



Speaking Activities in English Debating Club: Study at English Conversation and Debating Club of SMKN 1 Pandeglang

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Abstract

The purposes of the research is aimed at knowing how speaking activities and speaking difficulties are practiced in English Debating Club. The method used in this research was a case study. The instruments used to collect the data were observation, questionnaire, and interview. The respondents were 15 students of English Conversation and Debating Club at SMKN 1 Pandeglang. The result of the research confirms that by joining English Conversation and Debating club, students are able to (1) speak English fluently because they have more practice; (2) they can speak English quietly accurate; (3) the students are custom to speak English; and (4) they also speak with few grammatical errors, few long pauses, and only few clarifications for the beginners debaters (junior members) than the experienced debaters (senior members). On the other side, the difficulties of speaking found when they selecting the data and evidences, making argument, and making rebuttal due to the various resources.

Keywords: speaking activities, speaking difficulties, debating

Introduction

English takes a role as a foreign language in this country. It also becomes one of the compulsory subjects that should be taught in junior high school as implied in the government regulation No. 19/2005 articles 6 verses 1 about the scope of subject in every level of education in the curriculum.

Basically, English consists of four skills to be taught. They are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Recently, speaking has played an increasingly important role in second/foreign language settings as a means of communication in daily life. Among the four skills, speaking seems to be an important skill that a learner should acquire since one of the major responsibilities of any teacher working with

English language learners is to enable students to communicate effectively through oral language.

In Indonesia, English speaking was a quite difficult skill to master because English was the second language. Actually, English speaking was the skill which was good to be learned by people since they were young or kids. However, teaching speaking in vocational high school in Pandeglang seemed unproductive. Mostly, Indonesian students were unconfident to speak in English.

Many factors cause this. They include untrained teacher, being lazy, afraid to make mistake, boring class etc. Similarly with the researcher's experiences in teaching English at vocational high school, it was found that the most of students had no good skill in



speaking with the various reasons such as afraid to make mistakes, lack of motivation, limited vocabularies, boring class etc.

It's contrary with a few part of students who joined in English debating club, they could enjoy speaking in English both communicating to the teacher and asking the questions, there were significant differences with the other students who did not join in the English debating club.

Therefore, through this research, the researchers are interested in investigating to know how the students practice speaking in English debating club, and also how the instructor trains their students in English debating club to explore their skill in speaking. Those methods and strategy which were used to, they could be transferred and applied in learning teaching at the classroom by the other English teachers as supplements or alternative methods and strategies.

It's needed to investigate deeply, not only asking the information or discussing with the instructor of English debating club. So that's why the researcher chooses this topic as the tittle of research. Hopefully, not only the researchers can get the advantages from this research but also for the other English teachers.

The aim in the speaking skill is challenging, so it is not easy thing. The teachers and students may face some problems in the teaching and learning of speaking. As Baihaqi (2017) stated that in conversation, as well as speaking, people

must really consider in turn taking patterns, the types of speech, the adjacency pairs, sequences, and also implicature. Those conditions may not appear by the monotonous teaching technique used by the teachers. Sometimes the classroom activities tended to be teacher centered. Some students sometimes were only passive in the teaching and learning process.

This is the challenge for the teachers to control the students' success in learning, they should be more creative. Many students cannot speak English and do not want to speak English. Even, Hikmah and Fajri (2018) concluded in their research that anxiety in speaking made students never felt quite sure of themselves when they were speaking in foreign language class.

Therefore, the researchers explore the students' perception in joining English debate class towards their speaking skill at students of vocational high school who join ECDC (English Conversation and Debating Club SMKN 1 Pandeglang) in order to find out what is the students' speaking activity.

The researchers choose ECDC since it won many regency and province debate tournaments, the only debate club in SMKN 1 Pandeglang which the goal is to provide the place for those who are interested in English debate and increase their speaking ability. In addition, there are two classes in ECDC which are English debate class and intensive English Conversation class. The researchers



only focus on the students who join English debate class.

