

Students' techniques and perspectives in English persuasive communication

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ABSTRACT

This article explains the relationship between the persuasive communication and the speaking competence of the students in English learning process especially during pandemic where digital media is preferred choice in education. Digital media is used as an alternative medium for persuasive communication that can be accessed anywhere and anytime. The purpose of this study was to describe the persuasive techniques used by STMIK STIKOM Indonesia students in the assignment of making video presentation. The assignment which included persuasive aspect was expected to help students in improving their verbal and non-verbal skill. The objects of this research were seventh semester students majoring in Informatics Engineering. The data was in the form of English video presentation uploaded by the student in the Google Classroom application which was analyzed by using descriptive qualitative methods. Here the theory of persuasion from Kenneth E. Andersen was used to identify the patterns and categories of each persuasive technique. The results showed that the persuasive techniques used in students' video were association technique, integration technique, pay-off technique, icing technique, and red-herring technique. Meanwhile, from the students' perspectives obtained from online questionnaire (Google Form), it was found that mostly they were not ready for a presentation or speaking practice. This was not only caused by the lack of knowledge of English vocabulary or grammar but also by soft skill like self-confidence which greatly determined their fluency in speaking. Therefore, they thought that persuasive skill is important for their future career and should be added to English language learning.

Keywords: Speaking Competence; Persuasive Communication; Technique; Perspectives

INTRODUCTION

Being able to communicate effectively is one of the most important life skills to learn. Communication is defined as transferring information to produce greater understanding. It can be done vocally (through verbal exchanges), through written media (books, websites, and magazines), visually (using graphs, charts, and maps) or non-verbally (body language, gestures, pitch of voice, and tone). All of these means of communication are essential soft skills that are vital for a successful career.

Having strong communication skills aids in the use of English language that show the speaking competence of English learner. Burns in (Lestari, 2019) defined that learning to speak in another language is a challenging undertaking because speaking is a highly complex and dynamic skill that involves the use of several simultaneous processes – cognitive, physical and socio-cultural – and a speaker's knowledge and skills have to be activated rapidly in real-time but speaking is considered a skill to practice and master. It concludes that speaking is the ability to express something in spoken language. From language point of view, mutual understanding results from communication, good English communication are essential to allow others and ourselves to understand information more

accurately and quickly. In contrast, poor English communication leads to frequent misunderstanding. Techniques of communication applied by students may determine the success of delivering information in English.

A research conducted by Panda (2016) was about persuasive communication in fledgling entrepreneurship: a case of entrepreneurs. He found that persuasive communication is considered most relevant for an entrepreneur. It also assesses the entrepreneurs' comfort level in using English as a business language, and their perception of the relevance of alternative training modes for improving their persuasive communication skills. In this paper, a comparison is drawn between the perceptions of the entrepreneurs with regard to the importance of the persuasive communication skills in business.

Then, Syamsurizal (2017) analyzed persuasive communication strategy of presenter (marketing staff) in the candidate acceptance of new students. The purposes of his research are to investigate the persuasive communication strategies used by presenter (marketing staff), presenter persuasive communication process, and behavioral changes that occur in prospective students. Information obtained through observation and in-depth interviews (in-depth interviews) to four presenters have been recruited as an informant. Results from this study is the presenter strategy to convince new students through persuasive communication emotional and personal approach. The many uses of persuasive communication in everyday life, make researchers invite the academic community to expand their knowledge and insight about persuasive communication in order to have skills regarding persuasive communication that can be applied in various fields.

Supriyati et al. (2021) in their study consider persuasive communication and good work effectiveness could enhance employee performance. The purpose of her study is to determine and analyze variables of the persuasive communication and work effectiveness that affect the performance of the staffs. The results that partially and simultaneously showed the influence of persuasive communication and work effectiveness variables on employee performance and the persuasive communication variables had more enhancing than work effectiveness variables. The practical implication of this research is to improve the employees of the secretariat office. It is necessary to increase the effectiveness by increasing performance, job satisfaction, and the ability to adapt. Another factor to notification and application of persuasion is communication. Communication between superiors and subordinates is always well-established, improving the quality of communication between superior and subordinate so that superior can easily monitor the work done subordinate, with changes in opinion attitudes, social changes, and will change in behavior.

