MODERN ART: INTEGRATING SOCIO-AFFECTIVE STRATEGY TO ENHANCE INDONESIAN AND THAI STUDENTS' INTERACTION IN THE CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

There were some obstacles which happened in my Writing 1 classses due to the languages that were being used for communication, and my Indonesian and Thai Students' were not communicative to interact in the classroom. In this paper, I propose the integratation of socio-affective strategy to boost my Indonesian and Thai Students' interaction that can be facilitated by using modert art. Modern art has several interesting points namely it may display the real-world activities, use communicative language, foster persuasive communication, facilitate student to use their socio-affective strategy, and provide integrated skills.

Key words: Socio-affective Strategy, Classroom Interaction, Modern Art

INTRODUCTION

First year of academic study in a university can be very frustrated for new students. They have to manage their schedules. Furthermore, they need to join new classes which consist of new friends. These new friends tend to have different preferences, attitudes, and motivation. Thus they need to build their sense of interaction

among them because many lecturers probably provide some group projects. In addition, they struggle to meet a nice smoothly communication which requires them to interact each other. However, many universities or institutions use on-line administrative matters to be used by students to arrange their academic course. This system offers them to choose freely lessons, lecturers, venue and time allocation. Consequently, they may have different friends each semester. As a result, they always try to struggle in maintaining communication and interaction among them.

Sustaining communication might raise some conflict of personal needs in classroom interaction. I have several students come from Thailand, and they have beginner level of competence in using *Bahasa Indonesia* and English. However, I have majority Indonesian students that have various levels of English competence in my class. The problem that I had when I taught them was the language which was being used for communication. My Thai students faced some problems to recognize vocabulary, pronunciation, spelling of both Bahasa Indonesia and English. In addition, they also bit difficult to interact with their Indonesian friends because they did not want to leave the cage; they always sat and talked to their Thai friends in the classroom. On the other hand, only minority of my Indonesian students also talked to their Thai friends.

From the above obstacles that I had, I tried to focus on fixing their communication in the classroom first. Thus in this paper, I illustrate how to integate socio-affective strategy to enhance Indonesian and Thai students' interaction in the classroom.

DISCUSSION

Learning English can be seperated in term of specific skills which are commonly recognize as writing, speaking, listening, and reading. However, mastering English is not merely only capable to use the four skills seperately, but also integrate them. Furthermore, it is unuseful to learn English in isolated situation because students need to experience the usage of the language. Experiencing the language is demanded by students because the four skills can be easily used by them. As it is also promoted by DeRolf (1996: 6)

In conclusion, it has become apparent to me that more than teaching methods or curriculum, a language must be experienced. This does not mean that grammar, reading, writing, and speaking do not all need to be taught, but it means that along with these skills the language must be experienced before it can become a part of a person's being. In order for a person to be truly skilled in a language it must become a part of his or her being or in other words, a person must live the language.

Thus teachers are suggested to provide real-world activities which are brought to the classroom. The real-world activities can be best displayed the real life communication. Variuos situations of communication which expect students to interact in the classroom have to consider sociolinguistic competence. After all, most students do not study English just for linguistic competence. They will also want to develop sociolinguistic competence for communicating in different situations in English speaking countries, and this includes the classroom (Snell, 1999:5). Consequently, creating a real-world activities can show how the langauge is used and maintained because communication is not only mastering linguistic competence, but also promoting and developing sociolinguistic competence. However, teachers sometime do not realize that sociolinguistic competence is also another important factor to be addressed in classroom interaction. Thus the real-world activities need to be captured in classroom interaction because students may reduce their tension and anxiety.

Anxious students are also a problem in English classroom. This stereotype problem happens all the times because of two factors. It is qouted by Goh and Silver (2004:191), Young (1991) states that sources of their anxiety are both internal and external, relating to beliefs about themselves, what other people (peer and teachers) think, the language learning and assessment process and classroom procedures. It can be generated that anxious students experience two side-effects of learning English. Firstly, they do not have enough confident to show that they are able to use English, and they also afraid of someone's perception about them. Secondly, they have difficulties to follow the requirements of the learning activities because teachers may use different teaching method. Moreover,

they need to conduct assessment process which includes formative and summative test. Then they also need to meet the classroom procedure. Because of these factors, they probably reduce their motivation to learn English. Furthermore, because anxious or alienated students are unlikely to develop motivation to learn, it is important that learning occurs within a relaxed and supportive atmosphere (Good and Brophy, 1994: 215 as qouted by Thanasoulas, 2002: 3). Thus providing a comfortable situation in learning process is must be thought and done by teachers.

A comfortable situation in acquising English should rely on students' need of communicative language. They should recognize the use of English communicatively. According to Nunan (1989: 132) the 'good communicative language' lesson will:

> (1) derive input from authentic sources, (2) involve learners in problem-solving activities in which they are required to negotiate meaning, (3) incorporate tasks which relate to learners' real life communicative needs, (4) allow learners choices in what, how and when to learn, (5) allow learners to rehearse, in class, real-world language tasks, (6) require learners and tecahers to adopt a range of roles, and use language in a variety settings in and out of the classroom...

