

PROMOTING SPEAKING THROUGH GRAPHIC LITERATURE FOR EFL LEARNERS

Eva Solina Gultom

English Department, Faculty of Humanities

Universitas Halu Oleo, Kendari – Indonesia

eva_joshgroban@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

This research probes the effectiveness of literature used in improving speaking skills for EFL learners. The specific literature that applied for this learning is graphic literature. As part of literature, graphic literature has become one of the resources that provide aesthetic, creativity, intellectuality, and imaginative experience of writers for learners. This research used the quantitative method that focuses on data analysis through online class observation and surveys. The objectives of this research are to exhibit the ways of literature implied to teach speaking for EFL learners, to delineate the potency of graphic literature to escalate speaking skills for EFL learners, and to perceive students' discernments of studying literature through graphic literature in advancing speaking competence for EFL learners.

Keywords: EFL learners, graphic literature, literature, speaking, teaching

INTRODUCTION

Teaching speaking does not only teach students to produce spoken words to express their feeling, idea and mind but also to make students active in negotiating meaning using social knowledge of the situation and the topic. Speaking refers to the ability to speak effectively in different context to give information, to express idea and feeling, as well as to build social relationship in the form of activity which is various, natural, interactive and interesting.

On the other hand, teaching speaking to the students is complicated and has a great challenge to do because for Indonesian English learners, there are some difficulties that should be overcome. Some of them are they must always memorize new vocabularies, how to pronounce the words, use the grammar correctly and accurately, express their idea coherently, and how to eliminate their anxiety. Besides, some students have not been able to think something abstract to get the idea to express something if they want to speak so that it makes them not actively participate in learning activity especially in speaking class.

However, there are still some ways the English teacher can do to tackle the problems in presenting English teaching especially teaching speaking to the students in the classroom. One of them is by using literature. Literature can make the teaching of a language more fun. It helps us to talk about grammar and sentences with our students in an interactive way. We can talk about interesting topics, encourage our students to express their points of view and introduce controversial topics and more in depth topics.

One of interactive ways to teach speaking by literature is using a graphic literature. A graphic literature most commonly refers to works of the creative imagination, including novels, fiction, and nonfiction, short story combined with illustration or visuals. Graphic literature is identical to graphic novels or even comics. However, there are another kinds of graphic literature that we should concern about, such as graphic guide / books (fiction) or nonfiction and also short story. Graphic literature involve images and texts as well to tell the story. Its images help the readers or the viewers to understand not only the context or the story as the whole but also it could give us many implications or reactions. These implications or reactions are applicable for speaking enhancement. In speaking, students are prompted to expand and to analyze their understanding of the story in oral / verbal language in a small discussion or in front of the class. Discussing literature through graphics enables students not only develop their creativity in constructing their perspective but also encourage the students to be more critical. Besides, students are also prompted to boost up their vocabulary and boldness to speak up during the discussion. From these possibilities, the researcher then formulated some research questions as follows: how to identify the use of literature to teach speaking for EFL learners, how to acknowledge the potency of graphic literature to escalate speaking skills for EFL learners and how to perceive students' perception of studying literature through graphic literature in advancing speaking competence for EFL learners

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research are to identify the use of literature to teach speaking for EFL learners, to acknowledge the potency of graphic literature to escalate speaking skills for EFL learners and to perceive students' perception of studying literature through graphic literature in advancing speaking competence for EFL learners.

METHODOLOGY

This research used the quantitative method that focuses on data analysis through online class observation and surveys (polling and online form). This method was conducted to identify the effectiveness of teaching speaking strategies by applying graphic literature in advancing speaking competence for EFL learners. The data was addressed to 118 students of first year English literature students at Halu Oleo University, Kendari, whose subject is Basic Speaking.

