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Teachers' Strategies to Increase Students' Participation at English Language
Education Department of A Private University in Yogyakarta

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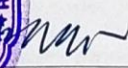

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**Teachers' Strategies to Increase Students' Participation at English Language
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Abstract

The students' participation has been regarded as an essential aspect of education. Therefore, any activities performed in the class must have participation from the students itself. The students' participation includes verbal and nonverbal. However, this study only researched on verbal participation. This study aims to investigate the lecturers' strategies used to increase students' participation and to find out the difficulties faced by lecturers to increase students' participation. This research used qualitative research as the research design. The data were gathered through interviewing with three female ELED lectures of a private university in Yogyakarta by purposive sampling. In analyzing the data, this research used three types of coding which were open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. The first finding in this research was about the lecturers' strategies to increase students' participation in the classroom at ELED of a private university in Yogyakarta. The findings were brainstorming, small group discussion, participation point, teacher praise, presentation, calling students' name, personal approach, and weekly conversation. The second finding was difficulties faced by the lecturers at ELED of a private university in Yogyakarta.

The findings were English skill, students' motivation, choosing a topic, time limitation, students' preparation, group dynamics.

Keywords: students' participation, lecturers' strategies, lecturers' difficulties

Background of the Research

According to Mulyasa (2004), in the CBC, the learning process uses student-centered learning, while teachers become facilitator to help students. Some teaching techniques commonly used in CBC are role play, contextual learning, participative teaching and learning (Sudrajat, 2008). In the classroom, students are required to be active in the learning process in order to meet learning objectives (Ma'rifah, 2017). The lecturers' perspective on active students is students actively participate in the classroom activities, such as sharing ideas, discussing topics in pairs discussing in small group or with whole class, and asking or answering question (Mariskind, 2013). Students' participation can be shown when they speak in front of the class (Abdullah, Abu Bakar, & Mahob, 2012). On the other hand, this is in contradiction in case of students' participation in classroom that the researcher observed.

According to the researcher's experiences, when she observed the activities in the classroom, she found some problems faced by students. First, some of them felt shy during oral activities. Second, some of them only listened to their friends, and they did not say anything when they got chance to ask questions and to give opinions. They were just taking notes and sit quietly (Abdullah et.al,

2012). They were less confident to speak in front of other people. Some of them faced difficulties in speaking. There were students' misunderstanding of the participation in the classroom (Knight, 2008). Students believe that participation is synonymous with attendance. They thought that participation in the classroom is as they came to class, listened to delivered materials, and took notes. Students' participation in the classroom does not only include attending the class or listening to the material during the teaching and learning process, but it also includes putting ideas during the class activity and understanding the material (Adullah et al., 2012).

In teaching and learning process, the lecturers apply strategies in order to make students participate in the classroom activities. The researcher chose the topic about the strategies used by the lecturers to increase students' participations, because the researcher was curious about the strategies used by the lecturers in the classroom. However, when the lecturers applied the strategies, they also faced difficulties. They face the difficulties, because the students also get difficulties in participating in the classroom such as being shy, lack of confidence, and being silent during the oral activities (Al Nakhalah, 2016).

To achieve the aim of this research, there are two research questions that are addressed, namely:

1. What are the strategies used by the lecturers to increase students' participation at English Language Education Department of a private university in Yogyakarta?

2. What are the difficulties faced by the lecturers in increasing students' participation at English Language Education Department of a private university in Yogyakarta?

Methodology

This research used qualitative design as the research design. This research was conducted at English Language Education Department of a private university in Yogyakarta. The researcher started the research from November 2016 until December 2016. The researcher chose three female lecturers at ELED of one private university in Yogyakarta to become the participants in this research. The data of this research was collected by doing semi-structured interviews. One-on-one interviews was used as the type of interviews. After doing the interview session with all participants, the next step done by the researcher was analyzing the data. There were three steps in analyzing the data. The steps were transcribing, member checking, and coding.

