TEACHERS' COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITIES IN TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE (TEFL): A STUDY AT SMAN 9 BANDAR LAMPUNG

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ABSTRACT

The research aimed to find out the kinds of communicative activities implemented by English teachers in TEFL at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung and the dominant communicative activity of each English skill implemented by the teachers. This was a kind of descriptive quantitative research. The technique in collecting data was the direct observation of the English teachers in TEFL at the first, second and third years of SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung. There were three teachers as the sample of the research chosen by using purposive sampling technique. The researcher used the checklist by putting tallies to certain columns. There were 42 items in the checklist of communicative activities implemented by the teachers. The result of the research shows that there are 24 communicative activities implemented by the English teachers at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung. The research also reveals that the dominant communicative activity of each English skill implemented in TEFL at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung is teachers' asking the question in speaking, note-taking in listening, pre-question in reading, and making sentences in writing.

Keywords: TEFL, teachers' communicative activities, senior high school students

INTRODUCTION

The communicative approach in language teaching emphasizes the idea of effective communication between the teacher and the students that focus on language as a medium of communication (Banciu, 2012). This relates to the situation in which the classroom activities can maximize opportunities for learners to use the target language in a communicative way for meaningful activities. From this argument, it can be noted that in a communicative language teaching, the emphasis lies on the meaning or message the teacher and the students are creating rather than the form of the correctness of language and language structure.

English teachers can make the language learning effective by implementing communicative activities. To establish such condition, teachers can perform some activities which invite students to speak or communicate with others in the classroom. Regarding the way of establishing the communicative situation, Ahmad and Rao (2013) maintain that teachers in communicative classrooms will conduct 'talking less and listening more', and become active facilitators of their students' learning. The teachers' attitude in communicative activities actually can motivate students to get involved in the learning activity. Thus, the result of the learning activity will be better, and the student's motivation surely can improve the student's achievements.

As teaching English is a complex activity, not every teacher applies the same activities by implementing the same communicative activities. Therefore, the teacher has to be creative in creating a lesson through appropriate task, where students can be active and successful in pair and also group

work. Specifically, Trejo (2008) has proposed some task activities which refer to the types of communicative activities such as games, information gap, dialogues, situational practice, reading, and listening. The task activities will then serve as useful media whichcan stimulate students to interact and speak up in the classroom. Similarly, Caicedo (2015) has also agreed that games, situational practice, information gap, debate, dialogue, and small-group discussion are highly recommendedto be performed in the EFL (English as Foreign Language) classrooms. Briefly, the discussion on the types of task activities meets a conclusion that there are some specific techniques or devices for stimulating communicative proficiency such as questions-answers, dialogues, plays, and games.

The kinds of communicative activities that generally used by the English teacher are asking questions, pair/group discussion, dialogue, situational practice, game, reading, listening, information gap, picture discussion (Garber, 2008). Furthermore, language consists of four skills, namely speaking, listening, reading, writing, and some language elements are grammar and pronunciation. The language skills and language elements are presented through an integrated method. Therefore, in this research, the researcher only looks at the communicative approach of teaching because it is believed that language skills should not be presented separately. Here, the research includes the activities into four language skills; speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Based on the background, the research aims toinvestigate the teachers' communicative activities in TEFL (Teaching English as Foreign Language) at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung. Specifically, the discussion covers two research objectives. The research tries to find out the kinds of communicative activities implemented by the teachers in TEFL at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung.In addition, the research also aims to find out the dominant communicative activity of each English skill implemented by the teachers.

Concerning the previous research on communicative language teaching, there have been a number of studies which tried to find out teachers' communicative activitiesin EFL classrooms.For example, Chang (2011) in the research entitled *EFL Teachers' Attitudes toward Communicative Language Teaching in Taiwanese College* has maintained that the teachers hold favorable attitudes toward principles of CLT (Communicative Language Teaching) and display characteristics of CLT in their beliefs. Also, the results demonstrate that Taiwanese college English teachers believe CLT can make English teaching effective and meaningful. Phisutthangkoon (2012) in there search entitled The *Use of Communicative Activities to Develop English Speaking Ability of the First Year Diploma Vocational Students* has revealed a statistical difference between the students' score of their English speaking ability before and after learning through communicative activities. The implication drawn from the study is the effectiveness of teaching communicative activities to the students' speaking ability.

