

International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research
Vol. 22, No. 2, pp. 113-130, February 2023
<https://doi.org/10.26803/ijlter.22.2.7>
Received Dec 30, 2022; Revised Feb 16, 2023; Accepted Feb 22, 2023

The Effectiveness of Opinion Gaps, Reasoning, and Information Tasks in Improving Speaking Skills

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Abstract. The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of using the gap task of opinion, reasoning and information on speaking skills at the secondary school level. This study used a quasi-experimental research method involving 352 students. The three experimental groups received treatment with gaps in opinion, reasoning, and information gap tasks. All groups were examined for their initial speaking ability. The experimental group was given an intervention with gaps in opinion, reasoning, and information while the control group was given a traditional intervention to improve speaking ability. After the intervention had been carried out, all groups were examined for their speaking ability. Data analysis was performed using one-way ANOVA. The results indicated that the experimental groups showed a significant increase in speaking ability compared to students in the control group in the post-test phase. Intervention from giving the gap task of opinion, reasoning, and information is more effective for improving speaking skills. Three assignments of opinion gaps, reasoning, and information can improve students' speaking fluency. Of the three assignments, the information gap assignment provides the most significant contribution compared to the gap of opinion and reasoning tasks because the instructions in the information gap task are more varied and more intensive in encouraging students to interact in various contexts. Based on these findings, the researcher recommends designing materials by creating assignments that contain gaps in opinions, reasoning, and information to achieve learning objectives.

Keywords: information gaps; opinion gap; reasoning gaps; speaking ability

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1. Introduction

The ability to speak is a language skill that is essential to communicate successfully with others. This means that the ability to speak is one of the main skills in expressing information, feelings, intentions or goals, ideas, beliefs, and individual feelings (Abdullah et al., 2021; Stark et al., 2020). Language learning must pay attention to speaking skills and using language realistically, as well as requiring practice to improve pragmatic-contextual abilities. In addition to speaking skills, reading and writing skills are also necessary in using language because these skills can improve comprehension and fluency in speaking (Cenoz & Gorter, 2022; Wongsu & Son, 2022). Speaking fluency is inseparable from other language skills because speaking ability is a productive language skill; therefore good reading and listening skills are needed. However, this study is focused on speaking ability. The term 'fluent' is defined as an individual's ability to use language both grammatically and at a good speed so that that people can convey their intentions and goals to the others without any misunderstanding (Albino, 2017; Kim, 2020). There are several definitions of fluency in speaking, including the ability to speak at length with few pauses, the ability to use sentences systematically and coherently, the ability to express feelings according to context, and the ability to use language creatively and imaginatively.

Speaking ability is an important language skill in teaching both first language and second language (Ataeifar et al., 2019; Fang et al., 2022). However, in reality, teaching speaking still has not received special attention from language teachers in either first or second language teaching. Currently, learning to speak is more intensive in terms of strengthening grammar structures, memorising dialogues, or memorising vocabulary (Dippold et al., 2022; Lin & Clark, 2021). There is still a lack of tasks in the form of real applications that encourage students to use their language directly. However, learning demands require students to be able to improve their speaking skills communicatively. This is a problem because the demands of learning according to the teaching process are not optimal for students' achieving learning goals.

The failure to teach speaking skills is caused by various factors, both internal and external, including the quality of the teacher, teaching methods, the proportion of material that is not balanced (dominated by structure), limited time, number of students, student motivation, and the school environment which is not yet optimal to encourage students' speaking skills (Buehler et al., 2021; Palma-Gómez et al., 2020; Perkins et al., 2018). To overcome this problem, teacher innovation is necessary in using learning methods or strategies that are able to facilitate students' improvement of their speaking skills. In this study, assignments were designed that prioritised the gaps in opinion, reasoning, and information in the process of teaching speaking. This strategy was used with the aim that students would be able to solve problems while at the same time encouraging students to practise their speaking skills (Aliakbari, 2014; Marzban & Hashemi, 2013; Tonia & Ganta, 2015). There are various teaching techniques for teaching speaking in language skills. However, this task presentation technique was considered by the researcher to be effective in improving speaking skills.

