

Implementing Triangulation Teaching Techniques to Enhance English Speaking Skills for Thai Undergraduate Students

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Abstract

This article reports the findings of implementing triangulation teaching techniques, consisting of collaborative learning, task-based language teaching, and learning motivation for Thai undergraduate students. The study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of Triangulation Teaching Techniques for improving English speaking skills for Thai undergraduate students enrolling in English for Business Communication and also a survey of students' satisfaction towards Triangulation Teaching Techniques. A sample group for data collection was a class of 42 fourth-year undergraduate students enrolled during English for Business Communication, which has a different language proficiency. The instruments were pretest and posttest, speaking role-play tasks, students' satisfaction questionnaire, students' reflective journal, and student case study. Quantitative data were statistically analyzed by mean scores, standard deviation, and t-test. Meanwhile, content analysis was applied for qualitative one. The results indicated that the implementation of triangulation teaching techniques facilitated the enhancement of English speaking skills through speaking role-play tasks, which were meaningful and enhanced students' communicative competence and interaction. It can be concluded that triangulation teaching techniques are a good approach used in the promotion of English speaking skills.

Keywords: Triangulation teaching techniques, Collaborative learning, Task-based language teaching, Learning motivation, English speaking skills

Introduction

English is an international language, which is widely used primarily to communicate. When communicating with other people having different languages and cultures, everyone needs to use English as a primary language. Particularly in Thailand, Thai students are required to take English courses from elementary to university level. The purpose of English has changed from learning the language to using the language for communication (Nonkukhetkhong, Baldauf, & Moni, 2006, cited in Bancha, 2010). In addition, the researcher often faced problems in the English communication of students in the class. The critical issue of pedagogical in speaking skill was found in English speaking problems, especially in English courses for business communication for English major students. For this reason, according to Wiriyachitra (2003), English learning in Thailand is not successful because most students lack the opportunities to learn and practice English in an English environment. Students' tension, excitement, lack of confidence while taking a speaking in the class time constraint also, are the problems in teaching and learning English (Ratanapinyowong, Pooapon, & Honsa, 2007, cited in Somdee & Suppasetserree, 2013).

Moreover, there is a large number of published studies that describe in English speaking skills. Poodla (2010) conducted the research related to the development of English speaking skills of the fourth year students at Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University through role-play and to develop lesson plans for improving efficiency with using role-play at 75/75, and to compare students' English speaking skills before and after being taught with role-playing. The sample of this study consisted of 22 fourth-year students in Business English major, Rajabhat Maha Sarakham University. The finding revealed that the efficiency of lesson plans with using role-play was at 80.25/84.20; the students' English speaking skills before and after being taught with role-playing was significantly at .05 levels. Furthermore, after the learning activities, the students' English learning satisfaction was also found at the highest level. In the case of Chawna, (2010) investigated the behaviors conducive to building English learning motivation of model English teachers under the supervision of the Office of the Basic Education Commission with the sample population consisting of 40 model English teachers in schools under the supervision of the Office of the Basic Education Commission who had been

selected as model teachers by the Office of the Education Council in the course of the Project for Model Teachers and National Teachers in 2002 for the operational period 1998 to 2001. The researcher found that the findings were concerning the behaviors under study, the model of learning styles of English teachers preferred to use at the highest level. Then, the use of the problem-solving process learning styled was found to be at a high level, and the use of the constructivism learning style was determined to be at a high level. Furthermore, the use of the integration learning style of integration involving the expression of multiple intelligences was at a high level, and the use of the problem-based learning style was at a high level. With respect to Tachom (2014) conducted the researching innovation in task-based teaching: authentic use of professional English by Thai nursing students. Samples of this study were thirty-one second-year nursing students from the School of Nursing, University of Northern Thailand (a pseudonym), participated and attended a 12-week TBLT in professional English course designed and taught by the researcher. The central feature of the course was the requirement for students to perform oral role-play tasks for over twelve weeks. The results are shown from the pre- and post-listening comprehension test, and pre- and post-role plays tasks students' significantly increased their listening comprehension scores and used more communication skills in the interaction between nurses and patients in the post-role play. The case study results also indicated that individual students increased their use of communication skills, grammatical structures, and lexical variety over time, as well as being more confident and adventurous with spoken language use.

