



## **A Preliminary Study on Developing Vocational- based Public Speaking Learning Materials for Business Communication**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The business world requires its employees to have public speaking skills as one of communication strategies. The skills are used for negotiating, collaborating, and networking with national and international parties that leads to global development. As business world relies on Polytechnics' graduates, lecturers must equip students with public speaking skills specifically for business communication. This study investigates students' perception on public speaking for business communication, which later on will be the based of developing learning materials. Questionnaires consisting of three aspects, namely needs, wants, and lack were given to 48 students enrolled in the Public Speaking of Business Communication course in English Department of Politeknik Negeri Padang. The data from the instruments were then analyzed descriptively. The results show that the students have not fully understood the concept of writing the business script, delivering the public speaking in business environment, and the relation with business communication. The conclusion generated from this research is vocational higher institutions like polytechnics must start to introduce the essential of public speaking in business environment by providing suitable materials.

### **KEYWORDS**

public speaking;  
business communication;  
learning material

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### **ABSTRAK**

Dunia bisnis menuntut karyawannya untuk memiliki keterampilan berbicara di depan umum sebagai salah satu strategi komunikasi. Keterampilan tersebut digunakan untuk bernegosiasi, berkolaborasi, dan berjejaring dengan pihak-pihak nasional dan internasional yang mengarah pada pembangunan global. Karena dunia bisnis bergantung pada lulusan Politeknik, dosen harus membekali mahasiswa dengan keterampilan berbicara di depan umum khususnya untuk komunikasi bisnis. Penelitian ini menyelidiki persepsi mahasiswa tentang berbicara di depan umum untuk kebutuhan komunikasi bisnis, yang nantinya menjadi dasar dari pengembangan materi pembelajaran. Kuesioner yang terdiri dari tiga aspek, yaitu kebutuhan, keinginan, dan kekurangan diberikan kepada 48 mahasiswa yang terdaftar dalam mata kuliah Public Speaking Komunikasi Bisnis di Jurusan Bahasa Inggris Politeknik Negeri Padang. Data dari instrumen ini kemudian dianalisis secara deskriptif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa mahasiswa belum sepenuhnya memahami konsep penulisan naskah bisnis, penyampaian public speaking di lingkungan bisnis dan kaitannya dengan komunikasi bisnis. Kesimpulan yang dihasilkan dari penelitian ini adalah Lembaga Pendidikan tinggi vokasi seperti politeknik harus mulai memperkenalkan esensi public speaking dalam lingkungan bisnis dengan persiapan materi yang sesuai.

### **KATA KUNCI**

berbicara di depan umum;  
komunikasi bisnis; materi  
pembelajaran

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## **INTRODUCTION**

A person's public speaking skills develop alongside their mastery of language and communication. Eke (2021) said that public speaking skills are an asset valuable, and it is even said that nothing is more important to a person's education in addition to knowing how to express yourself. In public speaking, public speakers must know the audience thoroughly in terms of needs, attitudes, backgrounds, interests, etc.

In this era, public speaking skills have an important role for businessmen to create effective and efficient communication (Zanola, 2016). The companies or industries required employees who have excellent communication in negotiation, diplomacy, marketing, cooperation, and collaboration. The global development demands employees that have public speaking skills in international language like English. Without public speaking skills, many businesses fail and many goals not achieved.

Unfortunately, research by Van Horn (1995) as cited in Crosling and Ward (2002) showed that although oral communication is viewed required by employers, but oral communication is a skill that is lacking prepared by graduates. This was confirmed by Novaković and Teodosijević (2017) who said that job seekers have not been taught public speaking skills during elementary school and even not in college. Referring to this situation, English Public Speaking for Business Communication course is offered in Politeknik Negeri Padang. As Bukit (2014) said that well describes education and training for job seekers. Different from public schools which focuses on general academic abilities, vocational education is oriented directly on various work skills as participant competency development his education. While Sudira (2012) also agreed that educational model that focuses on individual skills, abilities, understanding, behaviour, attitudes, work habits is named as vocational education and training. It is also appreciation of the jobs needed by the business community and industry that partners with the business community and industry in contracts with professional association institutions and on a productive basis. Meanwhile, according to Pavlova in Sukoco (2019) explained that the tradition of vocational education is to prepare students to work. Thus, it can be said an education that prepares the formation of skills, abilities, understanding, behavior, attitudes, habits work, and appreciation of the jobs needed by the whole community of business and industry which is supervised by society and the government, or in a contract with institutions and on a productive basis is called as vocational education. Therefore, the development of teaching materials for the English Public Speaking for Business Communication course must be developed that fulfill the criterion of a vocational institution. The first phase is doing analysis on the insider before continuing to the outsider' perspectives. Therefore, it is very essential to analyze the needs of the students and the lecturers toward the course. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) classified needs into target needs and learning nees. Target needs means what the learners needs to in the target situation by classifying into necessities, lacks and wants. Meanwhile, learning needs means the learners need to do in order to learn. Therefore, this study focuses on the analysis of the target needs from the students' perspective and analysis of the learning needs from the lecturers' perspective.

