

A Portrait of Applying Direct Method in Speaking Instruction by Islamic Junior High School English Teacher: A Descriptive Study

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Abstract: This research investigated the implementation of the Direct Method in speaking instruction by an English teacher at an Islamic Junior High School in Lumajang Regency. Employing a qualitative research design, data were collected through non-participant observation from a single English teacher, whose instructional practices were scrutinized in relation to the principles and techniques of the Direct Method. The research findings indicated that the teacher both adhered to and diverged from the core principles, characteristics, and techniques of the Direct Method. Key features of the method were applied, such as the use of gestures, facial expressions to aid comprehension, and structured speaking activities. Nevertheless, occasional use of the students' native language for translation purposes was executed that deviated from the method's fundamental principle of avoiding translation. This inconsistency was potentially found limiting students' opportunities to develop their speaking proficiency. Accordingly, the study suggests a hybrid approach - incorporating Direct Method with other pedagogical strategies, which could offer a more effective model for speaking instruction. These findings offer practical insights for language educators and highlight the need for further research on hybrid applications of the Direct Method in alignment with Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Theories.

Keywords: Direct Method, English Teacher, Islamic Junior High School, Speaking Instructions

1. INTRODUCTION

As a language learning subject, English consists of listening, speaking, reading, writing, and language components. Bailey and Savage (1994) affirm, speaking skill is the demanding skill to whom live in second or foreign language countries. English speaking skill requires the speaker to use the real language, which means, the students use the language in all situations or when communicating with other students in educational contexts. Whereas the second or foreign language has a different system than the native language, and this becomes a problem. In line to the speaking skill, Chaney and Burke (1998) clarified that speaking is the process of creating and sharing meaning in various situations and contexts by using verbal and nonverbal symbols. Due to the existence of a different system where speaking is a process of creating and sharing meaning that happens to connect symbols and meanings, it requires speaking skills.

In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language in school. Since English is not taught outside of the classroom, students do not have a chance to practice their speaking. Consequently, students only have a little speaking time and get limited inputs. In line with the use of English outside classroom, Mukminatien (1995) suggested teachers provide their learners with more sufficient input for acquisition in the classroom and encourage them to use English either in or outside the classroom. To overcome it, teachers can prepare by choosing an effective teaching strategy before beginning to teach lesson. As it is concerned with developing speaking skill, Direct Method has become one of the alternatives in teaching speaking.

Theoretically, Direct Method is a method designed where teacher uses the target language or English in the classroom. If some students do not understand the meaning of the words

that teachers conveyed, teachers may not translate but instead illustrate the meaning with visual aids or through demonstrations (Titone in Richards and Rodgers, 2001:12). Moreover, Norland and Terry (2006) describe how to apply Direct Method in teaching as follows:, 1) The teacher shows a set of pictures that often portray life in the country of the target language, 2) The teacher describes the picture in the target language, 3) The teacher asks questions in the target language about the picture, 4) Students answer the questions as best they can use the target language. In this context, the term direct refers to a direct relationship between the target language and its meaning, without any translation into the mother language. Therefore, this method is appropriate for students to learn English, particularly in learning speaking skills.

The researcher discovered the use of the Direct Method in teaching speaking of Junior High School in Lumajang, and then, a preliminary study was done on 8th October, 2022. An interview with the English teacher was conducted to find out how the teacher teaches speaking there. According to the teacher, many of the students found it difficult to learn English, especially when developing their speaking skills. One of the problems is the students' social background. Some students didn't get any English lessons in Elementary School, while others did. This condition can result in two factors. First, students rarely use the vocabulary, so they are unfamiliar with the vocabularies. Second, the lack of a vocabulary bank which makes them difficult to communicate in English. Both of them, students rarely use the vocabularies and the lack of vocabularies bank leads to the limited vocabulary that students have. It caused the students to become hesitant to use English when communicating with their friends.

Statement of the Problem

Due to some problems faced by the teacher during teaching speaking, as alternatives she decided to use Direct Method for teaching speaking. Moreover, research by Inayah (2022) showed several findings in the implementation of the Direct Method of teaching speaking by a teacher. She found some of the principles, characteristics, techniques, strengths, and weaknesses that have been used by the teacher during teaching speaking. This current research focuses on a portrait of using the Direct Method in teaching speaking by English teacher at Islamic Junior High School. The goal of current research should be to investigate is the teaching procedure. Based on the explanation above, the research question is "How is a portrait of applying Direct Method in speaking instruction by the Islamic Junior High School English teacher?"

