THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TOURIST HUNTING PROJECT IN IMPROVING STUDENTS’ ENGLISH COMMUNICATION SKILL

Dewi Christa Kobis
(STMIK Multicom Bolaang Mongondow/dechriskobis@gmail.com)

Abstract
Language practice through direct communication will develop students’ English Communication Skills especially when they practice it with native speakers. This study aims to find students’ level of interest in performing Tourist Hunting Project (THP) and the effectiveness of THP in improving students’ English Communication Skills (ECS). This study is a quantitative study by using SPSS 16 to calculate data from questionnaires and using Likert scale which is proposed by Pallant to interpret data. There are two types of questionnaires for this study. The first consisted of 5 questions to measure students’ level of interest in performing THP. Those were filled in by respondents before performing the THP while the second ones which consisted of 10 questions to measure the effectiveness of THP in improving students’ ECS were filled in after THP was performed by respondents as the requirement of passing a specific subject. The first finding showed point of 3.76 in the measurement of students’ interest in performing THP. This point is indicated as high based on a Likert scale. Thus, this study perceives that respondents were interested in performing THP. The second finding of this study showed the point of 3.65 which showed that the effectiveness of THP in improving students’ ECS is categorized high and respondents expressed positive attitudes towards THP in achieving their goals to improve their ECS.

Keywords:
Tourist Hunting Project; English communication skills; Native English speakers; English as a foreign language

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A. Introduction
As a lingua franca, English has a role as medium of exchanging communication globally. It tends to conceptualize communication which is full of meaning. Therefore, it has become a basic educational skill. It means English is a basic knowledge that people need to acquire because it will be useful for international communication. In fact, every subject related to communication skill has obtained attention in educational field. Due to the necessity of being proficient in English for global communication purpose, people in educational field have tried to

find efficient and effective methods for mastering it. There are various ways of English learning and one approach that might be considered to improve the English proficiency is through proper communication practice.

Language teachers plan their instruction with the goal of increasing learners’ communicative skill. Language practice through direct communication will develop students’ English Communication Skills (ECS) especially when they practice their English with Native English Speakers (NES). Particularly, it is important for students to learn English from native speakers and they must serve as a standard and model. By having interaction with the NES through direct communication, the students’ ECS will be automatically improved in various aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, listening and speaking ability as well. By considering the necessity of effective English communication in improving students’ ECS, and because language teachers also need to be creative and practical in teaching foreign language in terms to attract students’ attention in learning the language, the researcher managed to design a project called “Tourist Hunting Project” (THP) on her class as the final project that students need to conduct in order to get final grade to pass a particular subject.

Since English is a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia, it is particularly rare to find English communication outside English classroom or English community. The local people might not use English as their medium of communication. This condition might also cause English students to be shy and afraid to practice their English. The lack of English utilization in daily life among non-native English speakers, might give hard time for the English learners for practicing their English and this condition may cause their ECS becomes diminished.

THP is designed to prevent this problem. THP is a project basically designed for students to practice their English with NES. Students would be assigned to find international tourists around Manado city and interview them several questions related to tourism issue, and then try to interact with NES expressively. The selection of tourism issue and the implementation of THP as an approach in improving students’ ECS is also influenced by the condition of Manado where it has been reported that

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6 Febi Nur Biduri, ‘The Effect of Teacher’s Creativity on Native Indonesian Students’

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since 2015, tourists’ arrival in Manado has increased to 241%.⁸ Because of the high tendency of tourists’ visit in Manado, researcher thought that this project might be feasible to be implemented in the real practice and students would be easy to find their hunting targets (tourists) to conduct THP. In particular, this project is necessary to be done since it is accessible for students and specifically it will provide concrete proof through experimental project whether communicating with NES gives more contributions in improving students’ ECS or not.

By reviewing the clarifications above, this study tends to focus on its two purposes. The first is to measure the level of students’ interest in speaking with NES through THP and the second is to measure the effectiveness of the project in improving EFL students’ ECS. First and foremost, based on the literature review and findings, this study is expected to give a specific contribution for the English teachers or lecturers to consider that speaking English with NES is also a necessity of the English students in practicing their English and it might be effective to improve their ECS.

As EFL learners, it is undeniable to have expectation to listen from and to speak with a native speaker of a language that they are learning in order to be motivated to achieve their dreams to speak and sound like the natives. Most of Indonesian students are highly interested and motivated in learning English because they want to interact with foreigners.⁹ Besides, the role of foreigner especially native speaker for the EFL students is necessary to motivate students to maintain their interest of the foreign language that they are currently learning.

