Leaning and Teaching of Speaking through English Debate Club

Penta Olivia Rayendra, Fatchul Mu'in, Nanik Mariani

English Language Education Study Program, Lambung Mangkurat University

Abstract

This research was meant to observe the process of teaching speaking using small-group discussion method to the students in English Debating Club at SMA Negeri 7 Banjarmasin. This research applied qualitative research method due to the source of the data collected, that is observation. The researcher concludes that the goals of small group discussion can be accomplished when both teacher and students are active in the activity since in discussion technique, without communication, group members could not achieve their goals. Discussion is an incredibly valuable tool in small group teaching technique to address the issues, such as performance, authenticity, etc., in a balanced and collaborative way while engaging with particular topic. The power of teacher to maintaining the classroom interaction while the small group discussion activity is going on is essential. The teacher talk such as deals with feelings, praises or encourages, uses ideas of students, asks question, gives information and correct without rejection, and gives direction, is essential. The teacher needs to realize the differences between the amount of time that is allocated to a class and the amount of time students are engaged in learning activity. Both time allocation and management of engaged time are vital issues for teacher. Establishing clear classroom rules and effectively pacing a class are essential.

Key words: learning and teaching, speaking, English Debate Club

INTRODUCTION

Language, as defined by Finocchiaro (1964), is a system of arbitrary vocal symbols, which permit all people in a given culture, or other people who have learned the system of that culture to communicate or to interact. One of the characteristics of language is that it is basically spoken (Fatchul Mu'in & Sirajuddin Kamal, 2006; Nanik Mariani & Fatchul Mu'in, 2007; Fatchul Mu'in et al., 2018; and Fatchul Mu'in (Editor), 2019).

It is well-known that language learning consists of the development of four basic types of skills: listening, writing, reading, and speaking. Speaking is one of the four language skills which require the verbal form for learners to communicate with others to achieve specific goals or to express their opinions, intentions, hopes, and viewpoints. It is one way to communicate the ideas and message orally. To become a skillful speaker of foreign language, one should be sure that he/she has mastered the four basic types of skill on a decent level. In almost any form of language, speaking is the most frequently used language skill (Fatchul Mu'in et al., 2018).

Speaking is not necessarily a secure part of language learning. People can effectively mastering reading and writing skill through the written word, but speaking ability does not always follow. To mastering speaking skill, the learners need to improve the skill through different kinds of learning activity. That is why learning the spoken foreign language can be a challenge in its own right (Knapp and Antos, 2009: 401).

Speaking is an oral and receptive skill, which means that it contains auditory perception and understanding of the information. It also involves communicative performance and other essential elements, such as pronunciation, intonation, grammar, vocabulary, etc. Speaking is closely connected to listening; it means the partners are allowed to engage in a conversation with each other to clarify something or to influence the process of speaking-listening. To enable students to communicate, we need to apply the language in real communication. According to Gert and Hans (2008: 207), speaking is a speech of our utterances to have intention to be recognized by speaker, and the receiver processes the statements to understand their intentions.

The researcher was interested to observe the process of teaching speaking using small-group discussion method to know the work of the technique to the students in English Debating Club at SMA Negeri 7 Banjarmasin. Where the student's member of the club have already had experience in learning English skills, in this club, the students are receiving additional English activity to be prepared in several competitions such as debate competition, speech, story-telling, scrabble, etc. The students who are interested in joining the club will be trained twice a week by the teacher.

In English Debating Club, the students are practicing various activities to improve their English skills, especially speaking. Hence, the students enjoy discussions and the arenas of thought they uncover, so it might help to provoke their speaking skills in English. It is hoped

that this teaching technique will suit the needed of the English Debating Club itself: making the students more advance in speaking.

Research Problem

How is the process of teaching speaking at English Debate Club in SMA Negeri 7 Banjarmasin using small-group discussion technique?

Objective of the Study

This research is an attempt to describe the process of the English teacher in teaching speaking using small group discussion technique in English Debating Club of SMA Negeri 7 Banjarmasin.

METHOD OD RESEARCH

Approach and Type of Research

This research does not involve numbers or numerical data, so that, qualitative research method is applied due to the source of the data collected, that is observation. Qualitative methods place primary emphasis on saturation (i.e., obtaining a comprehensive understanding by continuing to sample until no new substantive information is acquired) (Miles and Huberman 1994).

