Stimulating students to speak up through presentation in business English class

Lia Agustina

Politeknik Negeri Malang, Indonesia
 email: lia_alfan2d@yahoo.com

Abstract - Doing a presentation is not easy; it needs self-confidence, practice, and knowledge. Assigning students to have presentations would be a great practice for both in and outside the classroom; it is a skill of most people will need in the working field. Doing presentations in the English Foreign Language classroom would practice all language systems areas (vocabulary, grammar, discourse, and phonology) and skills (speaking, reading, writing and listening), it would build students' confidence, fluency, and knowledge of English.

The teacher-researcher used the Action Research Method (Kemmis and Taggart, 1989) to illustrate the process of planning, action, observation, and reflection that formed spiral moments. The purpose of the study was used to see the improvement of the students' self-confidence and the ability to speak up when performing a business meeting project. The subject was 32 students of the Accounting Department who were studying at the fourth semester in the year of 2016/2017. The result of the study showed that most students showed an improvement in all four language skills but the speaking skill had the greatest improvement. Most students seemed developed their motivation and participated in learning activities with interest and enjoyment.

Keywords: speaking stimulation, student interaction, presentation for
                    learning

1. Introduction

Doing a presentation in the classroom is a great way to have students practised all language systems areas (vocabulary, grammar, discourse, and phonology) and skills (speaking, reading, writing and listening). It builds students' confidence. Having a skill of doing presentations will need in the world of work. Presentation skills are useful both in and outside the classroom. After finishing an assignment, a presentation is a media for students to be delivered to others about what they have learned. It is also a chance to challenge and expand on a deeper understanding of the topic. In the world of work, a confident presenter is able to inform and persuade colleagues effectively.

In today's global era, mostly mutely companies, require the ability to communicate information and ideas in English in a wide variety of contexts and situations. So, it is important to be able to communicate formally with colleagues, clients and stakeholders in English which are having clear content and also good in presenting the structure. Hence, making effective presentations in English has become an invaluable skill which has already been the need for a business.

In line with the background of the study, the formulated research problem would be; "How could assign students to do a presentation stimulate students to speak up"?
In accordance with the problem of the study, this study directed to see the effective feedback obtained from doing a practice for presentation/presentations model that could stimulate students to speak up.

This study was conducted under the following assumptions. First, it was assumed that the practice of doing presentations was a crucial tool as the process to improve students' learning and achievement. Second, implementation of practicing doing presentations could stimulate students to speak up.

In the globalization process, English has been introduced in almost all aspects of life; including education. The main object of learning English as a foreign language (EFL) as students should be able to communicate effectively the language, which may help students to develop certain skills and abilities that will be demanded by their target goals. Therefore, researches reveal that students' ability to realize their goals in different situations depends largely on their communicative competence. Besides, it was argued that oral presentations, as a common feature of most course especially for undergraduate students at the university level, play significant roles in engaging the students cognitively and communicatively in the process of foreign language learning. However, it is observed that EFL students show poor achievement in using and controlling the foreign language in the classroom, which may be explained by the lack of their competence and confidence in that language.

Below are 10 Tips for giving a great presentation in English written by Alena Khabibullina posted by ILAC Foundation (retrieved 02 June 2018).

1. Think About the Details in Advance

Giving a presentation in front of an audience is always stressful. Thinking about such details as the location of the presentation, equipment, materials, timing, your appearance and outfit will help you avoid nervousness.

2. Do Your Homework

Effective preparation requires consideration of the following things:
• Ask yourself what the presentation is all about, its title and its goal
• Think about who your audience is
• Figure out what your main message is
• Think about the structure of the presentation: the opening, the main part, and the summary
• Make it easier for the audience and yourself: use simple language
• Prepare yourself for questions. Think about what questions the audience might ask
•Usually, an orator has a maximum of 15 minutes at present. So, make the presentation simple, have no more than 20 slides using a font that is legible from a distance
•Don't put large blocks of text in your presentation. No one will be interested in reading it; people prefer visual material. So, think about images, graphs, and videos that support your idea, but don't overwhelm audience with too many visual aids.

3. Introduce Yourself and Set the Theme

At the beginning of the presentation, it's important to introduce yourself, giving your full name, position, and a company you represent. Some people also include their contact information on the first slide. That's in case you want someone from the audience to contact you after your presentation. After the introduction, don't forget to state the topic of your presentation.

