

STUDYING IN AUSTRALIA TO IMPROVE ENGLISH SPEAKING COMPETENCE: REVISITED

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Abstract: This study investigates Indonesian postgraduate students' perceptions about their improvement in English speaking competence during their period of study in Australia. Statistical tests show that the students who had spent more than one year in Australia perceived their English speaking competence as higher than those who had stayed for less than a year. However, the respondents expressed uncertainty as to whether their English would improve, even if they were to extend their stay in this English speaking country because of their Indonesian circles. They believed that they have improved their confidence in speaking English because of their stay in Australia. Finally, learning from this study some suggestions for the students learning English in Indonesia are proposed.

Key words: perceived improvement, speaking competence, study abroad.

Study abroad has many different types. As Freed (1995a:5) asserts, study abroad is an umbrella term for many programs abroad that “combine language and/or content learning in a formal classroom setting along with immersion in the native community.” Study abroad programs may be for “exchange” students, or even “peace corps volunteers who receive in-country language instruction.” The present study, however, uses “study abroad” in a specific way. That is, a study in Australian universities to gain academic as well as professional skills, not specifically or solely for the purpose of English language learning.

That specific definition of study abroad covers international students studying in the Australian universities. Most students have come to Australia to study different fields, while quite a number of them have come for language study per se. Many of these students are studying in postgraduate study programs (DEST,

2001). Indonesian postgraduate students sponsored by AusAID fall in this category. Their goal of study is to get academic as well as professional skills. Thus, they are in Australian universities not for the main purpose of English language learning, although this is possible too. Rather, they have joined EAP course before they commence their studies in universities.

There are a number of studies on SLA in a study abroad context in the book edited by Freed (1995a). Many of these studies focus on foreign language learning in the target language countries. Aspects of language gains during the study abroad, as compared with studying language at home, and the acquisition of sociolinguistic competence during the study abroad are explained in detail (e.g. Brecht, Davidson, & Ginsberg, 1993; Marriott, 1993; Meara, 1994; and Regan, 1998). Some studies (Freed, 1995a, b) suggest that study abroad has greater impact on learners' language improvement than study at home does, depending on the proficiency level of the learners before the study abroad. It is interesting to note that none of the studies in this volume refers to the experience of Asians, especially Indonesian learners of English. They mainly refer to studies of the Americans, Canadians, and Australians in different countries, such as France, Russia and Japan.

To give an example, Freed compared the fluency of 15 students who were studying French in France for one semester, and 15 students studying French in an American university. They took an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) before and after the program. Four native speakers of French were appointed to rate their fluency after the program. From both of the oral tests, it was found that the proficiency of the abroad groups was a little higher than the at home groups, and the native speakers judges' rating also showed a higher rating for the fluency of the study abroad group. The statistical test, however, did not show a significant difference. Another statistical test, which excluded the advanced students from the comparison, showed a significant difference between the groups. From this result, she suggests that students who had studied abroad with lower proficiency, have a greater tendency to improve and become somewhat more fluent than was the case for the students who were more advanced at the beginning of their time abroad (Freed, 1995b:135).

Meara (1994) studied the impact of study abroad on students' linguistic competence in European languages. He surveyed 586 language students who were part of European cultural exchange programs. He used a self-assessment taken from the Nuffield Modern Languages Inquiry, which examines different aspects of study abroad. This study found that most of the students felt that they had improved their speaking, listening, cultural knowledge, and personal skills (Meara, 1994:34-35). Further, Meara suggests that the "year abroad has its most significant effects in the area of spoken language" especially in speaking and passive listening. Some of the respondents were working most of the time while others studied in libraries, but all stated that they had improved their foreign language skills. Therefore, he suggests that the future studies should consider how the foreign language learners spend their time abroad.

In line with Meara's findings, many international students have a strong desire to study abroad as for them it is a chance to improve their English (Kiley, 1999). An example of benefits of study abroad for linguistic improvement is a study by Ife (2000), who studied the benefits students experienced from a study in the target language countries in Europe. The 135 students of the cohort participating in this study spent between one semester and more than two semesters overseas. They reported that they benefited from overseas study in terms of understanding the country more, gaining more vocabulary, grammar and fluency, and better comprehension, pronunciation, and writing. However, they also reported difficulties, especially in their social interaction with the people of the host countries.