Purpose of the Study

Referring to the research question, the research objective is to portray the application of Direct Method in speaking instruction by the Islamic Junior High School English teacher.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This research uses a Descriptive Qualitative Method. This method was chosen because this research aims to provide a portrait of using the Direct Method in English instructions by an English teacher at Islamic Junior High School in Lumajang. In line with descriptive study, Brumfit and Mitchell (1995, p.11), say descriptive research aims to provide as accurate an account as possible of current practice, how learners learn, how teachers teach, and what the classroom looks like at a given time and place.

2.2 Research Environment

The research was conducted at Islamic Junior High School in Lumajang. This school was chosen as the research area because one of the teacher there, already used the Direct Method in teaching speaking. Moreover, the English teacher of Islamic Junior High School agreed to be a research participant who has used the Direct Method in teaching English in her class. In particular, this condition supports the investigation of teaching speaking.

2.3 Research Participants

The research participant was a teacher who uses Direct Method in teaching English. The research participant was selected from the research context as the data source of this research. The reason of the English teacher was chosen is because she used Direct Method in teaching English.

2.4 Research Instruments

The researcher used classroom observation to gather the data. For observation, the researcher used the non-participants observation. In this observation, the researcher did not engage

in the teaching session. During the class activity, the researcher sits down in the back row. While observing the teacher teaching speaking using Direct Method, the data was collected by taking notes and recording the video. Phillippi and Lauderdale (2017) state field notes are the researcher's private personal opinions, ideas, and questions about the research observation. By using field notes, the researcher can take notes or write down personal ideas about the activities that occur during the observation. The researcher also recorded the video during observation and the recording was transcribed.

2.5 Data Analysis

After the data being collected during observation and interviewing, the researcher analyzed the data using the concept of the Interactive Model by Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014). They explain after the data being collected, the data was selected and simplified in the data condensation. In data display, the data was presented in the form of descriptive or narrative. Furthermore from the data display, the conclusion can be drawn. After writing the conclusion, the researcher verified the data analysis with the data that has been obtained from interviews.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results were presented in accordance with the research objectives, which portrayed the use of Direct Method in speaking instruction by the English teacher of Islamic Junior High School in Lumajang.

3.1 A Portrait of Teacher Teaching Speaking Using Direct Method

The Direct Method was used by the English teacher who teaches 8th Grade in Islamic Junior High School Lumajang. The teacher had followed the procedure of the teaching using Direct Method, but with some adaptation relating to the students' needs. The application of the Direct Method by English teacher in speaking instruction at Islamic Junior High School Lumajang was conducted into several stages:

- Pre Speaking Activities

In this stage, the teacher said about the learning objectives and tried to gain students' attention. Pre speaking activities also called as preparation stage, teacher must focus on students' attention, it means being able to explain learning objectives and provide motivation. During class observation, the teacher asked about the previous material and connected it with the new material that she would deliver. After that, she explained the learning objectives by writing on the whiteboard, and said to the students, "we are going to learn simple past tense today". To gain students' attention, the teacher asked each student to mention one daily verb in past forms. This was in line with one of the principles in Direct Method that daily vocabularies

were also taught during the teaching-learning process.

- **While Speaking Activities**

In this stage, the teacher demonstrated the knowledge by explaining the material by giving examples of simple past tense sentences. That was the first thing that the teacher did before giving the formula of how to make simple past tense sentences. After giving some examples of sentences in past forms, the teacher wrote on the whiteboard the formula for how to make sentences in past tense. Moreover, in this stage, the teacher also used one of the strategies in Direct Method, namely drilling. The teacher demonstrated the pronunciation of some verbs in past forms and asked the students to repeat the verbs after her. After that, the teacher asked the students to make their own sentences by using those formulas and asked them to read loudly their sentences. During this stage, it was in line with the characteristics of Direct Method which is grammar is taught inductively.

After giving the materials about past tense, the teacher also provided the students an opportunity to practice their speaking skills. The teacher conducted language games to engage the students, it had purposed to help them understand more deeply about the materials given, and practice their speaking skills as well.

