

**THE LITERACY COMPETENCY OF THE STUDENTS IN
ACCOUNTING DEPARTMENT OF SEMARANG STATE POLYTECHNIC
IN BUSINESS PRESENTATIONS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE
VIEWED FROM ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

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Abstract

Literacy is defined as the ability to read and write. Technological advances have resulted a shift of its interpretation, so that the applications of the scope of literacy are becoming wider and more complex, therefore this affects the literacy competence. The aim of this study is to examine the literacy competencies which cover three aspects of abilities, namely language aspects, social aspects, and cognitive aspects of of the students majoring in Accounting of Semarang State Polytechnic in making business presentations in English language. The data used in this research is recorded from the sample of students in doing the presentation. The samples of this research are 60 students from the Accounting Department who are taken from the all 6 Study Programs in Accounting Department, therefore, there are 10 students of each Study Program. Hopefully, that the results of this study can contribute to the development of literacy theory, applied language theory, as well as the theory of learning language and literacy in general. Moreover, it will increase the scores of the students in making business presentations in English. The expected output of this study is the map of the literacy competence of the students majoring in Accounting Department in Semarang State Polytechnic. While the expected outcome is improvements in the teaching and learning process in Business English Course, as well as improvement the students competence in doing business presentation .

Keywords: *business presentation, competence, literacy*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The background of the study

Literacy is claimed as an important skill which is used for all kind of problem solving in decision making and learning processes (UNESCO'2004, 2006) because literacy is the ability of each individual to manage himself and his environment and is a competency in achieving success and life safety. If knowledge is as a power then literacy is as the key to success (LPpolito, et al. 2008). Literacy education is the main focus of implementing international education as stated in the recommendations of the United Nation International education, scientific and cultural organization (Unesco, 2004, 2006)

The definitions of understanding and literacy competence are often misinterpreted considering that the presentation of language, discourse and literacy is the same in the form of oral and

written communication. Literacy is the ability to combine not only the ability to use language and social aspects which are the areas of discourse, but also cognitive aspects and knowledge possessed in various forms of communication to think and act (Kern, 2000) or as Mercer (2000) calls literacy is the ability to connect language and thought. Thus, in addition to similarities, there are also differences in interpretation, approach in developing mastery abilities of these three aspects and their use.

Demographic and technological changes that affect aspects of life automatically result in the evolution of the concept, definition, interpretation and understanding of literacy (Kern, 2000). Initially literacy was understood as the ability to write and read, then developed into a combination of abilities in oral and written communication or what is called the concept of the latest literacy or new literacy. From this explanation, it can be concluded that literacy is grouped into three layers of literacy, namely the first layer is spoken literacy, which is only oral communication skills, namely listening and speaking. The second layer is in the form of written communication skills both reading and writing. The third layer is a combination of oral and written communication skills

One of the literacy competencies that must be mastered in professional activities is the competence to make business presentations. Semarang State c students, including the students majoring in Accounting Department of Semarang State Polytechnic, are prepared to become work-ready graduates who, of course, have a high probability of making business presentations when they work. In the world of work, the use of English has become a necessity as an international language where business majors are global so that the ability to make business presentations in English is an urgent matter to be mastered.

1.2. Research purposes

This study aims to examine the competence of the students in making business presentations in English, and the result of this study will be useful for the lecturers in Accounting Department in Semarang State Polytechnic to make consideration for designing the teaching methods, as well as for preparing the teaching and learning process.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This research refers to one of the statement in the Strategic Planning of Semarang State Polytechnic in accordance with Law Number 12 of 2012 concerning higher education which emphasizes the development of applied skill competencies and problem solving for stakeholders. This research on developing literacy skills is in line with what is written in the about applied skill competencies, in this case generally covering the educating the nation's life and having competitiveness and specifically optimizing literacy skills in making business presentations when our graduates work later. In addition, literacy competence in presentations business is in an effort to make our graduates able to solve problems for stakeholders.

Literacy is as the paradigm in this study because most of the learning activities in educational institutions are to acquire literacy competencies such as accounting literacy, information technology literacy and others. As stated by UNESCO (2004, 2006), literacy is a human right because it is an essential skill for all human problem-solving and decision-making skills. Lack of literacy skills can create serious problems (Assenova (2010) & Cohen (2007). Gall (2003) claims that Business presentation is one of the literacy competencies.