Rubin and Thompson stated that: In fact, research has shown a definite relationship between attitudes and success when foreign language learners have an opportunity to know people who speak the language they are studying. Such positive attitudes usually help learners maintain their interest long enough to achieve their goals.¹⁰ It means, the presence and the role of NES in improving students’ ECS is not only important in building students’ motivation in learning English but also will lead them to keep their motivation longer and this condition might cause the students to achieve their goals in the area of language learning.

The popularity of NES among the EFL students is predictable due to reality that the NES is an original resource of the language that the EFL students

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¹⁰ Joan Rubin and Irene Thompson, How to Be a More Successful Language Learner, 2nd ed. (Boston: Cengage Learning, 1994), 6.
study. Murtiana distinctively explained that:

“When an institution has a native speaker, the atmosphere of learning is usually different from those which do not have a native speaker. It is believed that native speaker can boost students’ enthusiasm in learning English as a foreign language. Beside it is a rare chance, students can feel the benefits of learning from “first-hand source”; among them is exposure to the correct pronunciation, vocabulary, appropriate expressions, common idioms and slang used in English which may not always be found in textbooks. Moreover, learning with native speaker can make students feel more motivated to improve their ability in English”.11

Statement above clarified that NES really plays a crucial role in boosting the atmosphere of language learning and their presence might be beneficial for students in terms of being corrector for their pronunciation, expression, idioms, which are not always commonly found in textbook. Murtiana’s statement also strengthened the statement of Rubin and Thompson where they said that NES might improve students’ motivation in learning English. This motivation might also be effected by students’ wish to interact directly with foreigners like what had been mentioned by Jefiza as well.

For addition, TESOL International Association claimed that the native speakers will give the authentic condition for the students regarding the English communication itself since they perform real communication and it will cause students to realize that the language that they are studying does exist and being implemented like what the native speakers perform. Besides, the presence of the native speakers will make students to use English as the medium of real communication.12

Authenticity relates to the language produced by native speakers for native speakers in a particular language community.13 For the last, Shvidko in 2012 also found that it is generally anticipated that interaction with native speakers would result in a greater language gain than interaction with other language learners.14 This statement strengthened that the presence of the NES for EFL students is crucial since their existence and presence will make the EFL students become fully aware of the existence of the language that they are particularly studying and also help them to have a real communication of the language in authentic practice.

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14 Elena Vladimirovna Shvidko, ‘Students’ Perspectives on Language Use Outside the Classroom in an Intensive English Program’ (Master Thesis, Brigham Young University, 2012).
One strategy that can be used to learn a new language is “communication strategy; willingness to use the language in real communication”. It shows that people who want to master a new language need to have motivation in performing real communication.

Proficiency mastery in learning second or foreign language will be easily and more efficient to be obtained through interaction. Interaction (conversation) is also a medium of language practice and a means by which language acquisition occurs. Unfortunately, most of EFL students are anxious to practice their speaking skill because they are afraid to make mistakes and will be mocked or humiliated by their friends and even the society. This kind of attitude is called Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety (FLSA). This attitude needs to be eliminated because when people want to study a particular language, they should experience the real conversation through listening as well with speaking. Oral communication skills mean both speaking and listening to oral language, both talking and listening are lifelong activities and probably our most important communication tool. Thus, in terms to start to communicate, we cannot only listen, but we need to speak as well in order to create a proper conversation and appropriate mutual understanding.

Successful English learners also improve their English pronunciation mastery by being brave to practice a direct conversation with NES. Tran-Hoang-Thu conducted a research in 2009 entitled; Learning Strategies Used by Successful Language Learners and she reported an experience from one of her respondent:

“She also learns to pronounce well through communication with other people. For her, watching TV and listening to the radio facilitate pronunciation learning, but they are passive learning. Miranda believes that learning must be interactive, so that she can get feedback quickly, and she can improve her pronunciation more quickly. Another strategy she uses to improve her pronunciation is to find “a real native speaker of English to talk to.”

Based on the clarification of one of Thu's respondent who is a successful language learner, we found that direct communication with NES will improve the pronunciation mastery because a direct communication is categorized as

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19 Tran-Hoang Thu, ‘Learning Strategies Used by Successful Language Learners’ (Alliant International University, 2009).
interactive practice and it contributes natives' feedback directly where the feedback can be beneficial for English learners to improve their communication skill. That is why direct conversation is a necessity in improving English Communication Skills.

Several English instructors tend to centralize EFL students' learning activities and process inside classroom. However, leading EFL students to learn English and practice their English outside classroom will give them prospective benefit. Cundick stated that there is a positive relationship between the English usage outside the classroom and the improvement of English proficiency. Speaking English outside classroom will also help EFL students to learn the mastery of English faster than learning inside the classroom. It shows that having interaction outside the classroom is not only effective in improving English proficiency but it also makes EFL learners use less time to master English rather than learning inside the classroom. Specifically, outside-the-classroom work makes learners have more direct channels for receiving feedback. It can also help to develop their sociolinguistic, strategic and cultural competences, and learners' confidence in being capable of interacting successfully in the target language. Therefore, practicing English outside classroom is highly beneficial for the EFL learners.

