THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILL AT "FIRST COURSE": A CASE STUDY AT A BOARDING COURSE

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Abstract

  This research was to investigate the teaching of English speaking skill at "First Course": at a boarding course in Bangkalan. This research is a descriptive case study of First Course. The subject of this research was two instructors who taught the book two level at First Course. The data of this research was the information that researcher collected from the result of interview and observation. The sources of data were the instructors and classroom activities. The instructor collected the data by using interview guide, observation sheet and field note. The information was in the form of the interview transcript and classroom observation (field note). The analysis of the research data resulted in several findings concerning the preparation of the teaching of English speaking skill and the implementation of the preparation on the teaching of English speaking skill at First Course that covered lesson plan, material and media, teaching techniques, assessment and evaluation, and assignment. The instructors not only taught English speaking to the students but also built the good students' character. They improved morality, trained and strengthened spirit, appreciated the religious values, and taught attitude, politeness, discipline, diligence, honesty, responsibility, democratic, work hard, etc. Character education is one of way to build good characters and personality to the students of First Course in learning English.

Keywords: teaching English, speaking skill, First Course, boarding course.

Introduction

  Speaking English is an important skill in the process of language learning. The learners communicate through oral expression to gain much information effectively and efficiently. The teacher should be aware of the learners' speaking ability because it significantly influences the other learners' success in language learning. The ability to speak a foreign language becomes the most highly prized language skill. Many language learners regard speaking skill as the measure of knowing a language. It is supported by Nunan (1991:39) who states that mastering the art of speaking is the single most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language, and success is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the language. Furthermore, Richards (2008:19)

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states the mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many second-language or foreign-language learners. Therefore, it can be said that speaking as a skill plays a significant role for the students who studied English especially as a foreign language.

As we know, these learners define fluency as the ability to converse with others, much more than the ability to read, write, listen and comprehend oral language. They regard speaking as the most important skill they can acquire, and they assess their progress in terms of their accomplishments in spoken communication. The highest teachers' aim is making their students able to communicate and convey information effectively in spoken English. Besides, the teachers should create active learning condition and develop their techniques. Related with the second/foreign language learning, it is very important to teach and to learn speaking, because oral speech is commonly used in communication and more effective than the other language skills.

Based on the researcher's preliminary observation, First Course is one of the English course institutions which is unique and has strength to make their graduates able to speak English well until they can get a job in a foreign country quickly. "Unique", in this case, means that the students learn English in a boarding course (*Pondok*). It is a dormitory which provides and serves teaching-learning process and also accommodates the students/learners to stay, learn, and interact in English that takes place at non-formal education. It is generally intended for those who study especially English where the students come from different or the same regions, different educational background to learn English together. They learn what they will actually need to prepare their future.

While "the strength" of First Course institution, based on the field survey, right now, is that the total of students is about 450 students; it is lessened by some students who are joining the job training in the hotels in Surabaya and Bali. Every month, there are around 30-50 students who register to First Course boarding course. With the total number of students who register to learn English every month until the total number of students who stay in the First Course boarding course, this case shows that the enthusiasm of society gives a trust to First Course Institution to give education to their sons especially in learning English. Besides, First Course becomes a suitable and quality place for the students to build good characters.

Due to the uniqueness and strength, the researcher is interested to conduct a study on the teaching of English speaking skill. This study is entitled as the teaching of English speaking skill at First Course. The First Course institution is trusted by people even though so many English course institutions come up. Yet, First Course can stand and continue the success to develop its business in the education field.

In line with the title and the background of this study, a major research question is formulated as follows: How is the process of the teaching of English speaking skill at First Course? Meanwhile, to answer

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the major research question, two sub-research questions are formulated as follows:

1. How is the preparation of the teaching of English speaking skill at First Course?
2. How is the implementation of the preparation on the teaching of English speaking skill at First Course?