Subject of the research

The subject of this research is the English teacher of SMA Negeri 7 Banjarmasin, who is handling the English Debating Club and have at least two-year experience of teaching English Debating Club in that school.

Those requirements are essential to make sure the teacher has enough experience in teaching English, especially speaking, and able to apply the small group discussion technique in teaching and learning speaking activity.

Instrumentation

This research uses observation sheet in collecting the primary data in the teaching-learning process. The observation sheet methods are useful to researchers in a variety of ways. They provide researchers with ways to check for nonverbal expression of feelings, determine who interacts with whom, grasp how participants communicate with each other and check for how much time is spent on various activities (Schmuck, 1997).

In this research, the research uses FLINT analysis form to observe the classroom interaction that happened in small group discussion method. According to Moskowitz's FLINT in Brown (2001:170) there are seven categories of teacher talk, they are: (1) deals with feelings,

(2) praises or encourages, (3) uses ideas of students, (4) asks question, (5) gives information and correct without rejection, (6) gives direction, (7) joking, (8) repeating student response verbatim, and (9) criticizes students' response and behavior. And there are also students talk described as (1) student response specific, (2) student response, open-ended or student-initiated, (3) silence, (4) silence-AV, (5) confusion, work-oriented and non-work-oriented, (6) laughing, (7) using the native language, and (8) nonverbal / gestures.

The researcher will do the observation-only once depends on how many times the teacher or coach will finish the SGD technique. If it possible to complete the activity in one day, the researcher will only take one-time observation since there is only one class for this English Debating class.

Conducting observations involves a variety of activities and considerations for the researcher, which include ethics, establishing rapport, selecting key informants, the processes for conducting observations, deciding what and when to observe, keeping field notes, and writing up one's findings.

By using observational as the instrument, later, the researcher will gain the natural and accurate situation of teaching small group discussion method, because the observation method has that direct and practical characteristic. Observations can be made in real-life situations, allowing the researcher access to the context and meaning surrounding what people say and do.

Recording-transcription

Transcriptions need to be very detailed to capture features of talk such as emphasis, speed, tone of voice, timing, and pauses, but these elements can be crucial for interpreting data.

Students Hand-out.

This is the printable form of the topic that the teacher will ask to students to be discussed. The contents are the general information about the topic, the problem they need to solve, the set-up for the activity in small group discussion (so the students will not confuse in following the method, also contains of the small group activity steps), and the information about the choices they should take at the end of the activity. It also comprises of several questions related to the factor about the options, which will either help or influence then students' decision later.

Data Analysis

The data of this research were taken from the observation sheet. The analysis of this research is used descriptive method.

Step 1: Observation

The observation sheets used are the highly structured observations. It is an observation sheet that consists of a checklist to observe the research object in a situation which related to the purpose of the study. After filled the observation sheet, the researcher will describe and summarize the teacher's activity while teaching speaking with small group discussion. There will be two observations as the small group discussion session in teacher's lesson plan for the English club.

Step 2: Recording-Transcription

The researcher transferred tape-recorded data onto paper and read it to get an idea of what the data were about.

Step 3: Checking and Editing

The data was divided into smaller related (meaningful) units. This was achieved by reading each paragraph and recording the themes that were in every paragraph. Similar themes were then grouped to make related units.

Step 4: Analysis and Interpretation

Psychological meaning was used to interpret the themes, from step 2. This was achieved by using the author's understanding of the themes that were presented. The psychological interpretation was then used as the facts.

Step 5: Generalization

The differences and similarities between the different interviews were identified, allowing typologies to develop.

The author summarized the units in the order that suited her by dividing them into related paragraphs. The differences were also grouped into individual paragraphs.

Step 6: Validation

Validity of the data was checked by going through the transcripts again and allowing my colleague to read it as well- to validate the findings.

The central theme was then obtained (Karlsson, undated; Krippendorff,1980; Sarantakos, 1998).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Research Results

There are several classroom interactions created in small group discussion activity. In this section, the teacher gave students a real and tangible problem to solve with the title: 'Fuel Alternative Energy for Future Car.' By focusing on practical learning, the students can resolve the issues given by the teacher with their group and created the active speaking and listening situation.