The role of English as one of international languages plays an important role in tourism industry. The language of tourism is an element of inestimable value between tourists and the place they are visiting and, above all, a joint element between the local and foreign cultures involved. Consequently, this situation requires high quality tourist texts, especially translations, so as to guarantee effective and clear communication between local people and culture and real or potential tourists. That is why a role of a particular and specific language that can unite the tourists and the local citizens such as English is important in this issue. Whether it is to promote a nation's culture or doing business across nation, people might consider English as the best medium to communicate internationally wherever they go. When the tourists visit another country where the locals do not speak the tourists' language, English has been the first choice to communicate with the domestic people. English has also become predominant in the area of

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21 Shvidko, 'Students' Perspectives on Language Use Outside the Classroom in an Intensive English Program'.
23 Isabel Durán Muñoz, 'Analysing Common Mistakes in Translations of Tourist Texts (Spanish, English and German)', Onomazein 26, no. 2 (2012): 335–49.
tourism in terms of communicating, negotiating and also doing transaction with the tourists. It shows that the essential medium to approach foreign tourists is English as a media of international communication. This thus, using tourism issue in approaching tourists who are native English speakers is a relevant approach to be used by the students to interact with the tourists and learning from the expressions that native speakers possess in order to improve their communication skills in English.

B. Method

This study employed quantitative approach. Best and Kahn stated that quantitative research data is “explored through numbers”. This study can be called a quantitative study because this study focused on the measurement of the level of students’ interest in the implementation of THP and the effectiveness of THP in improving students’ ECS via questionnaire and calculated them in a software called SPSS 16. The respondents of this study were English major undergraduate students in the Faculty of Humanities of Universitas Sam Ratulangi and who took Oral English 2 subject. They were enrolled on the even semester of 2017-2018 academic year.

This study used original questionnaire which was used for the first time and pilot study was done to test the feasibility of every statement of the questionnaires because pilot study is crucial to prove the credibility of the questionnaire during the investigation. There were 25 students participated for pilot study. It was half of the total respondents that were used for real study and were ideal numbers for pilot study. Pilots comprise a risk mitigation strategy to reduce the chance of failure in a larger project.

The data was gathered by using the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. This first part consisted of 5 questions about the level of students’ interest for the implementation of THP as their final project. The second part consisted of 10 questions related to the effectiveness of THP in improving students’ ECS.

For data interpretation, the researcher used Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, 16th Edition). MEAN Score was used to answer the problems of the study. In order to find the students’ level of interest in performing THP and the effectiveness of THP in improving students’ ECS, the researcher interpreted the results based on Likert scale proposed by Pallant\(^{30}\) as follow:

4.50–5.00 = Strongly Agree (Very High)
3.50–4.49 = Agree (High)
2.50–3.49 = Neutral (Moderate)
1.50–1.49 = Disagree (Low)
1.00–1.49 = Strongly Disagree (Very Low)

C. Findings

1. The Level of Students’ Interest in Speaking with Native English Speakers through Tourist Hunting Project (THP)

The result showed that the mean score of students’ level of interest in speaking with Native English Speakers through THP based on the frequency was 3.76 (see Table 4.1). The mean score fell between 3.50 and 4.49; this shows that the level of students’ interest is high based on this study’s interpretation scale. It means, based on the students’ perceptions, they agree that they are interested in performing THP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students’ Interest in THP</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. The Level of Tourist Hunting Project (THP)’s Effectiveness in Improving Students’ English Communication Skills (ECS)

The result showed that the mean score of the effectiveness of THP in improving students’ ECS was 3.65 (see Table 4.2). The mean score fell between 3.50 and 4.49; this indicates high level based on this study’s interpretation scale. This finding proposed that the students had high level in perceiving that THP is effective medium to improve their ECS. It means that they had positive attitude towards the implementation of THP and the respondents also perceived that THP is effective in improving their ECS (referring to the statements on the questionnaire). It also means that THP can be considered by other English teachers to be used as a medium to improve their students’ ECS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The effectiveness of THP in improving ECS</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3.65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The 50 respondents of this research who took Oral English 2 Subject at the even semester of 2017/2018 academic year and also implemented THP as their final project in order to pass Oral English 2 Subject have participated in the evaluation of THP by filling in the questionnaires that have been divided into two sections. As it has been mentioned on the Methodology Section that the first questionnaire was designed to find whether the respondents (students) themselves think or perceive that the implementation of THP is important and necessary to improve their ECS or not and whether they were interested in participating of the implementation of THP and experiencing THP by themselves in real conversation with NES or not. Based on the finding that has been calculated through Mean and had been interpreted by using Likert scale, the Mean Score reached point of 3,76. Based on Likert Scale’s calculation, the scores between 3,50 – 4,49 are considered as high where the interpretation of this study indicated high as “agree” for the statements that have been written on the questionnaires where by reading each statement, students needed to choose their option from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

The first questionnaire that had been distributed to the respondents and they filled in before the implementation of THP showed that the respondents agreed that they were interested in participating THP and they also had high level of interest to experience the project. This finding evaluated that students also perceive that interaction between NES outside the classroom through THP is interesting and direct communication with NES is still considered as basic needs by the students themselves that they need to do in order to improve their ECS.

