IMPROVING STUDENTS’ SPEAKING ABILITY THROUGH SIMULATION

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Abstract— The purpose of this research is to solve the students’ problem in studying speaking English in classroom. It was found that the students have lack of ability in speaking English in the classroom. The problems were assumed derive from uninteresting techniques and monotonous activities done by the teacher when teaching and learning process was going on. To solve the problems above the teacher taught the students speaking through simulation. Because by using simulation the teacher could create various activities that given to the students. It could attract the students’ attention and interest when studying in the classroom and increase students’ speaking ability. This research was action research. The participants of this research were all of the students in Informatika Komputer B (IK.B) at Dynasty Computer Solok. The instruments to collect data were speaking test through interview and field note. Based on those instruments, it was found that studying speaking through simulation could increase students’ speaking ability. Shortly, the students’ speaking ability increased when they studied by using simulation.

Keywords— Improving; speaking; simulation

I. INTRODUCTION

Today, it is required the goal of teaching speaking which improve students’ communicative skills, because only in that way students can express their opinion or thought as stated in Oxford (1995: 1140). Generally, the aim of teaching speaking subject is to enable the students to use it as tool of communication orally.

Nowadays the approach of the integrated and communicative teaching and learning process on English is needed to enable the students to use the language communicatively. But there are still found some cases in formal education, one of them is teaching speaking through writing, for example the teacher only asks the students to complete the conversation without practicing it orally. Vice versa the aim of teaching speaking is enable the students to speak English fluently. That is the reason why people, parents, and teachers also encourage their children or their students to learn English more actively and at Dynasty Computer where the researcher teaches.

It is necessary for the English teachers to encourage students to speak English fluently and confidently and use more effective way for teaching speaking, in order to improve the students’ speaking...
ability. There are many techniques that are interesting and effective for teaching speaking. One of the techniques of improving students’ speaking ability is by using simulation.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE, METHOD AND FINDING

a. Speaking

Nunan (2003: 48) says speaking happens in real time: usually the people you are talking to is waiting for, you speak right then. Second when you speak, you cannot edit and revise what you wish to say, as you can if you are writing. Then he adds that speaking is the productive aural/oral skill. It consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning.

Thus, it can be said that speaking is an expressing of thought and feeling to others to keep communication orally. Luoma (2004: 9) states “speaking as interaction, and speaking as a social and situation-based activity”. People use spoken language to convey their ideas to others.

A communication will occur if there are the speaker and the listener. The information has a message of what the speaker wants to talk to the listener, whether they speak face to face or not.

Speaking is a complex skill. When someone talks or speaks, it is not enough for him/her just to know the sound, structure, and vocabulary of the language. The speaker also needs to think of the idea, he or she wishes to express and must be sensitive to any change in style to whom he or she is speaking, and on the situation in which the conversation is taking place.

b. Teaching Speaking

The goal of teaching speaking skills is communicative efficiency. Learners should be able to make themselves understand. They should try to avoid confusion in message due to fluency pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary that applies in each communication situation.

In communicative modes of language teaching, teachers help their students to develop the body of knowledge. They help their students to develop ability. Many language learners regard speaking ability as the measure of knowing a language.

The materials that are given by the teacher should encourage the use of authentic language in meaningful context. In learning English as foreign language in communication language teaching, Celce-Murcia (2001: 45) states some type of teaching speaking in the EFL classroom:

1. Discussions

Discussions are probably the most commonly used activity in the oral skill class. Typically, the students are introduced to a topic via a reading, listening passage and then asked to get into pairs or groups to discuss a related topic in order to come up with a solution, a response. Teachers must take care in planning and setting up a discussion activity. First, grouping or pairing the students to ensure a successful discussion outcome. Second, students need to be reminded that each person should have specific responsibility in the discussion to report the result. Finally, students need to be clear about what they will discuss, why they are discussing it and what outcome is expected. It is an external device for oral communication where students can convey their opinion or ideas.

2. Speeches

Topic for speeches will depend on the level of students and the focus of class, but in a case, students should be given some leeway in determining to content of their talk. The teacher can provide the structure for speech. Speech can be frightening for the speaker and boring for the listener so it is a good idea to assign the listeners some responsibilities during the speech.

