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SPEECH DISFLUENCY AND GESTURES PRODUCTION IN UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' CONFIDENCE LEVEL OF SPEAKING

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Abstract

Speech disfluency is a type of speech disorder that bothers someone's normal flow of speech. Along with speech disfluency, gestures also accrued during speaking performance. The production of speech disfluency is inseparable from the factors that caused it and the solutions to solve these issues. The study was held at Politeknik Negeri Bali, where the students and lecturer were the participants. Since this study is qualitative research that aims to collect textual data, observation, questionnaires, and interviews were conducted to collect the data. The findings showed that 19 students produced filled pause and 16 students experienced silent pause. There were 9 students who produced repetition and 8 students for repair. Lexical filler was experienced by 7 students and 6 students for prolongation. Meanwhile, there were 19 students produced the beat gesture, 5 students for the iconic gesture, 11 students produced the metaphoric gesture and 5 students for the deictic gesture. Moreover, the cognitive factors were found in 15 students, 17 students were influenced by linguistic factors and 11 students for the affective factors. To create an innovative teaching and learning environment the lecturer combined her method of teaching which used independent study, small-group discussions and brainstorming.

Kata Kunci: *Speech disfluency, Gesture, Teaching strategies*

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of the English skills that became the most selected language skill used to see the level of someone's ability to master English (Jaya et al., 2022). According to Phukan (2019), speaking plays a dominant role in acquiring a second or foreign language. Self-confidence is the condition of the human mind which allows them to believe and rely on himself/herself and their abilities in order to reach their goals (Lone, 2021). The lack of students' self-confidence in speaking skills causes some issues, like bothering someone's normal flow of speech, which makes the speaker look unprofessional. One of the issues is called speech disfluency, which affects language comprehension, acquisition and production. Speech disfluency is a kind of speech disorder which interrupts someone's normal flow of speech (Jansson-Verkasalo et al., 2021). MacGregor (2008)examined in her research there are six types of disfluent phenomena which probably faced during the speaking learning process namely fill pauses, silent pauses, repetitions, repairs, lexical fillers, and prolongations. These types will influence the performance of the students in the classroom, including their self-confidence in speaking. Along with speech disfluency, speaking can be accompanied by gestures.

As a component of the speech, the emergence of the gesture occurs when the speakers produce speech disfluency. It overlaps with the utterance both in time and also the meaning. In this situation, there are enormous possibilities for the students to use different kinds of gestures in every type of speech

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disfluency which can describe their feelings and their level of confidence (Yasinnik et al., 2005). The undergraduate program is the first stage of a higher education program, which provides a lot of chances for the students to develop their skills. As one of the higher education programs, Politeknik Negeri Bali (PNB) prioritizes practice rather than theory in order to create a professional and internationally competitive graduate students.

These various departments that are not major in English create some challenges for lecturers in teaching English subjects, especially in speaking, because there are still a lot of students who experience speech disfluency in speaking performance. For this reason, it is important to know the types of speech disfluency as well as the gestures that are produced during speaking activities. Moreover, identifying the strategies of the lecturer in teaching is also important. It is interesting because students and lecturers face challenges in teaching and learning. Therefore, the factors that cause speech disfluency are also discussed in this study.

This study is a qualitative study which applies a descriptive design in presenting the data that typically consists of the data in the form of words instead of numbers. The focus of this study is to find out the types of speech disfluency and gestures that occurred, as well as the factors that caused the speech disfluency. In this study, there were some subjects who participate in developing the research process. There is a class in the Department of International Business Management which consists of 19 students in the class. The class was chosen based on Purposive Random Sampling which determines the closest criteria of the sample that are expected to be able to answer the research problems. Besides the students, this study also involved a lecturer who is teaching at the Department of Business Administration English class. Therefore, to collect the data, the observation was applied. At the same time, an interview with the lecturer was also applied to know what kind of solution they use to face the issues. In addition, to measure the students' confidence level, the data was collected by doing a survey.

