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UTILIZING DISCUSSION TECHNIQUE IN IMPROVING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILL

MUHAMMAD ARFIN MUHAMMADSALIM , ANDISUKRISYAMSURI AND HAMSUHANAFICERWIN AKIB

AkademiPariwisata Makassar, Makassar Sulsel, Indonesia.
FakultasAdab, UIN,Makassar, Sulawesi Selatan. Indonesia.
FakultasKeguruan&IlmuPendidikan, UNISMUH Makassar, Sulawesi Selatan, Indonesia .

Abstract:

Teaching speaking is considered to be the most difficult among the four skills of language. The aim of this study is to examine discussion technique in order to improve to students' achievement on English speaking skill. This empirical study employs experimental approach to get insight the of the discussion technique in teaching English to students of Makassar tourism Academy. The data were collected from the test both speaking test and from questionnaire and they were analyzed quantitatively included descriptive statistic by using t-test. The finding demonstrates that discussion technique can improve the students' achievement better than lecturing one. And most of the students are interested to study English especially speaking skill with discussion technique.

KEYWORDS:

Discussion, Students achievement, speaking skill, Teaching English.

1.INTRODUCTION

There are so many theories discussing about the learning and teaching of languages that have been proposed. These theories, normally influenced by developments in the fields of linguistics and psychology, have inspired many approaches to the teaching of second and foreign languages (Gardner, 1991; Wetting & Arno, 1977). The study of these theories and how they influence language teaching methodology today is called applied linguistics.

One of the curricular objectives of English teaching in Indonesia is to enable the students to speak English. However, many students still cannot speak the language after many years of study. The students fail to use English as a tool of communication. This is proved by some researches. Muttaqin (1992) stated that the students failed to use English as tool of communication. Modi in Salim (2003) stated that to improve the quality of the students in learning English particularly in speaking skill, the students have to find their own strategies which suit on their interest and needs. In connection with this fact, the lecturer should give guidance and attention to stimulate the students in creating their own strategies

Speaking, like writing, involves an enormous range of sub-skills. Some of these sub-skills involve the mechanic of sound production, i.e. pronunciation, and these sub-skills will be focused for the first section on speaking. Other speaking skills involve fluent and accurate expression of meaning, the exercising of pragmatic, or communicative, competence, and the observance of the rules of appropriate, all of these skills together may be said to make up the global skill of speaking as an act of communication and interaction with others, and these will be the focus of the second section. In relation to the problem faced by most students above, the lecturers or teachers are expected to create effective learning and use appropriate

techniques and teaching media which can stimulate the students to speak English freely by giving sufficient opportunity. The teacher can use some method to increase students' motivation in learning English, one of the method is discussion method.

Therefore there are some reasons, why the researcher uses discussion method in increasing students' motivation in speaking by using English. First, generally, the teaching method is used by the teachers at AkademiPariwisata Makassar is not successful. It was proved by Nursyam (1998) found that most students of AkademiPariwisata Makassar cannot understand and speak English well. The teacher should also motivate the students to have more practice in English, either in class or outside of the class to make them familiar with the new situation.The research is focused on the teaching of English speaking at the fifth semester students of Food Production Department by using discussion. In this case the researcher will describe whether teaching English speaking by using discussion is effective or not.

2.LITERATURE REVIEW

In literature on teaching, the term "discussion" usually refers to a diverse body of teaching techniques, which emphasize participation, dialogue, and two-way communication. The discussion method is one in which the instructor and a group of students consider a topic, issue, or problem and exchange information, experiences, ideas, opinions, reactions, and conclusions with one another. For many of us in higher education, our image of college education involves more than the mere transfer of information. The students should be formulated applications of abstract principles, to gain practice in logic and thinking, to give us prompt feedback, and to develop the appetite for further learning. In short, our images of effective teaching involve the exchange of ideas between instructor and student, the Socratic model of "Mark Hopkins and a student at two ends of a log" (Goldsmid and Wilson, 1980).

Available research evidence also supports the general effectiveness of discussion techniques. Compared with the traditional lecture method, discussions elicit higher levels of reflective thinking and creative problem solving, including synthesis, application, and evaluation (Nunan, 1994). There is also evidence that information learned through active discussion is generally retained better than material learned through lecture. Moreover, students often prefer to participate in discussions rather than to be passive learners in a lecture (McKeachie, l978).

