ACTIVITIES TO ENCOURAGE SPEAKING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN ANGUAGE (A CASE STUDY OF ENGLISH CLUB PARTICIPANTS IN STMIK PROVISI SEMARANG)

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Abstract

Speaking is one of the four macro skills to be developed as means of effective communication in both first and second language learning contexts. In the English as a Foreign Language pedagogy environment, how to increase speaking competence and confidence for undergraduate students tends to be an important question. This concern led to a qualitative research. The findings indicated that confidence and mastery of gramar andvocabulary, the teacher's roles as prompter and feedback provider, and speaking activities such as information gap and role play were the key aspects that encourage students to communicate in English class better.

Keywords : Speaking; Foreign Language; encourage; confidence; teacher's roles; speaking activities

1. Background of the problem

For most people, the ability to speak a language is synonymous with knowing that language since speech is the most basic means of communication. Nevertheless speaking in a second or foreign language has been viewed as the most demanding of the four skills - Reading, Listening, Speaking, and Writing – due to the fact that Speaking is a productive skill together with writing (Bailey and Savage 1994:vii). Speaking is "the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts" (Chaney, 1998, p. 13). Speaking is a crucial part of second language learning and teaching. Some teachers often find it is difficult to encourage the students to speak especially in the case where English is a foreign language meaning that they do not use English for daily activities. These students usually have difficulties in expressing their opinions in English due to lack of grammar, vocabulary and confidence. This research is aiming at encouraging students ability in speaking through variety of activities and the teacher's roles

B. Purpose of the Research

This research is aimed at discovering what kinds of activities encouraging students to talk or communicate in English speaking class more actively.

C. Scope of the Research

The scope of this research was all STMIK ProVisi students taking English subject from semester 1 – 4 because it is mandatory for them to join Englsih club. In this case students from lower level participate along with students from higher level of English competence. The activities in Englsih class is varied starting from role play, discussion, information gap, etc

D. Hypotheses

A task-based learning approach (Nunan, 2006) was employed for the findings of the two main research questions conducted with the course participants 1) What factors help EFL learners to improve their speaking skills? 2) What is the most effective teacher roles to encourage learners to speak and communicate in englsih more actively? 3) What speaking activities that encourage learners to speak English more actively?

E. Research Advantages

The result is expected to be able to improve the materials for Englsih Club in STMIK ProVisi in order to encourage students to communicate in English more actively.

2. Literary Review

A. Problems with Speaking Activities

Classroom activities that develop learners; ability to express themselves through speech would therefore seem an important component of a language course. Yet, it is difficult to design and administer such activities; more so, in many ways, than to do so for listening, reading, or writing. There are characteristics of a successful speaking activities (Ur, 1996: 120)
1. Learners talk a lot
   Learners are supposed to dominate the activities by doing more talking not the teacher's talking.
2. Participation is even

Classroom discussion is not dominated bya minority talkative participants: all get a chance to speak, and contributions are fairlyevenly distributed.

3. Motivation is high
Learners are eager to talk: because they are interested in the topic and have something new to say about it, or because they want to contribute to achieving a task objective.

4. Language is of an acceptable level.
Learners express themselves in utterances that are relevant, easily comprehensible to each other, and of an acceptable level of language accuracy.

What are some of the problems in getting learners to talk in the classroom? The folowing are the problems faced by learners of English as a foreign language according to Penny Ur (1996: 121)

1. *Inhibition*
Unlike reading, writing and listening activities, speaking requires some degree of real time exposure to an audience. Learners are often inhibited about trying to say things in a foreign language in the classroom: worried about making mistakes, fearful of critism or losing face, or simply shy of the attention that their sppech attract.

2. *Nothing to say*
Even if they are not inhibited, they sometimes complain thay they cannot think of anything to say, they have no motive to express themselves.

3. *Low or uneven participation*
This problem compounded by the tendency of some learners to dominate, while others speak very little or not at all.

