The Use Of Critical Debate Technique To Improve The Speaking Skill Of The Sixth Semester Students Of Iai Hamzanwadi Nw At Pancor

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Abstract:

The teaching of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) speaking is necessary for university students to have basic skills of oral communication. Using critical debate technique in the teaching of EFL speaking might be beneficial to help students improve their speaking skills. As critical debate is a medium where the students can train their argumentative competence in form of debating process that demands them to communicate their opinions, argumentations, statements, and other substances, which support their position in the debate process. The aim of this research was to investigate the use of critical debate technique to improve the speaking skill of the sixth semester students of IAIH NW at Pancor. Based on the data of preliminary study, it was found that the students encountered many problems in their speaking class such as; the students had low motivation and reticence to speak, poor grammar and vocabulary, and had some errors in pronunciation.

With regard to the problem, this classroom action research was conducted to solve those problems occurring in the speaking class. This research was a collaborative action research in which a collaborator assisted the researcher to collect the data using speaking scoring rubric, questionnaire and field notes. This research was conducted in two cycles focusing on the improvement of the students' speaking performance and their positive attitude to the implementation of critical debate technique in the speaking class.

After the implementation of critical debate technique in the speaking class for two cycles, it revealed that the use of critical debate technique could improve the students' speaking performance and give them positive attitude to the implementation activities. The findings showed that the average score of the students' speaking performance could achieve 85.11 from the determined score 75. In addition, it was also found that 84.13 % of the students had positive attitude to the implementation of the use of critical debate technique in the speaking class.

The implementation of the use of critical debate technique in speaking class can cover a procedure of three main phases: The first phase is to speak out, second listen to different kinds of opinions and the third at the end respecting those differences. Based on the findings, it is concluded that the use of critical debate technique can be one of the solutions to improve not only the students' speaking skills but also the their' positive attitude in the teaching of speaking. Therefore, English teachers are suggested to use critical debate technique to teach their students in speaking class.

Key Words: critical debate technique, speaking skill.

A. Introduction

Responding to English as a language of international communication and lingua franca, people considerably think to learn English, which is used and spoken worldwide for education, business, communication, and others. With regard to the importance of English as a Second or Foreign language (ESL or EFL), the teaching of EFL speaking has been deemed important in the Indonesian context. In general, Richards and Renandya (2002:201) point out that a large number of language learners study English in order to develop proficiency in speaking. Hence, speaking is usually considered as the core skill in a foreign language learning and it is what learners generally want to be able to do (Broady, 2005; Graham, 2007).

To be able to speak English fluently and accurately, however, requires supporting knowledge and other skills of speaking. It also entails a full understanding of what is involved in the speaking skill. Burns and Joyce (1997:2) acknowledges that the mastery of the speaking skills engage a number of complex skills and types of knowledge about how and when to communicate. Similarly, Thornbury (2005:11) adds that to have a sufficient skill of speaking the EFL learners require linguistic knowledge and extra linguistic knowledge. Thus, the significance of understanding familiarity of speaking skills and related skills might favor EFL learners improve their speaking skill.

Furthermore, O'Malley and Pierce (1996) state that speaking seems to be an important skill that a learner should acquire. They add that speaking skill is very important to enable students to communicate effectively through oral language, because disability of the students to speak may result in the inability to express their ideas even in a simple form conversation. In line with O'Malley and Pierce (1996), Kayi (2006:1) states that the teaching of speaking is very important part of second language learning because it clearly and efficiently contributes to the success of the learners in school and success in their life. Thus, it is essential that language teachers pay great attention to the teaching of speaking.

