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2016

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION & SOCIAL SCIENCE (UK-ICESS)

9-10th November

PROCEEDING

"EDUCATIONAL & SOCIAL ISSUES IN THE CHANGING ASIA"

ISBN: 978-602-19859-7-7

UNIVERSITAS KANJURUHAN MALANG

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Malang, Indonesia
November 9-10, 2016

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Printed and Published by
Universitas Kanjuruhan Malang
Jl. S. Supriadi No. 48 Malang, Indonesia – 65148
Tel. (+62)341-801488; Fax. (+62)341-831532
www.unikama.ac.id; www.uk-icess.org; uk-icess@unikama.ac.id

First printing, November 2016
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PREFACE

The 2016 International Conference on Education and Social Science (UK-ICESS) is the first international conference hosted by Universitas Kanjuruhan Malang as a part of its XLI Dies Natalis commemoration. This international conference invites all educators and researchers in the field of education and social sciences to share latest issues, research, and information in these areas. Thus, as an important part of this academic forum, the organizing committee is pleased to present the Proceeding of 2016 International Conference on Education and Social Sciences which brings up the main theme of *Educational and Social Issues in the Changing Asia.*

There are 65 papers in this compilation, covering various topics around the theme of educational and social issues in the changing Asia which were studied from vast research areas; such as economics, health, education, language, arts, technology, geography, civics, and entrepreneurship. It is expected that all papers in this proceeding will enrich our knowledge and broaden our insights of current issues, trends, research, and information in the areas of education and social sciences.

Lastly, the organizing committee would like to deliver great appreciation to writers, presenters, and all parties who have been contributing to the publication of this proceeding.

Malang, November 2016

The Committee

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"Educational and Social Issues in the Changing Asia"
ISBN: 978-602-19859-7-7

Self-Assessment of Speaking Proficiency: Students' Criteria and Attitude

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Abstract: An assessment that involves reflecting on and monitoring performance is essential to provide students with more opportunities for learning. Through self-assessment and focus group discussion, the participants in this study are able to take control of their learning and generate feedback used for improvement. This study specifically explored students' criteria in self-assessing their speaking proficiency and the students' attitude regarding the effectiveness of self-assessment. Qualitative study, which drew on multiple data sources including audio-recorded interviews, focus group discussion notes, recording of students' speaking performance, was employed. Self-assessment and focus group discussion with other participants and the teacher functioned as tools for providing feedback to students' speaking performance. Ten English students of University of Kanjuruhan Malang volunteered to engage in self-assessment activities. The findings of this study suggested that students focused on various aspects of speaking skill in self-assessing their performance and that self-assessment had significant potential to help students to improve their speaking skill in terms of identifying their strengths and weaknesses and proposing some plans or strategies to address the weaknesses.

Keywords: ***Self-Assessment, Speaking Proficiency, Criteria, Attitude, Qualitative***

INTRODUCTION

Students will have more opportunities to promote their learning and achieve better if they obtain sufficient feedback on their learning performance. Unfortunately, in most Indonesian education system, students are assessed summatively to *get students' final grade* at the end of an instructional unit. The students get little formative feedback on their learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998). This due, in large part, to the facts that there are too many students in one class, most of Indonesian teachers have tight and busy schedule, and the duration of teaching learning process in the class is limited. Therefore, rather than relying on teacher as the sole source of learning evaluation, it is necessary for Indonesian students to have their own initiative to evaluate their learning via self-assessment. Fortunately, relevant studies also show that students themselves can be meaningful sources of feedback in self-assessment (Andrade & Boulay, 2003; Andrade, Du, & Wang, 2008).

Self-assessment, as a formative assessment tool, may be considered as a process of reflection on the quality of learning with the purpose of identifying the strengths and weaknesses and target areas that need work. The students, therefore, play the main role in assessment process. When students are involved in the assessment process, they can make

ISBN: 978-602-19859-7-7

improvement in both their ability to make judgments about their understanding and their ability to make decisions on how to improve their learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Heritage, 2009; Tan, 2008). Moreover, self-assessment assists students to set desired goals and thus to learn for themselves.

