



STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN UNDERSTANDING LECTURER'S EXPLANATION: A COMPARISON BETWEEN NATIVE AND NON-NATIVE LECTURER

Ramita¹ and Ratmanida²

English Department

Faculty of Languages and Arts

State University of Padang

email: ramita.ami27@gmail.com

Abstract

This study is aimed to find out the students' difficulty in understanding native and non-native lecturer which based on two aspects: linguistics and non-linguistics difficulties. It was also followed by the comparison of students' difficulties in understanding both of lecturers. This study was conducted at English department students of Universitas Negeri Padang in academic year 2017/2018. The population of this research are all English education students in academic years 2017/2018 with the total number 95 students. Based on the population, the samples of this research are two classes: the first class are taught by native lecturer and second class are taught by non-native lecturer with the total number 64 students. This research used the descriptive collaborative method and used questionnaire as the main instrument followed by interview and observation to support the data from questionnaire. This research found that native lecturer tend to give more linguistics problem to the students rather than non-linguistics problem especially in lecturer's accent and vocabulary understanding. Related to non-linguistics problem, lecturer's speed placed the highest percentage. However, non-native lecture did not give significant difficulties but the higher percentage showed in non-linguistics problem especially in the way of lecturer in giving explanation.

Key words: explanation, native lecturer, non-native lecturer

A. INTRODUCTION

Learning is generally defined as a process of transferring knowledge. The success of learning is not only based on what to teach but also based on how to teach, the process or the ways of how to deliver the material of the teaching or the strategies used in delivering teaching materials. One of the strategies used by the teacher is through interactional process, the interaction between all participants in the classroom, the interaction between teacher to student, the interaction between student to teacher, and the interaction among the student. Through the process of interaction, students will have a collaboration exchange of thoughts, feeling, or ideas between two or more people (Brown, 2001:164). It could be said that interaction in the classroom plays an important role in the process of teaching and learning because through the interaction, it will keep the students talking to each other and it is useful for language practice in order to develop language pedagogy (Allwright, R. L, 1984).

Interaction in the classroom is classified into different categories, they are accept feeling, praise of encouragement, accept or uses the idea of students, asking question, lecturing (teacher's explanation), giving direction, and criticizing or justifying authority (Flander, 1970 in Amatari, 2015). Explanation is one of the categories of classroom interaction which is generated from a teacher to students. Brown and Atkins (1988) states that explanation is one of lecturing skills which is related to coverage, understanding, and motivation. It is defined as a way in giving understanding to another which create a new connection between facts, between ideas, and between facts and ideas. It is also supported by Hoban (2015) explanation leads the deeper understanding in various phenomena. Thus, the ability of teacher in explaining the lesson has an important role to lead the students into the process of learning. As it gives the students' understanding, explanation helped the student to construct knowledge. In giving explanation, a teacher generally tries to elaborate the information based on the questions such as "what", "how", "why", "when", and "where", because it can give the detail information about something.

In addition, Ratmanida (2015) states that explanation is one of factors which facilitate the learning process because teacher as the explainer will guide the learner to follow the learning process systematically. By involving the students to construct the knowledge, it will help the students to follow and respond the process of teaching and learning. Novotna (2015) also states that explanation is purposed to facilitate the students' comprehension and give some feedback related to the level of students' comprehension. In addition, Ratmanida (2015) explains that teacher's explanation is supported by questioning which help the learner in reviewing the previous knowledge which had been explained by the teacher. It also creates students' contribution in the process of learning. Teacher's explanation will provide direct understanding for all of classroom participants and it will enable the learner to know what is being done in the process of learning (Rahaman, 2004 cited from Odora, 2014). If the teacher gives a good explanation, the students will have a good understanding of the lesson.

However, in the context of language learning, understanding an explanation is still being one of the problematic issues faced by some of foreign language learners. Students in general often find difficulties in following or understanding the lecturer's explanation. As a case of English Department students of Universitas Negeri Padang, students argued that they sometimes find difficulty in understanding what was being explained by the lecturer in the classroom and even, there are some of them do not understand the explanation which is given by the lecturer completely. The difficulties probably occur because of the problem which is owned by the student themselves and it can be caused by the lecturer in giving explanation, whether it is given by native or non-native lecturer. It probably happens because as a foreign language learners, students just started to be familiar to a new language so that they need more times to understand the language.

