

Enhancing Students' Speaking Skills in Speaking for Academic Purposes Subject through Active Debate At The 4th Semester in Academic Year 2023/2024 Universitas Panca Sakti Bekasi

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Abstract

In Speaking for Academic Purposes, the students must be able to speak actively. And there are some materials on this subject, one of them is Debate. Active debate is one way to improve students' speaking skills. So, the purpose of this study was to improve students' speaking skills through Active Debate. This research method is classroom action research, which is used in two cycles, and each cycle has four steps: planning, action, observing, and reflection. The data presented in this study were obtained from observations, interviews, and students' speaking scores. The subjects of this research were fifteen students in the fourth semester of the Speaking for Academic Purposes Class at Panca Sakti University. In the study, the researcher got the result, namely the percentage of speaking scores. The score for students speaking test in cycle one was 52.36 % passed, and 47.64 % failed; Passed 78,2% and 21.8% failed in cycle two. So, the increase in yield in cycles 1 and 2 is 25.84%. And score for aspects of observation in cycle one is 71,38% passed and failed: 28,62%; passed 92,5% and 7,5% failed in cycle two. Based on the data above, it can be concluded that learning English, especially speaking through active debate, can improve students' speaking skills.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In learning English, especially in speaking for academic purposes, students must be able to speak actively. The student must know and understand the introductory knowledge of academic purposes. It has some materials such as; the feature of academic spoken English, presentations, seminars, debates, and interviews. Because of that the mastery of speaking is the main purpose in this subject.

However, the observation proved that almost all students at Panca Sakti University have some problems with speaking skills. The students are less communicative in class. They feel not confident to speak in English. As we know more practice more better for speaking fluently.

Teaching speaking through active debate is effective learning. It is presented as a valuable learning activity for critical thinking and improving communication skills. In debate, students have many opportunities to practice speaking and be actively involved in discussion.

Because debate is dominant in speaking and an effective way to enhance students' speaking skills. So, the title of the research is " Enhancing Students' Speaking Skill in Speaking Academic Purposes Subject through Active Debate."

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves the production, reception, and processing of information, (Brown, 2021).

To speak is to use language in a familiar voice, say the words, know and be able to use language; express oneself in words; and make a speech (Hornby, 1987)

Speaking is one of the fundamental language skills to be mastered by students to become good communicators. Speaking is the use of language verbally to communicate with other people (Fulcher, 2023)

Brown (1994) and Burns and Joyce (1997) state that Speaking is an interactive process of making meaning that includes producing, receiving, and processing information.

Harmer (2007: 284) states speaking skill is the ability to speak fluently and presupposes not only knowledge of language features but also the ability to process the information and language ‘on the spot’.

Based on statements the experts above show that students who become good communicators must be able to speak fluently to interact with other people when they giving or receiving information.

(William 1981), “Debate is a formal discussion, consideration of a problem, a formal presentation of opposing ideas.” It’s a great way to improve speaking skills and is very helpful in providing experience in developing convincing arguments (Rofl, 2009).

Debate is a communication process in which participants argue for and against a given topic. Debate is a way to make students think critically about the problem and how to find the solution.

Active Debate is one way to encourage the students to say arguments or think and how to defend an opinion with logical reasons. They learn to understand points of view that are different from their own because, when debating they may have to argue a case that they don’t fully agree.

(Williams et al, 2008), The important Rules of debate :

1. The team supporting the motion did not shift its point of view. The same goes for the opposition, who must oppose the motion completely (whatever their private opinion may be)
2. If the speaker makes a statement, they must be able to provide evidence or reasons to support the statement.
3. Facts presented in a debate must be accurate.
4. Speakers may not bring up new points in a rebuttal speech.

For Academic Speaking Purposes, a debate is one of the materials presented, and the students are allowed more speaking practice. With active debate, the students can improve their speaking skills because the debate is a dominant speaking practice. Not only, the students can improve their speaking skills but also the students become good communicators. Active debate is one way to explore students' speaking skills and other skills also such as; the ability to take and give opinions, more critical thinking, try to accept different opinions even if they do not fully agree.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Ebbutt (1985) in Hopkins (1993:45) states action research is the systematic study of attempts to improve educational practice by a group of participants using their practical actions and using own reflection upon the effects of those actions.

Cohen and Manion (1985) in Nunan (1992:18) offer a similar set of characteristics. They argue that action research is first and foremost situational, being concerned with the identification and solution of problems in a specific context. They also identify collaboration as an important feature of this type of research and state action research aims to improve the current state of affairs in the educational context in which the research is being carried out.

