INCREASING THE ABILITY TO SPEAK INDONESIAN FOR INTERMEDIATE STUDENTS (FOREIGN LEARNER) AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY BY USING CONVERSATIONS AND MASHUPS

by Agita Risma

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Abstract:

Conversations is one of the applications for teachers to create integrated video, while Mashups is used as interactive media which combines images, texts, and videos for students' homework. By using Conversations and Mashups in learning Indonesian, it is expected to overcome problems related to the short time in practicing speaking activity and evaluating students'progress. This study aims to figure out: (1) Indonesian teaching and learning process on students (foreign learners) intermediate level (2) Their quality of speaking Indonesian by using Conversations and Mashups. The subject of this research is Indonesian intermediate learners at Columbia University where the research took place from April to November 2016. This study is a Class Action Research (CAR), which applies several steps, namely: planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. In collecting the data, researchers conducted several techniques including observations, recordings, questionnaires, and speaking test. There are two ways in analyzing data: Qualitative and quantitative data; the quantitative data are analyzed using descriptive statistics comparing the scores of pre-test and post-test. While, qualitative data are analyzed using the Constant Comparative Method. The results of implementing Conversations and Mashups for learning speaking on intermediate students at Columbia University are: (1) learning process by using conversation and Mashups can help students to finish the speaking assignments online and they feel the ambience like talking to people in reality (2) an increased speaking ability from precycle into cycle 1 and cycle 2. After cycle 2, learners mastered Bahasa Indonesia from low intermediate skill into high intermediate skill level.

Keywords: Enhancement of speaking skill, Conversations, Mashups

1. Introduction

There are some differences in the characteristics of language learner for instance between Indonesian language learner in the US and English language learner in Indonesia, and they are influenced by the culture where the language learner learns. American students can be very competitive and perfectionist also give much attention to details, so that the Indonesian teachers should adjust themselves to embrace students' cultural background. Under these conditions, the teacher is supposed to be good at determining what types of task are given in the class to train all the language skills in each meeting. After going through an academic year teaching Indonesian at Columbia University, the writer concluded that the teaching time was very short while the students were capable of receiving excessive workloads even though from year to year there is always a room for

material improvement. From four language proficiency, teaching speaking often have time constraints.

This lack of time constraints affects teachers in the attention to pronunciation detail of the students. Regularly the teachers do evaluate, but this evaluation is a general review of pronunciation about what is the students' strength also the weakness. To earn more data for evaluating students' progress, the author has plans to use Conversations and Mashups as the media of learning particularly to practice speaking and pronunciation given as students' homework. This study aims to apply Conversations and Mashups as supporting media in the process of studying Indonesian at the skill speaks for Intermediate class at Columbia University.

There is no previous study talking about Conversations and Mashups made by MSU. But there are some researches discussing mashups in general like one study wrote by Huang et al (2012) entitled "A study of user's acceptance on situational mashups in situational language teaching". It has purposes to figure out whether students' basic knowledge of computer and mashup were able to encourage them in using situational mashups (SituMash) inside language class and whether it was a useful program and could be applied effectively. There were 97 students as the participants taken from 2 classes in National Central University. They were asked to fill out Likert-scale questionnaires finding out what are their effective ways to learn language. By answering those questionnaires, SituMash would help them to provide the information, such as location, of books, media, applications in the entire campus. It can be concluded that mentioned program are able to help students especially who were mastered technology but it should be remembered that SituMash functions as search engine to help finding media not functions as the media itself.

Liu, et al (2008) describe important details related to mashups such as how mashups system work, examples of previous mashups, and mashups' possibility to be applied in teaching and learning process. There are some advantages earned b using mashups in teaching and learning process, for example:

a. Mashups is able to compile some files (pictures, videos, texts) in order to present such a real condition even though the students use computer and internet as the media.
b. Some types of mashups can be found and applied based on the necessity of the class.
c. Mashups are able to help students to be more active and creative in the learning process.

Those two previous studies give facts that basically mashups are able to give positive contribution to the class, and technology, in general, also does that. Correa (2014) proves Skype, one example of technology for long distance communication, that it affects the ability of speaking of its participants. There are some adult learners in Universidad Distrital Fransisco Jose de Caldos, Bogota, Columbia join to this project and earn the benefit from using Skype for social interaction and oral proficiency inside and outside class. Therefore, by writing this research, the researchers intend to apply different kinds of mashups to serve direct media in learning language especially in speaking class.