Useful phrases in English:

a)   Hello, ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming…
b)   The topic of today's meeting is…
c)   Let's get the ball rolling
d)   Shall we get started?

4. Provide an outline or agenda of your presentation

Providing an outline of the presentation is a must, as people want to know why they should listen to you. That's why the opening part is very important. It should be cheerful, interesting and catchy. You should know it by heart, so you don't lose track of your thoughts even if you are nervous.

Useful phrases in English:

a)   I'd like to give you a brief outline of my presentation…
b)   Here is the agenda for the meeting…
c)   My presentation consists of the following parts…
d)   The presentation is divided into four main sections…

5. Explanation When the Listeners Can Ask Questions

A Question & Answer period (Q&A) usually takes place at the end of the presentation, so you have enough time to deliver the main message of your speech without being interrupted by multiple questions. If you want the audience to ask questions during or after the presentation, say so.

Useful phrases in English:

a) There will be a Q&A session after the presentation

b) Please feel free to interrupt me if you have any questions

c) I will be happy to answer your questions at any time during the presentation

6. Make clear transition in between the parts of the presentation

Using transition words and phrases in English makes your presentation look smooth and easy to follow.

Useful phrases in English:

a) I'd like to move on to another part of the presentation…

b) Now I'd like to look at…

c) For instance…

d) In addition…

e) Moreover…

f) This leads me to the next point…

7. Wow Your Audience

If you are not excited by your presentation, your audience will not be excited either. When presenting, you should plan to wow your audience. Use adjectives and descriptive words as they will help to attract the audience's attention and make your speech more vivid and memorable.

Useful phrases in English:

a) The product I present is extraordinary.

b) It's a really cool device.

c) This video is awesome.

d) This is an outstanding example.

8. Make your data meaningful

If you need to present numbers or some comparative analysis of algorithms for integration, use some visuals to present it. You can use charts, graphs or diagrams to make your data meaningful and visually attractive. Remember that pie charts are good for representing proportions, line charts to represent trends, column and bar charts for ranking.

Useful phrases in English:

a)   Here are some facts and figures.

b)   The pie chart is divided into several parts.

c)   The numbers here have increased or gone up.

d)   The numbers change and go down (decrease).

e)   The numbers have remained stable.

9. Summarize

At the end of the presentation, briefly summarize the main points and ideas. Provide the audience with your opinion and give them a call to action, let them know what you want them to do with the information you've shared. End of the presentation by thanking all the listeners and inviting them to the Q&A.

Useful phrases in English:

a)   Let's summarize briefly what we've looked at…
b)   In conclusion…
c)   I'd like to recap…
d)   I'd like to sum up the main points…

10. Practice

Try rehearsing your presentation using the above tips. Practice in front of a mirror or with your friends, parents or spouse. The more you practice, the better. While practicing, try not to use crutch words (examples: uhhhhh, ahhhh, and so on, you know, like etc.). In general, the purpose of the study was to see the effective feedback obtained from doing a practice for presentations that could stimulate students to speak up.
      This study was expected to give contributions as follows:
a) the study would be used to see the effective feedback obtained from doing a practice for presentations that could stimulate students to speak up. b) theoretically, the result of the study could enrich teachers' knowledge of teaching English, c) the study positively impacted the observer and professional practices and effected on increasing students' performance
      The main object of learning English as a foreign language (EFL) is students should be able to communicate effectively the language, which may help students to develop certain skills and abilities that would be demanded by their target goals. Doing

oral presentations, play significant roles in engaging the students cognitively and communicatively in the process of foreign language learning.

2. Method

The chapter comprises the description of the research design; the subjects, the location, the instruments, the implementation of the methodology of action research. Thirty-two students of the second-year students in the fourth semester of the Accountancy Department-State Polytechnic of Malang 2016/2017 were the subjects of the study. The students have four hours (4 x 45 minutes) per week in the fourth semester.

