

USING SONGS IN THE SPEAKING CLASS: Improving Students' Abilities in a Relaxing Way.

Dahler

Lancang Kuning University
dahler@yahoo.com

Abstract: This Classroom Action Research (CAR) aimed 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 21 students of English department, Lancang Kuning University academic year 2012/2013. This present study conducted in two cycles, and each of the cycle had four meetings during April - Mei 2012. 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.

Keywords: CAR, Songs, Speaking Class

1. Introduction

Speaking is one of the subjects that must be possessed by students when they study English in the level of University. In Lancang Kuning University every student started from the first semester will listed under *Speaking I* class. This class aimed to make the students to be able to speak by using informal situation, such as expressing daily activities, hobbies, and ambitions. Then continues to the second semester, where *Speaking II* designed aimed to create the students being able to speak by using formal situation, such as at office, campus, and meeting. Finally, at the third semester, they will join *Speaking III* class with it aims to create the students to be able to speak academically, such as on the seminar and on the exam.

As an *insider* the researcher has an opportunity to observe 2nd semester students of FKIP Unilak during teaching and learning process. During the four months observation period (April-August 2010), the researcher see a phenomena that not all students can be categorized "fluent" in speaking English in the class. This phenomena following by other phenomena that the students faced many problems during their *speaking class*, such as confusion, less confidents, 1st language interfere, shy, and afraid of making mistakes.

By seeing these phenomena the researcher tries to conduct a research in order to help the students so they can improve their speaking skill by using suitable and relaxing activities during their *speaking class*. The researcher hoped that after doing this research, the students have high motivation and improvement on their speaking.

2. Speaking Skill in Unilak

Speaking is one of the subjects taught in English Department FKIP, Lancang Kuning University. This subject is taught from the first to third semester in order to create the students to be able to speak English informal, formal and academically. The students can be pass the speaking class if the students able to speak or use it in their circumstances.

In the level of university, learning to speak in English 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. [10].

In general, good English students are indicated by the way their *speaking*. It means that if the students are success to speak *fluently*, they are claimed success in learning English. Moreover, in speaking class the students can be categorized *success* in speaking class if they showing 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.

Regarding about speaking skill that need to be possessed every students in English department, teaching process in speaking class should be 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 [10].

3. The Media: Songs in English Class

In relation to the number of students involved, the researcher believed that every student loved to hear music, particularly the relaxing songs. The researcher believes through songs can help students enrich their vocabulary and improved their ability in speaking.

Songs were assumed as instruments to solve the students' problem in speaking. Regarding, 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. 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 [7]. Further, "...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." [18]. Moreover, 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.

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.

The researcher believes that there are three main reasons why songs can be 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. Similar opinion with several tributes on the opinion using Songs, for those the researcher believe songs in English class can have a great value. Regarding, songs would help the students to get some language components, such as vocabulary, composition skill, and comprehension. Through 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. 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 [15]. 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 [11].

Referring to the ideas above, it could be said that songs can be the most meaningful media that can helps the students in mastering English. Therefore, it was useful for learners to learn and know some songs from target language. Moreover, knowing English songs would add variety and enrich their social life also this is a alternative way to have a relaxing way in learning or teaching English.

3.1 Class activities using songs

There are some activities can be employ by lecturers to make the students doing some activities related to songs in the English class such as:

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

3.2. Assessing Students Speaking

There are many sets of assessments that can help lecturer measure the speaking class. This study proposes the assessments points and indicators that would be nice to evaluate 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)

4. 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.

This research was carried out at semester two B of the English Department of Faculty of Education and Teachers Training Lancang Kuning University. That consisted of 21 students. The researcher took this class as participant because after observation it was found most of the students from this class had problem on their speaking. Meanwhile, the *requirements* expected that these students had to be able to use English *fluently* if they want to pass the speaking class.

4.1 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.

4.2 Data Collection

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

4.2.1. 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.

4.2. 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.

4.3 Technique of Data Analyzing

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. Moreover, 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. In basic, this research analyzed based on these five steps to analyze the qualitative data:

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

5. Findings and Discussion

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.

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.

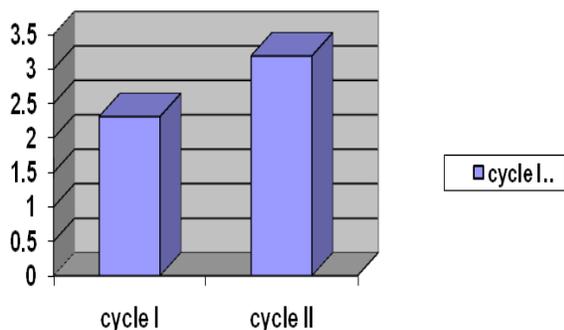


Diagram 1: The Class average score of students in Cycle 1 and 2

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. The diagram showing the students' speaking skill after having applied classroom action research through song achieved better improvement. If it compared to student's speaking skill before carrying out the research.

6. 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.

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

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