Teaching Speaking at Non-Formal Education Context

The goal of teaching and learning English in Indonesia is to develop communicative skills that include the skill of listening, speaking, reading, and writing proportionately. Therefore, the teacher should provide the students with speaking tasks and give them opportunities to use the target language to communicate with others. The teacher can use the speaking class to improve the students' speaking ability. To make the speaking class works and improves the students' ability in speaking skill is not easy. Students usually keep silent and listen to what the teacher says rather than take a part in the speaking class. They do not want to make mistake because it is shameful.

As stated by Harmer (1998:87), there are six things that the teacher should do in teaching speaking as follows:

1. The teachers should know what kind of speaking tasks that the students should do.
2. The teachers should encourage the students to do the speaking tasks.
3. The teacher should know the kinds of speaking activities (look like) such as; information gaps, surveys, discussion, and role play.
4. The teacher should know how to correct speaking activity.
5. Teachers should get involved with their students during a speaking activity and want to join in too.
6. The teachers should know how speaking activities fit into ESA: Engaged-Study-Activate, that is the teacher gets students interested in the topic.

Coombs and Ahmed (1974) in Rogers (2005:78) defines "non-formal education…is any organized, systematic, educational activity carried out outside the framework of the formal system to provide selected types of learning to particular subgroups in the population, adults as well as children.

At First Course, based on the observation, the process of teaching and learning was held for twenty one meetings in a week. The First Course' students are obligated to communicate or practice English all the time. The students have to stay at First Course boarding course that has been provided by the owner. The students learn English more intensively since they must stay in the dormitory and use English as their compulsory language in their daily communication. Besides, Indonesian national education system Law number 20/2003 states that the goal of national

education is to develop educated people with life skill and good character building. Thus, all levels of education should integrate character values into curriculum, syllabus, lesson plan and in teaching-learning material. In this case, First Course institution as non-formal education aims to provide educational services to students/communities on the teaching of English speaking skill and to educate the students with good character building.

Research Method

This study is a descriptive case study. The study placed the researcher as the key instrument to obtain any data from its source. The researcher himself collected and analyzed the data. To collect the data, the researcher used interview and observation technique as a qualitative one.

In collecting the data, firstly, for the first sub research question concerning the preparation of the teaching of English speaking skill, the source of data was two instructors. The researcher collected the data by using interview technique. This interview was done using interview guide that contains some major questions to be addressed to the instructors. Secondly, for the second sub research question concerning the implementation of the preparation of the teaching of English speaking skill, the source of data was the classroom activities. The researcher collected the data by using observation technique. In this research, the researcher used an observation sheet and field note to observe the teaching-learning activities.

In the data analysis process, firstly, the researcher analyzed the interview transcript which includes the preparation of the teaching of English speaking skill at First Course. The preparation covers: lesson plan, materials and media, teaching techniques, form of assessment and evaluation, and form assignment. Besides, the researcher also analyzed the result of classroom observation (field note) related to the implementation of the preparation on the teaching of English speaking skill at First Course.

Results

1. Lesson Plan.
   The instructors did not provide the lesson plan in teaching of English speaking skill. They kept the unwritten plan in their mind.
2. Material and Media.
   The instructors prepared soft copy and hard copy. They used a course book (English 900 by Collier Macmillan). The instructors also used media such as: pictures, card, dictionary, microphone and internet.

3. Teaching Techniques.
   The instructors used storytelling, question and answer, discussion, describing, debating and interviewing.
4. Form of Assessment and Evaluation.
   The instructors assessed and evaluated the students' speaking skill by providing an oral test through storytelling, question and answer, and interview.
5. Form of Assignment.
   The instructors gave an oral assignment. The instructors asked the students to make better preparation to perform the assignment such as: telling a story and having an interview.

