HOW DO STUDENTS LEARN BEYOND THE DOMINION OF TEACHER TALK?

Señires, Leilani T.

Completed 2020

ABSTRACT

The deteriorating macro skills of learners of this generation is very alarming and this leaves a challenge to every educator. The famous teacher talk is a deterrent in improving and refining the four macro skills thus the researcher did extra mile to discover how learners can be helped in actively engaging them to a collaborative real-life language task-based activities where communicative language teaching approach is used. The researcher used action research design and used random sampling in determining the 24 participants of the study. The researcher also used triangulation to check accuracy and validity of the data. Based on the data gathered, it was found out that students do not like teachers dominating the class discussion because for them, it is boring, and it will not give them the chance to share their own thoughts and understanding on the topic. The students like it if the teacher would give them challenging activities that would stir their minds and make them feel alert in using their creative mind. The participants are happy if being challenged and if pushed to do challenging tasks for they believe that it helped them improve their skills in speaking, writing, listening, and collaborating with other classmates. Group activities are found to be good because they harness students' confidence and critical thinking skills. Hence, educators must be creative and innovative and must apply student-centeredness in teaching to allow the holistic development of learners especially its macro skills.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I.   CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

Teachers play a very important role in making the vision and mission of the school achievable. In today's generation, students are no longer the passive ones, learners of the present time are interactive, where most of the time you see them explore things that are new to them. Mostly, this breed of learners is more attached to the digital world where in some instances the teacher's capacity to hold the learner's attention is being challenged.

I am one of those who experienced being challenged by learners at present time. My presence in class is important because I am the source of information but sometimes as a teacher of the millennials, I need to redirect myself, I need to open myself to new trends which I admittedly claim is more effective in achieving lifelong learning.

I was poked of a situation where a couple of my students were showing inattentiveness. They kept on going out for frequent necessities which I find unreasonable. As a teacher, manifestation of restlessness in learners is very annoying to witness. I was prompted to ask them what made them act like that and was surprised that they just don't want to be held seated for a longer time and that for them, an hour of sitting is killing their adrenaline.

Another situation that pushed me to do re-assessment of my teaching style was when I discovered a few students of mine manifesting a wandering eye. If assessed on the level of their understanding through oral recitation, they just simply look up to the ceiling and try grasping answers which are nowhere to be found. The thought of what went wrong during the process was considered by me and pushed me to create a trail of loopholes committed.

What destructed me most was when I saw learners who were physically present but mentally absent. I have been observing learners from different sections whose attendance was complete but when I assessed them, their marks were not acceptable.

The instances mentioned above are serious signs of learners whose interest in class are fading. Realistically, teachers cannot be removed in a classroom set-up because they serve as compass in achieving learning but based on my own experience, no matter how good you are in explaining rules and theories in class, still it's not everything what learners need to have.

The significance of the academic development of a learner is a continuing challenge to battle among teachers, specifically to language teachers whose ultimate aspiration is to produce learners who can practically use rules and theories in real life language based-task situations.

This urges me to think of a strategy and at the same time an intervention on how to find solutions to these unacceptable behaviors of learners which I believe true to all classes. Considering that learners these days are interactive, I am planning to use the four macro skills in a collaborative approach in designing my lesson plan and embedded on it are real-life language task based. This may sound very tedious, but I am positive that this will work since greater responsibility is thrown to learners.

II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Specifically, this study will attempt to find answers to the following questions:

1. How do learners be shaped in a teacher talk approach?
2. How will teachers do away from teacher talk so they can actively engage learners in a collaborative, real-life language task-based?
3. How does the communicative language teaching approach help students develop the four macro skills?

III. INTERVENTION AND STRATEGY

To hold learner's attention is a great challenge for teachers. No amount of teachers' degree can give a guarantee on learners' hundred percent attention and participation during classes. This phenomenon is exactly happening to any English class. The fact that English is a foreign language to our learners, the urgency of its usage and the degree of its acceptability on their behalf is not so high. To address this issue, language teachers, coordinators, and master teachers should convene to make plans on how to come up with a unified lesson plan guided by the ideals of communicative language teaching that will make use of the four macro skills which are already embedded in a collaborative, real-life language task-based activity.

