

**IN SEARCH OF PROFESSIONAL TEACHERS: ENGLISH TEACHERS' PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS IN IMPLEMENTING COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH IN TEACHING SPEAKING SKILL AT JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL AND MADRASAH TSANAWIYAH IN KECAMATAN DANAU TELUK KOTA JAMBI IN JAMBI PROVINCE, INDONESIA**

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**Abstract**

*This research is conducted to answer the question: What are the teachers' problems and solutions in applying the communicative approach in teaching speaking?. The objective of this research is to see some problems and how they solve the arising problems' that faced by the teachers of English at SMPN3, SMPN 13 and Madrasah Tsanawiyah in Kecamatan Danau Teluk Seberang Kota Jambi in applying the communicative approach in teaching speaking. The design which utilized in this research is a survey research with quantitative data. The population of the research is the group of English teachers and the number of population are 6 teachers. The sample of this research are all the English teachers of the schools mentioned above (total sampling technique). To find the data of this study the researcher used questionnaire. The data were analyzed by using descriptive statistic (percentage). The research findings indicated that there were 4 prominent problems that were faced by the English teachers in implementing the communicative approach in teaching speaking like the following points. The first problem is a big class. The second problem is an inappropriate materials of lesson for the students ability. The third problem is lack of students motivation in learning English. The fourth problem is lack of students' linguistics knowledge ability (i.e vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, spelling.) The solutions are described as follows: (1) The teachers speak louder and give warning to students in a big class. (2) The teachers often change the instruction materials which are very difficult for students especially for speaking. (3) The teachers often ask the students to discuss in group of four or five. (4) The teachers gives students use interesting media in teaching English. Thus, it can be concluded that the English teachers often have several challenges in implementing communicative approach professionally.*

*Key words: Teachers' problem and solutions, Communicative approach.*

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The communicative approach actually has been known by the English teachers in Indonesia since the launching of the 1994 curriculum. It rose after the experts of language teaching suppose that the previous approaches were not able to create the English teaching atmosphere effectively and efficiently. Speaking skill, however is an important language skill beside the other three skills (reading, writing, and listening) because one of the main purposes of language learning is to enable the students to communicate orally in target language. It is realizing of the important roles of English right now . The objective of the communicative approach is the acquisition of communicative competence that the students are able to use the language appropriately to a given social context. Larsen and Freeman (1986:32). Speaking skill, however, is an important language skill beside teh other three skills (reading, writing, and listening) because one of the main purposes of language learning is to enable the students to communicate orally in target language.

The problems of course could appear. The teacher may have some difficulties to apply it. Big classes, limited times, lack of students' motivation in learning, can be prominent problems of the teachers. From this point of view, this research was conducted in order to see

the what problems are faced by the English teachers in applying the communicative approach in teaching speaking out and to find out an alternative solutions to overcome the problems.

The communicative approach is not only applied in teaching speaking, but also other three skills such as reading, listening and writing. Basically, there are many things can be studied through those three skills. The writer only focuses the discussion on the teachers' problems in applying the communicative approach in teaching speaking. This study is conducted at Junior High School and Madrasah Tsanawiyah in Kecamatan Danau Teluk Kota Jambi. The problems of this research are formulated into the following questions. (1) What problems do the English teachers have in applying the communicative approach in teaching speaking at Junior High School and Madrasah Tsanawiyah in Kecamatan danau Teluk Kota Jambi? (2) How do the teachers solve the arising problems in teaching Speaking? In addition, it is important to explain the objectives of the study as stated in the following points. The first aim of the study is to know clearly the English teachers' problems in applying communicative approach in teaching speaking. The second goal of the study is to know how they solve their problems wisely in teaching speaking class.