Meanwhile, this research aims to analyze the persuasive techniques used by STMIK STIKOM Indonesia students in the assignment of making video presentation in ESP (English for Specific Purposes) class. The assignment which included persuasive aspect was expected to help students in improving their verbal and non-verbal skill. The subject of this research were seventh semester students majoring in Informatics Engineering. The data was in the form of English video presentation uploaded by the student in the Google Classroom application. The students also give feedback after the video assignment in the form of students' perspectives that they fill through online questionnaire (Google Form). These perspectives will help the writer identifying several factors that affect English speaking fluency of the students.

METHODS

Here this research used a qualitative descriptive approach while the subjects in this research were 47 seventh semester students of the Informatics Engineering study program in STMIK STIKOM Indonesia. This is relevant with the literature review that the subject of research is an object, thing, or person attached to and at issue in research (Suandi, 2008). This activity was carried out in an English class consisting of 16 online meetings. The object of this research is the assignment of speaking skills in English IV lecture. The information in this study contains qualitative data obtained from English presentation videos made by students in Google Classroom as the online classes in the context of implementing persuasive communication.

Data collection techniques use the method of observation and documentation. The instruments in this research were observation sheets and documents in the form of video presentation files that had been made by the students. The observation method was used by researchers to find data regarding the forms and aspects of speaking skills assignment in English learning. The observation method used is non-participatory observation technique. Researchers do not participate in activities, only play a role in observing activities (Sukmadinata, 2009). Researchers are in the classroom to conduct direct observations and recordings over the process of implementing online learning to conducting assignments, but researchers are not directly involved in the activities carried out by subjects of the research. The documentation method is a review of references related to the focus of the research problem. Sugiyono in Gunawan (2015) stated that documentation method is a method in the form of writing, pictures, and works. In this study, the documentation method was used to obtain data in the form of a video containing the persuasive techniques performed by students while carrying out English language learning and to obtain a students' perspective on the making of English persuasive video.

Methods of analyzing data in research must be adapted to the type of data collected. Considering that this research is a qualitative research, data analysis techniques are carried out simultaneously with data collection (Sugiyono, 2007). In this study, the researcher used a qualitative descriptive method as a method of data analysis. Based on this method, researchers can use relevant theories that have been described in the theoretical basis as a reference for researchers to explore the object of research. In this research the theory of persuasive communication by Effendy in Erviani (2017) was used to analyze the persuasive techniques of students' video presentation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section elaborates the findings in this research and its elaboration compared to previous studies. The data of this research were taken from the presentation session in ESP class. The data were in the form of communication techniques applied by the participants in the presentation session. The participants were 47 students from seventh semester students, Informatics Engineering, STMIK STIKOM Indonesia.

3.1 Students' Techniques in English Persuasive Communication

Andresen in Zaenuri (2017) defines persuasion as follows: "A process of interpersonal communication in which the communicator seeks through the use of symbols to affect the cognitions of a receiver and thus affect a voluntary change in attitude or action desired by the communicator". A process of interpersonal communication in which the communicator attempts to use symbols to influence the recipient's cognition, thereby deliberately changing attitudes or activities as desired by the communicator. Assessment of the aspect of persuasive cognition will help determine the quality of students' public speaking and improve the ability to convey information persuasively (non-verbally) so that communication goals can be achieved and according to the demands of the industrial world. In practicing persuasive communication, there are several techniques that can basically be used by students. These techniques can be developed according to the ability of the communicator.

What is conveyed by students in the video is basically interesting and has many benefits for the communicant or listener but has not been conveyed in a persuasive way. From the observations, there is no persuasive communication technique that is explicitly used by students. The ability to influence others through speaking skills is important to be taught to students so that they can be applied later when working in the industry. In the industrial world, the ability to sell, present, and negotiate is very important in determining success in a career, especially if the communication uses English so that the opportunity to sell globally is very open. This is clarified by Supriyadi in Sintadewi et al., (2017) stating "If someone has good speaking skills, he or she will get social and professional benefits". Social benefits are related to the activities of social interaction between

individuals. Professional benefits are obtained when using language to make questions, convey facts and knowledge, explain and describe.

Students' persuasive abilities are still low to convince others even though they are supported by other non-verbal skills such as audio and video editing. The linguistic side (verbal) will determine the success or failure of the student communication process in the form of English video presentation. With the linguistic aspect, the information will be successful in reaching the listener's mind, while the cognitive aspect will make the speaker successful in influencing the listener.

