

IDEAS OF CARRYING OUT CHARACTER EDUCATION IN SPEAKING 1 CLASS

Putu Ayu Prabawati Sudana
Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha, Denpasar, Indonesia

Corresponding email : putuayuprabawati@yahoo.com

Abstrak

To be able to speak properly in one language, one probably only thinks about language expressions, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and intonation, that those five components are adequate to be mastered. Yet actually, we can never put aside some other aspects in speaking, such as the role, age or status of the interlocutor, the non verbal behavior which we perform and the setting in which we are speaking. Unfortunately, nowadays it seems that not all students are fully aware of those aspects. Sometimes their speaking style does not show respect to the people whom they talk to. Now to gain their awareness of those aspects and for them to be able to speak English correctly and properly based on the circumstance, some ideas can be carried out in class, namely giving examples of formal and casual conversations, giving a few language expressions for one function which range from the more formal until the less formal, giving cued conversations with different interlocutors and settings as exercise, giving exercise of identifying proper or polite expressions and correcting utterances, and exposing students with non verbal communication which may include knowledge of cross cultural understanding. In relation to character education, those ideas will contribute to the pillar of respect, that the students should respect the people who they talk with and this is manifested in their choice of verbal and non verbal expressions.

Keyword : language expression, circumstance, non verbal expression, character education, speaking

I. INTRODUCTION

In learning English, the mastery of speaking skills is often considered priority. Learners consequently evaluate their success in learning English and the effectiveness of the learning course on the basis of how well they can speak in English. In speaking course itself, the components which are learnt are commonly, language functions and expressions, vocabularies and correct pronunciation as well as intonation. By mastering those components, a learner will be able to speak well in English and the learning will hence be said as successful. However, in its real use, there are some other aspects which actually need to be taken into account in speaking, such as the roles of the speaker, age, sex, setting, and other things which then determine the degree of formality of the expressions used. The knowledge and awareness of these aspects will be very important for learners or speakers to speak not only with correct but also proper language, based on the circumstance. Unfortunately, nowadays it seems that not all students are fully aware of those aspects. I often receive short text messages from them which contain sentences which are not really proper to be addressed to their lecturer. In conversing directly as well, sometimes they do not use proper language expressions and do not perform proper non verbal behaviors. To gain more awareness of my students on these aspects in speaking, I tried to introduce them and make them practice these aspects in Speaking 1 Class. Speaking 1 class is one of the classes which my students study in the first semester. Hence, I think that this will be the best time for them to learn about manner in speaking. In relation to character education, this is closely related to the second pillar, which is respect. That the students should respect the people whom they talk with and it is manifested in their speaking styles and the non verbal behavior that they perform. Speaking styles reflect the roles, age, sex and status of participants in interactions and reflect the expression of politeness. To support this idea, the materials which I deliver in Speaking 1 class are language functions, language expressions, pronunciation, intonation and non verbal communication. For one

language function, more than one expression is introduced, based on the degree of formality. For non verbal behaviors, the students are asked to identify the non verbal behaviors accepted in their culture and some non verbal behaviors accepted in other cultures. In practicing in class, students are asked to perform conversations and make conversations with peers who take roles as interlocutors of different roles and status. By doing so, it is hoped that the students will perform not only correctly in terms of sentence structure, but also more properly based on the circumstance as well as perform with proper non verbal communication.

2. THE TEACHING OF SPEAKING

Richards (2009: 25-33) differentiates three different functions of speaking, namely talk as interaction, talk as transaction and talk as performance. They are further explained as follows:

1. Talk as interaction

This refers to interaction which serves a primarily social function. The main focus is more on the speakers and how they wish to present themselves to each other than on the message. When people meet, they often exchange greetings, engage in small talks, recount about their recent activities because they want to be friendly and create a comfortable interaction. The main features of talk as interaction can be summarized as follows:

- a. Has a primarily social function
- b. Reflects role relationship
- c. Maybe formal or casual
- d. Uses conversational conventions
- e. Reflects degrees of politeness
- f. Employs many generic words
- g. Uses conversational register
- h. Is jointly constructed. (Richard, 2009: 25).