This method is implemented in teamwork of students. By discussing the issues together, the students can develop their own idea, decide the solution, and make presentation of their choice. This was enhanced the student's activeness in taking part in their group role.

In the post-activity, the teacher opened the activity by giving the general information about the lesson they will have. Showing media (video about car pollution) to open the session and to ask several questions to attract student's attention. This activity will help students to be more engage with the topic of the activity and provoking students' initiation.

There were several teacher behaviors in classroom while the teaching-learning activity was on progress, such as: setting up and guiding learners through meaningful real-world problem, moving around the room monitoring/questioning, encouraging students to consider alternative ways to solve problems/test solutions, promoting student use of inquiry through questioning,

In group learning, the learners are interacting with one another while they were discussing actively and applying the lesson material. In group learning, learners discuss a specific issue in small consensus groups. The occurrence of formal and informal speaking along the discussion became the prove of speech that naturally flow from one to another as the authentic result in learning speaking with foreign language.

The researcher found several patterns of interaction in teacher's teaching method using small group discussion. From teacher to students, students to teacher, students to students, and teacher-students to students, and students-teacher to teacher.

Observation and Evaluation

Observation was the process of recording and collecting data about any aspects or events that happen during the teaching and learning process. The primary purpose of conducting observation was to check and evaluate whether the method applied was successful or not. In this research, data collections were teacher's method in teaching speaking using small group discussion.

The process of observation took the full time of speaking activity in one meeting. It also helped by the observation sheets that been taken from "Language in Oral Production Perspective" (2018). The whole activity was well checked on observation and had been recorded as in video and audio by the researcher, which will become the dialog transcript for this

research. This will help the researcher to evaluate the result of the small group activity technique in teaching speaking activity.

The Description of Research Result

In this small group discussion activity, the teacher has set-up the activities by dividing the group member, prepared the students hand-out, and giving the background knowledge for the topic. The teacher also asked questions, response the students' comment or questions, occasionally explaining and pull the discussion session into the well-ended summarization. The type of teaching method that happened which commonly used in teaching EFL learners in this technique are Learner-Centered method and Content-Focused method.

As mentioned in the steps of the research activity, the steps are observation, recording-transcription, checking and editing, analysis and interpretation, generalization, and validation.

In observation, the researcher was helped by the observation sheet to check the activity goals. As it appeared on the observation sheet, there are some points showed along the teaching speaking with small group discussion activity.

Giving direction is the first checked that the teacher got. From the very start of the teaching-learning activity, the teacher-led the students to understand about the activity they would do. The teacher was facilitating the class with media and the direction for students to follow.

The teacher could deal with students feeling as her treating the students in a non-threatening way by asking the students feeling before starting the lesson. Praises and encourages also appear in the classroom interaction between teacher and student. When the teacher crouching around is the proper time for teacher to help. Jokes were made by the teacher spontaneously but not too much to still focus on the activity. The next checkpoint is the use of ideas of students. The teacher clarifying, interpreting, and summarizing the ideas of the students in the activity by saying: "So you think water is the best choice because it possible to contribute less pollution?" Use the idea of student will encourage student talk during the learning activity and promote their knowledge.

The next is gives information and correct without rejection. We can see this when teacher was in group 3 and said: "Well, good point. It uses electricity as you said, it means we will need even more electrical power and to produce more electric power we need more energy, right? Think about that point, too, OK?" By this category, the teacher should avoid rejection when giving respond to student's idea, as stated in Fatchul Mu'in et al., (2018), rejection will not provide good influence for the students; instead, it will make students feel un-confidence to express their idea.

As the starter, the teacher tried to be the media between students and the topic by asking several questions to the students, such as: "How do you go to school today?" and students gave good response toward the questions by answering with various answers. After that, the teacher continued her job in set-up and guide students through significant real-world problems by giving further questions as the extension of the former one. The teacher asked by saying, "Can you

imagine how much pollution that these vehicles (car & motorcycle) produce and the effect to the earth?" and the students gave the response by mentioning "global warming" and "bad for the air." The next step that teacher did is explain about the teaching and learning activity they will have at that time and showing media related to the topic (video about pollution). The students pay a close attention toward the video because they already knew; the materials will be connected to the video.

