

# IMPROVING SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH IN PAIRS TECHNIQUE AT THE FIRST SEMESTER OF MIDWIFE PROGRAM IN STIKES BHAKTI HUSADA MULIA MADIUN

Lidia Deviga<sup>1\*</sup>, Radian Arum Ardhani<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup>Bhakti Husada Mulia College of Health Science of Madiun

Corresponding Author's e-mail : [devigalidya@gmail.com](mailto:devigalidya@gmail.com)<sup>1\*</sup>, [radianarum@gmail.com](mailto:radianarum@gmail.com)<sup>2</sup>

**ARMADA**  
JURNAL PENELITIAN MULTIDISIPLIN

e-ISSN: 2964-2981

**ARMADA : Jurnal Penelitian Multidisiplin**

<https://ejournal.45mataram.ac.id/index.php/armada>

Vol. 1, No. 3 March 2023

Page: 163-169

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.55681/armada.v1i3.426>

#### Article History:

Received: March, 16 2023

Revised: March, 17 2023

Accepted: March, 22 2023

**Abstract :** *The objective of the research was to improve the students' speaking skills through Think Pair technique at the first semester of midwife program in STIKES Bhakti Husada Mulia Madiun academic year 2022-2023. Subjects of this research were 32 first semester students in Midwife Program. The research was applied in two cycles following the procedures for action research, namely planning, action, observing, and reflecting. The researchers used classroom observation, document analysis, pre-test, and post-test to collect data. It was found that students had difficulties expressing their ideas in English orally, had limited vocabulary in English. The findings show that the Work in Pairs method improves students' speaking skills in class. This can be seen from the improvement of students' speaking skills in each cycle. The students achieved 56.56 for the pre-test which is categorized poor. After implementing Work in Pairs activities in two cycles the students' average scores improved. The post-test was 67.54 in the first cycle and 76,74 in the second cycle. This proves that students responded positively to the Work in Pairs method. It can be concluded that working in pairs activities have a strong influence on improving students' speaking skills.*

**Keywords :** *Classroom Action Research, Speaking Skill, Work in Pairs*

**Abstrak :** Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara mahasiswa melalui teknik Think Pair pada semester I program bidan di STIKES Bhakti Husada Mulia Madiun tahun akademik 2022-2023. Subjek penelitian ini adalah 32 mahasiswa semester I Program Bidan. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan dalam dua siklus dengan mengikuti prosedur penelitian tindakan, yaitu perencanaan, tindakan, pengamatan, dan refleksi. Para peneliti menggunakan observasi kelas, analisis dokumen, pre-test, dan post-test untuk mengumpulkan data. Ditemukan bahwa siswa mengalami kesulitan mengekspresikan ide-ide mereka dalam bahasa Inggris secara lisan, memiliki kosakata terbatas dalam bahasa Inggris. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa metode Work in Pairs meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa di kelas. Hal ini dapat dilihat dari peningkatan kemampuan berbicara siswa dalam setiap siklus. Para siswa mencapai 56,56 untuk pre-test yang dikategorikan buruk. Setelah menerapkan kegiatan Work in Pairs dalam dua siklus, nilai rata-rata siswa meningkat. Post-test sebesar 67,54 pada siklus I dan

76,74 pada siklus II. Hal ini membuktikan bahwa mahasiswa merespon positif metode Work in Pairs. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa bekerja dalam kegiatan berpasangan memiliki pengaruh yang kuat terhadap peningkatan keterampilan berbicara siswa.

**Kata Kunci** : Bekerja Berpasangan, Keterampilan Berbicara, Penelitian Tindakan Kelas

## INTRODUCTION

English has become the standard of communication in the world. It is important for everyone to learn English because it is used to communicate over the world. A study of English includes four skills, they are writing, reading, speaking, and listening. Speaking skills are one of the language skills. Wuryaningtyas (2015) states that speaking has three purposes: informing, entertaining, and persuading. The importance of speaking skills was also expressed by Mulya (2016) that speaking is an interaction between speakers and listeners to exchange thoughts, ideas, and opinions. Therefore, speaking skills must be possessed by everyone who learns English because speaking skills are very important for everyone. The primary purpose of speaking is to communicate. Darmuki (2019) said that by speaking, a person is expected to communicate, convey ideas and messages, interact, and share information with others to be understood by the other person. Achmad and Yusuf (2014) Work in pairs is one of the interaction patterns used in language classes. This method might raise students' motivation in learning English, especially in learning speaking skills. It is in line with Achmad and Yusuf (2014), they state that after implementing pair work in class, students' speaking anxiety was lower than before the Work in Pairs method was applied and it increase students' confidence in speaking English. Dalisa et al., (2015) found that the Work in Pairs method can reduce students' anxiety in learning English. Based on aforementioned studies, it can be seen that a few researchers tried to improve students' English skill by reducing their anxiety using work in pairs. However, the use of work in pairs was not found to improve speaking skills especially in university level. This reason was also supported by the preliminary research that was found by researchers in which students faced difficulties in speaking skills. Therefore, the researchers intended to investigate students' improvement in speaking skills using work in pairs.