Examples of these kinds of talks are:

- a. Chatting to an adjacent passenger during a train trip (polite conversation which does not seek for further social contact)
- b. Chatting with a classmate over coffee (casual conversation which marks an ongoing friendship)
- c. A student chatting to his/her professor while waiting for bus (polite conversation which reflects unequal power between them)
- d. Telling a friend about a recent weekend experience and in turn hearing him/her recount similar experience (sharing personal recount).

Some of the skills involved in using talk as interaction involve knowing how to do the following things:

- a. Opening and closing conversations
- b. Choosing topics
- c. Making small talks
- d. Recounting personal experiences
- e. Turn taking
- f. Interrupting
- g. Reacting to others.

2. Talk as transaction

This type of talk refers to situations where the focus is on what is said or done. The central focus is more on the message and on making oneself understood clearly and accurately, rather than the participants and how they interact socially with each other.

Examples of these kinds are:

- a. Classroom group discussions
- b. Discussing a sightseeing plans with a tour guide
- c. Making a telephone call to obtain information
- d. Asking someone for directions on the street
- e. Buying something in a shop
- f. Ordering food from a menu in a restaurant.

Burns in Richards (2009: 29) distinguishes between two different types of talk as transactional. The first type is situations where the focus is on giving and receiving information and where the participants focus primarily on what is said or achieved (e.g. asking someone for directions). The second type is transactions which focus on obtaining goods or services, such as ordering food in the restaurant.

The main features of talk as transactions are:

- a. Has a primarily information focus
- b. The main focus is on the message and not the participants
- c. Participants employ communication strategies to make themselves understood
- d. There may be frequent questions, repetitions, and comprehension checks
- e. There may be negotiation and digression
- f. Linguistic accuracy is not always important

Some of the skills involved in using talk for transactions are:

- a. Explaining a need or intention
- b. Describing something
- c. Asking questions
- d. Asking for clarification
- e. Confirming information
- f. Justifying an opinion
- g. Clarifying understanding
- h. Agreeing and disagreeing.

3. Talk as performance

This third type refers to public talk, that is, talk which transmits information before an audience such as presentations and speeches. This talk tends to be in the form of monologue rather than dialogue, often follows a recognizable format and is closer to written language than conversational language. The main features of talk as performance are:

- a. There is focus on message and audience
- b. It reflects predictable organization and sequencing
- c. Form and accuracy are important
- d. Language is more like written language
- e. It is often monologic.

Some of the skills involved in using talk as performance are:

- a. Using an appropriate format
- b. Presenting information in an appropriate sequence
- c. Maintaining audience engagement
- d. Using correct pronunciation and grammar
- e. Creating an effect on the audience
- f. Using appropriate vocabulary
- g. Using appropriate opening and closing

In Speaking 1 class which I conduct, the focus of the learning is on talk as interaction and talk as transactional. This is due to the level of the students, that the first semester students are usually beginners as well as their needs.

3. SPEAKING STYLES

In conversing, it is very important for a speaker to use a style of speaking that is appropriate to the circumstance. A speaker's style of speaking reflects the roles, age, sex and status of participants in interactions and reflects the expression of politeness (Richard, 2009: 23-24). For example, various ways of greeting;

- Hi
- What's up?
- Good morning.

A speaker has to identify who he/she is going to greet, may be in terms of age, status, the degree of formality of the context, before saying one of the language expressions for greeting above. In producing

a suitable style of speaking, there can be lexical, phonological and grammatical changes, as the following alternatives illustrate:

- He's the boss of the company/ He's the manager of the company (lexical)
- Whachadoin?/What are you doing (phonological)
- Eaten already?/Have you eaten already (syntactical).