This study is focused on speaking activity in English debating club of SMKN 1 Pandeglang. The sub-focus are Speaking activities practice in ECDC of SMKN 1 Pandeglang and the students' difficulties in speaking activity at ECDC of SMKN 1 Pandeglang.

Theoretical Review

Speaking Skill

According to Scoot (2005:79) "Speaking is considered as the productive and oral skill. Speaking is a cognitive skill, is the idea that knowledge become increases automatically through successive practice." Nunan (2003) stated that speaking is the productive oral skill. It consists of producing systematic verbal utterance to convey meaning." Kayi (2006) added that speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts. It means that speaking is an interaction between speakers with listeners. Based on the previous definitions, the researchers conclude that speaking is the process of sharing with others, knowledge, interests, attitudes, opinions or ideas, and the speaker's ideas become real to him and his listener.

Speaking skill is the ability to say, to address, to make known, to use or be able to use a given language in the actual communication. In the light of these

highlighted definitions, the researcher can compose an operational definition of speaking skill in this study as speaking is the ability to produce meaningful utterances/discourse orally to address other people and to be accurate in using grammar and vocabulary.

Teaching Speaking Skill

Teaching four skills-listening, reading, speaking and listening-become a compulsory for the English teachers to guide the students to achieve those abilities by teaching them as interesting as possible. Thus, speaking is also to be taught like the other skills. Many teachers agree that students should learn to speak the second language by interacting with others. So, students should master several speaking components such as comprehension, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency.

In brief, English teachers should be creative in developing their teaching/learning process to create good atmosphere, improve the students' speaking skill, give attention to the speaking components, and make the English lesson more exiting. For this reason, the English teacher should apply appropriate methods and techniques of teaching speaking. The method used by the teacher is communicative approach.

Teaching is guiding learners in studying and getting new knowledge, skills, or attitudes. Brown (2000: 7) says that teaching cannot be defined apart from learning, for teaching is guiding and



facilitating learning, enabling the learner to learn, and setting the condition for learning. Nunan (2003) defined that teaching speaking as to teach ESL learners to (1) produce the English speech sounds and sound patterns; (2) use word and sentence stress, intonation patterns and the rhythm of the second language; (3) select appropriate words and sentences according to the proper social setting, audience, situation and subject matter; (4) organize their thoughts in a meaningful and logical sequence; (5) use language as a means of expressing values and judgments; and (6) use the language quickly and confidently with few unnatural pauses, which are called as fluency.

Problems in Teaching and Learning Speaking

Learners sometimes have some obstacles when they want to talk in the class. They feel afraid of making mistakes because they are reluctant to be judged by the hearer. Ur (1996) argues that some possible problems in speaking including: (1) inhibition, learners are often inhibited about trying things in foreign language classroom, afraid to make mistakes or to be criticized, and shy to utter words; (2) nothing to say, learners sometimes find fault that they do not have something to say. In other words, they cannot express themselves; (3) low or uneven participation, only one participant talks because some learners dominate, while other speaks a little or not at all; and (4) other tongue use, in the class, all learners share the

same mother tongue, so they feel unnatural to speak in the foreign language.

Burns and Joyce (1997) as cited in Nunan (1999) identified three factors that may indicate students' reluctance to take part in the speaking activity. The first is cultural factors. these can be related to the students beliefs of the teaching and learning activities such as they are used to being passive by tending to listen to their teacher explanation (teacher-centered) and they do not actively speak up in class, they apt to know that language learning is based primarily on reading and writing from a work book, and they are not familiar with communicative and learner-centered approaches to learning and expectations of teacher and learner roles.

The second is linguistic factors. These are related to the students' knowledge of the language that hampers the students to speak English. They include difficulties in transferring the language from the learners' first language, problems with the native speaker pronunciation of the teacher, lack of grammatical understanding, and (4) unfamiliarity with the cultural or social knowledge required to process meaning.

