Debate Technique as Teacher's Strategies in Improving Student's Higher Education English Speaking Skill

Firnantia Lara Lestari
thialara2@gmail.com

Airlangga University

ABSTRACT

Speaking is not only used in public forum but also anytime and anywhere. Speaking also required proficiency in order to make communication clearly. The biggest fear of a student is when they have to speak in public, therefore the lecturer's willingness to develop the speaking skill for students become very important, it accompanied by strategies that can make students become more courageous to speak in public. To improve the student's proficiency, teacher needs different strategies based on the skill's differences, such as speaking skill, reading skill and writing skill. Thereby, the different skills required different strategies in order to achieve the different goals and the expected results. This article uses descriptive qualitative as the method in collecting the data. Descriptive qualitative method is used to make a systematic, factual and accurate description, description, or painting of the facts, properties and relationships among the phenomena investigated in terms of words instead of statistics. The result reveals that the excellent score obtained by the students in the vocabulary. The lowest score obtained by the students is in the content of the structure which is the hardest problem that often faced by the higher education students. Moreover, the utilization of this debate technique is effective in order to improve the higher student English speaking skill.

Keywords: *speaking skill, teaching strategies, debate technique, students higher education*

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is not only used in public forum but also wherever and whenever. Speaking also required proficiency in order to make communication clearly. This proficiency is not only benefiting for students 'ability to communicate personally but also to identify the students' ability to communicate personally. Society tends to judge a person's English skills through their own speaking proficiency.

According to Oduke (2014), speaking skills is the most important language skills in order to achieve the learning achievement.

The biggest fear of a student is when they have to speak in public, therefore the lecturer's willingness to develop the speaking skill for students become very important, it accompanied by strategies that can make students become more courageous to speak in public. The cooperation between

students and lecturers are required for the

fluency of strategies applied by the lecturers during the teaching and learning process. The lecturer's have more responsibility to develop students with difficulties in speaking in than reading skill or writing skill, therefore teacher needs strategies to encourage their students to speak in the classroom which will affect their courage to speak in public eventually. The cooperation between students and lecturers are required for the fluency of strategies applied by the lecturers during the teaching and learning process. The communication which occasionally occurs in the public context is the only one context, which there is another specific context, such as in the academic context, and business context, therefore the importance of choosing the appropriate communication strategies in public speaking is required as it relates to the other context (Sellnow, 2004).

Teacher needs different strategies based on the skill's differences, such as speaking skill, reading skill and writing skill in order to improve the students proficiency,. Thereby, the different skills required different strategies in order to achieve the different goals and the expected results. According to the writer's experience, higher students sometimes lack the ability to speak in the public. More precisely, the higher students are not lacking in skills but lack in the courage to speak in public, therefore the lecturer need to encourage and set strategies to make their students more courage to speak in public. Futhermore, Herrera (2015) argues that the teaching and curriculum goals need learning strategies that are crucial to plan and consider to align in order to achieve the teaching goals. The preparation of language as communication tools is the teacher's

responsible, particularly the language that used for education (Cole, 2008). In line with the statements from Cole, the successful of language learning, including the lesson objectives, this implies the teaching and learning circumstances.

There are previous study relates with the strategies in improving speaking skill. The first previous study entitled dealing with learner reticence in the speaking class by Zhang and Head (2014). This study describes an oral English course for non-English majors at a university in the People's Republic of China. The aim of this study was to increase their motivation and overcome reticence by getting them to talk about what and how they wanted to learn. The result of this study shows that involving the students in making decisions about the design of their oral English course encouraged them to take charge of their learning, which resulted in positive attitude change and increased motivation. By being actively involved in the creation of activities, they acquired a better understanding of the learning process and were more self-confident in developing the skills they needed to progress towards their own goals in speaking English.

