

CREATIVE TEACHING FOR INTERACTIVE CLASSROOM

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Abstract: Student's participation in classroom is always expected by teachers. Therefore, they try to find out various techniques of teaching to get students' attention in classroom. The more creative they teach the more attention the students will give. Communicative Language teaching (CLT) model is an alternative model which has been believed to be effective in creating interactive classroom. This research is aimed at exploring how micro teaching students at the English Education Department (FKIP, Universitas Muria Kudus) make use of CLT model to have an interactive teaching model. The research uses a case study design which focuses on describing a case of learning activity in micro teaching class. It is found that the students have done the efforts to make their teaching practice interactively done by using various teaching techniques and media. Creativity in teaching brings about interactivity between students and teachers.

Keywords: *Communicative Language Teaching; creative teaching; interactive classroom*

Introduction

Student's disinterest during a learning process in the classroom is an unexpected case for a teacher since it can make the learning objective of the class unsuccessfully achieved. It is for sure something avoided by a teacher. Teachers are recommended to have continuous reflection to consider modifying their instructions, teaching method, learning media, equipment and any other important point to motivate students to get involved and give good attention in the learning process. Alternative methods of teaching have been suggested by experts to encourage students to get involved actively in learning process. One of the methods is by bringing the context of learning themes in the classroom so that the students will have a perception of being in a real situation. This approach is commonly termed as Communicative Language Teaching (CTL). It is a teaching method which conditions classroom activities to be meaningful and able to involve real communication (Richard, 2006: 2). To make the students take part actively in learning process, a teacher should bring the context of the discussed topic into the classroom. It means that students need to have factual visualization of the subject as if they were in a real situation in a community. In this case, developing students' communicative competence will in turn naturally facilitate them to do active learning.

Method of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is considered to be the anchor of paradigm shift, from *grammatical competence* paradigm to *communicative competence* paradigm (Richard, 2006: 3). The perception of *grammatical competence* paradigm suggests that students learn English by understanding how sentences are well constructed. They learn the grammatical rules and practice producing sentences with acceptable pattern of word classes. In turn, students are expected to understand the language theory well. It is indeed a good standing point because understanding sentence construction is a basic need for students to learn language. However, students also need to be introduced and, in the next level, exposed to meaningful situation when using English since using language is concerned with practicing a meaning negotiation. Therefore, there must be a next step for students, after they understand the concept of grammar, to learn how the mastered theory of grammar is used in a meaningful communication. In a simple remark, they need to practice using their grammar

mastery in contextual communication thematically. This is the notion of the importance of encouraging students to have intensive practice of communication in English because language is means of communication. Students are considered to have language proficiency when they know how to use the language in a various communication setting.

It is the sense of developing students' communicative competence in which they are not only conditioned and endorsed to learn language in grammatical level but also in wider scope of functional level. Canale and Swain (1980), Canale (1983) in Celce Murcia and Olshtain (2000: 16) proposed that communicative competence could be described as consisting of at least four components: linguistic or grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. CLT aims at developing students' communicative competence which is expected to help teachers make the students active in participating in the classroom. Learning process needs active students and challenging as well as creative teachers. Poorman (2002) points out, "true learning cannot take place when students are passive observers of the teaching process". It implies that students' disinterest in the learning activities may be caused by the fact that the teachers do not create a conducive and challenging atmosphere for the the students to give all out participation in the class. Making the students get involved in classroom activities is a way of anticipating student's disinterest to the class and it can be done through the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Method which covers such learning methods as role play, cooperative learning, project based learning, and other learning methods which provides stimulation for students to communicate actively in the class in various context.

Besides considering the use of the above mentioned teaching methods and in the scope of making efforts to find ways of designing an interactive class for better participation of students, teachers are also suggested to find appropriate teaching techniques, strategies and media. This research aims at exploring how micro teaching students at the English Education Department (FKIP, Universitas Muria Kudus) make use of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method to have an interactive teaching model. The research tries to describe the student-teachers' learning activities in micro teaching class. It is expected to find how the students have done the efforts to make their teaching practice interactively done by using various teaching techniques and media. It is also to investigate how creative the student-teachers are in teaching to bring about interactivity between students and teachers in the classroom.

Methods

The research is a case study which investigates how students of Micro Teaching Class implement the concept of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) method in developing interactive learning and teaching process. The subject of the research is the students of sixth semester who take micro teaching class. They are required to take this class as a pre-requisite subject for them to take a teaching practice program in seventh semester in a real school. The class is designed to train the prospective student-teachers to experience teaching activities practically. In this class, they are introduced to some curriculums having been implemented by schools in different level in Indonesia, such as Competency Based Curriculum, Institutional Based Curriculum (*KTSP*), and Curriculum of 2013. The student-teachers are also taught how to design a syllabus and lesson plan and how to practice them in the class. In this class, the student-teachers also explore the teaching method development from time to time in local and international scope. Through these learning activities, the student-teachers are expected to choose which method, technique, strategy and media are effective to build an interactive class.

The teaching practice is done by the student-teachers in three stages. The first stage is designed for teaching practice by using Competency Based Curriculum (*KBK*) and Institutional Based Curriculum (*KTSP*). In the second stage, the student-teachers perform the teaching activity by using Curriculum of 2013 while in the last stage they may choose one of the curricula. The audience or participants in the first and second stage are their own friends while in the third stage, the participants are real students of Junior or Senior High School students invited to the classroom. During the teaching performance, the assessment is done by the lecturer as first assessor and a student-teacher serving as second assessor. The assessment is done referring to assessment rubric which covers the following points:

- a. How is the apperception done?
- b. How is the student-teacher's mastery on the teaching material?
- c. How does the student-teacher relate the material with the real context of daily life?
- d. How does the student-teacher encourage the participants to be active through the use of certain technique, strategy and media of teaching?
- e. How does the student-teacher encourage the student's participation in the classroom when using certain technique, strategy and media of teaching?
- f. Is the class interactive?
- g. How is the student-teacher language proficiency?
- h. Does the student-teacher give follow up of the classroom activities?

