

## CHARACTER BUILDING ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH EDP'S ACTIVITY: SEEKING AND INVITING NATIVE SPEAKER

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### Abstract

This paper is aimed to reveal the character building achievement gotten from one of EDP's activities: seeking and inviting native speaker to the campus done by the EFL students in STAIN Bukittinggi. In this activity, the students get along with them and enjoy practicing their English automatically. This activity is useful to build up students' courage, students' self-confidence, students' self-esteem, and overcoming students' anxiety to speak English. Especially in Bukittinggi that has many tourism objects and visitors from all over the world, there is always a big chance for the ELS students to meet and talk with native speakers. When they have the brave to talk face to face with native speakers, they directly have built up their courage to speak English. Besides, the other characters (having self-confidence, having self-esteem, and overcoming the anxiety) are built up as well. Moreover, through the activity of seeking and inviting native speakers provided by EDP, the ELS students are not only active to practice their English but also have chance to build up their characters. They look for native speakers, greet them, talk to them, and take them to walk around together. Finally, this activity is really effective to build up character and improve their speaking skill.

**Keywords:** Character Building, Seeking and Inviting Native Speaker

### A. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, character building has been well applied within learning process at education field in order to get a great learning achievement. Cohen states in Maslow (2011) that when schools make character education integral facets of school life, student achievement increases and school violence decreases. Moreover, he adds that character is at the root of every achievement. The lecturers teach is not only to make the students able in language skills but also soft skills. Especially to the ELS students, language skills refer to students' mastery about reading, speaking, writing, listening, vocabulary, and grammar meanwhile soft skills refer to students' positive character achievement during learning process. Not only building up students' skill, the lecturer also builds students' good character up through positive motivation during lecture. It means the lecturer teaches not only for language skills' mastery but also for building up students' positive character. The way of building students' character may not explicitly stated in the class, but the lecturer makes efforts in order to achieve that the students have a good character at the end of learning process. By helping the students improve their positive character, it is hoped that the students get used to be good in life.

In addition, the purpose of character building in the classroom itself is that to lead the students to continue building up their positive character outside. The level of exposure to a character-building environment does not have to stop when a student leaves the school (Webster, 2012:4). The students do something for themselves outside of class affected by the lecturers' effort at classroom. In speaking class, the students do a self-practice and get their positive character improved. It is not rare that the students discover new positive character during self-practice outside. The students get satisfied with their improvement in speaking skill meanwhile they get some new practicing experiences which help them to build up some characters. For example, self-confidence, courage, self-esteem, and they are capable in overcoming their anxiety.

First, having self-confidence means the students speak without worrying others' perception. Second, having courage means the students use English to communicate in reality. Next, self-esteem can be defined as the way somebody looks into himself. Having good self-esteem means having happiness and satisfaction of own self. Self-esteem is an overall evaluation of oneself in either positive or negative way. Last, seeking and inviting native speakers overcomes students' anxiety (Akhtar and Farid, 2013:1325). Horwitz et al cited that anxiety is a feeling of tension, apprehension and nervousness associated with the situation of learning a foreign language (Juhana, 2012:102). The students who practice their English by talking with native speakers face to face will have their anxiety reduced.

Furthermore, the students who focus on improving their speaking skill do much self-practice. One useful activity can be done by the EFL students is seeking and inviting native speakers. This activity belongs to EDP (English Days Program) that is committed by an English Lecturer in STAIN Bukittinggi. English Days Program (EDP) is the program that created to improve communicative competence and enhance students' confidence in speaking English (Syafri, 2014:1). She adds that in this program, the English students do four activities in order to improve speaking skill: Speaking English, Weekly motivation, vocabulary notebook, and seeking and inviting native speakers.

In line with the explanation above, one of EDP's activities is seeking and inviting native speakers. Seeking and inviting native speakers carries the students to practice their English autonomously outside of classroom. Language teaching requires training and a lot of thinking about our everyday practice (Lasagabaster and Sierra, 2002:137). It needs more struggle to get the student be familiar with the native tone in speaking. Keeping in touch with native speakers can be a helpful way to do in order to improve speaking ability, but the students must have courage to greet the natives on the way through seeking and inviting native speaker activity.