Vongxay (2013) in the research entitled *The implementation of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) in an English Department in a Lao Higher Educational Institution* has stated that the factors affect the implementation of CLT in the Lao context related to teachers' factors include emisconceptions of CLT, traditional grammar-based teaching approach, teachers' English proficiency, and lack of CLT training. Theissues raised from students include students' low English proficiency, students' learning styles and behaviours, and lack of motivation to develop communicative competence. Algonhaim (2014) in the research entitled *Saudi University Students' Perceptions and Attitudes towards Communicative and Non-Communicative Activities and their Relationship to Foreign Language Anxiety* has claimed that the students in non-English speaking countries make better use of communicative language teaching (CLT), if communicative activities and non-communicative activities are combined in English classrooms. In other words, aligning the communicative approach with traditional teaching structures is beneficial for EFL students.

From the discussion, it can be concluded that there is a similarity between the previous studies and this study in terms of using communicative activities in EFL classrooms. In spite of similarity, as

far as the researcher is concerned, this research offers a novelty which has not been discussed in the previous studies. Briefly, Chang (2011) and Algonhaim (2014) only focus on teachers' and students' attitude and perception toward the implementation of communicative activities in EFL classrooms. Meanwhile, this research focuses on finding out the kinds of the communicative activity implemented by teachers in TEFL. In contrary to the Phisutthangkoon's research (2012) that only analyzes the use of communicative activities in teaching speaking, this research analyzes the implementation of communicative activities in all language skills, i.e. speaking, reading, listening, and writing. Moreover, the difference of this study can also be seen from Vongxay's research (2013) which only focuses on factors hampering the implementation of communicative activities in EFL classrooms.

METHODS

This research uses a descriptive – quantitative method. According to Sugiyono (2013), the descriptive quantitative method involves collecting data in order to answer questions about the current status of the subject or topic of study. This method is used to investigate and describe the communicative activities implemented by the teachers quantitatively in the classroom. The data of the research are obtained by observing the TEFL classes and how many communicative activities applied in the teaching learning activity. In addition, the research aims to find out kinds of communicative activities that implemented by the teachers in TEFL and the dominant communicative activities implemented.

The population of this study is all the teachers of SMAN 9 Kota Bandar Lampung in 2015/2016 academic year. This study applies purposive sampling technique in choosing the sample of this research. There are three English teachers as the sample of the research, consisting of a man and two women. This research uses direct observation and checklist to get data from English teaching learning activity. The checklist contains the number of communicative activities in the English class based on National Curriculum 2006 for English skills. They are; (1) Speaking, in speaking, the activities include discussion, dialogue, simulation, situational practice, the teacher asks questions, students ask the question, retell. (2) Listening, in listening, the activities include no overt response, obeying instructions, ticking off items, true/false, detecting mistakes, cloze, guessing definitions, answering questions, note – taking, summarizing, long gap – filling, problem-solving, interpretation. (3) Reading, in reading, the activities include pre-question, do – it yourself questions, providing a title, summarizing, continuing and preface, gapped text, finding mistakes in the text, comparison, comprehension. (4) Writing, in writing, the activities include gap – filling, copying, editing, essay writing, responding to given information, rearranging, form completion.

The data are collected by using direct observation method. It means that the data are collected by observation and then the data are tabulated and evaluated (Sugiyono, 2013). The researcher conducts this technique because he wants to see the activities clearly so that he could evaluate the objects. It takes two meetings so that it could be representative enough to investigate kinds of communicative activities that used in the English classrooms. The data are recorded by putting out the tally (1) on a checklist based on the communicative activities, which are done by the teachers and the students in English learning activity. Every activity, which is implemented, would be given one tally in the column of the frequency of the activities of oral interaction.

In analyzing the data, the researcher follows the procedures as follows (1) The researcher observes the teaching-learning activities that is going on in the classroom. The aims are to find out whether teaching activities in the classroom applies communicative activities or not. (2) The researcher takes the score from the number of the communicative activities that are applied in teaching learning activities. Researcher uses the format of observation if the students – teachers' interaction in

the classroom apply communicative activities. The researcher put tally in the frequency column. (3) The researcher tabulates and finds out the percentage of activities. To know percentage of the communicative activities used by the teachers in the classroom, the researcher uses the formula proposed by Sudjana (2013) as follows:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \quad \text{x 100 \%} \tag{1}$$

Where:
P = The score which is found in percentage.
F = Total of students – teacher interaction that apply communicative activities.
N = Total number of kinds of communicative activities implemented.

