

CLASSROOM ACTION RESEARCH: IMPROVING SPEAKING SKILL BY USING SIMULATION STRATEGY FOR HOTEL ACCOMMODATION STUDENTS (ESP) AT SMK NEGERI 3 PALANGKA RAYA

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Abstract

This research has been designed as collaborative classroom action research to improve the speaking skill of teaching English for specific purpose by using simulation strategy for Hotel Accommodation students at SMK Negeri 3 Palangka Raya. The previous generations of the school mostly got poor score at the final proficiency competency test due to the lack of specific English teaching for hotel. The research focused on how the teaching English for specific purpose – “Front Office subject” – by using simulation strategy can improve the speaking skill of Hotel Accommodation students at SMK Negeri 3 Palangka Raya – especially on escorting the hotel guest? This research was designed as collaborative classroom action research (CCAR); collaborated with the colleague – teacher – who teaches “Front Office” at the same class. The action research steps implemented for this research was adapted from Ferrance and Seberova and Maleik. The simulation strategy and the specific purpose approach in teaching English have improved the students’ speaking skill. There were so many advantages in implementing this strategy specifically to the vocational school students. The students were highly motivated in learning English. They may use their English speaking skill sustainably for their future. They felt free to practice speaking English contextually, and may learnt in peer collaboratively during the teaching learning time. The impact was shown on their speaking score - focused on fluency, pronunciation, utterance, and supportive body language - which has reached satisfying mean score. They also may enlarge their utterance skillfully due to the realia taken to the real English class. The simulation strategy – combined with role-play and drilling by delivering ESP material, performed with Genre-Based approach was highly recommended to be applied more and more in English speaking class at vocational school.

Keywords: Simulation Strategy, ESP, CCAR, Speaking Skill

INTRODUCTION

Core Competency and Basic Competency of English as stated on the Keputusan Direktur Jenderal Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah Number: 330/ D. D5/ KEP/ KR/ 2017 give the instruction for teachers to apply the teaching English as foreign language addressed to Indonesian students in order to be able to comprehend, to apply, to analyze, and to evaluate basic procedure, concept and factual knowledge meta-cognitively based on technical level, specific, detail and complex. Teaching English is not only to give knowledge and language theories, but also to use the language in the work-fields or competencies. Students are also assumed to be

competent in practicing the specific job in using the tools, information, and standard procedure in English. They must be able to perform the skill on thinking, processing, and presenting effectively, creatively, productively, critically, independently, collaboratively, and communicatively in giving solutions as a self-development (Oktarin et al., 2019). This has made serious consideration to be attempted in designing teaching-learning outcomes in every meeting at class.

Vocational school students have various – specific interests, goals, skills, and competencies (Nurhamsih & Syahrial, 2018). There are Tourism, Engineering, Accounting,

Business and Management, Agriculture, Art and Creative Economy, Information and Technology, Fishery and many more. In education, Tourism Industry has been elaborated into four majors as Tourism Service, Beauty and Spa, Hotel Accommodation, and Culinary. Hotel Accommodation students are demanded to manage the hotel skillfully especially in communicating by using English. In fact, the students face various problems to fulfill this demand.

The problem could be caused by some factors. First, the curriculum and syllabus at vocational school was not developed yet based on the need analysis of educational stakeholders: as students, parents, teachers, school-managements, and business industries. Teaching English for vocational students should be designed to assure the proficiency of students' competency (Wilks & Hemsworth, 2011a). The bundle of English materials is not suitable with the needs of vocational school students for their future work (Mutmainna, 2013). This has resulted the inappropriateness of skills and knowledge in English that is mastered by vocational students, especially with their need for the future work – based on industries demands. Need analysis has been considered as cornerstone in teaching English at vocational school that highly recommended to be applied in teaching English for Specific Purpose (ESP) in class – vocational school (Brown, 2020a). Need analysis should be applied at the first meetings of the class to gain essential information. Based on the pre-research, the researcher has found that there is no systematic need analysis act that been applied at SMK Negeri 3 Palangka Raya.

