

## ***THE BENEFITS OF PRAGMATIC APPROACH IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING ABILITY: A DOCUMENTARY STUDY***

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The purpose of this study was to examine how pragmatic methods can help students improve their speaking skills while learning English. As an essential component of communication, speaking skills require a deep understanding of the context, culture, and communication situations. A pragmatic approach, which focuses on how language is used in social and cultural contexts, can help students communicate better in real life. This study found that adding pragmatics to speaking instruction strengthened students' ability to adapt to various communication situations. The results showed that using a pragmatic approach significantly improved students' speaking fluency, their understanding of cultural contexts, and their ability to use language in real-life situations. In addition, this study revealed some problems with implementing this approach, such as teachers' lack of understanding of pragmatic concepts and cultural barriers. These findings are expected to contribute to methodological changes in English language teaching, with a focus on developing students into more critical, adaptive, and communicative individuals in the era of globalization.*

**Keywords:** *Descriptive Qualitative Methods, Documentary Study, Pragmatic Approach, Speaking Skills, Cultural Adaptation, Teaching Speaking, Communication Strategies, Social And Cultural Contexts.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In English language education, speaking skills, or speaking ability, is a complex phenomenon that requires a deep understanding of various aspects of communication. In today's era of globalization, the ability to communicate fluently in English has become an essential requirement for success in academic, professional, and social fields. Speaking is a complex social practice influenced by the dynamic interaction of cognitive, psychological, social, and cultural; extensive research in psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, and language education has consistently found that speaking is not simply the technical ability to master language structures. Communication skills go beyond vocabulary and grammar, according to renowned linguists such as Dell Hymes, David Crystal, and Michael Byram. They point out that much more complex abilities are needed for effective communication, such as understanding social context, reading cultural cues, understanding implied meanings, and adapting to various communication situations.

In English language education, the main problem is no longer students' ability to pronounce words correctly, but rather their ability to use language as a dynamic, meaningful, and living communication tool. The process of developing students' speaking skills is very difficult because there are many different and complex challenges that require an approach that looks at it from a holistic perspective. Cognitively, students face the challenge of processing multiple components of communication simultaneously. This includes selecting appropriate vocabulary, organizing grammatical structures, understanding social contexts, and making meaning during interactions.

There are many complex psychological dimensions, including speaking anxiety, lack of self-confidence, fear of making mistakes, and social pressure to perform at one's best.

Traditional approaches to teaching speaking that focus on mastering language structures have been shown to be ineffective, according to consistent empirical research. Conventional methods often neglect the pragmatic and social aspects of communication, so students often struggle to use their language in real-life situations. Even when they have a good grasp of grammar, they still fail to communicate because they are unable to read the context, understand what the conversation is about, or adapt to different communication situations.

When pragmatics emerged as a transformative paradigm, it offered a broad perspective to address the complexity. Unlike traditional approaches, pragmatics views language as a dynamic, contextual, and meaningful communication system. This approach not only teaches language structures, but also provides a deeper understanding of how language functions in different social contexts, how meaning is created and interpreted, and how context influences communication.

In order to incorporate a pragmatic approach into speaking instruction, pedagogy must undergo a major conceptual and practical change. To achieve this, the curriculum must be designed by considering the contextual, socio-cultural, and psychological aspects of communication in addition to linguistic skills. Educators must create learning experiences that encourage students to be more pragmatic, flexible, and reflective in communicating.

Pragmatic-based speaking skills rely on metacognitive aspects. Not only must students be forced to learn language, but they must also actively learn how language functions in various social contexts. This includes increasing cultural and linguistic flexibility, thinking critically about how they communicate, and finding effective communication strategies. The potential of pragmatics in improving students' speaking skills is discussed thoroughly and critically in this documentary study.

This study aims to uncover the complex relationship between linguistic, pragmatic, and communication skills through an analysis of academic literature, empirical research, and pedagogical documentation. Identify innovative models for pragmatic interventions, study the psychological and cognitive aspects of speaking skill development, and create a conceptual framework that will help educators create more contextual, meaningful, and empowering teaching strategies. The potential of this study to provide important contributions to the paradigm of modern English language teaching is the reason why this study is important. This study is expected to open up space for methodological changes that position students as critical, active, and adaptive communicators by deconstructing traditional approaches and offering a broader pragmatic perspective. This study does not merely want to make technical suggestions, but also to build a new way of seeing complex communication as an evolving and important social practice.