Teaching techniques using information gaps use incomplete information and encourage students to find this information through communication with friends so that students' speaking skills are trained. Information gaps can be in various contexts, for example, regarding student information, school information, environmental information and others (Fallahi et al., 2015; Yaprak & Kaya, 2020). Furthermore, the opinion gap can be in the form of a task asking for opinions, feelings, views, and preferences regarding social issues or certain topics. Reasoning gaps can be in the form of assignments to find paragraph patterns contained in information such as deductions, causal relationships, or practical reasoning; students are then asked to explain the relationships between the information they have read (Fallahi et al., 2015; Soleimani & Dastjerdi, 2021). With all these techniques, students are actively required to speak logically and communicatively. Through this teaching technique, not only do speaking skills improve, but also critical thinking skills and other language skills such as reading and listening. This shows that speaking ability is a language skill that requires intensive practice. It is a language skill that must not only be learnt but must be used directly (Marashi & Mirghafari, 2019; Yaprak & Kaya, 2020). Teaching speaking skills in the field is still regarded as passive, for example, by memorising vocabulary, filling in exercises, or doing assignments without actively encouraging students to be directly involved in speaking activities. Naturally, this method of teaching makes language teaching boring and ineffectual in helping students to improve their speaking skills.

There have been several previous studies investigating the role of task-based language teaching. Previous research examining the impact of task-based programs on language teaching has found it to be more effective than traditional teaching methods in improving students' productive skills in language, such as speaking and writing skills (Soleimani & Dastjerdi, 2021; Tonia & Ganta, 2015). Other research investigated the role of retelling tasks and differences of opinion in improving speaking and spontaneous thinking skills. This task can improve students' speaking skills in the experimental rather than the control group. Other research investigated the role of information gaps and opinion gaps on reading comprehension skills. Students in this study were divided into experiment and control groups, the latter of which only used the traditional question-and-answer method. Based on this research, it was found that giving information and opinion gap assignments was able to improve reading comprehension skills (Aliakbari, 2014; Marashi & Mirghafari, 2019).

Furthermore, task-based research is also applied to listening and speaking skills. This study provides assignments that encourage students to engage in speaking and listening to information. The results study showed that the experimental group that received this task showed an increase in listening and speaking skills that was superior to that of the control group (Fallahi et al., 2015; Soleimani & Dastjerdi, 2021). The opinion gap task was examined in previous studies on the fluency of students' speaking ability. From this study, it was found that the students' speaking ability increased significantly. From several previous studies (Aliakbari, 2014; Marashi & Mirghafari, 2019; Yaprak & Kaya, 2020), there is no research that compares the effectiveness of the three task-based language teaching tasks in the gaps of opinion, reasoning, and information on speaking ability.

Therefore, the difference between this study and previous research is the use of the three tasks of disparaging opinions, reasoning, and information and comparing their effectiveness on students' speaking abilities. In addition, the focus of speaking skills in this study is the aspect of fluency. This study seeks to examine the effect of differences of opinion, reasoning and information assignments on speaking ability, especially fluency. For this study, researchers designed various speaking teaching techniques as an alternative solution for improving students' speaking skills. Teaching techniques using gaps in opinion, reasoning, and information are considered by researchers to be interesting and effective in encouraging students' speaking skills. Therefore, this research was intended to examine the influence of the three task-based language teaching of disparaging opinions, reasoning, and information in improving students' speaking competence.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Teaching Speaking Skills

Speaking is one of the language skills in which there is a process of information processing and interpretation of meaning to build interactive, spontaneous, context-related, and developing communication (Abdulaal et al., 2022; Ghahderijani et al., 2021). Speaking is also a communication tool that is most often used by humans because, through direct verbal communication, speakers can provide direct responses. However, every human must learn a certain language before communicating. The ability to speak does not only entail grammar and vocabulary skills, but individuals must also practise by direct communication so that their speaking skills are fluent and improved (Homayouni, 2022; Ritonga et al., 2022). The ability to speak is the most basic language skill in human life. In language teaching, speaking ability is the ability to produce productive spoken language in the form of verbal utterances. It is supported by non-verbal elements that contain meaning according to the context. Therefore, the ability to speak is also an active and productive language ability. A person can speak fluently, not only by relying on knowledge of the language but also by being able to process information by means of knowledge of the language.