Finding and Discussion

The Lecturers' Strategies

Brainstorming. Participant one added, "Give the students brainstorming in order to make them more prepare and become confident to share ideas in front of their friends" (P1.15). Brainstorming employed by the lecturer to increase students' participation in classroom discussion. This was supported by Kate (1999) and Rocca (2010) who stated that this strategy is excellent method which makes students interested in the lesson. Brainstorming helped the students to find

new ideas and they could make a list of the new ideas. New ideas became a clue to the students to develop the problem given by the lecturers.

Small group discussion. The finding of this research revealed that dividing class to small group discussion was applied by the lecturer, participant two stated, “divide class into small discussion” (P2.29). This was in line with Nataatmadja et al. (2007) who found out that some students liked when the class was divided into small groups, because it helped the students whose English ability was poor to participate in the classroom. Cirillo (2013) stated that allowing student thinking to shape discussion is student can communicate with their peers in small group; students can express their opinion; and students become centered in the classroom discussion. Students could communicate with their peers in small group, and students felt more confidence.

Participation point. Participant two stated, at the beginning of the semester she told to her students, “whenever they participate actively I will give them a class participation point” (P2. 16). According to Jeffrey (2003) who stated that participation point is very effective to make the students speak-up. He also stated that the participation point aims not to control the dominate of students, but rather than to help the students to overcome their fear of making mistake when they speak English (Jeffrey, 2003).

Teachers’ praise. Another strategy used by the lecturers at was teachers’ praise. It was also shown by Wright (2012), the purpose of this strategy is to motivate students’ effort to be easy to speak-up or deliver some opinions in the

classroom. The lecturers could know what their students' need surely, make students feel comfortable in the class, make the study become easy to be absorbed by students, and can motivate students to participate again (Musthapha, et al., 2010).

Presentation. From the interview result, the presentation could be individual or group. Each type of presentation might have own benefit. Zaine (2015) stated that group presentation helps students to become autonomous learner and group presentation also gives an opportunity to students to practice their language skill, to demonstrate their understanding, also to develop their ability to present information in front of the other students. The presentation was used by the lecturer because it gave students chance to enhance their spontaneous respond in verbal, forced the students to speak English, and enhanced the students by reducing their shyness.

Calling students by name. Participant one stated, " what I do to increase students' participation is by calling students' name" (P1. 13). According to Dallimore, Hertenstein, and Platt (2012), they use term cold-call, for example, call students who do not to raise their hand. Cold-calling is an effective strategy to increase students' participation in which the students can answer the question voluntarily, and in the classroom which always use cold-call can increase the students' participation over time (Dallimore et al., 2012).

Personal approach. Participant one said, "with the personal approach the students would be more confident" (P1.22). It was appropriate with theory

mentioned by Sieberer-Nagler (2016) that it is very important for the lecturer to understand their students, to know some of their learning styles, to know the students' need, and to know each characteristic of students. Hence, getting closer to students was a good way to understand what students wanted. In the researchers' opinion, this strategy might overcome the problem when students were silent in the learning activity because by knowing what students wanted was important for the lecturer. This way could make students become more comfortable to participate.

Weekly conversation. The researcher found another strategy used by the lecturer ELED of a private university in Yogyakarta to increase students' participation. There was only one participant who said that weekly conversation was her strategy. Weekly conversation was used by the lecturer because she believed that this strategy could increase students' participation. Participant one said, "a strategy that I have used is a weekly conversation" (P1.08). In the researchers' opinion, a weekly conversation like common conversation did by the students in the class activity.

The Lecturers' Difficulties

Students' English skill. Participant one said, "students have not been ready yet to speak up, perhaps it is because of their English skill" (P1.26). Swales (as cited in Balla, 2014) showed that the second point is many of standards of students' skill. The students had different abilities and level. When lecturer asked students to participate, but the students have not ready yet to participate. Instead,

the lecturer might ask their self, might her students have the problem such as lack of vocabularies and felt fear to speak-up

Students' motivation. Participant one said, "students' motivation, if there are students who have more motivation, they will be easy to participate, and there are also students who do not motivate at all" (P1.27). Musthapha et. al (2010) the motivation is come from the students themselves, sometimes students feel afraid of making some mistakes when participating in classroom such as making wrong pronunciation or making their friends not understand what they explain. Students' motivation was the important thing in the participation because it helped students to get self-confidence.

