An Analysis of Mind Mapping Technique to Improve Students' Speaking Skills

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Abstract
This study was part of the community engagement program carried in one of Vocational School in Surakarta. It aimed at the improvement of the students' ability to answer Job Interview in English. English for Job Interview subject was given to prepare students to be ready and able to face job interview tests. This was an effort by ISP Cruise ships and Hotel School to produce quality and work-ready human resources. The preparation stage of this study contained primary coordination, field observations, and the development of the teaching method. The implementation consisted of six meetings interactive workshops. Initial evaluations indicated that participants still faced difficulties in speaking English. However, the instructor suggested to focus only on the job interview. To overcome the difficulties mentioned, proper learning techniques were necessary to help the students improve the quality of interview answers. Mind Mapping helped students to produce spoken language in an organized and easy-to-remember way. Mind Mapping also allowed students to expand vocabulary and connect them with images which helped students remember and convey meaning easily in certain contexts. After applying the Mind Mapping technique, students were more focused on providing answers.

Keywords: English, job interview, mind mapping

1. INTRODUCTION

This study is part of the community engagement program which is held in one of Cruise Ships and Hotel School in Surakarta. It aims at the improvement of the students' ability to answer Job Interview in English.

ISP Cruiseships and Hotel School Solo is a one-year course and training institution for those who want to work on cruise ships or hotels. The absorption of students in the world of work is a priority for course and training institutions. Producing quality human resources using more practical methods or strategies is a big task for a course and training institution and its vocationally oriented instructors. Communication in English is an absolute requirement to work in this

field, especially on cruise ships. Due to the importance of English for the vocational school students majoring in hospitality, English will be the fundamental skill that they must master, especially their speaking. Students skilled in English articulation and comprehension possess augmented prospects for securing scholarships, partaking in international internships, and benefiting themselves from educational opportunities at globally renowned institutions of higher learning (Johns & Dudley-Evans, 2013). In the professional sphere, English is deemed an exceedingly crucial proficiency and is anticipated by individuals hoping to engage in a global work environment (Martín-González & Chaves-Yuste, 2024).

In addition, ISP Cruise Ships and Hotel School provides several English language courses which are divided into (1) English for Seafarer/Hotelier (2) English Conversation (3) Marlin Preparation (4) English for Job Interview. English for Job Interview subject is given to prepare students to be ready and able to face job interview tests. This is an effort by ISP Cruise Ships and Hotel School to produce quality and work-ready human resources.

In this course, students are expected to be able to answer questions that might be asked in a job interview test using good and meaningful English. Not only that, students are also expected to learn about rules, attitudes, and manners in job interviews. Unlike the English Conversation subject where the author applies fun learning, English for Job Interview leads to a more serious classroom atmosphere. This was formed to adjust to the actual situation during a job interview, especially a job interview on a cruise ship. Students are trained to be more confident and calm when facing job interviews.

Even so, the learning process did not go as expected. According to the observation and interview with the instructor, it is already hard for them to speak English daily, let alone for an interview. The instructor claimed that most of the students came from countryside where English was not something they accustomed to. The instructor reported some students have difficulty in what to say. Oftentimes, they will tell things that are not correlated. The explanations or answers they give tend to jump around or are out of sequence, which confuses the interviewer in understanding what they say. Therefore, they needed help in improving their English skill, especially for job interview.

According to the instructors and academics, one question that always appear in job interviews are: "Tell me about yourself". This is a simple question yet determines whether students are accepted into the company. It becomes a question which gives opportunity for the students to show their qualities, work experience, and other explanations that can benefit students as job applicants. Thus, students are expected to be able to answer these questions optimally.