To discuss the results of the research that the researcher describes in this study, the data and information that has been obtained through the Google Classroom will be analyzed and discussed from five focuses which are the techniques of persuasive communication. Persuasive communication techniques of STMIK STIKOM Indonesia students in promoting the quality of a computer application are ways for students to improve the speaking competence through various communication techniques used to cause changes in listener's attitudes that lead to changes in opinions, changes in perceptions, changes in feelings, and changes in public or community actions about the importance of applications for the progress of a certain business or business which will increase the effectiveness of each company. This research namely improving the communication skills of students by observing the data of presentation video as shown in Figure 1 below.

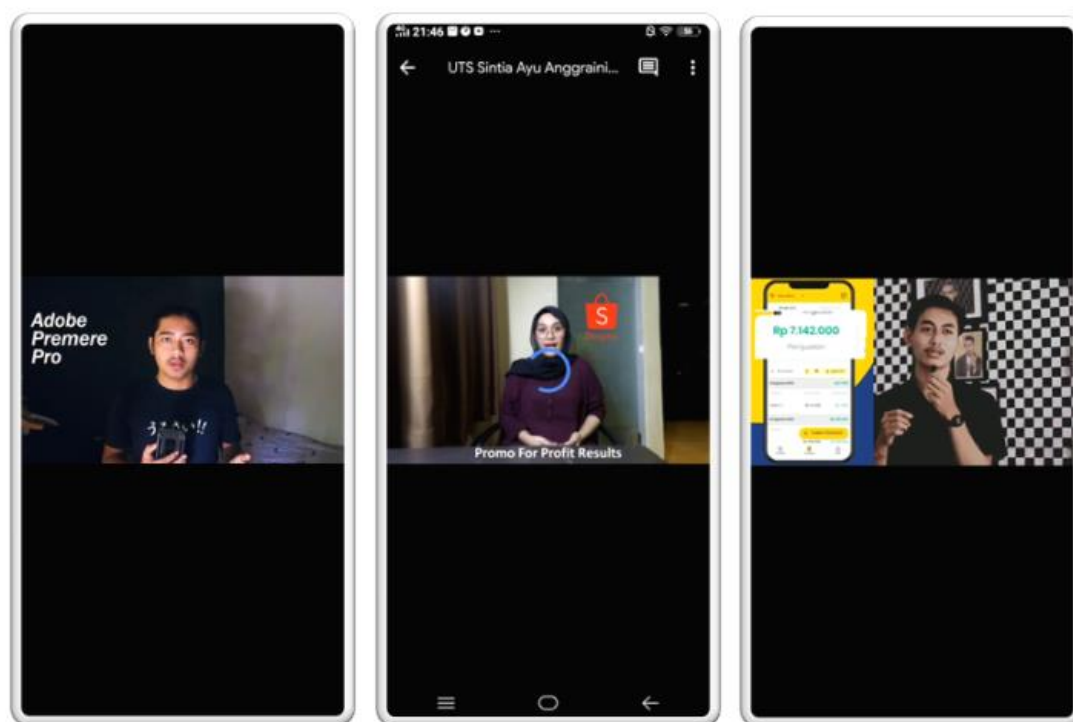


Figure 1. Example of Students' English Persuasive Video

From the observation session in video presentation, it was found that there were five communication techniques used by all students. They were association, integration, paying-off, icing, and re-herring techniques. The assessment of the aspect of persuasive cognition on the speaking competence of STMIK STIKOM Indonesia students through the uploaded presentation video can be explained as follows:

3.1.1. The Use of Association Techniques

The association technique is the presentation of a communication message by spilling it on an object or event that is attracting the attention of the audience. This technique is often used by business or political circles. Likewise, persuasive communication techniques for STMIK STIKOM Indonesia

students in offering business support applications. Based on the observations made, the researcher analyzed that in terms of association techniques, the problem was because students were not used to communicating persuasively, limited knowledge of communication techniques, and media to communicate in English.

Students should try to involve all the interesting parts of the application by showing the phenomena that are happening to support cognition goals in promoting and carrying out effective persuasive ways. In this case, students communicating are still in the general delivery stage and not specific to an event related to the application.

3.1.2. The Use of Integration Techniques

Integration here is the ability of communicators in this case, STMIK STIKOM Indonesia students, to unite themselves communicatively with the communicant. This means that through verbal and non-verbal words the communicator describes that he or she is "in the same fate" and therefore becomes one entity with the communicant.

The researcher analyzes that in terms of integration techniques, what can be a problem is like the previous technique, namely industrial needs that have not been reached by the application, because in its implementation this integration technique is very necessary for socialization, discussion and so on, with business people where it is quite difficult to collect them to take part in the discussion process.