Summarizing the advice of educational authorities (including those listed in the references below), below are several strategies for teaching using discussion. Discussion sessions vary widely across topics, cases, and instructors, and there are few general truths that apply to all teaching situations. With these qualifications in mind, however, here are some of the main points emphasized by experts on college teaching. Proper Discussion Techniques Classroom discussions, as typically practiced, are a middle-of-the-road teaching technique for instructors wanting moderate levels of student participation (Zander, l979). If one's primary purpose as a teacher is to communicate specific information, perhaps the lecture method would be more successful. Starting Classroom Discussions, Discussion implies involvement. Ideally, the students and instructor collaborate to meet mutual goals.

It cannot be denied that speaking English is very difficult for the most Indonesian students. Therefore, a teacher should use teaching technique that can make the students interested and motivated to speak. This is very important because there is sample evident from researcher and classroom experience with show that students make greater progress in their activities when they deal with things that interest them greatly.

Generally speaking, there are two factors to affect students' speaking English in class. One is they fail to find suitable words to express themselves and the other is they are afraid of making mistakes. Sometimes they make mistakes when they are speaking because they are shy and nervous. So, good environment helps the students to speak actively and correctly. On the one hand, I try to ease my students and remove their nervousness, fear and anxiety with encouraging words and on the other I have tried these ways to build a free and lighted-hearted environment.

In conjunction with the nature of speaking, Harmer (1983) states that when two people are engaged in talking to each other we can be fairly sure that they are doing so for a reason. When one of these people speaks, we can probably make the following generalizations: (1) He wants to speak: "want" is used here in general way to suggest that a speaker makes a definite decision to address someone. Speaking may be forced on him in some way but we can still say that he wants or intends to speak, otherwise he would keep silent. (2). He has some communicative purposes: Speakers say things because they want something to happen as a result of what they say. (3). He selects from his language store: The teacher has an infinite capacity to create new sentences if he is a native speaker.

It will be clear from this extract that we need not only knowledge of target language but also be able to use the language, namely speaking skills to achieve these speaking purposes. Much of our language

teaching energy is devoted to instruction in mastering English conversation. However numerous other forms of spoken language are also important to incorporate into a language course, especially in teaching speaking.

An important goal in a language arts program is to create purposeful and varied activities that will develop individuals who can comfortably and competently participate in a range of situations requiring speech. Hook and Evans (1982) identified four overall kinds of speaking situations that students should encounter, not only in the classroom but in their adult lives. The types of speech range from personal, exploratory speech to more formal, ceremonial speech. Students need to develop fluency and confidence in their oral language through experiences in many types of speech situations. Among the four major language skills, speaking is considered to be difficult to learn (McDonough, 1993) pointed out that learning to speak is obviously more difficult that learning to understand the spoken language. one who wants to speaks to others sometimes faces some problems.

3.METHODOLOGY

The design of the research consists of two groups (Experimental group and control group) which form randomly. Both experimental and control group will be given pre-test and post-test. The Pre-test will be administrated to find out the students' achievement before the treatment while the post-test is to find out the achievement of the students after giving the treatment (discussion technique). The population of this research was the fifth semester students of food production department diploma III. This research employs a consensus system or total sampling. That is taking all of fifth semester students of Food Production Department, Diploma III which consisted of 46 students. The total sample is 42 students. The respondent was divided into two groups, experimental group and control group. Collecting data needed, instrument used is achievement of English speaking test and observation checklist aims at identifying the students' Achievement before and after the treatment The data were collected from the test both speaking test and from questionnaire and they were analyzed quantitatively included descriptive statistic.

4.RESULT AND FINDINGS

The discussion section deals with the interpretation of the findings derived from the result of statistical analysis through both test (interview) questionnaire and also the researcher's note during the classroom interaction

4.1.The students' speaking achievement

Along with the discussion, the students could gain a significant progress in improving their speaking achievement covers accuracy, fluency, comprehensibility and structure. It can be seen from the result of the t-test analysis, t-observation is higher then t-table (t-obs = $14.01 > 2.68$) at .05 level of significant and at 44 degree of freedom. The mean score of the students' achievement who taught by using traditional lecturing technique is smaller than the students who taught by using discussion ($1.40 < 2.86$). It means that the application of the discussion technique in teaching speaking is different between the application of traditional lecturing technique in teaching speaking. The null hypothesis (Ho), therefore, was rejected and of course, the statistical hypothesis (H1) was accepted. It can be said that the discussion technique was able to change the students' achievement into the better one. Compared with the teaching English speaking by using traditional lecturing technique, discussion technique is more effective.

