TEACHING ENGLISH SELF INTRODUCTION THROUGH CHARACTER BUILDING- BASED MATERIAL

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Abstract: The important of inserting character building on English material has been realized by the government. There are many ways of doing that and one of them is through inserting culture on language teaching. Self introduction is one of the important materials that should be taught. Therefore it is needed to make self introduction material based on character building. This article discusses teaching English self introduction through character building-based material.

INTRODUCTION

Building the students' character through education is one of the most popular issues in Indonesia. The government and ministry of education try to insert character building aspect on every subject in education. This action is taken because the government realize that building the students' character is one of the purposes of education. As stated on UU No 20, 2003 that the purpose of education in Indonesia is to develop and build the students' potential, creativity, and character. Based on the idea above there are questions of how to insert the character building on education especially on English. Should the teacher always reading Koran before teaching English? Or should they teach moral in English? Those questions can be answered if the basic understanding of character building is understood by the English teacher.

Suryono states that the main purpose of character building is to build

the society norm and culture (2010). Therefore it can be said that building the students' character is building the students' awareness in culture. The simple way to increase the students' awareness in culture is through inserting the cultural aspect on English material. Lestari states that character building in English can be done through integrating culture and language (2010). That integration can increase not only the students' ability in language but also the students' understanding and awareness in culture.

Why through culture? It is the basic question that should be answered. Inserting character building in English through culture is chosen because in culture there are many positive values that can build the students' character. As stated by Suryono that the purpose of character building is to build the people awareness on culture (2010). The students have to be able to learn their own culture and respecting other people's culture. They do not only have

to learn but they also have to be able to apply it on their daily life.

There is a stereotype in learning cultural values of target language. The stereotypes that learning other culture can give bad effect and decreasethe students' own culture and character. But those stereotypes are not always true. In Abolghasem's (2010) research of the effect of culture class shows that teaching culture is beneficial for raising students' awareness in the target culture without forgetting their own culture. Adaskou, Britten, and Fahsi (1990 in McKay, 2004) are also note that learning culture is useful for developing the understanding of one's own culture. Therefore, learning culture in language classroom should not be abandoned because in fact it is useful for increasing the students' understanding in culture and building the students' character.

Inserting character building in English can be done through inserting culture. Another question is what is meant by culture. Culture is the context in which the communications happen (Seeley, 1994 in Lestari, 2010). Using the appropriate language in the appropriate situation based on the cultural context. It is also supported by Cakir statement (2006) that understanding a language involves not only knowledge of grammar, phonology and lexis but also a certain features and characteristics of the culture. The students are not only understanding about the linguistic aspect, but they also have to be able to use the language in the appropriate situation based on the culture.

Inserting culture on language teaching is not a simple way. There are two main factors that affected the successful of cultural teaching in language classroom. Those are teachers and textbooks (Tran, 2010). Teachers should understand what "culture" to teach and what methodologies to use. The teachers should understand that teacher's task is to make students aware of cultural difference and help the students to become communicatively competent. The second factor is language textbook that should contain elements of the culture (Wndel, 2003 in Tran, 2010).

In Indonesia those two factors above are often abandoned. The teachers are only concentrating on the linguistic ability of the students without concerning to the cultural aspect that can build the students' character. While, the textbooks are rarely give the materials which is related to character building. Some of the texts in English textbook are grammatically correct but lack of cultural context (Lestari, 2010). Based on those problems it is interesting to teach the students using the materials based on character building.

Self introduction is one of the most important parts in conversation. Before learning another thing the students have to be able to introduce them self using the target language. Self introduction is become the easiest material but gives crucial effect. If someone has got the wrong way in introducing her/himself it may give a bad effect such as misunderstanding in the conversation. In Indonesia it is

common to ask other people's name in starting the conversation but in Australia and America it is impolite to ask other people's name when starting conversation. Those phenomena happen because there is cultural different.

In *standard isi* for first grade of junior high school in first semester it is stated that the students have to be able to introduce their self using the target language. Actually this is the simple material but have deep cultural context. Language is the product of culture. Therefore, there are some differences in the way of introducing oneself. For example in Australia it is impolite to ask someone's name before you introduce yourself, it is also impolite to ask marital status, age, occupation, salary, what he/she is going to do, and many other things before we know her/his closely. In Indonesia those kind of impolite questions are become common question. Those differences between Indonesian and Australian culture in taking introduction at conversation will enrich the students understanding in culture and build the students' character background. Those benefits can be reached if the teacher can explain the difference of the culture. Therefore the teachers have to be able to explain and give some examples in order to avoid misunderstanding in culture.

Based on those reasons above it is interesting to make and teach *Selfintroduction* material which is based on character building. Actually there are some considerations in making materials for the students. Such as, the

material should be in line with the curriculum, should be appropriate for the students needs, and should be fit the purpose of the education. In making material based on character building, the teacher should integrate the curriculum with the purpose of character building itself.

LISTENING MATERIAL

Listening and speaking are parts of the language that cannot be separated. Speaking is the result of understanding in listening. In introduction material the students have to be able to introduce them self and giving response to other people. They have to be able to listen and speak. There are some considerations in making listening material based on McKeating such as the material should be chosen based on the appropriate of interest, it should makes the students enjoying the materials. Second is selecting the material based on the appropriate level of linguistic difficulty. And the last is listening materials should be shorter than reading materials (1981).