Most studies have meaningful expectation on the results of the studies themselves. This research is expected to have significances for the teachers as practitioners and institution as the resource of information. The research is expected to give information about some problems that the English teachers have in applying the communicative approach in teaching speaking. The solution given is hoped can give a contribution to the English teachers to minimize the problems. This solution can be contributed to the development of teaching English especially for the English teachers in Kecamatan Danau Teluk Kota Jambi.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The term approach, method, and technique have been bewildering variety terms. Fortunately, many linguists have attempted to sort out and make sense of this confusion. Anthony (1963:63-7) says that an approach is a set of correlative assumptions dealing with the nature of language teaching and learning. It describes the nature of subject matter to be taught. Method is an overall plan for the orderly presentation of language material, no part of which contradicts, and all of which is based upon, the selected approach. Within one approach, there can be many methods. A technique is implementational, that which actually takes place in a classroom. It is a particular trick, or contrivance used to accomplish an immediate objective. Technique must be consistent with a method, and therefore in harmony with an approach as well. The similar idea with the statement above is stated by Richard and Rodger (1986:15). They support Anthony's definition of an approach as a theory of the nature of language and of language learning.

Meanwhile the term method is substituted as design, which delineate as the specification of content as well as specification of the roles of teachers, learners, and materials. Finally, Richard and Rodger boarded Anthony's notion of technique into what they called procedure, which includes all of tactics, practice, exercise and activities in an instructional system. So, when we use the word "approach" it means that an idea or theory is being applied, that whatever the teacher does, certain theoretical principles are always born in mind. A method is a set of procedures or a collection of techniques used in a systematic way, which it is hoped will result in efficient learning. Finally "a technique", is a procedure used in the classroom.

The concept of communicative approach starts from a theory of language as a tool of communication. The goal of language teaching is to develop communicative competence. Richard (1985:22) emphasizes on the process of communicative rather than the mastery of the language forms (structural aspect of language). Furthermore Brumfit and Johnson K (1978:67) state clearly about the feature characteristic of the communicative approach as follows: (1). Focuses on language as a medium of communication. (2). The syllabus based on this communicative approach offered some communicative ability from early stage. (3) The classroom maximize opportunities for the learners to use target language in communicative way for meaningful activities. Emphasizes on meaning (messages they can create or task they completed) rather than form (correctness of language and structure) as in first language

acquisition. (4). Use of target language as normal medium for classroom management and instruction. (5). Communicative approach is much more student orientated, because dictated by students' needs and interests. (6). Classroom should provide opportunities for rehearsal of real-life situations and provide opportunity for real communication. Emphasis on creative role-plays, simulations, surveys, projects, playlets (all procedure spontaneity and improvisation – not just repetition and drills) (7). Primacy of oral work. Emphasis on oral and listening skills in the classroom. Contact time with language is all important. Not only just hearing the teacher but also have personal contact themselves with language, practising sounds themselves, permutating sentence patterns and getting chance to make mistakes and learn from doing so. (8). Errors are a natural part of learning language. Learners trying their best to use the language creatively and spontaneously are bound to make errors. Constant corrections is unnecessary and even counter-productive. Correction should be discreet or noted by the teacher. Let them talk and express themselves. Form of language becomes secondary. (9). Grammar can still be taught, but less systematically. (10) Use of idiomatic/everyday language (even slang language). (11). Makes use of topical items with pupils are already familiar in their own language. (12). Avoid age-old tects. (13) Communicative approach seeks to use authentic resources more interesting and motivating. In foreign language classroom authentic texts serve as partial substitute for community of native speaker. Newspaper and magazine articles, poems, manuals, recipes, telephone directories, videos, news bulletins, discussion programmes.

All can be exploited in variety of ways. The application of communicative approach in the classroom will be more effective if it is done naturally and without any pressure from the teacher. Here, the teacher should limit their attitude in order they are not focusing themselves on teacher-centered and supposed that they can motivate and encourage the students to be active.

In making the points, the teacher has no direct role in the communicative activities, of course, in which the teacher can take a part as a communicator. The teacher encourages students not to feel discouraged by making mistakes, because errors of forms are tolerated. Because, it seen as a natural outcome of the development of communicative skills. Another characteristics of communicative approach is the use of authentic materials. It is considered desirable to give students an opportunity to develop strategies for understanding language as it is actually used by the native speakers.