Finding and Discussion

This parts contains the important points used to answer the research problems presented in the previous chapter. Furthermore, this chapter also describes the study's findings and the discussion.

Finding

There are some main objectives in this study as follows 1) To describe the speech disfluency produced by undergraduate students speaking English class. 2) To find out the body gestures that occur in English-speaking activities among undergraduate students. 3) To identify the factors that caused the speech disfluency produced by undergraduate students. 4) To explore the kind of teaching strategies used by the lecturer in dealing with the students who lack confidence in speaking.

1.1. Students' Speech Disfluencies and Confidence Level

This part focused on the speech disfluencies produced by the students while presenting their speaking assignment in front of the class. The total number of students who presented their assignment was 19 students. This data was collected by providing a questionnaire and conducting observations.

1. Questionnaire Distribution

After doing the first observation, the following activity was the distribution of the questionnaire which determined the level of students' confidence. The students were given 12 close-ended questions in the questionnaire through the Google form link. In total, there were 19 students answered the questionnaire. The summary of the questionnaire results is described in the following table:

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Table 3.1 Students' Self-Confidence Level

No	Respondents	Statements												Scores	Confidence Category
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		
1	Student 1	5	3	4	2	4	4	5	2	2	3	3	5	42	High
2	Student 2	3	4	4	3	4	2	3	2	3	3	3	4	38	Medium
3	Student 3	2	3	4	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	2	4	33	Medium
4	Student 4	4	3	3	3	4	3	5	3	3	3	3	5	42	High
5	Student 5	4	4	4	3	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	5	42	High
6	Student 6	4	3	3	2	4	3	4	2	2	3	3	4	37	Medium
7	Student 7	4	5	3	3	3	2	4	3	2	4	2	5	40	Medium
8	Student 8	3	3	3	1	3	2	4	2	2	2	2	3	30	Medium
9	Student 9	4	2	3	2	4	3	3	2	3	3	3	4	36	Medium
10	Student 10	4	2	2	1	4	3	2	3	3	2	1	4	31	Medium
11	Student 11	4	3	4	4	4	3	5	3	3	4	3	5	45	High
12	Student 12	2	4	4	3	4	4	2	2	2	2	2	4	35	Medium
13	Student 13	3	3	3	3	3	2	4	3	2	3	3	4	36	Medium
14	Student 14	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	32	Medium
15	Student 15	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	3	3	3	3	5	46	High
16	Student 16	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	3	4	39	Medium
17	Student 17	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	24	Medium
18	Student 18	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	24	Medium
19	Student 19	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	3	4	4	4	5	50	High
	Total	64	59	62	51	66	54	68	48	48	55	50	77		
	Percentage	67%	62%	65%	54%	69%	54%	72%	51%	51%	58%	53%	81%		

The table 3.1 describes how Business Management students' confidence levels differed. Around thirteen of the nineteen students showed self-confidence at the medium level, with the average score ranging from 24 to 40. Apart from the medium level, six of the nineteen students showed a high level of self-confidence with an average score ranging from 42 to 50. The total scores of every statement convey the rate of each statement itself. The rate of the students' answers for the first statement was 67% which talked about speaking English in the classroom. The second statement talked about how speaking in English is easy, which only reached 62% and the third statement about the ability to do an English interview reached 65%. The next statement talked about the capability to speak English with native speakers which reached 54%. For how happy they are when speaking English reached 69%. The next one talked about how relaxed when speaking English only reached 54% which is different from how students look for chances to speak English which reached 72%. Meanwhile, the statement about whether they say something to other people in English every day and the next one talking about how they can show an English-speaking visitor around the campus and answer questions reached the same result which is 51%. The tenth statement about whether they can give their opinion in English when talking to a native speaker reached 58%, in addition to the next statement which concerned the students will speak to a group of people in English reached 53%. The last statement focused on the student's desire to study in an English-speaking country reaching 81%.

Observation

After distributing the questionnaire, the observation was held on April 25 and May 16, 2024. This part focuses on the students' speaking performance, whether spontaneous speaking or presentation in front of the class.

