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The Impact of a Linguistic Theory of Humour in Teaching Speaking Skill

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Abstract

This research aim is to investigate the impact of humor in the speaking class and its' effectiveness to improve students 'speaking skill. A quantitative research design was used in this study. This investigation took place between March 5th and June 2nd, 2020. The participants in this study were fourth semester English Department students from Universitas Negeri Surabaya. This study gathered information and data through observation, questionnaires, and documentation. The results indicated that hilarious lectures had a substantial effect on the process of speaking acquisition. After incorporating linguistic theory of humor into their teaching and learning processes, the students' scores increased dramatically. The inclusion of humor in the speaking learning process not only improves their speaking skills, but also their presentation ability and communication capability.

Keywords: speaking skill; the impact of humor; English Linguistics

1. Introduction

Humor is a common element of human interaction and therefore cannot be separated from day-to-day communication. In the academic discipline's communication has been called the basis of grading the language teaching programs (Richards & Rodgers, 1986:10). Speaking then become the primary aim of language in this country since English has been used in various communicative purposes. Using jokes or humor is one of the learning strategy to teach speaking in an educational field. It is considered as the best method as the ability to speak English is a very complex task that not many students have the courage to speak and most likely they keep silent in a class. Padmadewi (1998) found out that students attending a speaking class often felt anxious and stress because they have to speak in front of the class and spontaneously talking about a certain topic in a limited time. Humor providing a relaxed and enjoyable classroom atmosphere. The application of humor in teaching speaking skill eases tension and anxiety that motivated students to speak more. It brings positive emotion that increase their self-esteem and motivated students to reach a better outcome of learning (Soares, 2015:24). Therefore, this study focus on how humor give positive outcomes to the speaking learning process by conducting an experimental research and analyzing students' questionnaire and score on speaking test.

2. Humor Concept

Philips (2007:3) claimed that humour is all linguistic act of the speaker which intended to make an amusement or mirth in the audience. In everyday life, humour appears in various forms of jokes, conversational humour, satire, and accidental humour. In the classroom humour comes in the form of amusement that made learning less serious and create fun experiences. Furthermore, Humour in various contexts of communication that occur in our environment helps improve interaction and communication between humans (Martin, 2007). The use of humour as a pedagogical strategy to assist pupils in developing their abilities is considered positively in the educational area. According to Dziegielewski et al., humour is an effective way to assist learning in an educational setting. Humour has been demonstrated to be effective at reducing anxiety, tension, boosting self-esteem, and increasing self-motivation. At the moment, teachers include humour into their classroom instruction through the use of jokes and humorous short stories, which are occasionally delivered via technology. Additionally, Minchew stated that teachers should employ strategies to make learning more enjoyable and that it is their responsibility to engage students in the learning process. He contends that humour may foster a positive learning environment, hence increasing learners' ability and inventiveness. Humour has become a new educational strategy. Numerous educators increasingly recognize the critical benefits of humour in the classroom. It humanizes the teacher, which relaxes the pupils, fosters an open and non-threatening learning environment, captures and maintains their attention, boosts retention of studied content, fosters critical thinking, and fosters divergent or creative thinking" (Morreall,

2008: 472). Teachers with a good sense of humour demonstrate that they have the willingness and spirit to appreciate their students' originality. On a related point, Crossman identified comedy as one of the most effective classroom tools because it lends a sense of vitality and sparkle to the classroom. Nowadays, comedy frequently contributes to positive educational environments. Humour fosters positive relationships between students and professors, alleviates tension and anxiety, and increases interest in classroom lectures; all of these factors contribute to successful learning. Humour is a crucial technique to utilize in classrooms since it promotes a different perspective and can capture the attention of an inattentive student. Humour helps students to feel relax and increase their attention to the study. Using humour in the classroom is a skill that only an expert and professional teacher can master. Teachers with extensive teaching experience are more amusing than those with little expertise, since they understand how to properly include and relate comedy into the course. Teachers with a strong sense of humour have a better developed schema of humour and a broader repertory of hilarious behavior (Martin, 2007 cited in Banas et al., 2011). Therefore, the use of humour in pedagogy believed to have many positive sides that help increase students' abilities. It is believed that humour in the classroom is a potentially powerful pedagogical strategy that should be applied in teaching learning process.

3. Speaking skills

Speaking skills define as the skills that give us the ability to communicate effectively. Speaking skill is considered basic yet must be mastered in order to be considered proficient in the language. Often people equate a person who speak English fluently with the mastery of the language. It is because the ability of speaking involves communicative ability that make the learners able to use the target language to communicate. It is an important part of everyday interaction and mostly sought skill for an individual to be accepted competent in a foreign language. Due to the critical relevance of speaking ability and communicative competence, a number of language and language acquisition specialists have expounded on the nature of this notion (e.g. Canale & Swain, 1980; Hymes, 1971). The interaction of grammatical, psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic, and probabilistic language components is central to Hymes's (1971) theory of communicative competence. Brown (2001: 168) continued by stating that speaking competency encompasses a variety of factors, including pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, and accuracy. The principles of the language must be mastered through speaking. Chomsky recognize that speaking involves three area of knowledge i.e. mechanic, functions, Pragmatics, Social and cultural rules and norms. Nunan in Brown (2001: 251) believes that spoken language is divided into two categories: monologue and conversation. When a speaker employs spoken language for an extended period of time, such as in speeches, lectures, readings, or news broadcasts, the listener must process lengthy segments of speech uninterrupted. While dialogues contain two or more speakers and can be classified as those that create interpersonal interactions (interpersonal) or those that are used to impart propositional or factual information (transactional). Therefore, teaching speaking skills is not only related with monotonous speech in front of the class, but also in terms of communication and interaction between two or more speakers.

