

Let's Speak Up! Improving the Public Speaking Ability of Karang Taruna Members of Karang Rejo Village, Stabat District, Langkat Regency

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ABSTRACT

Public speaking is a skill that should be possessed in this digital era. In addition to being used as a public speaking technique, public speaking is also an indicator or requirement for prospective workers in many companies. The results of the situation analysis showed that members of the Karang Rejo village cadets, Stabat district, Langkat regency, had problems in public speaking skills; Minimal public speaking skills, low level of awareness to hone public speaking skills, and limited access and materials to learn public speaking. Responding to this problem, activities in the form of socialization and assistance in improving public speaking skills were applied to members of the Karang Rejo village cadets. This activity has been completed on August 7, 2021 at the Karang Rejo Village Hall, Stabat district, Langkat regency. In the implementation of this activity, the method of lectures, discussions and questions and answers is applied. The results concluded that the members of the Karang Rejo village cadets were very enthusiastic and interested in developing public speaking skills. They also agree that public speaking skills are a very important skill in this era.

Keywords : Public Speaking, Karang Taruna, Youth

INTRODUCTION

As the rapid development of the world affects many aspects: social, economic, political and cultural, human beings are also required to be able to survive in the midst of this current of development. In this era of digitalization, people are required to not only have hard skills but also soft skills. Likewise with members of cadet reefs in all villages in Indonesia because village youth in groups or individuals are a very important integral part in the development of village progress (Pinilas et al., 2017), they are also among those who must have soft skills.

Karang taruna can be called a social organization (Ridwan Arif, 2014) which functions as a forum for the younger generation to grow and develop with awareness and social responsibility and as a form of support in social welfare efforts. The cadet reef was formed to provide coaching to the youth. Teenagers are also young people as well as potential successors to the nation. Therefore, they need to be equipped with many things and knowledge that are useful in their current and future. It is inconceivable what the future of a village and even a nation will be if the youth are not equipped with qualified soft skills.

Public speaking is one of the communication soft skills (Vasanthakumari, 2019) which is currently widely used as a requirement for accepting workers/employees of national or multi-national companies. Public speaking is different from daily speaking or communication activities. In public speaking, there is a statement of views to a larger audience and often creates nervousness before and during that public speaking (Gareis, 2006; Surayya et al., 2020). However, there are many ways to overcome this nervousness such as making careful preparations, anticipating audience responses/questions, regular practice, and even joining the public speaking community (King, 2017; Surayya et al., 2020).

In the concept of public speaking effectiveness, speakers will be trained in combining public speaking as a science and public speaking as an art of communication (Baccarani &

Bonfanti, 2015). This is what will then boost the success of the public speaking function as a way to lead the public or audience to determine attitudes or take action towards something. Thus public speaking as a soft skill that requires long and organized practice and preparation. Starting from determining who we are talking to, where, when, to what we are going to convey, are some of the factors that must be considered by the speaker.

Departing from the results of the situation analysis obtained from the location investigation, and the interview of the head of the Karang Taruna of Karang Rejo village, stabat district, Langkat Regency, it was found that there were obstacles to the public speaking ability of Karang Taruna members of Karang Rejo village. These constraints are:

1. Lack of ability to speak in public.
2. Low awareness and willingness to improve public speaking skills and proficiency.
3. Limited supporting means for honing public speaking skills in the form of training.
4. Limited examples and models for people to improve their public speaking skills.
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Based on the partner obstacles found, this service team offers a systematic solution, namely by providing educational services to members of the Taruna Reef. Therefore, this devotion is carried out with the following objectives:

1. Improving the public speaking skills of Karang Taruna members of Krang Rejo village
2. Increase awareness of Karang Taruna members of Karang Rejo village to the importance of public speaking.

METHODS

This service is carried out by applying two stages, namely the preparation and implementation stages.

1. Preparatory stage

The preparatory stages of this devotion include:

- a. Investigation and preparation of the service site
- b. Coordination with partners regarding schedules and service schemes,
- c. preparation of facilities and completeness of socialization / counseling.

2. Implementation Phase

At the implementation stage, the method used in this service is by socializing and mentoring about how public speaking techniques. Facilitator mentoring methods during training will be put in place so that partner complaints and needs can be effectively addressed. It aims to maximize training activities. Partners in this program are also involved as objects because partners are targeted to contribute time, energy, attention, and high concern to existing problems. The stages that have been carried out in the implementation of this service are as follows:

- a. Stage of Providing Basic Material Basic material

This is an introduction to public speaking which includes the nature of speaking skills, the nature of public speaking, the urgency of public speaking, and simple techniques for designing public speaking that will be compiled by the service team.

- b. Mentoring and Practice Phase

In this phase, the service team accompanies the karang taruna members while practicing public speaking skills in accordance with the material that has been delivered in the previous stage. This activity was carried out by forum participants

and evaluated by fellow participants and also accompanying lecturers. As material material and examples before the practice is carried out, a brief evaluation by watching the speaker's video and public speaking techniques is also carried out first.

c. Evaluation Phase

This stage aims to monitor as a form of activity to cover this service. The team evaluated the final results of the service program to karang taruna members. The service team will also distribute questionnaires to find out the perceptions of partners in the implementation of this community service activity.

RESULTS

The stages of community service activities have been carried out by conducting a visit to prepare the service location with partners on August 3, 2021. The service team was welcomed by the Chairman and Secretary of Karang Taruna Karang Rejo village at the Karang Rejo Village Hall, Stabat District, Langkat Regency. The team discussed the program that will be carried out, namely socialization on improving public speaking skills to Karang Taruna members which was agreed to be held on August 7, 2021 offline (face-to-face) and August 14, 2021 via virtual (Zoom Meeting) considering the density of Partner activities in August to welcome the 76th independence day of the Republic of Indonesia.

This training activity was carried out on August 7, 2021 offline at the Karang Rejo Village Hall, Stabat District, Langkat Regency, attended by the Village Head, Village Secretary, Village Apparatus, Head of Karang Taruna, Secretary and Members of Karang Taruna (Attached Attendance List). The event starts at 10.00-16.00 WIB. In his remarks, the Village Head welcomed this activity as a form of developing the ability of young people in public communication. In the presentation, the head of the service team on public speaking as an application of mass communication, Prof. Dr. Humaizi, M.A. emphasized the importance of public speaking skills in everyday life.



Figure 1. The Head of the Implementation Team Delivers Material

After the lunch break, the activity continued with the delivery of material by USU

students; Nurhaliza, a 2021 USU outstanding student with the topic of basic techniques of public speech skills for youth; and Patrial Olivert Zega, Student of the English Masters Study Program and North Sumatra Language Ambassador in 2018 with the topic of building messages in public speaking.



Figure 2. Photo with the Implementation Team with Partners

Participants also showed enthusiasm in the discussion and question and answer sessions. At the end of the activity they committed to practicing public speaking skills. In the following week, namely August 14, 2021, the implementation team held an online meeting via the Zoom application to see the progress of the partners and the understanding of the material that has been delivered and the practice.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Conclusion

Based on the activities that have been carried out, participants are very enthusiastic in making this activity a success. They also understand that public speaking skills are crucial. Even so, they understand that public speaking can be learned and honed. Participants were also active in listening to the material and interacting with the service team as resource persons assisted by several students.

Suggestion

The University of North Sumatra through community service institutions still has many opportunities to carry out similar services in different areas or domains such as schools or community groups and similar social communities. Considering insights and knowledge about public speaking is a soft skill that needs to be honed and developed, so this service needs to be carried out regularly and periodically. It aims to educate the public and improve the ability of public speech to be more robust and sustained.

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