This documentary research aims to bridge the gap between contemporary linguistic theory, modern pedagogical practice, and the complexity of global communication by using a multidimensional approach, in-depth analysis, and a critical thinking framework. This research is expected to be the foundation for a major change in speaking teaching. The goal is to make people better at speaking and become intelligent, cultured, and competent communicators around the world.

## **METHOD**

This study used a qualitative descriptive approach, and the documentation study was well designed. According to Creswell (2014), a qualitative descriptive approach is very suitable for exploring complex issues and gaining an in-depth understanding of how a pragmatic approach can improve students' speaking skills in learning English. This method was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of existing literature and provides

an in- depth understanding of how a pragmatic approach can affect students' speaking skills. Secondary sources used in this study included academic articles, research reports, and case studies. The purpose of analyzing these sources was to determine the benefits and barriers of implementing pragmatic methods in teaching speaking.

This study used a documentation research design that involved analyzing existing documents, such as academic papers, reports, and case studies. This design allows researchers to gather important information from previous research, providing a rich source of data for analysis. Documentation research is effective for synthesizing current knowledge and providing a broad perspective on a subject without the need for primary data collection, according to Bowen (2009). Data were collected from a variety of academic sources, such as research databases and journals.

Thematic analysis was then used to analyze the collected data. Thematic analysis is a technique that helps to find, analyze, and convey patterns or themes in data. Starting with familiarization with the content, the researcher then identifies key themes related to the benefits of pragmatic speaking instruction, such as improving cultural understanding, context-based communication, and applying language to real-life situations. This information is then categorized into relevant themes, such as the role of pragmatics in cultural contexts or the use of interactive learning approaches such as role-playing. The results are then combined to come to conclusions about how pragmatic approaches can help people learn to speak English. This process utilizes established qualitative research approaches to ensure in-depth analysis and synthesis.

Only reliable sources and research reports were included to ensure the validity and reliability of the research. Data triangulation increases the consistency and credibility of the research results by examining findings from multiple sources. Additionally, experts in the field of language education and pragmatics will review the final analysis to validate the conclusions. This study provides important insights into how effective pragmatics teaching techniques are, although the scope of the existing literature is limited by the use of secondary data. One limitation is the possibility of cultural bias in the studies reviewed, as most studies may come from a specific cultural context. However, an attempt will be made to reduce this bias by including studies from a variety of sources.

The methodology is based on the principles of qualitative research and is intended to provide an in-depth understanding of how pragmatic approaches can improve students' speaking skills in English, providing valuable insights for the field.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

This study focuses on the benefits of using a pragmatic approach in improving students' speaking ability. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with a documentary study approach. Data were collected from secondary sources, such as academic articles, research reports, and case studies. The analysis process includes reading and understanding relevant studies, identifying and classifying information, analyzing the benefits of a pragmatic approach to speaking ability, and concluding the results of the analysis to provide comprehensive insights. This study aims to reveal how a pragmatic approach promotes the development of students' speaking abilities, such as improving fluency, understanding cultural contexts, and applying language effectively in real situations.

Previous studies have shown that implementing a pragmatic approach can significantly improve students' speaking ability. This method allows students to better understand the nuances of language, including idiomatic expressions, cultural references,

and social contexts, all of which are essential for effective communication. By focusing on the practical and situational use of language, students actively practice analytical and creative speaking strategies.

This approach ensures that students not only understand the structure of language but also its function in social interactions. In addition, a pragmatic approach prepares students to detect subtle cultural and contextual clues in conversations, allowing them to communicate more effectively in a variety of situations. By integrating pragmatic techniques, educators can improve students' confidence, adaptability, and overall speaking ability, preparing them for success in both academic and professional settings.

In this study, we will analyze the findings of several previous studies that discuss the benefits of using a pragmatic approach in improving students' speaking ability. These studies were selected based on several factors, such as the need to answer the research question, the purpose of the study, and the hypothesis that a pragmatic approach can significantly improve students' speaking ability.

