BEST PRACTICE QUALITY IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS BASED ON STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES AT IAIN PALANGKA RAYA

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji perspektif mahasiswa terhadap strategi efektif dalam meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara bahasa Inggris di IAIN Palangka Raya. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dan angket yang melibatkan mahasiswa semester tiga program studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa partisipasi aktif di kelas, keterlibatan dalam kegiatan ekstrakurikuler, serta latihan mandiri merupakan faktor utama dalam pengembangan kemampuan berbicara. Meskipun demikian, mahasiswa masih menghadapi hambatan seperti kurang percaya diri, keterbatasan kosakata, dan lingkungan yang kurang mendukung. Sebagai respons, mereka menerapkan pembelajaran mandiri, kolaborasi dengan teman, pelatihan eksternal, dan pemanfaatan teknologi digital. Studi ini menekankan pentingnya aspek komunikatif, emosional, dan lingkungan dalam perolehan bahasa. Tanggung jawab bersama antara dosen dan mahasiswa juga dianggap penting dalam mendorong peningkatan. Implikasi penelitian menunjukkan bahwa strategi yang dipersonalisasi dan umpan balik yang konstruktif sangat penting untuk meningkatkan kompetensi berbicara. Temuan ini mendukung pendekatan pembelajaran komunikatif dan kemandirian belajar siswa dalam konteks EFL.
Kata Kunci: Latihan, Kemampuan Berbicara, Perspektif Siswa, EFL, Penelitian Kualitatif.

ABSTRACT

This study explores students' perspectives on effective strategies to enhance English speaking skills at IAIN Palangka Raya. Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through semi-structured interviews and questionnaires involving third-semester English students. The findings reveal that active classroom participation, extracurricular involvement, and independent practice are key factors in skill development. Despite these efforts, students still face barriers such as low self-confidence, limited vocabulary, and lack of supportive environments. In response, students employ self-regulated learning, peer collaboration, external training, and digital tools. The study underscores the importance of communicative, emotional, and environmental aspects in language acquisition. It also highlights the dual responsibility of teachers and students in fostering improvement. Implications suggest that personalized strategies and supportive feedback are vital for advancing speaking competence. These insights contribute to pedagogical refinement in EFL contexts, aligning with communicative language teaching and learner autonomy frameworks.
Keywords*: Practice, Speaking Skills, Student Perspective, EFL, Qualitative Research.*

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a language skill that everyone must have. Speaking is actually not just about expressing what you want to express (Joko Prayudha S & Nabila Maratus Solihah, 2023). In the context of communication, when speaking we needs to pay attention to the situation including the background or place, topic, participants, and time. These aspects play an important role in determining how someone should speak. Although it does not have to be exactly the same as writing skills, speaking also involves the ability to express ideas in a good and correct way according to the context, delivered systematically while always

paying attention to the communication rules where the speaking takes place.

If we dig into history, the beginning of the development of communication theory systematically can be traced back to ancient Greece. Their initial interest arose from practical concerns about everyday life. The Greek state at that time had a democratic form of government, and almost all aspects of business, government, law, and education were done orally. Greek citizens also had to be their own lawyers. The accused and the accuser both had to explain their cases before a jury of several hundred people decided who was wrong and who was right. The determination of cases in Athens was done together, and as a result public speaking in a legal context became a pleasure in itself. Rakhamat (2000) stated that a small corporal, a World War II veteran managed to become emperor of Germany. In his book Mein Kampf, he firmly stated that his success was due to his ability to speak. This statement shows how public speaking can have a great impac throughout history.

Speaking is a type of language in which meaning is expressed through articulation or words. Spoken language or speaking activities have a very close relationship with the delivery of messages. The message delivered is not received by the target of speech in its original form, but in the form of language sounds (Hurlock, 1980). As social creatures, we need tools to connect us with other people. One of these connecting tools is language, which can be conveyed through speaking activities orally. Speaking in general can be said to be a means to convey certain things that are in accordance with what is thought to other people who are the target. Overcoming public speaking barriers can be simply said by using classes or small groups for training. Each group will be guided by a reliable instructor who will train its members. The instructor's job is to motivate in order to increase the self-confidence of its members. In addition, the instructor must also exemplify good speaking steps (Darmuki et al., 2017).