Teachers usually follow the content and activities provided in the textbook given – which is General English instead of Specific English (Purwanti, 2019). Thus, at the end of the school year of vocational high school when they have to join the Proficiency Competency Test, students faced difficulty in practicing their competency due to the lack of preparation, especially at English competency. Teaching English for hospitality must be

categorized under the English for the Specific Purpose (ESP) (Asrifan et al., 2020). It is undebatable that teachers must apply ESP for those students. That means, whenever teachers design a specific teaching-learning material for an English class, there must be a specific purpose – goal that want to be attained refers to their major.

Second, the teaching strategies applied by the teachers are not contextual yet. In fact, the teachers are recommended and supported to apply text-book strategy based on all the instructions in the text-book, which are not in line to the competency of each major – not contextual. Teachers usually follow the content and activities provided in the text-book given – which is general English instead of specific one. Students of vocational high school need to master English to support their competency which is needed both when they join the internship program and when they join the final test at the end of their last year of school contextually – named Proficiency Competency Test. They need to practice English more often contextually on their major context, as Hotel, Restaurant, Office, Tourism Industry, Fashion, etcetera. Contextual learning will support students in mastering English for their future work. English teachers as the front-liner in teaching learning English should consider those facts well to encounter the failure in gaining the teaching – learning goals for those vocational students.

Third, the students face some difficulties in performing the speaking skill as speaking fluently, using the appropriate diction, and pronouncing some essential words while escorting guest at Hotel. Moreover, mispronunciation has assured their poor speaking performance in fluency. The students also fail in optimizing their positive body language while performing speaking skill due to the lack of essential vocabularies. Thus, this research will focus in improving those speaking skills of Hotel Accommodation students in SMK Negeri 3 Palangka Raya by using specific strategy.

Considering the problems above, the alternative solution to overcome them is by

conducting collaborative classroom action research in implementing the simulation strategy. Action research is a very strategic method to equip teachers with systematized reflections and rich data to transform, change, improve, and contest their own classroom practices at school (Castro, 2019). By doing action research, teachers have their own detailed evaluation of regular teaching practice as reference to construct the better one. Action research focused on the improvement of classroom practice by filling the gap between the ideal and factual classroom practice. This essential goal allows teacher to apply various method or strategy in teaching to find the best one for each subject to solve any problem that happen in classroom.

Students are really motivated in learning when they are managed to work collaboratively in real situations. Thus, the teaching strategy must be designed to involved students collaborate in practice as real as the situation that they will be faced in their future job. Simulation is declared as the one of teaching strategy which can improve the speaking skill performance (Areski et al., 2019). Simulation is a teaching strategy that bring the real-life situation and condition to the classroom in order to be practiced – observed – by the students so that they could have clear description of their real-life in the future (Syafitri, 2017). Moreover, as in Oxford (1995: 1103) defines “Simulation is the deliberate making of certain conditions that could exist in reality”. The strategy of teaching by simulation will get the students to the real experience of their work-field of specific job in the future. Simulation brings realia to the English classroom to make both the situation and the condition are more contextual, in order to give a direct link between English classroom and the real-life situation – future work in industry for the vocational school students: the essential idea of teaching factory program.

The students of hotel accommodation need as real as possible situation in learning English communication – the hotel itself – so that they have precise description of the

situation they will face in their future. The teaching strategy by using simulation give significant improvement for students in communicating using English better than other strategies. The previous research conducted in using simulation strategy to teach English as Foreign Language has revealed that students became motivated in using English for communicating. They use even the micro-skills as body language, fluency, pronunciation, intonation, grammar, and vocabulary positively as the simulation strategy was applied in classroom (Hamad, 2022).