Fluency in speaking is a person's ability to produce meaningful speech confidently without any significant obstacles. In addition, fluency is also defined as the use of speaking skills spontaneously, fluently, and comprehensively without any significant errors that interfere with the interlocutor's understanding (Hartono et al., 2022; Snow et al., 2020). Fluency is also defined as the ability to put parts of speech together with the least hesitation or inhibition (Skoura-Kirk et al., 2021). The aim of teaching speaking skills is to facilitate students so that they are able to communicate efficiently and communicatively both in school and beyond, in the family and community environment. Therefore, the ability to speak is a language skill that is essential in real life. Good interactions among people are based on good communication skills in relating to the other person. Language teachers thus have a crucial role in facilitating students' ability to speak both in and beyond the classroom (Hartono et al., 2022; Ulupinar, 2018). In addition, speaking activities in class will also lead to feedback from the teacher for improving the quality of the speaking (Williams et al., 2019). If the teaching class gives students increased opportunities to speak, students will have more

opportunities to use the language components stored in their memory and will use their language skills more fluently (Hartono et al., 2022; Hadianto et al., 2021, 2022). This situation can encourage students to use language independently while increasing their ability to use words, phrases and sentences seamlessly without hesitation or requiring much thinking. It can therefore be concluded that teachers must pay more attention to speaking skills in language teaching.

Teaching speaking skills should provide a meaningful learning process environment, thereby encouraging students to speak so that they can communicate directly and freely (Abdulaal et al., 2022; Islam & Stapa, 2021). However, in the field, there are still many teachers who teach speaking through a series of less meaningful tasks such as completing exercises or memorising. Good speaking learning activities are learning activities that entail active participation, are carried out with a series of systematic activities, present real contextual situations, and are able to improve students' speaking skills (Koutsoftas & Srivastava, 2020; Lin & Clark, 2021). Teaching speaking activities that are interesting and encourage active participation from students can have a significant influence on basic interaction skills and communication skills. Such speaking activities can make the learning process more meaningful and real.

2.2 Task-based teaching of speaking skills

Task-based language teaching is carried out based on the principles of experience-based and real-life learning developed by John Dewey in the 1890s. Teaching speaking skills must be conducted by presenting real-life contexts that can encourage students to speak in the classroom. Researchers pay attention to theoretical learning modifications that can be turned into pragmatic learning activities that make a more meaningful contribution to students' speaking abilities (Soleimani & Dastjerdi, 2021; Zhang et al., 2019). Students who are facilitated with a learning process that encourages practical activities can improve their productive language skills and are able to broaden their horizons as well so that they are better prepared to enter the world of work. This concept has long been introduced in the communication strategy. This strategy embraces individuals from various media to communicate and understand each other. This strategy can be used in learning so that they are finally able to master the language (Albino, 2017; El Majidi et al., 2021). This strategy is considered better than merely studying theory and doing written assignments in class. This task-based learning is a move away from a traditional approach that is considered not optimal for improving students' speaking skills in language learning. This traditional method gives the wrong impression that students will be able to speak easily through memorising and using grammar when speaking. However, this traditional method has proved to be ineffective in improving effective communication skills (Fang et al., 2022; Sohn et al., 2022). As such, a task-based learning movement has emerged that brings real-life situations into the classroom.

This task-based language learning works by using the mechanism of students' natural abilities that are conditioned in the target language in a real-life context. This has proved to be effective in improving students' speaking ability. Students' opinions are the basis for changing the process of learning to speak because, through voicing their opinions, students have an opportunity to carry out

intensive verbal interactions while at the same time training their spontaneous thinking (Dilber & Kömür, 2022; Yaprak & Kaya, 2020). This indicates that a wide range of opportunities for students to participate actively in communication can accelerate the improvement of students' speaking skills in the target language. Intense practice, besides being able to help students' speaking skills, can also help students develop cognitive and other linguistic abilities (Aliakbari, 2014; Marashi & Mirghafari, 2019). This practice method can help students to avoid memorising knowledge about language without applying it. In addition, task-based teaching also provides an alternative learning process for students to work in groups. Such a learning group is an alternative to individual learning. Through group learning, students will have the opportunity to talk freely without fear or being concerned about being different when communicating with the teacher.