4. *Mother-tongue use.*
In classes where all, or a number of, the learners share the same mother tongue,they may tend to use it, because it is easier, because it feels unnatural to speak to one another in a foreign language, and because they feel less"exposed" if they are speaking their mother tongue. If they are talking in small groups, it can be difficult to get some classes to keep to the target language

While Brown (2000: 143-164) mentioned Personality Factors which affect language learning process :

1. Affective Domain
Affect refers to emotion or feeling both about oneself and about others with whom he/she comes into contact. Including in the affective domain are :
   a. Self Esteem
   A personal judgement of worthiness that is expressed in the atitudes that individuals hold toward themselves.
   b. Inhibition
   Sets of defences to protect the ego by warding off ideas, experiences, and feelings that threathen to dismatle the organization of values and beliefs on which appraisals ands of self esteem have been founded. An adaptive language ego enables learners to lower the inhibition that may impede success.
   c. Risk-Taking
   Risk taking is an important characteristic of successful learning of a second language. Learners have to be able to gamble a bit, to be willing to try out hunches about the language and take the rsik of being wrong. Self esteem seems to be closely connected to a risk taking factor.
   d. Anxiety
   It is associated with uneasiness, frustation, self-doubts, apprehension, or worry.
   e. Empathy
   The projection of one's own personality into the personality of another in order to understand others better. In order to communicate effectively one needs to be able to understand the other person's affective and cognitive states; communication breaks down when false presuppositions or assumptions are made about the other preson's state.
   f. Extroversion
   The extent to which a person has a deep-seated need to receive ego enhancement, self esteem, and a sense of wholeness from other people as opposed to receiving that affirmation within oneself.

2. **Myers-Briggs Character Types (Myers, 1962)**
People are different in fundamental ways, and that individual has preferences for functioning in ways that are characteristics or typical of that particular individual. **Table 2.1** Myers Briggs character types describes two major character types and their examples.

Table 2.1 Myers-Briggs character types

Extroversion (E)	Introversion (I)
Sociability	Territoriality
Interaction	Concentration
External	Internal
Breadth	Depth
Extensive	Intensive
Mutiplicity	Limited
Expenditure of	relationship
energies	Conservation of
	energies

Internal in external events	Interest in internal reaction
Sensing (S)	**Intuition (I)**
Experience	Hunches
Past	Future
Realistic	Speculative
Perspiration	Inspiration
Actual	Possible
Down to earth	Head-in-cloud
Utility	Fantasy
Fact	Fiction
Practicality	Ingenuity
Sensible	imaginative
Thinking (T)	**Feeling (F)**
Objective	Subjective
Principles	Values
Policy	Social Values
Laws	Extenuating
Criterion	circumstances
Firmness	Intimacy
Impersonal	Persuasion
Justice	Personal
Categories	Humane
Standards	Harmony
Critique	Good or bad
Analysis	Appreciative
Allocation	Sympathy
	Devotion
Judging (J)	**Perceiving (P)**
Settled	Pending
Decided	Gather more data
Fixed	Flexible
Plan Ahead	Adapt as you go
Run one's life	Let life happen
Closure	Open options
Decision making	Treasure hunting
Planned	Open ended
Completed	Emerged
Decisive	Tentative
Wrap it up	Something will
Urgency	turn up
Deadline	There's plenty of
Get the show on	time
the road	What deadline?
	Let's wait and see

Ehrman (1989) outlined both the assets (strengths) and liabilities (weaknesses) of each side of Myers-briggs continuum as shown in **the tables2.2** Assets and Liabillities of Myers-Briggs Types below :

Table 2.2 Assets and Liabillities Of Myesr-Briggs Types (Ehrman, 1989)