Cannon (2000) examines the advantages and disadvantages that Indonesian postgraduate students experience in their international education. For them, these are complex, but the advantages were seen as more important than the disadvantages. The advantages are, among others: "professional, affective, cultural and career advantages mediated by the nature of the environment in which they work and the nature of work they do" (Cannon, 2000). Interestingly, language can be both an advantage and disadvantage for them, depending on the language being learned. For these students, speaking a popular foreign language makes them better valued by the employer and colleagues than other competitors for the same job, but an unpopular foreign language does not help them much for their career opportunities (Cannon, 2000:369).

Despite the benefits of study abroad for learning a target language, in fact many studies suggest that lack of English language proficiency among international students in UK and Australia is also of serious concern to various authorities (Ballard & Clanchy, 1997; Todd, 1997). Similar to other international students, Indonesian postgraduate students in Australian universities have shown that they encounter problems during their study. These problems include academic (Firdaus, 2000; Juliana, 2000), linguistic (Juliana, 2000; Rodliyah, 2000; Kiley, 2000), cultural (Rodliyah, 2000) and affective problems (Rodliyah, 2000).

Juliana (2000) conducted a qualitative study on oral engagement in a class of the Business Systems Course. She observed Indonesian students' participation in their classes, interviewed them after the class. This researcher reported that for the students, classroom participation was important, but in order to participate in the classroom discussion these students have to overcome their weakness in understanding the jargon of the spoken language and lack of confidence in speaking in public (Juliana, 2000).

In a different study, Firdaus (2000) studied the interactional demands on communicative competence in classroom interactions in four different faculties, namely Arts, Education, Business and Economics, and Science, in an Australian university. The respondents in this study reported that they wanted to participate in the classroom interaction, but they were not confident with their English language. They also reported that their low linguistic proficiency and differences in learning and teaching styles/culture between Indonesian students and Australian lecturers and students made their English communication skills getting worse. Representative lecturers in those faculties who were interviewed confirmed those factors. Firdaus (2000) suggests that on one hand, the Indonesian students improve their English language and become familiar with the Australian academic demands, and on the other hand, that the lecturers adopt different teaching styles and develop understanding of the Indonesian students' way of learning and behaving.

Similar to Firdaus, Rodliyah (2000) investigated the problems that the Indonesian students face and the learning strategies which students use to cope with academic demands. Participants in this study reported that they faced problems in English language proficiency, affective, cultural, academic, and social issues. In speaking, most of their problems involved difficulty in expressing ideas, speaking spontaneously, participating in the class, social interactions and the feeling of shame arising from lack of confidence (Rodliyah, 2000). These

students suggested that through interaction with local students their problems in speaking could be solved. Regardless of their suggestion, these students' lack of confidence is apparent in causing them to do nothing to improve their spoken English.

A longitudinal study on Indonesian postgraduate students was also conducted at Adelaide University by Kiley (1999). Every three months during their study over four years, 33 Indonesian postgraduate students were interviewed to uncover how everyday life experiences influenced their lives and study. This study suggests that there are three periods of time when students have different experiences, namely, the first six-month period after arrival, the period of living and studying after six months, and the period of preparation for returning home. During these periods they had different experiences depending on factors such as age, previous experiences in Indonesia, and level of study and English language proficiency (Kiley, 1999). In relation to this last factor, during the first six-month period, half of the students felt there was an improvement in their English, but the other half felt no improvement at all or even felt that it dropped down (Kiley, 1999:182). This had made them feel their English language was not sufficient to adequately participate in class. In the subsequent period, most students reported a real desire to improve their English. However, their living arrangement with Indonesian friends had made this difficult. Nevertheless, Kiley (1999:234) suggests.

“I was very aware of students' increasing ability to express how they felt as the interview progressed. There was no doubt that some of this came from the development of the relationship over time, but in re-listening to the taped interviews it is evident that the students became more and more able at describing in English how they felt”.

All the studies referred to here have shown how complex English language learning in a study abroad context is for Indonesian students not only in Australia but also in other countries. A number of questions are still open for further exploration, for instance, what is the best way to help these students to succeed in their study? What linguistic and cultural requirements do they have to meet before commencing their overseas study?

The findings of these studies also indicate difficulties in developing speaking competence during their study in Australia. What has not been explored until now is the gains in spoken English language proficiency which they have made during their studies in Australia.

