

ACTION RESEARCH : IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPOKEN INTERACTIONS THROUGH *POSTER SESSION*

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Abstract

Spoken interaction is beneficial in learning a language. In fact the classroom interaction did not take place well. Due to the lack of students' interaction, this study aimed to improve students' spoken interaction through Poster Session. A classroom action research was carried out at the English major students at the fourth semester of STKIP Muhammadiyah Pringsewu Lampung. In collecting the data the researcher used observation, test, and documentation. The data collected were analyzed and synthesized both qualitatively and quantitatively, and then meaning and interpretation were built to know clearly the process which was occurred during the research. The results indicate that there is improvement of Students' spoken interaction using Poster Session. Poster Session facilitates students to practise English spoken interaction, it enhances them to be involved in learner-learner interaction. Due to the fact that their interaction is great, it influences their speaking skill.

Key Words: *Interaction, speaking, Poster Session*

1. INTRODUCTION

For English foreign language (EFL) learners, English does not play important role in social life, it is widely acquired in school instead and learned to gain insight and technology. Students do not use the foreign language much outside the classroom, except perhaps on holiday, with tourists to their country, and when using computers (Cameron, 2001). It implies that EFL learners usually use English for certain purposes. In addition not all of them could use English since for the foreigner, mother tongues prefer to be used because they still face

difficulty in English. As Cameron (2001: 241) stated "to get the abilities of learning a foreign language, it is different from learning the first language." Considering that phenomenon, spoken interaction should be built for facilitating learners in learning English. It is supported by Cameron (2001: 18) who stated that for English Foreign learners, spoken language is the medium through which the new language is encountered, understood, practiced and learnt. New language is largely introduced orally, understood orally and aurally, practiced

orally. Due to the fact that speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information (Nunan, 2003). In other words speaking is a complex skill which is crucial to be mastered for communication. Moreover Nunan also stated that for most people especially English learners, speaking a foreign language has often meant a difficulty (2003). Whereas the major goal of teaching speaking is communicative efficiency. Language learners should be able to make themselves understood by using their current proficiency (Bahrani & Soltani, 2012). In order that students can develop communicative efficiency, the teacher have to use appropriate activities that support students learning. Then in order to assist learners to speak English, oral interaction proposed to be implemented in speaking activities.

As Tuan & Nhu (2010) stated that classroom interaction is a key to reach that goal. It is the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings or ideas between two or more people, leading to a mutual effect on each other. Tuan & Nhu (2010) explain two types of classroom interaction : Firstly, non-verbal interaction is related to behavioral

responses in class such as head nodding, hand raising, body gestures, and eye contact. Secondly, verbal interaction, contains written oral interaction. Written interaction is the style of interaction in which students write out their ideas, thoughts. While oral interaction occurred when students interact with others by speaking in class, answering and asking questions, making comments, and taking part in discussions. Then, they explain form of oral Interactions namely teacher-learner interaction and learners-learners interaction. Teacher-learner interaction is commonly happened in the classroom in which the teacher ask question and the students respon it. While learner-learner interaction occurs among learners. In this form of interaction, the teacher plays a role as a monitor and learners are the main participants. Learner-learner interaction occurs in groups called learner-learner interaction, in pairs called peer interaction.

Furthermore the improvement of students interaction leads to the achivement of students' speaking skill. Wang & Castro (2010) have proven that classroom interaction and the language output may activate learners to learn English and have a positive effect on

improving the learning of a foreign language. For these reasons, it is necessary to introduce, learn, and practice English in the classroom, mainly for college students who take English major. However many students in English major got difficulty in mastering English. For instance they found problem in productive skills such speaking. That problem is caused by their lack of interaction both teachers-learners interaction and learners-learners interaction. It implies that spoken interaction have to be built in learning English as foreign language.