Discussion

In this section, the researcher presents the discussion of the findings of the research as presented in the previous sections. The first point is about the instructors' preparation of the teaching of English speaking skill at First Course. The second point is about the instructors' implementation of the preparation on the teaching of English speaking skill at First Course. The researcher presents the discussion of research findings as follows:

1. Lesson Plan.

   The result of interview concerning the preparation, it was found that the instructors did not provide the lesson plan in written form on the preparation of the teaching-learning process. Yet, they kept the unwritten plan in their mind. They developed the outline of their teaching activities at their cognitive level before entering the classroom. The unwritten lesson plan was relatively flexible used by the instructors. It could be changed according to the classroom situation and the students' needs. The instructors can develop their lessons by considering the activities and teaching procedures that they want to use in teaching-learning process than starting their planning processes by detailed considerations of input or output. It is in line with Richards (2013:13) states that central design curriculum development starts with the selection of teaching activities, techniques and methods rather than with the elaboration of a detailed language syllabus or specification of learning outcomes.

   The result of observations concerning the implementation, to reflect that they made a preparation in their mind, they presented the teaching-learning activities consistently. Their teaching contains three major parts: 1) Pre-teaching. 2) Whilst-teaching. 3) Post-teaching. Yet, the existence of lesson plan in written form is very important for the instructor in teaching-learning process. It provides a guide for managing and conducting the learning environment. The teacher/instructor has responsibility to design and implement the instruction. By providing the lesson plan in the written form, it would

be controlled and planned easily for the instructors to teach the students. Gower, Philip, and Walters (2005:175) state that writing of lesson plan has a number of important functions: an aid to planning, a working document, and a record.

2. Material and Media.

The result of interview concerning the preparation, it was found that the materials used by the instructors at First Course were soft copy and hard copy to help them in teaching speaking. These materials were considered good to use in the process of teaching and learning. The instructor provided the materials to be presented to the students in teaching-learning process. In addition, the instructors used printed material (English 900 book by Collier Macmillan) as a course book. The use of course book could help the instructors to incorporate into classroom activities. It is an invaluable resource. It needs adapting to meet the class needs. These materials were very helpful for instructional material. It is in line with Richards (1990:15) states that good instructional materials are an important part of the process of instruction. For instructor-provided materials, they can use the materials that are genuinely related to realistic communication activities.

Dealing with the media, it was found that the media used by the instructors at First Course were hard copy (pictures, cards, and dictionary), microphone and internet. Basically, they were not sufficient. Yet, with limited media available, the instructors could still use them to help the students on teaching-learning process. With the existence of internet, the instructor could look for some references to improve the new materials on the teaching of speaking skill in the classroom. Media are the means for transferring or delivering messages. Media are needed to attract the students' attention and to make the teaching-learning activities more interesting and effective; they offer powerful means to make the teaching-learning process effective to achieve specific classroom objectives. It is in line with what Mohan, McGregor, Strano (2001) state that if it is properly designed skillfully produced and effectively used have great influence on teaching-learning because it produces impact of save time, increase interest, hold attention, clarify ideas, reinforce concept, add tone, prove a point, and aid memory. Yet, the instructor should choose the right media because the media itself should be meaningful which deliver the purpose of teaching.

The result of observations concerning the implementation, the instructors used printed material (English 900 book by Collier Macmillan) as a course book. The use of course book could help the instructors to incorporate into classroom activities. The teachers/instructors have an important role to create an enjoyable and acceptable condition in order to make the process of teaching-learning goes well. It is in line with Usman's theory (2010:9-12), which

classifies the roles of a teacher as: a demonstrator, a mediator, a learning manager, a facilitator and an evaluator.

3. Teaching Techniques.

The result of interview concerning the preparation, it was found that the instructors used a number of teaching techniques. They are storytelling, question and answer, discussion, describing, debating, and interviewing. The techniques used by the instructors were based on their own teaching experience, some advises and suggestions, creativity, and references. The instructors combined all the techniques to be implemented in teaching speaking to achieve the students' speaking mastery. In addition, the students could accept the techniques implemented by the instructors and the students can master English speaking. The techniques used by the instructors to help the students to develop their speaking ability. Based on the techniques used by the instructor above, it was found that the process of the teaching of English speaking skill at First Course was very effective and it could help the students' speaking mastery. This is in line with Kayi's theory (2006) that there are some activities to promote speaking. They are discussion, role play, simulation, information gap, brainstorming, storytelling, interviews, story completion, reporting, picture describing and find the difference. In addition, the instructors could combine all the techniques. They could use and design speaking activities on the process of teaching-learning.

