A Qualitative Research On English Speaking Programs At Islamic Boarding School

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Abstrak.

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi persepsi siswa terhadap program berbahasa Inggris yaitu percakapan dan untuk mengetahui tujuan dari pelaksanaan program tersebut. Metode penelitian kualitatif digunakan. Lima puluh siswa dari dua kelas dari kelas tiga diambil secara purposive untuk sampel penelitian ini. Untuk menjawab pertanyaan penelitian "bagaimana persepsi santri terhadap program berbicara di Pesantren dalam meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara mereka?" kuesioner dibagikan untuk mengetahui persepsi siswa tentang program berbicara yang dilaksanakan. Setelah mengumpulkan data, hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa siswa memiliki berbagai macam persepsi terhadap program berbicara yang dilaksanakan. Lima puluh siswa memiliki sudut pandang yang berbeda tentang kegiatan berbicara yang mereka ikuti. Dalam hal ini, sebagian besar siswa setuju bahwa kegiatan percakapan meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara mereka dan memberi mereka banyak manfaat dalam pembelajaran mereka meskipun beberapa dari mereka tidak setuju. Secara umum, tujuan program berbicara adalah: (a) membiasakan siswa berbicara bahasa Inggris, (b) melatih siswa berbicara dengan lancar dan percaya diri, (c) memberi kesempatan kepada siswa untuk berlatih berbicara dan (4) menciptakan lingkungan pembelajaran berbicara dalam bahasa target.
Kata kunci: program berbahasa Inggris, pesantren

Abstract. The purpose of this study is to identify students' perception toward English speaking program, namely conversation and to find out the purpose of the programs implementation. Qualitative research method was used. Fifty students of two classes from the third grade were

purposively taken for the sample of this study. To answer the research question" what are the students' perception toward Islamic Boarding School speaking programs in improving their speaking skills ?" questionnaires were distributed to know the students' perception the implemented speaking program. After collecting the data, the results of this study shows that the students had many kinds of perception toward the implemented speaking program. Fifty students had different points of view on the speaking activities that they participated. In this regard, most of students agreed that conversation activities improved their speaking skills and gave them a lot of benefit s in their learning even though a few number of them disagreed. Generally, the purpose of speaking programs are: (a) to familiarize students to speak English, (b) to train students to speak fluently and confidently, (c) to give chance to students to practice speaking and (4) to create a good environment learning speaking in the target language.

Keywords: *English speaking program, Islamic boarding school*

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of the productive language skills which must be taught and developed in EFL teaching .The success of learning English frequently measured how well someone can communicate in the language. Ur (1999) argues that speaking is considered to be the most important skill and learning speaking becomes the greatest interest for English foreign language learners. Besides, Richard (2002) adds that a large percentage of the world's language learners study in order to develop proficiency in speaking.

However, to speak English native- like or close to native speakers is not easy for foreign language learners. Richard and Renandya (2002) in Amiruddin (2019) states that to speak the target language fluently and appropriately is difficult, especially for adults. Similarly, A number of scholars (e.g., Celcy-Murcia & Olshtain, 2001; Diaz, 2008; Philip,

1993) cited in Amiruddin (2018) argue that the skill of speaking is not only difficult to teach, to master but to assess as well.

My own experience as an English teacher at high school for more than 20 years reveals that the common problems   encountered by EFL learners when speaking English is that they feel shy and not confident to communicate in the language. They are afraid of making mistakes and being laughed by their friends. As a result, they are unwilling to speak English. Learning speaking, however, needs chance to practice. Teachers should put every effort to create classroom activities that encourage and help students communicate in English. According to Harmer (1991), speaking activities can give enormous confidence and satisfaction, and with intensive teacher's guidance can encourage them in their further study. If every student is participating fully and the teacher has set up the activity properly and then can give sympathetic and fruitful feedback, they will earn incredible satisfaction from it. Every speaking activity could support EFL learners to practice speaking regularly.