Hall (2011) also noted that much applied linguistics research now places interaction of one sort or another at the centre of language teaching and learning. The indentified problem is also experienced by the research subject, English major students at the fourth semester of STKIP Muhammadiyah Pringsewu Lampung. Having observed the students, the writer found that learners faced difficulties to interact with others in English. Actually, students at the fourth semester had learnt speaking 1, speaking 2, even language components such as grammar and pronunciation. But they still got difficulty to use English in

classroom interaction. They were nervous to say something. Then the leaners-learners interaction was still low. Students were affraid to make a mistake. Whereas from that mistakes, they could learn more. Then Classroom interaction does not take place well. The interaction is dominated by the more outgoing learners. Some students know the language rule, but they could not practice it in spoken interaction.

Based on the problems above, it can be assumed that the students need a lot of practices in spoken interaction, the more they interact in English, the more they get fluency in English. That is why the lecturer have to think creatively, how to facilitate students in order to interact with their friends and lecturer. It is an urgent need to implement a teaching technique that can attract students to talk more. To solve the problems, the researcher conducted a classroom action research. In this study, the writer tried to implement the interesting teachnique of teaching speaking. Then the appropriate one that was be chosen is poster sessions. It is one of strategies that can be applied in the class by the lecturer in order to encourage the students to speak up. Then it conducted in a group, where students

students write ideas in form of poster and share the displayed poster to others. Meng (2009) states "group work provides more language practice opportunities for conversations, where students can work together to produce language through speaking and given appropriate materials to work with or problems to solve, they can engage in the creative language use and develop communicative competence in the English language. That is why group work encourages learners to practice English orally and it also can decrease students' shyness in speaking because in a group students have an opportunity to work together and use visuals to enhance their motivation in speaking. In poster session activity, the students do mobile activity where they walk around to show all the posters which is displayed in the wall of classroom.

Previously, McNamara et al (2010) have investigated the use of poster presentations as assessment of work integrated learning to examine how poster presentations can be used to authentically assess student learning during work integrated learning. It found that it was an innovative approach to the assessment in the humanities where

posters were used as one way that universities can overcome the substantial challenges of assessing work integrated learning. Then Aziz (2009) in his research found that Poster is an alternative strategy or method in teaching and learning for the higher institution of learning. The poster serves the purpose of explaining the macro-level of understanding risk management so that students understand the idea that should go beyond classroom onto practice.

From the explanations above, it proves the important of interaction in learning english especially for fostering speaking skill. Unlike the previous study, the present research focus to improve students' interaction in order to their speaking would be improved too. The poster session is applied in college learning and teaching activities as the strategy for the students to be actively interacted in the class in the way how they share or convey their ideas, and deliver information to others. The researcher also believes that Poster Session is challenging for college students because this strategy facilitate students to do conversation, to talk what poster is about, and every member of the group has roles to take a turn in speaking,

that can foster simultaneous interaction during the Poster Session activities. Therefore this study aimed to know the improvement of students' spoken interaction through Poster Session.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The researcher used an action research. This action research consisted of two cycles. The series of cycling activities are planning, action, observing, and reflecting. In collecting the data, the researcher used three research instruments, namely observation, test, and documentation. Observation was done to watch the process of students' spoken interaction using *Poster Session*. During the observation the researcher also used field notes, observation checklist for students' interaction and students' speaking skill. By making use of observation, the researcher expected that the use of *Poster Session* to improve students' spoken interaction could be figured out. Focus of the observation are: the interaction process of English spoken between students in their group; and students' speaking performance on task during group work. Next, in documentation, the researcher used a video camera. The video taping took

place at any kind of activities during the teaching learning process. It made easier for the researcher to replay and examine the detail of capture.

In analyzing the data, the writer adapted steps of analysing Action Research data which is proposed by Burn (2010). In the this research the researcher analyzed the improvement of students' spoken interaction by identifying appropriate data analysis and data interpreting technique.

