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EFFECT OF TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONS TO SPEAKING CLASSES AT MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY, KENDARI

Isna Humaerah, Suhartini Syukri and Fahmi Gunawan*

Kendari State Islamic Institute, Southeast Sulawesi, INDONESIA

*Corresponding author: fgunawanp@gmail.com

Abstract

This study investigated the teachers' instruction in improving students' motivation in speaking. The objective of this study was to identify the instruction that usually given by the lecturer when teaching speaking and its impact to students' speaking improvement. The subjects of this study were three teachers of speaking classes for students in their third semester at the Muhammadiyah University in Kendari in the 2014/2015 academic year. This study used a descriptive qualitative design whereby data was gathered through classroom observations, recording of classroom activities and documentation. The findings showed that the lecturers' instructions were effective in improving the motivation of their students. Having students more fun in various activities, discussion, doing pair work to help each other in accomplishing task, and being motivated to complete complex tasks. The lecturers tended mostly to use direct instructions for teaching speaking. For example, asking frequent questions to see if the students understood the work they have to do, or by giving students frequent opportunities to practice what they have learned. By giving instructions, the students' motivation to speak increased. The students were also motivated to be more active in the teaching-learning processes that resulted in improvements in their speaking ability.

Keywords: Motivation, speaking class, teachers' instructions.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher's instructions are the way teachers talk to their students, the manner in which they interact is crucial to both successful learning and teaching. Generally, instructions lead or guide students. Perhaps the most important factor that determines how successful students will learn is the way instructions to them are formulated and sometimes it is this factor alone which distinguishes really good teachers from poor ones. Arthur, *et al.* (2015, pp. 16-18) have suggested that the qualifications for good teachers should include: (1) motivation to teach, (2) educated for good character, (3) always acts as a role model and (4) enacts the skills and virtues that they seek to develop in their students. Good teachers' instructions are one part of those qualifications in order to succeed at teaching-learning in the classroom.

In the Department of Teaching English at Muhammadiyah University in Kendari, many students still have difficulty in using English for communication. Based on observations, this is caused by many factors. One of them is the lack of understanding of the teaching instruction given by the teachers during the teaching-learning process. Another major factor that may influence the students speaking ability is that they lack practice in speaking English both in the classroom and in their daily life. In this

study, the researchers focused on how students might enjoy their speaking classes more. This should be supported by their English teachers.

Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997). Its form and meaning depends on the context in which it occurs, including the participants, the collective experiences, the physical environment and the purpose of speaking. It is often open-ended, spontaneous, and evolving. However, speech is not always unpredictable. Its functions tend to recur in certain discourse situation which can be identified and charted (ibid). In general, according to Brown (1994), a good speaker is one who can produce sounds, stress patterns, rhythmic structures, and intonation in the language using grammar correctly. One who can assess the characteristics of the language used, select appropriate vocabulary, apply strategies to enhance comprehensibility, use gestures and body language, and pay attention to ensure successful audience interaction adjusting components of speech accordingly. Those criteria should be mastered by teachers and students to achieve the goals of the speaking class.

In line with the above, teaching English at any level has the ultimate goal to teach to communicate. Factors affecting speaking performance that should be applied in the classroom as Tuan and Mai (2015, pp. 9-10) have suggested include performance attributes, affective factors, listening ability, topical knowledge, and feedback during speaking. Hence, it is important that directions from the teachers relate to academic activities and behavior which contributes and in accordance to the factors then the instruction will be clear, precise and effective. A qualified teacher should be able to use any good material, adapting it to an appropriate method which will be suitable for the students needs and should have a good attitude towards their students creating a conducive learning atmosphere in order to create successful teaching-learning processes.

METHOD

This study used a descriptive qualitative design to describe what and how the teachers gave instructions in the teaching-learning processes to students in speaking class in their third semester. The sample was three teachers in the English education study program in the 2014/2015 academic year. The instruments used were observation sheets (five steps of direct instructions according to Arends (1997, p. 67)), plus video recording of the classes. Techniques of data collection were (i) by doing direct observations, (ii) documentation of utterances from the teachers when giving instructions and recordings. The results of the study were analyzed through three major types of analysis following Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 10); which comprised data reduction, displaying data and drawing conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Speaking as a productive skill can be directly and empirically observed. Observations are invariably influenced by the accuracy and effectiveness of a test-takers listening skills which necessarily compromise the reliability and validity of observations of oral productions. The indicators which were used in this study are the teachers' behavior and also the students' behavior in their speaking classes, to see how effective the teachers' instructions were. Based on the observations, the three teachers that were observed in this study, mostly used direct instructions as a technique for encouraging and motivating their students to speak in their classrooms. Specifically, the teacher for class A tried to provide students with fun activities which also required collaborative participation from the students in order to give them chances to be active. The teacher went over the lesson objectives and gave the students background information for guidance.

