
DEVELOPING ACADEMIC SPEAKING MATERIAL: WHAT DO COLLEGE STUDENTS REALLY NEED?

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Abstract

As the official language of ASEAN Economic Community, the ability to use English in communication will inevitably be listed as the main requirement for the process of both job recruitment and career development in the participating countries. Despite of its importance, the process of teaching English i.e. speaking presents the lecturer with several challenges. Some of which are students' inability to organize their ideas to speak, the inappropriate implemented instructional framework, and other related problems. Regarding to this phenomenon, this research is aimed to design speaking instructional material for English Departement students. This study belongs to Research and Development (R & D). It was conducted in English Department of STKIP AbdiPendidikanPayakumbuh. The steps involved in this research were analyzing the existing material, doing need analysis, designing the material, and validating the material. The data were collected through observation, interview, and questionnaire. The research findings reveal that there are some facets in speaking; communicating opinions and information on daily topics, using appropriate language and diction while speaking, organizing ideas coherently, expressing and justifying the opinions, and speculating about an issue. From these findings, it is suggested for the lecturer to design instructional material that corresponds to students' needs since it will assist not only the students but also for the lecturer to achieve the learning objectives.

Keywords: *Material Development, Need Analysis, Research and Development, Speaking*

1. INTRODUCTION

As a primary means of communication, speaking enables humans to be functionally active in their social circumstances. Established as a channel through which they share their thoughts and express their ideas, speaking allows people to engage in the social interaction for different purposes and needs, such as explaining and describing things, giving command, asking things, and other related matters involved in such interaction. To gain benefit from speaking when conveying their thoughts and ideas, speakers are required to master how to produce the appropriate sentences with good structure, pronunciation, or vocabulary and to understand the context of a situation where the sentences are used (Florez, 1999: 1).

Considering its profound impact in their daily life, speaking is taught to language learners regardless of their proficiency level. In fact, the process of foreign language teaching has shifted from the dominant exposure to the target grammar to the significant emphasis on the students' ability to use the target language in communication i.e. speaking. Regarding to English teaching field, the recent trend is that the global world requires the process of teaching English should be aimed to improve students' skill in communication in order to provide them with the ability to express themselves through following the appropriate social and cultural rules applicable in the given communicative occurrence.

However, the demand to cater students' need to master speaking meets several challenges. The first problem stems from the nature of acquiring the skills needed to speak in a foreign language. As stated by Nunan (2003:48), speaking skills in a new language is more difficult than other skills. This notion implies that language learners need to devote more time and energy in order that they will possess the required skills to communicate in the target language. In addition to this intrinsic conundrum, the setting in which the students are exposed to the target language poses another challenge for such demand. Indonesian students who learn English in a foreign language context feel difficult to speak the language since they are not accustomed to it. In other words, their circumstance

does not support them to communicate in this language. Unfamiliar with the English communication process, students are reluctant and afraid to engage in speaking, which is natural and spontaneous.

The aforementioned challenges are manifested in the speaking instruction for a college level in which the writer is involved as a lecturer. Despite the apparent demand to master English, students seem to be lacking in their learning motivation. During the instructional process, most of them are reluctant to participate. Instead of using the opportunity to expand their speaking ability, they are just passive with little attention to the material presented. Such attitudes and behaviors will inevitably result in their low speaking ability. However, the students are not only the culprit in this problematic dilemma. With its ultimate purpose to assist students to be able to use the language in real situation both formal and informal, speaking should be instructed by using authentic, relevant, consistent, and adequate materials. However, the fact remains that many speaking materials used do not meet the whole previously mentioned criteria. In its practice, students are simply taught with the readily used instructional material with little attention to those aspects.

Given such problematic circumstance, this research aims to develop speaking material based on Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL). CTL is an approach of teaching and learning that helps the teacher to relate subject material to the real world situations and motivates the students to make connection between knowledge and its application to their daily life. The CTL concept offers students the better learning outcome if they connect the learning contents to the real life context where they are applicable. This approach is the most appropriate to be used as the basis for designing the speaking materials because of its foundation and constructivism. It allows students to understand and solve the problems as well as to express and develop their ideas. CTL also encourages the writer to design the material contextually based on the students' real life, needs, previous knowledge, and meaningful learning experience.

Owing to the this phenomenon, the writer carried out the research to find out what college students actually need in the speaking subject through which the instructional speaking material will be designed and developed for Speaking III class at English Department of STKIP YayasanAbdiPendidikanPayakumbuh.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Generally, speaking can be defined as a process of sharing ideas of information involving at least one speaker who encodes the intended message and one interlocutor who decodes or receives the message given. As suggested by (Harmer, 2007:343), speaking is an activity which happens when two people are engaged in talking to each other. Therefore, during this process speakers share their ideas, thoughts, or opinions. However, the process of speaking which is intended to deliver the ideas or thought is not restricted to the oral utterance only. According to Chaney in Kayi (2006), speaking is the process of building and sharing meaning through using verbal and nonverbal symbols in a variety of contexts. This view suggests that the process of communication is not only carried out through verbal activities but also carried out through nonverbal clues such as gesture, facial expression, and the likes.