## METHOD

This research is classified as Classroom Action Research. According to Arikunto (2014, p. 130) classroom action research is accuracy against the activity that is carried out intentionally and it takes place in the class. In addition, this classroom action research was done in a cycle model. Lewin in Arikunto (2014, p. 131) explains that there are four stages to do action research in cycle namely Planing, Acting, Observing, and Reflecting. Planning is the first step to prepare the teaching designed by the researchers. Then the researchers planned several things, including: developing learning plan strategies, preparing teaching materials, and determining assessment criteria. In the action stage, after making a plan, the researchers enforced the plan that had been made. Observations paid attention to events in the classroom and interactions between teachers and students, and among students in the classroom. In addition, reflection is an activity to analyze students' scores in speaking tests conducted at the end of these studies. The results of this reflection were used as a basis for consideration to revise the strategy that would be applied in the next cycle if problems need to be solved. This research was carried out in STIKES Bhakti Husada Mulia Madiun. Especially in midwife program. The implementation of CAR was carried out for first semester of midwife program with 32. The researchers chose research in first semester of midwife program because found that students had difficulties expressing their ideas in English orally, had limited vocabulary in English. Before the cycle was applied in the classroom, the researchers had conducted classroom observations to find problems faced by the students in speaking English. To support this finding, the researchers analyzed the recap document of the

students' score. After conducting observations and document analysis, the researchers applied a cycle by using the Work in Pairs strategy to improve students' speaking skills.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The researchers had three months to conduct the research in STIKES Bhakti Husada Mulia Madiun in midwife program. Researchers observed students' skills to speak English. Firstly, the researchers observed the classroom situation for three weeks in September 2022. During those weeks, the results of the observation showed that the students' speaking skill in the first semester of midwife program was low. Document analysis was also conducted to determine the students' English speaking skills in a pre-test. It was to support the results of observations so that they are more accurate. Before implementing the Work in Pairs method in the class, the researchers accumulated the document analysis results of the previous speaking skill and gave a pretest. Following the observations and the document analysis, the conversation text pre-test was given to 32 students. The average pre-test score is 56.56 of the 32 students the score comes in the poor category.

Table 1. The Students' Average Pre-test Score

No	Aspects	Pre-Test Scores	Category
1	Pronunciation	54.5	Poor
2	Fluency	56.8	Poor
3	Vocabulary	58.8	Poor
4	Word Order	55.5	Poor
5	Grammar	57.2	Poor
	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>56.56</b>	

It can be seen from Table 2 below that the average score obtained from the pretest is 56.56, and the post-test 1 is 67.54. Then the average score of the improvement in the pre-test and post-test in cycle 1 was 8.18%. That was an outstanding achievement. However, the results of the average score of the pre-test and first post-test were still below the Minimum Completeness Criteria of the school (KKM).

Table 2. The Students' Average Score BETWEEN Pre-Test and Post-Test 1 Score

No	Aspects	Pre-Test Scores	Post-Test 1 Scores	Improvements
1	Pronunciation	54.5	62.8	8.3
2	Fluency	56.8	64.5	7.7
3	Vocabulary	58.8	66.4	7.6
4	Word Order	55.5	64.2	8.7
5	Grammar	57.2	65.8	8.6
	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>56.56</b>	<b>67.54</b>	<b>8.18</b>

Based on table 3, it can be seen that the average score was obtained from the improvement of the first post-test and second post-test. In the first cycle, it was 67,54. In the 1 st post-test, the average score of students' speaking skills was low or poor. Meanwhile, in the second cycle, it was 76,74. In the 2 nd post-test, the average score of students' speaking skills was in a good category. In this case, after conducting the second A Classroom Action Research: Improving Speaking Skills through Work in Pairs Technique cycle, the average score of students' speaking skills improved. The second cycle can be carried out more successfully in improving students' speaking skills because researcher updated the technique when implementing the Work in Pairs method by

changing the pair from cycle 1. Furthermore, the average score of improvement from the 1<sup>st</sup> post-test and the 2<sup>nd</sup> post-test is 9.22%. It means that students' speaking skill has improved significantly after implementing Work in Pairs in two cycles.