Based on this phenomenon, this topic is needed to be investigated. Some studies about teacher's explanation has been carried out. For example, the study that is related to the use of explanation as a learning method, an approach, and teaching strategy. This topic has been conducted by Odora (2014) entitled "using explanation as a teaching method: how prepared high school technology teachers

in Free State province, South Africa?” The result of the study revealed that not all of teacher have competences in using various explanation approach effectively. Hoban, G.F (2015) in his study entitles “explaining as a teaching strategy” found that explanation is a away to develop learner understanding toward learning. Furthermore, Novotna (2015) conducted study entitled “Teacher’s Views and Use of Explanation in Teaching Mathematics”. She found that, there are diversity in approaches to explanation in teaching and learning. Based on these studies, it is obvious that the researchers mostly did studies about the how the explanation is used as learning method, approach, and as a learning strategy. It showed the use of explanation in developing students’ understanding, the function of explanation as a teaching strategy, and teacher’s explanatory skill.

Furthermore, the study related to the use of explanation as a process of interaction in the classroom was conducted by Ratmanida (2015) entitled “Classroom Interaction: A Key to Facilitate Learning”. This study found that there are three factors which facilitate the learning in classroom interaction, teacher’s explanation; teacher’s question; and peer sharing. It is found that teacher’s explanation is one factor which help the learner to construct the knowledge. Based on this study, explanation is found as a process which can facilitate the learning.

Study related to students’ difficulty in understanding teacher’s explanation was conducted by Al-Nouh and Abdul-Kareem (2017) entitled “EFL College Students’ Perceptions of the Difficulties of Comprehending Academic English Lectures”. It focused on students’ difficulties encountered by the students during English lectures at Kuwait University. The result showed that the difficulties in understanding academic English lecture is in medium level, students were able to understand a half of lecture in a single meeting. Although the focus of the research is quiet similar, it still has some differences. The previous researcher explained about students’ difficulties to the English lecture in general. However, this study will focus to examine students’ difficulties found in native and non-native teacher’s explanation. This study also will show the comparison of the result related to the student’s difficulties found in both native teacher and non-native teacher. It will be conducted in English department student of Universitas Negeri Padang in Academic year 2019/2020.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study used the collaboration of qualitative and quantitative research method. The students’ difficulties was qualitatively explained by using descriptive design. However, In order to show significant result of comparison between students’ difficulties in understanding explanation which was given by native and non-native lecturer was concluded quantitatively. The population of this research was third year of English department students who was taking cross cultural understanding class in academic year 2017/2018 at Universitas Negeri Padang which consists of 95 students. The sample of the research is purposely chosen with the total number 64 students.

The data of this research were mainly from open-ended questionnaire which had 40 statements and divided into linguistics and non-linguistics factors. The questionnaire consisted 8 indicators: lecturer’s accent¹, vocabulary², pronunciation

problem³, grammar problem⁴, lecturer's speed⁵, topic and ideas of explanation⁶, students' personality problem⁷, and the ways of lecturer's in giving explanation⁸. The statements were followed by five-point scale: Never (NR), Hardly Ever (HE), Sometimes (S), Often (O), and Always (A). In addition there were also two supported data which was obtained from interview and observation transcription.

The data was analyzed by selecting and grouping the data that is found in the questionnaires. After that, the data was tabulated in statistics frequencies by using percentage. It was formulated by Arikunto (2013, p.112) as stated below:

$$P = F : N \times 100\%$$

P= the percentage of the students' answer

F= the total of the students' answer

N= the total of the students' sample

In order to find the significant difficulty, the result was calculated to find the mean percentage for each of category. For those who choose 'always' and 'often' were categorized as having difficulty and for those who choose 'sometimes', hardly ever' and 'never' were categorized as having less difficulty.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Research Finding

The result of this study was analyzed based on linguistics and non-linguistics factors that were followed by 8 indicators: lecturer's accent¹ vocabulary² pronunciation problem³ grammar problem⁴, lecturer's speed⁵ topic and ideas of explanation⁶ students' personality problem⁷ and the ways of lecturer's in giving explanation⁸ (Flowerdew and Miller,1992; Chen, 2005 cited from Al-nouh and Kareem, 2017).