One way of exploring this issue is to study the perceptions of such students as to the gains they may have made. It is possible to compare the perceptions of Indonesian postgraduate students who have studied for more than a year at an Australian university and those who have just arrived in Australia as a way to explore the gains made in their speaking competence. In other words, it is important to explore their perceptions of their improvement as an indicator of their language gains.

This research was aimed at finding whether Indonesian postgraduate students who have studied for more than a year at an Australian University rate themselves higher than those who have just arrived in Australia in regard to their speaking competence.

METHOD

The design of the present research was a cross-sectional survey which studied variables in their natural settings at a certain “point of time from a sample or from more than one sample representing two or more populations” (Wiersma, 2000:164). This research used a combination of quantitative and qualitative approach. The quantitative method in this research was used to measure learners’ perspectives on language gains during their sojourn, while the qualitative method was used to explore the learners’ perception on their language gains and learning experiences in depth. Quantitative methods have commonly been used especially to measure the gain during the sojourn, for example in Freed (1995b) and Meara (1994) by using a questionnaire or a self-assessment.

The population was potentially all the Indonesian postgraduate students funded by AusAID in 18 Australian universities. A sample was taken from those who voluntarily responded to the researcher’s call for participation, called judgement or non-probability sampling (Gorard, 2001; Mansfields, 1994). Non-probability sampling is acceptable in educational research “when the intention is not to collect data on a general population but...to help explain an educational or social process (Gorard, 2001:25).

Two research instruments were used. The first instrument was the ISLPR self-assessment speaking version (Wylie & Ingram, 2001). Special permission was given by the authors to the researcher to use this. The respondents were asked to indicate one description of the ratings that best describes their English speaking competence. The second instrument was a questionnaire that was modified from studies by Chan (2001) and Ife (2000).

The final form of the questionnaire has two sections, which asks for the respondents' details, the languages they speak at home, and the language of their closest friends.

For the interview, six participants were selected from respondents who had indicated that they were willing to be interviewed. Three participants were chosen from the 'less than a year' group and three from 'more than a year' group. In each of these two groups, three representatives of respondents were chosen, the lowest, medium, and highest ISLPR scores in the groups. The interview explored the respondents' perspectives on the place of English speaking skills in their academic, social, and private lives during their study in Australia, the frequency of speaking English everyday, the improvement in the aspects of their English speaking skills, the factors that helped improve their English speaking, and their view on whether a longer stay in Australia would further help improve their speaking skills.

Data were collected by email for the ISLPR and questionnaire. The survey was publicly announced to the Indonesian AusAID students in all Australian universities via mail lists managed by the Indonesian students themselves in order to get as many respondents as possible. Four mailing lists are based in Melbourne, while other capital cities have one or two mailing lists. Direct information was also sent to those whose email addresses are known to the researcher.

The emails contained an invitation to join the survey and a special link that would take them to the website http://www.ahmadmunir.20m.com/whats_new.html. A file could be downloaded from the website. The file contained the consent form, explanatory statement, the ISLPR, and questionnaire. It was assumed that the respondents could access the ISLPR and questionnaire from the IT facilities in their universities, which makes the data collection fast, cheap, practical, and stimulating (Team, 2001).

The data analysis had two different aspects. The first type of analysis, the quantitative, used the SPSS software. This analysis was applied to the first and second sets of data. The second type of analysis used analytical categories by searching for themes in the third data set (Mason, 1994), which was the qualita-

tive analysis.

This study was limited to studying the perspectives of Indonesian postgraduate students funded by AusAID who were studying in Australian universities at the time of the study. It was also limited to oral competence in English, as measured by scales in the International Second Language Proficiency Ratings (ISLPR) self-assessment version.

As perspectives about English speaking competence may vary among Indonesian postgraduate students, the respondents' and participants' perspectives in the present study may not necessarily represent all the Indonesian postgraduate students studying overseas. The postgraduate students who did not participate in this study might have different perceptions about their English speaking competence. Privately funded students might also have different perspectives from those of the respondents in the present study, who were all funded by AusAID. More importantly, the actual English speaking competence may differ from of the perspectives explored in this study.

FINDINGS

After about 3 months the instruments were put, the reseracher got data about the respondents' details and their ISLPR self-assessment ratings as follows:

Respondents

There were 67 Indonesian postgraduate students participating in the research. Compared to the total number of AusAID awardees in 2002, totalling 330, this number is relatively small. But, seen from statistical point of view, this number can be considered large (Gorard, 2001). The following table presents the profiles of the respondents.