In this study listening materials are chosen from films. Film is an appropriate material for listening as Tran said that Film is an authentic material than can be used in order to give a real picture of the target language daily live (2010). There are many films that can be used as the materials but it should be based on the consideration of listening material by McKeating. The film which should be based on the students' interest, based on the appropriate level, and should be short

film. In order to make the film shorter than reading material, therefore the film should be edited. There are three films that are used as listening materials. Those are *Monalisa Smile, Titanic*, and *PS: I Love You.*

In *Monalisa Smile* there are formal introduction. Here are two examples: first is formal introduction of teacher in the class, it can be seen that asking the people name is impolite in conversation, saying your name first is the best choice in opening the conversation .Second is an example of impoliteness of asking marital status. In this film the students' can learn than they don't need to give all the information about them self to other. The personal information should be taken as a secret and it can be shared to the people who are having closely relation to them.

Script Dialog 1

Teacher : Good morning
Students : Good morning
Teacher : Thank you, this is history of art hundred, will be following Dr. Stanton syllabus. Any question so far
Student A : your name?
Teacher : why don't you go first?
Studen A : Conny Baker
Teacher : Katherine Watson, nice to meet you
Student B : Dr. Watson I presume?
Teacher : not yet, and your name?
Student B : Giselle Levey

Script Dialog 2

Teacher : impressing, name?

Student C : Elizabeth Warren, they call me Betty

Here are the examples of informal self introduction based on *Titanic* movie and *English Alive*text book.

Script Dialog 3
JD : I am Jack Dawson
R : Rose
Script Dialog 4
Pinastika : Hello. I am Pinastika. What's your name?
Yolanda : oh, hi, Pinastika. My name is Yolanda
Pinastika : nice to meet you
Yolanda : ………………….

Based on those scripts above the students can learn how to behave in formal and informal situation. They can learn diversity of culture. No one culture is better than other (Tran: 2010). Based on those examples perhaps the students can understand and learn from it and finally it can build the students' character and behaviour.

In *Monalisa Smile* there is an example how to behave as a teacher, how to introduce our self in formal situation as an educated person. Culturally Indonesian has the same way in that formal introduction especially in collage. It means that in this situation the target language and native language has the same point of view of culture. The students can learn the similarity of culture.

In *Titanic* script it has shown that informal introduction sometimes happen in such situation and in very short conversation. Just say the name

without giving any other personal information. In Indonesia, culturally it is impolite if people do the short self introduction. From this example the students can learn the diversity of culture. There is no culture better than other.

SPEAKING MATERIAL

Speaking ability is one of the important aspects in the process of learning language. The teacher should be aware of their students' speaking ability because the main purpose of learning foreign language is to make the students able to communicate. According to Nunan, speaking is the single most important aspect of learning foreign language (2001).

Lado (1964) states that speaking ability is someone's ability to transfer their knowledge and to express their idea in real communication by selecting correct words and systematized idea. It means that speaking ability is the ability to express oneself in one live situation in precise words, or the ability to converse, or to express a sequence of ideas fluently. Besides, speaking ability is an ability to use pronunciation, stress, intonation, grammatical structure, and vocabulary of the foreign language. Therefore in teaching speaking the teacher should be aware of cultural aspect beside the linguistic aspect.

The main purpose of teaching and learning foreign language is to make the students able to communicate using the target language. The opportunity to speak in a group should be given to the students as much as possible in order to facilitate the students in using the target language. Nunan(2001) states that learning to speak in a foreign language will be facilitated when learners are actively engaged in attempting to communicate.

Teaching speaking must be done based on the student's level. In the speaking there are three levels of the students such as beginning level learners, intermediate level learners, and advanced level learners. Actually first grade of senior high schoolstudents is still in the beginning level learners.

There are some principles for teaching speaking to beginning level based on Bailey and Nunan (2005). First is providing something for learners to talk about.One key principle in teaching speaking is that teachers should provide something for learners to talk about. This doesn't mean that only teachers can nominate topics. Teachers should be open to those topics that the learners want to talk about, and incorporate them into lessons whenever possible. Second is creating opportunities for students to interact by using group work or pair work.Using pair work and group work can improve learners' motivation and promote choice, independency, and creativity. Pair work and group work also provide feedback to the students from their peers other than the teacher. In the early research show that students working in a pairs get more individual time than students working in teacher-fronted classes. Third is manipulating physical arrangements to promote speaking practice.Changing the physical

environment can encourage speaking activities, partly because it partially alters the power structure of the traditional English classroom. There are some ways to work with the seating to encourage speaking, such as the inside-outside circle, tango seating, and cocktail party technique.

Based on those criteria above the teacher should made the teaching process become enjoyable and in line with the criteria of teaching speaking. Beside that the material should also in line with

For listening material that is based on character building, the teacher should give the material that provides students to speak the target language in cultural context. The material should provide something for learner to talk based on culture, creating the opportunities for students to interact in target language cultural situation, and giving speaking practice based on cultural context.

The examples of speaking material are:

Work in pairs and act them out with your partner.

Situation:

1. (Group activity). Imagine that you become a new Indonesian student in Australian and one day you meet a native speaker in library and you introduce yourself to her. In this situation there should be a student who acts as an Indonesian and others become native speaker.
2. (Group activity). Imagine that you become a lecture in Harvard University. This is your first time teaching and you should introduce yourself in front of your students. In this situation there should be a student who acts a lecture and others become university students.
3. (Group activity). Imagine that you become a tour guide and for the first time you should introduce yourself to the tourists. In this situation there should be a student who acts a tour guide and others become tourists.

From those materials above it can be seen that the students are trained to live in the native speaker situation. They have to be able to understand the target language culture in order to avoid misunderstanding.

CONCLUTION

Inserting character building into English material is the purpose of this study, while some teacher has got difficulties in doing that. Therefore it is made English self introduction material based on character building. The materials are taken from films, and books with such consideration. The materials should be based on character building. The importances of teaching culture in language class room are building the students' awareness in culture and character. The understanding of culture will make the students respect to the diversity of culture. It is very important for the students to understand their environment and respect each other. Those behaviours can build the students' morality and character.

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