

**ENGLISH STUDENTS' STRUGGLES TO ACHIEVE SPEAKING FLUENCY AT SPEECH
DEBATING COMMUNITY STUDENTS IN ENGLISH EDUCATION PROGRAM OF
MUHAMMADIYAH UNIVERSITY OF BENGKULU**

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Abstract

The objective of this research is to find out the students' struggles to achieve speaking fluency at Speech Debating Community students in English Education Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu. This research is a descriptive quantitative research which attempts to find out the struggles that frequently used by the students to achieve speaking fluency at Speech Debating Community English Education Program students of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu. Subject of the research is the whole students of Speech Debating Community at English Language Education Study Program of UMB Academic Year 2016/2017. The students consisted of 14 students of Speech Debating Community. The instruments of this research are a questionnaire and interview. The result showed there were seven struggle which were used by speech Debating Community students in English Education Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu to achieve speaking fluency, they were library experiences, course learning, art, music and theatre, campus facilities, clubs and organization, personal experiences, and speaking experiences.

Key words: *students' struggle, speaking fluency, debating community.*

I. Introduction

English Speaking is a compulsory course in any university in Indonesia offering English program as a major. Those universities may have different classes and focuses on the speaking courses but they share the same idea that speaking courses are necessary for the students. It is because in daily interaction most activities are accomplished through speaking. Furthermore, good speaking skill establishes good first impression to the listeners and interlocutors at any speaking demanded situation of non-native speakers.

Along the history of English language teaching and learning, speaking has always been considered as the most essential skill to be mastered. The ability to speak English as the target language is the parameter of successful language learning. In other words, the poor speaking skill is one of the indicators of failure in foreign language learning. The real condition is that most students consider speaking skill still as the most complex and difficult skill to master (Hinkel, 2005: 485). It could be seen from the reality that though student gets good score in English, it does not guarantee that he/ she is able to speak English fluently in daily

communication (Umasitah: 2014). In fact many students find difficulties in speaking English in the classroom or outside the classroom.

Brown (2001) proposed four aspects of speaking skills namely fluency, accuracy, pronunciation, and Vocabulary. However, the most important aspect in speaking was fluency. Fluency is the ability to speak quickly and automatically that has signs including the speed of speaking and few pauses which are used to characterize a person's level of communication proficiency (Harris and Hodges, 1995). In this definition, a person is said to be a fluent speaker of a language if he/she can use the grammatical structures and patterns accurately, quickly, and automatically at the normal conversation speed when they are needed. Fluency is considered to be the ability to keep going when speaking spontaneously. It also has signs that indicate that the speaker does not spend a lot of time to search the language items needed to express the message.

Good speaking fluency makes one's English proficiency much better and sounds slicker, more natural, and more impressive for the listeners. It also provides more effective communication due to the absence of speaking disturbances. Koponen in Luoma (2004:88) says

that fluency is about the flow, smoothness, the rate of speech, the length of utterances, the connectedness of ideas, the absence of excessive pausing, and also the absence of disturbing hesitation markers. Similarly, Lennon in Cucchiarini, Strik, and Boves (2002:263) defines that fluency is the speaker's ability to produce speech at the same tempo with the native speakers without the problems of silent pauses, hesitations, filled pauses, self-corrections, repetitions, and false starts. The researcher believes this definition of fluency is addressed to non-native language learner. So, a very good foreign learner is able to speak like the native speakers of the language they are learning.

However, speaking is the most difficult skill for English foreign learners. It was supported by Hinkel (2005), he said that speaking skill is considered as a hard skill to master-the most complex and difficult skill to master. The element of speaking is not only about to speak in English with appropriate grammar, beyond everything is to build students' confidence first to speak, because the problems that students faced in speaking English is their less of confidence to speak and they are afraid of making errors or inaccuracy while speaking besides other problems like their lack of vocabulary and poor pronunciation. According to dash (2012), there are some problems that may caused low ability in speaking such as the students' knowledge, students' motivation, students' linguistic knowledge, students' personality, and speaking materials.

Based on the preliminary study which was done by the researcher, it was found that there are still many students who can not speak English fluently in the classroom. Therefore, to achieve a good fluency in speaking English, the students need more struggle inside or outside the classroom. The activities of students' struggle could be done in everywhere; in school or neighbourhoods. The students' struggle is the motivation process of actions and goals design to achieve their need. Struggle is a kind of behavior activities in learning process. Struggle rises from the motivation process. According to Schunk, Pintrich & Meece (2008:4) stated that "motivation is a process rather than a product. As process we do not observe motivation directly but rather we infer it from actions (e.g., choice of tasks, struggle, and persistence)".

Motivation provided a direction and intensity to achieve the goals.