The last is psychological or affective factors. These factors are the important factor that can widely affect language learning especially speaking. The factors include culture shock, previous negative social or political experiences, lack of motivation, anxiety or shyness in class and perceptions. Richard & Renandya (2002) added that the



affective factors related to foreign language learning are emotions, self-esteem, empathy, anxiety, attitude, and motivation.

From the theories above, the problems in speaking are possible to obstruct students language development in the teaching-learning process. Thus, in teaching speaking, teachers should always encourage the students, not allowing students to become discouraged when they make mistakes. They have to understand that making mistakes is part of the learning process. Then, the teachers should provide some classroom speaking activities in which the students can engage actively.

Debate

One of the principal tenets of the communicative approach to language teaching is that the learners are involved in actual interaction in the classroom. This interaction must be meaningful and involve an authentic use of language (Basturkmen, 1994). To help students develop their communicative efficiency in speaking, there are some activities used in the classroom to promote the development of speaking skills in learners. The discussions below center on debate activities as one of the strategies that the researcher used to investigate the effectiveness of these activities in developing speaking skills in the current study.

Debate is a very important strategy in developing speaking skills of learners effectively. Bambang (2006) defines debate as an activity which is used for understanding

of the topic. It is done by two groups. Every group consist of three or five students. It is affirmative and negative team. Maryadi (2008) said that debate can motivate students' thinking, moreover if they must defend their stand or opinion which is in contradiction with conviction themselves. Krieger (2005) defined debate as an excellent activity for language learning because it engages students in a variety of cognitive and linguistic ways. Shan (2005) viewed debate as two groups of people on opposite sides of the issue discussing an agreed upon topic in the agreed upon rules, and the judges listen to both sides of the argument, choosing the winning team based on the reasoning and evidence provided. In the light of these definitions, the researchers can compose an operational definition of debate in this study that Debate is the process of presenting ideas or opinions which two opposing parties try to defend.

Method

This study was involved as qualitative study since this study attempted to gain deep understanding of a specific group or event, rather than surface description of a large sample of a population. In other word, this qualitative study did not try to quantify or to count anything or to use statistical methods since it attempted to understand other person's perceptions and motivations. Thus, in this qualitative study, the sample sizes taken were typically small because it did not



aim to statistically generalize the findings gained, and thereafter, the results of this qualitative research was presented descriptively rather than predictively.

This present study addressed research questions as follows; (1) how are the speaking activities practiced by students in English Conversation and Debating Club of SMKN 1 Pandeglang? (2) how are the difficulties of students in English Debate Club of SMKN 1 Pandeglang in speaking activities?

The setting of the research was at English Conversation and Debating Club of SMKN 1 Pandeglang. It is located on Kadulisung Kaduhejo Pandeglang Banten. English Conversation and Debating Club activity is held once a week for 80 minutes for each meeting. The members consists of 15 students (6 students are active in English Debate Team and the others are non in debate team). The facilities supporting at English Conversation and Debating Club activities in the Self Access Centre room are a whiteboard, board markers, 30 PC computer with internet access, ± 30 student chairs, a teacher table, and a teacher chair.

The subjects of the research are students at SMKN 1 Pandeglang who joined in English Conversation and Debating Club the academic year 2020/2021. The researcher chosed students at SMKN 1 Pandeglang who joined in English Conversation and Debating Club as the subject of the research with 15 students.

Data collecting techniques of the research were observation, interview, questionnaire, and documentation. The data were analyzed based on the field notes, result of questionnaire and the interview transcript during the research. To obtain the trust worthiness, triangulation was used. Burns (1999) stated that triangulation is one of the most commonly used and best known ways of checking for validity. It is aimed at collecting multiple perspectives on the situation being studied. In addition, she also stated that triangulation is a way of arguing that if different methods of investigation produce the same result then the data are likely to be valid.

Result

From the investigation of debate training used Australian Parliamentary system (without POI), the researchers find the speaking activities are: speaking as moderator, making definition, giving and countering the argument, greeting as opening the speech, introducing oneself and others, closing and opening the speech.