Speaking activities must be prepared cautiously, in order for the speaker's message to reach the intended audience. The way this message is delivered to the target can be influenced by a number of things. The speaker's expression is one of the determining elements. Good expressions should not cause bad interpretations to the target or the interlocutor being spoken to. Students as educated people must have good speaking skills. Having good speaking skills can add value to the students themselves. But In actuality, a large number of people still struggle with speaking. minimal knowledge, minimal contact, and a lack of key ideas in oral communication can all contribute to this low competence. (Darmuki et al., 2017). Providing material on the basics of speaking is also needed. The material includes theoretical concepts and skills material. The theoretical concept here contains an understanding of the basic concept of speaking skills. While the skills material contains the context of the existing situation, such as formal, interpretive, formal, and dramatic situations. Both types of materials are used to adjust the conditions of the speaker and the existing environment (Eriyanti, 2018). Therefore, Public speaking is used as a compulsory courses in the English Language Education program at Institut Agama Islam Negeri Palangka Raya which is taught in semester 3, which must be taken by students in addition to other courses related to communication, which are expertise courses.

Using English is one of the most effective language-learning activities in daily life, which is speaking. There is more excellent direct observation of this performance (Brown, 2005). Rather than being a participatory process for creating and receiving information, it is becoming the primary skill required to conduct a conversation. Proficiency in oral communication is a top concern for students in academic institutions. The communicative model of speaking instruction aims to teach students how to talk effectively in English by utilizing vocabulary, grammar, and fluency, understanding,

and communication skills. Speaking is the most essential part of the English language since it forms the foundation for communication, which is a function of education. In the context of learning English, speaking ability is crucial. For many second language or foreign language learners, mastering English speaking is a top priority, according to Richards (2008).

There are many definitions of speaking according to experts. Harmer (2013) states Speaking is the capacity to communicate effectively and requires both the ability to process language and information "on the spot" as well as an understanding of linguistic aspects. Nunan (2000) defines speaking as the ability to utilize language fluently—that is, with few unnatural pauses—quickly and confidently.

One way to communicate is to speak with others. This message can be sent directly or indirectly through thoughts, grievances, critiques, and viewpoints. If the recipient understands how the message was conveyed, it will be warmly accepted. Speech must be necessary for the messenger to accomplish that. Thorbury claim that speaking is much more difficult than mastering vocabulary and grammar (Thornbury, 2013). It encompasses conversation management, speech output, conceptualization and formulation, fluency, and articulation. English and Indonesian are occasionally mixed together due to their limited vocabulary sets. Specific research indicates that the main barrier to students' capacity to express themselves adequately when speaking is their limited vocabulary. (Khan et al., 2018; Panjaitan et al., 2022; Rullu & Daburan, 2020). In the meantime, speaking is an essential skill for students to master at English Departement of IAIN Palangka Raya. As a result, students who need help with performance or competency should receive special attention throughout the lectures.

These abilities include fluency, grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary control. In the first stage, vocabulary mastery, the speaker must understand jargon, diction, and word forms (nouns, adjectives, and verbs).Furthermore, Afzal (2019) claims that active and passive vocabulary are the two types. Students can utilize the words they acquire through active vocabulary to express themselves both orally and in writing. Conversely, passive vocabulary refers to words that students can learn and are given but cannot independently generate in written or spoken form. The second component discusses pronunciation. When speaking, one does, in fact, use the correct pronunciation as determined by a native speaker, and the rhythm, intonation, and stress are all suitable for the context. English language learners do not always need to pronounce words like native speakers due to the influence of their mother tongue. Puspandari and Basthomi (2022), "Learning L2 pronunciation is clearly influenced by mother tongue (L1)." The most important element is to use the standard, also known as reception pronunciation, or RP, which can be either American or British, to pronounce words correctly. Previous studies have shown that learners of foreign languages struggle with complex pronunciation, which results in a high percentage of mispronunciation errors (Lestari et al., 2020; Universitat de les Illes Balears & Rallo, 2022). The third segment is dedicated to editing. These linguistic standards govern the components that make up phrases, clauses, and sentences, as well as principal and subordinate clauses. The various tenses of verbal, nominal, active, and passive sentences, as well as when and how to use them, must be understood by the speaker. The researchers, like many EFL teachers, have experienced awkward circumstances where teacher-led conversations are frequently met with silence. According to Wilang and Vo (2018), It describes a situation when a significant portion of students, particularly those for whom English is a second language, avoid speaking during class debates because they struggle with grammar.The fourth element is fluency. The ability to express ideas succinctly and clearly, even when there are occasional grammatical errors; this is important because it means that concepts

