2 นาที ผลการศึกษาพบว่าหลังจากการใช้การทำซ้ำโดยใช้เทคนิค 4/3/2 ในกิจกรรมการพูดในที่สาธารณะ ความคล่องแคล่วในการพูดของนักเรียนเพิ่มขึ้นอย่างมีนัยสำคัญ แต่อย่างไรก็ตามผลลัพธ์ด้านความถูกต้องในการพูดและด้านเนื้อหาในการพูดไม่เห็นการเปลี่ยนแปลงที่ชัดเจน

คำสำคัญ: การทำซ้ำ, เทคนิค 4/3/2, การพูดในที่สาธารณะ

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Abstract

The present study aimed to investigate the effects of task repetition using the 4/3/2 technique in public speaking activities on the English speaking ability of upper secondary school students. The participants of the study were 13 twelfth-grade students studying in one public school in Bangkok in the first semester of academic year 2017. The instruments in the study were a speaking evaluation form and a rubric for content in public speaking. For data analysis, the quantitative data was analyzed by one-way repeated measures ANOVA to investigate the correlation among 4 minute-speaking, 3-minute speaking, and 2-minute speaking. The results revealed that after implementing task repetition using the 4/3/2 technique in public speaking activities, the students' speaking fluency was significantly increased. However, apparent changes could not be seen from the results regarding students' speaking accuracy and speech content.

Keywords: Task repetition, 4/3/2 Technique, Public speaking

Introduction

Since English speaking skill is one of the main skills that students in the 21st century need to have to be able to communicate well with people around the globe and to gain better job opportunities. Improving students' English speaking ability is therefore one of the key aims emphasized in The Basic Education Core Curriculum of the country. Especially for twelfth-grade students (Matthayomsuksa 6), the Ministry of Education expects that the learners should be able to present information of various topics that they are interested in; such as talking about themselves, their experiences, local and global news, and so on.

However, in EFL context, developing speaking skill is considered as one of the most difficult skills compared to the rest. This may be because "speaking is a highly complex and dynamic skill that involves the use of several simultaneous processes – cognitive, physical and socio-cultural – and a speaker's knowledge and skills (that) have to be activated rapidly in real-time (Sim & Pop, 2016)". Therefore, speaking skill is still a big challenge for EFL students worldwide, including those in Thailand. Thai students seem to have inefficiency in terms of grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation, and interactive communication. As the evidence shown in the study of Jaiyai et al. (2005), Thai students' English ability, particularly in speaking skill, seemed to be dissatisfied.

Because of this, a variety of teaching approaches have been proposed to help improve students' speaking ability. Public speaking is an interesting activity that should be considered.

This activity is believed by many scholars that it is an effective activity to help develop students' English speaking ability; particularly in the areas of communicative awareness, confidence building, using English in a comprehensive way, and enhancing critical thinking ability (Iberri-Shea, 2009; Wan, 2011, 2013 as cited in Zhang, 2009). This is because the process of public speaking activities can support learning a language through interaction among people in a classroom since it requires brainstorming, sharing, exchanging, and negotiating on different matters or issues. Therefore, it is likely that the use of this activity can possibly help improve students' English speaking ability.

Moreover, Task-Based Language Learning and Teaching (TBLT) is an approach to teach a language through applying tasks in order to encourage students' use of the target language for communication to achieve the goals. While the use of TBLT itself can motivate the use of the target language, studies suggest that repetition of tasks can even further provide beneficial results since it can help students to see their own language production and have the opportunity to improve their performance (Bygate, 1996; Indrarathne, 2014). The 4/3/2 technique adopted the concept of task repetition to develop the use of the target language (Maurice, 1983, as cited in Nation, 1989). As can be seen in many studies, the results affirmed that repeating either same tasks or similar tasks has positive effects on students' fluency, accuracy, and complexity.

A study of Thai and Boers (2016), for example, suggest that having a chance to speak the same or similar topics, the students' speaking performance and confidence is raised. It can be said that successful language learning is influenced by a crucial factor like repetition (Harmer, 2015). Furthermore, Liao (2014) mentioned that speech anxiety could be coped with through repetition of practicing speech in the class time either individually or in small groups.

