Improving Students' Speaking Skill By Using Activities Through Songs at the First Year Students of Class B Semester of English Department Faculty Teachers Training and Pedagogy Lancang Kuning University

Dahler
Dosen Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan- Universitas Lancang Kuning

Abstract: The objective of this research was to find out whether students' activities through song can be used as media for improving the students speaking skill. The participants of this study were the students of semester two B of the English department of Education Faculty and Teachers Training Lancang Kuning University academic year 2009/2010. The number of subjects in this research was 21 students. The writer conducted an action research to find the answer of the problem. In solving the problem, the writer carried out in two cycles, which each cycle had four meetings. It was done from April 12th, 2010 until Mei 31st , 2010. The researcher and collaborator gathered the data in each meeting in cycle 1 and 2 from the checklist of observation for teacher and students, field note/recording test and interview. After analyzing the data, it was found that the activities through song improved the students' speaking skill and influenced all indicators of speaking skill in term of accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Furthermore, it built up the students confidence and participation in class. The researcher concluded that the students' activities through song can improve the students' speaking skill.

Key words: Students' Speaking Skill, Students' Activities Through Song, Songs

Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji tentang permasalahan mahasiswa dalam keterampilan berbahasa. Kesulitan mereka adalah ketika berbicara mereka masih melakukan kesalahan-kesalahan tentang bagaimana pengucapan kosa kata yang baik, memilih kosa-kata yang tepat dan penyampaian yang lancar. Penelitian tindakan kelas ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi apakah aktivitas yang ditimbulkan melalui lagu dapat meningkatkan lebih baik keterampilan berbicara mahasiswa serta mengidentifikasi factor-faktor yang mempengaruhi peningkatan keterampilan berbicara. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan pada kelas B tingkat satu semester dua program studi pendidikan bahasa Inggris Universitas Lancang Kuning.

Partisipan dari penelitian ini adalah mahasiswa kelas B tingkat satu semester dua yang terdiri dari dua puluh satu mahasiswa. Penelitian ini dilaksakan mulai Tanggal 12 April sampai dengan 31 Mei 2010 dalam dua siklus. Dalam satu siklus terdiri dari empat kali pertemuan. Peneliti dibantu oleh kolaborator dalam mengumpulkan data yang diproleh melalui observasi, catatan lapangan, test, dan interview.

Dari hasil penelitian ini ditemukan bahwa aktivitas yang ditimbulkan melalui lagu bisa meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara mahasiswa dan dapat memberikan pengaruh pada setiap indikatornya yaitu accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, dan comprehension. Lebih jauh lagi aktivitas yang ditimbulkan melalui lagu ini bisa meningkatkan percaya diri dan partisipasi mahasiswa di dalam kelas. Singkatnya aktivitas yang ditimbulkan melalui lagu dapat digunakan untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara mahasiswa.

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of the subjects that must be learned by students at the English Department of Teacher's Training and Education Faculty of Lancang Kuning University. At the first semester, it is specifically aimed to make the students to be able to speak by using informal situation, such as expressing daily activities, hobbies, and ambitions. At the second semester, it is aimed to create the students to be able to speak by using formal situation, such as at office, campus, and meeting. Finally, at the third semester, it is aimed to create the students to be able to speak academically, such as on the seminar and on the exam.

The researcher is one of the lecturers who has been teaching at Lancang Kuning University for five years. During his teaching and learning process that has been done for four months, looking at the students' speaking score on last semester, the result showed that only two of 27 students were categorized as excellent, five students were categorized good, and the others students were categorized as poor students.

From the data above, the researcher tried to give a quiz and free daily activities in speaking on January 20th, 2009, the researcher found some problems faced by the English students, such as confusion, nothing to say, shy, and afraid of mistake.

As a solution of the above problems, the researcher wanted to conduct the research about improving students' speaking skill by using students' activities through songs. The researcher hoped that after doing this research, the students have high motivation and improvement on their speaking.

Speaking Skill

Speaking is one of the subjects taught at English Education Department students of Education and Teachers Training Faculty of Lancang Kuning University. It is taught from the first to third semester. Moreover, it is taught to create the students to be able to speak English formally and academically. In addition, it is hoped that the students to be able to share their topics in term of speaking. The students are categorized successful in learning a language if they are able to speak or apply them whenever they are staying. So, people know that they are success in learning English. Penny Ur (1997:120) states that speaking seems intuitively the most important; people who know a language are referred to a speaker. From the previous expert's idea, it can be concluded that English is indicated by speaking. It means that if the students are success in English, they are claimed success in speaking as well.

