

DESIGNING AN ESP SPEAKING FOR JOURNALISM CLASS – A CASE STUDY

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Abstract: Teachers of English for Specific Purpose or ESP need to design the appropriate course for a particular group of learners (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p.21). Having only English language background, it is a challenging task for the ESP teachers to prepare the materials and evaluation for the ESP classes. Moreover, in Speaking for Journalism Class, the limited numbers of textbooks on the subject demands teachers' creativity to design the class. Nitu (2002, pp.154-157) mentioned three steps to design an ESP course: setting the objectives, deciding the approach of language learning, and selecting materials and evaluation. This paper would like to share ideas and invite many other ideas from fellow ESP teachers interested in ESP Speaking Class. It elaborates and analyzes the implementation of the materials and evaluation of Speaking 3 for Journalism Class for English Program students of Vocational College UGM 2012. The discussion is focused on the preparation, teaching process and evaluation.

Keywords: *ESP Speaking class, class design, materials, evaluation*

Introduction

Based on Law No. 20 Year 2003 on National Education System, Vocational Education is expected to direct the students to develop applied skills, to adapt to the certain field of work and to be able to create work opportunity. In order to achieve these objectives, the curriculum in vocational college must be adjusted so that the students can experience the skills they need based on their choice of profession. Based on this law, English Program Vocational College Universitas Gadjah Mada offers not only English as the core of study, but also English for professional orientations, i.e.: Tourism, Business Administration, Public Relation, Media/Broadcasting, and English Language Teaching. Since English is learnt as a second language, there are still English skill classes taught in five semesters, such as grammar, listening, writing, reading, pronunciation, and speaking. Besides giving foundation for the mastery of English language, each of these classes is also taught to prepare the students in taking their professional orientation class in semester three until five as well as later on in the workplace. Speaking classes, for example, are designed as English for Specific Purpose (ESP) classes: Speaking 3 focuses the speaking skills on media; Speaking 4 focuses on tourism; and speaking 5 focuses on public relation.

Designing ESP Speaking 3 for Journalism Class

Speaking 3, as one of compulsory subjects focusing on English oral skills, has undergone several improvements in its course design for the last two years. The reason for these improvements is the awareness of need to practice the oral skill based on the professional orientation. From 1999-2012, Speaking classes were taught as General English class where the students are given opportunities to drill their speaking skills in random topics. Thus, in the new curriculum, speaking classes are treated more as ESP classes. This transition surely demands teacher's creativity and effort to design the class so that it fulfills the class objectives required by the curriculum.

The paper is based on the writer's experience teaching Speaking 3 at English Program Vocational College UGM in 2013. The writer would like to share her experience in designing Speaking 3 class in three steps, i.e.: preparation, the teaching process and planning assessment and evaluation.

1. Preparation

In the preparation stage of designing Speaking 3, there are some steps done, such as setting the objectives, analyzing the target learners, and preparing the lesson plan and materials.

Setting the Objectives

The first step is setting the objectives. Ellis and Johnson stated that the course objectives are "the goals of a course in English, as indicated by the need analysis, and expressed in terms of what the learner should be able to do" (1994, p.221). This means that in order to set a learning objective, one should conduct a need analysis to know the goals of the class, and one should also list down the learning outcome or what the learner should be able to do at the end of the class. Speaking 3, along with the other compulsory subjects in the new curriculum, is designed by all the lecturers of English Program Vocational College UGM in terms of the general description of the class. It also has been determined that the focus of Speaking 3 is media. This is determined

based on the observation of the target learners' curriculum and their future jobs and also based on discussions done with other teachers who design the other classes related to Speaking 3.

From this, the learning objectives and outcomes are also determined. For the learning objective, students of Speaking 3 are expected to possess the skills required in becoming television reporter and news anchor, while for the learning outcome, students are expected to be able to demonstrate the ability to use the expressions in reporting an event or situation, understand the steps of making television reports and reporting an event or interesting news as a television reporter in English, demonstrate the ability to conduct interview with the informants well, understand the procedure of news production process and know the language of television news anchor in English, and demonstrate the ability to read news in English well. These objectives and learning outcomes of Speaking 3 show that the class is basically an ESP speaking class for journalism. These enable the present writer as the teacher to design the syllabus, materials, learning process, and the evaluation.

