

# THE INFLUENCE OF DCM (DAILY CONVERSATION METHOD) TOWARDS STUDENTS' FOREIGN LANGUAGE SPEAKING FLUENCY IN MODERN ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOL IN INDONESIA

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## Abstract

DCM is a methodology that promotes speaking fluency through daily communication. A marked feature of conversational discourse is the use of fixed expression or "routines", which often have specific functions in conversation and which give conversational discourse the quality of naturalness (Richard, 1990). This method is almost conducted in all Modern Islamic Boarding School in Indonesia that obligates students to speak in foreign languages such English and Arabic language through students' conversational routines in their daily communication. One aspect of oral fluency is the use of conversational routines (Richard, 1990). This method sets a language environment and also provides more space for students to practice foreign language. This paper focuses on how Daily Conversation Method influences students' speaking fluency. This study is done by quantitative approach which uses questionnaire as the research instrument to find the results. Research data showed that students' interest of using foreign language is quite high. This result meant that students had high motivation to learn foreign language. This study also showed that DCM influenced student's speaking fluency where environment also supported them to practice foreign language in their daily conversation.

**Keywords:** The Influence, Daily Conversation Method, Speaking Fluency, Language Environment

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In facing global competition, students are required to have high proficiency of international language such as English and Arabic. It can be prepared through educational institutions including Islamic boarding school or called as "*Pesantren*". *Pesantren* is Islamic educational institution that demonstrates indigenous cultural of Indonesian national education. *Pesantren* has been established and developed since long time ago in all over Indonesia (Miftahusaiyan, 2002).

According to Dhofier (2011), *Pesantrens* in Indonesia can be classified into three categories; they are *salafiyah* (traditional), *khalafiyah* (modern), and mixed *salafiyah-khalafiyah* (as cited in Rosidin, 2015). *Salafiyah pesantren* is *pesantren*, which teaches Islamic knowledge with *turats* as the main source through

traditional method of knowledge transfer without introducing its *santris* to any other knowledge but Islamic knowledge. In contrast, *khalafiyah pesantren* is the one that uses classical teaching system like in common school to teach Islamic knowledge as the main subject as well as science and social studies as supplementary. Moreover, mixed *salafiyah-khalafiyah pesantren* is the combination between traditional and classical approach to teach not only Islamic knowledge but also science and social studies.

Looking at the importance of international languages, modern *Pesantren* takes a role on educating language to students especially on English and Arabic language education. It is based on consideration that both English and Arabic are widely recognized as international languages. Learning English is as students' preparation to be able to compete internationally, meanwhile learning Arabic is a must to understand Islamic knowledge as many Islamic studies refer to Arabic language such *Turats* (classic Islamic book), Al-Quran, Hadits, and so on.

To improve students' foreign language proficiency, *Pesantren* applies DCM (Daily Conversation Method) as a language education method to support students in learning foreign languages. This Method aims to promote speaking improvement through daily communication. This method is almost conducted in all Modern *Pesantrens* in Indonesia that obligates students to speak in foreign languages such English and Arabic language through students' conversational routines in their daily communication. In This research, *Pesantren* of Al-Mizan is chosen because it is one of modern (*khalafiah*) *pesantren* which applies DCM as foreign language education system.

## 1.1 Daily Conversation Method

DCM is a method of language education in *pesantren* that encourages students' speaking fluency improvement through daily communication. It aims to overcome several problems that students encounter in learning foreign language skill, especially in speaking. Richard (1990), stated that typical learner problems in speaking are 1) students cannot sustain spoken interaction beyond segments, 2) frequent communication breakdowns, 3) lack of vocabulary needed to talk about common utterances, 4) lack of communication, and 5) cannot participate actively in conversation.

Those problems faced by learners make them unconfident in practicing foreign language and impede their speaking skill improvement. Khan (1998), claims that speaking strategies are one of the most important aspects in dealing with communication skills, as they improve learners' confidence and fluency. They need habitual of speaking practice to be familiar with foreign language. In learning foreign language, the mastery of speaking skills is a priority for many second or foreign language learners. Learners consequently often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their foreign language on the basis of how well they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency (Richard, 1990).

### 1.1.1 DCM Rules and Application

Modern *Pesantren* is quite different with other common institutions, particularly in Indonesia. It is twenty four-hours educational system. It means that all students (*santris*) are required to stay in *Pesantren* during their study. Looking at this twenty four-hours educational system potential, *Pesantren* creates a rule called DCM (Daily Conversation Method) in enhancing the quality of students' foreign language by obligating them to speak foreign language in their daily conversation routines.