Conversations and Mashups are applications made by the Center of Language, Education, and Research, Michigan State University (MSU) as the media that can be used to learn a foreign language. Conversations is a program that can be operated by language teachers to create an integrated video conversation between teachers and students in separated places (http://clear.msu.edu/clear/resources/rich-internet applications / conversations /).

By using Conversations, teachers can evaluate the development of students' speaking ability by using the integrated videos where students give response on the questions that have been given. In addition, students can also enable the practice mode "practice", available in that application, to make the process of answering the question more fluent.

While mashup basically is a general term for an application that able to combine several features such as images, texts, voices, or videos (Fiaidhi et al, 2009: 15). In addition, mashup also provides more information because it compiles multiple sources and sums all up to the user. In this study, the authors will only use the mashups that is created by Michigan State University that named Mashups. Some functions of Mashups by Michigan State University (http://clear.msu.edu/clear/resources/rich-internet-applications/mashups/) are:

a. Teachers can create integrated videos,

b. Students are able to combine many features to complete their activity videos by using the target language and share them with their teachers and/ or other students,

c. Mashups is able to incorporate some other applications which are made by Michigan State University, such as Viewpoint and SMILE, even videos from Youtube to form a new learning media.

2. Method

This research is a classroom action research which seeks to analyze the result of the actions toward the subject of research in the classroom. In accordance to the design, this study has two cycles. Each cycle consists of planning, action, observation and reflection. The next step in the cycle is a revised planning, action, observation and reflection. Before entering the first cycle, it is important to do pre-cycle action to identify problems.

The research was conducted in May 2016 and ended in November 2016. The location for this study precisely housed at Language Resource Center, Columbia University, New York-The United States. The choice of location is based on the research need to develop and strengthen Indonesian language at Columbia University particularly, and in The United States generally.

The sample for this study was the students of Intermediate Indonesian II class in the academic year 2015 / 2016. The selection of Intermediate class is based on a priority basis where they have high proficiency level compared to Elementary Indonesian students which still struggle to remember basic vocabulary and do trial-error in putting words into sentences. Therefore, Intermediate Indonesian students need more rooms for practicing more sophisticated sentences and how they are pronounced. In collecting the data, researchers conducted several techniques including observation, interviews, recordings, questionnaires, and speaking tests. While in the qualitative data analysis, it used constant comparative method by doing these following steps:

a. Describing the procedures and implementation of instruction by using Conversations and Mashups

b. Analyzing observations in the learning process

c. Analyzing the results of interviews

d. Analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of Conversations and Mashups usage on the ability to speak Indonesian.

In quantitative data analysis, the following measures were implemented:

a. Analyzing the speaking test results

b. Processing the speaking test results by using statistical calculation, finding the average score of the tests, then comparing the average scores of the pre test and post test.

c. Formulating conclusions and suggestion

3. Result

Cycle 1 consists of three activities (2 practices and 1 test). Based on the result, it can be seen that in precycle, total of students in low intermediate level was 3 students and 2 students were in mid intermediate level. Then, in cycle 1 there was improvement of students ability both in speaking's fluency (function) and understanding of language (vocabulary and language control). In cycle 1, there were 2 students in low intermedite level and 3 students in mid intermediate level. Based on this below picture, it can be seen the percentage of students language ability level, as follow:
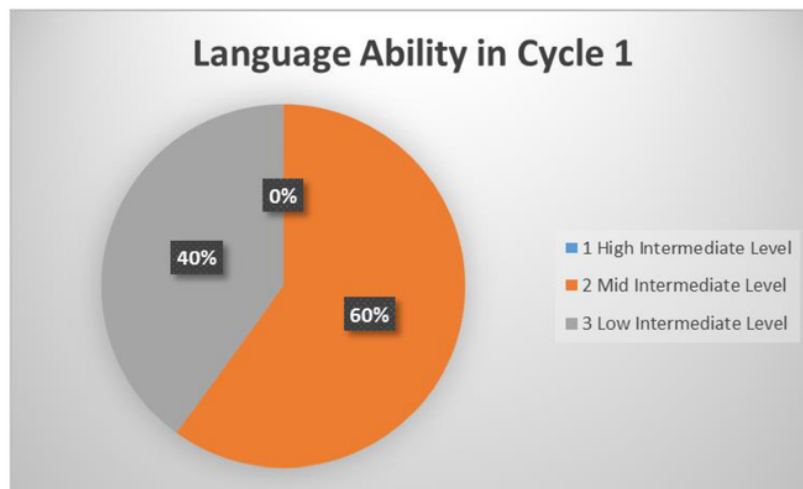
Graphic 3.1. Language Ability in Cycle 1

From the graphic above, it can be concluded that not all students reached the high intermediate skill. There was some weaknesses in applying conversation and mashups application, as an example, the duration in answering the question from lecturer to students has set, but it made students do not feel free in answering and expressing their opinion. Sometime, their opinion must be cut in the middle of explanation. That duration also made students felt nervous because they just focus on the duration not in the content nad grammar of the topic.