STMIK STIKOM Indonesia students in this technique can approach with persuasive verbal communication, speak from heart to heart to find common goals in achieving solutions. In this technique they at a certain time invite some of the listeners to be together with them to empower the intended application effectively.

If these activities are carried out regularly and continuously and also used as education for business people, they will have a very good impact on the progress of a business and to improve the quality of their video presentations. In this integration technique, STMIK STIKOM Indonesia students perform non-verbal communication using various ways. With this persuasive way, listeners can feel belonging and feel at one with all other business people. Interrelated effects between speakers, listeners, supporting applications, and so on have more value in improving the quality of the presentation video.

3.1.3. The Use of Paying-off Techniques

The paying-off technique is an activity to influence other people by luring things that are profitable or promising hope for listeners. Reward techniques seek to cultivate emotional arousal. Based on the observations made, the researcher analyzed that from a technical standpoint, the problem was the understanding of the application by students which had been mentioned several times by the researcher. Similar to the previous techniques, the problem lies with the students themselves.

STMIK STIKOM Indonesia students have not given any lure or promised something to listeners. They are more on providing understanding to the public so that they can take advantage of the application as a useful medium for business continuity. Utilization of these applications will later contribute economic value to people's lives. Listeners are only given information related to the benefits obtained when using the application to support business so that they will be interested in using it.

3.1.4. The Use of Icing Techniques

This technique is an effort to compose a communication message in such a way, so that it is pleasant to hear or read and the listener feels motivated to do as suggested by the message. The arrangement technique or icing technique in persuasive activities is the art of arranging messages with emotional appeals in such a way that the communicant becomes interested in his attention.

Based on the observations made, the researcher analyzed that in terms of icing technique, the problem was that STMIK STIKOM Indonesia students had not tried to systematically communicate

material in order to attract the attention of listeners. Even though there are many ways that can be done to improve the impression of communication, for example by adding language styles or expressions that evoke the listener's emotions.

Students should try to build communication, interest, and try to embrace it because the existence of these applications is needed to create an increase in the business performance of a company. Based on the analysis of researchers in this icing technique, it is still difficult for students to motivate the community or audience. Students in this technique also cannot emphasize a sense of awareness, togetherness, and a sense of belonging to these business-supporting applications. Because then the wider community will not be motivated by itself.

3.1.5. The Use of Red-herring Technique

The term red-herring is difficult to translate into Indonesian, because red-herring is the name of a fish that lives in the North Atlantic Ocean. This type of fish is famous for its habit of making tricks when being hunted by other animals or by humans. In relation to persuasive communication the red-herring technique is the art of a communicator to gain victory in debate. The researcher analyzes that in terms of red-herring techniques, what can become a problem is that the community or business actors are often faced with conditions of differences of opinion, mindset, characteristics, background, and so on. This is considered reasonable, so deliberation, discussion, and exchange of ideas are needed to harmonize the goals and objectives in order to reach a mutual agreement.

Differences of opinion in a debate are normal, but STMIK STIKOM Indonesia students should provide data and facts that occur to support the statements expressed. Heterogeneous needs with different business backgrounds become commonplace from the listener's perspective so that they will make statements or questions about the communication material that is delivered. The benefits of the application need to be communicated while the availability of data and facts in the field is needed to support any information. Discussion, debate or difference of opinion in approaching persuasive communication is another thing that will be experienced by students as the party providing information to listeners. Any differences of opinion and understanding need to be communicated properly so that the purpose of persuasive communication can be achieved effectively

3.2. Students' Perspectives on English Persuasive Communication

The findings elaborate students' perceptions on English and persuasive communication skill in general, their knowledge of communicating in English, their frequency of persuading others, and how achieving persuasion techniques affects their English-speaking performance. Figure 2 below illustrates students' perception on practicing their English-speaking skill in video presentation.