The authentic material will bring students into contact with language as it is, and help them using the new language authentically. So, providing the students with authentic materials, such as news paper articles, magazines, songs, advertisement or poem, will help the them to communicative in meaningful situation rather than for demonstrating knowledge or grammar. In terms of Learning and Teaching Activities, the range of exercise types and activities compatible with a communicative approach is unlimited. The learners through the processes as information sharing, negotiation of meaning and interaction. Classroom activities are often designed to focus on completing tasks that are mediated through language or involve negotiation of information and information of sharing.

Littlewood (1981:17) distinguishes between “functional communication activities” and “social interaction activities” as major activities types in communicative language teaching. For the learner roles, Breen and Candin (1980 : 110) describe that learner’s role within communicative approach is as described in the following point : The role of learner as negotiator-between the self, the learning process, and the object of learning-emerges from and interacts with the classroom procedures and activities which in group undertakes. the implication for the learner is that he/she should contribute as much as he/she gains, and thereby learn in an interdependent way.

Teacher’s roles in teaching and learning activities can be seen in the following description which is described by Breen and Candlin (1980). They point out that beside as a facilitator the teachers are also as needs analysts, conselors and class managers. (1) As a needs analyst, the teacher assumes a responsibility for determining and responding to learner language needs. (2). As a conselor, The teacher is expected to exemplify an effective communicator seeking to maimize the meshing of speaker intention and hearer interpretation , through the use of

paraphrase, confirmation, and feedback.(3).As a class manager, in communicative approach often require teachers to acquire less teacher-centered classroom as a setting for communication and communicative activities. W.S.Winkel (1996:137) claims that the differences those categories as follow.(1).Cognitive ,students intelligence rate and creativity ability.(2).Conative Dynamic, student's character, desire, motivation, attention and concentration.(3).Affective ,student's temperament, feeling,attitude and interest.(4).SensoricMotoric, student's ability of speaking, writing and draw a picture or made something.

In applying the communicative approach, the teachers use procedures. Finnochiaro and Brumfit (1983:107) claims that a lesson outline for teaching speaking that suggests the communicative language teaching procedures as follow.(1).presentation of brief dialogue or several mini dialogues, preceded by a motivation, and a discussion of the function and situation of people , roles, setting, topic and the informally or formality of the language which the function and situation demand.(2).Oral practice of each utterance of dialogue segment to be presented that day generally preceded by young model.(3).Question and answer based on the dialogue topics and situation itself.(4)Question and answer related to the student's personal experiences but centered round the dialogues theme.(5) Oral production activities preceding from guided to free communicative activities.(6) Copying of the dialogues or mini dialogues or modules if they are not in the class tet.(7) Sampling of written homework assignment, if given.(8) Evaluation of learning.

### 3. METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

The design of this research is a survey research with quantitative data. Fraenkel and Wallen (2008) explain that survey research is a study which tries to investigate the opinion of a large group of people about a special topic or issue. This research has characteristics that like the descriptions inthe following points: (1) The data are obtained from a group of respondents to describe some aspects or characteristics such as ability, opinion, attitude, beliefs and/or knowledge. (2) The data are collected through asking questions or questionnaires. (3) The information is collected from a sample rather than from every member of population. This survey research uses questionnaire to collect the data in order to answer the questions concerning on the current status subject of the study .Gay (2002:111). The population and sample of this study are only English teachers who teach at the same level of schools in Kecamatan Danau Teluk, Kota Jambi, in Jambi Province – Indonesia. Ary et al (2002:163) say that population is the total subject that would be research .The population is the English teachers at Junior High School and Madrasah Tsanawiyah in Kecamatan Danau Teluk Kota Jambi. Ary et al (2002:163) define that sample is a portion of population .Since they are only 6 teachers, the researcher decides to choose total sampling technique.

