PREPARING THE STUDENTS TO BE THE CHAMPION IN SPEECH CONTEST

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Abstract: In today's world of education, a teacher's role is quite multifaceted. Aside from the primary role of lesson planning and classroom instruction, the teacher is also taking on the role in preparing the students to become the champions in every contest they participate in. However, most of students do not master the competence and they always fail in the contest. In response to such condition, the writer applied project based learning (PBL) to develop their competence. In this activity, the teacher asked the students to design and implement certain projects through which they developed their oral English. The result indicated that PBL could develop their competence in delivering speech. It is relevant with the theory stating that PBL challenges the students to perform at the highest levels of competence, requiring them to think critically, creatively, and collaboratively; develop competencies; access the knowledge; develop oral and written communication skills in target language; design products and performances; assess their own learning; develop as a self-directed, independent and interdependent learner; and integrate technology meaningfully (Thomas, 2000: b). The meaningful point in the practice is not on the projects themselves, but on the exposures and practices of English. It is in line with the theory of language input, communicative competence, and behaviorism. Based on the implementation of PBL, there are satisfying achievements in English contest that can be gained by the students. Accordingly, the teachers are recommended to design appropriate strategies to help students get accomplishment based on their talents.

Keywords: champion, speech contest, project based learning (PBL)

Introduction
Becoming a winner in speech contest is one of students’ targets in joining the contest through which they show expertise in public speaking. By winning every contest which they participated in, the students have featured themselves as champions. It makes them feel proud and high self-confident, even their teachers and parents do too. Besides, it makes the institution become more popular and improve the standard of the school in the society. Consequently, aside from teaching in the classroom, the teacher is also responsible for taking the role in guiding the students to develop their public speaking competence to get the success, becoming the champion.

However, the fact shows that there are many students having learned English and joined an English club at school, they cannot master public speaking competence. When they follow a speech contest, they cannot win it although their teacher has guided, trained, and prepared them well in material, emotionally, and spiritually. Furthermore, they are always motivated and sent to take part in the contest, facilitated, and even accompanied by the teacher in order that they get the best. Unfortunately, they still cannot be the winners. They fail again to become the champion.

The condition above is experienced by students and teachers at MAN Karanganyar. The students are sent to participate in speech contest held by private and formal institution but they always fail. Since the writer teaches at MAN Karanganyar, she has guided students to follow speech contest three times however she never get her ideal accomplished. The students have never won the speech contest. Seeing the condition, the writer triggers her interest to do different action to make her dream become true, that is making the students to become the champion in speech contest.

Based on the background, it can be formulated that the problem the writer encounters is that MAN Karanganyar students never win speech contest in the period 1994-2010.

In the effort to overcome the problem, the writer has chosen an effective and appropriate strategy to develop students’ public speaking competence and accomplish a champion. She applies project based learning (PBL). It is a teaching and learning model that emphasizes student-centered instruction by assigning projects of delivering persuasive speech. The projects culminates in an event of contest that is carried out at the end of semester test where students have vacant weeks for class meeting.

The Implementation of PBL to Overcome the Problem
The writer chooses PBL to overcome the problem because PBL can develop students’ public speaking competence effectively. This is due to the characteristics of PBL that enhance students to work more
autonomously to construct their own learning, and culminates in realistic, student-generated various products by utilizing technology to facilitate the project. More specifically, PBL focuses on students’ autonomy, the use of meaningful and authentic material, collaborative and critical thinking, the use of technology, the use of target language (English) in written and oral skills, final product, and presentation of product (Morsound, 2002: 5).

In generating students to be a champion in speech contest, the writer applies modified procedures of PBL that covers five steps (Harfield, 2003: 44), as the followings:

**Step 1: Setting the Stage with Real-Life Examples**

The teacher-coach sets the stage for students with real-life samples of the projects in delivering speech they will be doing. She also guides the students to begin an in-depth investigation by considering the causes of the former failure. She takes a real-world topic and prepares topics for persuasive speeches. It is based on an authentic situation or topic in the classroom. The students brainstorm their own topics for the speeches. The first topic which has been decided is “The pro and contra of using mobile phone at school”. The other topics for different exercises include: the controversy of giving money to the beggars, and the effects of watching TV for children.

**Step 2: Design a Plan for the Project**

Having the goal in mind, the teacher assigns the students. She explains that they must have a forum for speech contest or competition at the end of the project. The students take on the role of project designers, establishing a forum for contest and competition. Every student must take part in the class competition, and each group of three to five students is to be representatives competing with other groups of different classes to win the speech contest. The design of competition is made collaboratively so that the students have high sense of belonging to the project. The design includes the rules and scoring rubric, the aspects to be judged, the choice of activity by integrating all possible subjects supporting the program, and the learning aids that are useful to finish the project. The teacher also provides rewards for the active students and for the winners in each step of activity. They become motivated and enthusiastic in doing activity.

**Step 3: Create a Schedule**

The students are guided collaboratively to create the schedule in finishing the project. The activities includes: preparing timeline, deciding deadline, deciding the procedures, guiding the students to find new design, and asking the students to explain their reason for the decision. Every student must prepare students’ diary to write whatever happens during the implementation of the project. It trains them make records and documents of all happenings. By so doing, the students learns to use high level of thinking so that the can gain knowledge through the experience in real life.