To date, there have been some previous studies investigating the use of public speaking activities and repetition of tasks in language learning. However, limited number of studies have been carried out with Thai students in the Thai context, particularly in secondary school level to see their impact on helping develop Thai students' English speaking ability. Therefore this study was conducted to see the effects of using task repetition and public speaking activities to help develop students' speaking ability by applying the 4/3/2 technique, which is a useful technique of using repetition in speaking tasks by reducing the amount of time for students to speak in each round (from 4 minutes to 3 minutes and to 2 minutes

respectively), to use in public speaking class. It is therefore interesting to see if the benefits of using task repetition in public speaking activities would still be achieved if the amount of time for speaking is reduced.

It should also be noted that, there are many aspects to consider when talking about speaking ability, for instance, fluency and accuracy in terms of using grammar and vocabulary, discourse management, pronunciation and interactive communication (Thornbury, 2005). Apart from that, content in giving speech is another important factor that need to be considered. Thus, in this study, the investigation of students' speaking ability would include students' speaking fluency, accuracy, and the content of the speech.

Objective

The main objective of this study was to investigate the effects of task repetition using the 4/3/2 technique in public speaking activities on the improvement of students' English speaking ability.

Methodology

Participants

The participants of the study were chosen by purposive sampling technique. They were 13 twelfth-grade students studying in Science-Math program at Donmuang Thahan Argard Bamrung School; a Thai public secondary school in Bangkok, Thailand; in the first semester of academic year 2017.

Research Design

A repeated measures design was used in this study to investigate the effects of task repetition using the 4/3/2 technique in public speaking activities on students' English speaking ability.

Designing Instructions

To design the instructions, 6 steps of public speaking activities proposed by Iberri-Shea (2009) were adapted to use in this study. The steps consisted of (1) identifying suitable topics, (2) researching the topic area, (3) organizing and outlining key points, (4) writing planned speech, (5) giving informative speech, and (6) reviewing and reflecting.

Another important concept used to design the instructions of this study was the 4/3/2 technique. This technique was applied in the 'Giving informative speech' step in public speaking activities. Four steps of implementing the 4/3/2 technique (Maurice, 1983, as cited in Nation, 1989) were adapted to use in the study. First, the speaker has to prepare a speech by spending a few minutes thinking of what he/she has written on his/her planned speech from the former period. Then, the speaker has 4 minutes to give speech to the first group of audiences. Interrupting and asking questions by the audiences are not permitted. Third, the speaker has to change a group of audiences (the second group) in order to give speech on the same topic for 3 minutes. Last, the speaker has to change a group of audiences (the third group) again in order to give speech on the same topic for 2 minutes.

Research Instruments

1) Speaking evaluation form

Students' speaking was recorded and then transcribed. The speaking evaluation form was used to record the number of words per minute and the number of disfluencies (e.g. hesitations, repetitions, false starts, etc.) for further evaluation of students' speaking fluency. In addition, the form was also used to note the number of errors found in the speech, including syntax errors, pronunciation errors, morphology errors, and lexis errors. These errors were investigated under the aspect of students' speaking accuracy.

2) Rubric for content in public speaking

In the study, the scoring rubric for content in public speaking was adapted from rubric for public speaking provided by University of Tusculum website (http://www.tusculum.edu/research/documents/PublicSpeakingCompetencyRubric.pdf). There were five aspects of content; including (1) stating the purpose, (2) organizing the content, (3) supporting idea, (4) incorporating stories and examples, and (5) summarizing the main idea(s). The scale of scores in the rubric was ranged from 1 to 5 (1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest).

Data Analysis

To answer the research question, the students' English speaking ability; including, speaking fluency (the number of words per minute and the number of disfluencies per 100 words); speaking accuracy (the number of errors per 100 words); and the scores for content, from three-time speaking (4-minute speaking, 3-munite speaking, and 2-minute speaking) in

each topic were analyzed by using one-way repeated measures ANOVA.

Findings

To what extent does task repetition using the 4/3/2 technique in public speaking activities help improve students' English speaking ability?