To apply this method, *Pesantren* sets rules and management of language education. Forming of language manager is a way to control *santris*' language activities. Language managers take a role as language activator. In the implementation of language education, *Pesantren* imposes reward and punishment system. Reward and punishment system means controlling *santris*' language activity by giving them punishment in order to make them feeling controlled because of the rules of language among them, and conversely, *santris* who practice foreign language in their daily conversation are highly appreciated in order to motivate them for always practicing foreign languages.

This system is conducted to manage *santris* to obey the rules of language in *Pesantren*. In brief, DCM is a rule with reward and punishment system which is conducted to accustom *santris* practicing foreign language in their daily communication around *Pesantren* environment, particularly for practicing foreign language outside classroom.

It is considered in order to make *santris* accustomed in practicing foreign language in their daily communication, so that they are able to improve their foreign language quality, especially in improving their speaking skill.

## 1.2 Speaking Fluency Improvement

Richards (2009, p.14) mentioned brave definition about fluency, “natural language use occurring when a speaker engages in meaningful interaction and maintains comprehensible and ongoing communication despite limitations in his or her communicative competence”. Furthermore, Fillmore (1979) defined fluency is the ability to talk at length with few pauses. A speaker is able to express his or her idea in a coherent way and to deal with lexical and syntactic items at a fast speed.

According to Krashen, fluency and accuracy are the two aspects of language learning. (As cited in Richards and Rodgers 1986). Fluency is the result of language acquisition and acquisition is an unconscious process which needs a lot of exposure.

## 1.3 Language Environment

DCM implementation is language education method with the setting of foreign language practice outside classroom. It aims to accustom *santris* in practicing foreign language speaking. Any kind of abilities needs a custom and practice continuously to be more skillful including the improvement of language skill adeptness.

In the words of Krashen “the ability to speak fluently cannot be taught directly but it emerges independently at time when acquirer has built linguistic competence by understanding it” (as cited in Richards and Rodgers, 1986, p.132). It is difficult for second language learners to speak well and with ease because they do not get exposure to communicate in the target language outside the classroom. So that, Pesantren sets rules of DCM to provide *santris* to get more exposure in communicating target language outside the classroom.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was done by quantitative approach in both collecting data and analyzing data phases. Al-Mizan Islamic Boarding School was chosen as the setting of this research. Ninety seven students (*santris*) were involved as the subject of the study. They were asked to fill a questionnaire as the instruments in collecting data of this research.

Rubric as the instrument of this research is divided into two sections. Section one aims to examine students’ perception on DCM application. Section two aims to look at students’ thought on the influence of DCM towards their foreign language speaking fluency. Respondents of this research were asked to tick a response of each statement that best represent their thought. There were five responses provided in the rubric they are; *strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree*.

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

As has been explained in the research method, this research aims to examine 1) *santris*’ perception on the application of DCM, and 2) *santris*’ thought on the influence of DCM towards their foreign language speaking fluency.

The data gained from the respondent of this research indicates that *santris*’ responses towards DCM are highly positive. Data in table 1 below examined *santris*’ perception on the implementation of DCM.

Data gained in the table 1 show that *santris* response positively in all statements. It implies that *santris*’ thought on the implementation of DCM slightly influences their foreign language speaking skill improvement. Data in the table1 illustrates on how DCM engaged *santris* to practice foreign language, how DCM motivated them in practicing foreign language speaking, and how the rules of DCM application was in their minds.

It is interesting to see, in the data gained, that DCM successfully engaged *santris* to practice English and Arabic in their daily communication. *Santris* (31.96%) strongly agree and (52.57%) agree that DCM application engaged them in practicing foreign language.

Data in table 1 displays that *santris* positively responded 75.25% (38.14% strongly agree plus 37.11% agree) that they have been able to speak in English and Arabic since they learn both two languages in *Pesantren*. It implies that DCM influenced their speaking ability, particularly in speaking fluency. They responded that they knew nothing about foreign language before, but after learning in *pesantren* through DCM application, they have improved their foreign language speaking fluency.

Furthermore, it can be seen from the data below that *santris*’ interest on practicing foreign language was very high. It implies that *santris* are highly motivated to improve their speaking skill especially in speaking fluency. As shown in the table 1, their response on feeling light-hearted while discussing something in

foreign language was quite high (76.31% agreed). In the statement 'DCM motivates the spirit of using bilingual language in daily communication' was also high. It reaches 58.75% (27.83% strongly agree plus 30.92% agree). Their response on the frequency of bilingual (English and Arabic) use in daily communication was good as well. It reaches 46.39% (12.37% strongly agree plus 34.02% agree) on positive response and 48.45% on neutral response. This illustrates that the application of DCM motivated them to accustom speaking in foreign language in their daily communication.