Moreover, Han-Yu & Gwo-Jen (2013) developed a collaborative game-based learning environment by integrating a grid-based mind tool to facilitate the students to share and organize what they have learned during the game-playing process. The experiment has been conducted in an elementary school natural science course to examine the students' performance in terms of their learning attitudes, learning motivation, self-efficacy, and learning achievements. From the experimental results, it is found that the mind tool-integrated collaborative educational game not only benefits the students in promoting their learning attitudes and learning motivation but also improves their learning achievement and

self-efficacy owing to the provision of the knowledge organizing and sharing facility embedded in the collaborative gaming environment.

As the problems mentioned earlier, the researcher recognized how to combine teaching techniques in English speaking skills in which collaborative teaching, task-based language teaching, and motivation were triangulated, called the triangulation teaching techniques, which could be shown in a theoretical framework in Figure 1.

Theoretical Framework

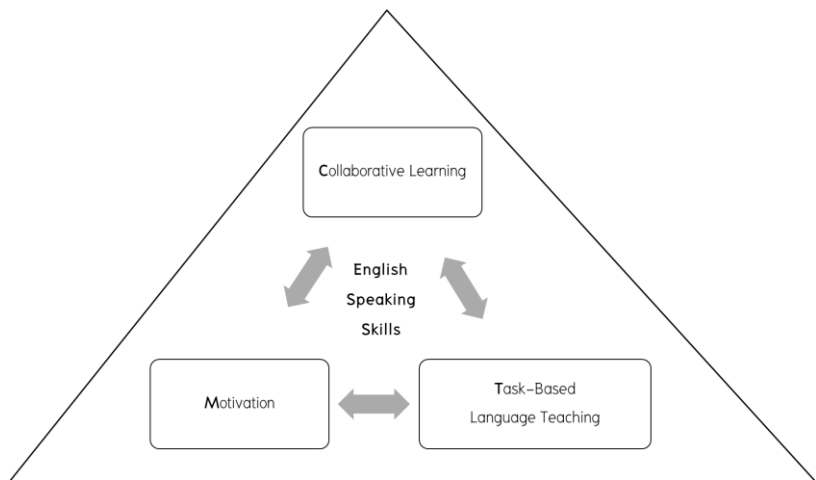


Figure 1: The relationship of Triangulation Teaching Techniques

According to Burnett (2009), triangulation is a technique where the researcher uses more than one method, object, or subject in order to check the robustness for the original data sets. Therefore, triangulation is a tactic whereby the researcher generates a few different data sets in different ways and compares them. The researcher will work out a position broadly lying in the middle of the various data directions, i.e., will take a fix. This prevents the researcher from being misled by outliers or unique cases that would otherwise skew the data. Triangulation can sometimes be done as a check on the effectiveness of the sample frame selected, and can also check how effectively data has been collected. Moreover, Bilash (2009)

defined the term of triangulation as a process by which a teacher collects evidence about student learning; this evidence is collected from three different sources. These sources are conversations, observations, and products. From the researcher's view, the triangulation teaching technique is suitable for graduates' research, and it can measure the procedures of research instruments to collect the data.

Furthermore, the methodology also explains the weaknesses of the chosen approach and how to plan to avoid the worst pitfalls, perhaps by triangulating data with other methods, or why do not think the weakness is relevant. According to Pilot and Hungler (1999), the purpose of triangulation is to provide a basis for convergence on the truth. They state that "by using multiple methods and perspectives, researchers strive to sort out 'true' information from 'error' information."

The integration of triangulation teaching techniques triangulated with collaborative learning, task-based language teaching, and learning motivation was regulated based on task-based language teaching procedure allowing the students to produce the tasks from their genuine language ability and understanding. Also, it is a tool for experimenting in teaching activities for the study. The method was equipped with collaborative learning, which was planning, monitoring, and evaluation in the form of questions, self-check, peer review, and reflection activity to raise the students' awareness of their learning process. Furthermore, the relationship between attitude factors towards learning language motivation for the English language for academic achievement of English for Business Communication of undergraduate students was associated and determined according to the research framework. To sum up, the researcher would now like to give strong justification for this Motivation-Collaboration-Task-Based (MCT) model that it can help students to learn English language skills, and as a tool to develop the speaking ability for efficient English communication in terms of English for Business Communication.

The objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study were to investigate the effectiveness of Triangulation Teaching Techniques for improving English speaking skills for Thai undergraduate students enrolling in English for Business Communication and survey students' satisfaction towards Triangulation Teaching Techniques.