Based on these indicators, the students' difficulties in understanding native lecturer was concluded based on the mean percentage of each indicator in this following table:

**Table 1. Students' difficulties in understanding native lecturer
Linguistics factor**

No	STATEMENTS	A	O	S	HE	NV	N
1.	Lecturer's accent	1 3%	15 45%	13 37%	5 15%	0 0%	34
2.	Vocabulary	3 8%	13 37%	9 28%	9 27%	0 0%	34
3.	Pronunciation problem	0 0%	8 22%	13 39%	13 39%	0 0%	34
4.	Grammar problem	1 3%	5 16%	16 46%	9 25%	3 9%	34
	Mean percentage	5%	26%	34%	28%	7%	34

From the table 1, the higher percentage of students' difficulties appeared in the lecturer's accent and vocabulary. The percentage of students' responses to the language accent showed that there are 3% (1 student) of students who always found difficulty in understanding language accent. The students' response for 'often' is 45% (15 students). For 'sometimes', there are 37%. The students' responses for 'hardly ever' is 15% and the last option 'never' showed that none of the students who did not feel difficult to understand language accent. Related to vocabulary, the percentage of students' responses to the vocabulary showed that there are 8% (1 student) of students who always found difficulty in understanding language accent. The students' response for 'often' is 37% (15 students). For 'sometimes', there are 28%. The students' responses for 'hardly ever' is 27% and the last option 'never' has 2% responses. It can be concluded that the percentage for 'often' for both indicators are higher than the other options. It indicates that students have significant problem in understanding lecturer accent and vocabulary.

**Table 2. Students' difficulties in understanding native lecturer
Non-linguistics factor**

No	STATEMENTS	A	O	S	HE	NV	N
5.	Lecturer's speed	0 0%	14 40%	10 29%	8 24%	2 7%	34
6.	Topic and ideas of explanation	0 0%	5 16%	16 46%	11 31%	2 6%	34
7.	Students' personality problem	2 5%	9 26%	11 34%	10 28%	2 7%	34
8.	Ways of lecturer in giving explanation	0 0%	1 3%	11 32%	12 36%	10 29%	34
	Mean percentage	0%	22%	36%	30%	12%	34

In non-linguistics factors, table 2 showed that the highest percentage of the students' responses are in native lecturer's speed. The responses for 'always' is 0% (0 student), for 'often' is 40% (14 students), for 'sometimes' is 29% (10 students), for 'hardly ever' is 24% (8 students) and there are 7% (2 students) for option 'never'. Based on this description, the students' response for 'often' is higher than 'sometimes'. It indicates that students have significant problem in following native lecturer's accent.

In conclusion, students' difficulties in understanding native lecture are significantly showed in lecturer's accent, vocabulary and lecturer's speed.

Related to the students' difficulties in understanding non-native lecturer, it was concluded in this following table:

Table 3. Students' difficulties in understanding no-native lecturer, Linguistics factor

No	STATEMENTS	A	O	S	HE	NV	N
1.	Lecturer's accent	0 0%	0 0%	10 33%	8 27%	12 40%	30
2.	Vocabulary	0 0%	3 9%	14 49%	11 37%	2 5%	30
3.	Pronunciation problem	0 0%	3 7%	13 45%	13 45%	1 3%	30
4.	Grammar problem	0 0%	0 0%	8 27%	17 57%	5 16%	30
	Mean percentage	0%	4%	39%	41%	16%	30

According to table 3, the students did not have any significant difficulties related to linguistics factor. It was proven by the mean percentage of all indicator, there are only 4% of students who often find difficulty regarding to the linguistics problem found in the non-native explanation.

Table 4. Students' difficulties in understanding non-native lecturer, Non-linguistics factor

No	STATEMENTS	A	O	S	HE	NV	N
6.	Lecturer's speed	1 5%	15 5%	13 23%	5 31%	0 35%	34
7.	Topic and ideas of explanation	3 0%	13 19%	9 55%	9 26%	0 0%	34
8.	Students' personality problem	0 0%	8 4%	13 31%	13 38%	0 26%	34
9.	Ways of lecturer in giving explanation	1 7%	5 18%	16 33%	9 27%	3 15%	34
	Mean percentage	3%	12%	36%	30%	19%	34

According to table 4, the high percentage was showed in the ways of lecturer in giving explanation. The students' response for 'always' is 7% (2 students) and for 'often', there are 18% (5 students). Based on these percentage, the difficulties that is faced by the students to the non-native lecturer was not really significant because the students' responses for 'often' is lower than 'sometimes'. It means that the students have less difficulty in understanding non-native lecture regarding to non-linguistics factor.