The second previous study is coming from Liu (2009), entitled a context-aware ubiquitous learning environment for language listening and speaking. This study aim is to construct a sensor and handheld augmented reality (AR)-supported ubiquitous learning (u-learning) environment called the Handheld English Language Learning Organization (HELLO), which is geared towards enhancing students' language learning. In order to evaluate the effects of the proposed learning environment on the learning performance of students, a case study on English learning was conducted on a school campus. The

participants included high school teachers and students. A learning course entitled 'My Campus' was conducted in the class; it included three activities, namely 'Campus Environment', 'Campus Life' and 'Campus Story'. The evaluation results showed that the proposed HELLO and the learning activities could improve the students' English listening and speaking skills.

The differences between those two previous study with this present study is the subject that used by the writer. The previous studies uses student's motivation as the subject study and the second previous study uses high school students and the teacher as the subject of the study. This present study uses students as the subject study and observation technique for the in order to collecting the data. Further, the writer also interviews the teacher in order to find the steps in teaching academic speaking class. Futhermore, the writer also interview the students and observe the class in order to find the problem that make the students seldom speak English in the class

Considering those explanations, the writer proposed research questions, as follows:

1. What problems that make students seldom speak English in the Academic Speaking class?
2. Does the teacher's strategies in improving student's higher education speaking skill using debate technique work effectively?

The aim of this study is to know whether the debate strategies work effectively in improving student's speaking skill since there are different problem that seldom faced by higher students in English speaking class which make them remain silent in that class. The significance of this study is that this research may provide possible contributions for the teacher and students who will conduct research about applied linguistics. Particularly for the teacher who teaches in academic speaking class may be the debate technique/ strategies can be used according to the student's characteristics and proficiency. For the next researcher who will conduct research about applied linguistics, it can give more literature on applied linguistics particularly about debate technique as teaching strategies in improving speaking skill for higher students.

Second language teaching and learning become one of the globalisation issues that arise as the impact of the globalization of language. The usage of English lead in to the "New Englishes" which become cultural identity of ESL users who have appropriated English by adding peculiar lexical items, by making changes in pronunciation and grammar, by employing local pragmatic conventions to meet their communicative needs (Ciprianova, E. & Vanco, M, 2010). Furthermore, The result of globalisation shows that English used by non native speaker in all over the world to communicate each other. As a means communication, English consists of various kind of accents and it need to be understood by others. Based on the explanation above as a student which is use English as foreign language, they must have linguistic skill including speaking skill.

Moreover, the role of teacher is required in order to develop the linguistic skill particularly the speaking skill of students. According to its condition that English almost used in all over the world, Thornbury and Slade (2006) assert that speaking happens in a small group of people with a minimum of two since it require feedback from another person so it required two people or more than two people. Speaking happens within shared contexts, shared

context here means the similar situation, similar institutional, and similar culture and social environment which takes place in real time and require spontaneous decision- making an improvisation (VanLier, 1989; Nunan, 1999). The elements of conversation (the social and cultural aspects and the elements which result the conversation) is required in speaking class as the guidance to make the teaching and learning process successful. Furthermore, the proper guidance, interesting activities, correct approach, and high motivation are necessary to be utilized (Applegate, 1975).

According to Kroeker (2009), there are three approaches in teaching speaking in second or foreign language, the indirect approach, direct approach and indirect approach plus. The indirect approach is based on the idea that speaking skill is formed through students' active participation in interactive activities such as discussion, role-play, information gaps, and problem-solving activities (Kuśnierek, 2015).This approach is applied in some language teaching methods, such as the Audiolingual Method, Community Language Learning, and Communicative Language Teaching.

Teaching speaking strategies has been utilized in the classroom for many circumstances (Cook, 2013). There are various number of teaching speaking strategies used by lecturer to teach in the classroom, as follows: critical thinking, through the mass media (blog), debate technique, role-play, cooperative activities, drilling and creative tasks.

