The Teaching of English Conversation at Oxford Public School Morarkhera: A Case Study in India

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Abstract
This study was intended to describe the phenomenon of the implementation of the teaching of English conversation at Oxford Public School Morarkhera in India. Case study qualitative research was implemented in this study. To gain the data, the subjects of the study were chosen. The subjects in this study were the students of Oxford Public School Morarkhera who took the English Conversation class. They were from first grade to fifth grade. Data collection instruments used are interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis was analyzed using the model of Miles et al. consists of four stages, namely the data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The results show a lower percentage of speaking lessons at the school, which can be attributed to the priority given to reading and writing. In the first year, only 50% of the available teaching material is devoted to speaking, as it is considered the second skill to be mastered by students. Nevertheless, speaking skills must not be neglected in the English curriculum. The portion is sufficient as speaking activities will be integrated with other English skills. The teacher primarily uses English rather than Hindi during the teaching-learning process, which can lead to student stress due to a lack of comprehension. It is important for students to participate actively in speaking class activities, as mastering the English language, particularly speaking skills, is crucial for their success. The finding suggests that the communicative approach may require adaptation, and the schools should create an environment that supports and encourages English-speaking mastery among their students.

Keywords: English conversation, English language teaching, Oxford public school Morarkhera, speaking skill
1. Introduction

The level of competition for human resources in the national and international job market is increasing. The increasing use of science and new technologies in various fields of business is undeniable, as well as the increasing level of professionalism needed (knowledge, hard skills, soft skills). Nowadays, most science and technology programs are in English. Knowledge of hard skills, soft skills, economy, and business are also written in English. Since the use of science and technology is increasing in business and job-seeking competition, the need to master the English language is also increasing undeniably. In order to survive and be more competitive, we need to master English. As we know, the English language is used internationally, and it is the world’s most widely studied foreign language (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). To master the English language, people nowadays do various learning ways. For school students, one of the ways to increase English proficiency, especially in speaking skills, is through English conversation in class.

English is the most important means of International communication. People from all over the world speak English when they meet each other at every international meeting, workshop, conference, or commerce. In every product’s leaflet, we could see some sentences or words in English. It is because English is the biggest language in the world. English becomes the most essential language in the world (Dutta, 2019; Rao, 2019; Wilde et al., 2020; Yusupova, 2022). Almost all people from many different countries use it to communicate. For that reason, it is important for people to master English orally and written, in order to be able to communicate and socialize with the world community. As a consequence, all countries in the world use English as one of the subjects studied at school. The purpose is to make the young generation competent in English, even though passive or active English, whether to speak fluently or just to understand what people say or to write their opinion to express their idea.

Having talked about English conversation, we need to know that India, as a developing country tries to bring the next generation to really master and have the ability in English. English is the second language taught at every school in India, including Oxford Public School. The main purpose of teaching English as a second language in Indian schools is to provide the competence of students to achieve communicative competence (Akhmedova et al., 2022; Gong et al., 2022; Sabirjanova, 2022) in English skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. To achieve this purpose, Indonesia sets its educational curriculum which is including teaching English as a second language. It is one of the compulsory subjects studied from nursery to senior high school up to the university.

As one of the four English basic skills, speaking is probably often considered to be the most important one. People said that someone has already mastered a language if he or she is able to speak the language fluently (Chand et al., 2022; Dilobar, 2022; Nematov et al., 2022; Prema & Arputhamalar, 2022). Oral communication is the most important one because it is used by people in order to maintain their social relationships. In doing so, they need speaking skills in order to perform communication. The performances of speaking English is an essential skill that can open up new opportunities for personal, academic, and professional growth.