Related to the process of teaching speaking in the language classroom, the students are involved in some kind of activities that enables them to express themselves and interact with their peers. Lazarataon (2001, 106) describes activities in speaking class such as discussion, speeches, role play, conversation, audiotaped oral dialogue journal.

Those proposed activities can help the students activate their confidence in communicating or interacting with others. Therefore, the teacher can solve the problems of students' lack of confidence by using them. Eventually, when the students are trained to do those activities in the classroom, it will provide them with better understanding and ability to communicate properly in the real context.

In developing speaking material for this research, the writer employs Contextual Teaching and Learning approach. According to Bern and Erickson (2001, 2) CTL is a conception of teaching and learning that helps teachers relate subject matter or content to real world situations and motivates students to make connection between knowledge and its application to their lives. It focuses on the context of what we teach from the students' point of view.

3. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Attempting to develop and design instructional material for speaking subject, this research uses Educational Research and Development as its method (R&D). According to Borg and Gall (1983: 772), educational research and development (R&D) is the process to develop and validate educational product. Some products developed in R&D are a variety of instructional tools such as curriculum, syllabus, learning modules, including teaching materials. As for this research, the main purpose is to develop Speaking III learning materials used at STKIP YayasanAbdiPendidikanPayakumbuh.

Speaking III subject aims to develop students' speaking skill to express themselves confidently, communicatively, and clearly through various selected activities for both formal and informal communicative situation. This research focuses on developing Speaking Material for students who enroll in Speaking III subject at STKIP YayasanAbdiPendidikanPayakumbuh.

The first procedure in developing this speaking material is conducting the needs analysis. This need analysis is used to find the students' need in order that the designed speaking material will be appropriate to what students need. To do this, the researcher conducted an interview with the students to find out what they need in learning speaking. Apart from the interview, an observation was also carried out during the students' interaction with their friend inside or outside the classroom. From this interview and observation, the writer obtained the following conclusion regarding to three terms of need analysis. What the students really need in Speaking III subject is how to communicate opinions and information on daily topics, how to use appropriate language and diction in speaking, how to organize ideas coherently, how to express and justify the opinions, and how to speculate about an issue. As for the lack, the students still find many difficulties in speaking. As for the want, the students want to improve their communication skill in English so that they can have good self-confidence in speaking of English. To achieve this, they wish to have appropriate speaking materials. The results of this need analysis are then used to develop the course grid and as the guideline to develop these speaking materials.

In relation with the result of needs analysis, the materials are designed in five sections. They are

Section 1: *Interview*

This section offers students some activities of speaking related to inquiring one's personal details, expressing strengths and weaknesses, instructing/directing one to do/say something.

Section 2: *Delivering a Speech*

In this section, speaking activities done by the students are preparing a speech script, arranging powerful sentences related to certain given topics to begin a speech delivery, delivering a speech and expressing appropriate comments on one's performance.

Section 3: *Presentation and Discussions*

The third section includes some speaking activities; preparing presentation material on a report, describing a product or thing, expressing comments on one's presentation, praising and complimenting, inquiring further information about a topic, responding somebody's both polite or awkward questions about a presented material.

Section 4: *Debate*

In this section, speaking activities are expressing strong argument on a topic given by employing "AREL" principles, expressing counter argument, justifying an argument or explanation, asking somebody's clarification on her/his argument, responding/accepting/denying somebody's argument about a topic.

Section 5: *Talk Show and Hosting*

In this last section, the students are involved in the activities of giving a short talk on a certain topic, asking somebody's opinion about a topic, speculating about future events or plans, inquiring and expressing approval and disapproval of somebody's opinion.

The speaking materials are developed by using Contextual Teaching and Learning approach. Some techniques are used in teaching, namely conversation, role play, survey, communication game, simulation, prepared talk, and opinion-sharing activity. These speaking techniques are in line with the

theories proposed by some experts, i.e. Thornbury and Slade, 2006; Harmer, 2001; Richards and Schmidt, 1985.

After the material prepared, the next step is expert judgment process. The expert evaluated seven aspects of the material. The material evaluation was done by distributing a questionnaire to the expert. The expert is a credible lecturer from the English Department of STKIP YayasanAbdiPendidikan who has experiences of teaching more than 20 years.

