

Enhancing Students' English Speaking Skills through Toastmaster Program

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Abstract: This study aimed to find out if Toastmaster can enhance students' speaking skills and its contribution to the speaking score and the significant difference between the experimental and control group. The research involved twenty students of SMA Negeri 10 Palembang as an experimental group. The students in experimental group were given English instruction through Toastmaster. To measure the result, the researcher used a pre-test and a post-test. The result of the test showed the Toastmaster could enhance the students' speaking skill ($t_{count} = 4.728$ and $P.0.000$). It means that the research hypothesis was accepted while the null hypothesis was rejected, with contribution of 19.4% to the total speaking score (based on the regression analysis). According to the result of the calculation of independent sample t-test ($t_{count} = 4.755$ and $P.0.000$), it is clear that Toastmaster gave a significant difference in enhancing students' speaking skill.

Keyword: *English, speaking skill, toastmaster*

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui apakah *Toastmaster* dapat meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara Bahasa Inggris siswa dan kontribusinya terhadap skor berbicara (*speaking*) dan perbedaan antara kelompok eksperimen dan kelompok kontrol. Penelitian ini melibatkan dua puluh siswa SMA Negeri 10 Palembang sebagai kelompok eksperimen. Siswa pada kelompok eksperimen diberikan pengajaran Bahasa Inggris melalui *Toastmaster*. Untuk mengukur hasilnya, peneliti menggunakan *pre-test* dan *post-test*. Hasil test menunjukkan bahwa *Toastmaster* dapat meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara Bahasa Inggris siswa ($t_{count} = 4,728$ dan $P,0,000$). Artinya bahwa *research hypothesis* (HA) diterima sedangkan *null hypothesis* (H0) ditolak, dengan kontribusi sebesar 19,4% terhadap total skor berbicara (berdasarkan *Regression Analysis*). Berdasarkan hasil perhitungan *Independent sample t-test* ($t_{count} = 4,755$ dan $P,0,000$), jelas bahwa *Toastmaster* memberikan pengaruh signifikan terhadap peningkatan keterampilan berbicara Bahasa Inggris siswa.

Kata-kata kunci: *Bahasa Inggris, keterampilan berbicara, toastmaster*

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English as an international language is widely used by a large number of people in the world as not only a lingua franca, but also a language of science. According to Moore and Newcomer (2010) it is used by approximately one billion people for various purposes, for example to communicate with other people having different language background from different countries, English is used as a lingua franca. The existence of English as a language of science has been even more crucial since knowledge, science, and information are mostly written and spoken in English. It is used in the media such as press, advertising, broadcasting, cinema, and popular music, international travel and safety (Crystal, 2003). Crystal (2003) further states that almost 90% of 1,500 papers in the journals *Linguistics Abstracts* were written in English. Therefore, mastering English is a must in both international affair and academic field.

In Indonesia, English has been taught to the students since Elementary School (School-Based Curriculum, 2006). Unfortunately, based on the research conducted by Firmansyah (2010, p. 31) in Muara Enim Regency, English mastery of the tenth grade students, especially speaking (52%) was not satisfying enough in spite of nearly 10-year-English studying. It did not even meet the standard requirement of 5.50 (55%) to pass the state exam (BSNP, 2009/2010). Students' cultural background is one of the factors that give big impacts in studying English, especially speaking. Mostly, their culture tolerate : a) being silent was a way to control situation and an effort to maintain harmony, b) saving face, c) children's opinion was not important, d) asking personal questions was the way to do small talk, and e) smiling as a positive to express oneself in Balinese context (Hadisaputra and Adnyani, 2008). In fact, it is clear that the main purpose of language learning is to be able to speak or communicate in that language. "Speaking is the heart of second language learning" (Egan, 1999, p. 277).

Referring to the importance of English speaking skill and the obstacles in learning English especially speaking, there must be a method that can equip the students with the opportunity to build their confidence and stimulate them to be active and critical in expressing their thought, feeling and ideas. In turn, it can ameliorate their speaking skill. In this study, the writer proposed Toastmaster. Toastmaster is an organization founded to develop public speaking set up as banquet

with toasts and after-dinner speakers. The founder is Dr. Ralph C. Smedley (Biography of Dr. Ralph C. Smedley as cited in Stiewi, 2000). Toastmaster has interesting meeting design where all the members can speak suitable with their role. According to Federal Toastmaster Club (2006), the members play roles as Presiding Officer (President), Toastmaster of the Day, Table Topic Master, Table Topic Participants, General Evaluators, Evaluators, Speakers, Grammarian, Ah-Counter, Timer, and Humor Master. Toastmaster consists of three main parts of the meeting, Table Topic master, Prepare Speeches, and Evaluation (Blumberg, 2008).