Debate is activity that requires a lot of knowledge since this activity presents and argues with opposite points of view (Hawkes, 2016).Debate can present opportunities for students to engage in using extended chunks of language for a purpose: to convincingly defend one side of an issue (Michael & Lorraine, 1996). Student's communication skill can be improved by effective speaking activities. There are many speaking activities can be followed by students such as role plays, becomes radio announcer, master ceremony for wedding, birthday party and etc. One of the effective sepaking activity for students is debate. Debates are most appropriate for intermediate and advanced learners who have been guided in how to prepare debate for them (Quinn, 2009). In line with the statements from Michael & Lorraine, Sabbah (2015) states that the debate technique is effective teaching speaking strategies for higher students, the speaking which becomes indicator in this paper is including the pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary. Furthermore, the teaching speaking strategise usng debate strategy can be applied for another teaching English such as reading, writing and listening.

Debate very useful for students who have less participation in the class. According to Dundes (2001), the students who rarely talk or have less participation in speaking class can be encouraged by the debate as one of the teaching strategies by teacher. Debate technique make the students to master the content of the debate which requires more knowledge, more think critically and more preparation to make support their arguments in debate, thus, debate is an affective way to sharpen the speaking skill. It supported by statements from Maryadi (2008) which states that debate is one of the students motivation since it supports the student's thinking which as the participants, students must defend their opinion or arguments which is in contradiction with conviction them. This strategy make all students to be active and not only as the debate performer.

As one of the communicative and an interactive technique, debate is an interested activity to be practiced in the classroom. Students can learn to maintain their idea which can result different arguments among students. The students will start to argue in order to maintain their opinion. This circumstances make debate as one of the effective speaking activity to train student's speaking skill. Moreover, Bellon (2000), states some benefits of debate, as follows:

1. Improve students' critical thinking. In debating, every student is proposed to analyze a problem critically.
2. Develop students' communication skill. Debaters spend many hours assembling and practicing hundreds of public speeches on topics of national importance.
3. Questioning skill developed in and struggle--often in the face of disappointment and defeat.
4. They are capable of making and defending informed choices about complex issues outside of their own area of interest because they do so on a daily basis.
5. Debate is thus not only a way to connect students with academic subjects in meaningful ways; it is also a way to re-connect students to public life if they have been overcome by feelings of alienation.
6. Policy debate specifically teaches students to adopt multiple perspectives which describe as one of the most important problemsolving skills.

According to benefits mentioned above, it makes debate really need to be practiced in speaking classroom. It is appropriate for students to improve their speaking skill.

This article uses descriptive qualitative as the method in collecting the data. Descriptive qualitative method is used to make a systematic, factual and accurate description, description, or painting of the facts, properties and relationships among the phenomena investigated in terms of words instead of statistics. This study employed Speaking Rubric for Fluency Activities adapted from Pearson Education, Inc, in order to know the measurement of the problem faced by the higher students in speaking. The researcher take the data from college students in third semester who take academic speaking class. The number of this academic speaking class is 30 students. In collecting the data the researcher interview the teacher about the steps in teaching academic speaking class. Particularly, the writer also make interview with the students and observe the class in order to find the problem that make the students seldom speak English in the class and the effectiveness of the debate technique in improving students speaking skill.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

The researcher perform class observation into the 1 academic speaking class consist of 30 students. Further the researcher also interview the teacher which teach Academic Speaking about the steps used in teaching Academis Speaking Class. According to the teacher, there are 3 steps in Academic Speaking classs to make discussion more interesting, as follows:

1. The teacher should provide any topics related to the academic fields.
2. The teacher divided the students into several groups and each group consists of 4 students.
3. The teacher gives 15-20 minutes to the students to discuss about the topic

4. The teacher asks the students to presents the result and allows the other groups to refuse the statements from other groups.