Like any other boarding schools, Al-Manar Islamic Boarding School supports and facilitates students in learning. One of the school efforts is running a language program to improve students' language skills. To encourage students to speak English, many kinds of speaking activities are applied in order for the students to gain good impact to improve their speaking ability. Harmer (2003) states that good speaking activities could and should be motivating. The present study focuses on two speaking programs namely English conversation and public speaking activities.

Previous research has been conducted by Miftahurrohmah (2012) to explore the language program of speaking at Islamic Boarding School. The research was describing activities of language programs and speaking and their characteristics. The present study explores the speaking programs of Al-Manar Islamic Boarding School which effect on students speaking skill. The programs could give support and benefits to increase the students' proficiency level. Some students may feel poor in speaking. Consequently, they are lack of motivation to do it. Implementing many kinds of speaking activities is of great help in support of their learning. So, hopefully the students

involve in the activities and practice English actively. They will be familiar with speaking English in real life.

Conducting a survey research on English speaking programs at Al-Manar Islamic Boarding School, in my opinion, is of importance to give a fruitful contribution in teaching and learning English especially in speaking ability.

Research Question

What are the students' perception toward Islamic boarding school speaking programs in improving their speaking skill?

Literature Review

Everyone needs speak to interact with others to express his/her ideas. Florez (2005) cited in Alviana (2011) states that speaking is an interacting process of constructing meaning which involve producing, receiving and processing information. It is spontaneous and open ended, but it is completely unpredictable. Speaking involves at least two people; a speaker and a listener. In real life, people talk each other, share information and experiences about they see and hear. People unconsciously interact and communicate not only through words but through facial expression, gesture and their body movement as well when communicating with other people.

Basically the main goal of speaking is to convey ideas or thought. A speaker should understand not only the target of speaking but to do the communication to the listener as well. So, the thought can be effectively communicated. Encouraging students to speak English in the classroom is very helpful to improve their speaking performance. Nemotavna (2016) suggests that if a teacher wants his/her students to speak English well, he/she must encourage students to speak English in the classroom.

Sugiharti (2007) revealed in her study that the primary reasons EFL learners are unwilling to speak English because they are afraid of making mistakes and lack of confidence. The teacher, therefor, should always encourage and motivate the students to speak up in the classroom. If they make mistakes, the teacher can help them by correcting their mistakes. Nunan (2003) suggests that at the beginning and intermediate level of study, learners must be given opportunity to improve their fluency as well as accuracy. Accuracy refers to the use of target language accurately. The teacher should

not only emphasize any one aspect of speaking, rather, the students should get practiced both fluency and accuracy. Paired work and group work are applicable for EFL learners to get them to speak the target language during the lesson. In this way, students will get more opportunity to interact and practice with their classmate or other students.

English Speaking Program at Boarding School

English speaking program in this context refers to a set of plan to support teaching learning activity in order to reach the goal of an institution. The programs run with a purpose to guide the students to have good academic achievement focusing on the development of student's speaking mastery. Students are able to speak English by participating in the English speaking program activity

Boarding schools are the institutions which provide English speaking programs to students. The program plays an important role in teaching. The implementation of English speaking programs in boarding schools should be based on the program supporting students learning speaking through speaking activity. Hammer (1991) states that speaking activities can give students enormous confidence and satisfaction, and with intensive teacher guidance can encourage them in their further study.

Good speaking program should be highly supporting student's speaking activity to improve their speaking skills. To most English foreign language learners, mastering speaking is considered the most important aspect of learning English. To have a good command of speaking according to Urr (1999) suggests that learners should talk a lot. Most of learning time must be allocated to an activity to let students to talk a lot. Participant is even. Classroom discussion is not dominated by an active participant but all students should get a chance to participate. Motivation is high. Learners are intent to speak because they are interested in the topic and have something new to say about it or they want to contribute to achieve a task objective. Language is acceptable level. Some participants do not understand what their friends' saying. It is, therefor, necessary to have an appropriate of how to clarify to avoid mistakes between the speaker and listener.

Conversation

Conversation is a talk which inv lves at least two people; a speaker and a listener. Richard and Shumidt (1993) state that a conversation is not only exchanging information but when people engage in conversation they share common principle of conversation leading them to interpret each other utterances. Conversation is an interactive and informal talk either involving two people or a small group of people. In short, conversation is an activity performed by two people consisting a speaker and a listener. Willy (2000) state that people conduct a conversation for different purposes; namely for social contact with people or to establish a relationship. The general purposes of conversation are to communicate and to maintain social relationship.