Generally, teaching and learning English especially speaking skill in Indonesia is still considered as the most difficult activity in most of school levels

because the skill contains a complex substance such as pronunciation, structure, discourse, and the social context of culture and situation. In short, it needs the mastery of the linguistics and the cultural competence. Besides, as speaking is difficult, more effort is required on the part of the students and teachers. It is not enough for the students to listen or to speech only. The teachers need to give the students activities to practice the new speech among the four basic skills of language. In addition, Bourdons in Nunan (1999) states that spoken language needs a process and the mastery of vocabulary habit. This means that practice speaking needs much time and enough vocabulary to fulfill the requirements of the mastery of spoken English in which we can get them through either school or environment.

Based on the previous observation, the researcher found that the students, based on their daily marks taken by the English lecturer, who got mark more than minimum standard, were only 10 students. Those who got under minimum standard were 12 students, and the other students got less than standard from totally 33 students in the class. While on the qualitative data the researcher got from interviewing some of them, they did not show their speaking competence well, for example from 10 students that the researcher interviewed, they often mispronounced certain words, often misunderstood with the hoped answer, did not have well structure, did not have fluent expressions as well.

Moreover, recognizing students' problems in learning English especially in speaking skill, Ur (1996) states some problems that may prohibit the students to develop their speaking skill. First, students have low motivation in learning since English is not used all the time in classroom or at school or in their environment outside the school. Unfortunately, English is a foreign language for the students. Second, students are lack of prior knowledge especially deals with vocabulary and grammar of the language. Third, students are lack of ideas, having low participation and only using their mother tongue to talk in the classroom. Fourth, the teacher is not able to manage the classroom since he or she is not familiar with various methods in teaching speaking skill. Fifth, teacher does not speak in English when giving instructions since most of the students do not

comprehend the teachers` point if learning is done in English. Finally, students are not facilitated by the school. School does not have sufficient source of material for learning to speak.

Furthermore, students' learning outcome, which is still considered unsuccessful, has always been the focus of criticism towards the failure of teaching of English in Indonesia. Consequently, English teachers are demanded to be responsible for the failure in making the students capable of using English for communication both productively and receptively. To alleviate this ordeal, educators, practitioners, and policy makers quite often pay very much attention to research dealing with the curriculum, methodology, and teachers excluding such significant variables as the learner perspective. They have rarely considered the learner perspective as a very important contribution to the learning process.

Pondering the above causes of students' difficulties in learning, the teacher should be able to discover and create a situation that enables the teaching and learning process to become more easily and enjoyable participated by the students. In this case, she/he must modify the class into a comfortable condition and apply proper techniques which are adapted to the materials being taught. So, the students will be enthusiastic in following the class activity without feeling boredom.

In relation to the teaching of speaking skill, the teacher should apply techniques in which they can activate the students to embroil in the process of the teaching and learning. The techniques have to be able to upgrade the students' participation in discussing the materials actively, so they will not only be able to comprehend what they are learning in the class but also express their own English orally. Here, the teacher has a very crucial role in managing and creating the class lively and actively. Consequently, the class will be possibly crowd but it is enjoyable.

Generating students' activeness in classroom, especially in guiding and attracting their speaking ability, it is appropriate for the teacher to apply collaborative learning techniques (CoLT). According to Barkley, *et al.* (2005) in Suharno (2006) that collaborative learning is the process of students in which

they work in pairs or small groups to achieve shared learning goals. In further explanation they say clearly:

"To *collaborate* is to work with another or others. In practice, collaborative learning has come to mean students working in pairs or small groups to achieve shared goals. It is learning through group work rather than learning by working alone. There are other terms for this kind of activity, such as *cooperative learning, team learning, group learning, or peer-assisted learning.* In this case, however, we use the phrase *collaborative learning* to refer to learning activities expressly designed for and carried out through pairs or small interactive groups".

Referring to the above assertion, it is clear that collaborative learning technique (CoLT) is a technique in a teaching and learning process in which the students work together in small groups or peers to achieve the learning objectives. Moreover, there are various forms of CoLT, such as Think-Pair-Share, Round Robin, Buzz Groups, Talking Chips, Three-Step Interview, Critical Debate, etc. All kinds of CoLT can be applied in conducting a discussion technique in order that the class activity can be active and all of the students take participation eagerly.