Research Questions

The following specific research questions were addressed in the current study:

1. What is the effectiveness of Triangulation Teaching Techniques to enhance students' oral communicative competence?
2. What are the students' attitudes towards Triangulation Teaching Techniques to enhance English speaking skills?

Research Methodology

This study is a one-group pretest and posttest design with both quantitative and qualitative data analyses. The experiment with the Triangulation Teaching Techniques lasted 15 weeks. 42 undergraduate students enrolled in English for Business Communication at Nakhon Sawan Rajabhat University, in the second semester of the academic year 2017, took part in the experiment, starting from measuring their speaking ability by using a pretest before studying, followed by a posttest after they completed the role-play tasks of 15 weeks. Besides, they were assigned to reflect their opinions after the end of the course concerning their speaking ability by writing the journal.

Furthermore, this study discussed the data obtained by responding to the research objective to investigate the effectiveness of the Triangulation Teaching Techniques in improving English speaking skills for Thai undergraduate students. Several research instruments were conducted to provide validity to the research study as the following details;

1. The achievement tests of a pretest and posttest containing the contents related to the basis of English for Business Communication.

A pretest and posttest were collected and analyzed. A pretest contained 35 questions in term of business English comprehension and was used to find out whether the students' ability was in the same level or not. Then, this current study also needed a posttest to assess the progress of the participants due to using triangulation teaching techniques.

2. Collaborative learning and task-based language teaching role-play tasks

The oral tasks score in task-based language teaching was used to check students' speaking fluency of different levels of ability. The development of the oral task scores in task-based language teaching suggested by Helton (1988) offers a rubric for listening and speaking assessment, which consists of three criteria: accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility.

3. A survey of students' satisfaction by implementing Triangulation Teaching Techniques

The questionnaires were used to evaluate students' satisfaction and perception of motivation in speaking role-play tasks. The adaptation of questionnaires from Dornyei (2001); alertness, participation, and volunteering by checklist observation through learning English for Business Communication course as well as a survey of students' satisfaction used with the development of English speaking skills by using the Triangulation relationship for this research. Moreover, researcher also granted the data writing of students' reflective journal. The participants wrote their reflective journal weekly after they completed the speaking tasks, as the topics were related to the feeling of implementing the Triangulation Teaching Techniques and improving English speaking skills.

Lastly, the quantitative data were statistically analyzed by using mean, standard deviation and t-test, while qualitative data were interpreted by using content analysis.

Findings and Discussions

In response to research objectives, the researcher investigated the effectiveness of Triangulation Teaching Techniques for improving English speaking skills for Thai undergraduate students enrolling in English for Business Communication and surveyed students' satisfaction towards Triangulation Teaching Techniques. Four results were illustrated to answer the research question.

1. The results of the effectiveness of Triangulation Teaching Techniques for improving English speaking skills for Thai undergraduate students.

The effectiveness of Triangulation Teaching Techniques for improving English speaking skills for Thai undergraduate students were developed systematically. As seen in Table 1, the students' score in the pretest and posttest was compared. The results were shown as the following.

Table 1 The results of the achievement test of a pretest and posttest

	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig (2-tailed)
Pre-test	42	15.79	1.75	12.8104*	0.0000
Posttest	42	23.95	4.36		

Note: *Level of significant at $p < .05$

From Table 1, it is clearly seen that the students' scores increase significantly because of the average scores of the posttest ($\bar{x} = 23.95$) were significantly higher than that of the pretest ($\bar{x} = 15.79$) at the level significant level of .05. It can be concluded that Triangulation Teaching Techniques was useful for teaching speaking skills. Furthermore, from the results of the pretest and posttest, it can be seen that group work could increase the students' speaking skills.

2. The survey of students' satisfaction towards Triangulation Teaching Techniques

The questionnaire investigated the satisfaction towards Triangulation Teaching Techniques for undergraduate students. The results were displayed in Figure 2 below.

