GESTURES USED BY THE STUDENTS IN GROUP PRESENTATION ACTIVITY IN SPEAKING CLASS

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Abstract

This paper explains about the use of gestures by students in group presentation. This research is descriptive research where the participant is the first year students of English Department of STKIP PGRI West Sumatra in academic year 2015/2016 in A and B class. The sampling technique used purposive sampling. The instrument of this research is observation. The result of this research is students used gestures in group presentation. Gestures are used in many situations such as when the students explain and deliver the information and opinions and also to give the instructions. Types of gesture which are stated by McNeill (1992), they are Iconic, Metaphoric, Deictic, and Beat gesture appear during process of group presentation. Iconic appears 12 times, this gesture has a function to describe the semantic information. Metaphoric appears 15 times, this gesture has a function to represent abstract content. Deictic appears 18 times, this gesture has a function to pointing and give the instructions. Beat appears 10 times, this gesture has a function help to find the words.

Keywords: Gestures, Group Presentation, Speaking Class.

INTRODUCTION

Group presentation is one of the activities in teaching and learning process to improve students’ ability where the students divided into several groups to present the result of discussions between members of the group about the topic which has given by lecturer. The lecturer will lead the process of group presentation. In group presentation, students are facilitated to practice their communication skills such as their speaking skill to speak in front of other people in sharing or delivering their information, opinions and thoughts. The goal of group presentation is to discuss the topic, sharing information, present opinions and solve the problems form of communication which produced orally. In verbal communication, students conveyed information or opinions to the listeners by using spoken language.
In the group presentation activity, all of the students are expected to give the contributions and participations. In the process of the activity, students share information each others. Students learn to explain their opinions or perceptions; the students deliver it by using their verbal communication. However, sometimes students’ explanations are not understandable for other students; it means that other students are difficult to comprehend the explanations. That is why the students need to involve nonverbal communication to support their utterances or verbal communication in conveying the information, opinions. The important thing in group presentation is communication between speakers and listeners. Communications will be success if the speakers and listeners understand the contents that are delivered each other. When the students presented and communicated the message or information in discussing the material to the listeners, the students used two kinds of communication, they were: verbal communication and nonverbal communication. Verbal communication was a fundamental or perception. Nonverbal communication can make the information easier to understand.

Furthermore, nonverbal communication is a communication other than words which involves bodily activity, such as gesture, body posture, facial expression, eye contact, intonation and tone of voice. Students used nonverbal communication to support their verbal communication and emphasize the information. In brief, gesture was one of the kinds of nonverbal communication which were commonly used by the students to emphasize their utterances or explanation in the group presentation.

Based on the explanation above, it can be identified that there are two forms of communication which used by students in group presentation, they were verbal communication and nonverbal communication. In group presentation students were not only focus using verbal communication but also they were using nonverbal communication in conveying their information, opinions, thoughts, and feelings.

Therefore, the researcher is interested in doing this research to analyze the types of gestures which are used by the third year students of English Department in academic year of STKIP PGRI West Sumatera in group presentation and to explain the functions
of gestures which are used by the third year students of English Department in academic year of STKIP PGRI West Sumatera in group presentation.

Furthermore, group presentation had several definitions. According to Hall (2007:1), group presentation encourages teamwork and help students get feedback from each throughout the process of developing the presentation. Groups can prepare a presentation is a process of discussion in the group which consist of some students to present the material. Students can discuss the material during or out of the class. However, Brooks and Wilson (2014:199) define that one of benefits of using oral presentation in the classroom is the opportunity that they present for learners to use their L2 to communicate with others in a natural way”. It means that group presentation is much needed for English Department students because in the group presentation activity students presents the results of discussion in English, thus it helps students to practice their English in communicating the information.