In this study, speaking ability focused on 3 main aspects: fluency, accuracy, and content. 'Fluency' included the focus on speech fluency and disfluencies. 'Accuracy' focused on number of errors that students produced and 'Content' was about how well the students could provide details related to the topic. The descriptive statistics including mean scores, and standard deviation were used to analyze the speaking scores of the participants. Table 1 illustrated the average number of speech fluency (words/minute) (S), disfluencies/100 words (F), errors/100 words (A), and content (C) of the participants across 3 topics.

Table 1

Average Number of Fluency, Accuracy, and Content across 3 Topics (n=13).

	Topic 1				Topic 2				Topic 3			
	S1	F1	A1	C1	S2	F2	A2	C2	S3	F3	A3	C3
4 m	73.93	20.64	25.80	14.88	76.42	20.90	25.43	19.23	77.94	19.47	25.02	21.04
3 m	81.06	18.50	24.35	14.58	84.72	15.27	26.21	18.77	86.64	13.93	23.39	20.35
2 m	93.37	14.59	24.30	12.81	98.53	12.45	24.51	17.15	97.85	11.70	23.82	19.15

Note: *S=speech fluency, F=disfluencies, A=Accuracy, C=Content, m=minutes

a. Speech Fluency (S)

From Table 1, the data showed average speed (number of words/minute) of 13 students' 3-time giving speech among 3 topics. The average speed of each topic dramatically increased from 4-minute speaking to 3-minute speaking and from 3-minute speaking to 2-minute speaking. As the evidence shown in topic 1, the average speed for 3-time speaking was 73.93, 81.06, and 93.37, respectively. Likewise, 3 times of speaking in topic 2, average speed was increased with the number of 76.42, 84.72, and 98.53, accordingly. Average speed increasing was also shown in topic 3 as the following numbers, 77.94, 86.64, and 97.85. This obviously means that speech fluency increased when time provided was minimized. In

addition, average speed for each-time speaking was gradually increased from the first topic to the following topics. For example, the average speed of 4-minute speaking rose from topic 1 to topic 3 (73.93, 76.42, and 77.94). Moreover, to check whether the mean of speech fluency from each time of speaking within the same topic was significantly different, the students' speech fluency for 4-minute speaking, 3-minute speaking, and 2-minute speaking were analyzed by using one-way repeated measures ANOVA. The results of the analysis revealed that speech fluency of each time of speaking in topic 1 was significantly different ($F(2, 24) = 55.547$, $p = .000$, *Partial Eta*$^2 = .822$). Likewise, the average speed of each time of speaking in topic 2 and topic 3 was significantly different with the statistic prove, $F(2, 24) = 70.421$, $p = .000$, *Partial Eta*$^2 = .854$) and $F(1.170, 14.039) = 31.429$, $p = .000$, *Partial Eta*$^2 = .724$), respectively.

b. Disfluencies (F)

From Table 1, the data presented average number of disfluencies/100 words of 13 students' 3-time giving speech among 3 topics. Disfluencies consist of hesitations (e.g. *er, um, ah, erm, well*), repetitions (e.g. *I I also, is a is a*), and false stars (e.g. *she they eat, I this country*). With regard to students' average number of disfluencies in each topic, disfluencies found were dramatically decrease from 4-minute speaking to the following speaking time. As the evidence showed in topic 1, a number of disfluencies/100 words for 3-time speaking were 20.64, 18.50, and 14.59, respectively. Similarly, 3 times of speaking in topic 2, average numbers of disfluencies/100 words were gradually decreased with the number of 20.90, 15.27, and 12.45, accordingly. This trend was also found in the topic 3's results with the declining number (19.47, 13.93, and 11.70). This claims that the shorter time provided, the less disfluencies occurred. Furthermore, to check whether the mean of disfluencies occurred from each time of speaking within the same topic was significantly different, a number of disfluencies the students made for 4-minute speaking, 3-minute speaking, and 2-minute speaking were analyzed by using one-way repeated measures ANOVA. The results of the analysis revealed that a number of disfluencies/100 words of each time of speaking in topic 1 were significantly different ($F(2, 24) = 10.158$, $p = .001$, *Partial Eta*$^2 = .459$). Likewise, a number of disfluencies/100 words of each time of speaking in topic 2 and topic 3 were significantly different with the

statistic results, $F(2, 24) = 13.962$, $p = .001$, *Partial Eta*$^2 = .538$) and $F(2, 24) = 29.718$, $p = .000$, *Partial Eta*$^2 = .712$), respectively.