The innovation may sound so complex if applied in the crafting of the lesson plans since it is a combination of different approaches/strategies in designing lesson plans which are real-life tasks. To concretize the innovation, one should be acquainted with the Task-Based Language Teaching of N Prabhu in 1980. Prabhu suggested that language acquisition is an unconscious process which is best facilitated by bringing about in the learner a preoccupation with meaning, saying,

and doing. He believed that using tasks would help tap learners' natural mechanisms for second language acquisition, thus learners will no longer be a mere listener or spectator of a teacher talk but become an active learner in doing real-life language task-based activity.

Moreover, if TBLT of Prabhu in 1980 is applied with Lev Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development, this completes the innovation since Lev Vygotsky had posited that learners rely on one another to accomplish tasks that they otherwise wouldn't be able to complete individually. Thus, working collaboratively is key for developing critical thinking skills where students retain more information when working in groups. In addition, working in a group may help students develop their higher-level thinking, oral communication, self-management, and leadership skills.

This proposal is expected to be given and be utilized by learners through the lined-up competencies for every semester to ensure regular exposure and application of the said innovation. For many years, language teachers were given freedom to use any teaching strategy without assessing the instrument and this practice had continually produced the same old problem.

My desire to adopt change made me thought of the theory of a British Linguist, D.A. Wilkins, the Communicative Language Teaching Theory. CLT is based on the idea that learning language successfully comes through having to communicate real meaning. When learners are involved in real communication, learners' natural strategies for language acquisition will be used, and this will allow them to learn to use the language. For instance, classroom activities guided by the communicative approach are characterized by trying to produce meaningful and real communication, at all levels. As a result, there may be more emphasis on skills than systems, lessons are more learner-centered and there may be use of authentic materials.

The collaborative approach in teaching and learning is being able to collaborate effectively with classmates which is a valuable 21st century skill to be developed among learners. Learners will be engaged in a common task in which everyone depends on and is accountable to each other. It involves the use of small groups so that all students can maximize their learning and that of their peers. It is a process of shared creation wherein two or more individuals interact to create a shared understanding of a concept, discipline, or area of practice that none had previously possessed or could have come to on their own. This collaborative approach may then embed the four macro skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) as

a way of checking their ability on the four macro skills and the progress it shows as they will be regularly exposed to differentiated activities.

Communication in its truest sense is the reason for every language to exist and the fact that this need is rooted within us, language then should not be limited to developing speaking skills only but integrate one skill to multiple skills such as reading, listening, and writing as well.

As students attempt meaning-making on language-based tasks, grammar is taught within context as part of the communicative task. In this way, grammar is not presented as a list of rigid rules but as a natural pattern that students acquire in the learning contexts.

If all these combined approaches are observed in the crafting of the lesson plans, teachers will no longer do the talking all the time, instead, it empowers learners to handle real-life task-based activities.

IV. METHOD

Research Design

I utilized action research design which seeks to gain insights and understanding on people's experiences and their perspectives on a particular phenomenon through studying and analyzing their responses.

To increase the validity of the result of my action research, I used Triangulation in Qualitative Research in which researchers used multiple sources and methods to investigate and answer a research question. Noble and Heale (2019) suggested this research method to help increase the credibility and validity of the findings of the study. In this action research, I used focus group discussion, in-depth interview and survey tool with open-ended questions to help me discover the experiences of Grade 11 students on the dominion of teacher talk in class, identify strategies of teachers to engage the students in a collaborative, real-life language task-based activities and assess the effectivity of communication language teaching approach in developing the four macro skills of students.

Participants and/or other Sources of Data and Information

My participants were randomly selected from grade 11 sections of the senior high school. To obtain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena the researcher used triangulation. Holland (n.d) argued that researchers should employ more than one instrument to measure variables. Through time, it was sought that findings could be corroborated and any weaknesses in the data could be compensated for by the strengths of other data, thereby increasing the validity and reliability of the results. Moreover, the approach has been used in many sectors to strengthen conclusions about findings and has been an instrument in reducing the risk of false interpretations.