Based on all of the theories above, it can be concluded that group presentation is an appropriate way to improve students’ ability in teaching and learning process. In group presentation, students will practice their speaking and listening skill. Besides, students practice to discuss the cases and they try to solve of the problems which related to the cases. Meanwhile, students can also improve their self confidence and communication. Thus, communication is very needed in the process of group presentation. A successful communication between students can make students easy to get knowledge and information. Thus, it can be seen that students do not only focus on using verbal communication but also nonverbal communication in group presentation.

In the group presentation activity, one of the kinds of nonverbal communication that is used by students in group presentation is gesture. According to McNeill in Quek et al. (2002:172) define that gestures are an important part of human conversational interaction. This statement shows that gesture is important in communication. Gesture as one of the nonverbal communication can make a successful communication between the speaker and listener. By using gesture as a companion of verbal communication will help it easier to explain information to listener and listener also easy to get the point. It also used to avoid a misunderstanding between them. However, Verderber et al (2009:44) state that
gestures are the movements of your hands, arms, and fingers that you use to describe or to emphasize”. Based on this theory gestures are hand, arms and fingers movement that people use to support the utterances in speaking. Gestures are also helps the speakers to describe the speakers’ intention to the listeners.

Based on the theories above, it can be concluded that gestures are natural movements of body such as arms, hands, finger which are produced spontaneously to represent the speakers’ emotion and feeling. They always appear in human speaking, when students discuss something and to solve problems probably. When students speak, they produce gesture in the explanation. Besides, gesture is used to represent or imitate something in delivering ideas.

There are several types of gesture that are used by students in group presentation activity. McNeill (1992:76) explains that he classes gesture movements into four major categories, as follow:

a. Iconic gesture refers to concrete event, object, action that is also referred to in speech at the same time.

b. Metaphoric gestures are similar to iconic in that they present imagery, but present an image of an abstract concept, such as knowledge, language itself, the genre of the narrative. Metaphorics are, therefore, intrinsically more complex than iconics.

c. Deictic gestures are pointing movement, which are prototypically performed with the pointing finger, although any extensible object or body part can be used, including the head, nose, or chin, as well as manipulated artifacts. The deictic gestures that appear during narratives rarely if ever point to concrete entities.

d. Beats are defined as movement that do not present a discernible meaning, and they can be recognized positively in terms of their prototypical movement characteristic they are typically biphasic (two movement components), small, low energy, rapid flicks, of the fingers or hand; they lack a special gesture space, and are performed indeed wherever the hands happen to find themselves, including rest position (the lap, next to cheek).
Based on that theory, it can be said that that Iconic gesture as a gesture to represent an event, action, shape, object, motion, size. In other word it can be called as a concrete event. And, Metaphoric gesture is used to present an abstract concept. Next, Deictic gesture can be used to pointing a concrete or abstract concept. Then, Beat gesture is used a repetitive movement that sometime used flick of hand to emphasize or to find the words which will be explained.

Then, as we know, gestures also have several functions. According to Roth (2001:370), beats function as interactive gestures, which serve to regulate the coordination of speaking turns, to seek or request a response, or to acknowledge understanding. It is supported by Lucero (2010:901), “beat gesture might cause speakers to find words more quickly simply because they are motor actions”. Then, Deictic can play important role in classroom interaction because they establish a distinction between figures (topic) and ground. Iconic gestures draw their communicative strength from being perceptually similar to the phenomenon that is being talked about. Metaphoric makes reference to a visual image; the images to which refers pertain to abstraction. In addition, Stam and Ishino (2011:4) state that spontaneous gestures serve many functions, they may serve functions simultaneous, add information that is not present in individuals’ speech or emphasize information, serve to lighten speakers’ cognitive load and improve their performance in other areas, help speakers organize spatial information for speaking and aid in the conceptual planning of speech, also indicate transition in cognitive language development, may be used to retain turn during conversation, gestures may indicate speech production difficulties and facilitate lexical retrieval.