c. Accuracy (A)

From Table 1, the data illustrated average number of errors/100 words of 13 students' 3-time giving speech among 3 topics. A number of errors were counted from syntax errors (e.g. *...because so beautiful...*), pronunciation errors (e.g. *<u>in</u>ducation (education), wis (wish)*), morphology errors (e.g. *I will let my childrens<u></u>*), and lexis errors (e.g. *fes, Ame*). According to average numbers of errors made in speaking, trends seemed to be varied among 4-minute speaking, 3-minute speaking, and 2-minute speaking. While average numbers of topic 1 errors were slightly declined from 4-minute speaking to 2-minute speaking (25.80, 24.35, 24.30), those of topic 2 errors' rose from 25.43 in 4-minute speaking to 26.21 in 3-minute speaking and fell to 24.51 in 2-minute speaking. On the contrary, those of topic 3 errors dropped from 25.02 in 4-minute speaking to 23.39 in 3-minute speaking and slightly increased to 23.82 in the last-time speaking. Moreover, to check whether the mean of errors occurred from each time of speaking within the same topic was significantly different, a number of errors the students made for 4-minute speaking, 3-minute speaking, and 2-minute speaking were analyzed by using one-way repeated measures ANOVA. The results of the analysis revealed that a number of errors/100 words of each time of speaking in topic 1 were not significantly different ($F(2, 24) = .744$, $p = .486$, *Partial Eta*$^2 = .058$). Likewise, a number of errors/100 words of each time of speaking in topic 2 and topic 3 were not significantly different with the statistic results, $F(2, 24) = 1.017$, $p = .377$, *Partial Eta*$^2 = .078$) and $F(2, 24) = 1.806$, $p = .186$, *Partial Eta*$^2 = .131$), respectively.

To elaborate the varied trends found in 3-time speaking across 3 topics, the table 2 illustrated average number of syntax errors, pronunciation errors, morphology errors, and lexis errors per 100 words and percentage decrease across 3 topics (n = 13).

Table 2

Average Number of Errors in 4 Categories and Percentage Decrease across 3 Topics (n = 13).

	Topic 1				
	4 m	3 m	2 m	% Decrease (4 m to 3 m)	% Decrease (4 m to 2 m)
S	7.95	6.75	6.68	15.09	15.97
P	15.56	13.69	13.95	12.02	10.35
M	3.83	2.30	2.43	13.84	36.55
L	2.77	1.62	1.24	41.52	55.23
	Topic 2				
	4 m	3 m	2 m	% Decrease (4 m to 3 m)	% Decrease (4 m to 2 m)
S	6.09	6.16	5.01	-1.15	17.73
P	16.84	16.46	16.96	2.26	-0.71
M	1.46	2.02	1.57	-38.36	-7.53
L	1.04	1.56	0.98	-50.00	5.77
	Topic 3				
	4 m	3 m	2 m	% Decrease (4 m to 3 m)	% Decrease (4 m to 2 m)
S	5.12	4.76	4.41	7.03	13.87
P	16.59	15.16	16.24	8.62	2.11
M	2.08	2.41	2.03	-15.87	2.4
L	1.22	1.06	1.14	13.11	6.56

Note: *S = Syntax Errors, P = Pronunciation Errors, M = Morphology Errors, L = Lexis Errors, m = minutes

According to Table 2, average numbers of errors concerning all 4 categories in topic 1 were dramatically decreased across 3-time speaking. It means that accuracy was developed in topic 1. However, there was an increase in average numbers of errors from syntax, pronunciation, morphology, and lexis instead of a decrease in topic 2 from 4-minute speaking to 3-minute speaking and from 4-minute speaking to 2-minute speaking. This was a cause of insignificant difference among a number of errors/100 words of each time of speaking in topic 1, topic 2, and topic 3.

d. Content (C)

