



TEACHING SPEAKING BY USING TALKING STICK TECHNIQUE FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

Speaking is one of the four elements of language that is very important to master in order to support a person's ability to speak. Talking is the process of conveying an idea and information orally to the opponent. In Indonesia, English has been taught since Elementary level up to University level. However, not many students are able to speak English fluently. This paper is discussing about one technique that can help teacher in teaching speaking in more enjoyable way at classroom. The technique that will be discussed is *Talking Stick Technique*. The technique uses a wooden stick as a sign for whom who may speak.

Key words: Speaking, Talking Stick Technique

A. INTRODUCTION

Language has been known as the media of communications to convey our ideas, feelings, and also opinion. This indicates that language has an important role in many parts of human life which is particularly realized in communication activities. Thus for most people, knowing the language well is indicated by their ability to speak the language because speech is the most basic means of human communication (Lazaraton, 2001:104). It means that speaking is the determination whether someone knows the language or not.

In communication activity, we know well the term where we called it speaking. Speaking is an activity used by someone to communicate with other. It takes place everywhere and has become part of our daily activities. Nunan (2000:4) argues that speaking skill is the single most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language. He further notes that the success of learning the language is measured in terms of the ability to carry out a conversation in the target language. This is also in accordance with what Bailey and Savagein Larazaton (2001:110) say. According to them, speaking in a second or foreign language has often been viewed as the most demanding of the four skills. In other word, being able to speak fluently is an urgent in students' language learning.

In Indonesia, teaching English as a foreign language has been an essential things in education. English has been taught since Elementary level to University level. Every level of Education in Indonesia use English as the compulsory subject

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in curriculum. Therefore students in Senior High School level are supposed to be able to speak English confidently to interact and to use English for the daily basis.

In this modern era, English has an important role for technology and also scientific developments. All the substantial and latest informations are represented mostly in English. In order to compete with students from another countries, Indonesian students should be able to get more knowledge as much as possible since the world of knowledge is mostly written and spoken in English. This indicates that mastering English is a must for students to actively engage in international relationships and to gain more knowledge about the world.

There are some problems that make the students get difficulties in speaking English. The first problem is the students feel anxious and hesitant when they learn it in school, because English is not the language that they usually use. In teaching and learning process, sometimes students think that their teacher will be mad at them if they cannot be able to speak in English. As the result, the students are just being quiet and refuse when being asked to speak by their teacher.

The second problem is lack of vocabulary. Based on his research to the Vietnamese students, Huyen (2003) says that there are two factors causing students' lack of vocabulary. First, students consider that the teacher's explanation is simply for meaning or definition, pronunciation, spelling and grammatical functions. The students in this context consider that those things mentioned are nothing to do in vocabulary learning.

The third problem, the students have difficulties in practicing conversation in front of the class. They are still not confidence to practice the conversation when the conversation in the class is dominated by the active students. Some of the students also are too shy and too afraid to take part in the conversation.

The last problem is about the technique that is used by teacher. Usually, teachers just teach the students by using the old method. Teachers always use the same strategy, Teacher-Centered Style; teacher becomes the main focus in the class. For the speaking activity, teachers ask the student to follow what teachers say in the class, and then ask them to repeat the conversation or dialog. This activity cause the students feel monotonous and bored.

In the classroom, where is the communication should be created, the teacher is demanded to create the situation that can encourage real communication, especially in Curriculum 2013. Curriculum 2013 requires student to be more active in participating in class. Teacher is only a facilitator while students are the center of the teaching and learning process. Therefore, to make students become more active and have the will to join the communication in the class, teacher is demanded to be more creative. According to David Holmes (2004) in *Speaking Activities for The Classroom*, there are two types of tasks proceeding in stimulate the students speaking frequency. The first type is based on having the students interviewing one-another and asking questions, so that there is an independent dialogue between class members, with a minimum of interruption and supervision by the teacher. The second type is based on easy games and speaking tasks that should not be seen as threatening to the students and that should help to ease them into talking in programmed, student centered excercises.

From the types of tasks, the students may have more topics to be discussed in speaking class.

There were some researchers which had been conducted related to the teaching speaking. One of them was Satria and An Fauzia (2013) which was conducted the “Stand-Up Comedy” in teaching speaking at senior high school. Based on the problems above, the teacher must create the situations that can make the students to learn and speak. Teachers have to have interesting teaching techniques and appropriate materials for them. According to Rahman (2009:5) to develop the students’ speaking skill, the teaching and learning should be more effective and it is important to the teachers to design the lessons according to the learners’ age group and competency level and also in a way that makes the students motivated to learn and speak.