3. Role play

It is suitable for practicing the socio-cultural variations in speech acts. Depending on the students level, role play can be performed for preparing script, creating for a set of prompt and expression or written, using and consolidating knowledge gained from instruction or
discussions of speech act and its variations prior to the role plays themselves. This is an interesting way in improving their speaking ability; this activity can be done like giving a role to one number of a group and considering on the purpose of the role play.

4. Conversation

One of the more recent trends in oral skills pedagogy is the emphasis on having students analyze and evaluate the language that they produce. The students can practice in using English directly and they can share their information about everything.

c. Evaluation of Speaking Skill

Haris (1979:81) states, there are five components which should be considered in testing students’ performance. They are: pronunciation, structure/grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Each component has scoring. The scoring consists of five levels which show the ability of students’ speaking performance.

In other way, Finocchiaro (1983:9) explain there are four components of scoring in speaking test. They are pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar/structure, and fluency. The scoring of four levels, show the ability of the students’ speaking performance.

In this research, the researcher uses the rubric of speaking test suggested by Haris (1979:81). It will be used as the indicators of the instruments of this research because in this case the components of speaking test are more complete and more detail. According to Harris (1979:81), there are some indicators of speaking rubric, such as: pronunciation, structure, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. Each component also has scoring or rating. The scoring consists of five levels. Each level explains the students’ speaking skill. Thus, the teacher will be able to give the score easily and objectively.

The scoring that will be used in this research (it is adapted from the Language Testing English as Second Language by Haris (1979:81))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pronunciation</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Easy to understand and has native speaker’s accent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Easy to understand although having the certain accent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>There is problem in pronunciation that make listeners should concentrate and sometimes find misunderstanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>It is difficult to understand because of pronunciation problem, and often asked to repeat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Serious problem in pronunciation, and it cannot be understood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structure/grammar</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Nothing or just a few mistakes found in structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>It is sometimes make mistakes in structure, but it doesn’t influence the meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>It is often makes mistake of structure and influence the meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>It makes a lot of mistakes that influence the meaning, and often rearrange the sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The mistakes of structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Using vocabulary and expression like native speaker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sometimes use in appropriate vocabulary and should explain the idea because of limited vocabulary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Often use inappropriate vocabulary, the conversation is limited because limited</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE I
SPEAKING SCORING RUBRIC
d. The Concept of Simulation

Brown (1994: 180) states “Simulations usually involve more complex structure an offer larger groups (of 6 to 20) where the entire group is working through an imaginary situation a social unit, the object of which is to solve some specific problems”. Furthermore Oxford (1995: 1103) defines “Simulation is the deliberate making of certain conditions that could exist in reality”.

Vernon, et al (2003: 248) says “Simulation is the replication of real situations which have designed to be as near the actual event or process as possible.” Moreover, Ely (2003: 380) states “Simulation is a special category of real things. Simulation is a simplified, operational model of a real-life situation that provides students with vicarious participation in a variety of roles and events.”

e. Components of Simulation

When the students play a game or simulation in the classroom they assume roles and participate in the decision-making process. The objective of the game and the rules under which it operates are clearly stated.

According to Vernon, et al (2003:381), the properties of a simulation include:

1. A small, fixed set of players striving to reach a goal.
2. Rules which define the legitimate actions of the players.
3. A basic sequence and structure within which the actions take place
4. A time limit.

Jones (1982, pp. 4-5) terms, the three essential elements of simulations: (a) Reality of function (participants are assigned roles and are told they must fully accept them both mentally and behaviorally as if they were actually those people); (b) simulated environment (a realistic setting constructed to enhance role-acceptance by utilizing a variety of realia. (c) Structure (the whole action is built around a set of problems or tasks---not invented by the participants but rather evolve as the action progresses).

f. Procedures of Applying Simulation
Vernon (2003: 383) states three ideas for using simulations:

1. Creating awareness
   Simulations can be used to give pupils an awareness of the subject being studied. Creating awareness is, of course, an affective objective.

2. Constructing objective before using simulation. Teachers must also develop a means of assessing whether or not the pupils attain that objective.