The students usually have some motivation for why they want to be able in speaking such as they want to be able to watch foreign films without necessary to read the translation, they can sing their favorite song in English with good pronunciation, they want to know some information assessed from the internet, they want to have chat with foreigner in social media, etc. They said that to be able to speak English skill is a proud thing to have. It indicates the students’ first appearance in speaking ability. People will judge someone’s master in English because of their good performance of speaking fluency. It means that speaking a language fluently is frequently the ultimate goal to be attained in mastering a language.
However, the fact shows that students’ English speaking skill is still below the standard (Harahap & Widiastuty, 2022; Istiqomah, 2017; Nurhayati, 2016; Renaldi, 2020; Sayuri, 2016; Wijaya & Mbato, 2020). The teacher should present an interesting method of teaching to attract the student’s interest and motivation in joining the teaching and learning process. Students are only required to memorize the speaking expression without practicing. This kind of method severely limits students’ chances of practicing their speaking fluency. The English teachers should start using various methods, techniques, or media in the teaching and learning process (L. Agustina & Bahrami, 2016; Anugrah et al., 2019; Daulay et al., 2021; Fanzan, 2014; Jayaputri & Mt, 2022; Kaniadewi, 2022; Karimah et al., 2022; Marzuki et al., 2016; Menggo et al., 2022; Nurhayati, 2016; Pratiwi, 2017; Rahma et al., 2020; Sari & Margana, 2019).

Matering various teaching methods and the use of media will enhance the quality of teaching and learning speaking, particularly in teaching English conversation. There haven’t been any research on this topic in Oxford public school. Oxford public school which consists of 15 classes still has difficulty in terms of making conversation even though there is a conversation class there. For this reason, the researcher is interested in investigating the communication strategies used by the students, which can solve some problems faced by them. The problem in this study is formulated as follows: “How is the process of study on teaching English Conversation at Oxford Public School Morarkhera in India?”

2. Research Methods

Case study qualitative research was implemented in this study. The objective of a case study research is to conduct an in-depth analysis of a specific phenomenon, situation, or individual case. The research is typically focused on a real-life situation and aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the case, as well as identify underlying factors, causes, and effects. This study is intended to describe the phenomenon of the implementation of the teaching of English conversation at Oxford Public School Morarkhera in India.

To gain the data, the subjects of the study were chosen. The subjects are sources who can provide information, selected purposively, and implementation in accordance with the specific purposes. The subjects in this study were the students of Oxford Public School Morarkhera who took the English Conversation class. They were from first grade to fifth grade.

In qualitative research, the researcher collects and analyses data simultaneously to draw a temporary conclusion and repeats the cycles several times, deciding what data needs to be collected again to verify their temporary conclusion. Therefore, the researcher was involved in the process of data collection using all kinds of necessary instruments. The instruments used by the researchers themselves are called human instruments. Therefore, in this study, the researcher himself as the key instrument. Data collection instruments used are interviews, observation, and documentation.

The data analysis technique is an important part of research because without analysis the researcher cannot take a decision about this research. Data analysis was done after the researcher entered and while in the field. Data analysis was analyzed using the model of Miles et al. consists of four activities, namely the data collection, data condensation, the data, display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

3. Results

Oxford Public School is a temple of learning, running classes from class (Arts, Science, Commerce stream) was established in June 1991 by Bhagat Azad Education and Rural Upliftment society, to kindle the light of education in this rural area and endeavors to provide genuine and holistic education in a stress-free environment. Now it has emerged as a unique organization with significant contributions to education. Oxford’s vision is to prepare children for life and enable them to be a better
humans. It aims to prepare these budding flowers by promoting physical, intellectual, socio-emotional, and spiritual development through innovative approaches in curricular and Co-Curricular activities.

The school is located 20 Km. away from the famous Dudhawa National Park (Palia), U.P. The serene and beautiful campus is in between lush green fields, totally free from noise and pollution, creating a studious atmosphere. The vast beautiful campus accommodates staff quarters, a sports complex, and a children’s park in addition to the aesthetically designed school building. It follows the Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) pattern of education and according to the CCE pattern, in the scheme of studies along with all the major subjects, the school lays emphasis on the Co-Scholastic area of life skills, attitude, value, sports, game, Co-Curricular activities. The Students are prepared for a meaningful and productive life in a globalized society.

The School organizes and participates in a variety of Co-curricular activities, Inter-house competitions, Inter-school competitions, educational trips, scouts & guides programs, and Celebrates all National and regional festivals. Even the students take part in various National Talent Search examinations and Olympiads. To be a part of the motion “Save the planet”, the science club is established in association with U.P. pollution Central Board, Lucknow.