#### a. Procedure of Data Collection

The instrument used to collect the data in this research is questionnaire. The questionnaire uses closed question form which is included in questionnaire.The entire questions consists of 11questions. The questionnaire was given to the teachers to be filled out. Then the researcher collected the answers from the teachers or samples. The next process was that the data were analyzed.

#### b. Procedure of Data Analysis

The data which were taken from close questions were the quantitative data. The researcher used percentage formula to analyze the data (Arikunto, 1993: 176). Data analysis was divided into four categories in accordance with the aspects of problems in implementing communicative approach. For example, the categories are (1) big size of class, (2) lack of time allocation, (3) instructional materials, and (4) student's motivation in learning. Therefore, the findings of this study refer to each of the category mentioned above.

### 4. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

#### a. Finding

Codes (X) and (-) are used to differentiate the respondents' answers. The teachers who gave the agreement as stated in the answers' column were given (X) as its code, and the

teachers who did not agree the answer were given (-) as its code. Based on the teachers' experience, 50% of the teachers have been teaching English for more than 10 years. About 33.33% of the teachers have been teaching English from 5-10 years. Then only a very small percentage (16.67%) of the teachers have been teaching English for less than 5 years.

The teacher's problem and their ways to solve the problems that related to *the class size* can be seen in the following percentage. About (66.67% of teachers face 30-50 students per class. Then about 33.33% of teachers face more than 50 students per class. In other words, four teachers faced ideal total class members, whereas two teachers did not face ideal total class members. In addition,

teachers found many problems in the class, especially the problems in terms of classroom management. Particularly the problems that face by the teachers related to *the class size* are: teachers found difficulty to get the students attention, difficult to contact with the students at the back rows, the students difficult to ask for and receive individual attention, many students make a noise in the classroom and many other. Solving problem is the teacher speaks louder and gives warning to students worthily or wisely.

The teacher's problems and their ways to solve the problem related to *the time allocation* can be seen from the teacher does not have the time allocation. If the materials quite difficult they continue for the next meeting. Here the teachers complained that they felt that they did not have enough time to reach mastery learning. They expected that for the difficult materials, the time allocated in curriculum should be suitable with the level of materials difficulty.

The teachers' problems and their ways to solve the problems related to *the instructional materials*. The teachers or 83.33% of the teachers said that the materials provided in the compulsory textbooks are not appropriate used for their students. The topics is not suitable with the level of the students' ability. Solving this problem is done by four teachers or 66.67% of the teachers used the other materials. But one teacher or 16.67% of the teachers do nothing to overcome the problems.

The teacher's problems and their ways to solve the problems related to *the student's motivation in learning*. Majority of the teachers (83.33%) have the students with low motivation in learning English. Teachers who have students with high motivation just only 16.67% in learning English. Teacher's problems and their ways to solve the problems that related to the student's linguistic ability such as: ability in mastering vocabularies, grammar, pronunciation can be seen in the following statement. Structure also can be taught integratedly. At first, teacher review briefly the familiar language item, which will the students need in order to present, clarify and practice the new language item. The teachers give explanation or instruction, and ask the students to discuss about the material, and ask them to practice or doing exercise. The teachers who have the students that have problems with linguistics ability is 100%. The teachers tried to solve these problems by using particular way. For example, they combine the use of English and Indonesian. In other words, the teacher use bilingual procedure in teaching speaking skill. In pronunciation practice, the teacher may have the utterance repeated in chorus by the entire class. The teachers can use media to improve their interest and make the teaching and learning more meaningful.