As it is said in Fatchul Mu'in, et al. (2018): Oral-auditory communication has many advantages over other possible means of communication. By using real-world examples, the teacher reaches the strategies of teaching speaking in classroom, which can make learning on essential issues more meaningful to students, and it can help spark excitement in learning. This is supported by research showing the value of authenticity when students are exposed to teaching strategies based on the use of real-world lives and scenarios. This strategy also has several benefits for the students.

The first one, they got a meaningful learning activity in speaking and able to engage in activity easily. Then, they also became more aware of the choices they make in society. After that, the teacher divided the students to be group of 3. Each group has five students who discussed and shared their opinion on choosing the best fuel for future car. When the students were discussing, the teacher moving around the room did monitoring and questioning all group. The teacher approaches each group and asked question such as: "How is your discussion going? Have you found and choose the best solution?" and "But, have you considered the disadvantage?" The purpose of these actions is to give attention for all students and motivation for student who lack of interest. Crouching in, around, or behind the students or group have several advantages. First is to give messages. The message could be implicitly help the students in improving their discussion. Second is that physically the teacher is at the same height as the students. It means that the teacher makes more personal and less threatening interaction which will create an enjoyable situation for students in discussion. There are times when sitting is also a good idea, because somehow, when the teacher is around and standing near them too long, few students feel it is distracting and could not concentrate on their discussion.

Next, while the students were discussing, the researcher found the gap between each member of the group which caused by the domination of some participants. For example, when student from group 3 consume too much time to explain their idea by saying: "So, based on the video we should consider several points, and somehow I know …. How about if we make some expensive car that can perform like the conventional car which is greener and environmentally better. So, I thought maybe Lithium-ion battery car. It says that this energy is a quiet, non-polluting drive car. Pollution has many bad impacts. And it has more efficient use rather than the hydrogen and biofuels one. And its battery means that we just need electrical power to turn it on. So, everyone can easily manage their car energy through battery power, right?"

This speaker was not only explaining in a long way but also take part in every statement given by her friends. As the effect, it took longer time for the group to have the idea of each

member been delivered, and the activity became time-consuming. Teacher also had to fix the problem in students who are not able to talk fluently. Several factors such as unconfident, being dominated by particular group member, or lack of knowledge in issue given, became the barrier of discussing using English in small group discussion.

It is also possible, hand-out that the teacher has given, made the students became material-oriented. Few students were only reading the text in hand-out and gave less contribution toward the discussion. This is where the teacher should more engage to the students, so they will have their own thought rather than read the materials given only. The teacher could ask the question which designed to encourage students to explain and discuss their topic with logic instead of stating their point of argument is right or wrong.

In the presentation section, the students give the conclusion of the choice of their group discussion. In this section, all the students came to the front and gave several point of the result of their discussion in turn. Some students got the long part, and some are just in brief and short sentence. The value of this presentation is the confidence of each student while talking in front of larger group. It is true that by discussing the idea before presenting it can improve their confidence in speaking English in front of larger group.

As the last section, the teacher gave conclusion of each group choice about the proper fuel for future car. Feedback was also provided by the teacher briefly to make sure there is no misunderstanding toward each point of the group.

Discussion of Research Results

Discussion ideally yields results both in terms of subject-specific learning and in terms of students' critical reflections about their interactions with one another (Brookfield and Preskill, 2005). They argue that discussion itself, when structured appropriately, is a means of creating an environment where small group teaching is both engaging and enlightening. We see these patterns of interaction by the group dynamics and performances ended up with particular conversation may not work out exactly as planned. When the students

Based on the findings, small group method with discussion technique applied the Think-Pair-Share (TPS) teaching model as the fundamental guide. The three steps have been preceded and gave no problem for the students to follow. This model motivates and gave students opportunity to discuss and to validate the result of their thought with their small group before present it in larger class discussion.

As it is said before, the small group discussion activity offers an ideal venue for the sharing ideas, strategies, and opinions. This approach emphasizes the purpose communication serves in small groups, and it makes it clear that, without communication, group members could not accomplish their goals. This is what makes small group discussion need active role of the teacher to steer the situation.