In terms of the implementation of THP, the respondents have shared their thoughts regarding their opinion whether the implementation of THP had worked properly to improve their ECS with NES in direct communication or not through the second questionnaire that they filled in after the implementation of THP. The Mean Score for second questionnaire showed the point of 3,65 which categorized as high based on Likert Scale where calculated the scores between 3,50 – 4,49 are considered as high. The point of 3,65 showed that the respondents of this study agree that THP is a project that may improve their ECS. The respondents have positive attitude towards THP and based on the statements on the questionnaires, the respondents claim that THP played an important role in improving their listening and speaking skills and also vocabulary mastery. This also means that the existence and presence of NES is still a necessary in order to help the EFL students to improve their ECS and a project that can be executed outside the classroom by having light and general conversation such as tourism issue is a possible method that can be used to
open a way for EFL students to interact with NES in a structural way.

D. Conclusion and Recommendation

1. Conclusion

This study discusses about the students’ interest in performing THP and the effectiveness of THP in improving students’ ECS. From the finding and discussion, it can be inferred that students perceive THP as an interesting project which is possible to be considered as a medium to train their ECS. The findings also proposed that the students who have performed THP have perceived that THP is effective in improving their ECS and this project is suggested to be performed in the future in order to keep training their ECS to be better and reach the perfection as they expect themselves to sound like the native speakers. Based on the statements on the questionnaire, the findings indicate that THP is useful in improving students’ ECS in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary, listening, and speaking. This study also proposes that the students have agreed that having direct conversation with the natives is more effective rather than communicate with non-natives although the language that they both use is English.

2. Recommendation

This study only focuses on students’ interest for performing THP and the effectiveness of THP in improving students’ ECS. It is highly recommended for further researchers to add several elements of the correlation related to this study such as students’ preference in the selection of the interviewee in performing THP, students’ performance and attitudes while performing THP, or students’ grammar mistakes in performing THP. The researcher also suggests the further researcher to conduct THP not only by using native speakers whose mother tongues are English but also other foreigners who are able to speak English. At the end, the THP is expected to be implemented more than once on the further studies so that the validity of the data findings will be more accurate.

References


Biduri, Febi Nur. ‘The Effect of Teacher’s Creativity on Native Indonesian Students’ Success in Learning


**APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX 1**

First Questionnaire:
The Level of Students' Interest in Applying Tourist Hunting Project (THP)

**Instruction:**
Please give check (√) to the column that you think which is the most appropriate with the statement.

| No | Statements                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Very Agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Very Disagree |
|----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------|---------|----------|---------------|---------------|
APPENDIX 2
Second Questionnaire:
The Level of the Effectiveness of Tourist Hunting Project in Improving EFL Students’ Communicative Competence

**Instruction:**
Please give check (✓) to the column that you think which is the most appropriate with the statement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Very Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Very Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Communicate with the native English speaker through THP has improved my listening and speaking ability.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Communicate with the native English speaker through THP has improved my English pronunciation to sound like the natives.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Communicate with the native English speakers through THP has enriched my vocabulary list.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Communicate with the native English speaker through THP has trained me to use any vocabulary that I memorize in direct conversation accurately, effectively, and efficiently.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>It has been easier for me to realize my mistakes in speaking English when I had direct conversation with native English speaker through THP.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Native English speaker helped me to correct my English vocabulary and pronunciation directly during our conversation in the interview section of THP.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The direct correction from native English speaker through THP has helped me to remember the right vocabulary and pronunciation better.

Having direct or face to face conversation with native English speaker through THP have trained me to interact in real English communication.

Having direct conversation with native English speaker through THP was more effective for me in improving my communication skills rather than having direct conversation with non-native English speaker although we both speak English.

I have considered THP as a useful method that I can use again in the future as the method to improve my English communication skills.

APPENDIX 3

The Result of the MEAN of “Level of Interest of Tourist Hunting Project” and “The Effectiveness of Tourist Hunting Project in Improving Communication Skill”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>mlevelofinterest</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>.638</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>meffectivenessofthp</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>.708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valid N (listwise)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>.708</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).