In addition, seeking and inviting native speaker activity leads the students practice their English with native. By seeking and inviting native speakers, the students get an opportunity to develop their English by practicing it with the native (Syafri, 2014:6). This activity seems to be hard if the students lack of willing in improving their speaking skill. That is why the speaking lecturer in STAIN Bukittinggi controls her students by giving motivation in each meeting of learning process. The students are free in choosing whether they enjoy self-practice outside by walking around with native speakers to some places or inviting them into the classroom. The lecturer pleases the students to own a practicing model since they keep practicing their English outside with native. To be brave speaking with native has strengthened student's character.

In short, in the case speaking skill, the students do self-practice not only to get their pronunciation ability and vocabulary mastery improved but also to build up their courage, self-confidence, self-esteem and overcoming students' anxiety to speak. Finally, they are some characters that are unconsciously built up through self-practice outside; seeking and inviting native speakers. The students enjoy their self-practice besides the lecturer helps building up their characters implicitly.

## **B. DISCUSSION**

### **1. Character Building and Achievement**

Character is what carried within oneself as trait. According to Aristotle, there are three levels of character development which have close relation to moral: an ethics of fear, an ethics of shame, and an ethics of wisdom (Vessel and Huit, 2005:1). Homby cites that character is defined as all the qualities and features that make a person, groups of people, and places different from others. It means that people may be different from each other because of character (Djiwandono, 2011:44). Besides, building character means emphasizing positive character traits (Webster, 2014). Pearson & Nicholson states that there are three interconnected areas that represent good character: self, others, and the community (Larson: ii). They add that students' positive character can be looked at students' self-discipline, responsibility, trustworthiness, courage, and self-discipline. In addition, Pearson & Nicholson state that character traits such as: honesty, respect, empathy, kindness, and caring play (Larson: ii-iii). Broadly say, character building means the effort that is done in order to make oneself own character traits.

When the effort done to the students is successful, the students turn to be better in character traits. The characters that are built during emphasizing the positive action within learning process are meant as achievement. The success of education is the collaboration of the intelligence and the character of the students (Syafri, 2014:9). In seeking and inviting native speakers, the lecturer challenges the students to recognize their courage, their self-esteem, their self-confidence, and also to be able in lowering anxiety. The students are not only aware of their own ability to use the English in real conversation with native but also build some character traits up.

### **2. English Days Program (EDP)**

English Days Program (EDP) is the program which encourages the students in English Educational Section at STAIN Bukittinggi to practice their English among English students by following some activities; speaking English, weekly motivation, vocabulary notebook, and seeking and inviting native speaker (Syafri, 2014). According to her, this program is aimed to improve students' speaking skill in communication and students confidence by applying the English inside and outside of the classroom.

EDP is based on two approaches in teaching language, namely Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Community Language Learning (CLL). The CLT approach emphasizes the students to use the language rather than know the language and CLL primarily directed to reduce anxiety of the students to communicate in a foreign language where the teachers' role is to be a counselor for the students. Besides, Richard states that Community Language Learning (CLL) was designed to ease the anxiety of Foreign Language Learners in educational contexts and promote group dynamics (Syafri, 2014:2-3).

### **3. Seeking and Inviting Native Speaker in EDP**

Native speakers are those who speak on their own mother tongue. The native speakers of English are those who speak English as mother tongue. They speak English naturally in conversations. Native speakers obviously spoke English as a natural means of communication (Madrid, 2004:130). The well-known countries which E The students can practice their English with native speakers come from such countries.

In seeking and inviting native speakers, both lecturer and students are allowed to take a part. Murcia proposes that the teacher can invite native English speaker to the class to give speeches, talk, or presentation (Syafri, 2014:11). Broadly, if the lecturer meets a native, she has a right to invite him into classroom as well as students. Both students and lecturer practice their English in this situation.

Besides, the lecturer motivates the ELS students to seek and invite the native speakers outside of classroom considering the fact that there are many visitors that come into Bukittinggi. It is the city where STAIN takes a place. There is always possibility that some of them are native speakers. To get along with them is not only to practice English only but also to share cultures.

#### **4. Types of Character Building Achievement by Seeking and Inviting Native Speaker**

Some characters building achieved through seeking and inviting native speaker activity:

##### **a. Build up Students' Self-confidence**

Students' self-confidence to speak English will be improved when they have been familiar with native speaking style. By having self-confidence, the students keep speaking English in real conversation without worrying others' perception. Self-confident learners usually take risks at speaking another language even if they do commit mistakes (Al-Hebaish, 2012:61). Self-confidence is another factor that affects students' achievement in language learning (Kamali, 2012:3). The students with high self-confidence in practicing their English have great possibility to be a success language learner.