Major Assets Associated with each preferences	
Extraversion	**Willing to take conversational risks**
Introversion	Concentration, self-sufficiency
Sensing	**Hard, systematic work, attention to detail, close observation**
Intuition	Inferencing and guessing from context, structuring own training, conceptualizing and model building
Thinking	**Analysis, self-discipline, , instrumental motivation**
Feeling	Integrative motivation, bonding with teachers, good relations lead good self-esteem.
Judging	**Systematic work, get th ejob (whatever it is) done**
Perceiving	Open, flexible, adaptable to change new experiences

Major Liabilities Associated with each Preferences	
Extraversion	**Dependent on outside stimulation and interaction**
Introversion	Need to process ideas before speaking sometimes led to avoidance of linguistic risks in conversation
Sensing	**Hindered by lack of clear sequence, goals, syllabus, structure in language course**
Intuition	Inaccuracy and missing important details, sought excessive complexity of discourse
Thinking	**Performance anxiety because self esteem was attached to achiement, excessive need for control (language, and process)**
Feeling	Discourage if not appreciated, disrupted by lack of interpersonal harmony.
Judging	**Rigidly, intolerance of ambiguous stimuli**
Perceiving	Laziness, inconsistent pacing over the long haul

It can be concluded that successful learners know their preferences, their strengths, and their weaknesses, and effectively utilize strengths and compesate for weaknesses regardless of their natural preferences.

3. Motivation

Motivation is probably the most frequent used term for explaining the success or failure of any complex task. As for language learning process, a learner is claimed to be successful if she is motivated. There are various definitions of motivation. Herewith are definitions of motivation from three different perspectives.

a. From behavioristic perspective, motivation is seen as someone's act the the mercy of external force.

b. In cognitive terms, motivation places much more emphasis on the individual's decisions, the choices people make as to what experiences or goals they will approach or avoid, and the degree of effort they will exert in that respect (Keller 1983: 368-379).

c. A Constructivist view of motivation places emphasis on social context as well as individual personal choices (William & Burden 1997:120). Each person is motivated differently, and will therefore act on his/her environment in ways that are unique.

B. Teacher's Roles

In speaking class, teachers need to play a numebr of different roles to encourage learners to speak fluently (Harmer, 2007 : 347-348) :

1. *Prompter*
   There are cases when students get lost and cannot think of what to say next or in some other way lose the fluency during the discussion. The teacher can leave them to struggle out in such situation on their own, and indeed sometimes this maybe the best option. However, the teacher maybe able to help them and the activity to progress by offering discrete suggestions. If this ca be done supportively without disrupting or forcin gthe students out of role, it will stop the sense of frustation that some students feel when they come to a dead end of language or ideas.

2. *Participant*
   Teachers can sometimes be participants in speaking classes. In that way they can prompt covertly, introduce new information to help the activity along, ensure continuing students engangement and generally maintain a creative athmosphere. However, teachers have to be careful not to participate too much or dominate the speaking so that students lose opportunities for speaking themselves.

3. *Feedback provider*
   Giving feedback in a speaking class should be done with careful consideration of the effects. When students are in the middle of speaking task, over correction may inhibit them and take the communicativeness out of the activity. On the other hand, helpful and gentle correction may get students out of difficult misunderstandings and hesitations

When students have completed an activity, it is vital that they are allowed to asses what they have done and that teachers tell them what went well according to the teachers' opinions.

C. What is Teaching Speaking?

Teaching Speaking means the ability of the English tecahrs to be able to encourage students or learners to do the followings :

1. Produce the English speech sounds and sound patterns

2. Use word and sentence stress, intonation patterns and the rhythm of the second language.

3. Select appropriate words and sentences according to the proper social setting, audience, situation and subject matter.

4. Organize their thoughts in a meaningful and logical sequence.

5. Use language as a means of expressing values and judgments.

6. Use the language quickly and confidently with few unnatural pauses, which is called as fluency. (Nunan, 2003)

D. How To Teach Speaking

The Impact of communicative competence theory on second and foreign language cannot really be overstated; few ESL materals published in the last decade or so fail to claim that their materials reflect the communicative approach. This is poved by the focus of oral skills is on developing grammatical competence. Today, teachers are expected to balance a focus on fluency as well.