According to Gonyea et al (2003) in College Student Experiences Questionnaire Norms for the Fourth Edition, there are seven main struggles that can help the students to achieve a good fluency. They are: library activities, course learning, art, music, and theatre, campus facilities, club and organization, personal experiences, and speaking experiences. Therefore, to know what kind of struggle that frequently used by the students, the researcher will conduct a research entitled English Students' Struggle to Deal with Speaking Fluency at English Education Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu. Based on the research questions, the objective of this research is to find out the students' struggles to achieve speaking fluency at Speech Debating Community students in English Education Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu.

II. Methodology

This research was a descriptive quantitative research which attempts to find out the struggles that frequently used by the students to achieve speaking fluency at Speech Debating Community English Education Program students of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu. Tracy (2012) states that quantitative research methods are primarily concerned with gathering and working with data that is structured and can be represented numerically. Subject of the research was the whole students of Speech Debating Community at English Language Education Study Program of UMB Bengkulu Academic Year 2016/2017. The students consisted of 14 students of Speech Debating Community. The instruments of this research are questionnaire and interview.

III. Result and Discussion

Results

This research was done to find out the students' struggles to achieve speaking fluency at Speech Debating Community students in English Education Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu. There were 7 struggle in learning speaking based on Gonyea et al

(2003). Each of struggle consists of some questions, therefore the total of items in questionnaire was 24 questions. The questionnaire was divided into 4 scales; always, often, seldom, and never. Moreover, based on the data analysis procedure the questionnaire result was divided into two categories; positive (always and often) and negative (seldom and never).

a. Library Experience

There are four activities in this scale. They are; used the library as a quiet place to speak, to read or to study that you bought with. Found some learning English websites while browsing in the library. Used an index or database (computer, card catalog, etc) to find speaking material. Made a judgment about the quality of information obtained from the library websites or other resources. The students often used library experience as the struggle in speaking for speech. There were 50% of students answered often. Thus, there were 75% of students answered library experience positively.

b. Course Learning

There are five activities. They are completed the assigned speaking for class. Took detailed note during class. Tried to see how different facts and ideas fit together. Summarized major points and information from your class note. Worked on a class assignment, project, or presentation with other students. Applied material learned in a class to other areas (your job or internship, other courses, relationship with friends, family, co-worker, etc). Used information or experience from other areas of your life (job, internship, interaction with other) in class discussions or assignments. The students always used course learning as the second struggle in speaking for speech. There were 51,43% of students answered always and 42,86% of students answered often. It can be concluded that mostly the students answered positively toward the use of course learning.

c. Art, Music, Theatre

There are some activities. They are; talked about art (painting, sculpture, artists, etc) or the theater (plays, musicals, dance, etc) with other students, friends, or family members. Talked about music or musicians (traditional and modern) with other students, friends, or

family members. Discussed the opinions of art, music, or drama critics. Went to an art exhibit/gallery or a play, dance, or other drama performance, on or off the campus. Participated in some art activity (painting, pottery, drawing) or theater event, or worked on some theatrical production (acted, danced, worked on scenery, etc), on or off the campus. Attended a concert or other music event, on or off the campus. Participated in some music activity (orchestra, chorus, dance, etc) on or off the campus. The students often used art, music, and theatre as the struggle in speaking for speech. There were 59,52% of students answered often. Thus, there were more than 75% of students answered art, music, and theatre positively.

d. Campus Facilities

There are three activities. Met other students at some campus locations like hall, canteen, secretariat organization (HIMA) for a discussion. Went to a lecture seminar, workshop. Used a campus learning lab as place to improve speaking skill. Followed a regular program of English speaking communication. The students always used campus facilities as the next struggle in speaking for speech. There were 50,00% of students answered often and 21,43% of students answered always. It can be concluded that mostly the students answered positively toward the use of campus facilities.

e. Clubs and Organization

There are three activities in this scale. They are; attended a meeting of a campus club, organization, or student government group. Worked on a campus committee like AIESEC, English student organization (ESA), or project (publications, student government, special event, etc). Worked on an off-campus committee, organization like KEY (Khatulistiwa English Youth) or project (civic group, religion group, community event, etc). Met with a faculty member or staff advisor to discuss the activities of a group or organization. Managed or provided leadership discussion/ speech for a club or organization, on or off the campus. The students often used club and organization as the struggle in speaking for speech. There were 59,52% of students answered often. Thus, there were more than 90% of students answered club and organization positively.

f. Personal Experiences

There are four activities. They are; discussed with another student, friend, or family member why some people get smoothly speaking and others do not. Identified with a character in a book, movie, or television show. Asked a friend to tell you what he or she really thought about your speech or role play. Meanwhile, there were two activities categorized as low effort; Taken a test to measure your speaking abilities. Talked with an academic advisor about your personal concern in speaking English. The students always used personal experience as the next struggle in speaking for speech. There were 50,00% of students answered often and 44,64% of students answered always. It can be concluded that mostly the students answered positively toward the use of personal experience.

g. Speaking Experiences

There are four activities in this scale. They are; used dictionary or thesaurus to look up the proper meaning of words. Thought about grammar, sentence structure, word choice, and sequence of ideas or point as you were speaking. Asked other people to listen when you speak to see if it was clear to them. Asked an instructor or staff member for advice and help to improve your speaking. The students often used speaking experience as the struggle in speaking for speech. There were 48,21% of students answered always. Thus, there were more than 90% of students answered speaking experience positively.