Unlike the task-based approach, traditional language teaching often does not pay attention to the fundamental aspects of learning a language. Students are taught grammar, words, sentences, and other linguistic aspects; however, they are not taught the spoken language, idioms, or expressions that are often used in spoken language (Marzban & Hashemi, 2013; Tonia & Ganta, 2015). Task-based learning provides opportunities for students to be taught idioms and idiomatic language and to use it practically in class. Task-based teaching is considered to be effective in teaching language orally. This task-based teaching method is widely used in first and second language learning in the classroom. Tasks are defined as a series of activities that encourage students to do something or carry out certain activities in order to achieve the goals of the learning process (Fallahi et al., 2015; Yaprak & Kaya, 2020). These students must be involved in this task interactively, which can help them to understand and apply the subject they are studying. A good assignment must encompass several components, namely cognitive aspects, reasoning, information processing, material transformation, and classification.

There are several characteristics of a task, including the fact that the task must be pragmatic in that it must prioritise the meaning of the assignment. Assignments must produce non-linguistic abilities that support students' cognitive abilities. Assignments must also provide opportunities for students to search for and select linguistic references necessary to complete assignments (Aliakbari, 2014; Marashi & Mirghafari, 2019). Tasks must be in the form of steps or procedures that provide opportunities for students to carry out tasks clearly and to be creative in these steps to achieve learning goals. One of the task-based language teaching approaches that can be used in teaching spoken language is the assignment of information gaps, reasoning, and opinions. The information gap task entails giving assignments that encourage students to fill in the missing information through understanding and interacting with their friends by means of spoken language (Aliakbari, 2014; Marzban & Hashemi, 2013; Tonia & Ganta, 2015). The reasoning gap task requires students to analyse, identify, and infer relationships or patterns in the information presented. The opinion gap task, on the other hand, encourages students to provide views and take a stand on a problem. These tasks can stimulate students' oral language skills through arguments and other forms of communication (Palma-Gómez et al., 2020; Zhou & Yoshitomi, 2019).

3. Methodology

3.1. Participant

This study involved 250 middle-level students with a gender percentage of 50% male and female, respectively. This study used a quasi-experimental research method, namely the Pre-test Post-test Non-equivalent Control Group Design, which is a design that provides a pre-test before being subjected to treatment, and a post-test after being subjected to treatment in each group (Stark et al., 2020; Wongsa & Son, 2022). The selection technique used was purposive sampling. Power analysis considerations and the level of confidence are the main considerations in determining the number of samples. The intervention in the experimental group with the three dissenting opinions, reasoning, and information tasks was carried out for three months with one month each for each type of intervention. Intervention in the control group was over one month with traditional methods.

The number of samples that met the criteria enabled the effects of the gaps in opinion, reasoning, and information tasks on students' speaking abilities to be investigated. In the early stages, the researcher first ensured that the students' language skills were at the same or homogeneous level by using a placement test from Oxford. Next, the participants were divided into three experimental groups according to the three gap tasks that would be used to improve students' speaking skills. The matched-group design was chosen to divide the experimental and control groups. This was done so that the effect of the dependent variable on the independent variable could be determined. Determination of the sample also considers research ethics; therefore the participants in this study expressed their consent to be voluntarily involved in this study.