Relevant studies have recommended the use of self-assessment and associated it with learning and achievement (Brown & Harris, 2013; Andrade, 2010; Leahy, Lyon, Thompson, & Wiliam, 2005). The main focus of the present study was engaging ten English students to set their own criteria in self-assessing their speaking proficiency and respond the effectiveness of self-assessment. The students were required to assess their speaking without providing scoring criteria. However, "the assessment of speaking, as an extremely difficult skill to test, involves a number of procedures to capture all the defining characteristics for objective testing" (Babaii, Taghaddomi, & Pashmforoosh, 2015, p. 3). Therefore, students still need feedback from others to make sure the accuracy of their assessment and to get more ideas how to improve their learning, such as teachers or fellow learners. This is because "feedback becomes a central component to the learning process in that a dialogue exists between teacher and student that facilitates and fosters knowledge acquisition" (Meer, 2012). Therefore, besides self-assessing their own speaking proficiency, the participants in this study were facilitated to have peer-assessment and engage in focus group discussion with their friends and teacher.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The term 'self-assessment' subsumes terms of 'self-evaluation'. It has been defined as the act of evaluating oneself and making decisions about the next step by asking a series of questions – 'How am I doing? Is this enough? Is this right? How can I tell? Should I go further?' (Boud, 1995). By answering these questions, students are learning to self-regulate and gradually taking over the ownership of their learning through self-assessment. Andrade, Du, and Mycek (2010) identified self-assessment as "a process of formative assessment during which students reflect on the quality of their work, judge the degree to which it reflects explicitly stated goals or criteria, and revise accordingly" (p. 199). In addition, according to McMillan (2008, p.39), self-assessment occurs when "students judge their own work to improve performance as they identify discrepancies between current and desired performance. Self-assessment also identifies further learning targets and instructional strategies (correctives) students can apply to improve achievement". Thus, the focus of self-assessment activity is to close the gap between current and desired performance by improving students' learning. It is a process-oriented rather than outcome-oriented.

There are some tools that can be utilized for students to self-assess such as checklists, rubrics, audio/video recording, portfolios, journals, or surveys. Each tool has its own advantages and disadvantages. For example, checklists are easy to construct and use but provide limited information about how to improve performance, rubrics help the grading process become more efficient, but the development of rubrics can be complex and time-consuming. Therefore, teachers may help the students to adapt the tools to suit their needs. In this study, the students were encouraged to use audio recording as the self-assessment tool.

The Purposes of Self-Assessment

The purposes of doing self-assessment for the students are to are to boost learning and achievement, and to promote academic self-regulation, or the tendency to monitor and manage their own learning (Pintrich, 2000; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2004). Woodward and Munns (2007) found that there is significant relationship between increased levels of student engagement and student self-assessment. The study conducted by Orsmond and Merry (2013)

ISBN: 978-602-19859-7-7

found that higher achievers gained more from tutor feedback than did their peers because of their better self-assessment ability. Rivers (2001) studied mature and successful foreign language learners, and discovered that these learners regularly engaged in self-assessment. In addition, Oscarson (1997) mentioned that self-assessment helps students to be more confidence while performing a task. In other words, self-assessment gives positive contribution to the improvement of students learning which leads to self-regulation and achievement improvement.

According to Goodrich (1996), in order for effective self-assessment to occur, students need:

- awareness of the value of self-assessment,
- access to clear criteria on which to base the assessment
- a specific task or performance to assess,
- models of self-assessment,
- direct instruction in and assistance with self-assessment,
- practice,
- cues regarding when it is appropriate to self-assess, and
- opportunities to revise and improve the task or performance.

Thus, the above components, which constitute to students' motivation, opportunity, and support to do self-assessment, are needed aiming for students' improvement in learning. This study reports the result of a study undertaken with ten students self-assessing speaking performance. The following questions constituted the focus of the study: (1) What criteria do students use to rate their own speaking proficiency? (2) How does self-assessment assist students to improve their speaking proficiency?