Several seminars, conferences, and Lectures are conducted to celebrate the various “days” such as National integrity day, No smoking day, Environment day, Earth day, etc. Every year Van Mahotasav festival is celebrated by plantation of trees and World Wildlife Week is celebrated by attending the different programs organized by the Dudhwa National Park authorities in Palia, Lakhimpur Kheri. Even Yoga camps are organized on the school’s campus. The School also participates in National, Regional, State, and Cluster level Athletic meets, organized by CBSE. The school has twice won the National Champion trophy for Girls in the National level Athletic meet, Conducted by CBSE, as well as, many gold medals were won by the Individuals in various individual events at the National, Regional, and Cluster levels. The school contributed towards the cultural exchange ideologies by participating in the Bharat Darshan Tour organized by Jammu & Kashmir Armed Police under CAP.

3.1. Teaching English Conversation at Oxford Public School

Based on the use of the research instruments during the data collection, the researcher found some data about the implementation of teaching English conversation in terms of goal of teaching, general instructional objectives, teaching material, and teaching methods. Based on the Teaching Guidelines in the curriculum, the general objective of language teaching at the elementary school is to develop the four language skills. The specific objective of the language teaching-learning process at Oxford Public School is to make the students active and responsive in the language class both oral and written and to apply the four language skills. The goal of teaching speaking by communicative language teaching (CLT) in Oxford Public School is divided into two objectives, they are:

The general objective of teaching speaking by communicative language teaching (CLT) is to give the first level in junior high school the oral and aural facilities in basic elements with the simple topic of the target language. The school implement the CLT is to develop students’ communicative competence and prepare them for real-life communicative situations by providing learner-centered, authentic, and intercultural language learning experiences.

The specific objective of teaching speaking by communicative language teaching (CLT) is for the students to be able to understand, and comprehend more vocabulary, fluently in speaking and be able to practice it in daily communication or they are able to tell their daily activities individually. Another objective is to enable students to develop their ability to communicate effectively in the target language. This includes developing their ability to use appropriate grammar, vocabulary, and discourse strategies in different communicative situations.

The material for teaching speaking consists of a handbook and workbook. They are Let's Talk and Learn (descriptive, narrative, and recount) as a handbook. It is written by Agnes Lal (Dean of Studies,
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Meera Public School) and it is published by Landmark Books PVT. LTD, Indira Nagar, Lucknow. The textbook is used during the practice of speaking using conversation. By doing so, it is hope to provide students with a model for natural language use in a specific context. Teachers also use conversation from textbooks, movies, or create their own dialogues to teach specific language points and encourage students to practice their speaking skills.

The success of the process of teaching and learning may also depend on the degree to which the teacher can provide the content or create the conditions for successful language learning by implementing an appropriate teaching method in teaching conversation. The main course is conversation class and the teachers used conversation in the teaching and learning process. However, sometimes, it was combined by using another speaking teaching method like role-plays, discussions, or games. Role-play is used because it allows students to practice their speaking skills in a more interactive way. Teachers can assign different roles to students and provide them with a scenario in which they must use the target language to communicate. Discussion topics can encourage students to express their opinions and engage in debates on a range of topics. These can be chosen based on students’ interests or related to specific language learning objectives. Meanwhile, games is effective way to engage students in speaking activities and provide a fun and relaxed atmosphere for language practice. The overall findings during the data collection, the researcher found that Oxford Public School implements communicative language teaching method in the teaching and learning process of speaking, particularly, in the conversation class.

3.2. Strengths and Weaknesses of Communicative Language Teaching Method

Communicative Language Teaching is a language teaching method that emphasizes that the goal of language teaching is to achieve communicative competence in the classroom. Implementing CLT, there are some benefits, such as the students become more active during the teaching-learning process in the classroom, the students become more involved in the classroom, the students can add their knowledge during the teaching-learning process in the classroom, the students become more interested in the materials, and it is relevant to a target group of learners through an analysis of genuine, realistic situations.

Although CLT has some benefits, it also has some weaknesses, they are 1) during group work activities, the teacher cannot control all the language used, so the students sometimes make mistakes, 2) The teacher gets difficulties controlling the class and is noisy, 3) Classroom Because the class is suddenly student-centered and not teacher-centered, 4) The students use their mother tongue because when they speak, they do not know the words in English. When the students use their mother tongue, the teacher tells the words in English, 5) The time is not effective, because the timing of a speaking activity in the class can be important sometimes, and 6) The students need a selection of vocabulary because the student does not understand the functional language used in every sentence.