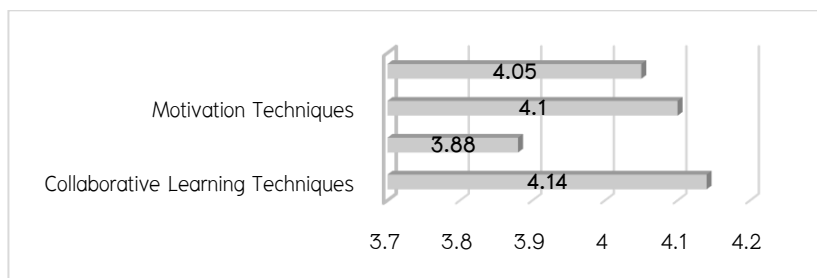


Figure 2 The results of students' satisfaction towards Triangulation Teaching Techniques

From Figure 2, it indicated that the overall result of a survey of students' satisfaction of Triangulation Teaching Techniques to improve undergraduate students' English speaking skills. It is evident that the overall results ($\bar{x} = 4.05$) of students' satisfaction with English speaking skills using Triangulation Teaching Techniques for undergraduate students' questionnaire. When considered in each aspect, it was found that their satisfaction was high level on Collaborative Learning Techniques ($\bar{x} = 4.14$), Task-Based Language Teaching Technique ($\bar{x} = 3.88$) and Motivation Techniques ($\bar{x} = 4.10$), respectively.

Moreover, the researcher granted the results of students' satisfaction towards Triangulation Teaching Techniques from the students' reflective journal. To respond the second research objective, the participants wrote their reflective journal weekly after they completed the speaking tasks, as the topics were related to the feeling of implementing Triangulation Teaching Techniques and improving English speaking skills. All of the students had positive feelings for the implementation of Triangulation Teaching Techniques. Eighty- percent of them said that they relaxed and enjoyed the implementation of Triangulation Teaching Techniques because it allowed them to improve and practice English

speaking skills. It was also useful and appealing. Here are some of the analyses on students' reflective writing are discussed below:

1. Students were more motivated to study because what they had performed in class was related to what they had to do outside. For example, students practiced in various topics related to English for Business Communication in class, and in doing the role-play tasks they adopted speaking skills to complete tasks. Thus, this made the topics of lesson meaningful, and in turn raised the students' motivation to study and apply their knowledge gained to work in the future. Here are some of their reflections:

S1: "One thing I have learned in this session that I may use in real situations."

S2: "Before I learn, I only hope to complete the work. Then we learn that the work that we have is beneficial both now and in the future."

S3: "In the future, I hope to improved conversational skills from various situations that I have done in various tasks better than this."

Some students claimed that the experience was exciting and something new to them. Moreover, three students also felt that this session of speaking role-play tasks helped them to learn more communicative skills for business English experiences.

2. The triangulation teaching techniques allowed students to demonstrate their English skills, especially in speaking skills. Students had also the great opportunity to produce oral tasks presentation in group collaboratively, including video recordings in role-play tasks, and also demonstrations in class were employed to make them more interesting. The information obtained from the students was:

S1: "I learned how to apply the skills for the job and where I can find a job such as on the Internet. It was the second video."

S2: "I tried to make the situation more naturally than in the first video. I found that I like to do a role-play task."

S3: "I think the importance this is collaboration in a group. It can use in the future when I work with other people. Moreover, I can also use English in the future."

Some students revealed that much enthusiasm in describing their speaking role-play tasks experiences. Three of the students enjoyed producing their speaking role-play tasks and also justified the engagement of working in a group with other people collaboratively.

3. Nearly 80 per cent that mentioned early felt enjoyed and relaxed themselves while working on the project, Furthermore, they needed to study more techniques on the topics related to the lesson in class. To gain more knowledge and confidence when apply to their job in the future. Here is what they said:

S1: I would like to study more about speaking smoothly when I meet new people in business, and I would like to know about etiquette while meeting new people.

S2: In the future, I will use this lesson to find the job and use it in that job, such as translate or when I encounter any foreigner, I can use my English skills correctly.

S3: I would like to study in more details about check-in and check-out and also make a hotel reservation.

It would be reasonable to assume that the comments of students' reflective journals would have been covered during this implementation. The fact that its registered with all students were aware of the relevance of including their thoughts about lessons learned from English for business communication.

These results correspond the research previously conducted by Mejang (2008) which results concerning the students' improvement in their learning by integrating of project-based learning in a course affecting students' attitudes and learning motivation. The findings may provide support for the claim that all students had positive attitudes toward the implementation of triangulation teaching techniques in a course contributes to the students' speaking ability.

According to the students' reflective writing, it can be concluded that the implementation of Triangulation Teaching Techniques had positive feedback on the improvement of students' speaking skills. Students were motivated, worked in a group collaboratively, and interested in the Triangulation Teaching Techniques by encouraging

them to express their own ideas and organize their knowledge in significant ways. Furthermore, they thought their own English speaking skills had better and improved because they had more confidence to communicate in English with their friends, a teacher in class, and others outside of the classroom.