It can assumed that a comfortable situation should address authentic materials that are materials used in the target culture for actual communicative needs. They should enable the learner to hear, read, and produce language as it is used in the target language (Opp-Beckman, and Klinghammer, 2006: 84). Authentic materials can be easily found in internet, magazine, newspapers, and television. Teachers also may invite students to bring their personal stuffs such as photographs, dolls, and toys. Moreover, they need to feel the interactions which are commonly happened in the real-life communication because they will experience a problem-solving activities. Then teachers and students may organize some agreements dealing with learning activities, for example: teachers may ask students' opinions about the project which is offered. In addition, teachers should provided various roles of communicative situation which can be acted by students, for example: students act as shop keeper

while teachers act as buyer in a canteen. Finaly, providing authentics materials are good idea to show practical application of communicative language, and learning English will be more effective if teachers also consider students' socio-affective strategy.

As commonly accepted, socio-affective strategies are the strategies that help learners regulate and control emotions, motivations, and attitudes towards learning, as well as help learners learn through contact and interaction with others (O'Malley and Chamot, 1990 as qouted by Chou, 2004: 2). As it is previously informed that first year of academic study is not too easy for students to handle new situation in campus. One of the problem that they may have is that they need to build communication with their new friends. Thus socio-affective strategy is needed to be facilitated by teachers. Consequently, teachers may provide any activities which display practical communication in real life, and promote students to use socio-affective strategy. As it is qouted by Goh and Silver (2004: 188), O'Malley and Chamot (1990) inform more deatil

> Social strategies are learner-initiated actions to engage another person's help or co-operation. Affective strategies are behaviours or thoughts for coping with one's emotions so as to ensure the successful completion of a learning or communicative task. Examples: ask questions or request clarification, ask the speaker to repeat, talk to oneself positively to overcome anxiety

Fostering students to use the combination between social and affective strategy help them to work together to solve their obstacles, show their good attitudes and beliefs in learning process, care someone' emotions when they show their obstacle and anxiety, and provide interaction which uses communicative language. In addition, communicative language can be facilitated by giving a persuasive communication. A persuasive communication is a discussion presenting information and arguments to change a learner's evaluation of a topic, situation, task, and so on (Thanasoulas, 2000: 11). When students discuss a topic, they may negosiate to match their perception on a topic. Students do a series of taking and giving information and confirmation when they do a persuasive communication.

Modern art is an interesting activity to present a persuasive communication. Modern art is proposed by Watt (2004: 1), and she thinks that

> This unit on looking at modern art can be used with inter-mediate to advanced adolescentand adult ESL learners. Many consider contemporary art simplistic, perplexing,and just plain weird, which makes it a perfect topic for generating discus-sionand language learning in the ESL classroom. As learners become engaged in the topic they will be developing their lan-guage abilities. The unit employs an integrated, four-skills ap-proach embedded in a cultural theme, and teachers can pick and choose activities according to student needs and available time.

It is informed that modern art is usually practised by students which have intermediate until advanced level. Eventhough, she sug-gested that it can be used for ESL classroom. I think it is not a bad idea to implement it in a EFL classroom. Because modern art is able to capture communicative language which can be happened when students discuss about cultural topic, it is no doubt that modern art is needed to perform in EFL classroom. Moreover, it displays an integrated skill tasks so it is easier to design a concept based on an agreement between teachers' and students' preferences.

The modern art which was implemented in my Writing 1 class-es covered sentence-based writing. Eventhough, it was writing class, but i tried to integrate the other skills. It also included the real-wold activities and communicative language. In addition, the modern art displayed the students' posters which the original ideas taken from internet, newspaper, and magazine. Earth day celebration was the topic of the posters. They did not discuss a cultural theme, but they created one type of art that was the poster. As the artists who cre-ated the posters, they discussed the issues of the earth day celebra-tion. The procedure can be jotted down:

1. They created posters of earth day celebration using English. I gave them a week to prepare it at home. Furthermore, they had to create it by themselves. They might use pencil, crayon, or other painting materials. In addition, they could draw something if they wish for, the posters should be based on their ideas, ev-

enthough they might get the ideas from the authentic materials namley internet, newspaper, magazine, or video. Furthermore, it explored their reading dan listening skills

2. They attached the posters on the curtains and white board of the classroom on the proposed day when the modern art was performed

3. I divided them into two groups to perform the modern art, which required using dominantly English. The students who were in the first group stood up beside their posters, and they got and answered questions from the students who were in the second group. The questions related to the posters that they created, for examples why someone got the idea? what is the material to create the poster, why you choose certain topic about earth day celebration, etc. Furthermore, the students must walk around the gallery to find the posters which were interesting for them. Each group spent 15 minutes. In addition, after the first group got the turn for 15 minutes, the second group continued the same activities, and in the second turn, the last group accepted and answered questions from the first group. It was the situation when they performed the persuasive communication, and they used communicative language. Morever, this situation fostered my Indonesian and Thai students to use socio-affective strategies in the classroom interaction. Then they also practised their reading, speaking, and listeninng skills.

4. After the performance of the modern art, they wrote the sentences about the posters that were picked up by them. While they produced the sentences, they might discuss with their peer dealing with vocabulary, spelling, grammar and sentences' patterns. They might use both English and Bahasa Indonesia. Then they conducted peer to peer review to check their sentences. In addition, the activities also included some steps of (a) performing persuasive communication, (b) using communicative language, (c) boosting students' socio-affective strategies. The langauge skills that can be enhanced were writing, reading, speaking, and listening.

LIMITATION, RECOMMENDATION, AND CONCLU-SION

Time management is needed to be addressed to perform the modern art because all of this activities happened in a day, and it was bit overtime at that day. Thus was the limitation of the study. I recommend that the activities can be done for two weeks. In conclusion, after all it was intersting to find out how excited and happy were my students to conduct the modern art. My Indonesian and Thai students were blended, and they were able to show positive attitudes in using socio-affective strategy.

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