Furthermore, based on the research findings, the students' achievement taught by using discussion is relatively good because 8.7 % gained very good, 65.2 gained good and 26.1 gained fairly good. There was no students gained fair, poor and very poor classification. It means that the students' speaking achievement in the experimental group was good classification. It can be said that there was an improvement on the English speaking. Otherwise, the students' achievement taught by using traditional technique was also improved but only to poor level. It can be proven that there is 21.7 percent gained fair, 56.5 percent gained poor and 21.7 percent gained very poor classification. It means that the students' speaking achievement in the control group was under average. It can be said that there was no improvement on English speaking. Though, Discussion technique can improve the students' achievement on English speaking, it does not mean that it is the only factor influencing the students' English speaking. As Rasyid in Salim, (2003) stated that to obtain the successfulness of the English teaching and learning process, there are some principles that should be implemented namely: (1) the number of the students should be small, in order to give chance to the learners have fluency and to use English in the classroom, (2) the frequency of the meeting should be intensive; (3) the available of learning center and library in which the learning materials are available and

meet the learner's need so that they can be interested and prepare them to learn optimally; (4) the learner should have high motivation in learning; (5) the learner's native language should be media of their English learning; (6) the English teacher should be professional and qualified.

McKeachie (1978) stated compared with the traditional lecture method, discussions elicit higher levels of reflective thinking and creative problem solving, including synthesis, application, and evaluation. There is also evidence that information learned through active discussion is generally retained better than material learned through lecture. Moreover, students often prefer to participate in discussions rather than to be passive learners in a lecture

Although the students achieved good classification after having material by using discussion, they still made some errors, such as:

a. Grammatical/Structure errors

The mastery of grammar became a first concern in developing the students' speaking. The source of the problem stemmed from the students' non-mastery of the English syntactical rules, such as word order and concord.

The typical grammatical errors the students made are:

1). The omission of – s suffix in predicate as the third person singular indicator. Examples of this case are: (1) Ali play football every Sunday afternoon; (2) Asapa speak English a little.
2). The omission of – s suffix as the indicator of plural. Examples of this case is "there are many student follow the discussion
3). The omission of "be". Example of this case is "I students of Akpar Makassar
The students, however, could develop their understanding of grammar during the treatment as shown by their ability to put words into simple sentences. They shared their knowledge of English to each other. In other words, the students who have a good understanding of grammar voluntary guided the others to build up some simple grammatical sentences.

b. Mispronunciation

Many students pronounce the English words just like Indonesian not in English way that's why they are wrong. The examples of this case are: (1) steak /steik/ becomes /stik/; think /□ink/ becomes /tink/

4.2. The students' attitude

The analysis showed that the use of discussion influenced significantly the students' attitude to speak English. This means that there is a good applicable strategy in teaching speaking skills. In other words, the students' attitude is the indication of a degree of success that a foreign language leaner is likely to have in a real given foreign language setting.

Since the students conducted discussion to deal with their ideas, ask questions, and answers questions, this automatically gave them a conducive atmosphere to apply the sense of having acceptable pronunciation, correct grammar, and appropriate word-choice, and the flow of the speaking.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and discussion in the previous chapter, the researcher has come to the conclusion toward the use of discussion strategy:

1. The achievement on English speaking of Food Production Students of AkademiPariwisata Makassar taught by using Discussion technique is significantly improved because most of the students got very good and good level of classification.
2. The achievement on English speaking of Food Production Students of AkademiPariwisata Makassar taught by using Traditional Lecturing technique is no significantly improved because most of the students only got fair and poor level of classification.
3. There is significant difference of the achievement on English speaking for the students of Food Production department between the students who taught by using discussion technique and who were taught by using traditional lecturing technique. The discussion technique can improve the students' achievement better than lecturing one.

4. Most of the students are interested to study English especially speaking skill as proven by the questionnaire given to the students after the class

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