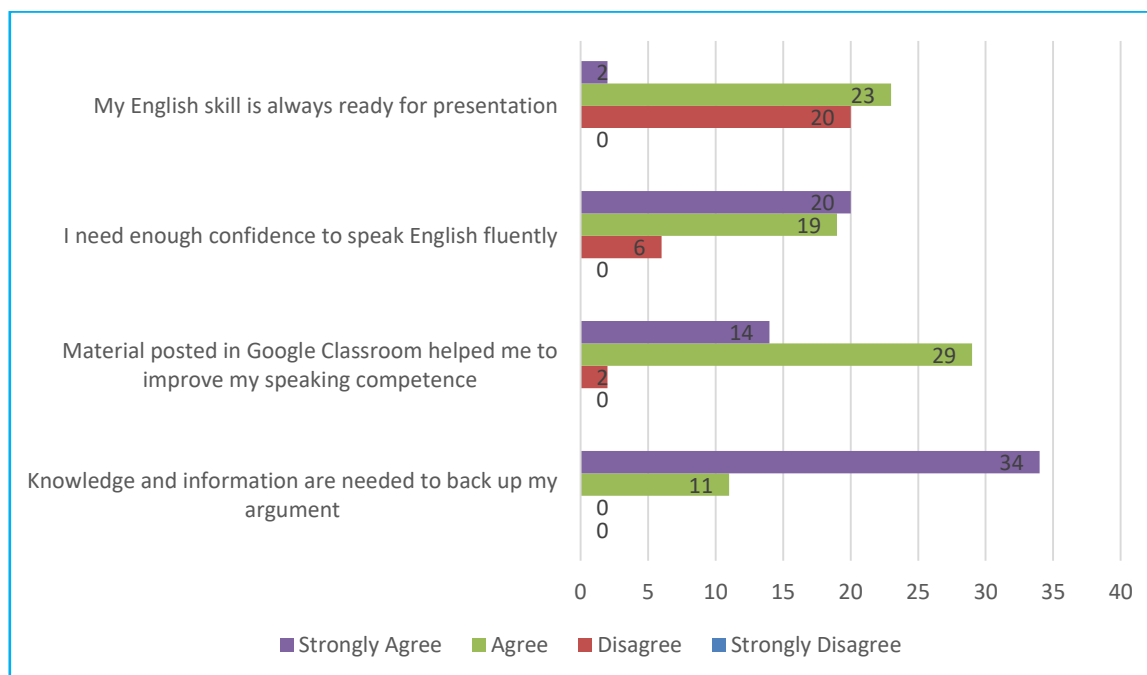


Figure 2. Google Form Responses Part A

Here we can see, responses in Figure 2 show that a huge number of students (23 students or 51.1%) showed a positive attitude by stating agreement on the statement that they English skill is always ready for presentation while the rest of the respondents (2 students or 4.4%) chose scale 4 or strongly agree. Students gave various responses to the statement on confidence to speak English fluently. Even though 20 students (44.4%) strongly agreed that they need enough confidence to speak English fluently and 19 students (42.2%) agreed, a different number of students (2 students or 13.3%) gave different responses stating that speaking English confidently was not difficult for them. Learning through Google Classroom allowed students to study material which help them to improve their speaking competence. This statement was supported positively in which 64.4% of respondents or a number of 29 people chose scale 3, namely “Agree”. Apart from being given material in the form of videos and slides, students also got instruction on persuasive communication e.g. for class assignment. Most of the respondents gave positive feedback in which 34 people (81%) strongly agreed that knowledge and information are needed to back up their argument when they try to persuade others.

In spite of their positive responses on English and persuasive communication skill in general, the result of paragraph type questionnaire revealed that students faced several difficulties including the use of proper grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and confidence. Several students reported specific challenge that they encountered on creating video presentation:

- “The problems that I face when speak in English were worried about making mistakes in speaking especially grammar and too shy speak English.”
- “The problem is in lack of grammar”
- “The pronunciation of some sentences is quite difficult”
- “I’m still not good at speaking complicated and new vocabulary”
- “Maybe about the grammar when speaking”
- “My problem is un using proper grammar”
- “The problem I face when speaking English is a lack of confidence and fear of being wrong”

- “Bad grammar, bad pronunciation, not confidence”
- “When i don't have much vocabulary, it would be a problem”
- “The problem I faced is that it is difficult to speak with new vocabulary that I know and because I am nervous. It makes me forget what to talk about”
- “I'm not confidence when I speaking English in front of camera or with my friends.”
- “The problem I faced when I must speak in English, I felt so nervous and I didn't know too much vocabulary in English and also my English grammar is so bad.”
- “Mostly, my pronunciation and grammar.”
- “The problem I face is finding new sentences or words in a story or text and being confused to start a conversation when speaking English.”
- “Lack of vocabulary”
- “Problem in pronouncing words and when speaking can't be fast because there are words that are difficult for me to say”