Through the convergence of information from different sources, the validity of the results may speak for the urgency of intervention in the field. There were eight participants for the In-depth Interview which consisted of 4 males and 4 females. Eight participants for the Focus Group Discussion which consisted of 4 male students and 4 females and another 8 participants for the Written Questionnaire.

Data Gathering Methods

To address the problem of mediocrity among learners towards their macro skills, the researcher used the focus group discussion, in-depth-interview, and survey.

Focus group discussion is used to explore the meaning of survey findings that cannot be explained statistically. Moreover, the range of opinions in a particular topic or issue requires facilitation to ensure even participation, careful wording of the key questions, maintaining a neutral attitude and appearance, summarizing the session by reflecting opinions evenly and fairly (Merton, 1940).

Detailed information can only be gathered through an in-depth interview. In-depth interviews transform thoughts and behaviors into a clear picture. Lazersfield in 1945 argued that unstructured interviewing will reveal the importance of answering the why question which can never be revealed by merely using the survey question.

The open-ended questions in a survey produced a long form written answers and thus revealed opinions, experiences, and narratives.

In selecting the participants, the researcher had asked for a list of names from the advisers of grade 11 senior high school students by gender, then did a random sampling. The sampling was done using a fishbowl technique.

Moreover, assent and consent forms were accomplished prior to the conduct of the study wherein participants were given the liberty to participate or not with the data gathering process. Ethics considerations and confidentiality were upheld throughout the program's execution. Each participant was given a pseudonym in order to conceal their true identities and origins. Only the researcher had access to a closed cabinet where information, documents, and other items were safely stored. Additionally, participants had the chance to examine and double-check their responses and data before the study was finished.

Data Analysis

The obtained data from triangulation were treated carefully to ensure the accuracy of the transcription of the content of the participants' responses. And in the process, cross checking among the responses from the FGD, IDI, and Questionnaire were carefully analyzed to ensure similarity and dissimilarity of responses and arranged all responses according to the lined-up questions. These processes were supported by **(Social Sciences Research Laboratories, 2018)** that described researchers who used triangulation method utilized multiple data sources, extracted

the required information carefully and analyzed the findings critically to establish validity and credibility.

From the participants' responses, a summed-up explanation was collated highlighting the reasons for what is wrong with the teacher's talk practice.

V.   DISCUSSION OF RESULT AND REFLECTION

Table 1: Sentiments on Teacher Talk

Student's Sentiments	Reasons of students' sentiments
Boring	It made them useless
Not challenging	It made them sit and listen
One man-show	It made them mere spectators
Promoting dependence on teachers' ideas	It deprived them to reason on their own
Crippling students' ideas	It stopped them to explore and collaborate with others

The question **_"Do you find it interesting when teachers dominate the class discussion_**?" had received differentiated responses.

One of which is **boring.** Most of the informants find their existence in the classroom useless. In a class set-up, students are supposed to be the subject and focus of the holistic development. When students do the work together it will help learners learn the complexities in solving tasks and help promote deeper learning through doing.

Not challenging, this sentiment being expressed by learners on teacher talk is a wake-up call for teachers. If learners are left unchallenged, then the possibility of no learning at all is possible. Plain listening and sitting is no challenge at all. The need to reflect on the essence of giving challenge is crucial in the teaching and learning process since it is the core of the growth of the mindset; without it, students do not get the opportunities to take risks, the ability to learn when failure comes and the readiness to figure out how to pick themselves up again when circumstances let them down.

One-man show is supposed to be not a classroom case. The effective teacher performs many functions that can be organized into three major roles: making wise

choices about the most effective instruction strategies to employ, designing classroom curriculum to facilitate student learning, and making effective use of classroom management techniques (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001). Thus, a teacher to be effective must have a wide array of instructional strategies at their disposal, skilled at identifying and articulating the proper sequence, and not bound to make students as audiences.