In this study, the researcher used classroom action research (CAR), which is a qualitative research method. Classroom action research uses two cycles and each process consists of four steps including; planning, action, observation, and reflection. From getting the data, the researchers want to describe and explain the problem chosen in this study.

The data source for this research is in the fourth semester at Panca Sakti University Bekasi, it consists of fifteen students. The data will be described using qualitative data. The researchers used observation, interviews, and tests.

The data analysis technique comes from the interpretation of data collection such as reduction; description and verification. The data obtained from a document observed the teaching and learning and the student's test results in the data. This research uses triangulation for the validity of the data collected from interviews, observations, and speaking tests. The score minimum in Speaking Academic Purposes is 70.

4. RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Pre - Action

This research begins by interviewing lectures, and the researcher found some of the students are good at speaking English, but more than fifty percent of students are low in English. So, this problem made the lecturers less communicative in class.

Most students are afraid of making mistakes in composing sentences because they do not have a rich vocabulary. Because of that, they do not feel confident more speaking practice with their friends.

2. Cycle 1

In the first cycle, the researcher explained the rules of debate to make students understand the ways or rules of discussing motions. So, it is easy for to students take part in debates actively and they know what are they going to do.

The researcher arranged the students into several groups. Each group consists of three students to make the discussion effective and efficient. Then the researcher divided the team into affirmative and opposing teams. After that, the researcher gives the task of reading the material will be debated by the two teams. The topic in cycle 1 is "Positive and Negative Effects of Junk Food. " Each team should be discussed as best as possible before the debate starts; they should prepare an outline to present their team's arguments or point of view when they argue. The team is given 15 minutes to present their arguments and then start the debate in order.

The discussion continues until all members have given their opinion starting from the first group until the last group. After all groups practiced their discussion, the researcher reviewed and evaluated the activity.

Table 1
Observation in The First Cycle

NO	Aspect of Observation	Success	Failed
1	Cooperative	78 %	22%
2	Confident	72%	28%
3	Enthusiastic	75%	25%
4	Active	60.5%	39.5%
	AVERAGE	71,38%	28,62%

Based on Table 1, it is seen that the students paid attention to the activity in the class. Student enthusiastic, confident, and active in the learning process was pretty good, but their speaking was still low. They work cooperatively with their team and they are very enthusiastic when they give opinions or ideas. Active debate is a new experience it

made the students interested and more active in speaking. Some of the students felt bored and still shy to speak in front of their friends. The lack of vocabulary made the students find it difficult to arrange complete sentences. So, they didn't speak fluently. Normally, the students get nervous and lose their minds when they have to speak up for the first time.

Table 2
Speaking Practice in the First Cycle

No	Aspect of Observation	Success	Failed
1	Sentence Arrangement	59.2%	40,8%
2	Pronunciation	54,5%	45,5%
3	Topic Accuracy	51.2%	48,8%
4	Fluency	48,8%	51,2%
5	Comprehension	57,1%	42,9%
	AVERAGE	52,36%	45,84%

Based on table 2, it is seen that the students are still shy to speak in front of their friends and their speaking is still low. The students didn't have enough vocabulary to express their arguments. So, not all students can be active in Debate.

3. Cycle 2

In cycle 2, the researcher gives the other topic and changes the members of the group to make the students not bored. The topic is "Gadgets for Kids" but the steps same as the first cycle. Based on the activity in Cycle 2, most of the students were more active enough to talk. They looked more enthusiastic, confident, and more active than before. It can be seen in the table below, that there is a significant change in improving students' speaking skills in cycle 2.

Table 3
Observation in The Second Cycle

No	Aspect of Observation	Success	Failed
1	Cooperative	96%	4%
2	Confident	100%	0%
3	Enthusiastic	88%	12%
4	Active	86%	14%
	AVERAGE	92.5%	7,5%

The table 3, that shown the students increased their English competence. They find their motivation to work cooperatively and do the best as well as to their team. They provide opinions, ideas and point of views about the topic. When the active debate was conducted, the students looked confident to argue and argue.