The evaluation result of expert judgment is converted to the following category which is proposed by Burn (2010):

Table 1: Data Conversion

Scale	Interval of mean values	Category
5	> 4.6	Extremely well
4	3.7 – 4.5	Very well
3	2.8 – 3.6	Fairly well
2	1.9 – 2.7	A little
1	< 1.8	Not at all

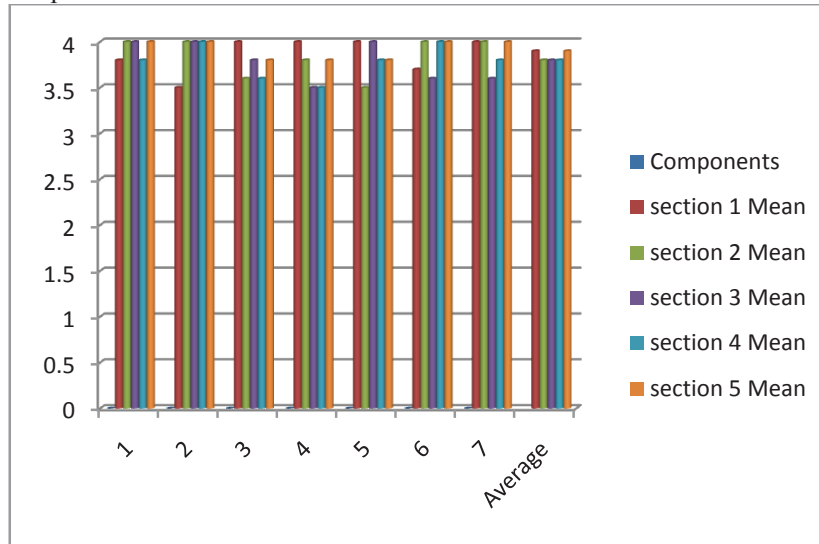
The result of expert validation for developed material based on the result of component analysis by the expert can be seen in the following table:

Table 2: Evaluation of All Sections

No	Components	Section 1		Section 2		Section 3		Section 4		Section 5	
		M	Category	M	Category	M	Category	M	Category	M	Category
1	The appropriateness of goals in writing the material	3.8	Very well	4	Very well	4	Very well	3.8	Very well	4	Very well
2	The appropriateness of input texts	3.5	Fairly well	4	Very well	4	Very well	4	Very well	4	Very well
3	The appropriateness of language structure	4	Very well	3.6	Fairly well	3.8	Very well	3.6	Fairly well	3.8	Very well
4	The appropriate of language skills	4	Very well	3.8	Very well	3.5	Fairly well	3.5	Fairly well	3.8	Very well
5	The appropriateness of tasks	4	Very well	3.5	Fairly well	4	Very well	3.8	Very well	3.8	Very well
6	The appropriateness of textbook organization	3.7	Very well	4	Very well	3.6	Fairly well	4	Very well	4	Very well

7	The appropriateness of textbook layout	4	Very well	4	Very well	3.6	Fairly well	3.8	Very well	4	Very well
Average		3.9	Very well	3.8	Very well	3.8	Very well	3.8	Very well	3.9	Very well

It can be seen from the graphic below
Graphic 1 : Evaluation of All sections



The results of the expert evaluation are in form of quantitative data. The data were then interpreted by finding the average value. The mean value of section 1 is 3.9 (very well); section 2, 3, and 4 is 3.8 (very well); and section 5 is 3.9 (very well).

Based on the result of the expert judgment, the developed materials are appropriate based on the students' needs in learning speaking. Most of the revisions are in term of the instructions in the exercises. The instruction should be clear either for the students or for the teachers (Celce-Murcia, 2001). Therefore, the revision was needed to improve the quality of the material in order to make it more appropriate. After this revision, the expert confirmed that that the whole material was good. However, there were still some parts needed to be revised. The listening input should be added more. It would be better if the listening input was in the form of recorded audio rather than lecturer's voice.

After developed materials had been revised, the second draft of Speaking III material called final draft was written based on the revision from the expert.

4. CONCLUSION

There are some conclusions drawn based on findings. The aims of this research is to develop Speaking III material for English Department students of STKIP YayasanAbdiPendidikanPayakumbuh based on Contextual Teaching Learning. From the result of needs analysis, the students' goals in learning are to know how to communicate opinions and information on daily topics, how to use appropriate language and diction while speaking, how to organize ideas coherently, how to express and justify the opinions, and how to speculate about an issue. Therefore, they need learning topics relevant to these purposes. To achieve this relevancy, the writer developed Speaking III material into five sections: Section 1 is *Interview*; Section 2 is *speech delivery*; Section 3 presentation and discussions; Section 4 is *debate*; and section 5 is *Talk Show and Hosting*.

Based on the result of product testing, the average point from expert judgment can be categorized as very well indicating that the speaking III material based on Contextual Teaching and

Learning can be considered as a good material. Hence, it can be applied for English Department students at STKIP YayasanAbdiPendidikan.

Through the findings of this research, some pedagogical implication can be made for design and material development for English Department students. Lecturers are suggested to apply the developed material in learning process as a main reference or as a supplementary material. Moreover, lecturers as material developers can make more interesting, innovative, and effective learning materials with different theme, and activities. By conducting the needs analysis, the lecturers can know the needs and interest of the students in order to make the instructional materials relevant. Interesting theme, attractive learning media, various activities, and colourful design allow the lecturers to make the speaking materials fresh and to make the students enjoy the learning process as well as maintain their attention during the learning process.

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