Furthermore, based on the data from cycle 2, there was improvement in students skill. If in cycle 1, there were 3 students achieved mid intermediate level and 2 students in low intermediate level. In contrast in cycle 2 there were 3 students who achieved high intermediate level and 2 students in mid intermediate level. None students was in low intermediate level because students could practice more outside of the teaching learning process.
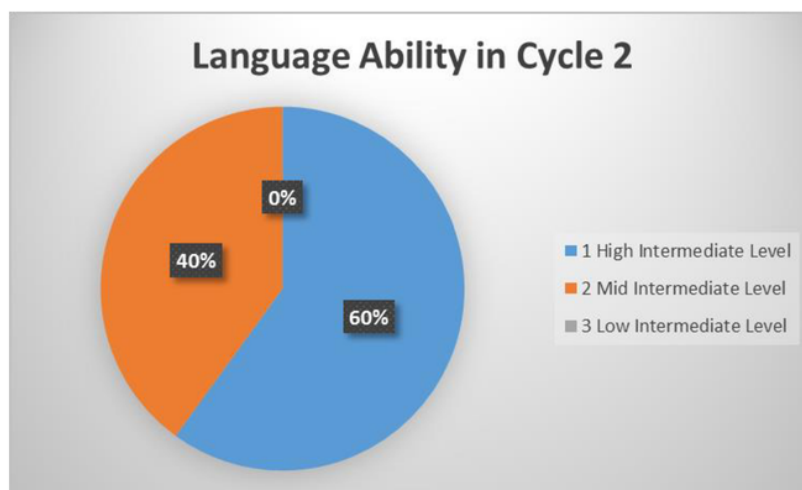
Picture 4.2 Speaking ability in Cycle 2

From the pie chart result, it can be concluded that students ability in (function, contexts, and text types) improved. They could discuss the complex content topic and produced suitable grammar. Then, in understanding the language (language control, vocabulary, comunication strategy, and cultural awareness) improved. The students ability in using various vocabulary also improved, the way in delivering the idea was more understandable, and they could minimize the mistakes by producing the new sentences by using target language.

In the end of lesson, students got quessionaire to evaluate the implementation of using Conversations-Mashup. Based on the quessionaire, it could be described that the strengthen of using Conversation and mashups are: First, students got new media to practice their speaking everytime and everywhere (flexibility). They can used this aplication if they have spare time. Second, students also could practice by using diferent Indonesian dialect. Third, students could evaluate their languange by playing and checking their recording.

In contrast, there were alaso weaknesses of using conversation-mashup application. First,students could not stop the process in asnwering the questions if they start click the "start" choice, so if they felt that their answer was not good, they must repeat to answer from the beginning. Second, if the timer in answering questions just 30 second, usually the students felt nervous and it will influence in their answer quality. Students also felt their idea sometimes stuck because they just focus see the timer.

4. Discussion

Researchers concluded that teaching learning process by using technology applied well. Students felt that by using this application, learning Indonesian language was enjoyable and effective because students can learn language not only in the classroom but in outside via online. Overall, there was improvement of students' ability in speaking Indonesian. Before clasroom action research students competence was on low and mid intermediate level, then improved to mid and high intermediate level.

Based on the observation in cycle 1 and 2, students were interested in using this application. It is proven by students enthusiasm in answering the questions and

discussing topics through conversation and mashup application. In every meeting, students showed the progress in aranging the sentence, quality content, vary vocabulary, and self confidence.

Furthermore, based on quessionaire, students gave opinion that this application can improve their ability in using Indonesian language. In the first cycle students felt nervous and did not feel confidence. Then, in cycle 2 students'ability improved both in self confidence and in content.