The above questions are the points on which the observation in the research is based. Those questions, more or less, provide an instrument to describe whether or not the student-teachers use Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) Method. The questions also guide the researcher to explore to what extent is CLT applied to build an interactive class. The researcher also observes the responses of the classroom participants by recording the teaching practice.

Finding and Discussion

The research is done in three classes of micro teaching with total number of students as many as 97. All of them get three chances to do the teaching performance. The performance is assessed by two assessors; those are the lecturer serving as the first assessor and one of the student-teachers serving as the second assessor. The assessors are given assessment rubric containing the above points of question. The assessment rubric is considered as the instrument of exploring how student-teachers manage the class in the perspective of CLT. Besides, video recording is also used to help the researcher investigate the students' responses towards the teaching and learning process. Score is given by the assessors based on the above points of question. The research finds out that in the first stage of performance, many student-teachers have not implemented CLT. The performing student-teachers are recommended to accommodate the suggestions given by the lecturer and the other student-teachers in a reflection session. The reflection is done after the student-teachers do the performance. It is done so as to improve their performance in the next performing session. In this stage, it is found that there are 49 student-teachers or almost 50 % who get low score. Based on the observation result most of them did not apply the CLT method well. It is proven by their less interactive class compared with the others.

In the second stage, there are 31 student-teachers who get low score. It means that there is a decrease in number of those who do not apply interactive class. It can be said that most of them have found alternative way to make the class interesting or interactive in terms of the class which get positive response from the students. Meanwhile, in the third stage there

are 16 student-teachers who get low score which means there is also a decrease in number of those who cannot manage the classes to be interactive ones. According to the points of questions used by the researcher to assess the teaching quality of the student-teachers, there are several important points that should be fulfilled by the student-teachers to be considered as having qualified teaching performance, those are quality of apperception, mastery of teaching material, level of relevance of the material towards daily life context, the use of appropriate technique, strategy and media of learning, classroom interactivity, student-teacher's language proficiency, and ability to follow up the class. The research result shows that there is a tendency (from the first up to the third stage) toward good improvement of the student-teachers' teaching quality at least indicated by the score supported by the observation result.

Referring to the assessment rubric, observation, and video recording, the student-teachers have done good efforts to make their teaching performance be positively responded by the classroom participants. Some student-teachers use teaching methods like cooperative learning, role play, genre based instruction, project based learning and suggestopedia, while regarding the techniques and strategies, most of them use game and group discussion to encourage the students to be active in the class. Meanwhile, it is found that the teaching media like picture, audiovisual, quiz, games and short story were also used by the student-teachers to stimulate the student's participation in the class. It is also found that the student-teachers, during the three stages, have dynamic efforts to do good teaching performance so as to develop interactivity between teacher and students. The observation shows that the student-teachers who can manage their method and media of teaching to facilitate the participants (students) to learn English through meaningful classroom activities and real communication are those who get good attention from the students. It means that whatever the method or media of teaching as long as the teachers can create an interactive class, the students will be encouraged to participate in the learning activities. However, empirically there are certain methods and media of teaching, like the above mentioned ones, which are best compatible with the implementation of Communicative Language Teaching method. Among the strategies done by the student-teachers to encourage student's participation in the class, classroom questioning is the most effective way to do so. The classroom questioning will be more influential if it is combined with other supporting techniques and media of teaching, for example, teaching narrative text with short story movie combined with group discussion and classroom questioning.

Student-teacher's creativity is also a determining factor for interactive class. Some of the students have shown their creativity by presenting: modified audiovisual media, puppet of short story, song for listening skill, interactive game, and short movie. However, it shows that the media will give a real effect in stimulating student's participation as long as the teacher can make use of the media appropriately. Teachers should understand the student's learning characteristics so that they can choose the suitable media for learning activities. In a very simple perspective, if teachers want to make their students give participation in the classroom, make the students do something. It means that all the learning aspects of the students should be stimulated, not only the cognitive aspect but also affective and psychomotor aspect. This can factually be done by the student-teachers of the micro teaching class by developing their creativity in using the learning media. It will, of course, be variously done by them since they have different potential pedagogical skills. Another thing that can be perceived from teaching practice in the micro teaching class is that good media of teaching are not always those which are electronic ones. Good media can be gotten from the simple media in our surrounding. The point is on the series activities during the use of the media to expose as much as relevant learning experience to the students.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Conclusion

From the above discussion, there are some concluding points that can be put forward, those are: (a.) The teaching performance of the student-teachers in micro teaching class at the English Education Department of Universitas Muria Kudus, has trained them to understand and practice Communicative Language Teaching (CLT); (b.) The student-teachers of the micro teaching class have done the efforts to design interactive class as the typical characteristic of CLT (c.) To create interactive class as suggested by CLT method, some student-teachers use such teaching method/technique/strategy as classroom questions, cooperative learning (jigsaw), group discussion, role play, project based learning and suggestopedia (through song). (d) There are also some students who design their class by using media of picture, movie, puppet, flashcard and audiovisual equipment. (e.) Among those methods, techniques, strategies and media of teaching, the most influential strategy on interactivity of class and which is empirically practiced by the students is classroom questioning and audiovisual media.

Suggestion

To implement Communicative Language Teaching Method (CLT), teachers need to have a good communication strategy since the main goal of this method is student's communicative competence. Communicative competence is nurtured through meaningful classroom activities and engaged with real communication. A good communication strategy combined with appropriate technique or media of teaching will create an interactive teaching and learning.

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