Referring to the above paragraph, English is always described by speaking. To improve students' English competence in

speaking, there were several things that must be involved (Chitravelu, 2004: 58-60):

1. Function. The speakers do a number of things with the language. They greet introduce one another, explain, invite, and accept information.

2. Linguistics forms. The speakers use different words and structures to express different things and in some cases they choose one of several ways of expressing the same thing.

3. The speakers also have to say the words aloud. They do not write them down. This means they have to pronounce the words correctly by using the right intonation.

4. Automaticity of response. The listener has to give response soon after the speaker stops speaking.

5. Social appropriately. Speech is highly sensitive to the context which it occurs.

6. Topics. When a person speaks, he cannot just speak about nothing. He needs to speak about something.

In short, to have good English or are able to speak English well, the students must apply those previous things. Function means that the students must be able to recognize the function of words at least to be uttered or produced in English. Then, linguistics forms mean that the students are able to select the proper word to be located for the proper situation. Moreover, after knowing the vocabularies, they have to say the words aloud. When a word is said loudly, the students practice their listening simultaneously. After the students listen to the words uttered by the lecture, they must respond directly as long as they have the same context and topics.

Moreover, speaking is a complex task. According to Hughes (2000: 261)"Learning to speak competently is a complex task. It involves the mastery of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency". From this idea, researcher could identify that to be able to speak competently, students must have vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency mastery.

From all of those previous ideas, it can be concluded that there are some speaking skill that indicate the students are categorized success in speaking class such as students' ability to give their opinion, express their feeling, convey a meaning in producing systematic verbal utterances, persuade some, and the ability to clarify the information. In this research, all of those skills are going to be assessed by some speaking indicators.

Back to the above idea, it could be concluded that the students were about to have good ability in English if they could decide what they want to say. Moreover, they could decide what words to be used and conveyed the meaning. In addition, they must be able to make the correct arrangement,

select the appropriate situation, and place tongue and lips in certain position to produce a word.

Based on the above discussion, it could be concluded that the indicators of speaking skill are: accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

Teaching Speaking

Teaching speaking is one of the lecturer's problems. Some considerations should be taken account before coming to English speaking class. It might be about what the problems of speaking activities are.

In relation to the number of students involved, the researcher believed that every student loved to hear music particularly songs. Songs, especially English songs, could help students enrich their vocabulary and improved their ability in speaking and listening by means of imitating and memorizing the words of the songs. For those who loved to hear music, they just have fun on music although they did not understand the spelling and meaning. Parallel to this, Plummeridge (1993:3) claims:

> "…the real function of music begins at a point where words, intellectually appended have no place. Its inherent significance is outside the range of the purely rational mind. A special exercise of the imagination is needed in order to recognize a musical idea in a particular series of sounds or to recognize in musical ideas a

disciplined expression of deep and obscure human emotion."

It means that music did not always need intellectual words. It also needs a special exercise of the imagination to express deep and obscure human emotion. It was interesting to analyze ideas of the songs found in English songs. Reimer (1989:41) reveals that music is a language of the heart. Songs have messages that reflect human experiences and clarify suitable feelings such as romance, melancholy, uncertainty, anxiety, and security. By clarifying our feelings, music educates us; to explore feelings we might not have through our capability of experiencing. Easy listening from popular songs would be chosen.

Songs help students spoke like a native speaker. Maley (1987:94) states that there are three reasons why songs are effective as language learning activities. *First*, song is a reaction language. It gave access to a third type of spoken language use. *Second*, song has motivation. There was an obvious motivational element in learning songs in the foreign language. *Third,* song is interaction. The use of songs offers unparalleled opportunities both for lecturers-students and students-students interaction, but most of the interactions were between lecturers and students and they were initiated by the lecturer.

Basically, the first point of the above theories was supported by the Hughes (2003) the mentions that the objective of teaching spoken language refers to the development of ability to interact successfully in that language and involved comprehension as well as production. In the other words, teaching speaking was to enhance the ability how to interact in comprehending and producing the language.

In addition, Brown. (1983) states that in teaching speaking classes, there must be (1) some attentions to the formal aspects of speaking such as pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and the appropriate use of the spoken language; (2) opportunity and encouragement for learners to produce meaningful spoken messages where the messages have real communicative goals; (3) opportunity for the learners to gain truly fluent use of what is already known. In the other words, the goal of teaching speaking is emphasized on the importance of delivering massages and how the massage can be delivered.