3.2. Instrument

The instrument used to assess the fluency of speaking from the results of the three treatment tasks, gaps in opinion, reasoning, and information consists of several instruments to reinforce data mutually. There were several such instruments used in this study to measure students' speaking ability, including the Oxford Speaking Placement Test, Top Notch 3, research questions for interviews, and a speaking checklist. Tests using the placement test from Oxford were used to determine the standard deviation and average speech ability in the pre-test phase. The Top Notch 3 instrument was also used to assess speaking ability by asking students to speak for three minutes about a topic and record it. To examine the validity of the students' speaking ability test, the students were given a choice of topics for speaking that are commonly used in the learning process. Furthermore, the inter-assessor reliability test was carried out using the Pearson correlation with a value ($r = 0.85$). The validity test was also carried out through expert judgment involving eight experts using the Content Validity Index analysis on the instrument. In addition, teachers were also involved in testing the validity. Based on the results, the results of the validity and reliability tests in the pre- and post-test phases obtained Pearson correlation values of 0.85 and 0.88, respectively. In addition, the instrument used showed an internal consistency of 0.89. These results indicated that the instrument used met the criteria of validity and reliability.

Furthermore, the instrument used to assess speaking fluency was a speaking checklist adapted from Hughes (2003). This instrument assesses speaking fluency based on several aspects when someone gives a speech. Fluency in research is defined as an element of speaking ability. This fluency assessment was carried out using the discourse management and speaking ability criteria developed by Ellis (2004) which consists of a maximum of five points. There are several criteria for evaluating fluency, namely the ability to compose long sentences even though there is a sense of doubt, there is relevant improvisation even if it is repeated, and using appropriate non-verbal aspects. In addition, the aspects used in assessing students' speaking fluency include 1) there are still many sentences used that have not been completed but have been changed to new sentences; 2) intensity of repetition of words, phrases, and clauses; 3) improvement, or justification of syntactic pronunciation; and 4) the number of speech items replaced by other items. The point range for fluency is 0-20 points. This scale was adopted from the initial test from Cambridge University. To maintain the validity of the assessment process, the researcher involved speaking experts who already hold certificates and have experience in speaking spanning more than 10 years.

3.3. Data collection procedures

Researchers carried out several stages in collecting data. The participants involved in this study totalled 250 students who were selected from five secondary schools. Participants were divided into three experimental groups to attempt three dissent, reasoning, and information tasks, as well as one control group. Next, the students' speaking ability pre-test was carried out in all groups, followed by the intervention, and finally, the post-test. In the opinion gap experimental group, the researcher checked their speaking ability by asking students to speak using words, sentences, and idioms that would become examination material. During this phase, students discussed opinions, feelings, or views on a given topic, while the teacher acted as a facilitator if students experienced errors or difficulties during speaking, such as grammatical errors, or the use of difficult words, thereby directing the discussion to stay on track.

In the information gap experimental group, students were given the task of discussing in groups to find incomplete information about each other and about information on certain topics. This information search was carried out by means of students' communicating with each other, either in pairs or in groups. In the experimental group carrying out the reasoning or reasoning gap task, students were given a certain topic and tasked with providing claims and reasons regarding the topic. Furthermore, the pattern of information was also checked by the students who explained the pattern again using their own language. Students in the control group were given an intervention using traditional instruction that focused on the teacher's role and a question-and-answer session as usual. After the intervention session ended, a post-test was carried out to check the effectiveness of the intervention of disagreements, reasoning, and information in improving speaking skills. The researcher transcribed all students' speech and conducted an analysis of the number of words, use of grammar, insight, barriers or pauses, speed, and non-verbal aspects that support students' speaking fluency.

3.4. Data analysis

After the data had been collected, data analysis was conducted using several tests. First, a data normality test and the Kolmogorov–Smirnov (K-S) test on speaking ability data were carried out. Next, an analysis was conducted using the t-test and ANOVA to assess the influence of the intervention of the three tasks, namely gaps in opinion, reasoning, and information gap on improving students' speaking ability, especially students' speaking fluency.

4. Result

The researcher described the results of processing the normality test data in the pre-test and post-test phases to carry out further tests. The distribution of the data on the pre-test and post-test can be seen in Table 1. Next, a one-way ANOVA test and a paired sample t-test were conducted. It was found that the data on students' speaking abilities in each group in the pre-test phase were relatively the same. Descriptive statistics can be seen in Table 2. The average score of students' speaking abilities in the three experimental groups and the control group was relatively the same. The average value of the three experimental groups that received the opinion gap task was 11.02, the reasoning gap was 11.10, and the information gap experimental group was 10.65. The average value of the control group is 11.15.

