

**THE INFLUENCE OF POP CULTURE ON STUDENTS'  
SPEAKING FLUENCY OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT  
HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY**



**A THESIS**

*Submitted to the Faculty of Cultural Sciences of Hasanuddin University in partial  
fulfilments of requirements to obtain Sarjana Degree in English Department*

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**THESIS**  
**THE INFLUENCE OF POP CULTURE ON STUDENTS' SPEAKING FLUENCY OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY**

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## PREFACE

First of all, the writer would like to express his gratitude to the Lord, because with his will, the writer was able to finish his undergraduate thesis entitled *The Influence of Pop Culture on Students' Speaking Fluency of Universitas Hasanuddin English Department*. The writer would also deliver his gratitude for his parents for their constant support, and both of the writer's supervisors Nadirah Mahaseng and Karmila Mokoginta for their endless effort to make sure the writer is on the right lane. The writer also want to thank his work collages for scheduling him to make sure his undergraduate thesis is well-worked. The last but not least, the writer would like to send endless thanks to Gogon; Tente Tuty, Yurek, Eka-chan, Bu Dian, Sarbat Umay and Bunda Yayat for their companions during the campus life, also Agung, Zefa, Ainun and The Flowers; Tenri, Chantika, Novi, and my dearest Mira for the good times at the final on campus.

The writer

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## ABSTRACT

Nugraha Lukita Munir, Penelitian ini berjudul *The Impact of Pop Culture to Students' Speaking Fluency of Universitas Hasanuddin English Department class of 2016* dan dibimbing oleh Nadirah Mahaseng dan Karmila Mokoginta.

Penelitian ini dibuat untuk mencari tahu tingkat *fluency* mahasiswa Sastra Inggris angkatan 2016 Universitas Hasanudin dan pengaruh *Pop Culture* dalam tingkat *fluency* mahasiswa tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif. Penelitian ini mencari tahu tentang bagaimana *exposure* terhadap *Pop Culture* berperan terhadap tingkat *fluency* mahasiswa sebagaimana dikemukakan oleh Al-Zoubi (2018) melalui *The impact of Exposure to English language on Language acquisition*, dan Murray (2008) melalui *Pop Culture and Language Learning: Learners' Stories Informing EF, Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*. Penelitian ini menggunakan teori pengukuran *fluency* yang digunakan oleh Stockdale (2009) yang kemudian dicocokkan dengan table tingkat *fluency* yang disarankan oleh Jong and Hulstjin (2009). Penulis menemukan bahwa tingkat *fluency* mahasiswa bervariasi, dimulai dari level *Intermediate* sebagai yang terendah dan level *Native-Like* sebagai yang tertinggi. Selanjutnya, peneliti menemukan bahwa mahasiswa dengan pengetahuan *Pop Culture* yang lebih luas memiliki rata-rata skor *fluency* yang lebih tinggi dari pada mahasiswa dengan tingkat pengetahuan *Pop Culture* yang rendah. Hal ini ditandai dengan produksi silabel yang lebih tinggi, waktu bicara yang lebih panjang dan *unfilled pause* yang lebih rendah

Kata kunci: **Pop Culture, Exposure to Language, Speaking Fluency**

## ABSTRACT

Nugraha Lukita Munir, this study titled *The Impact of Pop Culture to Students' Speaking Fluency of Hasanuddin University English Department class of 2016* and supervised by Nadirah Mahaseng and Karmila Mokoginta.

This study was designed to find the fluency level of Hasanudin University English Department students who registered as 2016 batch and the impact of pop culture on students' speaking fluency. This study using a qualitative descriptive method. This study is trying to find about the significance of exposure to pop culture in students' fluency as Al-Zoubi (2018) explained in *The impact of exposure to the English language on Language acquisition* and Murray (2008) in *Pop Culture and Language Learning: Learners' Stories Informing EF, Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*. This study using the fluency measurement proposed by Stockdale (2009), then the result of the measurement is matched with the Fluency Scale Ordinated which was adapted from Jong and Hulstjin (2009). The study found that the students' speaking fluency is varied, starting from Intermediate level as the lowest and Native-like level as the highest. Furthermore, this study found that students with better pop culture knowledge having averagely better fluency score than the students who have less knowledge about pop culture. This is proven with the more syllables produced, the longer runs in speaking and lower unfilled pause produced.