In debate training, one of students role as a moderator who has the duties to guide the run of debate, the duties of moderator as follow: opening the battle of debate, introducing both of the teams, introducing her/himself, introducing adjudicators, conveying the motion/topic of debate, and the regulation.



The purpose of the definition is to specify the issue or issues which arise from the topic and which are to be resolved by debate between the teams. Defining the topic is one of the first tasks to be undertaken by each team. There is no point in arguing the merits of an issue before the nature and scope of the issue have been determined.

The main duty of debate is giving argument to open debate with the opponent team and countering the argument or rebuttal. The process of proving that the opposing team's arguments should be accorded less weight than its claim.

Whereas based on the result of interview, the researchers found the difficulties of speaking activities in debate were included interaction as mental/social element of speaking: (1) Giving fact, data and examples because there are so many sources, and they feel confused to choose which one is better, (2) Making rebuttal, before they can do the rebuttal they have to pay close attention to the opponent word by word, so that later their opinion who will be the opponent's opinion can enter and even the opponent agrees with their opinion but, if they missed the context they will discuss, that is clear they defeat the opponents.

The speaking activities for teaching learning process at the class are based on Competency standards of syllabus curriculum 2013 that students as Novice Level are able to (1) understand the basic expressions of social interactions, (2) list objects, people,

characteristics, time, day, month, and year, (3) describing objects, people, characteristics, time, day, month, and year, (4) produces simple speech sufficient for basic functions, (5) explain in simple terms the activities that are happening, (6) understand simple memos and menus, public transport itineraries, and traffic signs, and (7) understand foreign words and terms and simple sentences based on formulas.

Whereas the speaking activities in English debating the researcher found are making definitions, delivering speech as the arguments, responding the opponent arguments, making reasons, giving data and evidences, being a moderator (in debate battle), introducing oneself and others. Some of them are related with the speaking activities in teaching learning process at the class. The example giving and responding the arguments equivalent to giving and refusing things. It means speaking activities in debate can strengthen the students speaking skill.

Giving and countering arguments activity, it showed that students can express their ideas and opinions, this activity become an antidote to the students' speaking difficulties "nothing to say" by giving and refuting the opposing arguments before the students prepare the material to be presented as arguments or rebuttal. In addition, For the other students' speaking difficulties: unconfident, low motivation and mother tongue use It can be resolved with frequent and active debate exercises, automatically the



students' speaking activities are honed and trained so that feelings of unconfident and low motivation will disappear by themselves.

Debaters in speaking are usually high confident and motivated in order to their arguments or their rebuttal can convince the audiences. This presented data is suitable with the previous study from Fauzan (2016) that the students gradually could express their thought and opinions in debate practice, encouraged the students' creativity to explore the language, and they improved their fluency as well as their confidence.

Conclusion

The researchers found that by joining debate club it helps students to speak English fluently because they have more practice. It helps them speak English quietly accurate. They could convey general aim in speaking. The students are also custom to speak English because they have more opportunity to practice their English in debate class, it helps them against their fear, build their self-confidence and critical thinking. The researchers also found that students speak more with few grammatical errors, not much great efforts, pronunciation slightly influence by the mother tongue, few long pauses, and only few clarifications for the beginners debaters.

With regard to the result of the research, the implementation of debate supported with its accompanying actions is successful to solve students' speaking

problem and to improve the speaking skills of English debating club members of SMKN 1 Pandeglang. Debate is able to attract the students' attentions and motivation in learning. The use of debate in the speaking activities provided various speaking activities which could facilitate the students to improve their speaking skills. Therefore, as debate technique is very beneficial to be implemented in the speaking teaching and learning process, it is suggested for the English teachers to use debate as technique or strategy in the teaching and learning process of speaking at the class. The last, regarding the result, the researchers suggest the future research in elaborating the further benefit of debate for speaking skill. This can be developed, especially, in action research or research and development.

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