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The following table shows the types of Speech disfluency produced by the students during their speaking performance. It was divided into six categories based on Speech Disfluency by MacGregor in 2008. The result of the observation was shown as follows:

Table 3.2 Students' Self-Confidence

No	Students	Speech Disfluency					
		Filled Pause	Silent Pause	Repetition	Repair	Lexical Filler	Prolongation
1	Student 1	✓			✓		
2	Student 2	✓	✓				
3	Student 3	✓					✓
4	Student 4	✓	✓		✓		
5	Student 5	✓	✓	✓			
6	Student 6	✓	✓	✓			
7	Student 7	✓	✓	✓		✓	
8	Student 8	✓	✓	✓			✓
9	Student 9	✓	✓		✓	✓	
10	Student 10	✓	✓		✓		✓
11	Student 11	✓	✓				✓
12	Student 12	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
13	Student 13	✓	✓	✓	✓		
14	Student 14	✓	✓			✓	
15	Student 15	✓		✓	✓		
16	Student 16	✓	✓		✓	✓	
17	Student 17	✓	✓	✓			
18	Student 18	✓	✓			✓	✓
19	Student 19	✓		✓	✓		

Based on the Table 3.2, all the students in total nineteen produced Filled Pause. Different from Filled pause, sixteen students experienced Silent pause. There were nine students who experienced repetition and eight students for repair. The next type is Lexical Filler which seven students experienced. Furthermore, six students experienced Prolongation in total. In conclusion, almost all of the students who have high and low confidence experienced Filled Pause. The data obtained from the questionnaire and during the observation shows that students have two levels of self-confidence.

They are the students with high confidence and the students with medium confidence. The first one is the students with high confidence.

For this level, the students could speak confidently and fluently although they also produce few speech disfluencies. On the other hand, the students with medium self-confidence produced speech disfluency quite high, therefore they had difficulty in conveying what they meant especially when speaking in English.

3.2 **Gestures occur in English-speaking activities among Undergraduate Students**

Based on the observations that have been held, some gestures occurred when the speech disfluencies were produced while the students were presenting the speaking assignment in front of the class. The types of students' gestures were divided into four categories, namely iconic, metaphoric, deictic, and beat. The following table indicates the gestures that occurred while the students presented their speaking task. The result of the observation was shown as follows:

Table 3.3. Students' Gestures

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No	Students	Gestures			
		Iconic Gesture	Metaphoric Gesture	Deictic Gesture	Beat Gesture
1	Student 1		✓	✓	✓
2	Student 2			✓	✓
3	Student 3		✓		✓
4	Student 4	✓	✓		✓
5	Student 5		✓		✓
6	Student 6				✓
7	Student 7		✓		✓
8	Student 8	✓	✓		✓
9	Student 9	✓			✓
10	Student 10		✓		✓
11	Student 11		✓	✓	✓
12	Student 12		✓		✓
13	Student 13	✓			✓
14	Student 14		✓		✓
15	Student 15		✓		✓
16	Student 16			✓	✓
17	Student 17				✓
18	Student 18				✓
19	Student 19	✓	✓	✓	✓

The table 3.3 shows that the beat gestures occurred in all of the students in total nineteen students, while they were performing their speaking presentation. For the iconic gestures, five students were experienced. The metaphoric gestures occurred in eleven students and the last deictic gestures were experienced by five students. It can be concluded that the students from the Department of International Business Management of Politeknik Negeri Bali produced various gestures. The first one is for students with high confidence who experienced only some speech disfluency while speaking was more expressive than students with medium confidence level.

The students with high confidence commonly produced 2 to 4 gestures while they were speaking. Meanwhile, the students with medium confidence were more passive and in total only 1 to 3 gestures were produced.

The gesture often made by the students was a simple flick using their fingers and hands like up, down which indicates the beat gesture.