Table 3. The Students' Average Score between Post-Test 1 and Post-Test 2 Scores

No	Aspects	Post-Test 1 Scores	Post-Test 2 Scores	Improvements
1	Pronunciation	62.8	72.8	10
2	Fluency	64.5	73.8	9.3
3	Vocabulary	66.4	76.2	9.8
4	Word Order	64.2	72.6	8.4
5	Grammar	65.8	74.4	8.6
	<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>67.54</b>	<b>76.74</b>	<b>9.22</b>

## Discussion

The discussion is rooted in the findings and the researcher's justification following the analysis of the data in the findings. The researchers had three months to conduct the research in STIKES Bhakti Husada Mulia Madiun of midwife program. Researchers observed students' skills to speak English. Firstly, the researchers observed the classroom situation for three weeks in September 2022. During those weeks, the results of the observation showed that the students' speaking skill in the first semester of midwife program was low. Document analysis was also conducted to determine the students' English speaking skills in a pre-test. It was to support the results of observations so that they are more accurate. Before implementing the Work in Pairs method in the class, the researchers accumulated the document analysis results of the previous speaking skill and gave a pretest. Following the observations and the document analysis, the conversation text pre-test was given to 32 students. The average pre-test score is 56.56 of the 32 students the score comes in the poor category. Based on these observations, the speaking class situation was boring and not active. Classes become ineffective because students feel anxious or afraid when speaking in class Afrizal (2015). The learning process was dominated by the teacher. This is parallel with the document analysis conducted by the researchers. They found that the students' speaking scores had a low average. The pre-test score of the students' average speaking skills can be seen in Table 1. That the average score of the pre-test is 56.56. Suppose the students' average score is synchronized with the rubric in table 1 that the researchers have determined, the score comes in the poor category. Hence, the researchers conducted the first cycle using the Work in Pairs method. The Work in Pairs method is students working and learning together in pairs. It can also improve and increase students speaking skills using the English Language. Zohairy (2014) also stated that Work in Pairs method could enrich and enhance meaningful interactions that will improve their language. Therefore, Pair work can be considered as an effective strategy to improve students' speaking skills. Pushpanathan and Satheesh (2017) state that Work in Pairs is a learning activity that involves learners working together in pairs. It is also increasing the amount of student practice. The first cycle was held on Monday, September 12th, 2022. In this cycle, work in pairs was not carried out directly. First, an introduction to the material was given to students. In the next meeting, the researchers asked the students to make groups in pairs with their classmates to implement the Work in Pairs method. The researcher applies this method by holding four meetings, and each meeting the theme has determined the theme of the conversation that will be discussed by students in pairs. The themes for the first cycle are friends, class, home, and place. The atmosphere in the class was quite pleasant when students used the Work in Pairs method to create conversations. They seemed enthusiastic and happy to practice speaking English with their classmates. Achmad and Yusuf (2014) state that after implementing pair work in class,