Discussions

The current study investigated the effectiveness of implementing the triangulation teaching techniques on English speaking skills development of Thai undergraduate students. Based on the findings discussed, some critical conclusions might discuss. Firstly, the present study strongly suggests that triangulation teaching techniques was valuable and positively affects students' language development in terms of speaking skills ability. The students also produced role-play tasks in accuracy and fluency. The current study also links to the triangulation teaching techniques research as well as delivering that triangulation teaching techniques were possible and desirable for Thai students, particularly in ESP students. In previous studies on English speaking skills, different variables have been found to be related to Barlow (2013) studied the design of an English speaking skills development course for second language learners. This research aimed to develop and set out a way to help students' English speaking skills and also analyzed speaking in a way which differentiates it from other language skills and area. Besides, this study adopted the most appropriate fluency development tasks of speaking skills courses were drama, role-play, simulation, and improvisation. The researcher also concluded that English speaking skills development course in a second language learning context using fluency development tasks under the term 'Drama' comprised of a range of activities, where the teacher has many opportunities to 'fine-tune' the activities to the learners' levels. The speaking activities were themselves task-based preparing second language learners for real-life situation focusing on meaning first and were relevant to the learners using authentic English providing social interaction was highly effective in developing speaking skills geared towards fluency for second language learners. Regarding Jarvele & Jarvenoja (2011) investigated social constructed self-regulated learning and motivation regulation in

collaborative learning groups. This study aimed to identify higher education students' socially constructed motivation regulation in collaborative learning. This was studied by collecting data about the 16 students' experiences of situation-specific social challenges in collaborative learning groups and observing what the students do to overcome these challenges. The findings concluded that motivation regulation could be identified as a socially constructed activity, and the importance of regulation of motivation in socially self-regulated learning made clear that when the challenges derived from collaboration instead of personal priorities, and also the students could focus on on-task activities instead of confirming and shaping their shared motivation.

Furthermore, the results of this study suggested that the triangulation teaching techniques with an emphasis on communication skills in undergraduate students can be applied as a basis to facilitate English oral communication. Lastly, the study provided useful insights into the relationship between triangulation teaching techniques framework, role-play tasks, students' task performance, and their opinions towards triangulation teaching techniques. As a result, Richards & Rodgers, 2001 mentioned a variety of games, role plays, simulations, and task-based communication activities had been prepared to support in the class. Such insights offer clear directions for the further development of the teaching and learning of spoken English in Thai EFL contexts.

Conclusion

The discussions were discussed according to each research question. A class of Bachelor of Arts, the fourth-year students, were participated in this study. The population who attended English for Business Communication Course in semester 2 of the academic year of 2017, Foreign Languages Program, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Nakhon Sawan Rajabhat University. The population was selected along with the number, gender, and nature of the field; there were 42 students: 5 males and 37 females. The mean age of students was 21.81 and 22.00. The mean grade point average (GPA) of the students was 2.91 and 3.19, respectively.

Responding to research question 1, the findings indicated that the students increased their English speaking skills after they participated in the Triangulation Teaching Techniques. This implies that the students' have improved their English speaking skills in terms of business communication knowledge.

Responding to research question 2, the analysis of English speaking role play tasks has illustrated that, the students successfully used a range of communication skills in their role-play tasks. The students used more communication skills in the post-role play tasks than they did the previous tasks, though this development was limited to the interaction in the heterogeneous class settings.

Overall results from three main research questions reflected that students had positive views about the Triangulation Teaching Techniques implementation. The students supported the integration of the Triangulation Teaching Techniques in English courses, and most students were satisfied with learning English through the Triangulation Teaching Techniques.

Recommendations

As discussed previously, the findings of this study indicated that the triangulation teaching techniques course had some positive effect on the students' language improvement. The following are some suggestions for research that suggest being done in order to successfully triangulation teaching techniques for EFL settings. The implementation of this project took place in the EFL classroom in that the students performed role-play with their friends. In future research plans, it would be crucial to have a student's opportunity to do role-play tasks with native speakers. For instance, students should have experience of native speakers' accents, reactions, gestures, a variety of useful expressions and so on. Furthermore, the students reflected that they would perform role-play tasks in authentic settings such as in the hotel reception, interviewing room atmosphere, or busy office hours. It would clearly be challenging to have students perform role plays in realistic contexts in which they can be evaluated more widely with their language skills.

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