should not be repeated or filled with unnecessary words.. However, Tavakoli and Hunters' (2018) According to studies, teachers usually give fluency a broad definition and confuse it with speaking ability. Additionally, the majority of the activities that teachers said were beneficial for expanding speaking practice rather than fluency. In light of all those concepts, teaching children to speak aims to enhance their speaking skills generally and result in changes in their cognitive, emotional, and psychomotor domains. In this instance, Nur et al. (2021) clarify that It is important to consider instructional approaches as hypotheses that need to be evaluated in order to identify the most effective strategies for a certain second or foreign language classroom. Therefore, considering the situation, we need to decide on the best course of action for the students.

In reality, kids can only produce specific language components during the learning process, like vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. They should be aware of the how, when, and why of language production. Most of them regularly utilize their perceived growth in spoken language proficiency as a metric to assess the effectiveness of their English course as well as their degree of language learning achievement. According to Richards (2008), Despite the fact that teaching oral skills has long been the focus of methodological debates, it has not yet been disapproved of. The goal of speaking skill training is effective and proficient communication (Anand et al., 2025). The aim of speaking skills instruction should be to enable students to use their current level of knowledge to communicate as effectively as feasible. By following the social and cultural conventions that are pertinent to each communication scenario, they must try to prevent mispronunciation, grammatical errors, and confusion in their message. The goal of teaching kids to talk is to use their language until they can do it with ease.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research design is qualitative research with descriptive approcah. This study aims to examine the perspectives of English study program students in an effort to improve the quality of students' speaking skills when speaking in front of the class. Moleong (1989) defines qualitative research as research that aims to understand the phenomena experienced by the research subjects. This research is more appropriate and suitable for researching matters related to research on the behavior, attitudes, motivations, perceptions and actions of the subjects to be studied. According (2008) One method of providing a detailed, engineering-free explanation of the atmosphere or data from research findings is the descriptive technique.

The sample for this study was third semester students of the English study program in 2023. The students to be studied consisted of fifteen students who had to meet the criteria of having taken a speaking course or had taken a speaking course in the previous semester. By using the purposive sampling technique, the sampling technique is used when the researcher already has a target individual with characteristics that match Dana P. Turner's research (2020). So purposive sampling is a sampling technique by providing self-assessment to samples among the selected population. The assessment is taken of course if it meets certain criteria according to the research topic.

This studies employ interview and questionnaire for data collecting method. The interview technique in this study was carried out using a semi-structured method. While for interviews using interview guidelines, so that researchers can develop research questions according to the desired information needs. Sugiyono (2008) semi-structured interviews are interview guidelines that are carried out in an effort to find problems more openly, where the parties involved are invited to ask for opinions, ideas in depth. The interview process begins by making an agreement in advance with the research informant regarding the time

to be able to conduct the interview. Several questions from the interview guide were asked during the interview. To go deeper into the study, the researcher also included a few questions not included in the interview guide. To make it easier for researchers to capture the data, informant interviews were conducted utilizing voice messages or individual video calls. In addition, the researcher documented significant points that the informant made throughout the interview. The questionnaire method is a data collection tecnique used in research by providing a set of written questions to respondents to be answered based on their experiences, knowledge, or opinions. Following the collection of all the data, the data is subjected to three stages of analysis suggested by Miles, Huberman, & Saldana (2020), they are; data reduction, data display, and conclusion.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Results
1. Effort in improving English Speaking Skill
a. Active participation in speaking class

Students who make the effort to try to be active during learning find that this is excellent way for improving their speaking skills. Not only that, students feel that guidance and correction from teachers directly have a great impact on their ability to speak. In addition, students also feel that it is important to have input from fellow students to be able to improve their speaking skills, so they feel that actively participating in speaking using English in class is an effective strategy.