Different speaking styles reflect perceptions of the social roles of the participants of the conversation. If the speakers are more or less of equal status, a casual speech style is usually more accepted. If the speakers are of uneven status, a more formal speech style is more commonly used.

4. Character Education and Its Importance

Started in 2010, the government of Indonesia through the Ministry of National Education gives instructions for schools to implement character education. The goal is to be able to educate students to be knowledgeable, skillful and have good character. This is due to the fact that moral crisis is a big problem that Indonesia faces at the moment, indicated by corruption, bullying, vandalism, ethnical conflicts, and many more bad behavior of the people. This makes people realize that in addition to knowledge and skills, good character is really needed in coping with life, and many people believe that education at schools plays an important role in implementing character education. Lickona in Alkind and Sweet (2009) defines character education as the deliberate effort to help people understand, care about, and act upon core ethical values. In accordance to this view, Zubaedi (2011: 14) states that in school, to carry out this character education, efforts from all components of school are needed, namely the content of the curriculum, the process of instruction, the quality of the relationship of the people and the handling of discipline. There are nine pillars of character education, namely responsibility, respect, fairness, courage, honesty, citizenship, self-discipline, caring and perseverance (Puslitbang Kemendiknas, 2011). The one that is highlighted in this paper is respect, particularly in speaking.

5. IDEAS ON CARRYING OUT CHARACTER EDUCATION IN SPEAKING 1 CLASS

The standard competency of speaking 1 is students are able to communicate using appropriate language expressions based on the circumstances in conversations fluently and accurately with proper non verbal expressions. Some teaching materials are used in class, such as the book *Speaking Naturally Communication Skills in American English* by Bruce Tillitt and Mary Newton Bruder which is published by Cambridge University Press in 1995, some print outs from the internet and self-written materials. Below are some ideas on carrying character education in speaking 1 class as I have implemented.

1. Giving examples of formal and casual conversations.

In every unit, it would be a good idea for the students to read given conversations. The conversations should be more than one, with characters of different status, roles, age or sex, hence the students can understand that they should identify who they talk to in determining their speaking styles. From the conversations, the students can also learn about the different language expressions used to talk to different people. Below are examples of conversation in the topic "Opening and Closing Conversation"

Conversation 1

John : Hi, Mark, how you doing?
 Mark : Hi John, good. How about you?
 John : Over to Jerry's. You?
 Mark : University library. Got some works to do.
 John : You should be hurry. It'll be closed in two hours.
 Mark : Yeah, See you then.
 John : See you.

Conversation 2

John : Good morning, Prof. Brown. May I come in?
 Prof. Brown : Good morning, John. Sure. Can I help you?
 John : Yes Professor. I need to ask when the final project for Poetry Class will due.

Prof. Brown : Just a moment, let me check my agenda. On Tuesday, John.
 John : Ok, thank you Professor.
 Prof. Brown : You are welcome, John.
 John : Excuse me.

2. Giving a few language expressions of one function which range from the more formal until the less formal. This will enrich students' repertoire of language expressions and will add their choices based on the circumstance of their conversation. Below is the example of a list of language expressions for opening and closing conversations.

Greetings

Responses

↑ More formal

Good morning Good morning
 How nice to see you
 What a pleasant surprise
 Hello, Rob
 How are you?
 Hi ,Bob
 How have you been?
 What's happening?
 What's new?
 How are you doing?
 How you doing?
 Long time no see

Yes, it's been quite a while

 Hello, Kat
 Fine, thanks. And you?
 Hi, Kathy
 Pretty good
 Not much
 Nothing
 Ok
 Not bad
 Yeah

↓ Less formal

Preclosing

Responses

↑ More formal

Well, I'm afraid I have to be going
 It's been a pleasure
 Thank you for the advice
 I really must go now (stronger)
 It was nice to see you
 Well, it's getting late
 Thanks for coming
 Got to go now