Having got the result of analysis of each step of activities, the researcher makes a conclusion for answering the research problem. The conclusion covers two research objectives, i.e. finding out the teachers' communicative activities in TEFL at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung and the dominant activity performed by the teachers in each language skill.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This part describes the research findings drawn in the results and discussion of the observation to the teachers' communicative activities in TEFL at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung. In this stage, the findings are analyzed by simple statistic percentage and described in the discussion. Based on the data analysis, the researcher finds out some kinds of communicative activities that implemented by English teachers in TEFL at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung as shown on the below Table.

Table The Kinds of Communicative Activities in TEFL

Skills	Activities	F(1st ob)	F(2nd ob)	Precentage (%) 1st ob	Precentage (%) 2nd ob
S	The teacher asks questions	108	112	56,25%	56,57%
P	Dialogue	4	4	2,08%	2,02%
E	Situational Practice	2	1	1,04%	1,01%
A	Retelling	1	1	0,52%	0,50%
K	Discussion	3	3	1,56%	1,52%
I	Translating Indonesian	12	10	6,25%	5,06%
N	sentences into English				
G					
L	No overt response	6	5	3,13%	2,53%
I	True/false	1	1	0,52%	0,50%
S	Answering questions	1	1	0,52%	0,50%
T	Note – taking	7	10	3,65%	5,05%
E	Summarizing	1	1	0,52%	0,50%
N					
I					
N					
G					

Table The Kinds of Communicative Activities in TEFL (Continued)

Skills	Activities	F(1st ob)	F(2nd ob)	Precentage (%) 1st ob	Precentage (%) 2nd ob
R	Pre-question	10	12	5,21%	6,06%
E	Skimming and scanning	5	6	2,61%	3,03%
A	True/false	2	2	1,04%	1,01%
D	Answering questions	3	3	1,56%	1,52%
I	Cloze	3	3	1,56%	1,52%
N	Summarizing	1	1	0,52%	0,50%
G	Looking for synonym in the text	1	1	0,52%	0,50%
W	Copying	3	4	1,56%	2,02%
R	Gap – filling	1	1	0,52%	0,50%
I	Rearranging	2	2	1,04%	1,01%
T	Making sentences	13	11	6,78%	5,56%
I	Writing essay	1	1	0,52%	0,50%
N					
G					
	Puzzle	1	1	0,52%	0,50%
	Total	192	198	100%	100%

As stated by Banciu (2012), the communicative approach in language teaching emphasizes the idea of effective communication between the teacher and the students and focuses on language as a medium of communication. This relates to the situation in which the classroom activities can maximize opportunities for learners to use the target language in a communicative way for meaningful activities. The findings of the research are in accordance with Bancius's statement concerning the opportunities for the students to use the target language in communicative language teaching. Table 1 shows the data that there are 24 teachers' communicative activities in TEFL at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung. All activities are directed to provide students' opportunity to be actively involved in the teaching-learning process. The communicative activities include 6 activities in speaking, 5 activities in listening, 7 activities in reading, 5 activities in writing and added with language game; puzzle. There are two activities outside the checklist provided; they are translating Indonesian sentences into English orally in speaking and finding the synonym in the text in reading.

Based on data analysis from two observations, it can be noted that the dominant classroom activities performed by the teachers are the teachers' asking questions (56,41%) in speaking, note-taking (4,35%) in listening, pre-question (5,63%) in reading, and making sentences (6,17%) in writing. From the observation, the researcher finds that the teachers' asking question activity included personal and imperative questions and question set of the materials. The teacher asked questions from beginning of the lesson until the end. The teachers also asked questions mostly in the middle, the so-called question sets of material.

In performing note-taking, the teachers explain the material and the students take note whatever they consider as important things. The students also take a note when the teachers check the students' answers and the students improve their fault in their work. Note taking also includes dictation. For example, the teacher mentions some sentences orally and the students write on their notebook. After that, the students and the teacher check it together. The activity of pre-question is performed by the teachers by giving a text to the students. The teacher gives some questions about the text generally in order to prepare the students to read the text. The questions are also provided with the picture in the textbook. The teachers' question set is from the textbook or by themselves. The use of pre–questions is very crucial to be given before reading in order to give motivation to the students to find out answers or information that are asked, but they do not know them before reading the text.