Table 1: Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (pre-test and post-test)

Task gap group	Statistic	df	Sig.
Opinion. Pre	.175	88	.092
Opinion. Post	.224	88	.080
Reasoning. Pre	.245	88	.142
Reasoning. Post	.278	88	.092
Information. Pre	.123	88	.205*
Information. Post	.263	88	.135
Control. Pre	.156	88	.205*
Control. Post	.143	88	.204*

Table 2: Descriptive statistical data (pre-test of all groups)

Task Gap Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Opinion	88	11.02	1.753	.2682
Reason	88	11.10	1.564	.2563
Information	88	10.65	1.476	.2336
Control	88	11.15	1.687	.3442
Total	352	11.03	1.635	.1562

A sig value (0.812) was found from the results of the one-way ANOVA test (Table 3). This sig value is greater than (0.05). This means that the pre-test scores in each group, both the experimental and control groups, were not too significant or it could be said that they had relatively the same initial abilities. The results of the ANOVA test at the pre-test can be seen in Table 3. Furthermore, after the intervention using the four interventions, the gaps in opinion, reasoning, and information, the speaking ability of students from the experimental group showed a significant increase. This was reinforced by the mean scores in each experimental group for differences in opinion, reasoning, and information, which were 18.13,

18.05, and 19.31, respectively while the average of the control group was 11.42. From these data, it can be concluded that the three experimental groups experienced an increase in speaking ability which was superior to that of the control group. To strengthen the effect of the intervention on students' speaking ability, a one-way ANOVA test was conducted. Based on the results, a sig value of (0.000) was obtained; this value was less than (0.50). It can be concluded that the three interventions of opinion gaps, reasoning, and information contributed significantly to students' speaking abilities. In addition, the experimental group also showed a more significant increase than the control group. The increase in speaking ability at the post-test can be seen in Table 4.

Table 3: One-way ANOVA (pre-test)

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	4.562	2	1.245	.437	.812
Within Groups	445.856	350	2.673		
Total	425.432	352			

Table 4: Data descriptive statistics post-test phase in all groups

Task Gap Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Opinion	88	18.13	1.3276	.3215
Reason	88	18.05	1.2547	.4572
Information	88	19.31	1.7582	.3761
Control	88	11.42	1.3862	.2245
Total	352	16.72	3.3541	.2567

Table 5: ANOVA test results in the post-test phase

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1426.451	2	425.665	231.524	.000
Within Groups	263.425	350	1.768		
Total	1376.456	352			

To confirm that the three tasks of opinion gap, reasoning, and information effectively improve speaking skills, an ANOVA test was conducted in the post-test phase. As reflected in Table 5, the value of sig 0.00 is less than 0.05, which means that the intervention was significantly effective regarding students' speaking ability. Furthermore, to find out more about the effectiveness of the three interventions on differences of opinion, reasoning, and information in each of the experimental and control groups, Scheffe's post-hoc test was carried out. Table 6 shows Scheffe's post-hoc test at the post-test stage. Based on the results of tests conducted with the post-hoc Scheffe test, the average value in the opinion gap intervention group was 18.13, the average value of the reasoning gap was 18.05, the average value of the information gap was 19.31, while the average value of the control group was 11.42. From these data, it was found that the experimental group experienced a significant increase in speaking ability compared to the

control group. There is a significant difference between the experimental group with differences of opinion and reasoning ($P = 0.9888 > 0.05$). Moreover, significant differences were found between the opinion and information groups. The information experimental group showed the most significant improvement compared to the other two experimental groups. Next, a paired-sample t-test was carried out to determine differences in the speaking ability of the experimental group before and after the intervention. The results can be seen in Table 7.