Promoting dependence on teacher's ideas is a sad reality. The main critique of this approach is for the learner to merely master limited sets of knowledge, by memorizing content or applying rehearsed formulae, without addressing actual process-skills as needed in professional practice (Schön, 1983). Higher cognitive skills include abilities like analysis, synthesis, evaluation (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2000), critical thinking, interpretation, and self-regulation (Schraw & Robinson, 2011). Meta-cognitive skills such as facilitated in Problem-Based Learning include the questioning about the justification and validity of arguments, not just the given reasons themselves (Barrows H., 1992). Teacher-centered learning most often does not address the importance of open inquiry which can occur at any stage of the learning process.

Crippling students' ideas manifests negativity in attaining quality learning. A teacher- centered learning environment does neither facilitate nor empower a learner's autonomous study-skills and subsequently lifelong learning skills (Trilling & Fadel, 2009). And in this manner learners will have the difficulty to outgrow his or her dependency to his or her teacher which eventually halts their own macro-skills.

Table 2: Activities Needed by Students

Classroom Activities	Opinion on suggested class activities
Group Work	It pushes everyone to speak up
Brainstorming	It encourages everyone to be inquisitive
Question and Answer	It develops quick thinking
Critical thinking tasks	It sharpens analysis
Solving life's actual problem using the topic	It develops critical thinking

Based on the question, ***what do you think are the best strategies for the teacher for you to actively participate in class activities and discussions***?

One participant had expressed the desire to have **group work** for a particular task. The participants claimed that it pushed them to speak up when they are in a smaller group. Davidson in 2014 posited that students are better at solving problems and develop a deeper understanding of the material when working in groups. Small-group learning helps draw people out who normally would not participate in front of the whole class. It also promotes self-esteem as compared to competitive or individualistic learning (Millis, 2014).

Brainstorming as suggested by the participant was thought to be a student friendly approach since it encourages learners to be inquisitive in class. Brainstorming is a problem-solving activity where students build on or develop higher order thinking skills. Encourages creative thought. Brainstorming encourages students to think creatively out of the box, encouraging all students to share their ideas, no matter how far "out there" they may seem Baumgartner, 2005)

Questions and answers as suggested by the participant allow them to develop quick thinking. This strategy can be a flexible tool that opens opportunities for students to discuss and argue with each other. Question and answer can be a valuable strategy for teaching and learning since it encourages learners to express their opinions and share common or opposing points of views.

Critical thinking tasks as suggested by the participant sharpens analysis, but a greater and in-depth revelation of how helpful critical thinking task is to students was shared by Ferlazzo in 2021. Ferlazzo postulated that critical thinking blasts through the surface level of a topic. It reaches beyond the who and the what and launches students on a learning journey that ultimately unlocks a deeper level of understanding. Teaching students how to think critically helps them turn information into knowledge and knowledge into wisdom. He added that critical thinking has the power to launch students on unforgettable learning experiences while helping them develop new habits of thought, reflection, and inquiry.

Solving life's actual problem using the topic as suggested by the participant develops critical thinking. But this suggested classroom activity can be translated to Problem-Based Learning where students must come up with a well-constructed answer from a real-world issue. As a reflection they can use their previously taught knowledge and ask critical questions to brainstorm and present a solid solution. This

engagement will eventually push learners to become innovative, open-minded, logical, and later assume responsibility for their own learning experience.

The question, ***when you are given challenging activities by the teacher, how do you feel about it and how do you respond?***

Being **happy** promotes positivity when one is learning different concepts in school. Happiness may be used as an indicator that learning is present in learners' life especially when one is more motivated to do things on his own, he or she had increased her awareness about his or her responsibility in school, and her happiness strengthens her own creativity and social relationship.

Being **challenged** as an impression for a collaborative task was raised by one participant. Taking students out of their comfort zone is a tough job for teachers. According to Gershon (2021), if learners are consistently experiencing lessons that contain a high level of challenge, they are likely to make more progress than if they experience a diet of low challenge.