3.3. Problems Faced in Teaching and Learning Speaking

The urgent problems faced by the teacher are less of the materials. Because many kinds of materials must be presented to the students. But the student did not understand the meaning. So the teacher should translate word by word. And about the time, the teacher needs a lot of time to translate a sentence.

There are also problems faced by the students in speaking activities. They are identified as 1) Students Inhibition. Learners are often inhibited from trying to say things in a foreign language in class. They are worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism or losing face, 2) Nothing to say. Even if they are not inhibited, we often hear learners complain that they cannot think of anything to say to students, 3) Low participation. Only one participant talks at a time or he or she dominates the group while others speak very little or not at all. In a large group, each member gets very little talking time, 4) Mother-tongue use. In classes where all or a number of the learners share the same mother tongue, they are likely to use it. It is easier and it feels unnatural to speak to one another in a foreign language, and 5)
The students have problems with grammar. Most students very easy to get confused with English grammar, while grammar is very needed to form the right sentence. If the students do not have grammar mastery, of course, they will not be able to produce grammatically correct sentences. Realizing that the grammar students have is very weak, they feel embarrassed when they want to produce English sentences orally.

4. Discussion

The teacher used a variety of teaching methods adjusted by the teaching material provided by him. Such as the lecturing method, the reason the teacher used this language is to make students understand the general explanation. Through this method, the teacher can guide the student to understand the purpose of the general explanation of the teaching-learning material. Such as the Discussion method, the teacher did not only used Lecturing method to make students understand the teaching-learning material but also the Discussion method. The discussion method can be very useful in the teaching of English (Naibaho, 2019; Taher, 2020).

The teacher always used the Lecturing method the first time meeting started. The teacher conducted the discussion part to help students to find the difficult word’s meaning and make students who hesitate to ask not to dare became dare to ask and this method happened to all students. Through both methods, the teacher used communicative language teaching (CLT) to conduct a conversation with students. The teacher can make teaching learning material that can be used to train the communicative ability of students. Indeed, CLT provides a student-centered approach to language teaching that emphasizes communication and interaction. This can lead to more engaging, effective, and enjoyable language learning experiences for students (Armnazi & Alakrash, 2021; Bakar et al., 2019; Claudia Ho, 2020; Hien, 2021; Phoeun & Sengsri, 2021; Santos & Miguel, 2020; Teh, 2021; Toro et al., 2019).

Besides the two methods that usually used by the teacher. An English teacher might use other ways to succeed teaching and learning of english speaking, such as role-play (Agustina, 2022), youtube (Sari & Margana, 2019), ted talk (Karimah et al., 2022), games (Daulay et al., 2021), local drama (Nurhayati, 2016), improvisations technique (Fauzan, 2014), story telling (Marzuki et al., 2016; Pratwi, 2017), application (Anugrah et al., 2019), zoom (Kaniadewi, 2022), debate (L. Agustina & Bahrani, 2016; Fauzan, 2016), or video-based task (Menggo et al., 2022). English teachers should provide ample opportunities for students to practice speaking, both inside and outside the classroom. They can create a positive and effective learning environment that helps students to develop their speaking skills in a more systematic and enjoyable way. This can be achieved through activities such as role-plays, debates, discussions, and oral presentations etc.

5. Conclusions

The objectives of teaching English Conversation at Oxford Public School are to improve students' understanding of the English language skill and English as a means of communication and to enable the students to be active in practicing the English language. The communicative approach is deemed a success if the teacher understands the student. But, if the teacher is from the same region as the student, the teacher will understand errors resulting from an influence of their first language. This observation may call for new thinking on an adaptation of the communicative approach. The writer observed the percentage of teaching speaking at this school. It can be said that speaking is less because of the minority on reading and writing lessons. The percentage of teaching speaking in the first year students is only 50% of the total material available. It is about 50% because speaking is the second skill that must be mastered by the students. As the result, speaking skills cannot be neglected in the composition of teaching English. From this observation, it can be concluded that this portion is enough because the speaking activity will be integrated with other English skills. The teacher always uses English in the teaching-learning process more than 50% and Hindi language just 20%. It makes students stressed because students do not understand the material given by the lecturers. Speaking class activity is very
important for the students to know the extent because the English language should be mastered by students especially speaking skill. Students are also expected to be active in the speaking class.

References