Speaking Assessment

There are several kinds of assessments that can measure the speaking skill. Ellis & Barbara, (1989: 72) propose that you can assess your speaking by assessing two cases. Firstly, you are going to focus on accuracy on your fluency or both.

1. Accuracy means that you assess your vocabulary, grammar, style, pronunciation of sound, stress, intonation.
2. Fluency means that you assess your meaning and spontaneity.

In this case, it was not concerned with assessing the correctness of specific points, but with the general effect of spoken English. In assessing the students' speaking skill, Bachman (1990:44) explains that what the tester actually tests from speaking skill. They are as follows:

1. It is a set of elicitation procedures including a sequence of activities and a set of question types and topic.
2. A measurement scale of "5' on which sample oral language obtained via the elicitation procedures are rated.

Moreover, According to Hughes (2003: 131), there are some speaking indicators and would be evaluated in this research:

a. **Accent**: it is concerned on the pronunciation that produced by the students whether it is like foreign accent or not. On the other hand, students' pronunciation is like native pronunciation or not.

b. **Grammar**: it is concerned on the students' error of using grammar or pattern that causes misunderstanding.

c. **Vocabulary**: Students ability in selecting a word and applying the accurate form in the accurate situation will be valued.

d. **Fluency**: it indicates students' speed in speaking, slow, incomplete sentence, smooth, or speaks is like native speaker.

e. **Comprehension**: it is concerned on the students' understanding about type of conversation, speech topic, and its style. (see the appendix)

From the ideas given by the experts above, as theoretically, the researcher could be concluded that fluency and accuracy were important aspects as the guidance of speaking assessment.

In assessing students' speaking skill, the lecturer assessed the aspects of accent / pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension.

Using Students' Activities Through Songs

Songs were the second variable of this research. They were assumed as instruments to solve the students' problem in speaking. First, songs have been part of the human experience for as long as he/she could remember. There were many experts proved that songs could build students' language skill. As Gugliemino in Kevin (2001) states that songs have become an integral part of our language experience, and if they used in coordination with a language lesson, they could be a great value. Fortunately, with the expanding prevalence of the Internet and specifically the World Wide Web into both the classrooms and lives of students, access to music and lyrics has been made easier".

From the above expert's idea, it can be declared that songs have a great value. Songs would help the students to get some language components, such as vocabulary, composition skill, and comprehension. First, songs would help the students to develop their vocabularies. After listening the songs, the lecturer would ask the students to translate, define, gave a list of expression, and idiomatic from songs that have been worked with in the class, and put them into a context in which their meaning becomes clear. Second, songs can help the learners make the composition skill (grammar). After listening to the songs, the lecturer could ask the students by giving some questions around the verbs of the song lyric and asked the students to analyze the pattern of the song lyric. Finally, the songs could help the students to develop their comprehension about a text. After listening to the songs, the lecturer could ask the students several questions that relate to the song content.

Second, songs have many advantages in language classroom as technique variation.

> Metin and Saricoban (2000) state that: "the use of songs in language classrooms provides many

advantages. They entertain and relax the learners while they are learning or practicing a structure, and they often eliminate the students' negative attitude towards learning. Through providing authenticity and context they make the grammar points more understandable and easy. As language teachers, we can benefit from using songs, since our concern is to motivate the students and draw their utmost attention on the subject during teaching".

Referring to the above expert's idea, it could be clarified that songs were the most meaningful media that helps the students to have the language focus, grammar and vocabulary. By having the language focus they could create their language skill. The students, so far, could not speak because they did not have an idea. Songs would give them an idea to be shared to their friend or to the class. When the students were listening to the song, they usually adopt the lyric to be expressed. So, by listening to the songs they have many ideas to be shared.

Finally, Jolly (1975) and Zola and Sandvoss (1976) point out that the relationship between song and speech is closed one means that song and speech are produced to communicate some intention, emotion or thoughts in a linguistic form in term of the structure, rhythm, and tones. A song also is made to be coherent and complete itself and provide sufficient context for understanding.

Increasing common sense, song was common skill which shared by many people. Therefore, it was useful for learners to get and know some songs in the target of language. Knowing English songs, it would add variety and enrich their social life.