METHODOLOGY

As stated above, the purpose of the present study is to explore students' criteria in self-assessing their speaking proficiency and the students' attitude regarding the effectiveness of self-assessment. In order to achieve this purpose, the qualitative study was employed. A self-assessment procedure was presented to ten English students of University of Kanjuruhan Malang in their speaking lesson. The ten students were chosen purposively as the research participants based on the considerations of their difference in gender (male and female) and English mastery (intermediate and advanced level).

The instruments used in this study included voice recorder, focus group discussion, and interviews. The voice recorder was used to record participants' speaking performance with their permission for three times. The voice recorder was placed on every participant's desk. Focus group discussion were conducted every time the participants finished self-assessing their speaking. In other words, the focus group discussions were conducted three times. In the study, a semi-structured interview was employed and carried out in Indonesian. The interviewer was the author herself. To avoid the influence on one another, the interview was conducted individually in a classroom and audiotaped. With the help of interview guidance, the author invited students to express their feelings of doing self-assessment and what they have learned in the process. Some elaboration in the questions and answers was also allowed.

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Research procedure in this study is presented in Chart 1 below.

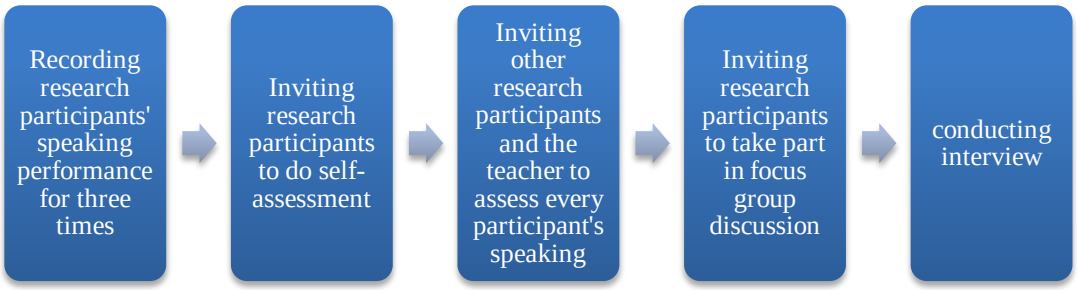

Chart 1: The procedures of data collection

Based on the above diagram, firstly, the students' speaking was recorded three times when they did individual presentation in front of the class. The students were then invited to listen the recordings and self-assess their speaking performance. The students were encouraged to set their own criteria in the process in self-assessment and were not provided with scoring rubric. Other research participants and the teacher were also invited to assess every participant's speaking performance. The purpose was to get more feedback and cross check the accuracy of every participant's judgment. When the students had completed their self-assessment process, they were invited to take part in focus group discussion with other research participants and their teacher. The purpose of conducting focus group discussion was to encourage students to share their rate in self-assessing their speaking performance and to know others' opinion about that including the possible ways to improve their learning. Finally, the participants were invited to take part in interview.

FINDINGS

Students' self-mentioned criteria for rating speaking

The first research question was aimed at exploring the students' criteria to rate their own speaking proficiency. To answer this question, the data from interview, voice recording, and focus group discussion were analyzed inductively. The students' comments were compiled and categorized to arrive at the students' assessment criteria for English speaking. The six criteria used by the students in assessing their speaking performance are presented below with follow-up, relevant excerpts taken from the students' comments on their strengths and weaknesses of their speaking. The criteria include pronunciation, grammar, diction, fluency, vocabulary, and time management.

1. Pronunciation

All participants focused on their pronunciation in assessing their speaking performance. Two research participants, for example, stated:

> *What I first noticed when I listened to my speech was my pronunciation. When I listened, I was very much surprised by myself. I found some mistakes in pronouncing words such as define, honest, genre, love, and children.*
>
> *My pronunciation was not accurate. I really need to improve my pronunciation. I mispronounced the words heart, hurt, , based, strange, now, define, criteria, school, etc.*

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2. Grammar

All research participants also paid attention on their use of grammar in self-assessing their speaking proficiency. The examples of the students' excerpts are presented below.