From the table below, it can be seen that more female respondents (53.6 %) participated in the present study than males (46.4 %). Most of the respondents were aged between 26 and 30 years old (37.7 %), followed by those who were aged between 31 and 35 years old (30.4 %), and those aged between 36 and 40 years old (21.7 %). Only a small proportion of the respondents were aged between 20 and 25 years old (5.8 %) and between 41 and 45 years old (4.3 %). It can further be seen in Table 1 that in terms of their postgraduate studies, most of the respondents (65.2%) were doing Master degrees while only two respondents

(2.9 %) were doing their Postgraduate Diploma. A relatively large number of respondents (31.9 %) were doing PhDs.

Table 1. Profiles of the Respondents

	CATEGORY		Number	Percentage
GENDER	Male		32	46.4
	Female		37	53.6
AGE	20-25 yrs		4	5.8
	26-30 yrs		26	37.7
	31-35 yrs		21	30.4
	36-40 yrs		15	21.7
	41-45 yrs		3	4.3
LEVELS OF STUDY	Postgraduate Diploma		2	2.9
	Masters		45	65.2
	PhD		22	31.9
LENGTH OF STAY	<i>Less than one year</i>	<6 months	9	13.0
		6-12 months	30	43.5
	<i>More than one year</i>	1-2 years	25	36.2
		>2 years	5	7.2

Further in Table 1, more respondents (56.5 %) have stayed for less than one year in Australia than those who have stayed for more than one year (43.5%). The first group was divided into less than six months and between 6 and 12 months in Australia. The second group, more than one year, have been assigned into groups of between 1 and 2 years or more than 2 years in Australia.

Speaking Competence Based on ISLPR

A t-test was conducted on the data obtained from the ISLPR and Questionnaire to answer whether the respondents who had been studying in Australia for *more than one year* rate themselves higher in ISLPR than those who had been in Australia for *less than one year*. The following table gives the results of the test.

Table 2. Mean Scores and t-Test of ISLPR

Measure	Group	Mean	SD	t-value	p
Self Assessment rating using ISLPR	1	8.08	1.16	-3.132	.003*
	2	8.87	.86		

Group 1 = more than one year

Group 2 = more than one year

SD = standard deviation

p = significance level .05

* = significant at $p < .05$

It can be seen in Table 2 that the mean scores of ISLPR of both groups were different. The independent t-test (2-tailed) shows that the difference is statistically significant ($t = -3.132$; $p = 0.003$). The *more than one year* group scored higher than the *less than one year* group in the ISLPR self-assessment for speaking. It is important to note that for the labeling purposes in the SPSS, the Ratings were labeled with 1 for Rating 0 to 12 for Rating 5 respectively (See Appendix 1).

The mean score of the ISLPR for the *less than one year* group was 8.08, while that of the *more than one year* group was 8.87. Rating 3 was labeled 8, while Rating 3+ was labeled 9. By rounding 8.08 to 8 and 8.87 to 9, the *less than one year* group tended to assess their English speaking competence as at Rating 3 of the ISLPR, while the *more than one year* group put their competence at Rating 3+ on the same scale. The description of their competence for Rating 3 is

"I speak well enough to take part in conversations on any topic that I can talk about in my first language. In these conversations I can substantiate my own opinions and discuss other people's opinions effectively. I feel uncomfortable when a discussion starts to get deep, however, because I can't go into the depth that I could in my first language. I can give an unprepared speech of several minutes on any topic that is of interest to me. I make some mistakes in grammar, though these rarely (if ever) seem to confuse the listener. I don't always have the word(s) I need to express the exact meaning but I can gener-

ally get close with other words. I may lack technical terms that would be expected with certain topics but I can communicate with non-technical language. When I am familiar with the type of situation, I can adjust the way I express myself in terms of such things as the formality of the occasion and my audience (e.g. their age, status, background knowledge)” (Wylie & Ingram, 2001:2).

Because the description of Rating 3+ is “I am midway between the description above (3) and the one below (4)”, it is important to also see the description of Rating 4, as follows,

“I operate very effectively in complex, in-depth discussions or monologues in social and academic or work situations. My language is highly accurate, fluent and appropriate to the particular audience and situation. Someone might think I was a native speaker for a while, but little mistakes (e.g. with prepositions) and non-idiomatic phrases would give me away before long” (Wylie & Ingram, 2001:2).