Students' hand-out, which is the idea of the teacher, makes students more natural to understand about the topic. The content helped the students gained additional background

knowledge of the topic, so they will be more even sure about what they will learn in this activity.

The teacher prepared the materials for discussion as a form of improvisation in teaching speaking. By understanding the information given, the students were helped to develop sharing their idea. As a result, the discussion activity flowed as it should be.

By giving questions and praising, the teacher drove the interaction between learners became more cooperative. They planned and carried out the idea for their group, tutored one another, analyzed and worked on problems together, and presented the result confidently in front of the class.

The teacher talks mainly occurred in this activity as it should trigger the interaction in the class. According to Ur (1996:228), teacher talk is one of the interaction patterns, this may involve some silent student response such as writing from dictation, but there is no initiative on the part of student.

The researcher also paid attention to the students talk to analyze the students' response toward the teaching-learning method. The specific response such as: "we choose biofuels as the better alternative energy, Ma'am." and "Yes, but still… we talk about." as their response to the teacher's question. It occurred that the students are not always being grammatically correct about their spontaneous response along the teaching speaking but it can be the first stage for them to reach the confidence in delivering their response toward something.

It is correct that somehow, in small group discussion, the teacher as presenter involves less than other methods. But as a guide, teacher should be more concerned about whether teaching emphasis is placed primarily on course context, interpersonal relationship, or on classroom discipline and control. The improvisation of teacher is highly required in this activity so the students' speech along the discussion will not be boring or stuck in certain level of conversation. In some cases, it possible for the teacher to involve more in the activity depends on the students speaking ability. The less they can talk, the more teacher should involve.

Managing to lead, without dominating the discussion oneself, is another fundamental aspect of navigating an authentic but equitable performance of the teacher role in a small group context. As it said in Fatchul Mu'in et al. (2018), the teacher cannot be a selfish, and teacher should take care of students feeling to make a good and comfort interaction among the teacher and the students in the classroom.

It is also believed that in teaching speaking, the teacher has to help students to be active not only depend on the theory as it is taught in English lesson but also helping them to take part in the act of producing sounds and thinking of the words they about to say. By this technique, the researcher believes that the teacher of SMA Negeri 7 Banjarmasin has fulfilled her role as the coach of English Debating Club, whose purpose is to prepare the students in English skill, especially speaking ability.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusion

Related to the researcher finding in previous part, the researcher concludes that the goals of small group discussion can be accomplished when both teacher and students are active in the activity since in discussion technique, without communication, group members could not achieve their goals. It can be seen from the last performance of the students in presenting the result of their discussion. They successfully gain the further result and able to explain the resolving idea for the real-world problem given. Teaching speaking using small group discussion is one of the suitable techniques for teacher to teach speaking to improve the communicative skill in English language between students.

Discussion is an incredibly valuable tool in small group teaching technique to address the issues, such as performance, authenticity, etc., in a balanced and collaborative way while engaging with particular topic. The power of teacher to maintaining the classroom interaction while the small group discussion activity is going on is essential. The teacher talk such as deals with feelings, praises or encourages, uses ideas of students, asks question, gives information and correct without rejection, and gives direction, is essential.

The teacher needs to realize the differences between the amount of time that is allocated to a class and the amount of time students are engaged in learning activity. Both time allocation and management of engaged time are vital issues for teacher. Establishing clear classroom rules and effectively pacing a class are essential.

Suggestions

Based on the result of the research, the researcher gives some suggestion as follows:

1. Since this method is the learner-centered, teacher as presenter need to be as firm as they can, because the participants will be relying on how the presenter manage the topic, rules, and time, so the goals of small group discussion could be achieved.
2. The time management for each speaker turn in group discussion may be needed to give the same speech-time portion to all the students.
3. Teacher talk and student talk are the most crucial focus in practicing classroom interaction. Accurately, in small group discussion, the teacher should keep the communication between students going. And enhancing the students' idea in their group is one of the fundamental parts in the activity.
4. There are a lot of activities to teach speaking skill. Moreover, the teacher should concerned more on which activity is better based on their students needed (students level, the ability to follow the more accessible or more difficult step that will effecting the time-consumption, etc.).

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