students' speaking anxiety was lower than before the Work in Pairs method was applied and it increase students' confidence in speaking English. After four meetings of implementing the Work in Pairs method were completed, the researchers gave a post-test. 32 students came in front of the class in pairs and show the results of what they had practiced during the meetings. Then, the researchers assessed and compared the students' speaking skills during the pre-test and post-test in cycle 1. The post-test value after implementing the Work in Pairs method increased compared to the pre-test before the performance of the Work in Pairs method. However, researchers were not satisfied with the post-test results because they were still below the Minimum Completeness Criteria of the school (KKM), which are 70. The post-test outcome in the first cycle can be seen in the table 2 that the average score obtained from the pretest is 56.56, and the post-test 1 is 67.54. Then the average score of the improvement in the pre-test and post-test in cycle 1 was 9.22%. That was an outstanding achievement. However, the results of the average score of the pre-test and first post-test were still below the Minimum Completeness Criteria of the school (KKM). So, the researchers decided to repeat the cycle. The goal was to increase the score above the Minimum Completeness Criteria of the school (KKM). Based on the observations, anxiety was one of the reasons why the students' pre-test scores were not optimal. In addition, stress was also often a problem among students when speaking in class. Aulia *et al.*, (2020) believe that anxiety in speaking is one of the common obstacles in speaking class. It makes students neglect the opportunity to practice speaking in speaking class. The implementation of the second cycle was different from the previous cycle. The researcher modified the group because the researcher wanted to see more improvement in the second cycle. In this second cycle, the researcher replaced the previous group and created a new group. The new group is selected by lottery. Four meetings were again carried out to implement the Work in Pairs method. The themes of these meetings were given differently from the first cycle. The students had to describe about the school, things, a pet, and family. Then, at the end of the meeting, a post-test was given by the researchers. During the second post-test, the researchers found, that only a few students were still less confident and anxious. However, many of them were already better at speaking English. Moreover, their speaking anxiety had been significantly reduced to the relaxed category in their second post-test. Based on table 3, it can be seen that the average score was obtained from the improvement of the first post-test and second post-test. In the first cycle, it was 67,54. In the 1 st post-test, the average score of students' speaking skills was low or poor. Meanwhile, in the second cycle, it was 76,74. In the 2 nd post-test, the average score of students' speaking skills was in a good category. The second cycle can be carried out more successfully in improving students' speaking skills because researcher updated the technique when implementing the Work in Pairs method by changing the pair from cycle 1. Furthermore, the average score of improvement from the 1 st post-test and the 2 nd post-test is 9.22%. It means that students' speaking skill has improved significantly after implementing Work in Pairs in two cycles. It is in line with Mulya (2016) who states that the method of Work in Pairs is the right method used to improve students' speaking skills because the method requires students to interact with their partners. Jatmiko. (2017) that pair works has a positive impact to improve the students' ability in speaking. Pair work applied as a good and effective strategy in solving the students' problem which are lack practice, shy to speak up and low in speaking ability. This strategy can improve the students' speaking ability. The classroom situation was active, enjoyable and comfortable since the researcher reminding the vocabulary first in each meeting and change in their partner, which the students has good pronunciation, brave to speak up with the students which has low pronunciation and shy to speak up. Maya, M., & Habebanisya. (2022) that the Work in Pairs method positively affects students' speaking skills in English. Working in pairs is a suitable method and effective in solving problems of students who lack self-confidence, are embarrassed to speak English, have anxiety, and have low speaking skills in English.

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The research results indicate that the Work in Pairs method positively affects students' speaking skills in English. Working in pairs is a suitable method and effective in solving problems of students who lack self-confidence, are embarrassed to speak English, have anxiety, and have low speaking skills in English. This method can improve students' English speaking in STKES Bhakti Husada Mulia Madiun of midwife program. This is evidenced by the increasing results of the pre-test, post-test 1, and post-test 2. The results of the pretest in the first cycle are 56.56. Following the value criteria table that has been determined by the researchers, it is included in the poor category. Then, the researchers implemented the Work in Pairs method for 4 meetings. In this regards, the researchers gave a post-test to see the improvement of students' speaking skills after using the Work in Pairs method. The results of the average score of post-test 1 is 67.54 and still in the poor category. It means that the average score of the improvement in the pre-test and post-test in the first cycle was 8.18%. Researchers need to do the second cycle because it has not reached the target of the KKM class, which are 70. Furthermore, the results of the average score of post-test 2 are 76.74, which is categorized as Good. It indicates that the average score of improvement from post-test 1 and post-test 2 is 9.22%. It means that students' speaking skill has improved significantly after implementing Work in Pairs in two cycles. The improvement in students' speaking skills using the Work in Pairs method recommends teachers for teaching English speaking using this method. In this regard, the teacher can take several steps: first, the teacher chooses an interesting activity and prepare well. Second, the teacher must not forget to design activity procedures and prepare assessment procedures. When using the Work in Pairs method, the teacher must also manage time effectively so that activities can be carried out properly. Finally, the teacher explains the method properly so that students understand what they have to do. In addition, it is recommended for other researchers to conduct further research using various topics and interesting activities to find out.

### Suggestion

Based on the previous experiences that the researcher got during the action research, the researcher could give suggestions for the betterment of students' speaking as follows.

1. Use various techniques in teaching speaking especially in teaching speaking such as using pair work it can make the classroom situation was active, enjoyable and comfortable, make speaking class enjoyable since the enjoyment can increase students' participation in speaking class.
2. For the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process, the University is suggested to: Implement pair work to teach English especially speaking. This strategy can improve the students' speaking ability and always motivate the students to develop their talent and speaking in order that they can communication with the others to keep up with the growing education and technology for facing the global era.
3. Suggestion for next researcher are: a. Create more creative ways in using pair work to improve students' speaking ability and should be record and save the data when teaching learning process in teaching speaking using pair work activity.

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