Excited. Excitement comes from an enthusiastic teacher who often spices the class with excitement, enjoyment, and anticipation; engages students to participate; and stimulates them to explore (Zhang, 2014). He added that teacher enthusiasm sparks the curiosity of students and jumpstarts their motivation to learn. Further, this can lead to better teaching evaluations, positive attitudes toward teachers, better student performance, and improved classroom behavior.

Belongingness is felt. A small group of students for a subject task is like working with a family. Engaging them culturally and socially with others collaboratively for a learning task could open the world for them to gain a new perspective on life from their peers. Students also get to reflect upon their lives and values against those of their classmates and learn to acknowledge differences without being critical. Through this engagement genuine belongingness is felt.

Active class. The impression on collaboration as leading to having an active class was a product of comparison made by the learner to his or her other classes. Active participation in class according to both Piaget (1952) and Vygotsky (1978), the outer world and the interactions carried out with the outer world play an important role in an individual's development. While Piaget refers to the concept of cognitive conflict that occurs because of peer interactions, Vygotsky explained the learning that occurs because of interactions with individuals.

Demands full participation. The impression that collaborative tasks demand full participation on the part of the learners is evident in other classes as being relayed by one participant. Students tend to give their full participation in a collaborative learning approach because students need to work in small, independent groups for common educational goals, and their work is evaluated both individually and as a group. If teachers give full responsibility to students through task eventually students will be pushed to give full participation.

Develops confidence. This impression can be correlated to the study of Villeneuve in 1997 which states that once a learner is part of a class setting it will enhance students' learning process and added that confidence grows and develops through constant experience of social interaction or learners' immersion in cooperative learning.

Discussion

The following discussions were the questions thrown in the field during the conduct of the study and collated responses from the In-Depth Interview, Focus Group Discussion, and survey were carefully organized to reveal the commonality of their thoughts regarding the problem.

The general answer for question number one which is "Do you find it interesting when teachers dominate the class discussion? Why or why not?", students do not like that the teacher will dominate the class discussion because for them, it is boring, and it will not give them the chance to share their own thoughts and understanding on the topic. They feel that they are just a mere audience who waits for the speaker to finish his talk.

As for the second question, "What do you think are the best strategies of the teacher in order for you, to actively participate in the class activities and discussions?" The students like it if the teacher would give them challenging activities that would stir their minds and make them feel alert in using their creative mind.   It is also depicted in the answers that class sharing, and group discussions push them to share their thoughts and make them more confident of themselves especially talking in front of the class.

In the third question "When you are given challenging activities by the teacher, how do you feel about it and how do you respond?" most of the students' responses are, if they are given challenging activities, they feel happy because they feel that they are really being challenged and being pushed to improve more.

Basically, group activities are good because it harnesses students' confidence to believe in their capacity using their critical thinking skills.

Reflection

As a teacher, it should be our primordial responsibility to indulge our students into higher order thinking activities for them to explore their capacity and capability to answer difficult questions and solve mind blowing tasks. These exposures will help them grow not only in the academic aspect but also in the aspect of emotional and psychological well-being. If we are looking forward to the improvement of our students, we must be creative and innovative to think of the most suitable activities that would enhance the students' macro skills. Developing communicative competence will help students earn the confidence which is useful in the real battle of life, and this gives enough reason for us teachers to do away with the old school approach, the teacher talk approach.

Personally, as a researcher, I feel that there should be an innovation on our part as educators because learners these days are more exposed to technology and with this development the traditional way of imparting learning to learners will no longer be appreciated and the worst is we are no longer be of help to them in bringing the best version of themselves.

VI.   Action Plan

Below is the plan for its dissemination and utilization of the conducted action research.

Master teachers should convene to present classroom challenges of teachers and to plan ways and means in addressing such identified challenges of senior high school teachers at Senior High School in Digos City.