Based on the previous experts' ideas, it could be concluded that the indicators of using students' activities through songs were:

1. Theme presentation: Students listen to the song while looking at the lyric; they guess the theme of the song.
2. Grammatical analysis: The students analyze the grammar of the song lyric.
3. Text comprehension: In this activity, the students try to comprehend the song lyric.
4. Content discussion: The students did discussion about the content of song.
5. Representation: The students represent the result of song content discussion.

METHOD

The research was a classroom action research. This was typically a classroom problem solving. It was functioned to assess

a new technique or strategy which was applying in a classroom.

Setting Of The Research

This research was carried out at semester two B of the English Department of Faculty of Education and Teachers Training Lancang Kuning University. They were consisted of twenty one students. The researcher took this class as participant because most of them had problem on their speaking. Meanwhile, the curriculum expected that they had to be able to communicate with the others by using simple sentences or expressions. This research was done from April 12th, 2010 until Mei 31st, 2010.

Instrumentation

The key instrument of this research was the researcher himself. He was involved in every cycle. Moreover, he was also helped by a collaborator and two raters. In this research, the researcher collected the quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data was collected by using the test and task, means the test was verbal presentation; the qualitative data was collected by using the checklists containing the indicators of speaking skill, the indicators of students' activities through songs, teaching steps were taken from plan, and field notes.

Technique Of Collecting Data

In collecting the data of this study, the data were collected by doing direct observation, field note/recording, and test.

1. Quantitative data

There were some steps in getting the quantitative data from the task and test.

The end of each cycle, The students were tested by oral presentation in the end of each cycle about the song lyric that had been discussed at the previous meeting as well as to know the students' progress.

2. Qualitative data

The researcher got the qualitative data from the observation based on the indicators of speaking skill, students' activities through song, lesson plan and field note that observed by his collaborator. The collaborator observed the teaching and learning process. As long as the observation, the researcher and collaborator also used field note for taking note and recorder to interview the students related to the progress of teaching and learning activities.

Technique Of Analyzing Data

1. Quantitative Data

In quantitative form all data were be taken from the result of speaking task and test through the students' oral presentation. They were be analyzed by using scoring system and diagrams.

Analysis means the categorizing, ordering, manipulating, and summarizing of data to obtain answers to research questions (Kerlinger, 1988:125). To find out the mean/ average score of students improvement in speaking skill in every indicator such as Accent / Pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension, it was counted by using the following formula:

$$M = \frac{\sum X}{N}$$

The description of class average/mean score:

$\sum$ = The sum of score

X = Score

N = Number of students / number of indicator

M = Average / Mean score

The total students' score was divided to the amount of students were the class average score of student's speaking skill in each indicator.

2. Qualitative Data

In analyzing qualitative data, the researcher used the data gained from the indicators of speaking skill, students' activities through song, lesson plan and field note that observed by his collaborator. They were analyzed based on Gay, R. L., and Airasian, P. (2000; 239-249). the points, there are five steps to analyze the qualitative data:

1. Data managing: it involves creating and organizing the data collected during the study. The researcher and collaborator will manage all the data gained during the study and put them in order.

2. Reading and memoing: The researcher and collaborator read the data that got from the observation sheet, field note and data recording that he did and experienced in the teaching and learning process.

3. Description: it aims to provide a true picture of setting and event that took place in it. So, the researcher and reader will have an understanding about the result.

4. Classifying: After the researcher and collaborator read the data, they classified or grouped the data into the same point. Here, they classified the data on the positive and negative findings from each cycle.

5. Interpreting: The researcher interpreted the data and find out the relationship between

quantitative data and qualitative data. The researcher explained the relationship descriptively as to know the factors influenced from the data gained.

FINDINGS AND DICUSSION

This chapter presents the description of the data finding and discussion. These are done to answer the research questions. They are answered based on the data which are collected from the observation sheet, filed notes, speaking test, speaking task, and interview.

After analyzing the data, the researcher could present all the data from meeting one until meeting four in this cycle. From the data presentation, the class average score in each indicator increased significantly.

After analyzing the data from cycle 1 and 2, the researcher could present the average score as in the Table 1:

Table 1.
The class average score cycle 1 and 2

No	Cycle	Class Average Score
1	I	3.04
2	II	3.03
3	Total	3.03

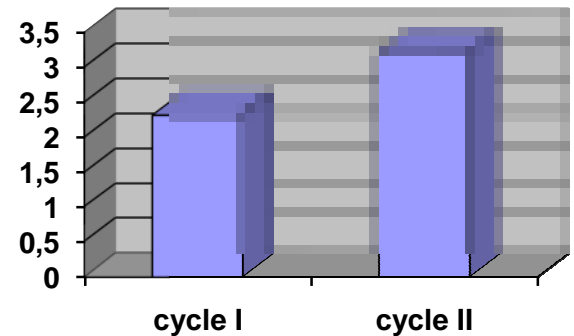The level of the students' speaking skill in each cycle could be illustrated in the following diagram.