The first study was conducted by Nur Alfillail, I Nyoman Adi Jaya Putra, and Kadek Sintya Dewi, who are from Ganesha University of Education, Bali, Indonesia. This study was conducted at Madrasah Aliyah Samsyul Huda Tegallingsah, in Buleleng Regency, Bali. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of a pragmatic approach in improving the speaking skills of grade XI B students at MA Samsyul Huda Tegallingsah. The main objectives are to provide opportunities for students to practice English in real contexts and to increase students' participation and speaking ability. The pragmatic approach has been shown to be beneficial in improving students' speaking skills. The hypothesis that can be formulated from this journal is that "a pragmatic approach can improve students' speaking ability by providing learning experiences that focus on the use of language in contextual situations, strengthening students' ability to speak confidently, and increasing their involvement in the learning process." This study uses the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method which is carried out in two cycles, each consisting of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Data were collected through speaking tests to measure students' abilities, as well as non-test techniques such as classroom observations and interviews with students and teachers. The first cycle focuses on identifying obstacles, while the second cycle implements improvements to improve results.

The results of this first study showed that the pragmatic approach successfully improved students' speaking skills. In the first cycle, 64% of students achieved scores above the KKM (75), while in the second cycle, the number of students who succeeded increased to 84%. The pragmatic approach increased students' participation, their confidence in speaking, and their ability to use English in contextual situations, such as communication simulations in cultural events. This proves the effectiveness of this approach in improving students' speaking skills.

The second study was conducted by Adhis Ubaidillah, who is affiliated with educational institutions in Indonesia. This study focused on the application of the pragmatic approach in English learning at the elementary level, especially at MIWB Hidayatut Thullab, Trenggalek, East Java. The purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of the pragmatic approach in English learning, especially in improving students' ability to communicate practically, both orally and in writing. This study aims to explore how the pragmatic approach can help students understand the context of language and improve their speaking skills through interactive and real-context-based learning situations.

The pragmatic approach has been shown to be beneficial in improving students' speaking skills. The hypothesis that can be formulated based on this journal is that the

pragmatic approach helps students communicate more effectively by practicing language in real contexts, thereby increasing their confidence in speaking and the ability to adapt language to certain situations. With this approach, students not only understand the structure of the language, but also learn to use the language in a way that is socially and culturally relevant.

This study uses a qualitative method, with a descriptive approach. Data were collected through interviews with English subject teachers, classroom observations, and analysis of documents related to learning. Interviews were conducted to understand the implementation of the pragmatic approach and its impact on students, while classroom observations were used to record student interactions during the learning process. In addition, learning documents such as lesson plans were also analyzed to evaluate the extent to which this approach was implemented.

The results of the study showed that the application of the pragmatic approach provided significant results in improving students' language skills. With this approach, students became more active, confident, and skilled in speaking, especially in practical contexts such as formal discussions or presentations. Teachers reported that students found it easier to understand the material and were able to use English in various situations according to the context. In addition, learning with a pragmatic approach creates a learning atmosphere that is more interactive, fun, and relevant to students' needs. The interviewed teachers also noted an increase in student learning outcomes, both in terms of assignment grades and their active participation in class. The third study was conducted by Muh. Jaelani Al-Pansori, a lecturer at STKIP Hamzanwadi Selong. This study originated from Indonesia and discussed the implementation of a pragmatic approach in teaching speaking skills in schools. The purpose of this study was to explore the effectiveness of a pragmatic approach in teaching speaking skills in schools. This approach aims to bring students closer to practical speaking conditions, both orally and in writing, so that students can apply their speaking skills contextually in everyday life. In addition, this study also aims to create more active and meaningful learning, where students can communicate appropriately according to social and cultural situations.

The pragmatic approach has been proven to be very useful in improving students' speaking skills. The hypothesis that can be formulated based on this journal is that the pragmatic approach improves students' speaking skills by providing them with an understanding of factors outside of language, such as social context, situation, and communication goals. This approach helps students use language that is more relevant and in accordance with practical communication needs. By integrating pragmatic elements into learning, students not only learn about language structures but also learn how to use language effectively and efficiently in various contexts.

This third study is a theoretical study, so it uses a qualitative descriptive method based on a literature review. Data were collected from various relevant literature, including books, articles, and previous studies that discuss teaching pragmatics and speaking skills. Researchers also link pragmatic theories with teaching practices in schools to show how this approach can be applied in speaking learning.