There are many advantages of Toastmaster. The purpose of Toastmaster is to afford practice and training in the art of public speaking (Lay, 2006). Toastmaster is a part of role play with well-organized guidance. Since it is set up formally with division of roles and duties, toastmaster can be a tool for the students to become more proficient to be a good speaker, even as a good public speaker. Effective Public speaking skill benefits people with increased credibility, exposure for the message, and satisfaction that can lead to success (Slutsky & Aun, 1997). Toastmaster can also be advantageous to boost students' self confidence (Richardson, 2009). With its design, Toastmaster can be an effective way to instill students' self confidence through their active participation in each meeting. Finally, Toastmaster facilitates the students to develop their leadership skill (Schnaubelt, 2007). From its design and advantages, Toastmaster can significantly enhance students' speaking skills.

METHOD

"Population is the group of interest to the researcher, the group to which the researcher would like to generalize the result of the study", (Wallen and Fraenkel, 1991, p. 129). The population of this study was all the tenth grade students of SMAN 10 Palembang in academic year 2009/2010 with 165 male students and 191 female students. "A sample refers to any group on which information obtained," (Wallen and Fraenkel, 1991, p. 129). This research involves 40 students (20 male students and 20 female students) as a sample taken from the population, 20 students as an experimental group and another 20 students as control group. The researcher used purposive sampling in choosing the sample. Purposive sampling is choosing the sample based on the purpose of the

researcher's research (Wallen and Fraenkel, 1991). In choosing the sample, the researcher referred to considerations such as the effectiveness of Toastmaster implementation in the classroom, and students' English skill. The sample was selected based on their English score in the report card with a ranged score of 71-88. Researcher divides the sample into two groups, experimental and control group in balanced composition based on the range of score.

The research used a quasi-experimental research. According to Nunan (2003, p. 41), "quasi-experimental research has three characteristics, pre- and post-test, experimental and control group, but no random assignments of subjects." The basic scheme can be stated as following :

O 1	X	O 2
O 3		O 4

Experimental group received a treatment, while control group received no treatment or treated as usual. The experimental group was given instruction through Toastmaster.

The study was carried out in some meetings with the following descriptions;

Meeting 1: The researcher gave the pre-test to the sample students in both experimental and Control group.

Meeting 2: The researcher introduced Toastmaster to the students in experimental group by giving detailed explanation about Toastmaster.

Meeting 3-17: The researcher delivered instruction to the students in experimental group through Toastmaster.

Meeting 18: The researcher gave the post-test to the students in both experimental and control group.

The researcher used Toastmaster's meeting script adapted from Brainwave Toastmaster Club in delivering Instruction.

Stage I: The students who acted as a president went to the podium, opened the meeting and asked other members to introduce themselves.

Stage 2: Toastmaster of the Day told the topic and ran the meeting.

Stage 3: All the evaluators (General Evaluator, Grammarian, Uh-Counter, Word master, and Timer) explained their duties.

Stage 4: Table Topic Master Session
Table Topic Master went to podium and asked two members (students) as Table Topic participants to talk about the

topic without preparation.

Stage 5: Prepared Speeches

The prepared speakers spoke about the topic in 2 to 3 minutes duration

Stage 6: Evaluations

All Evaluators gave their evaluation

Stage 7: Discussion

Stage 8: The toastmaster of the day turned the meeting to the President to close the meeting

The researcher used a test as an instrument to collect the data. According to Hornby (1995, p. 1233), "test means a short examination of knowledge or ability, consisting of questions that must be answered or activities that must be carried out." The researcher gave a pre- and post-test to both experimental and control group. The material of the test was taken from various resources based on the topic in the school-based curriculum. The test was in the form of 2-to-3-minute speaking. To check the validity of the test, the researcher referred to the school-based curriculum. "Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument gives us the information we want" (Wallen & Fraenkel, 1991, p. 85). To know the reliability of the test, the researcher conducted a pilot study to the non-sample students (the students of SMAN I Palembang) with the same level or grade and the same range of score in their report card. To examine the reliability, the researcher used test-retest. According to Siegle (2013), "test-retest reliability measures consistency from one time to the next". Based on the calculation of SPSS 15 (Statistical Package Social Science) for Windows, the reliability coefficient was 0.787 higher than the standard coefficient (0.6). It means the test was considered reliable.

To analyze the collected data, the researcher used a scoring guide of speaking assessment proposed by the Foreign Service Institute cited in Russo (1983, p. 39) modified with one of scoring rubrics by Kubiszyn and Borich as cited in Windarni (2008) to score the students' speaking that covers comprehensibility, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and rate. The interval score was based on the guidance book used by Faculty of Teacher Training and Education.