Next, he presented step by step information and gave the students chances to ask questions, then he gave them suggestions about the methods they should use to prepare their material in order to make the students more motivated to prepare for the following lesson. The students asked questions and gave responses to the teacher's instructions. The motivation was high as shown by the conducive atmosphere created in the class. The teacher's instruction adopted the role of facilitator by providing fun activities then students devoted their attention and participated actively without any undue burden. In addition, teacher A gave his students freedom to improve their ideas. He did not limit the materials to those in the text book-based neither with monotonous activity but exercise-based activity. By inspirational stories, he motivated the students and encouraged them to

get the highest scores in their speaking class. This was in line with Kayi's (2006) advice that when the teacher comes to the classroom, he should set clear goals, make sure that his students understand the goals, and give students clear, concise explanations to illustrate the subject matter. When teacher A gave instruction to the students, he tried to encourage students to use simple sentences in building their knowledge to speak related to the topic. He also gave demonstrations of his instructions before asking his students to do the activities (Joyce, Weil & Calhoun, 2000).

In addition, the teacher for class B also built students' motivation and self-confidence in public speaking by collaborated of students' participation. Moreover, the teacher gave enough chances for students to communicate actively using the target language. Question and answer activity used in order to fulfill his role as the facilitator. The triggering of questions encouraged the students to answer the questions. Other activities used were pair work, in real communication, giving listening activities to be shared by their pairs, and in other cases students were asked to retell the information they had known or heard to share with each other. It was apparent that the instructions were mostly effective and helped the students improve their speaking. In this case, the teachers' activities in the classroom were mostly focused on independent practice. Its might be because the speaking three class is the last class for speaking in the English study program at the Muhammadiyah University in Kendari, so, the students have had previous experience of the stages of instruction as what Joyce, Weil and Calhoun (2000) has proposed that in direct instruction there are five phases of activities: orientation, presentation, structured practice, guided practice, and independent practice. When the teacher instructed them to speak, they immediately chose a partner without having to have structured practice from the teacher.

In another class, the class observations showed that the teacher provided fun activities. The teacher divided the students into groups to perform something in front of the class. The groups made students easy to share with their friends since they practiced their English more actively such as in making statements, arguing, giving feedback, and so forth. Hence the students could build their confidence in their speaking skills to accomplish their tasks and used team work in discussing the topic that they were given to be responsibility done by each group.

In terms of students' behavior, from the observations emerge that students had fun practicing English in the teaching-learning processes. The active participation was a result of how the instructions were given and effectively used moreover understandable. It positively reacted by students enthusiastic in cooperative way of learning. Besides, students were given a choice to decide the method which they thought most suitable for them to be applied in the speaking class. The role of co-operative learning can also be seen in teacher at class B and the rest class by pair work, group work and triggered instruction by teacher's question and answer method. Students became accustomed to the target language as they learn.

Teacher who never gives up guiding students in enhancing their skill by giving instruction clearly can make the Instructions effective to use. This instruction included having students more fun in various activities, discussion, doing pair work to help each other in accomplishing task, and being motivated in complex task. Likewise, if those activities are properly handles, they will enhance students' learning motivation, engage students to be more active in pair work or group work and build students self-confidence.

Various materials provided, and evaluations also take into account in affecting the better quality of teaching and learning process. In line with evaluation, Richards and Rodgers (2001, p. 158) argues that evaluation addresses whether the goals and objectives of a language program are being attained, that is, whether the program is effective. In this case, English speaking teachers evaluate students through conducting student observation in daily performance. Students tended to be more active to the activities assessed by teachers. Hence, evaluation done by teachers affects students' performances in their motivation, participation and in particular, speaking skill. It verifies that teachers' instructions bring much improvement in the speaking ability of their students.

CONCLUSIONS

The ability of teachers in getting positive results in speaking classes starts from giving appropriate instructions. The effects of instruction from teachers on the quality of English speaking in the teaching-learning process can be demonstrated by the use of interesting materials and clear instructions from the teachers. They can promote students' learning as symbol of their

professionalism. Moreover, the evaluation also should be taken into account to create the more effective ways to improve the teaching-learning processes. Therefore, various ways of instruction by their teachers can result in positive improvements in the speaking ability of their students.

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