The result of observations concerning the implementation, the preparation of the teaching of English speaking skill conducted by the instructors was asking the students to get together or guide the students to come into their classroom. After the students were ready in their own classroom, then, the instructor asked the students to pray together. For this purpose, the process of the teaching-learning could run well. Then, the instructors began the lesson by greeting and giving motivation to the students. This motivation is a power that supports the students to do something and to start an activity. The teacher/instructor must arise the students' motivation in order to learn and the teacher/ instructor must attract students' response to participate actively. Brown (2000:72) says that motivation is the extent to which you make choices about (a) goals to pursue and (b) the effort you will devote to that pursuit. It is also supported by Harmer (2001:51) who says that it is some kinds of internal drive which push someone to do things in order to achieve something.

The instructors conducted some techniques in teaching speaking. They are storytelling, question and answer, and interview. Related to the techniques used, Brown (2000:275-276) states that there are seven principles for designing speaking techniques, those are: (1) Use techniques that cover the spectrum of learner needs, from language based focused on accuracy to message-based on interaction, meaning, and fluency, (2) Provide intrinsically motivating techniques, (3)

Encourage the use of authentic language in meaningful context, (4) Provide appropriate feedback and correction, (5) Capitalize on the natural link between speaking and listening, (6) Give students opportunities to initiate oral communication and (7) Encourage the development of speaking strategies. Based on the theory above, the instructor could design speaking techniques to help the students in real life communication and achieve the students' speaking mastery.

4. Form of Assessment and Evaluation.

The result of interview concerning the preparation, it was found that the instructors assessed the students' speaking skill by providing an oral test through storytelling, question and answer, and interview. It can be as an evaluation in the process of teaching-learning. The most important function of assessment is identifying how much learning has taken place. Assessment is mainly a tool to help learning, not only to evaluate it. Assessment result can help the instructors improve their program. Information gathered through regular assessment can be used to evaluate the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of their teaching-learning activities. It is in line with what UNESCO (2001:5) states that the results of our assessment may be useful for the planning process of our literacy programme: encourage more community participation, identify new learning needs, revise or modify existing materials and develop new ones, improve teaching learning techniques and plan new policy direction.

The result of observations concerning the implementation, the instructors assessed the students by providing an oral test. The instructor asked the students to tell a story, make question and answer, and have interview based on the topic given. In this case, the students could create their own stories to tell their classmates, foster their creative thinking, and make question and answer. Besides, the instructor did an interview to test the students' mastery on speaking. The purpose was to make the students to be accustomed to learn their speaking and train their mental. The instructor gave the speaking task every meeting to improve the students' speaking ability and to know the students' achievement during the process of teaching-learning. As stated by Harmer (1998:87) there are three basic reasons why it is a good idea to give students speaking tasks which provoke them to use all and any language at their command (1) Rehearsal, (2) Feedback, and (3) Engagement. Speaking activities which are given should be highly motivating, so that the teacher/instructor can give useful feedback for the students.

Assessment and evaluation must be an ongoing and integral part of the teaching-learning process. The evaluation is very important. Without an effective evaluation, it is impossible to know whether the process of teaching-learning have been effective or not. The purpose of this evaluation is to ascertain how far the instructors could achieve the learning objectives on their teaching and to make sure that the

students really understand what the instructor had already taught in teaching speaking. Worthen and Sanders (1973) states that evaluation is the determination of the worth of a thing. It includes obtaining information for use in judging the worth of program, product, procedure, or objective, or the potential utility of alternative approaches designed to attain specified objectivities (quoted by Richards, 1990:17).

