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Exploring the Factors Affecting Speaking Skills in Second Semester Students of the English Education Department at IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro

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Abstract— This study examines the factors that affect the speaking ability of second semester students of the English Education Study Program at IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. The main focus is on psychological, linguistic, and external factors, such as anxiety, limited vocabulary, ineffective teaching methods, and lack of speaking practice opportunities. The purpose of the study was to identify these barriers and provide solutions to support the development of speaking skills and improve the effectiveness of the English language learning curriculum. The approach used was qualitative with a case study design. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 15 students, observation of speaking classes, and documentation of learning activities. Data analysis techniques were conducted through thematic analysis which included data reduction, categorization, and interpretation. Data validity was maintained through method triangulation, member checking, and audit trail. The results showed that psychological factors such as anxiety and self-confidence, linguistic factors such as vocabulary and grammar mastery, and external factors such as limited practice and English-speaking environment, mutually influenced students' speaking ability. Students who had high motivation and good learning support showed more significant progress. The conclusion of this study emphasizes the importance of a balanced approach to improving speaking skills, including active student involvement, interactive teaching methods, as well as institutional support.

Keywords— speaking skill, contributing factors, second semester student

abstrak— Penelitian ini mengkaji faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi kemampuan berbicara mahasiswa semester dua Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris di IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. Fokus utama adalah pada faktor psikologis, linguistik, dan eksternal, seperti kecemasan, keterbatasan kosakata, metode pengajaran yang kurang efektif, serta minimnya kesempatan praktik berbicara. Tujuan penelitian adalah mengidentifikasi hambatan-hambatan tersebut dan memberikan solusi untuk mendukung pengembangan kemampuan berbicara serta meningkatkan efektivitas kurikulum pembelajaran bahasa Inggris. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan 15 mahasiswa, observasi kelas speaking, dan dokumentasi kegiatan pembelajaran. Teknik analisis data dilakukan melalui analisis tematik yang mencakup reduksi data, kategorisasi, dan interpretasi. Validitas data dijaga melalui triangulasi metode, member checking, dan audit trail. Hasil

penelitian menunjukkan bahwa faktor-faktor psikologis seperti kecemasan dan kepercayaan diri, faktor linguistik seperti penguasaan kosakata dan tata bahasa, serta faktor eksternal seperti keterbatasan praktik dan lingkungan berbahasa Inggris, saling memengaruhi kemampuan berbicara mahasiswa. Mahasiswa yang memiliki motivasi tinggi dan dukungan belajar yang baik menunjukkan perkembangan lebih signifikan. Kesimpulan penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya pendekatan yang seimbang untuk meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara, termasuk keterlibatan aktif mahasiswa, metode pengajaran interaktif, serta dukungan institusi..

Kata kunci—keterampilan berbicara, faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi, mahasiswa semester dua

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is an essential skill in English language learning, especially for students majoring in English Education. This skill not only facilitates effective communication but also serves as an indicator of one's language competence. According to Leong and Ahmadi (2017), speaking is one of the most challenging skills to master because it requires the integration of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency in real-time interaction. Speaking skills involve many technical and psychological aspects that are interconnected, making it a complex skill to develop. Additionally, success in oral communication is influenced by psychological factors such as motivation, self-confidence, and a supportive learning environment (Dong, 2022). Students often face various psychological challenges, including speaking anxiety, fear of making mistakes, and limited opportunities to practice English outside the classroom. This situation is further exacerbated by the lack of chances to interact in authentic, real-life situations in English. Oktavianti, Nurdianingsih, and Rozak (2021) emphasize the importance of self-directed learning in improving speaking skills, showing that students actively engaged in self-learning strategies experience increased fluency and self-confidence. However, psychological barriers such as anxiety and low self-confidence often hinder students' speaking abilities (Dewi, Hardian, & Cahyono, 2024). Furthermore, a lack of motivation and the absence of a speaking-friendly environment further aggravate the issue, limiting the potential development of students' speaking abilities (Mashwani & Damio, 2022).

Linguistic factors also impact speaking ability, especially related to limited vocabulary and weak sentence structure, which reduce fluency and hinder spontaneous speech. Research by Bahrudin and Febriani (2020) reveals that excessive emphasis on grammar-focused instruction tends to limit opportunities for speaking practice. A strong focus on grammatical aspects often confines students to rigid rules, while opportunities for speaking fluently in informal or real-world contexts become limited. On the other hand, students with a stronger vocabulary tend to speak more fluently and confidently, as they have more word choices to express their thoughts without being hindered by an inability to find the right word (Suryanto et al., 2021). In this regard, communication-based teaching methods, such as discussions, debates,

and role-playing, have proven to be effective in enhancing speaking skills. These methods not only provide students with opportunities to practice speaking in more authentic contexts but also encourage them to think quickly and interact with their peers in the target language, which directly contributes to improving speaking fluency (Amrullah, 2022; Khasbani & Seli, 2021).