Table 6: Scheffe's post-hoc test in all groups

Task		M Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Opinion gap	Reason. Group	-.04634	.23621	.988
	Information. Group	-.31824	.23621	.000
	Control. Group	5.4622*	.23621	.000
Reason gap	Opinion. Group	.04528	.23621	.988
	Information. Group	-.22553	.23621	.000
	Control. Group	6.76331*	.23621	.000
Information gap	Opinion. Group	.28267	.23621	.000
	Reason. Group	.32538	.23621	.000
	Control. Group	6.44752*	.23621	.000
Control	Opinion. Group	-6.5635*	.23621	.000
	Reason. Group	-6.46682*	.23621	.000
	Information. Group	-7.14432*	.23621	.001

Table 7: Paired sample test (before and after all groups)

	Group pre-post	M	SD	Std. Error M	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Opinion. Post – Opinion. Pre	7.35521	1.44365	.27823	22.834	351	.000
Pair 2	Reason. Post – Reason Pre	8.11342	1.24351	.23315	24.566	351	.000
Pair 3	Information. Post – Information. G. Pre	8.22561	1.22678	.25782	26.446	351	.000
Pair 4	Control. Post – Control. Pre	.15331	.13425	.04672	2.889	351	.134

Researchers examined the comparison of students' abilities in the pre-test and post-test phases in each group with a paired t test. As depicted in Table 7, the sig value (0.134) was greater than 0.05. From this finding, it can be concluded that the difference in the increase in the control group in each phase was not significant. This is different from the difference in ability in the three experimental groups. From the results of the paired sample t test, it was found that the sig value in the three experimental groups was 0.00, which was smaller than 0.05. From this value, it can be concluded that the intervention of the three gaps of opinion, reasoning, and information made a significant contribution to students' speaking ability.

5. Discussion

Three interventions using gaps in opinion, reasoning, and information were more effective in improving students' speaking skills compared to those of students who were in the control group who received the traditional method (question and answer). Of the three gap task interventions, it was found that the information gap proved to make a more significant contribution compared to the other two gaps, namely the opinion and reasoning gap. Based on data processing of the research results, task instructions on gaps in opinion, reasoning, and information can train students' speaking skills, especially impacting on speaking fluency (Cabell et al., 2021; Disbray et al., 2022). By following the instructions of the three assignments, students can improve their speaking ability significantly. Instructions that can improve speaking skills in the information gap experimental group are instances where students are asked to find information that does not yet exist by exchanging information with friends in their group. Instructions for the experimental group of gaps in opinion were that students were asked to express their views, attitudes, and feelings towards a problem or phenomenon that existed in real life (Aliakbari & Mohsennejad, 2014; Ganta, 2015). The instruction in the reasoning gap of the experimental group was that students were asked to look for new information and retell the pattern of the information and conclude it. These instructions led to students' being more fluent in speaking. This is in accordance with the theory that students' speaking ability can be increased through the intensity of organised practice (Albino, 2017; El Majidi et al., 2021).

The use of tasks in the learning process can provide a wider range of opportunities for students to use language without worrying about making mistakes. These three gap assignments require that the learning process takes place in a natural atmosphere or in a real-life context that is introduced into the classroom. Such a setting in the classroom allows students to improve communication fluency naturally even though they have not paid much attention to the grammatical aspect (Goldfeld et al., 2021; Palma-Gómez et al., 2020). In addition, this gap assignment can increase students' motivation and confidence levels in carrying out communication activities. Of the three gap tasks, the information gap task has the most significant contribution to improving speaking ability. Instruction on the information gap task has several benefits, including promoting students' cooperative activities, providing opportunities to negotiate meaning, making students feel comfortable and less afraid when speaking, increasing the intensity of communicative practice, providing opportunities for students to discover and communicate meaning, and improving students' attention to the social context of communication (Ghahderijani et al., 2021; Islam & Stapa, 2021). The findings of this study reinforce the results of previous research, which proved that gap assignments can facilitate student communication (Bagheri & Mohamadi Zenouzagh, 2021; Ritonga et al., 2022; Skoura-Kirk et al., 2021).

This study reinforces the findings of previous research showing the opinion gap task effectiveness. This task-based teaching relies heavily on the abstract or concrete aspects of task instruction. The more abstract the assignment given, the greater the students' difficulty in achieving learning objectives. From the results of previous research in which students were given reading, listening, and

speaking assignments, it was found that some students still had difficulty following assignments that were unclear or had never been experienced before (Hartono et al., 2022; Snow et al., 2020). In addition, students also sometimes became confused if the instructions given were not clear. Therefore, the main factor for student success in participating in task-based language teaching is determined by the students' experience in following the task, the clarity of instructions, and student knowledge.