The conclusion of each items of students' struggles in speaking will be showed in the table below.

Table 1 Summary of Questionnaire Result

No	Speaking Struggle	Positive	Negative
		Always + Often	Seldom + Never
1	Library Experiences	75.00	25.00
2	Course Learning	94.29	5.71
3	Art, Music, Theatre	83.33	16.67
4	Campus Facilities	71.43	28.57

5	Clubs and Organization	90.48	9.52
6	Personal Experience	94.64	5.36
7	Speaking Experiences	94.64	5.36

The percentage in positive and negative column are found from the amount of percentages always and often for positive column and seldom and never for negative column. The percentages are got based on previous tables of each struggle items. The summary of the questionnaire result revealed that there were 94.64% of students used personal and speaking experiences as the struggle in speaking. Moreover, there were 94.29% of students who responded positive for course learning. However, to see the dominant struggle for students in speaking skill, the researcher concluded in the following chart.

Discussion

The finding of this research was there were seven struggles which were used by Speech Debating Community students in English Education Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu to achieve speaking fluency, they were library experiences, course learning, art, music and theatre, campus facilities, clubs and organization, personal experiences, and speaking experiences. Moreover, the result of interview also revealed that mostly the students' struggle in learning speaking by watching television, talking together, listening music, taking English course, and finding some English material through internet.

The detail description of the result, first, the students often used library experience as the struggle in speaking for speech. There were 50% of students answered often. Second, mostly the students always used course learning as the second struggle in speaking for speech. There were 51,43% of students answered always and 42,86% of students answered often. It can be concluded that mostly the students answered positively toward the use of library experience and course learning because they taught that they can learn more new vocabularies to speak by reading book in the library and practice their speaking in a course learning.

Third, the students often used art, music, and theatre as the struggle in speaking for speech. There were 59,52% of students answered often. Thus, there were more than 75% of students answered art, music, and theatre positively. Fourth, mostly the students always used campus facilities as the next struggle in speaking for speech. There were 50,00% of students answered often and 21,43% of students answered always. It can be concluded that mostly the students answered positively toward the use of campus facilities.

Fifth, the students often used club and organization as the struggle in speaking for speech. There were 59,52% of students answered often. Thus, there were more than 90% of students answered club and organization positively. Sixth, mostly the students always used personal experience as the next struggle in speaking for speech. There were 50,00% of students answered often and 44,64% of students answered always. It can be concluded that mostly the students answered positively toward the use of personal experience. And the last, the students often used speaking experience as the struggle in speaking for speech. There were 48,21% of students answered always. Thus, there were more than 90% of students answered speaking experience positively.

However, the students are dominantly used personal and speaking experiences as the struggle in speaking. It was in line with five activities in personal experiences according to Gonyea et al (2003). They are; discussed with another student, friend, or family member why some people get smoothly speaking and others do not. Identified with a character in a book, movie, or television show. Asked a friend to tell you what he or she really thought about your speech or role play. Meanwhile, there were two activities categorized as low effort; Taken a test to measure your speaking abilities. Talked with an academic advisor about your personal concern in speaking English.

Moreover, Gonyea et al (2003) also mentioned some activities in speaking experiences. They are; used dictionary or thesaurus to look up the proper meaning of words. Though about grammar, sentence structure, word choice, and sequence of ideas or point as you were speaking. Asked other people to listen when you speak to see if it was clear to them. Asked an instructor or staff member for advice and help to improve your speaking.

This research findings also confirmed a result of study from Wardah et al (2010) entitled An Analysis on Students' Effort to Improve Speaking Skill. The data showed that the activities of students' effort were varied. There were 20 college activities recognized as students' efforts. Which included in five activities scale; course learning, art music and theater, campus facilities, personal experiences, and speaking experiences. The aspect of speaking skill mostly developed on students' effort was comprehensibility which the highest scores 72.19 %. So, the fourth semester students used several kinds of effort to improve speaking skill in various college activities scale, and the aspect of speaking skill mostly developed by the students was comprehensibility. It can be concluded that this research finding was similar to the finding of the previous study above.

IV. Conclusions and Suggestions

Conclusions

The conclusion of this research was there were seven struggle which were used by speech Debating Community students in English Education Program of Muhammadiyah University of Bengkulu to achieve speaking fluency, they were library experiences, course learning, art, music and theatre, campus facilities, clubs and organization, personal experiences, and speaking experiences.

Suggestions

Based on the result of this research, the researcher suggests for English students to apply library experiences and campus facilities as the struggle in learning speaking because there were only seventy percent of the students answered that they applied library experiences and campus facilities as the struggle in learning speaking. It will be better if the students can apply the seven struggles as the way to improve their speaking ability especially in speech debating community.

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