3.3 **The Factors that Cause the Speech Disfluency**

There were some factors that influenced the students' speaking competence such as cognitive, linguistic and also affective factors. The result of the observation was presented as follows:

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Table 3.4 Factors Influencing Learners Speaking Competence

No	Students Name	Factors Influencing Learners Speaking Competence		
		Cognitive	Linguistic	Affective
1	Student 1		✓	
2	Student 2	✓		✓
3	Student 3	✓	✓	✓
4	Student 4		✓	✓
5	Student 5	✓	✓	
6	Student 6	✓	✓	
7	Student 7		✓	
8	Student 8	✓	✓	✓
9	Student 9	✓	✓	✓
10	Student 10	✓	✓	✓
11	Student 11	✓		
12	Student 12	✓	✓	✓
13	Student 13	✓	✓	✓
14	Student 14	✓	✓	✓
15	Student 15	✓	✓	
16	Student 16	✓	✓	
17	Student 17	✓	✓	✓
18	Student 18	✓	✓	✓
19	Student 19		✓	

Based on the Table 4.4, it can be seen there were 15 students who were influenced by cognitive factors in speaking, specifically in deciding the proper words to apply in appropriate grammatical structures in spontaneous speaking. Furthermore, 17 students were influenced by linguistic factors due to the limitation of vocabulary and lack of grammar in English. The last was affective factors which influenced 11 students who mostly felt nervous when speaking English.

3.4 **The Teaching Strategies**

The teaching strategy is the method used by the teacher to make the learning process more effective, innovative, and interesting. Sri Rahayuningsih (2022) stated that teaching strategy is one of the basic components which affect the success of the learning process in achieving the learning goals. In teaching, every teacher has a different method to make the class more interesting, therefore as a junior lecturer in Politeknik Negeri Bali teaching undergraduate students is one of the most challenging things. For that reason, there are some teaching strategies that have been applied. In order to know the strategies used by the lecturer, the data was collected by doing the interview and observation.

1. **Observation**

In this part, the process of taking the data began with observations which were used to find out the method or strategies of the lecturer in delivering the material to the students. Based on the observation the result was shown as follows:

Table 3.5 Teaching Strategies

Teaching Strategies	Class	Date	Activities
Independent Study	International Business Management	30th of May 2024	- Make a Resume and CV about their friend. - Interview their friend to get the data.

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Small-Group Discussions	International Business Management	30th of May 2024	- Discuss the related topics in groups.
Brain Storming	International Business Management	30th of May 2024	- Asking certain questions about the topics at the beginning of the course.

Table 4.5 describes that the lecturer combined her method of teaching which used independent study in giving the task to the students, having small-group discussions about the related topic and starting the lesson with brainstorming by asking the students some questions about the topic that will be discussed.

2. **Interview**

Furthermore, this part explained about the lecturer's opinion of the best teaching strategies that are used to teach the students. The data was taken based on the interview with the lecturer, the method often used in learning is discussion which is about 9-10 of 16 meetings. The reason of the lecturer used this strategy is because Politeknik Negeri Bali is a vocational higher education which enforces more practice than theory, therefore instead of listening to their lecturers talking in front of the class, the students need to discuss the problem and find the answer by themselves. It is a chance for the students to practice their English, especially in speaking. In dividing groups, the lecturer used two types of ways, the first one, she decided based on the students' numbers, like students' number one to five in one group and so on. However, most of the time, she asked the students to divide themselves. This way was

an effective way in the learning process because she believed that when her students were working together, they would feel more comfortable.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the research including questionnaire results, observation and also interview results have been provided. These data were already explained and analysed which became the basis for the further parts. Furthermore, this part focused on the discussion used to present the explanations and concepts of this research. It was arranged based on the research questions that were formulated.