"I feel like I've developed a lot in Speaking III and IV because the lecturers encourage us to debate, discuss, and even act like native speakers. Although it was awkward at first, I got used to it" (Student 4, Interview)

b. Extracullicular activities

Some student stated that they participated in activities such as English Club, Debating Club, or Speaking Competition. These activities not only improve their verbal skills, but also strengthen their courage to speak in public.

c. Independent practice

Some ofof students stated that they independently practice their speaking skills through such as watching and copying YouTube or movies, tyring shadowing technique (imitating native speakers) when listening podcast on spotify or other audio application on their phone or laptop, self monologue recording technique with their phoness, have a self monologue in front of mirror, and lastly trying to think in English language for several minutes.

"Every night before going to bed I practice speaking for 10 minutes, usually telling what I experienced that day. This helps me think directly in English." (Student 7, Interview)

2. Factors Inhibiting Students' Speaking Ability

Despite many positive efforts, students also experience various obstacles hindering their development in their speaking skills. They are:

a. Psychological factors

Most students stated that they feel less confident when they have to speak English in public. This anxiety usually comes from their mind. Many reasons they stated to express this hindrance such as afraid of wrong grammar or pronunciation, afraid of being laughed at by friends. feeling that other people's abilities are better.

"I feel a mental block every time I want to speak. Afraid of making grammatical mistakes. Afraid of being asked back and not knowing the answer." (Student 8, Interview)

b. Lack of vocabulary and grammar mastery

There are also several students admitted that they often have difficulty because they

do not know the right words or the correct sentence structure. This makes them prefer to remain silent or speaks as minimum as possible.

c. Less supportive environment

Students complained that they could only use English in class. Outside of class, whether at home, in boarding houses, or in the surrounding community, there were no interlocutors who encouraged them to use English.

"If only in class using English. Outside the class everyone uses Indonesian, even classmates. So it is difficult to practice speaking continuously." (Student 1, Interview)

d. Lack of feedback from lecturers

Some students felt that feedback from lecturers was still limited to common mistakes, and did not provide detailed guidance on pronunciation, intonation, or more complex sentence structures.

3. Student Solutions and Strategies in Overcoming Obstacles

Despite facing various obstacles, students showed an adaptive attitude and tried to find solutions that suited their respective learning styles.

a. Self-regulated learning or independent learning

Students begin to realize that speaking skills can be honed independently with various strategies, for example reading a text or a script and then recite it aloud, using voice recording to correct their pronunciation, by creating daily English speaking journal, or watching TED talks and practice making an oral summary.

b. Collaboration with friends

Students form small groups as a medium for informal speaking practice. These groups usually meet once a week to discuss certain topics in English.

c. Participate in external training programs

Some students take short courses, bootcamps, or webinars on speaking. This broadens their horizons and gives them the experience of speaking with people outside of campus.

d. Utilizing technology

In this now and day, learning are made easy with the help of technology, one of them is learning apps, most students use apps like Elsa Speak, Duolingo, Cake, or the Voice Typing feature in Google Docs to correct pronunciation.

"I installed the Elsa app, it really helps to practice pronunciation. There are scores too, so I know the progress." (Student 2, interview)

Discussion

This finding is in line with Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) which emphasizes that language learning is through practice, not just memorizing theory. CLT encourages task-based learning, projects, and social interaction as the main methods in improving communication competence. The findings also support Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis, which states that emotional barriers such as anxiety, shyness, and low self-confidence can hinder the process of language acquisition. Therefore, the role of the environment and a calming approach is very important in the learning process. Meanwhile, the independent strategies carried out by students reflect the principles of Self-Directed Learning and Metacognitive Strategy, where learners are aware of their weaknesses and actively seek solutions according to their conditions and capacities.

CONCLUSION

This study highlights that improving students' speaking skills requires a combination of classroom engagement, extracurricular participation, and independent learning. From the students' perspectives, active involvement in speaking activities, both inside and outside the classroom, plays a crucial role in enhancing their verbal communication abilities. Despite

notable efforts, students still face psychological barriers, such as low confidence and anxiety, as well as practical limitations like insufficient vocabulary, grammar mastery, and a lack of English-speaking environments. However, students demonstrate resilience by adopting various strategies, including self-regulated learning, peer collaboration, digital tools, and participation in external programs. These findings underscore the importance of supportive teaching practices, emotional safety, and learner autonomy in the English language learning process. Ultimately, successful speaking skill development depends not only on teacher-led instruction but also on students' initiative and persistence in navigating their own learning paths.

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