> *I just realized I made some grammar mistakes and my friends said so. I need to give more attention on the use of appropriate grammar in my speech.*
> *I could listen clearly that I made many grammar mistakes when I talked. I did not realize that when I was talking.*

3. Diction

Diction refers to choice of words. Although some research participants did not mention directly that they had difficulties in their diction when they talked, they mentioned that they did not use the correct vocabulary as presented in the excerpts below.

> *I should say **passed away** instead of **died** when I talked. I still got problem with my vocabulary.*
> *I got difficulties in using the correct vocabulary in some expressions such as **bring** when I should use **carry**, **desire** when I want to say **willingness.***

4. Fluency

Some participants considered fluency (able to talk accurately and quickly) as one of criteria in self-assessing their speaking. One participant mentioned that he was good in his fluency, but another participant found difficulty in her fluency as stated in the below excerpts.

> *One of the strengths in my speaking is my fluency, I think. The speed of my speaking is already good.*
> *I was not happy with my fluency in my speech. I used a sound like e..e..e so many times.*

5. Vocabulary

Research participants also considered vocabulary as one of the criteria when they self-assessed their speaking proficiency as stated in the excerpts below.

> *I think the words I used in my speech were various. I did not use the same words many times.*
> *I still need to enlarge my vocabulary. I stopped suddenly when I talked since I forgot how the say the words in English. At that time, my lecturer helped me.*

6. Time management

The last criterion considered by two research participants was time management. The participants, for example, commented that

> *I think I did not have problem in time management. When my lecturer gave me two minutes to talk, I could use the time efficiently.*
> *I think my biggest problem is in time management. I could not focus on the topic I talk. I talk about many topics in one occasion so I ran out of time.*

The benefits of self-assessment

All research participants mentioned that they never did self-assessment before. By participating in this research, they got first experience in conducting self-assessment. The second question in this study focused on how self-assessment assisted students to improve their speaking proficiency. To address this question, inductive analysis was employed. The students' comments were compiled and categorized to arrive at the benefits of self-assessment activity

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for students learning.

1. Facilitating the development of reflection in learning

The research participants mentioned that self-assessment encouraged them to change the way they learn. They wanted to minimize their weaknesses in their speaking they found in self-assessment activity. One participant stated that:

> *I want to improve my speaking especially my pronunciation. I'll check my audio dictionary if I'm not sure how to pronounce certain word correctly. I will also try to pay more attention on some mispronounced words I found in self-assessment activity.*
> *Next time, I should be more careful when I talk in English. I need to reduce my speed and talk slowly so that my English will be more understandable. I'll try to keep that in mind.*

The above statement show that self-assessment helps the students to do reflection on their learning. They learn from mistakes and difficulties and want to use them to improve their learning.

2. Helping clarify what good performance is

By assessing other participants' speaking performance, as a part of self-assessment in this study, the research participants gained more understanding on what good speaking was as stated by the participants in the excerpt below.

> *When I listened to my friends' speech, I was amazed on how good it was. He could talk fluently with good pronunciation and grammar. I want to be like him.*
> *I need to talk like my friend, I think. He did not have any problems with his pronunciation and grammar when he talked. His good speaking ability motivates me to do better.*

In other words, the students compared their ability with their friends. They then clarified what good speaking was. In addition, they get meaningful feedback from each other in focus group discussion activity.

3. Delivering good understanding to students about their learning

The research participants also mentioned that self-assessment helped them to be more aware of their strengths and weaknesses in their speaking as stated in the following excerpts.

> *This is my first experience to do self-assessment. After listening to my own voice recording, I could analyze what good aspects and what needs to improve from my speaking. I was already good at my fluency but still need a lot of improvement in my pronunciation and vocabulary.*
> *I did not have problem in time management when I talked. However, my grammar was bad. I did not realize before that I got difficulty in the use of grammar in my speech.*

The above statements imply that self-assessment facilitates the students to get more information and understanding about their learning.