Talking about kinds of CoLT, in this study the writer wants to specify his discussion to one form of CoLT namely critical debate. In a critical debate, individual students select the side of an issue that is contrary to their own views. They then form teams and discuss, present, and argue the issue against an opposing team (Barkley, *et al.*, 2005) in Suharno (2006).

Based on the above statement, in guiding a debate a teacher is required to make the students to work in groups consisting of students in small number in which the groups generally consist of three students. Two groups will fight against each other to persuade their opponents that their opinion is true, based on the data they have prepared. The data can be in form of an expert's statements, quotation taken from the doers' experiences, and many other sources of information.

Furthermore, applying a debate technique in teaching speaking skill may influence students' learning motivation. In this case, students may be more motivated to have more vocabulary, to read more information and to be

courageous in telling their opinions. In line with this, correlating between CoLT, (in this case is critical debate) and language teaching process, they have a very close relationship mainly in developing students' speaking ability. Therefore, the writer is interested to conduct a research about "Using Critical Debate to Improve Students' Speaking Skill at the Sixth Semester of PAI Program in 2017/2018 Academic Year.

B. Theoretical Review

1. Speaking Skill

a. The Meaning of Speaking Skill

Of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), speaking skill seems to be intuitively the most important skill because people who know a language refer to as the `speakers` of the language. This is as if speaking includes all other kinds of knowledge and according to Kayi (1996:1), most if not all foreign language learners are primarily interested in speaking.

The term of speaking has several meanings. Widdowson (1978) in Suharno (2006:12-58) says that speaking has two meanings. First, it refers to the manner in which language is manifested. Second, it refers to manner in which language is realized as communication. In addition, speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information (Joyce & Burns, 1999:2). In speaking, one needs to know how to articulate the sound in a comprehensible manner and needs an adequate vocabulary. One also needs to have mastery of syntax. These various elements add up to linguistic competence.

To acquire speaking skill of language, motivation is really needed (Finochiaro, 1976) in Suharno (2006:12). Students come to study a foreign language in high school level with strong convictions that "language" means "an instrument of communication". Students who are able to speak the language feel great sense of satisfaction and their attitude towards language learning is more enthusiastic.

When one talks about speaking skill, it is necessary to understand that there is much common between the receptive skill of listening and reading, and the productive skill of speaking and writing. There are controlled, guided and free practices of production in both oral and written works. It is particularly important that these stages of controlled, guided and free practices should always be seen in relational to the functional use to which the students must put their oral fluency. In this case, the students are prepared for actual communication with others (Broughton, 1989:) in Suharno (2006:13).

Students who are trained to speak should recognize two basic language functions. They are transactional function, which is primarily concerned with the transfer of information and the interactional function, in which primary propose of speech is the maintenance of social relationship (Nunan (1989) in Suharno (2006:12).

In line with the above statement, Bailey, Keith and Morrow (1981) say that speaking ability is an activity to produce utterances in oral communication. This activity involves two or more people in which the participants are both speaker and hearer have to react to what they hear and make their contribution at high speech, so that each participant has an intention or a set of intention that he/she to. Hymes in Nunan (1999:226) proposes the concept of communicative competence as an alternative to Chomsky's linguistic competence, a range of other sociolinguistics and conversational skills that enable the speaker to know how to say what to whom, and when.

The above definitions, speaking is one of language skill in which it is an activity to express or communicate opinions, thoughts, and ideas orally involving two or more people where the participants (both speaker and hearer) have to interact to what they hear and make their contribution at high speech. so each of the participants has an intention or a set of intention that enable them to know how to interact and communicate each other easily.