Thank you for coming
 Yes, I've enjoyed it
 My pleasure

 It was good to see you
 Maybe we can talk again
 It was fun
 Ok, see you

↓ Less formal

Closing

Responses

↑ More formal

Until the next time
 Good night, Bill
 Have a nice (evening)
 Talk to you later
 See you later

Good bye
 Good night, Jean
 You too
 Bye
 So long

↓ Less formal

(Tillit&Bruder, 1995: 6)

3. Giving cued conversations with different interlocutor and settings as exercise
 As exercise, the students can be asked to make conversations based on the cues given and do role play with the conversation later. They can be asked to make conversations with interlocutors of different roles and status and settings. This will demand them to use proper language expressions based on the circumstance. Below are the examples of the cues given.

- Cued dialogue

Direction: Read the situation below and make conversation based on it. Before that, think about the relationship of the speakers and the level of formality. Then practice in front of class.

Situation 1:

A

B

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. Greet A, expresses surprise | 1. Returns greeting |
| 2. Ask about B's family | 2. Answer and asks about A's job |
| 3. Replies and precloses | 3. Replies to preclosing and gives closing |
| 4. Closing | |

Situation 2:

Professor A and student B meet at the parking lot. Student B has a class to attend and is already late. But, he doesn't want to be rude to Professor A, who is very friendly and talkative this morning.

4. Giving exercise of identifying impolite and polite expressions or correcting utterances
Besides making and performing conversations, one exercise which can be executed in class is identifying polite and impolite expressions or correcting expressions into the polite forms. Below are the examples.

Exercise 1

Which of the expressions below would you use to ask for the time to a stranger at the bus stop?

- Got the time?
- What time is it?
- Can I bother you for the time?
- Do you have the time?
- Excuse me, do you have the time?

Exercise 2

Write better expressions for the following underlined utterances.

Dialogue 1 (Mark is a looking for Melinda Jones, his son's biology teacher)

Mark : Excuse me, are you Ms. Jones?

Melinda : Yes. What do you need?

Mark : I am Mark, David's father. Can I talk to you about David's Biology exam?

Dialogue 2 (at a restaurant besides a crowded street)

Mark : Can I have a cup of coffee and sandwich, please?

Waiter : What?

5. Exposing the students with non verbal communication (may include knowledge of cross cultural understanding)

Non verbal communication is behavior that creates and represents meaning. Some important non verbal communication which should be known by students are eye contact, distance in speaking, way of shaking hand, tone of voice and facial expressions. The students should understand the accepted non verbal communication in their culture and know also accepted non verbal communication in the culture of the English native speakers or other people that they will probably converse with. Non verbal communication is speaking without words. It can be very important even more than speech. Like for example: eye contact. The accepted rule in English speaking people, when two or more people are conversing, they should maintain eye contact, because it shows that they respect and pay attention to each other. No matter how strong one person says that he/she pays much attention to his/her interlocutor, if he/she does not look at the interlocutor's eyes, then no one will believe him/her. Another example is shaking hand. The students should be aware that the accepted rule for shaking hand for English speaking people is short and firm shaking hand, not limb or long and squeezing. The same thing happens to gestures. The students should be aware that one gesture can have different meanings in different countries or cultures. For example thumbs up can have a positive meaning in some countries, but in Nigeria is a rude insult.

6. CONCLUSION

To be able to speak in English well and properly, language accuracy is not the only lesson to learn. Students need also to consider other things, such as manner in speaking for which they have to consider the role, status or age of the people that they converse with. Besides that, they need to also pay attention on the non verbal communication that they perform in speaking. Learning in class should accommodate these aspects as well, so that the students will speak with correct language and proper manner. To achieve this, some ideas which can be carried out in Speaking Class are giving examples of formal and casual conversations, giving a few language expressions for one function which range from the more formal until the less formal, giving cued conversations with different interlocutors and settings as exercise, giving exercise of identifying proper or polite expressions and correcting utterances, and exposing students with non verbal communication which may include cross cultural understanding.

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