3. Involving the students.
   Some teachers have had success in developing their own simulation; frequently they involve the pupils in the development.

g. Advantages of Simulations
   Simulations permit students to experience lifelike situations in which there is social interaction and an observable outcome. The ability to observe the consequences of actions permits a student to reflect on the process as well as on the actual result of the game. Most games contribute more to the development of social processes than to the acquisition of information or basic learning content. According to Vernon (2003: 382), there are other unique advantages:

   1. Students seek to solve problems in which they are intimately involved.
   2. Students are satisfied when they sense a new insight as new ideas and concept are formulated.
   3. Students are placed in a more realistic environment that in any other form of learning (except when the actual experience occurs).
   4. A full range media can be used to create realistic simulated environments. Stove, frying pan, and other media offer opportunities to capture and distribute useful stimuli.

5. A high degree of interest is generated through realistic participation.

6. Running a Fluency Activity

Scrivener (2005: 161) offers the activity route map as below. It works well for a fluency activity.

**TABLE II
SIMULATION STAGES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Teacher involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Before the lesson: teachers familiarise with the material and activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>In class: lead-in/prepare for the activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Set up the activity (or section of activity), i.e. give instruction, make groupings, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Run the activity (or section): students do the activity, while teachers monitor and help</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Close the activity (or section) and invite feedback from the students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Post-activity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A useful thing for teachers to do during stage 4 above is to take notes of interesting student utterances (correct and incorrect) for possible use later on (at the end of the activity).

The main aim is to get the students to speak, then one way to achieve that would be for teacher to reduce own contributions. Probably teacher less to speak, the more space it will allow the students. It can be useful to aim to say nothing while the activity is underway, and save any contributions for before and after. In an activity mainly geared towards encouraging
fluency, the teacher likely to monitor discreetly or vanish.

This research was designed as action research. The researcher chose the classroom action research design. This kind of the research hopes could solve teacher’s problem in teaching process. Action research is simply a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participant in social situations in order to improve the rationally and justice of their own practices, their understanding of these practises and the situations in which the practices are carried out (Carr and Kemmis, 1986). Action research is also a process of studying a real school or class situation to improve the quality of actions or instructions (Mc Taggart, 1997).

As the sample of this research, the researcher took whole numbers of the population of IK B at Dynasty Computer Solok, it meant that the sample technique used was total sampling technique.

Researcher and collaborators had found students’ improvement in all indicators in second cycle. Therefore, researcher decided to stop in second cycle.

Based on the model above, the action research was the cyclical process. The following are the steps:

Cycle 1
1. Plan
   The researcher would plan the activities before applying simulation in teaching speaking skill.
   1. Prepare the lesson plan of teaching speaking skill by using simulation.
   2. Prepare media needed in teaching speaking skill.
   3. Prepare a research instrument (speaking test, field note, and video recording).
   4. Prepare the test items to check the students’ ability for every cycle.
   5. Meet the collaborators and explain what and how to do in the classroom.

2. Action
   In this stage, the researcher would do the action / activity of teaching and learning process by using simulation and collaborators would observe all the activities of teaching process would be based on the lesson plan. After the researcher did the action, she would ask some students to do as what she had done. In this case the researcher would teach about procedure text. the topic was drink.

3. Observation
   While doing the action, collaborators observed the teaching and learning process, the activities were done by the students and researcher herself. It would be observed until all students improved. Collaborators would take field note for each step in the teaching and learning process.

4. Reflection
   After doing the observation, the researcher and collaborators would discuss the result of the first cycle based on field notes. Researcher would analyze the data that have been gotten during observation. Then researcher would decide to make revision in the next cycle if the result of speaking test was still low.

5. Revise Plan
   After all the activities took place in the classroom at the first cycle, the researcher revised the plan of the related to what the lack of the research; the technique was applied in the classroom activity. At the second cycle the researcher applied the action with the revised plan.

III. CONCLUSIONS

Most of the students were interested because they were involved directly. After teaching through simulation, the researcher found that the students’ were improved significantly in speaking English. Most of the students enjoyed and relaxed in studying in the classroom because they felt like studying at home.
Students’ speaking ability improved significantly after practicing speaking through simulation. It can be seen that when it was compared before studying through simulation and after studying through simulation.

REFERENCES