Those kinds of the problems above can be solved by one of the technique which called Talking Stick Technique. Talking stick technique was known first as Native American Technique to let everyone speak their mind during council meeting, a type of tribal meeting. Dr. Locust, in the Talking Stick: An American Indian Tradition in the ESL Classroom by Fujioka describes the talking stick, according to Native American tradition:

“The talking stick has been used or centuries by many Indian tribes as a means of just and impartial hearing. The talking stick was commonly used in council circles to decide who had the right to speak. When matters of great concern would come before the council, the leading elder would hold the talking stick, and begin the discussion. When he would finish what he had to say, he would hold out the talking stick, and whoever would speak after him would take it. In this manner, the stick would be passed from one individual to another until all who wanted speak had done so. The stick was then passed back to the elder for safe keeping.” (Locust, 1998 cited in Fujioka, 1998:157)

Oktavia (2012) stated that the improvement of students’ learning competencies in the subject of Civic Education is 48,1% after using the talking stick technique individually in SMP Negeri 9 Malang. Meanwhile Karmapati (2013) combine the use of Talking Stick with the Crossword Puzzle for the teaching and learning of TIK subject at SMP Negeri 2 Singaraja. The percentage of the classical completeness is improving from 69% to 81 %. From those data we can see that Talking Stick Technique can be used to improve students’ performance in class.

Talking stick technique will be worked by the students make a circle and running together with simple song such as “Twinkle-Twinkle Little Star” and then the last student who hold into the stick is allowed to speak. He or she needs to speak whilst holding into the stick for an agreed-upon length of time (usually one minute) before passing it to the next person in the team. A talking stick is usually decorated in some ways. When teams are created in the beginning, ask the team to make their own Talking Stick and decorate it to represent the team’s name or the topic that will be discussed. This activity also can be consider as a team-building activity. When each student is in possession of the stick, he or she is asked to speak whatever comes to their mind based on the topic.

B. DISCUSSION

Talking stick is a kind of methods used in Americans to invite all the people speak and extend their opinions in an ethnic group meeting. For long times ago, Indian ethnics are used this method as a good and wise facilitation without taking side each other. Talking stick is used by the councils to decide who will have the right to speak up. When the leader starts in the discussion, he must hold the stick. Then, the stick moves to another person who wants to speak or respond the topic. After all the people have the opportunities to convey their opinions, the stick returnable to the leader. (www.historytalkingstick.com).

Ahmad MunjinNasihdanLilikNurKholidah (2006:136) define that talking stick method is one of cooperative learning methods in the learning process by a stick, the student who gets the stick must answer the question by the teacher. Talking stick method is not only trains the students speak up but also creates fun and active condition in the class. This activity encourage students to speak out their own opinion or share their thought about something that is discussed. It will make students to cooperate and interact with other students in the learning process. It also gives the same opportunity to passive students as much as the active one to practice their speaking ability.

The Teacher's Preparation

Teacher has to do a preparation before they come to the classroom in order to do the teaching-learning process run well. The main thing that has to do by the teacher is making a lesson plan. It really helps the teachers to know what steps or procedures that they will take in the classroom and achieve the aim of teaching and learning. In short, the teacher should prepare and plan well what he/she is going to do before come to the class. In the lesson plan the teacher can add it by prepare command, instruction and others that are used when teaching in the classroom.

Next, the teacher needs to prepare the materials that are taught before teaching in the class. Without prepare the materials the teacher does not know what they are going to teach. Teacher also needs to prepare the media that will activate students' background knowledge about the material such as pictures, videos, or text. The media has to be interesting so it will gather students' curiosity and attention. Media that is used can be from internet or the teachers can make it by their own. Moreover, teacher needs to pay attention whether the media is appropriate and compatible or not with the curriculum.

Before entering the class, teacher needs to prepare a talking stick that will be used in learning process. Teacher can decorate the talking stick as creative as it can be so later on it will catch student's attention.

Implementing Talking Stick Strategy in Teaching Process

As the implementation of The Talking Stick Strategy, the material about Asking and Giving Opinion will be used as the model. The topic of the material is about The Legalization of Gay Marriage in US.

Pre- Teaching Activities

Before doing the teaching process, the teacher can start the teaching by doing these some activities:

1. The Teacher greets the student.
2. The Teacher prepares the students to study physically and psychologically.
3. The Teacher checks the classroom environment.
4. The Teacher motivates the students to study
5. The Teacher makes apperception
6. The Teacher explains the purpose of the lesson for the day
7. The Teacher starts the process of teaching by preparing the students to learn.