This classroom action research found some things related to students improvement in speaking Indonesian by using conversation and mashup application from pre-cycle, cycle 1, cycle 2. After analyze the research, here the conclusion:

a. The using of conversation and mashup can be used as practice tool via online every time that make their ability improved. As we can see, theory learning must be balanced by practice.
b. Improved Intrinsic motivation
c. Situation of speaking process can brainstorm and stimulate students in exploring their idea
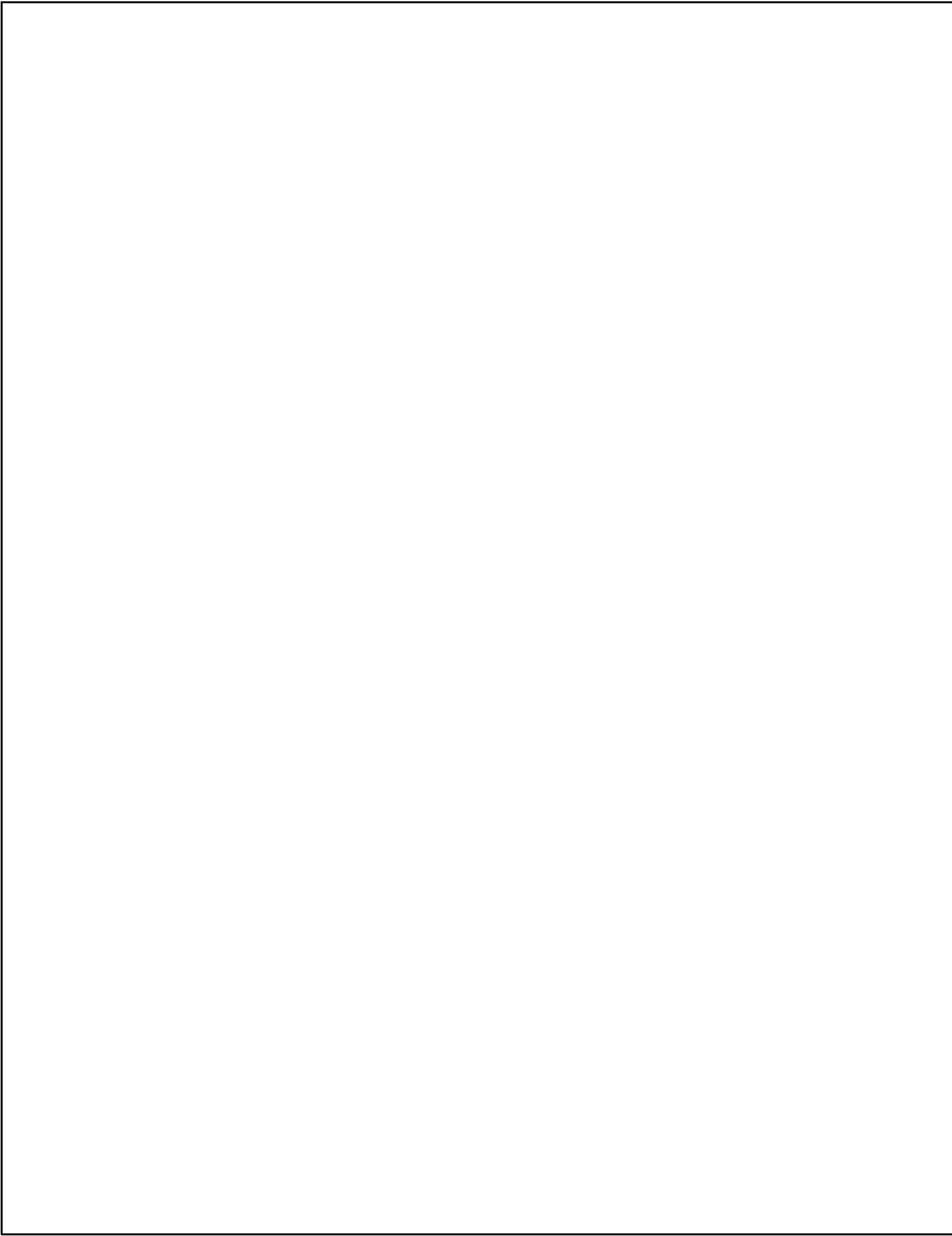d. The using of technology in teaching e- learning process.

Based on the results above, teaching learning process by using conversation and mashup could make students achieve their speaking ability in intermediate or advance level than previous learning.

Based on the quessionaire result, it can be concluded that conversation-mashup application can help students in mastering the speaking skill using target language, Bahasa Indonesia. They used to practice doing conversation with native and can see how to pronounce clearly, so they can evaluate their ability. In general, the weaknesses of using this application is when answering the questions or discussing the topic because they have limited time to answer.

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