To overcome the difficulties mentioned above, appropriate learning techniques or methods are needed to help the students improve the quality of

interview answers. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the learning techniques in this study are focused on explaining yourself (self-explanation) by using mind-mapping techniques. Based on the explanation above, this community engagement program is entitled: An Analysis of Mind Mapping Technique to Improve Students' Speaking Skills.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1 Speaking

English has a very significant role in the academic and professional world. As one of the most dominant international languages, English serves as the main communication tool between individuals from various countries and cultural backgrounds (Johns & Dudley-Evans, 2013). The students are obliged to learn to speak as part of their studies. English is an international language that is frequently spoken by English-speaking foreigners and people from countries where English is not officially used (Asrifan et al., 2020). English is taught as a critical topic in many nations, including the education side, economic, social, and the working world (Al-Sobhi & Preece, 2018). In this era, people who can communicate well in English are in high demand.

Meanwhile, Bahadorfar and Omidvar (2014) stated that if the listeners can comprehend what someone is saying, the speaker is considered as having excellent speaking skills.

2.2 Mind-mapping

Mind Mapping is a technique that is considered effective to be applied to ISP Cruise ships and Hotel School students. Mind Mapping is a note-taking technique based on how the brain works which was introduced by Tony Buzan, an expert and prolific writer in the fields of psychology, creativity, and self-development. Buzan said Mind Mapping is a way to develop thinking activities in all directions, capturing various thoughts from various angles. Mind Mapping or concept mapping is an organizational thinking tool that is also the easiest way to place information into the brain and retrieve that information when needed.

Mind Mapping is an effective way to organize and combine thoughts or ideas because in making a Mind Map, students associate shapes/images and colors so that they can stimulate the brain better. Mind Mapping uses colors, symbols, words, and images that match the central theme and additional information around it. Long lists of information can be turned into colorful, easy-to-remember diagrams. The brain is not designed to remember or digest information in the form of sentences, but rather in the form of images and keywords (Buzan, 2012). Tony Buzan adopted the concept of Mind Mapping from the memory system developed

by the Greeks. The combination of writing and imagination balances the function of the right and left brain so that memories can be obtained that last longer.

Mind Mapping helps students to produce spoken language in an organized and easy-to-remember way. Mind Mapping also allows students to expand vocabulary and connect them with images which will help students remember and convey meaning easily in certain contexts.

4. METHOD

This study was part of the community engagement program in ISP Cruise Ships and Hotel School Surakarta. Fifteen students belong to the Cruise Ship Program. This study was directed to action research procedures, which consisted of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. These processes were intended to answer the general question that is whether problems with speaking, especially in the job interview, could be overcome.

The preparation stage included initial coordination, field observations, and the implementation of the teaching method. Then, the execution consisted of six interactive workshops. This service is carried out by applying the demonstration method. Method Demonstration is a teaching method by demonstrating items, events, rules, and sequence of carrying out activities, both directly and through the use of teaching media that is relevant to the subject matter or material being served (Ubaedillah et al., 2020).

5. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Before starting the learning step, the tools needed to make a Mind Map include paper/notebook, pen, colored pencils or markers, and an eraser if needed. To anticipate students who do not have colored pencils or markers, the institution brings sets of colored pencils/markers.

In the first step, the author calls one student to the front of the class and asks the main question. Other students listen and listen. Once finished, the author calls other students to do the same thing. Usually, the first and second students have the same order of explanation. This is because they have previously answered the same question but in a different context. Thus, the answers given tend to be less appropriate when applied to the context of an interview test.

In the next step, the author explains the purpose of asking the question "Tell me about yourself" in a job interview. Based on a survey conducted by academics with HRD Hotels and Cruise Ship Agents, this question was asked to find out two important things. The first is to find out the extent to which job applicants are fluent in communicating using English and the second is to find out the personal qualities of a job applicant. By explaining this, students will have a change of perspective on the question in question. They realize that this question is an opportunity for them

to "sell" their abilities to the company they are applying to. On the other hand, students' concentration or seriousness in this subject will increase.