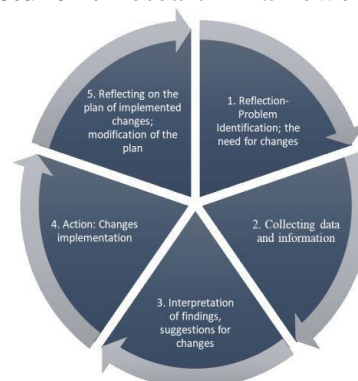
This research has been designed as collaborative classroom action research to improve the speaking skill of teaching English for specific purpose by using simulation strategy for Hotel Accommodation students at SMK Negeri 3 Palangka Raya.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research was designed as collaborative classroom action research (CCAR) to find out how the teaching English for specific purpose – especially in escorting the guest – by using simulation strategy can improve the speaking skill of Hotel Accommodation students at SMK Negeri 3 Palangka Raya. The researcher collaborated with the colleague – teacher – who teaches “Front Office” at the same class during the research was conducted.

The action research steps implemented for this research was adapted from Ferrance (2000) and Seberova and Maleik (2014) as can be seen in figure below (Yildirim & Ozdener, 2021).

Picture 1. Research Framework



The first stage was determining the problem that was faced by the students and the teacher of SMK Negeri 3 Palangka Raya in Front Office subject, especially in escorting the guest. The data was collected through questionnaire and semi-structured – purposive sampling – interview. There was data should that be interpreted, especially for any problem faced by the students in performing the English-speaking skill while escorting the guest with the causes of it. The modification of teaching strategy by using simulation was recommended to overcome the problem based on the collected data. After this stage, a modified lesson plan was created and implemented for at least three weeks. The implemented lesson plan was analyzed and evaluated based on its role in improving the performance of twelfth-grade of Hotel Accommodation students at SMK Negeri 3 Palangka Raya for their English-speaking skill while escorting the guest. Here were the detail steps in conducting this action research: Step 1, Reflection - problem Identification; the need for the changes: The goal of this step is to find out the problem(s) faced by the students in performing the English-speaking skill while escorting the guest.

Step 2, Collecting Data and Information: The goal of this step is to support the decision in implementing the new strategy for teaching ESP in order to improve the performance of the English-speaking skill while escorting the guest

Step 3, Interpretation of findings, suggestions for changes: The goal of this step is to determine the changes of the teaching strategy – that is simulation strategy – to be implemented as mitigation of the problem.

Step 4, Action-Changes Implementation: The goal of this step is to identify any problems faced by the participants and the researcher during the action plan implementation.

Step 5, Reflecting on the plan of implemented changes, modification of the plan: The goals of this step are to identify any changes or improvement of students' performance in English-speaking skill while

escorting the guest; and to investigate the opinion of the participants – the students – about the implementation of teaching ESP by using simulation strategy.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The researcher has conducted the treatment of using simulation strategy on the teaching learning activity and also implementing English for specific purpose material - escorting guest at hotel. The treatment has implemented by following the action research steps which is adapted from Ferrance (2000) and Seberova and Maleik (2014), as follow:

Step 1; Reflection-Problem Identification; the need for the changes: As the researcher and the teacher himself on the class, the researcher has identified some problems during the teaching learning process had been conducted. Students had no passion in learning English; They were anxious in using English spoken language at class to communicate. Students had a low confidence in performing speaking skill, specifically in their field work as vocational students of Hotel Accommodation. It has straight correlation with the Front Office subject especially for the competency on escorting guest - as it must be delivered standardized in English spoken language.

Step 2; Collecting Data and Information: The data has been collected through interview, classroom observation, distributing the questionnaire and surely delivering pre-assessment as an instrument of success criteria. Based on the data gathered, the researcher concluded that there should be a specific treatment to implement in order to improve the students' speaking skill. The first data was gathered from semi-structured interview method in which the researcher has interviewed the sample of the participants purposively. They were three students of low English competence level, three students of standard English competence level and three students of high English competence level. Each sample were taken randomly in order to find out their opinion about the English lesson

issues that had been designed and delivered in English class for the vocational school students.