Firstly, the researcher collected the data by using observation, test, and documentation. Secondly, the data that had been collected was analyzed and synthesized both qualitatively and quantitatively. The result of observation and documentation were analyzed qualitatively by categorising and inductive coding. Inductive coding means that we look at the data from the perspectives of people closely involved in the research context and analyze their opinions and views exactly as we find them. Then, the data of students' talk in group was analyzed too. Thirdly, the researcher built meaning and interpretation. Fourthly, having interpreted the result of collecting data, the writer employed WH- Question to

know clearly the educational process which was occurred during the research. The last, the researcher reported the outcomes.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 Sum up of the improvement of students' speaking from pre-observation to cycle 2

Pre-Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students were embarrassed to express their opinion or idea • Students lacked vocabulary • It was difficult for students to utter the correct sentences. • Students' pronunciations were poor and grammatical errors almost entirely in their utterance
Cycle 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students tried to express their opinion • Grammatical Error and inappropriate pronunciation still dominated students' speaking • Some students had adequate vocabularies but others still lacked vocabulary • A few students spoke fluently • some students interact with other members in simple way
Cycle 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few students still made grammatical error and inappropriate pronunciation in their utterance but it did not obscure the meaning • Most of the students spoke fluently • Most of the students used wide of vocabularies in speaking • A few students spoke with much pausing and hesitation • Most of the students could keep the interaction going on

Table 2 Sum up of the improvement of students' interaction from pre-observation to cycle 2

Pre-Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students were lack of interaction in English • The interaction was dominated by teacher and smart students • Students rarely responded the turns which were given by their teacher. • Students' participation was not equal, the more outgoing learners frequently dominated in the class
Cycle 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some students were not enthusiastic to interact with their group members. • Hesitation and pausing dominated students' interaction • Students could ask and answer the question in their turn • A few students were not motivated in interaction they hesitated in interaction; they spoke softly; they were nervous to interact with other members in group. • They were responsible to take the solicit turn but they could not maintain the interaction.
Cycle 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All of the students could ask and answer the questions given in their turn • Hesitation and pausing could be reduced in students' interaction. • Students took turns properly • Most of the students involved in spoken interaction actively. • Students could initiate the interaction • Most of the students could keep the interaction going on

The results in table 2 and table 3 show that from the first cycle to the second cycle, it was known that through interaction students have a chance to

speak in great quantities. In the first cycle, students worked in group to make a poster, and present it to the audience. In this cycle only 60 % students were active in group interaction. It could be seen during the activity. Some students in the groups were not active while some other students enjoyed learning in group. Active students interacted with their friends happily, they tried to express opinion to discuss the posters. When they found difficulty, they did not give up. They spoke without considering the structure. Moreover some students did not enjoy learning in group, they were not enthusiastic to interact with their friends. All of the students took a solicit turn but their interaction was still limited. They asked and answered questions in his turn but they could not maintain the interaction. Since their interaction was not good enough, they could not develop their speaking. They took much pausing and hesitation in interaction. When they were required to speak, they took much time to think or grope the words. It was because their lack of vocabulary and they still made grammatical error and used inappropriate pronunciation. The percentage of students who passed the speaking grade were 46 % (16 students).

Therefore, the teacher had motivated them to be active. In the second cycle, the students were required to do poster session again. Since in the first cycle, some students did not maintain the interaction, the researcher decided to prepare the lesson. In the cycle 2, their interaction was better than the first cycle. The percentage of students' active interaction was 74%. They were more active to be involved in interaction by taking the turns properly. Most of the students maintained their interaction. Since their interaction was great, it influenced their speaking skill. Their speaking was also better than the previous cycle. They also spoke with appropriate pronunciation and grammatically. They could elaborate their speaking. Consequently 27 (83%) students passed the speaking grade.

4. CONCLUSION

The research findings lead the researcher to conclude that this study was successfully done. During the group activity over five sessions, learners were observed by the researcher. Poster Session was employed effectively in students' learning. The observation compared two cycles, and speaking test

showed that students' spoken interaction improve. It could be seen from the development of students' interaction and speaking skill from the first cycle to the second. Students took the turns properly. When they got the solicit turn, they could take it well. They could ask and answer the question. Then, they not only could initiate the interaction but also maintain the interaction well. Students are curious to do interaction in Poster session where they can do mobile activity; walk around the class, look some posters, and discuss the poster. There is improvement of Students' spoken interaction using Poster Session. Poster Session facilitates students to practise English spoken interaction, it enhances them to be involved in learner-learner interaction. Due to the fact that their interaction is great, it influences their speaking skill.

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