Whilst Teaching Activities

1. Observing

In this stage teacher provides a media to be shown as the stimulation for students' background knowledge. The media that is used needs to be related with the topic that is discussed. For this case, let just say that video has been chosed as the media. Teacher can find the news video about the Legalization of Gay Marriage in US. When the video is played, students need to pay attention and observe it to the detail. Teacher can ask the students to prepare at least one question for one person to be asked later about the videos content. It is done in order to make sure whether the students observe the video or not.

2. Questioning

After the students finished observing the media that is presented, teacher can ask students' opinion about things that they watched at the time. For example if the topic that is used is about "The Legalization of Gay Marriage in US". While watching the videos students is allowed to ask questions, and if one student is asking a question, pause the video and let the class hear the question. Before teacher answers that question, try to ask the same question to the other students, it helps them to be more critical. For example they ask about what the people do at the video or what the gay marriage is.

3. Associating

In this stage, teacher starts to deliver the material to the class. As in this case is about asking and giving opinion. Teacher gives the relevant theory about asking and giving opinion. The material must be arranged from the simple one to the more complex one. For example it starts with how to ask someone's opinion and how to give an opinion. While delivering the material to the students, teacher also gives a brief but clear instruction with accompanying examples that is associated with our daily basis.

In associating, teacher also asks students to practice the way for asking opinion and giving opinion. At this stage, teacher can point out some students to give an example about asking and giving opinion in front of the class. The practice is done over and over until the teacher is sure that most of the members understand the material. If the material is still not clear, teacher can always do the repetition of the material.

After the material is clear, teacher can start to talk about the topic that is discussed later on the next stage. For example, the chosen topic is about “The Legalization of Gay Marriage in US”. There must be at least one member in the class who is not familiar with the topic, so teacher needs to give the brief explanation about the topic so later on everybody can give their opinion about the topic in the discussion.

4. Experimenting

In this paper, the concept of Talking Stick Technique is deeply practiced in this stage. In this case, the students are going to discuss about “The Legalization of Gay Marriage in US”. First of all, teacher gives a chance for a brainstorming session where students can gather the information as much as possible about the issue. Teacher gives the students one article about gay marriage in US. Students are going to read the text first to understand the topic. Besides that, teacher also gives an approach about what is the issue talking about. Students are allowed to look for the other source and information about that topic from Internet during the brainstorming session. Students also are allowed to have a mini discussion in pair with their friends in order to share their thought about the subject matter.

After the brainstorming session, students sit in a circle, the big one. Teacher stands in the center of the group. After arranging the position, teacher explains the rule of talking stick technique. The only person who is allowed to speak during the discussion is only a person who holds the stick. The stick is passed clockwise. The first person is chosen by passing the stick clockwise while singing the “Twinkle – Twinkle Little Star” song. The persons who is holding the stick in the end of the song, is the first to speak. The person who is chosen to hold the stick needs to speak their mind or choose to remind silent. After the first person’s turn is over, he or she can choose the next person to hold the stick. The next chosen person can give the new opinion about the issue or give a response to the previous argument. The procedure is repeated all over again until all of the members have their chance to speak. All of the members have to speak at least once, so the stick is being passed continuously until all of the members have a chance to speak.

While the holder speaks, everybody needs to pay attention and be quiet. If one member disagrees about the holder opinion, he or she needs to hold and wait until the speakers finish and passes the stick to her or him. If there is disagreement about students’ opinion or the information is not clear, teacher needs to step up and give the explanation about that matter. The discussion is going to be ended after all the students have spoken.

5. Communicating

In this stage, after the students already have a grasp the knowledge about the material and understand how to produce the language through practices, the students are then, obliged to apply what they have learned and try to produce the dialogue. Teacher asks students to sit in pair and try to produce dialogue related to the Asking and Giving Opinion. Students are given 5 minutes to prepare and produce the dialogue by their own, and then try to practice the dialogue with their

partner. Later on, teacher points out several pairs of the student to perform in front of the class. The procedure of choosing the pair to perform is using the talking stick. The representative of the group sits in the circle while the stick is being passed clockwise. The first pair to be chosen has the right to pass the stick to the other pairs after they have finished.

Post Teaching Activities

In this activity the teacher can see how far the students understand about the topic that is given and can see which student is still lack of confidence in speaking. Teacher also does some review about the topic that has been discussed with asking the related questions about the topic. In the end, teacher can summarize about student's opinion and pick some interesting opinions as the best ideas of the discussion. Teacher also can give rewards to the best speaker such as applauses from the entire class.

C. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

It is suggested to the teacher to use The Talking Stick Method as a teaching technique in classroom. It is appropriate to give a chance to the students to speak their minds in front of everyone in class equally. It is a fun activity to do for both the teacher and students. It only needs a wooden stick and the procedure is not difficult to be followed by the students. Besides, it can be used for several topics of English lesson such as asking and giving opinion about some matters.

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