DISCUSSION

Literature as a Media to Teach Speaking for EFL Learners

Reading, writing, listening, and speaking are four core language abilities that are taught through literature. When employing literature in the language classroom, however, skills should never be taught in isolation, but rather as part of a whole. English Literature may introduce students to a variety of topics, including not only the English language but also English learning and culture. English literature captures some features of English culture. Of course, this is clear when studying Shakespeare's works or the works of eighteenth and nineteenth century writers, poets, and playwrights. This is also true when looking at other works of English literature. Allusions and references and a certain areas of English culture can be taught to students. There are some advantages to teach speaking through literature as follow: students can also gain an understanding of the context and meanings of well-known statements and phrases. Students who enjoy and appreciate literature will be able to turn their enthusiasm for books and reading into a lifelong passion as they move away from their studies and into adulthood. Since they were exposed to a variety of literature during their school years, they will have the confidence to approach and confront new sorts of books and writing.

Besides that, students studying literature are not limited to English traditions; they may be introduced to traditions that inform English literature, such as the study of Ancient Greek play, as well as literature from other cultures, such as American literature. It also gives students an alternative to the pervasiveness of a culture which is characterized by its immediacy and shallowness.

Another advantage is students can learn not only linguistic aspects such as vocabulary items, but also how language can be employed for specific and aesthetic reasons when studying literature. Students' ability to recognize and use the concepts of beat, meter, and rhythm might help them enhance their own writing. Finally, studying literature can provide students a new and innovative perspective on their schoolwork and lives in general or in the daily conversation.

The Potency of Graphic Literature to Escalate Speaking Skills for EFL Learners

Visual literacy is a complicated phrase that must be understood in the context of other forms of literacy. Visual literacy (also) entails reflecting on the meanings of visual words, as well as their critical examination, according to Sintara (2006), rather than just adapting to the dominant visual orders. Visual literacy is defined as a process that generates meaning and action via the use of images. When children see the word 'dog,' they immediately associate it with the stereotypical image of a dog that they have in mind.

Visual pictures, according to Fransecky and Debes (1972), have a surface and deep structure, comparable to Chomsky's universal grammar. The surface structure of images is made up of visual symbols, whereas the deep structure is made up of the underlying notion beneath the visuals. These structures are modeled after the representational system that a language uses to produce meaning (Hall, 1997).

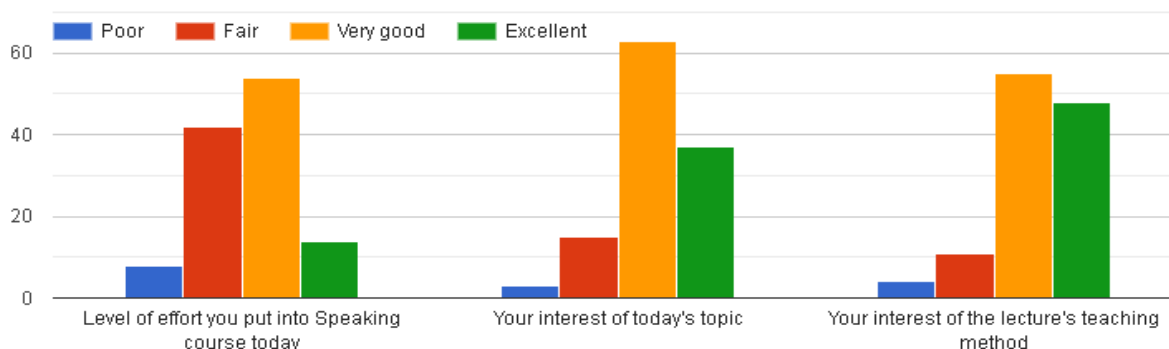
When we compare visual and verbal grammar, we can see that visual images use the same sources to construct meaning as words. Visual images have the same ideational, interpersonal, and textual meaning as verbal language (Halliday, 1994). According to Unsworth (2001), visual images have ideational/representational meaning in terms of informing what happened, who the participants are, what their responsibilities are, and under what conditions the event occurs in an image. In order to be visually literate, it is necessary to comprehend not only the meaning of images, but also the nature of how image representation systems work. Images are classified as representational, analogical, or arbitrary, according to Alesandrini (1984). The physical similarities between the representational representations and the material they depict are striking. Analogical pictures, on the other hand, share some characteristics with their antecedents in various ways. Typically, visuals make the nature of the objects being compared more valuable.