After those steps are performed, the teacher can start the learning process and the researcher observes the learning process. The researcher fills the speaking indicator to perform the research. The indicator as follows:

Rubric of Students Speaking Ability

Performance areas	EXELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	SCORE
Performance	There is almost no mistake in expression	There are few mistakes in expression	There are many mistakes in expression	Almost all mistakes in expression	EXC: 6 G: 10 AVG: 8 P: 6
Content	Tells the story effectivelly with almost always understands the generic structures appropriately	Tells the story effectively with few mistakes in the generic structure that does not interfere the communication	Tries to tell the story with few mistakes in the generic structures that does not interfere the communication	Tries to tell the story with some mistakes in the generic structure that interferes the communication	EXC: 8 G: 9 AVG: 11 P: 2
Fluency	Speaks smoothly, with little hesitation that does not interfere communication	Speaks with some hesitation, but it does not usually interfere communication	Speaks with some hesitation which often interfere communication	Hesitates too often when speaking, which often interferes communication	EXC: 5 G: 16 AVG: 4 P: 5
Accuracy	There is almost no mistake in the accuracy of constructing of correct pieces of language	There are few mistakes in the accuracy of constructing of correct pieces of language	There are many mistakes in the accuracy of constructing of correct pieces of language	Almost all sentences contain mistake in the accuracy of constructing of correct pieces of language	EXC: 12 G: 8 AVG: 5 P: 5
Pronunciation	Pronunciation and intonation are almost	Pronunciation and intonation are usually clear/accurate	Pronunciation and intonation errors, sometimes	Frequent problems with pronunciation and intonation	EXC: 9 G: 7

	always very clear/accurate	with a few problem areas	make it difficult to understand the student		AVG: 8 P: 6
Vocabulary	Uses a variety of vocabulary and expression	Uses a variety of vocabulary and expression, but makes some errors in word choice	Uses limited vocabulary and expression	Uses only basic vocabulary and expressions	EXC: 13 G: 7 AVG: 6 P: 4

Adapted from WorldView Levels 1-4: Video/DVD Speaking Rubric for Fluency Activities Copyright © 2005 by Pearson Education, Inc.

Excellent : 91-100
Good : 75-90
Average : 60-74
Poor : 0-59

The result shows that the excellent score obtained by the students in the vocabulary. Vocabulary is required to support the fluency of speaking. The number of vocabularies can enrich the speaker with a variety of words that have the respective functions. For higher education students, the various vocabulary are actually very necessary since it can help in doing assignments and support them to face the world of work. As the students of English department, they should have various vocabulary. It also supported by the expression of their face following their speech. From the highest score obtained by students, the writer concludes that vocabulary gives remarkable impact to the student's speaking ability. More various vocabulary they have, more knowledge and more arguments they will state in the learning process by debate techniques.

The highest score of the lowest grade (poor) is in the performance (expression) and pronunciation. The expression of the students when they state their arguments make sure that they have much information and ensure the audiences and the opponents. Great expressions make their opponents feel intimidates and it increase the points also. Furthermore, the great expressions showing confidence in the statements and the good pronunciation makes the statement of someone easily understood by others, so that the message in the statements can be conveyed clearly and the communication went well. In that table above the pronunciation obtained the highest score of the lowest grade. For the speaker it gives disadvantages since their arguments won't be easily understood by their opponents. It gives chances for the opponent to counter the arguments of the speaker.

The highest average score obtained by students is in the fluency of speaking English. The students which get the average score tend to speaks with some hesitation. It can be related with the number of the vocabulary of the students. Further, there is another factor that influences the student's fluency, it relates with anxiety of the students as seen in the gesture of the students when stating their arguments. This factor can be decreased by learning more and reads

more material in order to decrease their anxiety. According to the lowest score obtained by the students, the content of the structure is the hardest problem that often faced by the higher education students. The lowest score is in the content that delivered by the students. The students who have the low score in the content of the debates is try to tell the story with some mistakes in the generic structure that interferes the communication.

Further, the message they conveys is not too clear. They also use the basic vocabulary so their speech seems so bored and not interesting. It leads them into the anxiety of the students and the lack of confidence in speaking in front the people. The structure of their sentences also make the hearer confuse thus the purpose of their speech cannot be understood clearly by the hearer. Moreover, the usage of this debate technique in improving students speaking skill is effective. It could be seen from the amount of the lowest score in every indicator which is lower than 50% of the total number of the students in that class.