**Key words: Pop Culture, Exposure to Language, Speaking Flue**

# **Chapter I**

## **Introduction**

As an international language, English is used as a medium of interaction and communication among people from different parts of the world. It becomes the most popular language in the world. It is not an easy language to learn, though. It requires understanding and a serious willingness to learn since there are many reasons why people learn this language. One of them is knowing the fact that it is one of the most important lingua franca in today's globalized world. Students find it harder on improving their speaking skills because of the lack of English practitioners in their environment.

Deceiving the fact many students, especially students who take English literature as their major said that listening to English song, watching English movies and television shows help them to improve their speaking English skill rather than formal education or private course. Students learn how to pronounce the right words through songs, they learn how to listen to the right pronunciation through movies and they even learn idioms and everyday language through Television Shows. These things: Music, Movies, or TV Shows are part of Popular Culture or Pop Culture.

## **1.1 Background**

Humans are programmed to speak before they learn to read and write. In any given, human beings spend much more time interacting orally with language rather than using it in its written form. Speaking is the most important skill because it is one of the abilities that is needed to perform a conversation. English speaking is not an easy task because speakers should know many significant components like pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension. Learners should have enough English speaking ability to communicate easily and effectively with other people. Rivers (1981) studied the use of language outside the classroom situation and understood that speaking is used twice as much as reading and writing combined. According to Brown (1994), listening and speaking are learners' language tools. Efrizal (2012) on Pourhosein Gilakjani (2016) expressed that speaking is of great significance for the people interaction where they speak everywhere and every day. Speaking is the way of communicating ideas and messages orally. If we want to encourage students to communicate in English, we should use the language in real communication and ask them to do the same process.

There are a lot of ways to enhance speaking skills, one of them is exposure to the target language. Al-Zoubi (2018) explained that students unconsciously learning English through the book they read, the movies they watch, or simply because listening to the radio. Besides, Sheela & Ravikumar (2016) found the more fluent people are

those who exposed more to the target language they learn. This means there is a huge impact of exposure in enhancing learners' skills in learning the language.

What the students used in both previous research above, is what we refer to as Pop Culture. It is basically what is popular among people at the moment. Music, Movies, or even some behavior that got broadcasted through the internet, is considered as part of pop culture. The impact of exposure to pop culture on students' fluency is explained by Murray (2008) who held a project which leads him to a fact that there are a lot of Japanese EFL learners have a great level of fluency without even leaving Japan, they only exposed themselves to Popular Culture.

Looking back at the explanation above, it is suggested that exposure is one of the ultimate moves to help students learning English, and Pop Culture is a practical way to use. Since pop culture came in many forms, Books, Movies, Music, Television Shows, etc. It is easier for the student to access and learn from it, eventually. However, some ideas come to a realization. If exposure from culture helps a student learn English, is pop culture could be used as a tool to enhance students' fluency in speaking? Pop culture offers learning through exposure, it means students could experience one or two-way communication through this media. For the reasons, it is interesting to find out how significant pop culture in enhancing students speaking skill through this study which titled **THE INFLUENCE OF POP CULTURE ON STUDENTS' SPEAKING FLUENCY OF ENGLISH DEPARTEMENT HASANUDDIN UNIVERSITY**



## **1.2 Identification of Problem**

Basic on the background above, the writer identified the problem as follows:

- The speaking fluency level of English Department students
- The influence of pop culture on students speaking fluency
- Using the exposure of pop culture to improve speaking fluency
- Pop culture as the way to eliminate disfluency in speaking

## **1.3 Scope of the Problem**

To limit the investigation of this research, the writer decided to only put these problems in focus:

- The speaking fluency level of students of the English department, Hasanuddin University
- The Influence of pop culture on students' speaking fluency

## **1.4 Research Question**

1. What is the speaking fluency level of the English department students?
2. What is the impact of Pop culture on students' English speaking fluency?