4. Method

The experimental approach utilized in this study is a subset of a quantitative method. The current study involved 40 undergraduate students who were engaged in an Active Speaking class. They are divided into two groups: experimental and control. Students in the experimental group were provided with hilarious materials to assist them in their teaching learning process. By comparison, the control group pupils were not exposed to amusing materials. The two groups are supposed to be identical in all relevant respects and to differ only in the manner in which they provide educational treatment. Data sources for this study were two-fold: a form of questionnaire distributed in the classrooms and the speaking test materials performed during classroom observations. the results of the student scores and the questionnaire rubric were analyzed and presented in the form of table 1 and table 2.

5. Result and Discussion

The result of this study divided into two categories. Table 1 presents Students' speaking scores which were carried out during their teaching and learning process. Table 2 provides the result of distributions of the questionnaire indicating the cited benefits of humorous materials.

Table 1 The Percentage of Students' Speaking Score before the treatment

Classification	Score	Experimental Class		Control Class	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Very Good	4	-	-	-	-
Good	3	5	25 %	6	30 %
Fair	2	15	75 %	14	70 %
Poor	1	-	-	-	-
Very Poor	0	-	-	-	-
Total		20	100%	20	100%

The results depicted in table 1 illustrate that there is no significantly different between the students' speaking skill in experimental and control classes before treatment. They both have the similar basic capability in speaking fluency. 15 students (75%) got moderate score and 5 students (25%) got good score. While in control class, the score was also categorized in average category, based on the data from 20 respondents, 14 students (70%) got mean or average score and 6 students (30 %) got good score. Therefore, it can be concluded that both experimental and control classes were almost the same in the score acquisition.

Table 1.1 The Percentage of Students' Speaking Score after the treatment

Classification	Score	Experimental Class		Control Class	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Very Good	4	3	15%	-	-
Good	3	12	60 %	8	40 %
Fair	2	5	25%	12	60 %
Poor	1	-	-	-	-
Very Poor	0	-	-	-	-
Total		20	100%	20	100%

According to table 1, the results indicated that the students' speaking scores in the control group were significantly lower than those in the experimental group. The experimental class was taught with humor-based materials, while the control class was taught with a more conventional attitude. Following the introduction of this interferer, the majority of students in the experimental group scored higher than those in the control group. According to the data, three students (15%) received a very good grade, twelve students (60%) received a good grade, and five students (25%) received a fair grade. While eight students (40 percent) in the control group earned an excellent grade, twelve students (60 percent) earned an ordinary grade. Although both groups of students improved, the scores of the two groups were significantly different following treatment. Students enrolled in the experimental class demonstrate a considerable improvement in their speaking ability score. According to the data analysis, the score prior to the treatment was similar; however, after the application of humor materials in the speaking class, there was a considerable improvement in students' speaking ability. It demonstrated that the use of comedy benefited students, as evidenced by the rate of growth in the experimental group's score and students' positive attitudes toward the use of humor in the teaching-learning process.

Table 2. The Perception of Students toward Humor Application

Question 1: Explain how the use of humor contributes to your learning?
Easies the learning process
Reduce stress
Helps self esteem
Improves my English
Classes are more active
Question 2: Describe your experience with the use of humor as English learning strategies
Good strategy,
Playful and enjoyable
Helped me to get prepared for my presentation
Question 3: How has the use of humor improve your speaking ability?
Reduce anxiety and stress
Humorous expressions are easy to remember
Learn more English Entertainment and concentration
Improve spontaneous speech

The table demonstrated the students' favorable attitude about the use of funny elements in their speaking lesson. Among the most striking things cited were the usage of comedy act activities, the emphasis on having fun while learning and relieving stress,

and the emphasis on vocabulary expansion. In summary, this project enabled students to recognize the positive side of comedy, which aided in their English learning and communication ability.

6. Conclusion

As a result of this finding, the researcher concluded that using humor in the speaking class is highly beneficial. The students recognize that the incorporation of humor into the teaching-learning process pushed them to learn, aided them in improving their English proficiency, assisted them in overcoming anxiety and tension, and provided them with more confidence to speak in front of the class. Additionally, we can observe from the score findings that content-based comedy does have some beneficial benefits on students' speaking ability. Students who are relaxed and enjoying the session have a better chance of achieving a higher score on their speaking performance. Thus, the use of humor in teaching speaking is critical, since it enables students to develop not just their speaking skills, but also their communication ability.

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