Based on all of these theories, it can be concluded that gestures is very important in group presentation have many functions in speaking such as gesture can be used to emphasize speakers’ explanation, to represent something, to make the explanation clearly and understandable for the listeners and also can improve the speakers performance in presenting. However, every type of gesture has specific function on gesture production.
RESEARCH METHOD

The design of this research was descriptive research. According to Gay and Airisian (2000:275), descriptive research was used to investigate the variety of educational problems and issues.

This research was conducted in speaking class at the first year students of English Department of STKIP PGRI West Sumatera in academic year 2015/2016. The participant in this research was the first year students at Speaking class of English Department in academic year 2015/2016. The researcher used purposive sampling technique. According to Lufri (2002:86), purposive sampling is sample that purposed chosen based on certain characteristic needed on research in selecting the sample. The researcher decided to select A and B class to be observed because among whole classes only A and B class had a characteristic that researcher needed for the research. A and B class did group presentation activity toward Cross Cultural Understanding subject while other classes already finished the activity of group presentation.

Furthermore, in this research the research used observation as an instrument; it was involving observation checklist, field note and video recording. Observation checklist was used to determine the types of gesture that used by the students where the indicators of gesture types adapted from McNeill (1992:76) and Roth (2001:370) who had explained that there were four types of gesture; they were Iconic, Metaphoric, Deictic and Beat gestures.

During collecting the data by using observation checklist, the researcher also made a note that was named field note. Then, video recording that used to record students activities during group presentation in order to get information toward the use of gesture by student, what types of gestures that students used. Video recording helped the researcher to fill the observation checklist and field note. All of them are related to complete each other to do observation.
RESEARCH FINDINGS

As a result of this research, the researcher described the finding of the research. It can be found that there were 13 students as participants who used four types of gesture that was adapted from McNeill (1992). There were 2 students who used Iconic gesture, 3 students who used Metaphoric gesture, 9 students who used Deictic gesture, and 2 students who used Beat gesture.

The student’s code that used Iconic gesture, they were (1 and 2). Iconic gesture appeared 12 times where student 1 used 8 times and student 2 used 4 times. In this, the students used Iconic gesture was to help her to represent and emphasize what were in her mind. Next, the students’ code that used Metaphoric gesture, they were (3, 4, and 5). Metaphoric gesture appeared 15 times where the student 3 used 7 times, student 4 used 3 times and student 5 used 5 times of Metaphoric gestures. In this, Metaphoric gesture helped the student to describe the abstract thing which was stated in their statement when sharing their opinions to the other students.

Besides, the students’ code that used Deictic gesture, they were (2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12). In this, Deictic gesture appeared 18 times where student 2 used 3 times, student 5 used 4 times, student 6 used 2 times, student 7 used 3 times, student 8 used 2 times, student 9, 10, 11, and 12 only used 1 time of Deictic gestures. In this, Deictic gesture helped the students to emphasize an abstract one such as this, there, that, he, she, I, you, etc become a concrete one.

On the other words, the students’ code that used Beat gesture, they were (2, 13). Beat gesture appeared 2 times. In this, Beat gesture helped the student to seek the response, it means that this gesture was also helped the students to find the words and to emphasize certain of utterances.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the research in The Use of Gestures by Students in Group Presentation in the first year students of English Department of STKIP PGRI West Sumatera in academic year 2015/2016, the result can be concluded that students used
gesture when delivering the information or opinions to emphasize their information or opinions, to represent what on their mind are and as a code to give instructions.

The researcher also found that the types of gesture that is stated by McNeill (1992), they are Iconic, Metaphoric, Deictic, and Beat gesture were used by students in delivering their information or opinions in group presentation activity. Based on three times of observation in group presentation at the first year students of English Department of STKIP PGRI West Sumatera in academic year 2015/2016, the researcher noticed that students used those gestures and it helped the student to deliver the information to other students. Each of them has different functions that can be applied or used by students. So that, students’ explanation easier to understand and students’ performance do not feel monotonous.

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