5. Form of Assignment

The result of interview concerning the preparation, as reflected in the research finding, the instructors gave an oral assignment to the students at the end of the class. The instructors facilitated learning and manage the various activities by giving assignments. They could find some topics or materials given by the instructors. By providing assignment to the students, it can give them an opportunity to develop and display particular skills and knowledge. The instructor can make sure that the assignment is effective and useful. The instructor should define the task that the students to undertake, what the instructor's expectation for the assignment and know what the instructor want students to gain from the learning.

The result of observations concerning the implementation, the instructors provided an oral assignment. Generally, both instructors asked the students to make better preparation to perform or present the assignment that was given based on the topic given on the following meeting. This assignment can be additional task for the students. Thus, the students can make better preparation to do in performing task. It is a good idea for the instructors to give some punishment to the students who are not ready to present the assignment given so that the students really prepare for it. In teaching-learning process, giving assignment is the most common way in which instructors give students an opportunity to develop, apply and demonstrate new knowledge. Assignment is an important part of the learning process. Davis (1993:89) describes that some of the basics of preparing and presenting homework and writing assignment. It is important to keep three main points in mind:

- The teacher should be clear and specific with the students about what teacher's goals and expectations are for each assignment.
- The nature and construction of each assignment should reflect the learning goals the teacher articulated when he/she created the course.
- The assignment that the teachers create for the students should be challenging but not intimidating or overwhelming.

The instructors not only taught English speaking to the students but also built the good students' character. They improved morality, trained and strengthened spirit, appreciated the religious values, and

taught attitude, politeness, discipline, diligence, honesty, responsibility, democratic, work hard, etc.

In the implementation of teaching-learning process in the classroom, the instructors gave a good model, such as; asking the students to pray together before teaching-learning began (the application of religious), attending the class on time (the application of discipline of time), giving a freedom to the students about the topic which was discussed or taught (the application of democratic), giving assignment (the application of work hard), etc. In this case, the instructors had a role in build of students' characters. The character education which was provided by the instructors were memorized and followed by all the students. Character education is one of way to build good characters and personality to the students of First Course in learning English. It is in line with what Indonesian national education system Law number 20/2003, which states that the goal of national education is to develop educated people with life skill and good character building. Thus, it is not mistaken if many people give a trust to First Course institution to give education to their sons in learning English and build the good students characters. First Course can be one of the references for the students who want to learn English.

Conclusion

First Course is an English boarding course institution which provides and serves teaching-learning process and also accommodates the students/learners to stay, learn, and interact in English. As a result, through the interview and the classroom observation conducted by the researcher, it can be seen and concluded that the preparation and the implementation of the preparation on the teaching of English speaking skill at First Course as follows:

- The instructors did not provide a lesson plan in written form. Yet, the instructors kept the unwritten plan in their mind. In the implementation, to reflect that they made a preparation in their mind, they presented the teaching-learning activities consistently. Their teaching contains three major parts: 1) pre-teaching, 2) whilst-teaching, and 3) post-teaching. Thus, they developed the outline of their teaching activities at their cognitive level before entering the classroom. The instructors at First Course could still arrange and manage the teaching activities and the agenda for the whole time table based on their teaching experience.
- The instructors provided printed material that is a coursebook (English 900 by Collier Macmillan) as a handbook in teaching speaking. The media used by the instructor were pictures, cards, dictionary, and internet.
- The instructors conducted a number of teaching techniques such as: storytelling, question and answer, discussion, describing, debating and interviewing to help the students to develop their speaking skill.

- The instructors assessed and evaluated the students' speaking skills by providing an oral test through storytelling, question and answer and interview.
- The instructors not only taught English speaking to the students but also built the good students' character. They improved morality, trained and strengthened spirit, appreciated the religious values, and taught attitude, politeness, discipline, diligence, honesty, responsibility, democratic, work hard, etc. Character education is one of way to build good characters and personality to the students of First Course in learning English.

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