Choosing a topic. Participant one said, "choose a topic that they like, sometimes it feels challenging" (P1. 29). Choosing topics for weekly conversation was not easy for the lecturer. Participant one said, "keep up to their world was challenging" (P1. 30). Moreover, the topic had to be interesting for all of the students and made students felt curious to discuss the topic. Musthapha et. al (2010) argued if the topic is so difficult for students, they will only hear and keep quite.

Time limitation. Participant two said, "when there were a lot of students to participate and time was limited" (P2. 26). According to Atwood (as cited in Safitri, 2017) time allocation might influence the students to be active in discussion. Participant two used participation point as her strategy and did 20 minutes before the learning process begun. The second participant usually asked

the student about what she had told previously. Many of students participate, and the lecturer had to choose only some of the students. Sometimes the students felt disappointed.

Students' preparation. Participant three said, “ in the group presentation, there are students who do not to participate, the students only do the presentation” (P3. 22). The preparation done by students was lack. Sometimes, only students who presented the material who read and understood the material, but other students did not. While students who did not do presentation do not participate in the discussion, the discussion did not work smoothly. Participant three mentioned, “students were less preparation before came to classroom” (P2.24). Based on Atwood (as cited in Safitri, 2017),lack preparation influences the students to be active in the discussion.

Group dynamics. Participant three said, “When the students work in a group, there are students who only join in a name” (P3.20). This case showed that the group work did not work. Based on the third participant's opinion, this strategy worked, and students' participation increased, but there were still some students who only joined name. Group work used by the lecturer to assess the students' teamwork (Chariroh, 2016). The lecturer used group work to see their students work in a group, and surely the teacher had assessment for group work. The lecturer let their students work in a group in order to give an opportunity for students drill their skill working together (Arafat, 2016).

Conclusion

First, this study revealed the strategies used by some lecturers at ELED of a private university in Yogyakarta. Brainstorming and a weekly conversation was also used by lecturers to increase students' participation. Indeed, two strategies were usually combined as one. The use of small group discussion was believed as the effective strategy to increase students' participation. Dividing the class into small group discussion became one of effective strategies because it helped the students to participate. Similarly, pointed students or called students' name was also an effective strategy to increase students' participation. Calling the students' name in random way minimized the students to feel targeted. In addition, the other effective strategies was participation point. The lecturers also used teachers' praise as their strategies. The most common strategy used by ELED lecturers of a private university in Yogyakarta was a presentation. Presentation became the effective strategy because each of students should search the other references based on the topic given before, and they also absorbed the material by themselves. The personal approach also implemented by ELED lecturers. The lecturers used this strategy when the students remained silent. The lecturer asked the students before the class began or in the brainstorming session.

The second findings was about the difficulties faced by ELED lecturers of a private university in Yogyakarta. First, choosing the topic was a difficulty faced by the lecturers. Second, students' English skill also became difficulty faced by the lecturers. When students have been given the topic, then they were brainstorming the topic became a story or news to be share in front of the class. In fact, when the lecturers asked them to share in front of the class, they were not

ready. The third is students' motivation. In the brainstorming session, students were motivated to participate. Fourth, the difficulty was time limitation. A lot of students wanted to participate but the time was limited. Fifth, students' preparation. There were only a few students who prepared well before the class began or students who had to present the material prepared well. Students' preparation is was an important thing before class began because it influenced students to be active in the classroom. The last is was group dynamics. There were students who only joined name in the group work. These students did not prepared anything in the group work. The lecturer gave them group work in order to be able to monitor their work.

The conclusion of this research was the lecturers of ELED of a private university in Yogyakarta had some strategies to increase students' participation in classroom discussion. On the other hand, the lecturers also faced some difficulties when implementing the strategies.

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