The affectivity of the debate as teaching technique for higher students, according to the table above is quite effective. According the observation of the writer, there are some students which rarely speak in the speaking class become slightly active and share their idea. The interview shows that it influenced by the encouragement given by the teacher to the students. Although they cannot reach the excellent or good score in that class but they manage to perform in front of the class and manage their performance. The utilization of the debate technique as teaching strategies hopefully can help the students to be brave speaking in front of the class and share their idea.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result above there are two findings in this study, first is the problem that faced by the students in English Speaking Class that make them seldom speak in the class is the lowest knowledge about how to construct the content in the debate class. The failure in constructing sentences can caused by many mistake, one of them is lack in vocabulary which can cause the anxiety of the students and the lack of confidence in speaking in front the people particularly in front their teacher and their friends.

Further, the lowest score in every indicator shows that the amount of the students which get the lowest score is not more than 50%. So, it can be concluded that the utilization of this debate technique to improve the student English speaking skill is effective. For further researcher who wants to conduct the similar study with this study, they can use different object such as Junior High School or Senior High School or Vocational High School students. Moreover, for the present researchers are recommended to perform comparison study with another study.

Moreover, the usage of debate technique as teaching strategies for higher students is effective since the students which rarely speak in the speaking class become slightly active and shares their idea. Although they cannot reach the excellent or good score in that class but they manage to perform in front of the class and manage their performance.

REFERENCES

8

Bellon, Joe. (2000). A Research-based Justification for debate Across the Curriculum. Atlanta: Georgia State University

Ciprianova, E. & Vanco, M. (2010). English the Age of Globalization: Change ELT Models, Restructuring Relationships. JoLIE 3, pp. 123-208.

Cole, R. W. (2008). *Educating Everybody's Children: Diverse Teaching Strategies for Diverse Learners* (revised). ASCD.

Cook, V. (2013). Second Language Learning and Language Teaching. Routledge.

Dundes, L. (2001). Small group debates: Fostering critical thinking in oral presentations with maximal class involvement. *Teaching Sociology*, *29*(2), 237–243.

Hawkes, T. (2016). *Ten Leadership Lessons You Must Teach Your Teenager*. UK: Hachette.

Herrera, S. G. (2015). *Biography-Driven Culturally Responsive Teaching* (illustrate). Teachers College Press.

Kroeker, R. H. (2009). *The reality of english conversation classes: a study in a south korean university*. University of Birmingham.

Kuśnierek, A. (2015). Developing students' speaking skills through role-play. *World Scientific News*, *7*, 73–111.

Liu, T. Y. (2009). A context-aware ubiquitous learning environment for language listening and speaking. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, *6*(25), 515–527.

Maryadi, A. (2008). Implementing Debate di Sekolah. Jakarta: RinekaCipta

Nunan, D. (1999). Second language teaching and learning. Boston: Heinle and Heinle Publishers.

Oduke, O. (2014). *Learning French oral skills using role play as a learning strategy: The kenyan experience*. Anchor Academic Publishing (aap_verlag).

Quinn, S. (2009). *Debating in the World Schools Style: A Guide*. IDEA.

Sellnow, Deanna. 2004. Confident Public Speaking. USA: Thomson Wadsworth

S. Sabbah. 2015. The Effectiveness of Using Debates in Developing Speaking Skills among English Majors at University of Palestine. Gaza: Al- Azhar University

Thornbury, S. and Slade, D. (2006). Conversation: from description to pedagogy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Van Lier, L. (1989). 'Reeling, writhing, drawling, stretching, and fainting in coils: Oral proficiency interviews as conversation.' TESOL Quarterly 23(3), 689-508.

Zhang, X., & Head, K. (2009). Dealing with learner reticence in the speaking class. ELT journal, 64(1), 1-9.