From the data below, although DCM is a rule of language education in *Pesantren*, but *santris* response (47.42%) disagree and (39.17%) strongly disagree that the obligation of foreign language speaking in daily communication encumbered them in practicing foreign language conversational routines. It means that their willingness in practicing foreign language is not under the pressure of *pesantren* language rules but it is their awareness in practicing it.

**Table 1. *Santris'* interest and responses toward the application of DCM**

	N = 97				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<b>Using English and Arabic in daily communication is engaging</b>	31.96%	52.57%	15.46%	0%	0%
<b>Feeling light-hearted on discussing something in English and Arabic Languages.</b>	35.08%	41.23%	16.50%	6.18%	0%
<b>Capability of speaking in foreign language is gained since studying in <i>Pesantren</i></b>	38.14%	37.11%	16.49%	6.18%	2.06%
<b>DCM motivates the spirit of using bilingual language in daily communication</b>	27.83%	30.92%	39.17%	2.06%	0%
<b>I always use English and Arabic in daily communication</b>	12.37%	34.02%	48.45%	5.15%	0%
<b>Feeling encumbered with the obligation of speaking in bilingual (English and Arabic) language</b>	1.03%	0%	12.37%	47.42%	39.17%

The data in table 2, 3, and 4 below examined *santris'* thought on the influence of DCM towards their foreign language speaking fluency through their responses to the following statement as shown in the table.

<b>Table 2. <i>santris'</i> response to statement 'daily communication in foreign language influences their speaking fluency'</b>	
N = 97	
<b>Strongly agree</b>	65 (67.01%)
<b>Agree</b>	28 (28.86%)
<b>Neutral</b>	4 (4.12%)
<b>Disagree</b>	0 (0%)
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	0 (0%)

Table 2 shows that *Santris* positively responded statement that daily communication in foreign language influenced their speaking improvement and fluency. Positive responses dominated *santris'* responses with

95.87% (67.01% *strongly agree* plus 28.86% *agree*). It indicates that DCM successfully improves students' foreign language speaking fluency.

N = 97	
<b>Strongly agree</b>	74 (76.28%)
<b>Agree</b>	18 (18.55%)
<b>Neutral</b>	5 (5.15%)
<b>Disagree</b>	0 (0%)
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	0 (0%)

As many lessons taught in English and Arabic languages, *santris* need good proficiency to understand those lessons in their class. Based on the data in table 3, most of *santris* responded statement positively. It reaches 94.83%. Table 3 displays that most of *santris* strongly agree (76.28%) and agree (18.55%) that daily communication in foreign language improves their language ability which helps them in understanding lesson in the class. It points out that DCM is highly helpful in improving *santris'* language proficiency.

N = 97	
<b>Strongly agree</b>	51 (52.57%)
<b>Agree</b>	32 (32.98%)
<b>Neutral</b>	11 (11.34%)
<b>Disagree</b>	2 (2.06%)
<b>Strongly disagree</b>	1 (1.03%)

From the data in table 4, it can be seen that 85.55% of the respondents are pro (52.57% strongly agree plus 32.98% agree) that language environment in *Pesantren* really supported *santris* to have conversation routines in foreign language which affected to their speaking fluency improvement. It points out that DCM in this research creates a language environment where this environment can influence their speaking fluency.

Over all, respondents of this research responded positively to these statements. Positive responses, which are *strongly agree* and *agree*, dominated respondents responses for all statement. It indicates that DCM positively influenced their speaking fluency.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

To sum up, in the first result of this research displays *santris'* perception on the application of DCM is really good. All *santris'* responses are dominated on positive response. In the other hand, the second result of this research shows that *santris'* thought on the influence of DCM towards their foreign language speaking fluency is good as well. These results indicate that *santris* have positive thought towards the application of DCM which accustom them practicing foreign language in their daily communication. Besides, they are also motivated in enhancing their quality of speaking ability. It can be shown that they have significance progress from knowing nothing on foreign language until they are able to speak in English and Arabic at the same time.

In the authors' humble opinion, it can be concluded that most of *santris* have positive thought both in their perception on the application of DCM and in their thought on the influence of DCM towards their foreign language speaking fluency. They are aware that to gain fluency in speaking, they should have a lot of practicing in speaking.

Hopefully, results of this research can be a consideration of valuable input for further step to increase DCM application for better language educational system in *pesantren*.

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