Teaching Conversation

Learning a language cannot be separated from speaking. Conversation is one of its learning activities. Nunan (1999), argues that the successful of leaning speaking is measured through one's ability to carry out a conversation in the language. In a conversation, two people or more interact each other by asking and giving information. Hummer (1998) suggests the following technique to teach conversation; (a) introduce the conversation orally while the students close their book containing material of conversation. The teacher should make the explanation interesting, so the students do not fall asleep during the class. (b) Let the students open the book if they do not understand the situation and the meaning of certain expression. (c) Ask the students to imitate what the teacher says. (d) Practice together with the teacher as the partner of the whole class. (e) Divide the class into two groups to replace the teacher's role

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed Qualitative research approach. Cresswell (2008) states that "*qualitative research is a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or group ascribe* to *a social or human problem*". Using quantitative approach was to find out the students' point of view about the implemented speaking program by distributing questionnaires. Qualitative approach was used to know the purpose of the particular program implementation by conducting interview to teachers. Fifty students were taken

as the participants of this study. The fifty participants were taken because they have participated in the speaking program for more than two years. I therefore believe that they have a potency to provide rich information to the research. I determined two English teachers to ask about the purpose of the programs to answer the second research question.

Technique of Data Collection Questionnaires

To find the students perception on the speaking programs and why the programs are implemented, the data were collected using questionnaire and interview. The present study used a closed-ended questionnaire consisting of 15 questions of conversation and 15 of public speaking. The questionnaires were distributed to students to know their perceptions toward the speaking programs. Options for each question were provided and the options would be chosen by the students based on their point of view about two implemented speaking program.

Interview

This study used structured interview to secure the data from the teachers. According to Mackey and Gass (2005) structured interview is a type of interview equal to verbal questionnaire and allow the researcher to compare answers from different participants. Four questions were provided to the teacher in the interview guide.

Technique of Data Analysis

The technique was interview to find out the purpose of speaking programs implementation using structured interview in which participants were asked the same questions. Four questions in the interview were asked to the two teachers. The data of teachers' responses toward the speaking programs were gathered and transcribed and the finding of the interview would be presented narrative explanation.

Research Finding and Discussion

Result of Questionnaires

The students were asked to fill in questionnaires to collect the primary data of this study. The following data would draw the students' perception of two English programs; conversation and public speaking activity. Fifty students of class A and C completed the questionnaires. The results are interpreted as follow:

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Data Presentation Of Conversation Activity

1. **Conversation activity is very good and suitable for learning Speaking.**

   The result was 35 students (70%) answered strongly agree, 15 students (30%) answered agree. No student (0%) answered disagree and strongly disagree. It showed that all students agreed and the programs are good and suitable for learning speaking.

2. **Conversation activity motivated me master speaking skill**

   The results was 25 students (50%) answered strongly agree, 23 students (46%) answered agree, two students (4%) answered disagree and no student (0%) answered disagree. It indicated that the activity can motivate them to master speaking.

3. **Conversation activity is unhelpful to improve speaking skill.**

   The result was two students (4%) answered strongly agree, 5 students (10%) answered agree, 20 students (40%) answered disagree and 20 students (40%) answered disagree and 23 students (46%) answered strongly agree. It can be inferred that the students disagreed that the activity is unhelpful to improve speaking skills.

4. **I was very satisfied with learning speaking through conversation activity.**

   The result was 20 students (40%) answered strongly agree, 26 students (52%) answered agree, 2 students (4%) answered disagree, and 2 students (4%) answered strongly disagree. So, It shows that the students were satisfied with learning speaking activity.

5. **I participated in conversation activity because I was forced.**

   The result was 2 students (4%) answered strongly agree, 3 students (6%) agree, 19 students (38%) disagree, and 26 students (52%) strongly disagree. So, in

conclusion, the students disagree that they were forced to participate in the activity.