To see how great the difference within two groups, the data was analyzed by using t-test. "The t-Test is used to determine how great the difference between two means must be for it to be judged significant, and that is significant departure from differences, which might be expected by chance alone",

(Phopham & Sirotnik, 1973, p. 125). In this study, the researcher used independent sample t-test to compare the progress between the experimental and control group and paired sample t-test to see the progress in each group before and after treatment. The researcher also used linier regression to find out the amount of contribution of all variables to the total speaking score .

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION

There are some interpretations that can be inferred based on the findings. First, based on the data analysis of pre-test and posttest in experimental group (table 1), only two students (10%) are on the very poor category with the range score of 41-55 in spite of only one student in the good category with the score of above 70. The rest (85% students) gain the range of score between 56-70 (on the average category). The second interpretation is based on the data analysis of paired sample t-test (table 2) .Table 2 provides the data of the progress in experimental and control group

before and after treatment using paired simple t-test in all variables of speaking including comprehensibility, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and rate. From the data analysis , the comprehensibility can be improved due to the significant difference before and after treatment with tcount = 4.819 higher than the critical value of t-table (2.086) and p output of 0.000. Besides, the data analysis also shows that there is significant difference in pronunciation with t obtained of 2.236 and p output 0.038 below 0.5. The grammar is also improved after treatment with t obtained 3.115 and p .0.006. The vocabulary and rate shows the good progress with t obtained 3.621, p.0.002 and 4.196, p.0.000. From the finding of the result of pretest and posttest and paired sample t-test in the experimental group, it can be interpreted that Toastmaster can enhance students' English speaking skill in all variables of speaking. It means the null hypothesis is rejected, while the reasearch hypothesis is accepted.

Table 1. The Score distribution of Pre-and Post-Test in Experimental group

Score Interval	Experimental Group				Category
	Pre-Test		Post-Test		
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	
86-100	-	-	-	-	Excellent
71-85	-	-	1	5	Good
56-70	13	65	17	85	Average
41-55	4	20	2	10	Poor
≤ 40	3	15	-	-	Very poor

Table 2. Paired Simple t-test of the Experimental and Control Group

Variables of Speaking	Experimental Group				Control Group			
	Pre-test	Post-Test	T	Sig p<	Pre-test	Post-test	T	Sig p<
	Mean	Mean			Mean	Mean		
Comprehensibility	54.50	65.50	4.819	0.000	52.50	57.50	1.876	0.076
Pronunciation	54.50	59.50	2.236	0.003	51.50	48.00	-1.196	0.246
Grammar	49.00	55.50	3.115	0.006	47.50	50.00	1.097	0.287
Vocabulary	56.00	63.00	3.621	0.002	46.50	52.50	1.747	0.097
Rate	50.50	62.00	4.196	0.000	50.00	54.50	1.630	0.119
All variables	52.90	61.10	4.728	0.000	49.60	52.50	1.248	0.227

The next interpretation from the finding is based on independents sample t-test (table 3). Independent sample t-test is used to see the difference between the result of posttest in experimental and control group. It is also

measured from all variables of speaking. In comprehensibility improvement, due to the t obtained of 3.606 with p.0.001 in the posttest, it is clear that there is significant difference between experimental and control group

in term of comprehensibility. Based on the data of posttest in pronunciation, t obtained reaches 4.763 with $p.0.000$ implies that there is a significant difference in pronunciation between experimental and control group. The t obtained 2.342 with $p.0.024$ for vocabulary and t obtained 2.975 with $p.0.005$ for rate

variable in the posttest gives implication that there is also significant difference in variable of vocabulary and rate. From the findings, it can be concluded that, there is significant difference in students' speaking skill between experimental and control group in all variables of speaking after treatment.

Table 3. Independent Group Statistic of Pre-test and Post-test

Variables of Speaking	Experimental Group (A) and Control Group (B)				Experimental Group (A) and Control Group (B)			
	Pretest (A)	Pretest (B)	t	Sig $p <$	Posttest (A)	Posttest (B)	t	Sig $p <$
	Mean	Mean			Mean	Mean		
Comprehensibility	54.00	52.50	0.627	0.535	65.50	57.50	3.606	0.001
Pronunciation	54.50	51.50	0.815	0.420	59.50	48.00	4.763	0.000
Grammar	49.00	47.50	0.415	0.680	55.50	50.00	2.342	0.024
Vocabulary	56.00	46.00	2.880	0.007	63.00	52.50	4.018	0.000
Rate	50.50	50.00	0.119	0.906	62.00	54.50	2.975	0.005
All variables	52.90	49.60	1.008	0.320	61.10	52.50	4.755	0.000