The location of doing the research was at the English Laboratory at Accounting Department, Politeknik Negeri Malang. In order to be easier to monitor the implementation of the teaching and learning process in the classroom, some instruments were prepared. The first instrument was pre-test. It was used to inspect, to observe, to record and to judge the ability of the students. The second instrument was projected planning form or students' activities' sheets. It was used to record the students-activities during the process of doing the project. The third instrument was a weekly goal sheet; it was used to record the data weekly for the teacher. It contained written descriptions of what the observer heard, saw, experienced and thought when collecting the data during the teaching and learning process in the classroom. These were intended to anticipate the possibility of losing the relevant data during the implementation of the action. The fourth instruments were observation checklist 1 and checklist 2, which were used to record the data for the students' improvement. The last instrument was a questionnaire, which was used to see the students' opinion about the model implemented.

Lewin (in Kemmis and Taggart 1992: 8) described action research as proceeding in a spiral of steps, each of which was composed of planning, action and the evaluation of the result of the action. Kemmis and Taggart (1992: 11) defined planning as constructed action and by definition must be prospective to action-it must be forward-looking. It must be recognized that all social action was to some degree unpredictable and therefore somewhat risky. The general plan must be flexible enough to adapt to unforeseen effects and previously unrecognized constraints. While the action was deliberate and controlled-it was a careful and thoughtful variation of practice and was critically informed. Furthermore, they mentioned that observation had the function of documenting the effects of critically informed action and reflection recalls action as it had been recorded in observation, but it was also active.

The last step in a circle was a reflection. Reflection sought to make sense of processes, problems, issues, and constraints made manifest in strategic action. Action research is a dynamic process in which these four moments are to be understood as moments in the action research spiral of planning, action, observing and reflecting.

3. Results and Discussion

The purpose of doing the research was aimed to implement a strategy of doing presentations. It was used to improve the students' communicative competence. The obtained results from students' questionnaire and teachers' interview revealed that implementing the presentations was the ideal way through which EFL students could improve their communicative competence. The teachers insisted that through

implementing presentations in the classroom, the students could enlarge extent, improve communicative competence with the different components that contain; all language systems areas (vocabulary, grammar, discourse, and phonology) and skills (speaking, reading, writing and listening). It also builds students' confidence. Moreover, according to the students' responses, presentations help them to a wide extent in improving their communicative skills.

A teacher's role involves more than just standing in front of a classroom and teaching. Several roles can be assumed for teachers. Benseddik (2005: 23) describes them as "…assessor, organizer, prompter, participant and as a source". While Richards et al (1986) stressed more the roles of need analyst, counselor, and group manager. A successful teacher brings real and natural atmosphere in order to make the students enjoy the sessions. In this vein, Dobson (1992: 69) advocated that "Realia is not only good for stimulating conversation skills; it tends to make the session especially inexorable". It should be, the teachers have to encourage the students to practice their oral English and speak spontaneously by involving them in communicative tasks, as an old Chinese proverb says "Tell me and I forget, teach me and I remember, involve me and I learn".

Implementing the presentations model influence on the students' responsibility (Gibbs and Habeshaw, 1989: 37) stated that students learned well when they took responsibility for their learning. Thus, students' responsibility was an important factor that helped them to maintain their learning, and therefore developing their communicative competence.

It referred to the belief that a person has the ability to produce results, achieve goals or complete tasks proficiently (Dörnyei, 2005). Thus, developing students' oral communication skills based on self-confidence as the most essential factor that determines students' willingness to participate in oral activities in language classrooms. In other words, it was worth saying that where there is self-confidence there will be good communication, i.e.; it was thought that low confidence usually would tend to perform less successfully because they were concerned about being criticized or disapproved when using the language orally. The correlation between self-confidence and academic achievement was a dynamic one; as levels of self-confidence raised, academic achievement increased and this had a particular impact on the students' communicative competence.

Therefore, teachers needed to develop students' confidence within the teaching process. Speaking plays a vital role in the process of communication; it helps people express their ideas, thoughts, and feelings to others. Thus, providing students with an effective environment enables language speakers to speak fluently and interact freely with each other without anxiety.

4. Conclusion

It could be concluded that implementing presentations was an effective learning strategy, particularly because it promoted students-students interactions. Obviously, active learning cultivated multifaceted thinking procedures and developed maintenance, absorption, comprehension and appropriated used of course content. As a result, practicing presentations exercises must an experience offered to students in a broad diversity of university classrooms to introduce a new product released to the city public.

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