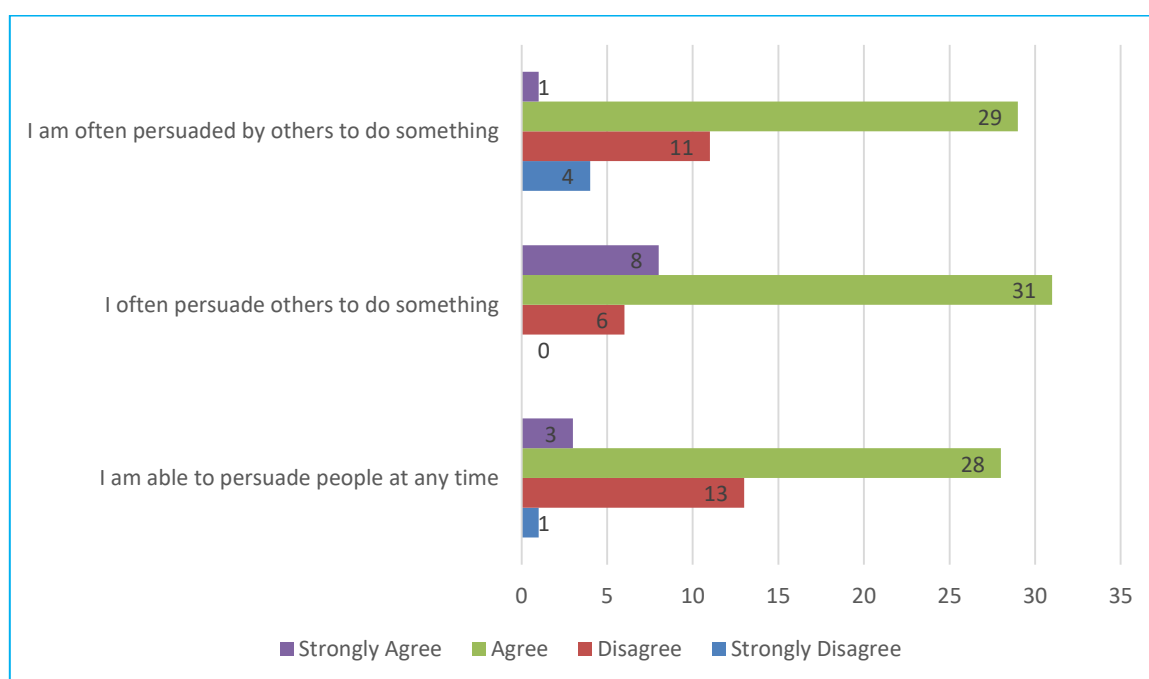


Figure 3. Google Form Responses Part B

Referring to the above data, students gave various responses on English persuasive communication using persuasion techniques, including the process of being persuaded, the process of persuading people and the ability to do persuasive communication. A total of 29 people (64%) stated that they are often persuaded by others to do something. On the other hand, they may persuade others more frequently. This statement was supported positively in which 68.9% of respondents or a number of 31 people chose scale 3, namely “Agree”. Apart from being given persuasive material in the form of videos, students also believe their ability in persuading other people for a certain purpose e.g. for promoting a product or service. Most of the respondents gave positive feedback in which 28 people (62.2%) stated that they are able to persuade people at anytime. In this case the English language skill and persuasion techniques are involved in the communication process.

Students further elaborated their view on English persuasive communication in their Google Form response. The result emphasized that they gained benefits from video presentation project in terms of persuading with some ideas as stated below:

- "It's very important, because we can invite someone to do good"
- "Provide useful information so that people can try or do too"
- "I think it's good we can persuade someone to do or believe something by giving them a good reason to do it or by talking to that person and making them believe it."
- "If you can persuade others in English, this is very helpful if you want to work with foreigners"
- "In my opinion, it's just like we lead others to do something or to believe in something that we've said"
- "In my opinion, persuading people is an act/desire that must be done when we want something that must be done by others for their own sake"
- "It's important to persuade other because it can help my English communication skill"
- "Verily interesting, because this is a new experience for me"
- "I think persuading someone is the first step if we want to sharing new information or find someone who has same opinion about something"
- "Persuading others is purpose to getting someone to agree with you, buy your product, vote for you"
- "Persuading others in English is very important so that we can learn lessons for us when we work later."
- "In my opinion persuading in English is fun and challenging but I'm still nervous to use English"
- "I think persuading other people in English makes that person able to improve speaking skills in English"
- "My opinion is very useful, especially when the person we are persuading can accept our invitation. It is very useful in the field of business"
- "I can use it in the future because I live in a tourism area so I can persuade tourists with various things"
- "Persuading people in business is very influential in business and the choice of language in my opinion depends on what market we are aiming for"
- "It's important to know how to persuade others in English, since now you can offer your works or your stuff through the world within internet (online)."