Based on the findings of the regression analysis (table 4), another interpretation can be proposed. R^2 of 0.028 for comprehensibility shows the contribution of comprehensibility to the speaking score only reaches 2.8% although the F change significance is 0.481 higher than probability value 0.05. Pronunciation contributes 12.6% ($R^2=0.126$) based on the finding, it is significant with F significance of 2.595 and F change significance 0.125. The next finding is for grammar variable

which only contributes 0.3 % ($R^2=0.003$) with F significant of 0.062 and F change significance 0.806. The contribution of rate to the speaking score reach 0.5% ($R^2=0.005$) with F significant = 0.001 and F change significance 0.978 for rate. Unfortunately, there is no contribution of vocabulary to the speaking score. Overall, all variables of speaking contributes 19.4% ($R^2=0.194$) to the speaking score with F significant value of 0.673 and F change significance 0.651.

Table 4. Summary Statistic of Regression Analysis

Independent Variables	Dependent Variables	R^2	F	F Change Significance
Comprehensibility	Speaking	0.028	0.518	0.481
Pronunciation	Speaking	0.126	2.595	0.125
Grammar	Speaking	0.003	0.062	0.806
Vocabulary	Speaking	0.000	0.001	0.978
Rate	Speaking	0.005	0.084	0.775
All variables	Speaking	0.194	0.673	0.651

Obviously, Toastmasters can enhance students' speaking skill in all aspects or variables. Speaking covers discussion and presentation skill (Anderson, Maclean and Lynch : 2006). Through Toastmasters, people can increase their presentation and discussion skill (Slutsky & Aun, 1997). It is proved by the enhancement of the comprehensibility, one of the variables of speaking with t obtained of 4.819 much higher than the critical value of t -table (2.086). Comprehensibility is to

measure people'intelligibility to express thought and ideas, in this case, in delivering presentation.

In addition, Evaluation session in Toastmasters meeting supported the students to evaluate their grammar and vocabulary. "The best way to improve your speaking skills is through evaluation"(Slutsky & Aun, 1997, p. 153). In turn, it could improve their grammar and enrich their vocabulary. According to the data of Paired sample t -test,

there is progress in grammar and vocabulary with t obtained 3.115 and 3.621 greater than the critical value of t -table. It means Toastmasters can also enhance other variables of speaking, grammar and vocabulary.

Speed or rate is one of the important factors to measure the fluency in speaking (Thornbury, 2005). Natural-sounding pauses can form words into a meaningful unit (Thornbury, 2005). Through Toastmaster meetings, the students were facilitated with the discussion activity that could be beneficial for the students to pay attention to the rate in formulating the utterance. Based on the data, the “rate”, one of speaking variables increased ($t_{count}=4.196$). It shows that toastmaster contributes in enhancing one of variables of speaking, rate.

The last variable of speaking to be discussed is pronunciation. “The lowest level of knowledge a speaker draws on is that of pronunciation” (Thornbury, 2005:24). Nevertheless, pronunciation is one of the important aspects in speaking since one area of pronunciation that provides significant choices is intonation (Thornbury, 2005). There are three functions of intonations, as segmentation, prominence, and cohesion (Thornbury, 2005). Besides, two of four important tools to make strong speeches is voice modulation and vocal variety (Slutsky & Aun, 1997). It is related to pronunciation and intonation. Through Toastmaster, students’ pronunciation was improved based on the paired sample t -test ($t_{count}=2.236$).

In spite of its strength, Toastmaster is hard to be applied in the classroom because of some factors. Generally, Toastmaster is set as a formal meeting to train people’s public speaking in order to enhance people’s career. Due to its formal setting, the students tended to be bored for a long-term implementation. Moreover, toastmaster has rather complicated format to adapt. In conducting her research, the researcher had to give detailed explanation to the students about Toastmaster before adapting it into the classroom’s activity. Nevertheless, Toastmaster has more strength than weakness.

CONCLUSION

The researcher can draw some conclusion based on the findings. Toastmaster can enhance students’ English speaking skill including all its variables. There is significant difference between the experimental and control group based on the result of the posttest of both group. All variables contributes 19.4% to the

speaking score despite insignificant result.

In spite of its complicated implementation in the classroom, Toastmaster give many advantages and impacts on the students’ English speaking skill enhancement including its variables such as comprehensibility, pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary and rate. The researcher suggests to apply this method in the classroom of 20 to 30 students. Finally, the researcher hopes that this research can give positive contribution to the research of education especially in enhancing students’s speaking skills.

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