The game was made by the teacher and it only required 4 standing balls. The games have some rules, they are: a) The teacher divided the class into five groups, two groups consisted of boys and three groups consisted of girls. b) Each group should make a line from front to back. c) The teacher gave a clue about place, and students should mention some verbs, and what they can do in that place using past forms. d) Each student in the group should mention a verb in front of the teacher, then turn back and go to the back row. The next student did the same. e) When every student in the group had already mentioned a verb, students with the last turn took a standing ball which was located outside the classroom as soon as possible. f) Every group got the standing ball and only one last group who didn't get the standing ball. g) The students or groups who got standing ball, they also got points. h) The games run with 2 rounds. During playing the game, all students are forced to speak by mentioning verb in past forms. In this stage, the teacher only used one techniques, it was read aloud.

- **Post Speaking Activities**

Checking Understanding and Skill by Providing Feedback In the classroom, teacher constantly recheck about students' understanding and providing the feedback. For example by asking, "Do you understand about the material?", or "Do you have any questions?". To assess students'

comprehension of the material presented, the teacher assigned a worksheet in the form of Fill in the Blank with true or false options. Students are asked to determine whether the sentence is using past forms or not. When the students doing the worksheet given, the teacher walked around checking the students. In the end, after all of the students are completing the worksheet, the teacher asked each student to read aloud their answer. If the answer is correct, the teacher will give feedback by saying, "Good job", "Nice", or "Excellent". When the answer is wrong, the teacher will say, "Are you sure?", so it made students think again about their answer and immediately back up with the correct answer. In addition, the teacher also provided feedback for some students who were having pronunciation errors and provided them with correct pronunciation.

Based on the findings the researcher made during the data analysis, there are some points that the researcher found, as follows: First, the use of Direct Method in speaking instructions has been carried out properly and following the instructions provided. Second, the teacher used many gestures, demonstrations, and explanations to convey the meaning of English words. Third, the use of language games could be taught effectively in teaching speaking using Direct Method

3.2 Discussions

The findings of the research showed the way the teacher taught students by using Direct Method followed the certain procedures. The following section is an explanation of the teacher activities which obeyed and disobeyed the principles, the characteristics, and the techniques of Direct Method.

3.2.1 The Teacher's Activities which Obeyed Direct Method can be classified including the principles, the characteristics, and the techniques

The principles of Direct Method that were obeyed during teaching speaking:

- The teacher taught daily vocabulary and sentences during class activities. At the beginning of class, the teacher asked for some verbs to be mentioned by each student. Moreover, the teacher also taught the students how to make sentences using those verbs mentioned.
- The explanation of the material was delivered orally by the teacher using the English language. Even though the teacher still needed translation during the explanation. The class was actively built because the teacher kept asking about students' opinions about the material delivered.
- The teacher used objects and pictures to demonstrate concrete vocabulary. While for abstract vocabulary such as verbs, the teacher used gestures to explain the material.

- The teaching-learning process was emphasized in speaking. It could be seen from the language games that were conducted after the material had been delivered. Each students were actively involved and forced to speak.
- The grammar was taught inductively. This could be seen from the teacher providing examples and connecting the learning material with factual events experienced by the students.

The characteristics of Direct Method that were obeyed during teaching speaking are:

- The Direct Method must be implemented directly using English when learning to speak. The data showed that the teacher practically used English since the beginning of the class, from greeting the students, reading the attendance list, reviewing the previous material, and explaining learning objectives. With this, it could help students habituated with some expressions and sentences that were used daily.
- Pronunciation was taught systematically, so the student could pronounce the words and the sentences correctly. During the interview with the English teacher, she said the main reason she used the Direct Method for teaching speaking is she could teach the students directly with the English language with correct pronunciation. Practically, during the teaching-learning process, the teacher used drilling techniques to train the students' pronunciation.
- The teacher used the media or objects when delivering the material. It was very helpful to make students understand easily. As explained in the principles, Direct Method should use English directly. Therefore, the role of learning media is very important to help students understand what is conveyed by the teacher. The learning media that can be used include realia or objects related to learning materials.
- The importance of using facial expressions and gestures. The teacher had good facial expressions and used many gestures while explaining the material. Therefore, the students would understand what the teacher said in English.
- In the process of teaching using Direct Method, the teacher provided many opportunities for students to practice their speaking. First, at reviewing previous material, the teacher asked the students to mention some infinitive verbs. Second, the teacher asked the students to make sentences using present simple. Third, during the language games each students were forced to speak and mention some verbs in past forms.
- The use of language games could be effective in teaching speaking using Direct Method. The teacher used the language games which was made by herself

and it only requires 4 standing balls only. In addition, Chen (2002) emphasized the benefits of games for language learning, particularly for speaking skills. Language games facilitate student-centered learning by letting the students to demonstrate their proficiency of the target language. The researcher discovered that using language games increased students' enthusiasm and encouraged them to communicate at all times. Everyone got a turn to speak, making achieving the learning objectives easier.