Literacy is not merely the ability to speak, even though language is the center of literacy itself (Holm, 2000; Kern, 2000), because language works not because of language itself but according to its social context. This makes language must be analyzed in a social context. Language and its social functions remain static when not in use. Literacy occurs to make language and the social aspects where language is used function as desired. Therefore literacy combines linguistic and social aspects with cognitive aspects (Kern, 2000)

According to Tri Widodo and Joko Kristanto (2004: 157) in Hamdan and Ratnasari (2016) "the notion of presentation is a form of oral report regarding a certain fact to the communicant". And a business presentation is a presentation that is done in a business context that is different from other presentations such as academic presentations or something else. Furthermore, according to Hamdan and Ratna Sari (2016) the presentation consists of three parts, namely introduction, core, and conclusion. The introduction must answer 4 questions, including why should I listen to the presentation, why do I want to study the topic presented, what will I listen to, and what will I get from the presentation. in introduction,

3. RESEARCH METHODS

The research design used in this research is descriptive research with a qualitative research approach. This study aims to examine literacy competencies covering three aspects of ability, namely language aspects, social aspects and cognitive aspects of Polines accounting students in business presentations. The data used is recorded student presentation data. The research samples were taken from all Study Programs in the Accounting Department, namely the Accounting Study Program, the Finance and Banking Study Program, the Computer Accounting Study Program, the Islamic Banking Study Program, the Financial Analyst Study Program and the Managerial Accounting Study Program. From these six Study Programs, ten samples were taken from each using the purposive random sampling method, so that the total sample was sixty students.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Actually, English is only one of the supporting subjects in Accounting Department, but the role of English is considered important for students, so English courses are given to students in several semesters. As stated in their curriculum, in the third semester the students has Business English 1 courses, and in the fourth semester the students has Business English 2 course, one of

the objectives of giving those Business English courses is to give the students the ability to be able to make business presentations in English language, as English considered as one of the most common international language commonly used in business today, therefore, it is intended to provide students with the competence for the benefit of their future jobs or careers after they graduate from Accounting Department.

Related to the importance of students' ability to make business presentations in English, it is necessary to study the literacy competence of the students in making business presentations in English language.

The following is the result of data analysis on the literacy competence of Accounting Department students in business presentations in English using the Brown Rubric assessing speaking analysis tool which consists of 5 components, which is analyze using the speaking scoring rubric proposed by Brown. (2004), which is ranging from 0 to 5, and the highest score is with the competence of speaking like a native English speakers.

Table 1 below shows the literacy competence of the students in doing business presentations in English from the point of view of Grammar aspect.

Table 1. The literacy competence of the students from the point of view of the grammar used in the business presentation

SCORES	GRAMMAR	
	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGES
1	0	0.00%
2	5	8.00%
3	45	75.00%
4	10	16.70%
5	0	0.00%
	60	100.00%

This table shows that there is none of the students get 1 and 5 scores for the grammar used in the presentation. It means there is no students having very bad or the lowest score in their presentation, and as well as no students speak like a native speaker in their presentation. The highest percentage is the students having the 3 scores, that is 75% . Meanwhile the second highest is the student having the 4 score, that is 16.70%. The percentage of students having 2 scores is only 2%.

Table 2 below shows the students' competence in literacy in making business presentations in English from the point of view of the vocabulary aspect. From the data analysis, it shows

that there are no students getting 1 and 5 scores for the grammar used in the presentation. It means there is no students having very bad or the lowest score in their presentation, and as well as no students speak like a native speaker in their presentation. It is the same as the result of the literacy competence of the students from the point of view of the grammar used in the presentation. However, the percentage of the other scores show differences. The highest scores of the percentage is the students having the 3 scores, that is 70.00%. Comparing with the students having the 3 scores for grammar used, this percentage is lower, with the difference of 5.00%. The percentage of the students having the 4 scores is 23.00%. And 6.70% for the third highest with the score of 2. The percentage of the literacy competence from the point of view the vocabulary that they use in their business presentation for the second highest shows 9.70% increasing comparing with the second highest with the literacy competency of the students from the point of view grammar used in the presentation. On the contrary for the students having the 2 scores indicate 1.30% decrease. 70% increasing comparison with the second highest with the literacy competency of the students from the point of view grammar used in the presentation. On the contrary for the students having the 2 scores indicate 1.30% decrease. 70% increasing comparison with the second highest with the literacy competency of the students from the point of view grammar used in the presentation. On the contrary for the students having the 2 scores indicate 1.30% decrease.