Some characteristic of those who have high self-confidence proposed by H. Wright:

- 1) They are ambitious. They want more from life than existence or survival. They can envision themselves in better circumstances and surroundings.
- 2) They are goal oriented. They seek a challenge of completing and setting new goals for themselves. They are not especially competitive, except against themselves. They enjoy breaking their own records.
- 3) They have learned to communicate. They know how to ask for what they want and to hear advice and counsel. It is less important for them to be right than to be effective. They listen more than they speak.
- 4) They are loving and kind. Those people who have a good inner self-image form nourishing relationships instead of toxic ones. They have learned to detach from relationships which do not allow them to be authentic.
- 5) They are attractive and open to others. Self-confident people are usually drawn to one another. They vibrate their confidence in a way that attracts good things and good people to them. Being attractive does not necessarily mean physically attractive in the usual sense of the word, but rather spiritually beautiful.

In brief, seeking and inviting native speaker activity gives a wide chance to the students to make positive change toward their self-confidence. When they are practically active in speaking English with native, they will have tougher self-confidence to speak English. Considering this, self-confidence is intended as a proof of successful seeking and inviting native speaker activity.

##### **b. Build up Students' Self-esteem**

The students assume that they have achieved the highest level of success language learner when they talk to native often. They will not underestimate their own capability in English when they feel satisfied with what they have achieved during learning language. This satisfaction is defined as self-esteem. Besides, self-esteem is a psychological and social phenomenon in which an individual evaluates his/her competence and own self according to some values, which may result in different emotional states, and which becomes developmentally stable but is still open to variation depending on personal circumstances (Rubio, 2007:5). Ehrman and Dörnyei (1998) point out that according to motivation theory, the highest human priority is the need for self-acceptance (Rubio, 2007:3). Self-acceptance can be defined as one great motivation for the ELS students to improve their speaking ability.

Learners with low self-esteem are believed to display more inhibition, leading to the building of defenses and alienation from the target culture, as they are less able to tolerate threats to their existence (Chong, 2012). Moreover, Alatorre, et.al. propose that self-esteem is always a significant factor in the level of accomplishment of all students (Noguoras, 1996:4). Moreover, low self-esteem is widely recognized as a factor that is associated with poor educational attainment and non-participation in education and training (James and Nightingale,....:3). Thus, self-esteem is like a self-motivation in language learning which crucially needs to be well improved within one self.

##### **c. Overcoming Students' Anxiety**

Anxiety is a real obstacle for the students to be achieve a success in language learning. The students feel worry and fear of practicing their English. Gregersen, 2005 cites that learners who feel anxious in their foreign language learning may find their study less enjoyable (Marwan, 2007: 38). Brown (1994) lists anxiety as one of personality factors of second language success in oral performance (Kazumata, Vol.27). In speaking, when the students are anxious to speak, they lose the chance to have better speaking ability. MacIntyre & Gardner, cited

by Brown, 1994 cite that anxiety has a negative effect on the language learning process (Kazumata, Vol.27). When a student feels anxious to speak they sometimes lose words. Thus, anxiety means as a real obstacle in language learning.

In further, a beneficial trait that helps the students in language learning is positive self-image or self-esteem that is mentioned at previous part. It helps the students reduce their anxiety. Greenberg et al., 1992, "People are motivated to maintain a positive self-image because self-esteem protects them from anxiety" (Tseng, 2012:75). Seeking and inviting native speaker activity is meant to help the students to have a positive self-image. By involving the students to seeking and inviting native speaker activity, it is hope that they can lower their anxiety gradually. When the students have no anxiety in language learning, they will enjoy speaking English.

### C. CONCLUSION

Seeking and inviting native speaker is one of EDP's activities. It leads the ELS students to speak English with native. This activity is aimed to help ELS students to build up their self-confidence; the students speak English without worrying others' perception of their English ability, self-esteem; the students have satisfaction on their own ability in speaking English, and to be able to overcome their anxiety in using a language communicatively. In brief, this activity is not only intended to improve students' English speaking skill but also to improve students' positive character.

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