The results of this study indicate that the pragmatic approach is very effective in learning speaking skills. With this approach, students are better able to communicate practically, both inside and outside the classroom. They not only understand grammatical rules, but are also able to use language by considering factors such as context, audience, and communication goals. Learning using a pragmatic approach creates a more active and interactive learning atmosphere, thus increasing student engagement. Ultimately, this

approach helps students develop speaking skills that are more relevant to real situations, providing them with the necessary provisions to communicate effectively in society.

This fourth study was conducted by Euis Suryawati from SMP Negeri 1 Ciawigebang, Kuningan, West Java, Indonesia. This research was conducted in the context of learning in class IX D of SMP Negeri 1 Ciawigebang during the 2021/2022 academic year. The purpose of this study was to improve students' speaking skills, especially in conveying enjoyable experiences, through the application of a pragmatic approach. This study also aims to overcome the problem of student inactivity in speaking learning, so that they can be more confident and skilled in communicating.

This study shows that the pragmatic approach is very useful in improving students' speaking skills. This approach helps students to speak in real contexts, trains analytical and imaginative skills, and increases their self-confidence. Based on this journal, the hypothesis that can be proposed is:

"The pragmatic approach significantly improves students' speaking skills by making learning more contextual, interactive, and relevant to real communication situations." This journal uses the classroom action research (CAR) method, based on the Kemmis and McTaggart model, which involves two cycles of action. Each cycle consists of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Data were collected through evaluation of student learning outcomes, interviews with teachers and students, and observations during the learning process. The results of this fourth study showed that the application of the pragmatic approach significantly improved students' speaking skills. In the first cycle, the average score of students was 72, with a learning completion rate of 69%. After improvements in the second cycle, the average score increased to 76, with a learning completion rate of 91%. A total of 29 out of 32 students (91%) managed to achieve the KKM score, indicating a significant improvement in their speaking skills.

Based on the various studies above, it shows that the pragmatic approach significantly improves students' speaking skills at various levels of education. Research by Nur Alfillail, I Nyoman Adi Jaya Putra, and Kadek Sintya Dewi at Madrasah Aliyah Samsyul Huda Tegallingsah, Bali, showed an increase in students' speaking skills from 64% in the first cycle to 84% in the second cycle, with increased participation, confidence, and speaking skills in contextual situations. At the elementary level, a study by Adhis Ubaidillah at MIWB Hidayatut Thullab, Trenggalek, East Java, found that the pragmatic approach helps students understand the language context, improves practical speaking skills, and provides confidence in communicating effectively. Meanwhile, research by Muh. Jaelani Al-Pansori at STKIP Hamzanwadi Selong shows that the pragmatic approach helps students understand the social context and communication situations, and use language practically and relevantly in everyday life. Research by Euis Suryawati at SMP Negeri 1 Ciawigebang, West Java, also supports this finding, where the average score of students increased from 72 in the first cycle to 76 in the second cycle, with a learning completion rate of 91%.

Overall, the pragmatic approach has proven effective in improving students' speaking skills by emphasizing the use of language in real contexts, increasing cultural sensitivity, and building students' confidence in communicating. This approach also creates an active, interactive learning atmosphere that is relevant to practical communication needs.

## CONCLUSION

A deep understanding of the pragmatic approach is essential in improving students' speaking skills, especially in English language learning. Research has shown that mastery of pragmatics can provide various benefits, including: helping students communicate more

effectively and in accordance with social contexts, improving their ability to use language in various communication situations, and enriching their speaking skills. These skills are very important in improving students' ability to interact in an international environment, both in academic and professional contexts.

The pragmatic approach not only helps with technical aspects such as the use of appropriate language according to context, but also supports the development of critical thinking skills and cultural awareness. Students who understand the pragmatic aspect will be better able to adjust their speaking style to different situations and audiences, so that the communication that occurs becomes more effective and relevant. This is in line with research findings showing that pragmatic-based teaching can strengthen students' speaking skills in English and improve their ability to adapt to various communication situations.

Although the application of pragmatics in language teaching has challenges, such as cultural differences and students' levels of understanding, the right approach such as contextual and interactive learning can overcome these obstacles. Therefore, this study emphasizes the importance of pragmatic approach as an integral part of English curriculum that can significantly improve students' speaking skills. More intensive and appropriate pragmatic teaching can prepare them to face communication challenges in the global world that increasingly requires effective and contextual speaking skills.

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