Table 2. The literacy competence of the students from the point of view the vocabulary used in the business presentation

SCORES	VOCABULARY	
	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGES
1	0	0.00%
2	4	6.70%
3	42	70.00%
4	14	23.30%
5	0	0.00%
	60	100.00%

The literacy competence of the students from the point of view of the comprehension comprehension is presented in table 3 below. It can be seen that it is similar to the 2 previous points of view being discussed above, that there is no the students having the scores of 1 and 5. From the point of view the comprehension of the presentation, the score of 3 is 71.70%, becoming the highest percentage. The second highest is 25.00% for the score of 4, and the percentage of the students having 2 scores is 3.30%. The trend of the scores of the students

from the points of view of the comprehension of their presentation is similar to the 2 previous points of view.

Table 3. The literacy competence of the students from the point of view the comprehension of the business presentation

SCORES	COMPREHENSION	
	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGES
1	0	0.00%
2	2	3.30%
3	43	71.70%
4	15	25.00%
5	0	0.00%
	60	100.00%

The result of the data analysis on the fluency of the students in making business presentations in English is shown in table 4 below. There is no students having the score of 1 either 5 for the point of view the fluency of their business presentation. There are only 34 students (56.70%) having the 3 score, although this score is becoming the highest. The students having a score of 4 increased sharply, that is 38.30%. However, this percentage is lower comparing with the students having the score of 3, with the difference of 18.4%. The second lower of the students for their business presentation in English from the point of view of their fluency is 5.00%, that is for the students having 2 scores.

Table 4. The literacy competence of the students from the point of view of the fluency in the business presentation

SCORES	FLUENCY	
	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGES
1	0	0.00%
2	3	5.00%
3	34	56.70%
4	23	38.30%
5	0	0.00%
	60	100.00%

Table 5 below presents the literacy competence of the students from the point of view of the pronunciation spoken in the business presentation. The result of the study shows that 75.00% having a score of 3 for their pronunciation in business presentations in English. This

percentage is the highest of the scores of the students from the point of view of the pronunciation spoken in business presentations. The second highest is 20.00% for having the score of 4, and the second lowest is 5.00% for the students having the score of 2.

Table 5. The literacy competence of the students from the point of view of the pronunciation spoken in the business presentation

SCORES	PRONUNCIATION	
	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGES
1	0	0.00%
2	3	5.00%
3	45	75.00%
4	12	20.00%
5	0	0.00%
	60	100%

From the data analysis from the 5 different points of view of the students literacy competence in making business presentation in English, it is find out that there is a trend that the highest score is 3. As presented in table 7 below, the average scores of the students in the 5 different aspects of the students for having the score of 3 is 69.68%, which means more than half of the students.

Table 6: The average of the students having the highest score in business presentation in English

ASPECTS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGES
GRAMMAR	45	75.00%
VOCABULARY	42	70.00%
COMPREHENSION	43	71.70%
FLUENCY	34	56.70%
PRONUNCIATION	45	75.00%
	41.8	69.68%

From table 7, it shows that the average score of the students having the score of 2, which is as the second highest, is 24.66%. It is around a quarter of the students having the score of 2 in Brown Rubric scoring system.

Table 7: The average of the students having the second highest score in business presentation in English

ASPECTS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGES
GRAMMAR	10	16.70%
VOCABULARY	14	23.30%
COMPREHENSION	15	25.00%
FLUENCY	23	38.30%
PRONUNCIATION	12	20.00%
	14,8	24.66%

There is none of the students having the score of 1, as the lowest score, and there is also no students having the score of 5 in speaking rubric proposed by Brown. As it can be seen from table 8, the average percentage of the students having the score of 2, as the second lowest is only 5.66%. So seeing from the 5 different aspects in making business presentation in English, as shown in table 8 below, the number of the students with that low speaking competence is only a few.

Table 8: The average of the students having the second lowest score in business presentation in English

ASPECTS	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGES
GRAMMAR	5	8.00%
VOCABULARY	4	6.70%
COMPREHENSION	2	3.30%
FLUENCY	3	5.00%
PRONUNCIATION	3	5.00%
	3,4	5.66%

From the result of the data analysis, it can be learn that the average of the literacy competence of the students in Accounting Department in Semarang State Polytechnic is in the medium position of the Rubric scoring system in speaking proposed by Brown.

5. CONCLUSION

The result of the study shows that there is no students having the lowest and either the highest scores in the rubric scoring system proposed by Brown. There is only quite few of students having the second lowest score, that is only 5.66% of the students having the second lowest score in Brown rubric. A little bit higher with that, the percentage of the students having the second higher is 24.66%. The percentage of the students for having the

score of 3 is 69.68%. Those percentage shows that the literacy competence of the students in Accounting Department in Semarang State Polytechnic is in the middle level, therefore it needs to be improve into higher level of competence.

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