## **1.5 Research Objectives**

1. To find what is the speaking fluency level of the English department students
2. To find what is the impact of Pop Culture on students' speaking fluency

## **1.6 Significances of the research**

This research has several significances as follows:

Theoretically, this study expects to contribute a richer and deep systematic conceptual understanding of the basic Pop Culture references. Furthermore, it is expected to find out What, How, and Why Pop Culture impacts the student's ability to speak in the English language.

Practically, this study can be applied in daily life and studying process. If at the end of the study shows that pop culture has a significant impact on speaking fluency, Pop Culture could be used as a medium to enhance the speaking ability of the students.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Previous Studies**

This research is highly related to a previous study conducted by D. Ashley Stockdale (2009) with a title "Comparing Perception of Oral Fluency to Objective measures in the EFL Classroom" about measuring students speaking fluency who use English as Foreign Language (EFL), he first examines the literature on fluency judgments and the debate on which is most accurate, then goes on to describe the methods for the project: a comparison of a global fluency ranking for a mixed group of adult EFL learners with established fluency measures assessing the role of pauses, disfluencies, speech and articulation rates, and mean length of run on perceptions of fluency. Besides, Mairi (2016) also studied students' English fluency in his research about Fluency level conducted in Universitas Negeri Padang (UNP).

Regarding using exposure to learn English, Al-Zoubi (2018) in his thesis "The Impact of Exposure to the English Language on Language Acquisition" elaborated about how students learn more about English through the exposure of reading English books, magazines, watching movies, or listening to the radio. Sheela and Ravikumar (2016) also research the importance of Exposure in English learning as a second

language, he concluded that the more exposed a person to the target language they learn, the more fluency they get.

About culture and Language learning, Murray (2008) "Pop Culture and Language Learning: Learners' stories informing EFL" has held a project identifies collecting language learning stories of adult Japanese English foreign language (EFL) learners who have attained intermediate to advanced levels of fluency without having studied or lived overseas. Moreover about Pop culture, Kos-lajtman and Slunjski (2016) explain the influence of Pop culture on character formation in the contemporary Croatian children's novel. The paper discusses the elements and strategies of popular culture which we can observe in the contemporary Croatian children's novel.

Overall, the above researches studied how pop culture could impact English Skill in general, the writer's aim in this research is to find the impact in fluency, a narrower subject of English proficiency.

## **2.2 Conceptual framework**

### **2.2.1 Oral Fluency of Second or Foreign learners**

There is no doubt that speaking is the most crucial communication skill and because of that, speaking fluency is a crucial thing to master to overbear a new language. Not only providing effective communication because of the lack of disturbance in one's speaking, but it is also made the speaker slicker and more natural

which lead the speaker to be looking more impressive to the listener. Koponen in Luoma (2004) explains that mastering fluency is about flow in speaking, smoothness, the rate of speech, the length of utterances, the delivery of ideas, the lack of excessive pausing, and also the absence of disturbing hesitation markers. Also, Stockdale (2009:1) states that fluency occurs when somebody speaks a foreign language like a native speaker with the least number of silent pauses, filled pauses (ooo and emm), self-corrections, false starts, and hesitations. Similarly, Lennon in Cucchiarini, Strik, & Boves (2002:263) defines that fluency is the speaker's ability to produce speech at the same tempo as the native speakers without the problems of silent pauses, hesitations, filled pauses, self-corrections, repetitions, and false starts. The researcher believes this definition of fluency is addressed to a non-native language learner. So, a very good FL or SL learner can speak like the native speakers of the language they are learning.