2. Critical Debate

a. The Meaning of Critical Debate

According to Barkley, *et al.* (2005) in Suharno (2006) that critical debate is a fairly complex Collaborative Learning Technique (CoLT) and thus requires ample preparation. First, spend sufficient time selecting a controversial topic in the field with two identifiable, arguable, and opposing sides that are appropriate to debate. Carefully craft the debate proposition into a one-sentence statement, such as, *Universities should used affirmative action policies to determine student admission.* Proposition statements should avoid ambiguity, yet be general enough to offer students flexibility in building arguments.

Second, determine whether students need any background information to address the proposition. Prepare students for the debate through lecture, assigned reading, discussion, or student research on the topic.

Third, identify ground rules. For example, allow students to use as many arguments as they wish, or have students spend five to ten minutes brainstorming all possible arguments supporting their position and then select their five best arguments. Consider whether each team should select one person as spokesperson, or whether each member of the team will be responsible for presenting at least one of the arguments. Thinking about ground rules ahead of time will also provide the opportunity to decide whether to assign team members specific role, such as team leader or timekeeper.

In detail, Barkley, *et al.* (2005) in Suharno (2006) say:

"In a critical debate, individual students select the side of an issue that is contrary to their own views. They then form teams and discuss, present, and argue the issue against an opposing team. Preparing for, participating in, and listening to debates offers many benefits to students. Debates can increase motivation, enhance research skills, promote critical thinking, and develop communication proficiency. Debates expose the class to a focused, in-depth, multiple-perspective analysis of issues. Because critical debates have the added dimension of requiring students to assume a position opposite to their own, they encourage students to challenge their existing assumptions. This can move students beyond simple dualistic thinking, deepen their understanding of an issue, and help them to recognize the range of perspective inherent in complex topics. In this way, critical debate may also build appreciation for diversity and develop tolerance for other viewpoints".

Referring to the above quotation, it is clear that critical debate attracts the students' good preparation and participation in order that the debate process runs well. Besides, the technique demands the students to have deep analysis in certain problems, strong argumentations and statements, multiple perspective, and deep thinking in facing problems. Moreover, critical debate also builds the students' awareness of appreciation for diversity and develop tolerance for other viewpoints which may appear in the process of discussion. On the other hand, people hold a debate for a number of possible reasons: to convince other people that his/her opinion is better, to listen to what other people think of an issue, to find which solution is the best for a problem, etc. Since competitive debating aims to convince judges that team's argument is superior, it gives opportunities to use analytical-critical thinking and public speaking skills to the fullest, skill, which are very useful in everyday life.

Meanwhile, in further view, Michael Birshan in ISDC Official Regulation (2006:2) says that critical debate is a clash of arguments. For every issue, there are always different sides of story why people support or disagree with that certain issue. Debating seeks to explore the reasons behind each side. To make those reasons understandable and convincing, debaters should deliver their arguments in good communication skills. In addition, a competitive debating is debating using a specific format. With formats, people are regulated to speak one at a time and at side are given the same amount of time and opportunity to prove their point. This format rules out the possibility of who- speaks-or-fastest shall win the debate. It encourages people not only to speak out but also to listen to the other side. In this case, there many formats of debates: Karl popper format, British Parliamentary format, Australasian format, World schools format, etc.

b. The Way to Do Critical Debate

It is necessary to remember that debating is not a discussion process in which there is no compromised result as in a discussion. The point of having a debate is to speak out and listen to different kinds of opinions and at the end respecting those differences. So competitive debating is debating using a format. What format does *Indonesians* use? How does it work? The Indonesian school

debating championship use the world schools format proposed by Michael Birshan in ISDC Official Regulation (2006:2). This format works as follows:

1) There are 2 teams debating, each consists of 3 (three) debaters who would be 1st. 2nd, and 3rd speakers of each of the team.

2) One team will be the Government/Affirmative side – the side agreeing with the motion. The other team will be the opposition/negative side-the side disagreeing with the motion.