From the descriptions of both Rating 3 and 4, it is understood that on average the *more than one year* group felt that their English speaking competence was more than good to take part in a conversation of a particular field they were familiar with, but they did not feel that their spoken English was “highly accurate, fluent and appropriate.” Therefore, they chose to be in between.

Despite the statistical difference, it is still unclear if the difference between two groups can be associated with the length of stay in Australia since t-test does not test cause and effect relationship (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991). To make sure if a smaller duration of the stay in Australia may change a difference in the respondents’ perceptions of their English speaking competence, an ANOVA test was suitable to find out the difference between the groups, namely *less than 6 month, 6-12 months, 1-2 years, and more than 2 years* (Diekhoff, 1996; Wiersma, 2000). The following table gives the results of the ANOVA test.

Table 3 ANOVA and Mean Difference of ISLPR between Groups

ANOVA	Sum of Squares	F	Sig.
Between Groups	11.372	3.449	.022*
Within Groups	71.440		

F = ratio between groups variant and within groups variant; which means to what extent is the association among the members of a group with other groups

Sig = F-value probability

• = significant at $p < .05$

Table 4 Means Comparison Between Groups

Groups' mean comparison	<6 months	6-12 months	1-2 yrs	>2 yrs
<6 months	--	.33	-.55	-.47
6-12 months		--	-.88*	-.80
1-2 yrs			--	.08
>2 yrs				---

* =significant at $p < .05$

Table 4 shows that between the four groups there was a significant difference ($p=0.022$). This means that the groups perceived their English speaking competence differently. To see which group contributed to this difference between groups, the above table also provides comparison of groups. In that table, there is only one significant difference, which is on the scores of ISLPR between the *6-12 month* group and the *1-2 year* group. Interestingly, there was no significant difference between the *less than 6 months* and *more than 2 years* groups. However, seeing the number of respondents in each group, it was found that the number of respondents for both *less than 6 months* and *more than 2 years* groups were far smaller than the rest of the groups. Thus, any further conclusion cannot be based only on these results.

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Many of the findings of the present study confirm a common belief that by studying abroad language learners can get much improvement in their foreign language proficiency (Freed, 1995a). First of all, on average the respondents who have been studying in Australia for more than a year perceive themselves as having a higher competence in speaking English measured using the ISLPR than those who have been in Australia for less than a year do. Additionally, the *more than one year* group perceived that 'confidence', 'appropriateness', 'ade-

quacy of vocabulary' and 'relevance' in English speaking was higher than the *less than one year* group. Hence, it can confidently be said that both the *less than one year* group and the *more than one year* group have different perceptions of their English speaking competence. This means that the longer they stay in Australia the respondents will consider their English speaking competence higher.

This research suggests that Indonesian students who started studying in Australia with a certain level of competence will improve along with their stay in Australia, although the patterns of the improvement cannot be clearly seen from this study. As Sasaki (2000) suggests, self-assessment will reflect actual performance if the learners are exposed to the real language use.

Nevertheless, in interpreting that the length of stay has an influence on learners' perceptions of their competence in English speaking, one should be careful in seeing a cause and effect relationship between the two variables since the variables in the present study were studied in their natural state--no controls over the variables have been made (Hatch and Lazaraton, 1991). Logically, the effect of length of stay on language gains can be measured using a pre-test in the beginning of the respondents' study and a post-test when they complete their study. By doing so, the changing of English speaking competence made by two groups can be empirically measured. As the present study did not apply this, the data from the interviews could confirm whether or not the respondents felt an improvement in their English speaking competence during their study in Australia.

Interview Data on Perceived Improvement

Verification of the statistical test by the results of the interviews suggests that perceptions of one's English speaking competence in self-assessment do not reflect the reality of one's English speaking competence. Not all of the participants in the interviews perceived themselves as having improved their English speaking competence during their stay in Australia. Only half of them perceived improvement in their English speaking competence in the time in Australia. (It is important to note that participants were sequenced in order of their interviews. The numbering system did not represent their groupings. It happened that participants 1, 4, and 6 were from the *less than one year* group, while participants 2, 3, and 5 were from the *more than one year* group). For example, one participant replied,

“Yes, I feel that my fluency (*in English*) is different from it used to be. I used to take a long time to speak of something, but now I don’t. Sometimes we feel that we don’t improve. We often say that. To be honest we actually do improve though with different extent” (Participant 2).