In terms of disfluency, Shipley and McAfee (2004:357) categories two kinds of disfluency that can be the indicator to decide the fluency levels; they are fluency disorder and typical disfluency. A fluency disorder is a kind of disfluency category that is mainly related to the weakness or problem of the speaker's physical condition related to speech production. The second category of disfluency is typical disfluency. It is a kind of disfluency that is not related to somebody's physical condition. It is related to somebody's weakness in the mastery of a foreign language. An example of this is the

disfluency found in English as a foreign language learner who does not have any physical problems related to speech production.

His type of disfluency can be caused by several problems that come from the students themselves in learning. Nation and Newton (2009:154-155) say that there are four problems to be identified. The first problem is the difficult task which is commonly caused by lack of practice, this makes them keep doing what they think as difficult tasks. Secondly, it is not meaning-focus tasks, this kind of task may lead them to lack of self-confidence or anxiety and nervous. Thirdly, it is a lack of target or time pressure in doing the speaking practice. The fourth problem is lack of planning and preparation in every practice, this affects the learners' readiness. Lastly, doing a non-repeated task is also a problem to be taken into account.

There are four components of disfluency data needed to be analyzed to measure the fluency level of the speaker from the typical disfluency perspective. The accumulation of these four components was then used to indicate which level of fluency the speakers belong to. This method is adopted from Stockdale (2009).

#### 1. Speech Rate (SR)

Speech rate, the number of syllables a speaker produces divided by the amount of time including internal pauses taken to produce them, is an element of fluency assessment examined in the work. It is generally agreed that speech rate is a good indicator of

fluency because it factors in both articulation rate and pause time (Chambers, 1997: 538; Cucchiariini and Strik, 1999) and as such provides an encompassing idea of how efficient the process of production (Levelt, 1989).

## 2. Pause Rate (PR)

There are two types of Pauses: Unfilled and Filled pause. Unfilled pause is a brief of silence during a speaking session while Filled pauses are pauses with syllables or mumbles such as Um, Uh, and Err. Besides, Beattie (1997) includes discourse markers such as "well" and "so" as filled pauses. In short, the Pause rate is the total time taken by the speaker in turns of pausing including the filled and unfilled pause.

## 3. Disfluent Syllable (DS)

Shriberg (1994: 1) describes disfluency as 'linguistic material (which) must be deleted to arrive at the sequence the speaker "intended"'. This view is in line with the concept of 'pruned syllables' (Lennon, 1990; Mehnert, 1998; Derwing, 2004) which requires the removal of disfluent syllables from speech samples to arrive at a more accurate measure of fluency. Which requires the removal of disfluent syllables from speech samples to arrive at a more accurate measure of fluency.

#### 4. Mean Length of Runs (MLR)

The mean length of run refers to the mean number of syllables found between filled and unfilled pauses in turns of speech. According to Leedham (2006) mean length of the run is an 'increasingly common measure of fluency'. Improvements in fluency over time correlate strongly with longer MLR in numerous studies (Raupach, 1987; Lennon, 1990; Towell, 1996) and advanced learners have been shown to produce longer runs than intermediate learners.

#### 2.2.2 Using Language Exposure in Learning

It should have been realized from a long time ago that it is important for the learner to expose themselves to the second or foreign language (L2) in order to master the language. Al-Zoubi (2018) stated in his research there is a strong relationship between exposure to English language and English language acquisition that can take different forms such as: listening to English program and songs on the radio, watching English program and movies on the television, traveling to English speaking countries, talking face to face with English native speakers (L2 interaction), using English language in real-life situations, surfing the internet using English language, using social media in the English language as well as, reading English books, magazines, and newspapers.

Chandrasegaran (1979), conducted a study among Malay learners who learn English as a second language. She found a strong relationship between the extent of exposure



to English and proficiency in acquiring the English language. The assumption was that urban learners, by living in an environment where the chance for practicing English was more available, experienced wider contact with English accordingly became more proficient in the target language. Moreover, she concluded that urban learners were better at English than rural learners. She eliminated the factor of quality of teaching in rural schools as being lower because government schools followed the same curriculum and the teachers have similar qualifications. As well as, urban learners were more motivated towards learning the English language than rural learners. In conclusion, the principal hypothesis here is that learners' relative proficiency in their two languages is in some sense a function of the amount of language to which they are exposed in those languages. Moreover, the acquisition of the first language occurs in a long period of cognitive and physical development and socialization.