Analyzing the target learners

The next step after setting the objectives and learning outcome is analyzing the target learners' necessities to prepare the content and forms of the class. There are four questions that are usually asked before starting to design an ESP course: *who*, *why*, *where*, and *when*. (Nitu, 2002, p.155). In Speaking 3 for Journalism Class, the first question "*who*" refers to the target learners who are the students of English Program from the year 2012. There are approximately 80 students taking this class, and they are divided into three parallel classes. The next question "*why*" refers to the reason they have in taking this class. Since it is a compulsory class, all students must take the class. In addition, this class is not only designed for the students who will choose media for their professional orientation. It is expected to give additional skills for students whose professional orientation choice is not in media. The question "*where*" refers to the location for the learning process. In Speaking 3, the learning process is done in the classrooms mostly and in the TV studio owned by a Private TV Station to provide opportunity for the students to observe directly as well as experience the real works of television reporters and news anchor. The last question "*when*" refers to time of the Speaking 3 implementation including its duration and frequency. Speaking 3 discussed in this paper was taught to the students from September to December 2013. Since it is taught as a subject in regular semester program of formal education institution, the length of course is sixteen meetings including the mid semester exam in the eighth and ninth meeting, and final exam in the last meeting.

In addition to asking these four questions, in designing the course the teacher should also know the learners' level of proficiency in order to know what they do not know so that it could be covered in the class. All the students taking Speaking 3 do not have any speaking or other classes focusing on media. Thus, it can be assumed that the level of proficiency of the students is beginner level. This means that in designing the lesson plan and materials, the teacher needs to consider putting introductory materials on journalism prior to teaching the skills of news reporting and anchoring. Another aspect which needs to be considered is the learners' necessities so that the teacher can design a class which is useful and interesting. This is a challenge for the teacher since sometimes the students are not aware of their necessities. Speaking 3 for Journalism Class is a compulsory subject for all the students of English Program 2012, but later on in the following semester not all of these students will choose their major in media or journalism. This demands the teacher's creativity in designing the class as interesting as possible so that the students are enjoying all the learning process.

Preparing the Lesson Plan and the Materials

Once the learning objectives and outcome as well as the needs of learners are clear, the ESP teacher can start preparing the lesson plan. Robertson and Acklam (2000, p.4) stated that planning a lesson is important for some reasons. Planning is a sign of professionalism, and students respect professional teachers. Next, planning provides opportunity for the teachers to tailor their material for teaching. Planning a lesson can also help teachers ensure the points need to be included in the lesson and also help teachers to predict possible problems in the class and ways to deal with them. This automatically will also make the teachers feel confident to teach in the classroom.

Robertson and Acklam also stated that "a lesson plan is a framework for a lesson" (2000, pp.3-4). If a lesson is associated as a journey, this framework provides a map which will take the students to the destination. It is a written plan on a lesson produced by teachers' thoughts about what they hope their student to achieve and how they hope their students can achieve it. Based on this statement, it can be inferred that lesson plan can be made by mapping the activities need to be carried out throughout the period of learning to achieve the objectives and to ensure the learners are able to possess all the learning outcomes set in the curriculum.

The lesson plan for Speaking 3 class of English Program is designed more like a syllabus for sixteen meetings. It is not in the form of detailed lesson plan which list all the details of the activities to be carried out in each meeting along with the duration of time because there is always possibility for the teachers to do improvisation. Van Lier (as quoted in Rahman, 2010, p.6) stated that there are two dimensions which should be

balanced in teaching: planning for a lesson and improvisation. The term balanced is important to make sure that the learning process is effective. Whenever a lesson is planned tightly without any space for improvisation or on the other hand, whenever a lesson is entirely improvised without any planning, it is inevitable that the learning process will not be an effective one.

In the first meeting, the students are introduced with the syllabus which gives illustration to the students on what they are going to study and practice throughout the semester. There are two main objectives, i.e.: becoming news reporter taught in the first half of the semester and news anchoring taught in the second half of the semester. For the first half of the semester, there are four main skills taught from the first meeting until the seventh meeting, such as (1) introductory materials on definition of news, news gathering and news preparation; (2) making news scripts; (3) interviewing the source person; (4) techniques in reporting news. After each topic, there is always time allotted for the students to practice the skills. The following skills taught in the second half of the semester are: (5) news anchoring skills; (6) expressions used by news anchor; and (7) news production process. There are fewer skills taught in meeting 10-16 because there are more time scheduled for students' practice and final project preparation.

After the lesson plan is set, the next teacher's task is to provide the materials to be taught as well as drilling activities to be done in each meeting. The materials used in Speaking 3 are mostly compiled from various sources, especially on news reporting and anchoring. This way of preparing the material is called as material evaluation (Nitu, 2020, p.156). This materials evaluation is a handier choice for designing an ESP class because it enables the teacher to choose from many available materials and combine them according to the class needs or even change them according to the target learners.