## **METHOD**

This study was a development research which is known as R&D. The development model consists of five stages which are analysis, design, development, implementation and evaluation. Since this study focuses on the analysis stage, descriptive qualitative method was applied. Nassaji (2015) said that naturalistic data which attempt to study language learning and teaching in their naturally occurring setting without any intervention or manipulation variables is involved as the characteristic of qualitative research. Lans and Voordt (2002) stated that descriptive research that describes reality according to a systematic approach rigorously followed and it is usually based on theoretical consideration and is dependent on the objective of the study is well researched.

The instrument of this research was a questionnaire in a form of google form. Taherdoost (2022) said that the important instrument in a research study to help the researcher collect relevant data regarding the research topic is called as a questionnaire. There were two forms applied. The first questionnaire consisted of 15 questions and applied five point-likert scale- strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. Before applying, the first questionnaire was validated by the experts from the side of the appropriateness of the content, language, presentation, and graphics. Getting valid in all the aspects, the questionnaires were then distributed to 48 students of English Department who enrolled in Public Speaking for Communication Business course. The aim of the questionnaire was gaining data about the students' perspective toward the development of Public Speaking for Business Communication teaching materials. The data was categorized into necessities, lack, and wants (Hutchinson and Water, 1987).

The second questionnaire was open questions. This second questionnaire which was also validated with the same aspects as the first was then given to 5 lecturers who have experienced in teaching Public Speaking for Business Communication course. The aim of the second questionnaire was to get information about the lecturers' perspective toward tasks or activities that should be included in the teaching materials of the course.

## **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

There were 48 students that respond to the questionnaire (g-form) of target needs or what the students' needs to in the target situation. The questionnaire that consisted of 15 questions were categorized into necessities, lacks, and wants.

In the development of vocational-based public speaking learning materials, the students must get an insight from a practitioners side that fully understand what is happening in the real business nowadays. The practitioners and the lecturers are teaching side by side, thus the students know the relation between the theories and the practice. From the questionnaire analysis, there were 50% students agree that there are tasks provided in the public speaking learning materials taught by practitioners. Jean-Pierre, J., et.al (2021) stated that the practical instructor acts as a facilitator who significantly assists with breathing exercises and vocal warm-up routines, which are performed while standing, helping the students become more familiar with their own voices. In addition, the instructor also organized peer teaching activities where students could practice presenting and giving constructive feedback to each other.

By having practitioners as the instructor, the students also must have public speaking experience in a real business environment. Beside gaining new insight, their soft skill and hard skills will also improve much. They will be strong enough to enter the real business work after graduate. Referring to the questionnaire, there were 49.9% students that strongly agree to include

practice in a real public area in the learning materials. As Nadiah, Arina & Ikhrom (2019) said that to build self-confidence, students should consider practicing public speaking, which involves presenting information to a group of people. This can reduce their anxiety.

Actually, applying public speaking skill in a real business environment without any preparation is also a kind of suicide. Someone business can fail because of the lack of effective business communication. Thus, students must be prepared with a suitable public speaking method. They must be ready in the real work that full of challenges. Therefore, they need to be accustomed with a good preparation which totally need a hard work. In the learning process, they can prepare themselves by having many practices in front of the class. They can get opinion from their classmate about their strength and weaknesses. Referring to the questionnaire result, there were 47,9% agree that practice their public speaking delivery in front of the class before going to the public area must be in the learning materials. Puluhulawa et.al (2022) said that in class, students usually prepare and develop strategies by discussing in groups. By by engaging in discussions and observing each other's performances, each student adapts and learns how to approach public speaking by responding to various situations that arise during public speaking activities in class.

Practicing without any technique is also a useless thing. The students must use a right method. For students of non-English speaking background, extemporaneous method is more appropriate. The students are given times to practice and making notes of the important points in a set of cue cards. Therefore, during applying their public speaking, the students' anxiety will be more controlled since they are more confident on the information that they deliver during public speaking. Referring to the questionnaire result, there were 43,8 % students strongly agree that a set of cue cards is needed in the learning materials. As Sukmana, et.al (2023) said that the use of cue cards can help students to improve speaking accuracy, fluency and anxiety. This tool allows for a more organized delivery, boosting confidence and making public speaking less intimidating. While, Pusparini, D., & Suryatiningsih, N (2023) said that public speaking is a crucial skill which is useful in the context of communication especially in formal meetings that require eloquent and clear speaking skills.