3) Each speaker will deliver a substantial speech of 8 (eight) minutes in duration, with the affirmative going first. Afterwards, either the 1st or 2nd speaker on both sides will deliver the reply speech of 4 (four) minutes in duration, with the negative going first.

C. Method

The design of this research was Classroom Action Research (CAR). It was employed because it focused on solving the classroom problems dealing with the teaching of speaking at *IAIH NW* at Pancor. Lier (1990:9) points out that classroom action research is the central data deriving from things that go on in the classroom. According to Bassey (1998 cited in Koshy, 2005:8), an action research can be defined as an inquiry which is accomplished in order to understand, to evaluate and then to change in order to improve educational practice. Ary, *et al.* (2006:538) state that the goal of action research in education is to create an inquiry stance toward teaching where questioning one's own practice becomes part of the work and of the teaching culture.

This research was conducted at Hamzanwadi Institute for Islamic Studies *(IAIH)* NW at Pancor since the researcher is one of teachers of listening and speaking courses in this institution. The subject was the sixth semester students of PAI department of Tarbiyah Faculty of IAIH NW at Pancor in the 2017/2018 academic year as the subjects of the research. The researcher selected sixth semester students because in this semester the students of PAI department must have an English Communicative program for communicative purpose. This program is a compulsory course of PAI Department of Tarbiyah Faculty of IAIH

NW at Pancor in which the students are given an intensive English program for two credits in order to have a basic competence of English communication. After having the program they are expected to have basic competence in English communication both spoken and written. In fact, their English communication competence is still far from the expected output especially their speaking performance.

In conducting this research, the researcher employed classroom action research, which aimed at solving problems that occur in the class. This classroom action research had four steps as proposed by Kemmis and McTaggart (1992 cited in Cohen, *et al.* 2000:229), action research develops through the self-reflective spiral: a spiral of cycles of planning, acting (implementing plans), observing (systematically), reflecting.

Setting the criteria of success in classroom action research is one of pivotal steps to judge whether the action is effective in solving the students' problems. It is also important to make sure the result of the research is successful or not. The criteria of success are designed to determine if the students' speaking skill have been improved through the use of video, then to decide whether the action would go on to next cycle or stop. This study is considered to be successful if it meets the following criteria;

a. The average of the students' speaking performance attained 75 (equal B based on *IAIH* NW at Pancor' scoring guideline). This means the improvement of the students' speaking skill is successful if the average score of students ' speaking performance could achieve point 75 in grade range from 10 up to 100. It was determined on 75 (B) since the finding of the preliminary study showed that the average of the students score was only 60.22 (C) and to gain the score 75 (B) from 64 (C), the students should increase up to three levels of determined score.

b. 70% of the students have positive response. It means that 70 % of the students have good or positive response to the implementation of the use of Critical Debate Technique in speaking class. It was determined 70 % of the students because the preliminary data showed that less than 60 %

of the students had positive responses to the teaching and learning process particularly in speaking class.

D. Research Finding

The findings of this research were obtained during the implementation of the use of Critical Debate Technique in the two cycles. They encompass the result of the students' speaking performances, their attitude and their activities during the teaching and learning process. The findings of this research are related to the criteria of success, as shown in following table.

Table 01: *The Description of the Criteria of Success and the Findings of the Study*

No.	Criteria of Success	Findings of the Study	Note
1.	The average of the students' final score was 75 (equals B-based on IAIH Pancor' scoring guideline within the range of 10 to 100.	The average of the students' final score could reach 85.11 (equal A in the range of qualitative) in the range of 10 to 100	The criterion was achieved.
2.	70% of the students had positive attitude to the implementation of the use of Critical Debate Technique in the speaking class.	84. 13% of the students had positive attitude to the implementation of the use of Critical Debate Technique in the speaking class	The criterion was achieved.