6. **Learning speaking by participating in conversation activity makes me bored.**

The result was 3 students (6%) answered strongly agree, 4 students (8%) agree, 27 students (54%) disagree, and 16 students (32%) strongly disagree. So, in conclusion, the students disagree that participation in the activity makes them bored.

7. **Participation in conversation activity helps me practice and train my speaking skills.**

The result was 32 students (64%) answered strongly agree, 17 students (34%) agree, no student (0%) disagree, 1 student (2%) strongly disagree. It exhibits that participation in the activity helps them practice and train their speaking skills.

8. **I feel happy and exited when participating in conversation activity.**

The result was 15 students (30%) answered strongly agree, 28 students (56%) agree, 5 students (10%) disagree. It can be inferred that the students were happy to participate in the activity.

9. **I always try to participate in conversation activity even when I am busy**

The result was 9 students (18%) answered strongly agree, 20 students (40%) agree, 19 students (38%) disagree, and two students answered strongly disagree. There is no significance difference from those who agree and disagree. But it still can be concluded that the students tried to participate in the activity even when they are busy.

10. **I always look for the reason and bustle to avoid participating in conversation activity.**

The result was 3 students (6%) answered strongly agree, 5 students (10%) agree, 18 students (36%) disagree, and 24 students (48%) strongly disagree. So, to sum up, the students disagree that they tried to avoid participating in the activity.

11. **Conversation activity makes me become more active and confident in speaking English.**

The result was 21 students (42%) answered strongly agreed, 27 students (54%) agree, 1 students (2%) strongly disagree. So, the conclusion is that the students agree they become more active and confident by participating in the activity.

12. **I do not like learning speaking by participating in conversation activity.**

The result was 3 students (6%) answered strongly agree, 4 students (8%) agree, 26 students (52%) disagree, and 17 students (34%) strongly disagree. To sum up, the students disagree that they dislike learning speaking by participating in the activity.

13. **Participating in conversation activity help me improve my speaking skills.**

The result was 28 students (56%) answered strongly agree, 18 students (36%) agree, 4 students (8%) disagree, and no student (0%) strongly disagree. So, it can be concluded that participating in conversation activity help them improve their speaking skills.

14. **I feel I make a lot of progress after participating in conversation activity regularly.**

The result was 28 students (56%) answered strongly agree, 18 students (36%) agree, 3 students (6%) disagree and 1 students (2%) strongly disagree. It shows that the students agree that they feel they made a lot of progress after participating in the activity.

15. **Learning speaking through participating in conversation activity makes me feel free not depressed.**

The result was 6 students (12%) answered strongly agree, 14 students (28%) agree, 15 students (30%) disagree, and 15 students (30%) strongly disagree. So, it exhibited that students disagree that they feel not free and depressed by participating in the activity.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing the data and discussing the result of the research findings, I would like to draw conclusion.

Speaking is one of the important language skills that must be taught and developed in teaching English. Mastering speaking allow people to communicate verbally to each other. Mastering speaking itself is measured in term of the ability to carry out a conversation in the target language. So, someone who is able to do a conversation will be deemed to have been able to master a language. In general, the purpose of the implementation of English speaking programs at Al-Manar Islamic Boarding School is to improve students speaking skills. To train them to speak English fluently and confidently, It is very important to give them chance to practice and create a good learning environment. So, applying the program it is expected for the students to be of help in their study and the learning goals is achievable.

Even though the programs implementation goal are to support and help students in their learning, and have got positive attention from most of them, some of whom still have different point of view. Referring to the research findings, few students feel unhappy to participate in the programs. Many of them said the programs are very useful and does not make them feel depressed and bored.

RECOMMENDATION

Referring to the result of study about the present speaking programs at the boarding school, it needs to be maintained. It is a good and useful program to improve students speaking skills. Teachers should be creative to manage the speaking activities. The teachers should create interesting and enjoyable speaking class activities so that the students participate in the programs.

The students should really understand the purpose of the English programs of speaking implemented in their learning and try to fully involve in it. All programs implemented by the school have a good purpose in their learning. They, therefore, have to follow the instruction and participate in the English learning program

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