In addition, one of the participants mentioned an improvement in comprehension as the most apparent improvement as follows, “So I think what improves most is our comprehension skills...that’s all. And we get many expressions that we cannot find in the books. That’s all....” (Participant 5). Another respondent was so confident about this improvement by saying,

“First....I divide it straightly to different fields.....academically, and closely related to my job, my English is obviously more fluent. I mean I used to know a term but difficult to recall the word I wanted to use, but now it is easy for me to do so. In my daily life, I don’t speak haphazardly anymore even though I sometimes use inappropriate words...” (Participant 3).

Another participant confirmed this, saying, “Yes, that’s obvious isn’t it? My improvement isn’t excellent but I feel improvement in my confidence. Previously, I didn’t feel confident when speaking to my supervisor and friends but now I feel very easy, not awkward anymore” (Participant 5). It is interesting to note the emphasis on improvement in confidence by both Participant 1 and 5.

In contrast to those who considered that they had improved in their English speaking competence, few participants perceived that their English speaking had not improved. One of the participants maintained that he did not improve in English speaking competence, except in his confidence. He maintained, “I don’t think it is a significant improvement. I just feel improvement in my confidence...” (Participant 1). In a similar message, one respondent was defiant when asked whether or not his English speaking had improved as a result of staying in Australia, “Speaking? Nope” (Participant 6).

In summary, the results of the interviews cannot justify that having a perspective of improvement in English speaking competence suggests actual improvement in English speaking competence. This has left us no choice but to return to the data of the present study to unfold what really happened to the improvement in the English speaking competence during the respondents’ study in Australia.

When asked whether a longer stay in Australia, the first factor, may

improve their English speaking competence. Half of them said 'yes' and the rest said 'no', or 'yes' with condition.

This fact indicates that the Indonesian students are well aware that their stay in Australia will never have an effect on their English speaking improvement if they are not exposed to using it. This is what one of the participants said, "That's obvious....in my opinion I'll improve my English as long as I communicate with other people, but if you only read but never speak with other people....then there won't be any effects" (Participant 4). The respondents would improve their English speaking competence if they practised using English during their stay in Australia.

In short, despite the limitation of the statistical test in uncovering the cause-effect relationship in this study, length of stay in Australia cannot be seen as an unambiguous contributing factor. The participants associate length of stay with the quantity of their interaction using English in their daily life. Indeed, as Sasaki (2000) and Ross (1998) suggest that one's own assessment of their language competence depend on the exposure and experience in the target language. This lead to a question, is it because the more than one year group spoke English more frequently than the less than one year group did so that the former group perceived their English speaking competence higher than the latter group? The following section will attempt to answer this question.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The main thrust of the present research was to explore whether the students who have been in Australia for more than one year perceive their English speaking competence as being higher than those who have been in Australia for less than one year. The statistical tests have found that there is a significant difference between the two groups. The students who had been in Australia for more than one year perceived their English speaking competence as higher than the ones who had stayed for a shorter time than one year.

In conclusion, studying in Australian universities has given opportunities for the Indonesian postgraduate students to change their perception of their English speaking competence. By and large, the unanimous improvement they perceive is confidence. This confidence is due to their experience living in Australia. Indeed, interactions with English native speakers as well as with students from other nationalities provide a real life practice in speaking English on a day-to-day basis for the Indonesian students. Nevertheless, the feeling of together-

ness among the Indonesian postgraduate students limits their interactions with them. Therefore, it all depends on the Indonesian students' own effort to use opportunities to improve.

Learning from this research, it is suggested that the current Indonesian students abroad should try to escape from exclusiveness of the Indonesian circle. To be able to do this, they should also develop an awareness of the valuable moments they have in Australia to improve their English speaking skill. To reduce the exclusiveness among international students, Australian universities should promote communication among international students as well as communication between international and local students. This will open a greater opportunity for the Indonesian students to get to use English in communication.

Learning from what Indonesian students lack in study abroad, awareness of the importance of the ability to speak English has also to be introduced to the students in Indonesia. Moreover, an artificial English speaking environment may be set up in classrooms so as to provide a conducive learning environment to the learners, as in Indonesia English is taught as a foreign language. By doing so, the learners will feel the ease of learning English and they will develop self motivation so that they will learn for themselves, not because they have to. Interactions with English speaking people may provide a good environment to trigger internal motivation to improve English speaking competence.

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