4. Encouraging positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem

Self-assessment also encouraged the students to have positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem. This was because of the good points they found in their speaking when they did self-assessment activity.

> *My fluency and pronunciation are not bad. I'm sure I will do better in the next speaking activity.*

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Although I found some weaknesses in my speaking especially in grammar and vocabulary, I believe that I can improve my speaking if I keep practicing.

DISCUSSION

This study explored students' criteria in self-assessing their speaking proficiency and the students' attitude regarding the effectiveness of self-assessment. To investigate the research questions in this study, qualitative design was used. The findings indicated that the students' self-mentioned criteria included pronunciation, grammar, diction, fluency, vocabulary, and time management. The results of the present study confirm the findings of Babaii, et al (2016) that investigated the extent to which learners' assessment of their own speaking performance, before and after their being provided with a list of agreed-upon scoring criteria followed by a practice session, matches that of their teachers. One of the research findings showed that the learners' criteria to rate their own speaking before being provided with the teachers' agreed-upon criteria and the follow-up practice session include seven criteria. Those are topic management, confidence, fluency, time management, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation.

Most of studies about self-assessment deal with the accuracy of students' self assessment (Dunning, Heath, & Suls, 2004; brown & Haris, 2013). However, Cowan (1988) has argued that the self-assessment are so beneficial that we should trust students to act appropriately even when there is a risk that there could be differences between the student mark and the teacher mark. In other words, students should be encouraged and supported to do self-assessment to improve the effectiveness of their learning. Although, it might be difficult for students to do self-assessment, the students will naturally be able to rate their ability. By having active involvement in self-assessing their learning, the students' ability to self-assess will improve. The students also can validate their rating to their peers or teachers.

The findings also indicated that the introduction of self-assessment practice was well accepted by students. Students' attitudes toward self-assessment were positive. The students' attitudes and responses regarding the effectiveness of self-assessment include facilitating the development of reflection in learning, helping clarify what good performance is, delivering good understanding to students about their learning, and encouraging positive motivational beliefs and self-esteem. This confirms the findings of de Saint Leger (2009) who stated that self-perception evolved positively over time in relation to fluency, vocabulary, and self-confidence in speaking in second language as a result of self-assessment. In addition, Boud (2000) suggested that sustainable self-assessment as a self-learning activity, results in improved short- and long-term learning.

In this study, self-assessment was done formatively to "help students recognize their strengths and weaknesses and hence improve specific aspects of their performance" (Baleghizadeh, S. & Masoun, A., 2013, p. 53). This means that students learning and achievement can be improved by implementing self-assessment. The results of the study, therefore, lead to more optimistic view about the potential for the adoption of self-assessment practices in schools. The full supports from the school management and teachers are necessary. The school needs to give more opportunities to students to do self-assessment of their learning. Teachers, then, could teach the students to define and apply certain criteria, by which they assess their learning. Teachers should also give students feedback on students' self-assessment and provide sufficient time for revision and improvement after self-assessment.

CONCLUSION

This study provides both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, this study adds more literature in self-assessment especially in the Indonesian context. At the

ISBN: 978-602-19859-7-7

practical level, the students are provided with the opportunity to take part in self-assessment activity they have never done before. This evidently has significant potential to help students to improve their speaking skill in terms of identifying their strengths and weaknesses and proposing some plans or strategies to address the weaknesses. A further implication is for policy makers and teachers. They should provide opportunities and support for students to conduct self-assessment. Providing students with guidance and support and opening a dialogue to allow further interpretation of feedback becomes a mandate in ensuring students fully engage with and make use of feedback designed to promote self-assessment practices (Wiliam, et al, 2010).

However, data of this study were mainly gathered from ten English students. The future research may, then, be conducted with larger and more representative groups of participants in diverse contexts. Further research on other areas of language proficiency and different self-assessment tool are also needed to validate the claim that requiring learners to do self-assessment is an effective way to contribute to the learning improvement and student achievement.

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