1. Findings of Cycle One

Evaluating the finding gained from the students' speaking test in cycle one, the researcher concluded that the implementation of the use of Critical Debate Technique could improve their speaking skills. The result of data on the speaking performance (78.19) showed that it already met the first criterion of success (75) of this research. However, considering the average score of each aspect of the speaking performance in terms of grammar, vocabulary, fluency and pronunciation was still in the category "fair" or close to weak. The researcher, thus, decided to have another cycle with some revisions. The revision taken from

the collaborator's observation during the cycle was importantly required to analyze the weakness of implementing process.

Dealing with the data gathered from the questionnaire, the students were requested to give personal judgment toward the implementation of Critical Debate Technique. It designated that the use of Critical Debate Technique in the speaking class could present the students different learning circumstances so that they experience meaningful activities while teaching and learning process. The result of the questionnaire showed the majority of the student or about 84.81% had positive attitude to the use of Critical Debate Technique in speaking class. It meant that this result already met the second of the criterion (70%) of success of this research.

The relationship between the two findings, the result of speaking test and the analysis of the questionnaire is significant to decide whether or not the researcher required drawing the conclusion. The findings of cycle one revealed that there were many aspects that required to have the improvement particularly on the students' speaking skills improvement. The researcher, as a lecture, decided to have another cycle in order to see betterment.

2. Findings of Cycle Two

Evaluating the findings obtained from the students' speaking test in cycle two, the researcher concluded that the implementation the use of Critical Debate Technique facilitated the students to improve their speaking skills. Based on the result of data on the speaking performance, it was found that the students statistically improved not only their speaking skills but also their attitudes toward the implementation of the use of Critical Debate Technique in teaching of speaking. Considering this finding, the researcher concluded that he did not need to conduct another cycle. The Table 02 shows the improvement of the students' speaking skills from the preliminary study to the last cycle of this research.

Table *02: The Improvement of the Students' Speaking Skills*

	Preliminary	Cycle One	Cycle Two
Average Score of the Students' speaking Skills	64.81	78.19	85.11

The Quality Score	C	B	A

Dealing with the data collected from the questionnaire, it revealed that more than 84.13% of the students had positive attitude to the implementation the use of Critical Debate Technique in teaching speaking. In general, the use of Critical Debate Technique presented the students different learning experiences so that they had meaningful activities in learning process. It meant that this result already met the second of the criteria of success of this research.

Based on the two findings from the result of speaking test and the analysis of the questionnaire, it showed the significant improvement of the students' speaking skills and positive responses to the use of Critical Debate Technique in teaching speaking. Both the speaking performance and the questionnaire data reveals that the students' speaking performance and attitude toward the implementation the use of Critical Debate Technique were positive as they were involved in speaking class. With regard to the findings, the researcher concluded that he did not need to conduct another cycle.

To conclude the findings, the researcher obviously pointed up that the use of Critical Debate Technique in speaking class was a valuable means to improve not only the students' speaking skills but also their positive attitude to learn English particularly in learning speaking.

E. Conclusion

In light of the findings and the discussions of the research in the preceding chapter, the researcher draws a conclusion that the use of Critical Debate Technique has been proven to be able to improve the speaking skill of the sixth semester students of PAI Department of Tarbiyah Faculty of Hamzanwadi Institute for Islamic Studies *(IAIH)* NW at Pancor. This conclusion is derived from the result of analyzing on the students' speaking performance and their attitude toward the implementation activities.

Related to the students' improvement in speaking performance after cycle two, it is concluded that the implementation of the use of Critical Debate Technique in speaking class can improve the students' speaking skill. Besides it can improve the students' speaking skill, the researcher also found that the

students had positive attitude to the implementation of Critical Debate Technique in speaking class.

In short, this research has revealed that the use of Critical Debate Technique can be an alternative to solve the students' problems in speaking English and it should be considerably used in the speaking class not only for the reason that it can improve the students' speaking skills but also because it can promote the students' positive attitudes towards language learning.

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