Businesses in the world develop rapidly. Thus, in developing vocational- based public speaking learning materials, the students must be ready in various types of business jobs communication. Therefore, 72,9% strongly agree that industry business is necessary as the topic in the learning materials. The result also shows that 66,7% strongly agree that trading business as a topic in the necessary in the course materials. Zanola (2016) said that public speaking plays an important role in the growth of a trading business, just as it does in other business roles such as salespeople, buyers, and consultants. The various positions and types of businesses within the trading sector require specific public speaking skills. This is because each role demands different communication strategies to effectively engage with clients, present products, negotiate deals, and build professional relationships.

With the various types of business, the students must be able to manage and arrange their public speaking script based on the current situation and condition. Outlining the content will help mastering the script. The outline can organize information into logical patterns that audience can understand. It also helps to sort out the key points and customize the appropriate words to be delivered in the speech (Billington & McKay, 2021), and this is inline with the questionnaire result that shows 41,7% strongly agree that outline development is needed in the learning materials.

In delivering public speaking, the success does not come only by acquiring the script but also the way of delivering it to the audience. As an employee of a business, he or she must be

able to persuade, negotiate, cooperate or build network that give advantage to the business in an attractive way. They must optimally use their body movement and vocal technique to engage and mingle with the audiences. Billington, S., & McKay, S. (2021) said that body movement followed by posture and body language is necessary to adjust to the context of the discussion being delivered. People will be more confident if they perform a speech with good body movement. This is inline with the questionnaire result that shows 50% strongly agree that teaching the used of body movement is needed in the course materials.

In all the activities and tasks given in the public speaking learning materials, the students also must get a feedback or correction from their practitoners, lecturers, and classmates. They must be ready to be critized and get an action to overcome it. This will also be faced by them in a real business environment. From the questionnaire result, 44,7% agree to get direct verbal correction. As Rochma, A (2023) said that there are two key aspects of providing oral corrective feedback to students in speaking courses: the best opportunities to give feedback on errors, and the most effective types of feedback. When instructors aim to improve students' accuracy in speaking, they often use a combination of both immediate and delayed corrections to maximize learning outcomes.

Beside getting verbal correction, there were 47,9% agree to get written evaluation of their public speaking progress is wanted in the course materials. Chollet, M., et.al (2015) said that as a speaker, feedback and suggestion is crucial for increased awarness of certain behaviours in fact improves public speaking skills. Every performance needs direct feedback to understand the condition significantly. The correction or evaluation verbally and written is optimal when there is an evident. Therefore, videotapped the practices that the students did in the class and in the real business environement are needed. Videotaped feedback enables students to review and reflect on their performances, resulting in improved skill development. This is inline with questionnaire result that showed 45,8% agree that videotapped the public speaking delivery practice is necessary

Furthermore, external feedback is also important to build the students' modesty on any critic and suggestion from strangers. Thus, the videos can be uploaded in social media such as Youtube and been watched by people and get their viewed. There were 45,8% agree that the use of video technology as a teaching tool in public speaking classes is extremely effective at improving students' abilities and attitudes. Furthermore, Bourhis, J., & Allen, M. (1998) said that students' value and enjoy the option to view themselves on video, leading to more favorable attitudes toward the course. Importantly, the presence of a camera had no negative impact on student performance, making video technology a useful supplement to public speaking education.

Meanwhile, the second questionnaire aimed to gain lecturers' perception on the needs of developing the vocational-based public speaking learning materials. Interview guidance list was given to 5 lecturers of English Department Politeknik Negeri Padang that have experienced in teaching Public Speaking for Business Communication. The lecturers were given open questions that related to what the learners need to do in order to learn (learning needs). From the interview guidance list, it is identified that the students need to research kinds of business not only in their own country but also overseas. They need to identify when public speaking usually occurs in the business. They need to develop a real script from a real business and delivery it in a real public area to feel the sensation of a real public speaker. The students need to train themselves to deliver their public speaking as interesting as possible.

## CONCLUSION

The target needs or the data of what the students' need for the developed vocational based public speaking learning materials for business communication has been gained. The data are gained from two perceptions which are the students and the lecturers which come from vocational higher institution which is polytechnic. There were 48 students and 5 lecturers. The collecting data can be said valid since it was collected through instrument that has passed validation process done by an expert. The data also have been supported by several researches and experts' theories. The data are categorized into necessities, wants, and lacks. These will be the based in the developing the learning materials for the further research.

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