Speaking ability is one of the important basic skills in learning a language like English. According to Nurmalasari et al., (2023) basically, students need self-confidence in their speaking performance. Self-confidence is the behaviour that allows someone to be realistic and positive about themselves, their circumstances, and their situations in life (Lone, 2021). Therefore, the level of self-confidence plays an important role in students' speaking performance. Additionally, Mareta et al., (2017) in their research stated self-confidence has a direct effect on students speaking skills. It can show when the students with a high confidence level are more active in speaking class rather than students with a medium or low confidence level. Moreover, the difference between students' confidence levels also affected the speech disfluency produced. Speech disfluency is one of the self-confidences impacts which can occur while speaking. This kind of thing also happened at Politeknik Negeri Bali, where students produced various types of speech disfluency in speaking performance. The students with high confidence did not make a lot of errors in their performance, because the frequency of the speech disfluency production was low. However, with the high Speech disfluency production in speaking performance, the

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students with medium confidence levels had difficulty in conveying what they meant.

Moreover, the students with high confidence levels made more gestures in their performance than the students with medium confidence levels. It also showed the various frequencies of the gestures. Mostly, the students used beat gestures or only simple flicks to help them find the appropriate words to use. These are consistent with the research proposed by Wagner et al., (2014) who mentioned that beat gestures occurred very frequently during students' speaking performance. At the same time, they also pointed out that beat gestures tend to have no semiotic content which means the form was unrestricted by the meaning expression. Based on the observation, most of the students produce that gesture in order to decrease their nervousness while speaking in front of the class. At the same time, the students also produced other gestures like iconic gestures to help them describe people, places and objects. Furthermore, the metaphoric gesture often occurred when the students wanted to explain abstract concepts. Moreover, some students also made deictic gestures by pointing the real objects like screen, clothes and their friends to support their utterances. All of the gestures that were produced had the same function which was used to reduce the students' nervousness and decrease the frequency of speech disfluency.

The production of speech disfluency was influenced by some factors that affected the students' performance while speaking did not look professional. Website et al. (2023) found that there are various reasons that disturb the students' speaking performance. Those factors include the lack of student vocabulary and also doubt of their own skills. Based on the data in the findings section, the students from the Department of International Business Management of Politeknik Negeri Bali experienced some problems like speech disfluency because there were some factors that influenced their performance. Based on the

observation, all the students in total nineteen students felt nervous and anxious when they had to speak in front of the class especially when they did spontaneous speaking. Although all of the students felt nervous and anxious, the level of their nervousness and anxiety was different. Therefore, the frequency of the speech disfluency that was produced was different. The types of disfluencies that were influenced by this factor were fill pauses, silent pauses, repetitions, repairs, lexical fillers, and prolongations. For that reason, it concluded that the affective factor was the most influential factor for the students.

In realizing a more effective, innovative, and interesting learning process, the lecturer should have some strategies to reach the learning objectives. It is a challenge for the lecturer, especially as the junior lecturer in Politeknik Negeri Bali. Based on the observation, the lecturer has applied all of the strategies namely independent learning, discussion and also brainstorming. At the beginning of the class, the lecturer applied brainstorming by giving the students simple questions in order to recall their knowledge about the topic that would be discussed. Furthermore, after explaining the topic, the lecturer organised the time for the students' discussion section. In this section, the students had a chance to discuss with their friends and find the solution to the problem that they had found during the class. In addition to the observation, in the interview, the lecturer stated that the most effective method of teaching the students was discussion. She chose discussion as the most effective strategy for teaching her students because they were more comfortable working with their friends.

CONCLUSION

There are some points that can be concluded based on the analysis of the findings and discussion in the previous chapter. The level of students' self-confidence influenced the frequency of speech disfluency production. Speech disfluency is the type of speech disorder which bothers the students' normal flow of

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speech. The students with a high confidence level only produced a few types of speech disfluency in their performance because the frequency of speech disfluency production was low. As well as the types of speech disfluency, the students also produced various gestures while speaking. The production of the gestures for all of the students functioned as a way to reduce their nervousness and decrease the frequency of speech disfluency. There are several factors, including cognitive, linguistic, and affective factors that influence the number of production speech disfluencies. These various factors were shown in every student's performance. Therefore, the lecturer must have the strategies to teach the students in order to decrease speech disorders. The lecturer mostly used discussion as the strategy in teaching her class due to the students being more comfortable working with their friends and speaking more confidently.

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HALAMAN INI SENGAJA DIKOSONGKAN