#### **b. Discussion**

The major problems faced by the teachers in teaching speaking are classified as follows: (1) The teachers have to face big class, (2) The teachers find inappropriate instructional materials for the students' ability. (3) The teachers face the students who have lack of motivation. (4) The teachers face the students who have low ability in vocabulary and the use of grammatical rules (linguistics ability)

#### **The Class Size**

The first problem is caused by a big class. Relating to this problem, the teachers tried to minimize the problems in a large class in order to reach the instructional goal successfully. One of the ways done by the teacher for this problem is that the teachers tried to get the student's attention at the beginning of teaching activity by giving interesting and prospective direction or

orientation to the students. Other alternative way to solve the problem is that the teacher can use realia to make the students curious about the materials of lesson. The next way that can be done by the teachers to solve their problems is that the teachers ask the students to do pairs work, group presentation, and work play. So, they can decrease their nervous and can make them to share idea easily. In general, school in Kecamatan Danau Teluk, Kotamadya Jambi have bif classes. This reality, made the teachers are difficult to manage the class well.

### **The Materials**

Futhermore, teacher use other materials beside the materials they usually used. The teachers have to find the materials form social media or internet. In using the other materials, the teacher have to try to find the suitable materials from some sources such as from social media including internet. Those are relevant, understandable, interesting, exchange information rather than on the presentation of grammar. Brown (1995:15).

There are three strategies to get materials in teaching language Brown (1995:130). the first one is adopted. the teacher may adopt material form other sources and relevant and understandable to their students. The second is develop, the teachers may develop the exist materials in the tetbook. The third is adopting materials, includes all steps necessary in adopting them. Therefore, materials can be adopted and developed, or some combination of the three strategies.

### **The Student's motivation**

As the result of data collection, 83.33% of the English teachers have the students with low motivation in learning English. The teacher must realize that the application of the communicative approach is not as simple matter, especially when the students do not have motivation to express their idea in English and even tend to be passive. A good teacher is able to read their student's feeling in the classroom, because teacher can be a good motivator and facilitator for them. For example, when the students feel bored with the process in teaching and learning activities, the teacher should make fast decision to arrange and organize the activity. The teacher can design and vary the teaching by using various kind of communicative activity, such as dialogues, role-play, games, debate and many others. Here, the teacher is very important to convince their students that English is not a difficult subject and the teacher should have knowledge about the student's psychology, by trying to find out the cause of the student's problem whether if come from the teacher who disable to present the material correctly or from the students who find difficulties to understand the lesson easily. Actually, many various kinds of things that can cause the students tend to be unmotivated in learning. For example, the students' are bored. So, the teacher should force their idea how important English is in this era. Teachers give reward and stimulus for the students. To make them relax and comfortable the teachers may guide and give full attention to them.

### **The Students' ability in grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary**

The data shows that, most of the students faced difficulties in communicating in English because of their lack of vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Those are the major face of language learning and also the prominent factor influenced the successful in applying the communicative approach. In speaking class, the teacher also can teach grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation in language focus. In order to increase the students vocabulary, the teachers should explain the new word effectively by using the teaching aids, such as real object, pictures, and other media. Structure also can be taught integratedly. At first, teacher review briefly the familiar language item, which will the students need in order to present, clarify and practice the new language item. The teacher can give explanation or instruction by using structural is being discussed in a normal utterance and model or for several times. In pronunciation, the teacher may have the utterance repeated in chorus by the students. Giving the realia to develop their pronunciation practice, for example, teachers give them the assignment for listening the song or read a poem, and ask them to pronounce.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

After analyzing the data, the researcher draws several conclusions as follows:

Firstly, most English teachers (66.67%) should teach the big class and they complained that they found serious problem namely classroom management which brings effect to the success of teaching and learning activities.

Secondly, about 83.33% of teachers think that the instructional materials available in the text books are not suitable with the students' real ability, and the teachers changed the materials to less difficult ones.

Thirdly, it is a common problem for the students to have less motivation to learn English. Because of this the teachers found difficulties to rise students' willingness to learn English seriously. Teachers are required to give direction and orientation to the students professionally.

Fourthly, Most students did not have good mastery in grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. This condition makes teachers difficult to apply any kinds of approaches including communicative approach. Meanwhile this approach requires teachers to communicate orally in English to the students.

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