A second implication is that multiple skills should be taught whenever possible. In fact, Murphy (1991) believe that oral skills teachers should always connect speaking, listening, and pronounciation teaching although the focus in any one class or activity may highlight one or another.

A final feature which characterizes the current ESL classroom is that students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. They should be allowed and encouraged to initiate communication when possible, to determine the content of their responses or contributions, and to evaluate their own production and learning process. (Lazaraton, 2001:104-105)

E. Class room Speaking Activities To Promote Speaking

Many of the classroom speaking activities which are currently in use fall at or near the communicative end of the communication continuum. There are a number of widely-used categories of speaking activities starting from relatively easy to more difficult ones, as follows (Harmer, 2001:348-353)

1. *Acting from a script*
   Students are asked to act out scenes from plays and/or their coursebook, sometimes filming the results. They sometimes act out dialogues they have written themselves.

2. *Information gap games*
   In this activity, students are supposed to be working in pairs. One student will have the information that other partner does not have and the partners will share their information. Information gap activities serve many purposes such as solving a problem or collecting information. Also, each partner plays an important role because the task cannot be completed if the partners do not provide the information the others need. These activities are effective because everybody has the opportunity to talk extensively in the target language.

3. *Discussion*
   Discussions range from highly forma, whole group staged events to informal small-group interaction.
   a. **Buzz Groups** : students get involved in quick conversation on the right kind of music in a wedding party, the content of a reading text, etc.
   b. **Instant Comment** : students are asked to respond fluently and immediately upon pictures showing, or topic introduction, etc.
   c. **Formal Debates** : students prepare arguments in favour or against various propositions.

4. *Prepared Talks*
   Students make a presentation on a topic of their own choice. Such talks are not designed for informal spontaneous conversation; because they are prepared, they are more "writing-like" than this. However, if possible, students should speak from notes rather than from a script.

5. *Role Play*
   One other way of getting students to speak is role-playing. Students pretend they are in various social contexts and have a variety of social roles. In role-play activities, the teacher gives information to the learners such as who they are and what they think or feel. Thus, the teacher can tell the student that "You are David, you go to the doctor and tell him what happened last night, and…" (Harmer, 1984)

6. *Simulations*
   Simulations are very similar to role-plays but what makes simulations different than role plays is that they are more elaborate. In simulations, students can bring items to the class to create a realistic environment. For instance, if a student is acting as a singer, she brings a microphone to sing and so on. Role plays and simulations have many advantages. First, since they are entertaining, they motivate the students. Second, as Harmer (1984) suggests, they increase the self-confidence of hesitant students, because in role play and simulation activities, they will have a different role and do not have to speak for themselves, which means they do not have to take the same responsibility.

7. *Interviews*
   Students can conduct interviews on selected topics with various people. It is a good idea that the teacher provides a rubric to students so that they know what type of questions they can ask or what path to follow, but students should prepare their own interview questions. Conducting interviews with people gives students a chance to practice their speaking ability not only in class but also outside and helps them becoming socialized. After interviews, each student can present his or her study to the class. Moreover, students can interview each other and "introduce" his or her partner to the class.

3. Research Method

A. Research Design

This research is a qualitative research in which questionnaire were distributed among students who participate in English Club in STMIK ProVisi Semarang, and the results/answers were collected and taken into conclusion.

B. Research Subject and Instruments

The subjects of this research were 20 students of STMIK ProVisi who participated in English Club as a mandatory activity for those taking English Courses 2 and 4.

The instrument for this research was a questionnaire distributed to the participants of the English Club at the end of the third month. The questionnaire consists of three questions 1) What factors help EFL learners to improve their speaking skills? 2) What is the most effective teacher roles to encourage learners to speak and communicate in englsih more actively? 3) What speaking activities

that encourage learners to speak English more actively?