Based on the 4 tables above, this could be concluded that native lecture caused significant problem related to accent, vocabulary and speed. Related to non-native lectures, there is no significant difficulty caused by non-native lecturer but the highest percentage was showed in the ways of non-native lecturer in giving explanation.

2. Discussion

This research was focus to find the students' difficulties in understanding native and non-native lecturer in giving explanation and followed by the comparison of students' difficulties given by both of native and non-native lecturer. Based on this focus, it was found that native lecturer created more linguistics difficulties rather than non-linguistics difficulties for students especially in lecturer's accent and vocabulary problem. However, related to non-native lecturer, it was found that the students felt more difficulties in non-linguistics factors rather than linguistics factors especially in the use of learning style, approach and material development.

The topic of this research are similar with Al-Nouh and Kareem (2017). In their research, the focus is not comparing the students' difficulties in native and non-naive lecturer's explanation but it focus on the tendency of students difficulties in understanding lecturer whether the students incline to linguistics difficulty or non-linguistics difficulty. The data analysis of this research are based on the age, nationality, grade level, and GPA of the students. The purpose of this research was to find out whose felt the most difficulty whether it was linguistics and non-linguistics problem. This research did not categorized what are the specific difficulty found in both linguistics and non-linguistics problem. The finding of this research found that students variable in age variable was insignificant. Related to nationality, non-Kuwaiti faced more linguistics problem rather than Kuwaiti. Related low grade level, freshman faced both of linguistics and non-linguistics difficulties. Furthermore, related to students' GPA, lower GPA's students faced more non-linguistics difficulties that others.

The finding of the first research question found that students have both of linguistics and non-linguistics problem. However, the percentage of linguistics is higher rather than non-linguistics factors. Based on the result, it is indicated that students have significant problem related to lecturer's accent and vocabulary. It is proven by the mean percentage of always and often are dominantly about 41% (14 students). However, for sometimes is about 32% (11 students). It is also supported by data from observation, during learning process with native lecturer, the students often feel confuse about what was asked by the lecturer because the students do not know what the lecturer means. As the result, most of them tend to ask the other students and there some students are keeping silent until the native lecturer repeat the question. For non-linguistics problem, the highest responses were shown in lecturer speed of explanation. It showed that there are about 40% (14 students) who often find difficulties. It indicates that, from non-linguistics

factors, students have significant problem in following native lecturer's speed.

Related to second research question, it found that students have more problem in non-linguistics problem rather than linguistics problem. It is indicated that students have problem related to understand the ways of non-native lecturer in giving explanation but it is not really significant. It is proven by the mean percentage of always and often are about 19% (6 students). However, option sometimes is higher about 39% (12 students). Based on observation, for those who find difficulty related way of lecturer in giving explanation is caused by the monotone lecturing style and approach. Based on interview, students argued that non-native lecturer often give the task but never discuss it so that the students sometimes ignore the task and did the task in the class when the lecturer ask about it.

Related to the third research question, it was found that there is a significant problem for students in linguistics factor which found in native lecturer's explanation. However, related to non-native lecturer, non-linguistics problem occur but it is not really significant.

D. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the finding and discussion above, the students' difficulty in understanding native and non-native lecturers' explanation can be concluded that related to native lecturer's explanation, the students tend to have difficulty in linguistics factors. The result showed that the highest percentage of the linguistics difficulty which is faced by third years of English department students at UNP is vocabulary problem. On the other hand, in non-native lecturer's explanation, students did not really face any significant difficulties but the highest responses are showed in non-linguistics factors especially in the ways of non-native lecturer in giving explanation.

Based on the data analysis, findings, and discussion, the researcher want to give some suggestion and considerations for the learning process. For lecturers, the finding of this research is expected to help native and non-native lecturer in arranging the learning process. Both of lecturer can prevent the students' difficulty by looking for the best way in explaining the material. In addition, this research finding hopefully can help native lecturer to find strategy which make the students getting easy to understand the lesson.

For the researcher, it would be valuable to conduct new study about the students' difficulty in understanding the lecturers' explanation by looking for the other indicators and factors which causes the students difficulty. The researcher also can develop the instruments that is used in investigating this problem.

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