**Step 3: Monitor the Students and the Progress of the Project**

The teacher is responsible to monitor the students’ activities in finishing the project of designing a speech contest. Monitoring is done by facilitating the students in their overall activities. It can be said that the teacher serves as the mentor of the students’ activities. In this step the students act out their project individually and in group. They practices making persuasive speech related to the topic. They learn how to demonstrate the appropriate classroom public speaking, define the elements of persuasion, recognize the elements of personal credibility, develop methods to analyze other students' speeches, understand outlining main ideas, and create a persuasive speech. After that they learn the speech by heart and practice it in the group. They also practice how to conduct a speech contest followed the participants of the invited schools represented by the groups. This step can be done repeatedly by having different topics (Gray, 1991: 30). In this step, the target language (English) is applied and used all the time. It is supposed that the students can do repetition or exposures in the language practice so that they can get the improvements in all aspect of public speaking competence.

**Step 4: Assess the Outcome**

The assessment to the outcome is done to measure whether the project is achievable. The assessment is applied to individual and group presentations. The first is done to select the best individual, and the later is done to prepare the representatives to compete with other students from different classes. It is done to know the development of students’ competence and get input to plan the next program. The class assesses each speaker’s performance in terms of voice, body coordination, and in terms of persuasiveness, besides speaking aspects. Each class can develop performance assessments such as rubrics to facilitate this process.

**Step 5: Evaluate the Experience**

At the end of the project, the students discuss what they enjoy about working in pairs or small groups, and how one student's idea will spawn another student's idea. They discuss what they like about the materials
and what they find to be frustrating. Students share their reflections to note what they have in common and what is special to each pair or to each individual personally. They review the criteria of assessment and discuss how well they meet them. The teacher asks the students to have discussion talking their works so that they find new inquiry to overcome the problem.

The setting of the project implementation is at MAN Karanganyar Jl. Ngalian No 04 Karanganyar, phone (0271) 495085, post code 57714. It was done from July to December 2010. The subject of the project is 36 students, 11 males and 25 females. They are all in grade X 1.

The Impacts of Project Implementation

Having applied PBL, the teacher finds many positive impacts as the following:

1. Students’ interest and motivation to learn English improves so that their speaking competence improves significantly. It is indicated by their English scores at final semesters.
2. Students have higher self-confidence to speak English so that they are ready and motivated to join the English contest.
3. The students master materials and techniques in delivering speech because they are exposed to repetitive exercise enhancing them learn by heart.
4. In one year, MAN Karanganyar wins 8 English contests as stated at table 1.

Table 1: Students’ Achievement in English Contest in 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Name of Students</th>
<th>Achievement</th>
<th>Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dyah Retno Septiyani</td>
<td>Winner I of Speech Contest</td>
<td>Province</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sri Hartati</td>
<td>Winner I of Speech Contest</td>
<td>Regency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rusyidatun Fatonah</td>
<td>Winner I of Story Telling</td>
<td>Regency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Muhammad Ridwan</td>
<td>Winner II of Story Telling</td>
<td>Regency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bambang Priyanto</td>
<td>Winner I of Speech Contest</td>
<td>Regency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Nur Wulan Agustin</td>
<td>Runner Up of Writing Contest</td>
<td>National/KGI AUSAID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Annisa</td>
<td>Runner Up of Writing Contest</td>
<td>National/KGI AUSAID</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Anggit Tri Maulan</td>
<td>Winner I of Speech Contest</td>
<td>Regency and Province</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. The group of English students are invited to present English performance in the Hajj Boardinghouse in Donohudan Solo in 2012
6. The English teacher also wins some contests in writing scientific works.

The most important point in the practice is not on the projects themselves, but on the exposures and practices of English. It is in line with the theory of language input (Krashen, 1994), communicative competence (Hymes, 1972), and behaviorism (Skinner, 1991). First, it is said the primary importance on the comprehensible input is exposure. Understanding spoken and written language input is seen as the only mechanism that results in the increase of underlying linguistic competence. Second, the idea behind communicative competence is that the ways in which people communicate can be analyzed and considered with regard to effectiveness. Someone is often considered competent, at least on a surface level, if he or she can talk to someone else in a way that is appropriate and which conveys meaning in an accurate way. Finally, behaviorism theory on operant conditioning states that learning occurs through rewards and punishments for behavior. Through operant conditioning, an association is made between a behavior and a consequence for that behavior.

Based on the implementation of PBL, there are satisfying achievements that can be gained by the students and it automatically can improve the learning quality.

Despite having the positive effects, there are some factors handicapping the program, namely: (1) the difference level of students’ interest and talent. Not all students show good progress so that the steps cannot run smoothly; (2) the limitation of learning aids. Only three students have laptop so that they find it difficult to find reference in the internet and do the project; (3) the overload schedule at school. The schedule of doing the project is after the class, so it coincides with the activity of scouting and other extra lessons. Fortunately, the English teacher and the headmaster support the program by changing the schedule based on the condition.

Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that the implementation of PBL can overcome the problem that MAN Karanganyar have never won speech contest. By so doing, PBL can make the students to become the champion in speech contest and other English Contests. Besides that, it improves students’ interest and motivation, and standard of the class in the society. It is suggested that all teachers develop students’ competence through possible strategies to facilitate students establishing their ideals.
Bibliography