The results of the characteristics above, were in line with the theory of Toshiko and Palmer (1991). Moreover, the researcher found additional characteristics during the research. Those are, the use of media plays an important role during the teaching-learning process, the use of facial expressions and gestures when explaining the material, and providing more opportunities for students to practice their speaking skills.

The techniques of Direct Method that were obeyed during teaching speaking. In this research, the researcher found that the teacher used some techniques to teach speaking skills using the Direct Method. The teacher used read aloud, question and answer, and oral communication. This techniques used by the teacher based on theory of Togatorop (2016).

- Question and Answer
The researcher discovered that when a teacher asks a question about previous material and asks multiple questions to the class, the students attempt to respond orally in English. With this is evidence we can see the teacher is using the question and answer technique.
- Oral Communication
Teacher used oral communication strategies when assigning students to play language games in which they must name verbs in the past forms.
- Read Aloud
The last technique that has been used by the teacher is read aloud. The researcher discovered the use of this technique when rechecking students' understanding by having them complete a worksheet provided by the teacher. Students were asked to read aloud their answer one by one while the teacher checks whether their answers are right or wrong.

3.2.2 The Teacher's Activities which Disobeyed Direct Method can be classified including the principles, the characteristics, and the techniques

- Principles of Direct Method in Teaching Speaking
During the teaching process, the teacher violated one crucial principle in Direct Method, which is "No Translation Allowed". The teacher used translation when explained the materials to make the students

understand. The reason the teacher used translation is because the students' background which is lacking of vocabulary bank.

- Characteristics of Direct Method in teaching Speaking For the characteristics that was disobeyed by the teacher is the meaning of words should be taught by showing the pictures and then described using the target language. During the teaching process, when the students asked the meaning of some words, the teacher didn't show any pictures to explain the meaning, instead she explained using gestures.
- Techniques of Direct Method in Teaching Speaking Instructions The results of the analysis about techniques that had been used by the teacher, she only used three techniques they were, read aloud, question and answer, and oral communication. However, she didn't used the other three techniques for teaching speaking, they were map image, students' self-correct, and dictation.

Compared to the results of previous study by Shinta Inayah (2022), the teacher used Direct Method in teaching speaking also implemented some principles and characteristic, but also the teacher used all of the techniques according to Togatorop like map image, question and answer, self-student correct, read aloud, and dictation. Due to the teacher was not implementing all of the techniques during teaching the simple past tense material, students didn't have appropriate practice to demonstrate their speaking skills maximally. And to support this, the teacher should combine another method while teaching speaking using the Direct Method. This is supported by Ellis (2017), learning outcomes and engagement are enhanced when the Direct Method is combined with the ideas of communicative language teaching (CLT). This blended approach allows for inductive learning while also addressing the need for structured grammar instruction.

In addition the teacher also used facial expression and gestures a lot while explaining the material. This finding also same as Shinta Inayah (2022), that facial expressions and gestures play an important role especially in teaching speaking using Direct Method. This is support with the current results finding that the teacher used gestures when explaining the material and when the students asked some questions that they didn't understand the meaning. Overall, based on the discussions above, it can be concluded the use of Direct Method in teaching speaking instruction was very helpful, particularly to make student speak using English language directly. Furthermore, the teacher should be consistent in using English fully when teaching speaking using Direct Method. The teacher must pay attention to the use of media or visual aids and facial expressions and gestures, because those can help in delivering the material. Moreover, teacher also can combine the Direct Method with other method in teaching speaking. As a

results, the learning objectives, such as the students should pronounce the words in English correctly, could boost students' confidence in speaking English. Furthermore, the students would no longer be hesitant to practice their speaking whenever they would like to.

4. CONCLUSIONS

This research investigated the use of the Direct Method in English-speaking instruction. The findings are categorized into two aspects: teacher activities that adhered to and those that violated the Direct Method principles, characteristics and techniques. The teacher occasionally violated the Direct Method rule by using the native language to translate words that students did not understand, which contradicts its main rule of avoiding translation. However, the teacher also followed the Direct Method by adhering to its structured steps, including pre-speaking, while speaking activities, and post-speaking activities. Additionally, the teacher effectively used facial expressions, gestures, and visual aids to facilitate understanding, which was especially helpful for students struggling with fluency.

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