From Table 1, the data showed mean scores of content of 13 students' 3-time speaking among 3 topics. The mean scores in each topic dramatically decreased from 4-minute speaking to 3-minute speaking and from 3-minute speaking to 2-minute speaking. As the

evidence shown in topic 1, the mean scores for 3-time speaking were 14.88, 14.58, and 12.81, respectively. Similarly, 3 times of speaking in topic 2, the mean scores were declined with the number of 19.23, 18.77, and 17.55, accordingly. The mean score decreasing was also shown in topic 3 as the following numbers, 21.04, 20.35, and 19.15. This obviously means that the ability in providing content was decreased when the students encountered time constraints. Furthermore, to check whether the total scores of content from each time of speaking within the same topic was significantly different, the students' content scores for 4-minute speaking, 3-minute speaking, and 2-minute speaking were analyzed by using one-way repeated measures ANOVA. The results of the analysis presented that a total score of content of each speaking time in topic 1 were significantly different ($F(2, 24) = 7.762$, $p = .003$, *Partial Eta*^{2} = .393). Likewise, a total score of content of each speaking time in topic 2 and topic 3 were significantly different with the statistic results, $F(1.357, 16.287) = 6.067$, $p = .018$, *Partial Eta*^{2} = .336) and $F(2, 24) = 7.760$, $p = .003$, *Partial Eta*^{2} = .393, respectively.

Discussions

The results of the study revealed that the implementation of task repetition using the 4/3/2 technique in public speaking activities showed the positive effects on students' speaking fluency but did not clearly show prominent impacts on their speaking accuracy and speech content. Based on the findings regarding the fluency aspect in the present study, it was noticeable that the average number of disfluencies were obviously decreased from topic 1 to topic 3. It was therefore possible that the decrease of disfluencies would be from the effects of task repetition. The students gathered experiences from repeating speech performance. As the study of Bygate (2001) reviewed that there was an increase of fluency after applying specific task repetition. Moreover, the findings in the present study were congruent with previous studies which supported the positive effect of implementing the 4/3/2 technique on students' fluency. As can be seen in the study of Nation (1989), the findings revealed that a number of false starts, repetitions, and hesitations in speech were significantly deceased. However, the improvement of accuracy was not clearly shown in his study. In addition, the present study's findings were congruent with those of De Jong and Perfetti (2011)'s study which found that there was development only on the fluency aspect. Similarly, Macalister (2014) also affirmed that the 4/3/2 technique obviously helped improve fluency, but may not

have a lot of effects on accuracy. Likewise, the results of Thai and Boers (2016) and ARAB (2016) presented that after employing such technique, fluency was encouraged, but accuracy or complexity did not show significant change.

In addition, the findings from this study possibly highlighted the point that time pressure affected the students' controlling of speech accuracy and the quality of content provision while speaking. The quality of speech seems to be decreased when time limits. Clearly, the results were related to some previous studies. For example, De Jong and Perfetti (2011) mentioned that the limitation of time in speech prevented the students from focusing on the content and accuracy of their speaking; including semantics, grammar, and lexis. Similarly, ARAB (2016) discussed that when the time constrained, unimportant details were normally omitted during speaking. Therefore, it is likely that the findings of this current research are congruent with previous studies in two dimensions: task repetition using the 4/3/2 technique can help increase students' speaking fluency and time pressure can probably cause some negative impacts on the quality of speech.

Limitations and Recommendations for the Future Research

It is noticeable that the number of participants in this study was rather small. This was because task repetition using the 4/3/2 technique in public speaking was suitable for a small group of students in order to effectively control and conduct the teaching and learning process. In addition, because the time allocation for teaching in Thai regular schools was rather limited (50 minutes), it was very difficult to set up the public speaking activities using the 4/3/2 technique. The teacher had to manage the time wisely to deal with the stages of giving speech which lasted about 45 minutes (3 groups of students gave a speech for 3 times to different groups of listeners). Third, because this study focused only on public speaking, the results emerged may not be able to generalize to the other types of speech. Based on the limitations found in this study, it is recommended that a larger-scale study over a longer period of time, or the use of this approach on wider types of speech would offer even more benefits to the students and, perhaps, provide further interesting findings. Last but not least, since this research was conducted with students in secondary level, it may also be beneficial if the study related to the area of public speaking will be conducted with students in other levels,

especially those in tertiary education, to see if different results and feedback can be found from the use of such activity with students in higher level.

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