Speaking ability is developed at this period. The illustrations in graphic literature aid students in comprehending the tale and setting (the words give the learners a dialogue and its details). They can assist students improve their vocabulary and broaden their perspectives on the subject. Through images, students are able to construct their understanding from written or text into oral/verbal languages. In here, students are given a freedom to be more creative in their exploration of the topic's material so that this enables them to improve their visual literacy skill.

Students' Perception towards Graphic Literature

In order to perceive student's perception of studying literature through graphic literature in advancing speaking competence for EFL learners, the researcher classified the ways into two, as follow:

1. Level of effort and Interests
2. Level of learning enthusiasm and speaking capability



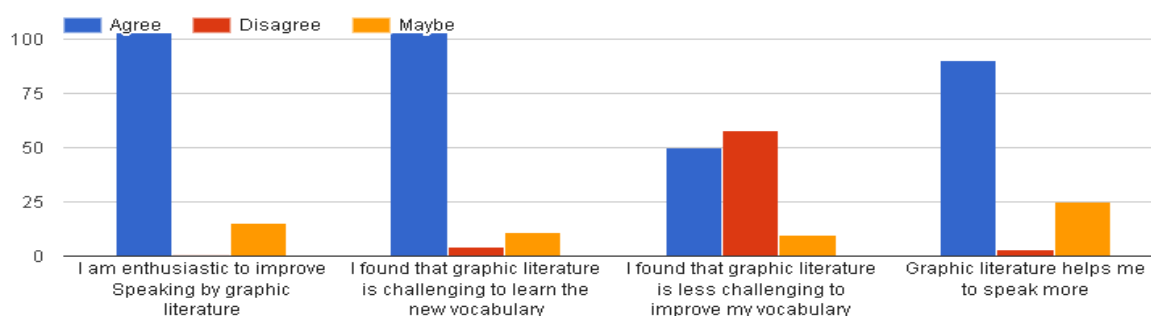
Pict. 1 Students' effort and interests toward Graphic Literature

Based on graphic above, the majority of students from English Literature at Halu Oleo University claimed that they were enthusiastic in learning speaking through graphic literature. They agreed that learning literature through graphic literature enables them to boost up their interest and

motivation in speaking class. Teacher also found that graphic novel is a visually appealing way to explain a certain topic as it has a variety of features that may help students learn more effectively than standard textbooks. There are some conditions why graphic literature is assumed as a cool communication media with a high level of engagement. One of them is because communication receivers or students must "fill in" or use their imaginations to finish the communication. Although the lines in graphic literature, such as novels or comics, are not exactly realistic depictions of people or movement, we "see" individuals who are moving when we look at them because we participate in the medium by "filling in the blanks." When we see the three letters b, a, and m accompanied with an action drawing, we may even "hear" a "BAM" sound in our heads. What you see is what you get in hot media like television, but what you receive in cool media is what you make of the medium.

2. Level of Potency to Enhance Speaking Skill

Graphic Literature (novel, comic, graphic guide/book, short story)



From the table above, most students agreed that graphic literature is potential to improve their speaking skill. They found that its content helped them to create their imagination and encourage them to think critically towards every questions that may appear during the discussion. Besides, graphic literature is challenging to learn new vocabulary. Images are beneficial to construct their words and sentences to be transferred into oral language. Graphic novels are non-simplistic stories with limited text and rich images. According to research, learners that participate in learning graphic literature reap numerous benefits, including: extensive exposure to advanced vocabularies, readers with low language skills will benefit from the combination of pictures and text, critical thinking and comprehension abilities are being developed, increased knowledge of literary terms, techniques, and elements. Furthermore, the exploration of historical and contemporary social and cultural issues is achieved and it could make a wonderful framework for learning speaking English.

CONCLUSION

This research concluded that literature has been proven as a great tool to approach English language and English learning or culture. Besides that, graphic literature is proven and potential

to escalate speaking skills for EFL learners since most students are enthusiastic to use graphic literature to improve their speaking and help them to speak more.

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