Moreover, specific activities for dissemination and utilization are provided as follows:

Activities	Time Frame	Audience	Success Indicator
Conduct information dissemination on the Research Findings at our School	1st week of July 2021	All teachers of Senior High School of Digos City	Positive Feedback from the teachers after the findings had been adapted
Giving of Brochures or Policy Brief about the Research	2nd week of July 2021	Secondary Schools in Digos City Division	Teachers received a copy of the brochure
Participate in Division Research forum	1st week of August 2021	All invited teachers, school heads,	Positive Feedback from the attendees about the

		supervisors and other leaders	findings had been adapted or disseminated
Participate in a Policy Brief Presentation to Stakeholders	2nd week of September 2021	All invited LGU, NGO and other Stakeholders	Recommended for program or policy formulation
Participate in Regional Research Congress	1st week of December 2021	All invited researchers	Positive Feedback from the attendees about the findings had been adapted or disseminated

VII. REFERENCES

Anderson, A., & Krathwohl, D. (2000). A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. (2nd ed. ed.). New York: Allyn & Bacon.

Barrows, H. S. (1992). The Tutorial Process (2nd ed., pp. 1-5). Springfield, IL: Southern Illinois School of Medicine.

Barrows, H. S., & Wee Keng Neo, L. (2007). Principles and Practice of aPBL. Pearson Education South Asia.

Baumgartner, J. (2005). Key factors to successful brainstorming. http://www.jpb.com/creative/keyfactors.php

Davidson, N., Major, C. H., & Michaelsen, L. K. (2014). Small-group learning in higher education—cooperative, collaborative, problem-based, and team-based learning: An introduction by the guest editors. Journal on Excellence in College Teaching

Farrell, L., & Fenwick, T. (2007). World Yearbook of Education 2007: Educating the Global Workforce: Knowledge, Knowledge Work and Knowledge Workers. Routledge.

Ferlazzo, L. (2021). Integrating Critical Thinking into the Classroom. Opinion Blog

Gershon, M. (2021). © 2023 Gershon Learning Limited - All Rights Reserved

Holland(n.d)How to combine multiple research methods: Practical Triangulation.(n.d.).Retrieved from http://johnnyholland.org/2009/08/practical-triangulation/

Lazarsfeld, Paul F. "The Art of Asking Why." National Marketing Review 1, no. 1 (1945):
26–38.

Marzano, R. J., Pickering, D. J., & Pollock, J. E. (2001). Classroom instruction that works: Research-based strategies for increasing student achievement. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Millis, B. J. (2014). Using Cooperative Structures to Promote Deep Learning. Journal on Excellence in CollegeTeaching

Noble, N. & Heale, R. (2019). Triangulation in research, with examples. BMJ Journals, 22(3). Retrieved August 22, 2020 from https://ebn.bmj.com/content/22/3/67

Nunan, D. (1992), Collaborative Language Learning and Teaching, Cambridge University Press, https://books.google.com.ph

Piaget, J., & Cook, M. T. (1952). The origins of intelligence in children. New York, NY: International University Press.

Savignon, S. (2009), Communicative Language Teaching, Journal Theory in Practice, Volume 26. Issue 4: Teaching Foreign Language

Schön, D. A. (1983). The Reflective Practitioner, How Professionals think in Action. Basic Books.

Schraw, G., Robinson. D.H. (2011). Assessment of Higher Order Thinking Skills. Information Age Publishing

Social Sciences Research Laboratories SSRL (2018, June 6). Using Triangulation to Improve Credibility and Validity [Video]. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apcn0r3fL1o

Trilling, B., Fadel, C., &, F. (2009). 21st Century Skills, Learning for Life in our Times. Jossey-Bass Inc Pub

Villenueve, R. (1997). Can cooperative learning centres help to develop the self-esteem of students? Lethbridge, Alta.: University of Lethbridge, Faculty of Education, 1997

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wilkins, D. A. (1974b). A communicative approach to syllabus construction in adult language learning. Modern Languages in Adult Education, EESI Symposium 57, 10. Strasbourg:

Zhang, Q. (2014). Instructor's Corner #3: Teaching with Enthusiasm: Engaging Students, Sparking Curiosity, and Jumpstarting Motivation