The first issue been asked was their opinion toward the English lesson they have had. Low English competence students said that English was difficult for them to understand. Some of them even said that they had no idea why they had to learn English as they live in Indonesia. On the other hand, standard English competence students said that it was fine to learn English at school. They realized the importance of learning English for their future. Meanwhile, high English competence students assumed that English was fun and easy to understand. They liked English very much and used English for fun in their daily life.

The second issue been asked at the interview session was the students' opinion about the material of general English by delivering genre-based texts to learn. Low English competence students found that English The material was too large and too difficult to understand – memorized, as they did not know how to implement the material in their daily life. Standard English competence students declared strongly that it was not relevant for them to learn. It did not suit to their needs in the future in which speaking skill is needed more to be practiced at hotel. High English competence students had their own opinion toward the second issue. They clearly said that the material was boring and monotonous as they needed extra effort to gain the material for they realized that they need to master reading comprehension skill for their future.

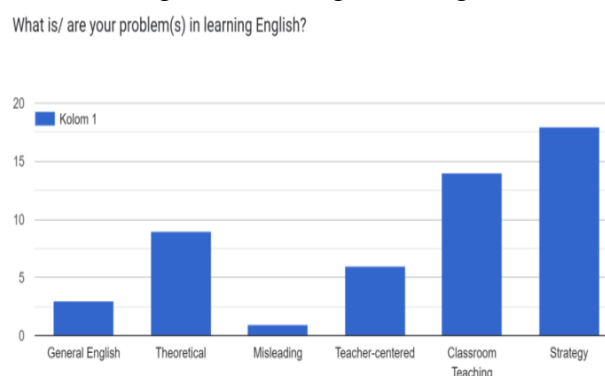
The next issue was about the English material they need which suit to their need as a hotel accommodation student and how to deliver it. The first group needed something specific for vocational students only, not too much but essential to be used in daily life that must be delivered relax, communicatively and practical in daily life. The second group had almost the same as the first group. They told that the material should be reduced but still in the formal concept that allow students to speak

more. The last group of the students been interviewed asked for varied and realistic materials, specific text for hotel issue and designed to master any discourse around hotel. They also assured the teaching strategy should be creative, active, practical and stressed to the hotel issues and setting. Here are the data compiled based on the interview:

The researcher has also observed the students in the classroom during the teaching learning process on five issues being stressed: students' attendance, students' passion on learning, students' confidence in using English, students' involvement, and students' speaking skill proficiency. Those students showed poor response to the issues been observed during the teaching-learning process in the classroom.

As the researcher delivered the questionnaire, it was focused on the participants' attitude toward the teaching learning activities. The researcher gave the participants google form to fill in. This strategy was taken as the participants interested more in digital form than the manual one. The questionnaire focused on the problems faced by the students as they studied English at vocational school majoring hotel accommodation. The participants answered least problem in teaching misleading, more in general English material, teacher-centered concept, theoretical material, classroom teaching process and mostly on teaching strategy. They asked more innovation in teaching strategy of English. The results were shown on this chart below.

Picture 2. Students' Attitudes Towards English Teaching Challenges



Pre-assessment was delivered to the participants to gain the speaking score which was compared to the minimum standard score of English established at SMK Negeri 3 Palangka Raya. The school has established the standard minimum score of English at 70 point. This comparison was analyzed to measure on the success criteria of the treatment. The elements to be scored were fluency, pronunciation, utterance, and supportive body language. These elements were assumed as the essential competencies – proficiency needed as hotel accommodation students. This pre-assessment showed that nine-teen students reached under the standard minimum score (65.5%) and eight students reached beyond the standard minimum score (27.6%), meanwhile two students reached exactly on the standard minimum score (6.9%). The highest score was 82 points; the lowest score was 60 points and the mean of the students' score was 68.24; which was under the standard minimum score that being established by the school.