Although this task-based speaking teaching can improve speaking fluency, this gap assignment cannot be applied in all topics of conversation (Ulupinar, 2018; Williams et al., 2019). A teacher must be able to choose the right topic and encourage students' critical thinking and active participation in speaking activities. These gap assignments must be authentic or situate students as they are in real life despite being in the classroom. Therefore, a teacher must be able to provide these authentic situations that encourage students to participate actively in the learning process. Based on the research findings, the information gap task was shown to be more effective compared to other gap tasks because students were encouraged to use spoken language more intensively while at the same time encouraging their critical thinking in uncovering information (Hartono et al., 2022; Yeh et al., 2021). Moreover, communication activities and the presentation of the results of this information can encourage fluency in speaking and motivate students to express views, attitudes, or feelings regarding the information they receive.

Information gap task instructions are also more intensive in interacting with various settings, such as interaction with partners, group members, presentations, and with instructors. Interaction with these various contexts affords students more opportunities to speak without hesitation or fear of being wrong (Ulupinar, 2018; Williams et al., 2019). To obtain missing information, students must communicate with partners, groups, or teachers. This situation encourages the potential of students to speak more optimally compared to merely listening to explanations from the teacher regarding grammar and other language issues. Speech error feedback can be given directly when the communication is carried out by the teacher (Islam & Stapa, 2021; Zhou & Yoshitomi, 2019). Although the three gap tasks of opinion, reasoning, and information can significantly contribute to speaking ability, these three-gap tasks also have several limitations, including requiring a considerable amount of time, the ability of the teacher to control the class so that the interactions carried out are in the setting of the learning process, and the fact that there remain students who are still confused if the instructions are not clear. The findings of this study as a whole reinforce that spoken language cannot only be obtained through explanations of grammar and other materials, but must also be practised intensively. In addition, the practices carried out must be authentic or place students in simulated real-life situations (Bagheri & Mohamadi Zenouzagh, 2021; Snow et al., 2020).

6. Conclusion, Limitation, and Recommendation

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the three assignments of gaps in opinion, reasoning, and information can effectively improve students' speaking skills. This happens because these three assignments can present

authentic situations in the classroom so that they provide more opportunities which encourage students to be trained in real communication. Of the three assignments, the information gap assignment provides the most significant contribution compared to the gaps of opinion and reasoning tasks because the instructions in the information gap task are more varied and more intensive in encouraging students to interact in various contexts. Through a variety of contexts, students have the opportunity to receive more and varied language input, so that these students are also able to produce more and varied language output. In addition, with intensive practice, students' linguistic abilities in spoken language are better trained because spoken language not only requires mastery of vocabulary and grammar but also requires non-verbal abilities that support students' fluency and fluency in speaking. The implication of this research is that teaching speaking must be carried out in various situations or contexts so that teachers must be able to present authentic situations in class that motivate students to speak freely. Situations that encourage students to speak are situations that provoke students to add, argue, support, or give their opinions on material or topics. One of the situations that encourage this practice of speaking are the gaps of opinions, reasoning, and information. This activity significantly improves students' speaking skills, as well as fluency.

This study has several limitations, including the fact that this research does not deal with gender variables, which might affect the results of the intervention. Moreover, it lacks reinforcement with qualitative research. In addition the duration of the intervention is quite short, the level of students' knowledge of the topic is not examined, and the speaking skills examined here focus on fluency; therefore further research is needed.

The research recommends that future studies pay attention to the shortcomings of this study, including samples that must be larger and wider. In addition attention must be paid to gender while the study needs to be strengthened by qualitative data, for example, with feedback regarding the strengths and weaknesses that students identify from the three assignments. Furthermore, the duration of the intervention should be longer, the level of knowledge of the material should be checked, and the non-verbal elements of speaking ability should be examined. Based on the findings of this study, students' speaking skills should not always be in the area of grammar or speech knowledge, but students should be given ample opportunities to practise these because speaking skills can only improve through such practice.

7. References

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