The third step is to create a mind map. Students listen to the author's explanation and then draw/write the theme that will become the center of their mind map according to the example. Before starting to draw or take notes, the author informs that students are free to choose the color of the pen they will use and are free to design their mind map. After writing down the central theme in the mind map, the author begins to draw the first branch, namely personal information. In personal information, students state their name, age, origin, status, and hobbies. The second branch is the educational background where students explain their latest education, program, and what they have learned. In the third branch, students draw a branch that contains job experience, where usually, cruise ship and hotel program students have experience working as casual in star hotels in the city of Solo.

In the fourth branch, the author guides students to draw/write about their interests. The interest here is the interest in the majors taken by students, including Housekeeping, Food and Beverage Service, Food and Beverage Products, Front Office, and Sales and Marketing. Here students explain the reasons for their interest in the department they choose. The last branch is self-quality. In this case, students must have confidence in their abilities. The self-quality they mention must be related to the needs of the job they are interested in.

The final step is to ensure that all students capture the meaning and understand the mind map they created themselves. The process of making a mind map itself requires a relatively long time in one meeting, namely around 50-60 minutes. Some students need more time to make a mind map to complete the colors they want. Mind Mapping can be done in groups, but in this case, students are required to work on their mind map individually. In the last 30 minutes before class time ends, the author asks students to present the mind map they have made and asks students to explain themselves according to the mind map. This is done to correct or provide feedback to students so that in the next meeting students are ready to be tested on core questions without bringing the mind map that has been made.

In the learning technique using mind mapping, students are directed to create a mind map based on a given topic and draw it according to taste or favorite color/shape so that it will help students remember. The concept of mind mapping itself is based on the brain's working system. The working potential of the brain contained within a person in Mind Mapping is combined and developed. By involving both hemispheres of the brain, the right brain, and the left brain, it will be easier for a person to remember all forms of information, both written and spoken. The use of colors, symbols, and shapes makes it easier for the brain to absorb the information received. Mind Mapping created by students produces

various images or shapes. Differences in color tastes, emotions, and feelings in the learning process influence the variability of the note results.

Following Buzan's theory regarding Mind Mapping, the benefits of this note-taking technique are that it makes it easier to understand knowledge, focuses attention, and makes it easier for someone to remember a discussion. This is in line with the results obtained by the author after implementing Mind Mapping. The results of activities can be seen from two aspects, namely the cognitive aspect and the affective aspect.

In the cognitive aspect, it can be seen that students' understanding of the answer to the question "Tell me about yourself" is more focused on information about themselves and the qualities they possess. Students already have a higher quality answer concept than before. Previously, students would talk about their families and personal experiences when they were asked this question. They admit that they often forget or do not know what they should talk about so students cover up this weakness by telling things that are not significant. After applying the Mind Mapping note-taking technique, students are more focused on providing answers. Some students still seem to have difficulty coming up with answers. However, the answers given are more focused on what should be discussed. Even though they are not sequential, students can provide a conjunction to connect one sub-topic to another sub-topic.

The affective aspect in this case does not directly result from the application of Mind Mapping but the affective domain that is visible to students is the overall result of learning English for a Job Interview. In this course, students are not only taught how to make a curriculum vitae and application letter, and how to answer questions that might be asked in a job interview. But students are also taught about attitude when taking a job interview, from knocking on the door to saying goodbye, what to say and what not to say, what not to do, and what to do. Not only that, students are also directed to pay more attention to good appearance (grooming) during interviews and when they are already working.

6. CONCLUSION

In this study, most students responded positively to the use of Mind Mapping. The impact that can be seen is the improvement of students' self-confidence in speaking English, in this case, answering job interview tests. This result is in line with Baracheta (2024) which stated that strengthening one's English-speaking skills gains linguistic competency and self-confidence as they increase their speaking abilities. Prepared answers become more organized and meaningful. The application of Mind Mapping helps students to remember the information they want to convey more easily and sequentially. On the other hand, Mind Mapping helps students to enrich their vocabulary in English. In this way, students are better

prepared to take part in job interviews and help the institution increase student absorption in the work field.

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