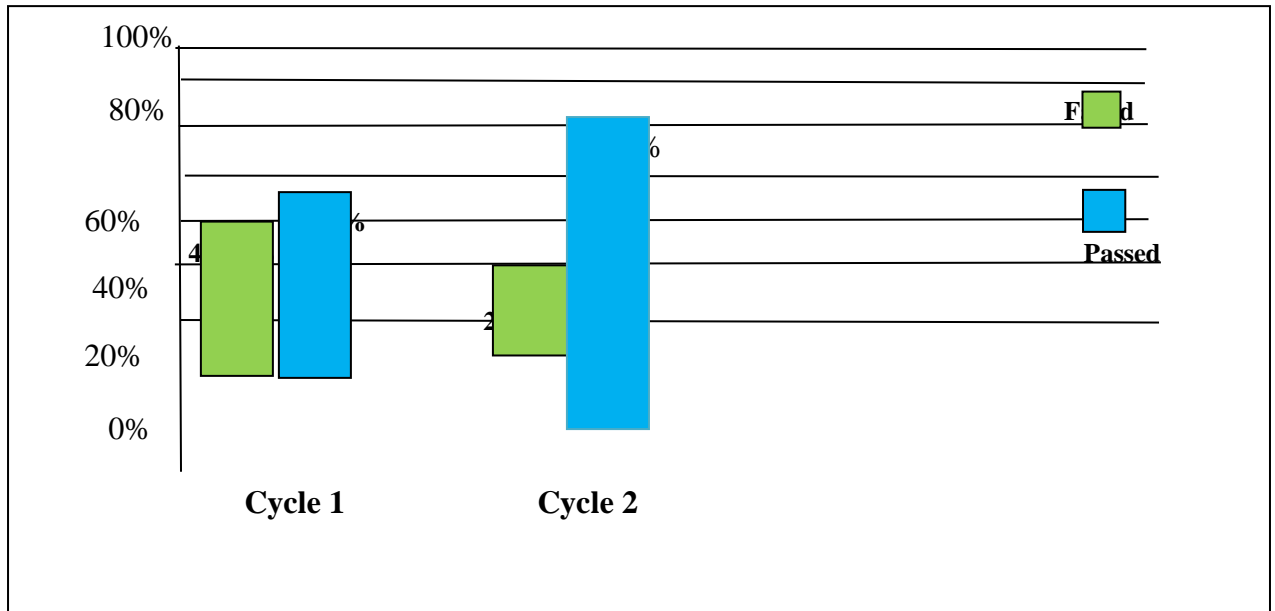
Table 4 Speaking Test in Second Cycle

No	Aspect of Observation	Success	Failed
1	Sentence Arrangement	79%	21%
2	Pronunciation	76%	24%
3	Topic Accuracy	85%	15%
4	Fluency	74%	26%
5	Comprehension	77%	23%
	AVERAGE	78.2%	21.8%

Table 4 shows that the students in Cycle 2 are more active than the Cycle 1. It can be seen in the percentages for all aspects of observation improved than before. The average in cycle 1 is 52,36% and the average in cycle 2 is 78,2%, so it's clear that the students' English skills improved.

3.2 Observation Result

Based on the observation results in the activities of cycles and 2, it's clear that the student's English skills improved. It's about 25,54%. Table 5 can explain the results of both of them.



Picture 1. Percentage of Student Success in Cycle1 and 2

3.3 Speaking Test Result

Active debate gives more opportunities for students to speak in a team. So, the student can improve their speaking skills. Based on all the data the researcher concluded that the result of students' speaking test can improve by analyzing the percentage of students who pass the minimum score. After research was conducted in cycle 1 there were **52,36%** and the cycle 2 there were **78,2%** of the students was passed the minimum score.

The researcher concluded that Active debate is an effective way to improve the students' speaking skills. Most of the students were more active in expressing their opinions or ideas. They work very cooperatively in their team. The activeness all of the students show this after participating in the lesson.

Interview Results

According to the interview results, most of the students were interesting. Active debate can improve their speaking skills and they feel more confident and also have good motivation to work together in a team. According to Arung Fernandes, "The debate is fascinating to be applied to improve speaking skills." However, some students feel bored and nervous when they're participating in active debate.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the data research result and discussion the researcher found that Active debate is an effective way to improve the students' speaking skills in the speaking for academic purposes. It proves that active debate makes people more active, enthusiastic, confident, and cooperative in their team.

All the data showed there were improvements in cycle 1 the student's speaking scores were **52,36%** and **78,2 %** in cycle 2. It has proven that Active debate supports enhancing students' speaking skills in speaking for academic purposes subject.

5. THANK-YOU NOTE

We would like to extend our sincere gratitude to all who contributed to the success of our recent research project titled "Enhancing Students' Speaking Skill in Speaking for Academic Purposes Subject through Active Debate in The 4th Semester in Academic Year 2023/2024 at Universitas Panca Sakti Bekasi." To the students who participated in this research, thank you for your active involvement and enthusiasm. We are also grateful to the Head of the English Language Education Program for her guidance and support and also to the university administration for providing the necessary resources. Thank you once again to everyone involved for your contributions and collaboration. We look forward to further advancements in our academic pursuits.

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