Step 3, Interpretation of findings, suggestions for changes: The first data taken from interview has shown that there should be changes on the teaching-learning English approach and strategy for the participants. All the groups of the students agreed for the need of significant changes in teaching-learning approach, strategy and material. The need was being supported by the observation sheet that showed poor responses of students during teaching learning process at English class. The change needed has also explicitly declared at questionnaire responses of the participants which mostly choose the teaching strategy and the material as the main problem in English teaching learning class. Furthermore, the score of pre-assessment showed the failure of gaining the minimum standard score of speaking skill has been performed in escorting guest. Thus the researcher conducted the simulation as new teaching strategy and English for specific purpose approach as the specific material to be implemented as mitigation of the problem.

Step 4, Action-Changes Implementation: The researcher has implemented the simulation strategy in delivering the ESP material for participants. Here are the steps applied in the classroom:

The class was started at the early morning of the school at 06.30 a.m. The teacher entered the class and interacted with some of the students by smiling and other supportive body languages. As the pre-activity, the teacher greeted the class as the first verbal communication. The students responded the greet as the first produced spoken language of the day in the class. The teacher checked the students' attendance while having a personal simple conversation and discussion randomly by the class in the issue of previous subject and making sure the students' understanding of the material. The last pre-activity was ended by asking the students feeling in studying English as the preparation to the next material delivered.

The main activity of learning has designed based on the genre based approach. As the step of "Building Knowledge of the Field (BKOF)", the teacher gave motivation to the class to learn English as vital skill to master as Hotel Accommodation students. This activity has involved intensive conversation in the class. The teacher gave some factual evidences of English usage in daily life, especially in hotel issues; as greetings, expressions, phrases, notices, notes, things, facilities, etcetera. The teacher also explained the industries' need of English competence for working at Hotel. As the school has implemented "teaching factory" curriculum for years; and has signed Memorandum of Understanding with many Hotels at Palangka Raya, the teacher "rolled out" those Hotels need for English competence as pre-requisite of working on. Furthermore, teacher delivered the essential concept of English for Specific Purpose (ESP) for Hotel. This part is very important to delivered well and comprehensively for it is a new approach in teaching English for this class – as they were taught with general English for previous teaching approach. The students must get the

essential point of ESP approach that will be implemented during the research on their class. It has motivated the students to learn English in a different and interesting new approach for them. The students will find that English for Hotel is different with the general English. "Polite English" is the essential of Specific English for Hotel Accommodation issues as it begins with the very first greeting at the Hotel. As the first engagement, teacher asked students to convey their mastery in greetings. Forth, each student was asked to perform their ability in greeting others, escorting the guest to the reservation – front office, and escorting the guest to the room in peers.

The next step on implementing the genre based was "Modelling of The Text (MOT). The teacher gave the materials by exposing some expressions needed as a bellboy. Those expressions are taken from the "Front Office" hand-book materials – Front Office SMK/MAK Kelas XI, written by Asri Pujihastuti, published by PT Kuantum Buku Sejahtera, 2020 on page 118 – 120; this is the core-significant of ESP approach for vocational school of Hotel Accommodation that being applied on this classroom action research. On this step, the students were demanded to drill any expressions which are difficult to pronounce. Here are some expressions to drill:

Good morning, welcome to Edotel Kartini. My name is ____ How may I assist you?

Please follow me to the front desk. After you, Ma'am.

Please have the reservation here. This way, Ma'am.

"Your room is at the second floor.

"Let me escort you."

"Bellboy - Bellboy - Bellboy."

"Your room is ready."

"Let me explain you"

"It is television remote control" "This is dressing table" "That is luggage rack"

"There are safety deposit box, slippers,

laundry bag, and hanger" "Here is bathroom"

"Do you have any question?"

"If you have any question, please feel free to call the receptionist."

Joint construction of the text (JCOT) gave the students and teacher to analyze the expressions exposed. Students were free to analyze from any point of view of the expression being studied. Some of them connected the expression with their personal background knowledge. The others analyzed them by translating and interpreting the expressions into the local expressions and local language as well as local wisdom. This part was very interesting and needed more time to expense. The analysis was ended with identifying the standardized expression of bellboy in greeting hotel guest as has been written on the textbook. Those expressions were practiced directly in front of the class by each of the students.