Language is learned through the context of the community of the speaker. Giving a spotlight on the relevance of exposure in language acquisition, Steinberg (1982) stated that students are exposed to language generally through overhearing adults, watching television, or by conversation do not attain enough language knowledge due to the nature of the environment and speech input which learners receive to assist target language learning. However, additional exposure to the language, particularly at levels in which the speech has to be mainly modified to the learners' level of understanding, will essentially lead to more regular usages of definite words and language structure. Lambine's (2008) entitled "English just is not a foreign

language anymore", she clarified that the more exposure to the language the children can get outside the school the more they learn the target language. Generally, learners in their last three years in school (at ages 16-19) were asked to respond to the statement "I consider English to be more like my second mother tongue than my first foreign language". The learners generally agreed to this, distinguishing it from other foreign languages they had begun to learn afterward stage.

To find out learner's exposure to low-frequency words through watching movies, Webb (2010) investigated the scripts of 143 movies. The results showed that there is not adequate exposure to make certain learning unless learners keep a normal habit of watching movies for a long time. In the course of long exposure to movies, it is probable for learners to acquire the low-frequency words under the condition that they recognize the most frequent 3,000-word families.

### 2.2.3 Pop Culture and its impact as Exposure

Although popular culture is pervasive in contemporary Western and other highly urbanized, postindustrial societies impacted by globalization, it can be difficult to define and delimit the term. That is because popular culture means different things both theoretically and practically—to different people, and what is "popular" today can lose popularity quickly as the novelty wears off and new cultural forms emerge (Storey, 2006). Television programs, commercials, movies, sports broadcasting, radio programming, hip-hop, online media, blogs, YouTube, concerts and poetry slams, computer games and simulations, comic books and trade fiction, and various social

media, texting tools, and clothing fashions can all be considered contemporary manifestations of popular (pop) culture—usually with mass (commercial) appeal and relevance to large swaths of the population. Because of the way, these media attract large numbers of people, and because culture learning is generally considered an integral part of language learning, pop culture has a potentially powerful and motivating role to play in second language (L2) education and socialization (Murray, 2008). As digital media keep on developing through globalization, people particularly students are constantly exposed to English. Especially the ones with a certain interest such as Music, Movies, Video Games, etc. Their interests have to lead them to a point where they have to adjust themselves to catch up with the updates. In the process of adjusting, they are unconsciously learning the used language, mostly English. As they think that their interest has relevance in their life therefore knowing the used language is crucial for their interest.

As Cheung (2011) suggested that students have devoted time to learning their hobby, students are no longer interested in "teacher talk, Students listen" in fact this could lead to a waste of opportunity. Instead, using things that appeal to the student is a better way, popular culture for instance. Children are able to read, even before they started school as reported (Millard, 2003) research have found that the reported children are prior and have an extensive relationship with pop culture before they start school, this is due to the parents are constantly exposing them to YouTube and Mobile Games. Continuous engagement with pop culture to students, not only developed

comprehension and critical thinking but also developing other English skills for instance writing and reading. A result of research held by Hobbs and Frost (2010) suggested that a multilingual helped weaker students to perform better and continuously improve other literacies within the area of the English Language.

Pop culture also helps students in learning English, especially in multicultural and multilingual class. Sweden for example, many classrooms in Sweden are considered to be the place of a growing multicultural society. Students coming from a different cultural and different language background could affect the result of the classroom, therefore the teacher needs to summon an activity where all the different student have one thing in common, the teacher decided to use popular culture as references through the class activities and modern forms of meditation. Not only their study has improved, but each student also started to realize that one another have a different way of reading and speaking and appreciated the differences. Duff (2002) showcasing their result, teacher are make sure to give an equal chance to each student to bring their very own popular text and present them to the class, each of the popular text that resembles is put on the same heterogeneous group and students are learning their text together.