Diagram 1: The Class average score of students in Cycle 1 and 2

Diagram 1 presented the average score of cycle 1 (all indicators) and cycle 2. Based on the diagram, there was a good achievement from first cycle to the second cycle.

In conclusion, the students' speaking skill after having applied classroom action research by students' activities through song achieved better improvement. If it compared to student's speaking skill before carrying out the research.

DISCUSSION

Regarding the findings of this research, it was found that students' activities through song could better improve the second year students' speaking skill at semester two B of the English Department of Faculty of Teacher Training of Lancang Kuning University in academic year 2009/2010. The improvement was in terms of accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. In addition, students' activities through song could build up the students' confidence and improve the students' participation in teaching learning

activities. However, there were only five indicators of speaking skill improved by students' activities through song improved students' participation and build up students' confidence. The students' accent was improved through listening activities. It was found that the students, who had no good pronunciation, always made mistakes in pronouncing the words. By listening the song the students can imitate the native speaker to pronounce the words clearly. The students' grammar was improved through developed the student confidence to ask questions when they were confronted with the grammatical point. By giving examples, the lecturer helped the students to understand the problem. The students' vocabulary was improved through the contribution of friends in the group developed their vocabulary mastery. In the other words, among the students and the lecturer, they can share the vocabulary each others. The existence of media or resources also became the factors influenced. And the students created the new vocabulary when they used their own sentences. The students' fluency was improved through do oral presentation in grouping and individually after discussing. The students' comprehension was improved through write their speech and report their speech after comprehending the content the song context.

Furthermore, factors improved the students' speaking skill by using students activities through songs were:

a. **The voice of the singer could improve the students' accent/pronunciation in speaking English.**

It was found that the students, who had no good pronunciation, always made mistakes in pronouncing the words. By listening the song, the students can imitate the native speaker to pronounce the words clearly.

b. **Classroom discussion could improve the students' grammar in speaking English.**

Applying students' activities through songs in teaching speaking had developed the student confidence to ask questions when they were confronted with the grammatical point. By giving examples, the lecturer helped the students to understand the problem.

c. **Classroom discussion and oral presentation could improve the students' vocabulary in speaking English.**

There was chanced to increase the vocabulary mastery in speaking English tudents' activities through songs. The contribution of friends in the group developed their vocabulary mastery. In the other words, among the students and the lecturer, they could share the vocabulary each others. The existence of media or resources also became the factors influenced. And the students created the new vocabulary when they used their own sentences.

d. **Oral presentation could improve the students' fluency in speaking English.**

It was found in this research that students had problem in fluency; it was caused by their limited knowledge about grammar and vocabulary. The students would do oral presentation in grouping and individually after discussing.

e. **Classroom discussion of the songs' script could improve the students' comprehension in speaking English.**

The improvement of students' comprehension in speaking was gradually be improved as well the students could improve their comprehension. The students could write their speech and report their speech after comprehending the content the song context.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that Using students' activities through songs better improves students' speaking skill at semester two B of the English Department of Faculty of Teachers Training of Lancang Kuning University.

While the factors that influence the changes of students' speaking skill by using students' activities through songs: Firstly, By listening to the song, the students can imitate the native speaker to pronounce the words clearly. Secondly, classroom discussion in teaching speaking develops the students confidence to ask questions when they confront with the grammatical point, and improve the students' comprehension. Finally, classroom discussion and oral presentation improve the students' vocabulary in speaking English, because it increases their accent and fluency. In the other words, among the students and the lecturer, they share the ideas each others. The existence of media or resources also becomes the factors influenced, and the students create the new vocabulary when they use their own sentences.

IMPLICATIONS

As previously clarified, students' activities through song could improve the students' speaking skill and influenced some factors of the students' speaking skill in terms of accent, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension, and students' participation and confidence as well. It can be implied that students' activities through song was very useful strategy in teaching speaking.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following suggestions can be made:

1. The researcher as an English teacher should use students' activities through songs in teaching speaking in the future.
2. The researcher as an English teacher should use the factors that improve students' speaking skill, such as, in teaching speaking skill in the future.
3. The future researchers do research using students' activities through songs on other skills.

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