The final step in genre based approach is independent construction of the text (ICOT). This step allowed students to implement the standardized expression in greeting – welcoming hotel guest by using simulation strategy at 'Edotel Kartini' as the real situation of a hotel. Simulation strategy applied the real situation and condition – physically and mentally – to the students as they learn the subject. The students acted as bellboy of the Hotel and escorting the guest – the teacher or the peer – to the room by using English. Each of the students used those expressions independently together with supportive body language as the real hotel attendant; started by welcoming the guest, making reservation and escorting the guest to the room to stay in. Of course they may interpret and modify the expression creatively based on their own version. During the performance, the teacher assessed the students' speaking elements on fluency, pronunciation, utterance, and supportive body language by filling in the scoring rubrics.

Post activity was started by evaluating the teaching-learning process by classroom

observation and asking-giving feedback by purposive sampling interview in the classroom. This activity gave many valuable enrichments both to the students and the teacher as well. Evaluation and feedback are very useful in constructing the better teaching-learning strategy and also lesson plan directly. The evaluation started by reviewing the scoring tabulation of students' performance while simulating at the Edotel Kartini as the bellboy.

As the implementation of the strategy applied, there was an assessment delivered to the participants. There were four elements which been scored along the speaking performance, such as: fluency, pronunciation, utterance, and supportive body language. The assessment was focused on four elements: as the instrument of the criteria of success. It showed all the twenty-nine students have reached beyond the standard minimum score (100%). The highest score was at 94 points; the lowest score was at 74 points and the mean of the students' score was at 79.75 points; which was beyond the standard minimum score that being established by the school.

Step 5, Reflecting on the plan of implemented changes, modification of the plan: The implementation of simulation strategy has successfully improved the speaking skill the of participants at the first cycle. The speaking scores were raised significantly as the result of post-assessment after the implementation of the strategy. The students were highly motivated in practicing specific English during the treatment. They enjoyed the strategy and even asked more practices in the real situation by using English. The students were being satisfied in practicing their pronunciation, giving utterance based on the real situation - real materials, and they constantly asked for more simulation in practicing English as their need. Simulation strategy combined with ESP approach has successfully improved the students' score in speaking. They have reached above the standard minimum score that has been established by the school. They were more confident and relaxed while escorting guest in

using English. They also directly enlarged their utterance skillfully due to the realia taken to the real English class - Education Hotel. The participants also felt free and happy while simulating speaking English contextually - escorting guest at Education Hotel, they enjoyed and had not anxiety while simulation strategy was implemented contextually. They may share with peer while simulating in escorting guest at Edotel - which affected uniquely in improving their speaking skill. Both teacher and students had more time and energy in exploring specific material (ESP) in detail. These students found that ESP material aligned with their daily and future needs so that they were motivated in exploring their speaking skill.

Unfortunately - in the other hand - the participants still faced problem in maximizing their speaking proficiency competence. Based on the interview result, the students said that before doing the simulation strategy, they need more time for pre-practicing and drilling the material, especially in pronunciation and expressing their supportive body language. Role-play and emphasis explanation at the first hours in classroom was needed before the contextual simulation was implemented.

CONCLUSION

The simulation strategy and the specific purpose approach in teaching English have improved the students' speaking skill. There were so many advantages in implementing this strategy specifically to the vocational school students. The students were highly motivated in learning English. They may use their English speaking skill sustainably for their future. They felt free to practice speaking English contextually, and may learnt in peer collaboratively during the teaching learning time. The impact was shown on their speaking score - focused on fluency, pronunciation, utterance, and supportive body language - which has reached satisfying mean score. They also may enlarge their utterance skillfully due to the realia taken to the real English class - Education Hotel (Edotel) Kartini. The participants also felt free and happy while

simulating speaking English contextually - escorting guest at Education Hotel, they enjoyed and had not anxiety while simulation strategy was implemented contextually.

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