For Speaking 3, the material evaluation is done firstly by browsing for ready materials in the internet. There are books and also webs offering materials for journalism class. Based on what have been listed in the need analysis of Speaking 3 and target learners aforementioned, the teacher decides to only take materials on specific skills of news reporting and anchoring adjusted with each skills determined in the lesson plan. She chooses to use ready materials provided by BBC News for the School Report (www.bbc.co.uk/schoolreport/), and combined it with the authentic materials, such as news from several different English news program, both national and international (www.youtube.com) and also printed newspaper (*The Jakarta Post*). In addition, the teacher also plans a visit to a local TV station to give opportunity to the students to learn more from the practitioners, such as the news reporter and news anchor. These are done based on the consideration that the learners should also know more not only on the English language as the instrument to deliver the news, but also on the content of the news and the needs to experience the skills related to news preparation and production. The teacher mostly may only focus on the English language aspects, such as expressions, structures, and pronunciation of the news. The class visit to the TV station is also important because the students need to know not only the theory they learnt in the classroom, but also the practice in the real world. Videos on news programs both national and international as authentic materials are also important to show the students more on the skills aforementioned. As news reporter and anchor, they have to know not only the correct pronunciation and clear articulation, but also the eye contact, pause, word grouping, intonation, etc. whenever they read the news. All these materials are aimed at achieving the class objectives of Speaking 3 aforementioned.

2. Selecting Teaching Process

There are many teaching approaches in English language teaching. However, teacher of ESP needs to consider which one is the best to be used for ESP classes. Nitu stated the communicative approach to language teaching is the most appropriate teaching theory for an ESP class (2000, p.155). In communicative approach, language learning is implemented through using the language communicatively rather than practicing the language skills. As we know, ESP learners have specific needs in learning a foreign language. Thus, the teacher needs to use this approach to reach the learners' goals as it aims at helping the student to be communicatively competent (Larsen-Freeman, 1986, p.131).

Communicative approach has many principles and methods that can be chosen by ESP teachers based on what best fit both their intentions and their students' expectations. In Speaking 3 that I taught last year, there are some principles that I take. First, the target language is not just an object of study, but it is also the means of communication during the course, so the learners are learning the language through using it. Second, it is important for the teacher to introduce the authentic language and material to the students and get them exposed to it as often as possible. Because the learners' objective is English for specific profession, which in this case of Speaking 3 is journalism, there are many authentic materials used in Speaking 3 to ensure they get the exposure of English for Journalism. The next principle is the teacher acts as an advisor; this means that teacher should be able to create tasks that involve real communication so that they are motivated in learning. All the skills of English must also be covered in the class. There are several areas of skill covered in Speaking 3, such as writing, listening, reading, and speaking skills. The writing skill is focused on the news script writing, while the listening skills are done in the stage where the students are gathering news. Reading skills are also required when the

students are gathering news. The speaking or oral skills are also highly required which comprise of vocabulary mastery for journalism, pronunciation, stress and intonation.

In addition, Task-based Learning approach, in my opinion is also appropriate for ESP class, especially in Speaking 3. Willis stated that there are three stages: pre-task stage, task cycle, and feedback, which is interesting for the students as they are given the opportunity to get the materials first and then practice what they have learnt, and they can also get the feedbacks on the tasks they performed (as quoted in Bowen, 2013, para.7). Thus, eclectic approach might be the best approach for Speaking 3 since it combines different approaches, i.e.: communicative approach and TBL approach.

3. Planning Assessments and Evaluation

The evaluations on students of Speaking 3 are not only done in the mid semester and final exam, but it is also done throughout the course. After the students performed the tasks given, there are feedbacks to evaluate what they are already able to do and what they need to improve. There is also a project done during the visit to TV station where the students also get the feedbacks directly not only from the news reporter and anchor but also from the producer since the students are also learning the news production process. For the mid semester exam, the skill evaluated is focused on news reporting skill, while for the final exam, the skills evaluated are anchoring skills and news production skills. The criteria for evaluation and assessment are accuracy, expressions, choice of words, performance, and confidence.

In the last meeting of the class, there is a questionnaire distributed to the students to get feedback and evaluation on the course so that the teacher can improve the class in the following year. Approximately 70% of the students taking Speaking 3 stated that they can follow the class and achieve the class objectives. The rest stated that media is not their passion, but so far they can follow the class although it is with less confidence and motivation.

Conclusion

The paper shares and proposes steps of designing ESP Speaking 3 Class for Journalism in three parts: preparation, selecting teaching process, and planning assessments and evaluation. There are more processes done in preparation stage, such as setting the objectives, analyzing the target learners, and designing the lesson plan and materials. All of these steps are related to each other and are flexible to be used in designing other ESP classes. Hopefully, it brings benefits for other ESP teachers or course designers in planning their ESP classes.

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Biodata

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