C. Data Collection and Analysis

The data were collected for two semesters of the English Club Activity by distributing the questionnaires and students were asked to answer the questions after the activity was ended. The answers of the questionnaires were then collected and analyzed based on similarity of the answers.

4. Findings and Discussions

The major findings were presented based on the three research questions and answers from the questionnaires.

1. Factors help EFL learners to improve their speaking skills?

The findings in this section were derived from the answer of the first question. Building up confidence in speaking of the participants was mainly reported as a factor that strengthened speaking performance. They also stated that the mastery in vocabulary and grammar, talk to foreigner, interesting topics, watch foreign film with translation, listen to English songs are other factors that improve their speaking skills as shown in **table 4.1** Factors improving speaking skills below.

Table 4.1 Factors improving speaking skills

Participant	Factors
No.1	Confidence due to having adequate vocabulary and grammar mastery
No.2	Watching foreign movies with translation, listen to songs
No.3	Interesting topics, talk to foreigners

2. The most effective teacher roles to encourage learners to speak and communicate in English more actively.

The findings in this section were obtained from the answers of the second question. Some participants stated that they need a teacher that was able to correct their mistakes during the conversation especially their pronunciation (as a feedback provider). They also mentioned that a teacher should help them with the activity by being the ice breaker (as a prompter) whenever there was a moment of silent during the conversation. The correlation between teachers roles and learners are shown in **table 4.2** The most effective teacher roles to encourage learners

to speak and communicate in English more actively below

Table 4.2 The most effective teacher roles to encourage learners to speak and communicate in English more actively.

Participant	Teacher's Roles
No.1	Being able to correct their mistakes espescially their pronunciation
No.2	Being able to be the ice breaker during the conversation

3. Speaking activities that encourage learners to speak English more actively

The findings as shown in **Table 4.3** concerning Speaking activities that encourage learners to speak Englsih more actively, were gathered from students' answers from the third question. From the answers it can be concluded that most students agree that they like speaking activities that are fun such as information gap, role play, and prepared talk. However, they do not really enjoy discussions because of their lack of vocabulary and grammar mastery.

Table 4.3 Speaking Activities that encourage learners to speak English more Actively

Participant	Factors
No.1	I like information gap and role play because they are fun to do
No.2	I like role play but I don't like discussion because sometimes I don't know what to say.
No.3	I like information gap and role play and prepared talk because I can practice speaking English with my friend.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

A. Conclusion

The ability to communicate in a second language clearly and efficiently contributes to the success of the learner in school and success later in every phase of life. Therefore, it is essential that language teachers pay great attention to teaching speaking. Rather than leading students to pure memorization, providing a rich environment where meaningful communication takes place is desired.

With this aim, various speaking activities such as those listed above can contribute a great deal to students in developing basic interactive skills necessary for life. These activities make students more active in the learning process and at the same time make their learning more meaningful and fun for them.

B. Recommendations

Here are some suggestions for English language teachers while teaching speaking skills to encourage students/learners to communicate more actively in English :

1. Provide maximum opportunity to students to speak the target language by providing a rich environment that contains collaborative work, authentic materials and tasks, and shared knowledge.
2. Try to involve each student in every speaking activity; for this aim, practice different ways of student participation.
3. Reduce teacher speaking time in class while increasing student speaking time. Step back and observe students.
4. Indicate positive signs when commenting on a student's response.
5. Ask eliciting questions such as "What do you mean? How did you reach that conclusion?" in order to prompt students to speak more.
6. Do not correct students' pronunciation mistakes very often while they are speaking. Correction should not distract student from his or her speech.
7. Circulate around classroom to ensure that students are on the right track and see whether they need your help while they work in groups or pairs.
8. Provide the vocabulary beforehand that students need in speaking activities.
9. Diagnose problems faced by students who have difficulty in expressing themselves in the target language and provide more opportunities to practice the spoken language.

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