Making sentences are also frequently performed by the teachers in writing. This activity is done to apply the students' new vocabulary through making the sentences. After the teacher teaches new vocabulary and students have known its meaning, they make the sentences. Besides, making sentences activity also happens if the teacher teaches structure and language focus. The students are asked to make the sentences by their own based on examples given and teachers' explanation. The table also includes language game, puzzle. Particularly, language game is the puzzle, not language skill, but on the table, it is also included in Skill column. A language game is not grouped into certain skills because the language game is intermezzo in language teaching process to spend time remaining.

Regarding the teacher's role in creating communicative activities, Chang (2011) has maintained that the teachers hold favorable attitudes toward principles of CLT and display characteristics of CLT in their beliefs. This attitude can make English teaching effective and meaningful. In TEFL at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung, all activities that are implemented by the English teachers are easy to do. Almost all of the activities are stated in the textbook or the teachers only develop the material from the textbook, except no overt response because in doing the activity the researcher must be rich in making jokes, songs, stories and anecdotes. The asking questions activity is the dominant activity because it is the easiest one to do. The teacher can use this activity when they teach on whatever topic. It is also implemented to motivate students to pay more attention to the lesson and make the classroom condition more interactive. The dominance of asking question activity among other communicative activities often happens because through asking questions; the teacher can motivate students to speak up.

This is in line with the argument that pointed out by Phisutthangkoon (2012). It has stated that the speaking is the most important language skill and as the target of learning a language for communication. The students look enthusiastic to answer teachers' questions although they often lack the vocabulary, so they could not say how to answer in English, but they know the question's meaning. In this case, the teachers hold a particular role to help the students on how to answer their questions in English besides reminding the vocabulary to the students. Moreover, the teacher also does other activities in speaking skill. From the Table, it can be seen that speaking is the dominant language skill used by the teacher in teaching English.

There are 10 activities rarely done (0,52%) as can be seen in the previous Table. They only happen once, from two observations to three English teachers. Among those activities, there is language game, puzzle. It is an interesting game, and the students are interested in following this activity. A game is very important to reduce stress so that the students and the teachers can relax for a while and the students can also increase their vocabulary. From 42 activities involving speaking, listening, reading, writing, and language games, 22 activities used by the teachers and two activities outside the checklist. They are translating Indonesian sentences into English orally and looking for the synonym in the text. Therefore, there are 24 communicative activities used by the English teachers at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung. Most activities are based on the lesson plan that available in the textbook. The teachers only follow the task from the textbook. Particularly in teaching reading, the teachers use the text unfamiliar with students, such as Botanical Garden because there is not a Botanical Garden in Bandar Lampung and might be only a few of students have gone there. In other words, there are a few activities used by the teachers in teaching. Actually, they could create some activities.

Although the English teachers use a few activities in each meeting, they always try to convey the materials as maximum as possible so that the students get input as much as possible and understand about the lesson. The teachers also have selected good books based on the teaching and learning need. They have chosen the book based on the communicative competence that has communicative activities and has integrated skills in the tasks. They are also often integrated the certain tasks with some language skills.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research's findings, it is known that some kinds of communicative activities were implemented by the English teachers in TEFL at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung. They are asking questions, making sentences, translating Indonesian sentences into English, pre – questions, note – taking, no overt response, skimming and scanning, situational practice, discussion, answering questions in reading, cloze, copying, retelling, true/false in reading, rearranging, discussion, true/false in listening, answering questions in listening, summarizing in listening, summarizing in reading, looking for synonym from the text, gap – filling, writing essay, and puzzle. In addition, the dominant communicative activity of each English skill implemented by the English teachers at SMAN 9 Bandar Lampung is teachers' asking the question in speaking, note-taking in listening, pre-question in reading, and making sentences in writing. Among those dominant activities, the asking questions place the highest rank. The asking question activities were mostly performed in the middle of the lesson as the question set of material. The teacher asks questions in order to motivate the students to speak up.

Based on the data analysis, the implementation of communicative activities gives some positive effects to the students in the teaching-learning process. In response to the research results, the researcher offers some suggestions as follows; (1) The English teachers may create some activities by themselves based on the material given, (2) The English teachers have to select the appropriate textbooks and activities in the textbook, (3) The authors may make many communicative activities in the textbook, (4) The other researchers who are interested in this topic can choose other Senior High Schools as sample and use video camera when observing to take data in the class accurately. Besides, the researcher also suggests to find out how far those activities can establish the students' achievement to the materials.

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