This is in line with the findings in Supriyati et al.,(2021) which revealed that persuasive communication and good work effectiveness could enhance employee performance. The results that partially and simultaneously showed the influence of persuasive communication and work effectiveness variables on employee performance and the persuasive communication variables had more enhancing than work effectiveness variables. It is necessary to increase the effectiveness by increasing performance, job satisfaction, and the ability to adapt. Another factor to notification and application of persuasion is communication. Communication between superiors and subordinates is always well-established, improving the quality of communication between superior and subordinate so that superior can easily

monitor the work done subordinate, with changes in opinion attitudes, social changes, and will change in behavior. Increasing effectiveness supported by good communication, it is expected.

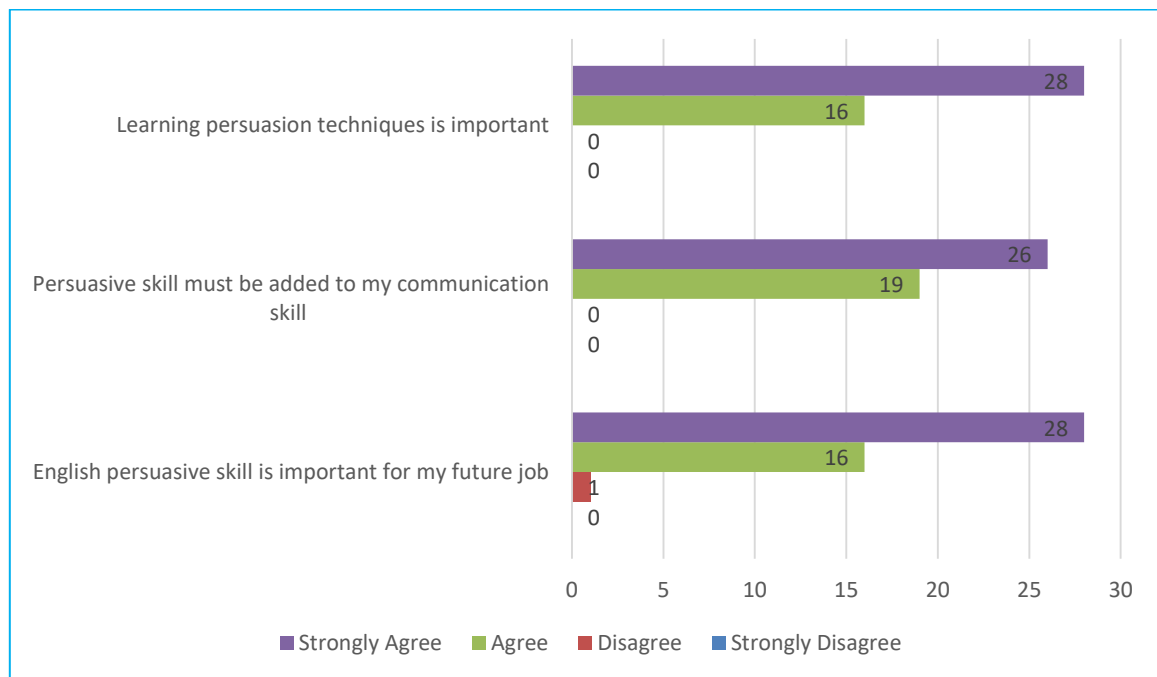


Figure 4. Google Form Responses Part C

In this study, the final result of students' persuasive video was uploaded to the assignment section (Classwork) to receive review in terms of structure, pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, content, and comprehension. In the process of making this video project, students did not get review to English language competency only since it was completed with the use of persuasion techniques that they can apply in English communication. Regarding the statement learning persuasion techniques is important for daily needs of communication, all respondents gave positive answers by choosing a scale of 4 (28 people or 63.6%) and a scale of 3 (16 people or 36.4%). In this questionnaire, students were also asked to provide feedback on the addition of persuasive skill. A total of 45 respondents agreed (19 people or 42.2%) and strongly agreed (26 people or 57.8%) on the statement that persuasive skill must be added to their communication skill because it could support their professional work in the future. In term of the advantages of English persuasive skill for career or business purpose, students required this kind of skill to convince their client in a business negotiation, influence the audience in business campaign, promote new product or service features especially with the foreigners where English is the first language choice in business communication. A large number of respondents, namely 16 people (35.6%) agreed and 28 people (62.2%) strongly agreed that this English persuasive skill is important for their future job. Students also gave deeper elaboration on learning persuasive skills in their Google form responses as follow:

- "Very important, because in the world of work we are required to invite people to use our products or services"
- "English persuasive skill is very important for me. Because in the future I want to be an employee or want to work abroad. So that's why for me English persuasive skill is very important. I can persuade others that I deserve to work at that company"
- "I think it's very important because have persuasive skill can get some attention by the others to believe in us and it makes easy to grow up our career"
- "My dream is to become a Youtube animator and game developer. In my opinion, persuasive skills are very important to get people to play the games that I make, especially for people from all over the world."

- “Persuasive English skills for career are very important because we can get wider job opportunities, more established career paths, can access more information, can have a bigger income, better thinking skill, make negotiations easier and can continue to work higher level of education.”
- “For some cases, this skill will help you to upselling your product or service”
- “It is very important, especially when we have a business, we can influence customers from abroad.”
- “I think persuasive skills in English are very important for my career because now almost all companies have the requirement to use English”
- “In my opinion English persuasive skill is very important, because in a work environment we must be able to convince someone to agree with us. And it is also very important in daily life”
- “I think it's very important, by learning persuasive skills I can influence or persuade other people properly and correctly to want to do what I want them to do for me.”
- “I think this is very important, so that the people we discuss with can be sure of what our goals are going forward.”

Video presentation project has proved to be one of media that helped students to enhance both their English language skill and English persuasive skill. Lestari (2019) mentioned that the use of video as the learning media to help students' in improving speaking skill is effective because its usage has many advantages compared to its disadvantages, as for the existing challenges, it could be anticipated and solved by each student. Furthermore, video can enrich students with a variety of knowledge about vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, accent, and knowledge of culture. Thus, students can continue to practice their speaking skills by watching video which fits their needs. The students are free to choose the video despite of it has a good characteristic, the content is also interesting and useful to be watched, the pronunciation is clear, the accent is similar as natives' accents and it offers authentic tool for learning which describes their daily activities. This research proved that students' perspective on the use of video to improve speaking skill are positive while the strategies that used were various based on the results of the data explained. Syamsurizal (2017) further emphasized that there are many uses of persuasive communication in everyday life, make him invite the academic community to expand their knowledge and insight about persuasive communication in order to have skills regarding persuasive communication that can be applied in various fields. To determine whether or not persuasive communication has been carried out, there are three factors that need to be considered, namely the source who conveys the message, the persuasive message, and the communicant who receives the persuasive message. In the characteristics of the source (communicator) there are three influencing factors, namely credibility, attractiveness, and power.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion elaborated in the previous section, it can be concluded that knowing and applying persuasion techniques is useful for the students in English persuasive communication. The result of this study revealed students' techniques in English persuasive video presentation. The persuasive techniques used in students' video were association technique, integration technique, pay-off technique, icing technique, and red-herring technique. Most of the student's have not optimized the use of persuasion techniques that their video content tends to be informative rather than persuasive. Therefore, they should improve their communication skill by applying persuasion techniques properly to get maximum advantage instead of improving English language skill. Meanwhile based on the results of Google Form questionnaire in scale and paragraph type, the making of English persuasive video received good responses because most students gave positive

responses to aspects related to English language skill, persuasive communication, and persuasion techniques. Students explain that to make their English skill ready for presentation at any time, they need to prepare enough confidence in communication. It could be supported by providing learning material about speaking in Google Classroom therefore their argument on persuasive communication will be backed up with complete knowledge and information. In term of persuasive communication, they think that they persuade other people more often than being persuaded. It is not only about commercial information of a company but also information in daily activities involving persuasive communication. This means they are basically able to persuade people. Then, in term of persuasion techniques they consider learning those techniques is important for especially their English communication so that persuasive skill must be added to their communication learning process.

Understanding persuasion techniques give more benefits compared to the conventional method on students' speaking competency as they experienced to work in convincing the audience about product or service. In addition, students were fully engaged in the classroom activities as they devoted much efforts to complete projects with their own level of creativity as well as practicing their English. This further led to more understanding of the subject and improvement in English language. Referring to these findings, it is recommended that persuasion techniques should be given in the subject of English especially speaking part as one of differentiation in teaching English communication that will be required for their professional career in the future. Persuading people in English language with proper technique should be an advantage for them.

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