This study aims to explore how various psychological, linguistic, and instructional factors, including self-directed learning, influence the speaking performance of second-semester students in the English Education Study Program at IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro for the 2024/2025 academic year. The main research question is: What factors influence the speaking ability of second-semester students in the English Education Study Program at IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro? By answering this question, the study aims to make meaningful contributions both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research seeks to expand the understanding of second language acquisition by analyzing the interaction of various factors affecting speaking performance. The study will also provide new insights into the importance of the interaction between psychological, linguistic, and instructional factors in developing speaking skills. Practically, the findings are expected to assist English lecturers in designing more effective speaking activities and improving the classroom environment to provide more opportunities for students to practice speaking and build their self-confidence in using English.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research used a qualitative approach with a case study design to better understand the factors that influence the speaking abilities of second-semester students in the English Education Program at IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. A qualitative method was chosen because it allows the researcher to explore the topic in depth and from various perspectives, while the case study design helped provide a detailed picture of the real classroom context and the specific challenges students face in developing their speaking skills.

The study took place between February and April 2025 at IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. This location was selected for practical reasons it was accessible, directly related to the research topic, and provided a relevant group of participants: students currently enrolled in speaking-focused courses. The data collected in this study came from two main sources. Primary data included the results of interviews and classroom observations, while secondary data came from supporting documents like syllabi, lesson plans, and recordings from teaching sessions.

To gather the data, the researcher used several methods. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with students to explore their experiences and thoughts related to psychological, linguistic, and environmental factors that might affect their speaking performance. In addition, structured observations were carried out during

speaking classes to see how students engaged in learning activities, how fluent they were in using English, and how they responded to teacher feedback. Document analysis was also used to enrich the data and provide context for what was observed and discussed in interviews.

Once the data were collected, they were analyzed using thematic analysis. This began with reducing the data by focusing only on information that was relevant to the study's aims. Next, the data were sorted into categories based on emerging themes, such as emotional factors, language use, and classroom support. Finally, the researcher interpreted these themes and connected them with existing theories and the objectives of the study.

To ensure the findings were trustworthy, several validation techniques were used. Data triangulation was applied by comparing results from interviews, observations, and documents. Member checking allowed participants to review and confirm the accuracy of the researcher's interpretations. An audit trail was also kept throughout the process, ensuring every step of the study was well-documented and transparent.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. The Results

This study aims to analyze the factors that influence speaking skills in second semester students of English Education Study Program at IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. Data were obtained through interviews and observations of 15 students. The findings are grouped into three main categories: psychological, linguistic, and external factors.

The interview results show that psychological factors play a significant role in influencing students' speaking ability. Many respondents stated that shyness, lack of confidence, and anxiety were the main obstacles in the practice of speaking English. Students often feel afraid of making mistakes and worry about being judged negatively by classmates or lecturers. For example, respondent Panji Wijayanto admitted that he often hesitated to speak because he was worried that he did not follow the correct grammar. This shows that psychological barriers are rooted in self-perception and social pressure in the academic environment.

In terms of linguistics, most students stated that their lack of vocabulary and mastery of sentence structure (grammar) made it difficult for them to convey ideas fluently. Some respondents mentioned that they often had difficulties in constructing the right sentences or finding equivalent words in English. For example, respondent Chikaa stated that she understood what she wanted to say, but often lost the appropriate words in English. This shows that linguistic constraints are closely related to the lack of active practice in speaking and the limitations in practical mastery of language elements.

External factors also play an important role in influencing students' speaking skills. Based on the interview results, many respondents complained about the lack of

opportunities to practice speaking in class, the lack of support from lecturers in encouraging speaking courage, and the limited English-speaking environment outside the classroom. Researcher observations confirmed that interaction in English during lectures was still limited and the dominance of Indonesian was still strong. Respondent Eli Kameliana stated that although there are speaking activities, the time is limited and not all students get the opportunity to speak actively. In addition, access to an environment that supports the use of English such as a language club or a community center is limited.

The findings in this study confirm that students' speaking skills are influenced by a combination of interrelated psychological, linguistic and external factors. Understanding these factors is important for designing more effective learning strategies that support the overall development of students' speaking skills.

Psychological aspects, such as anxiety, lack of confidence, and fear of making mistakes, were shown to be the main obstacles in speaking English. This finding is in line with Krashen's (1982) Affective Filter Hypothesis theory, which states that negative emotions such as anxiety can be a barrier in language acquisition and production. When students feel fear of being judged or fear of being wrong, they tend to refrain from speaking, which ultimately hinders their fluency development. However, the findings also show that good preparation and support from the surrounding environment can help reduce these barriers. Students who feel prepared and master the material tend to be more confident and courageous in public speaking.

Limited vocabulary and difficulty in applying grammatical structures are major challenges faced by students. Many of them realize the importance of grammar, but still struggle to apply it in spontaneous speaking situations. This reflects the gap between receptive skills (listening and reading) and productive skills (speaking and writing). This finding supports Thornbury's (2005) statement that speaking skills require not only linguistic mastery, but also automation in language processing. Therefore, context-based learning and repeated speaking practice can be a solution to improve accuracy and fluency.

From the external side, the lack of speaking practice opportunities and the limited English-speaking environment also hinder the development of students' speaking skills. Most respondents felt that classroom learning still focuses too much on theory rather than practice. This shows the importance of creating a communicative learning environment that supports students' courage to speak. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) theory emphasizes that language is learned most effectively when used in real social contexts. Thus, increasing the frequency of activities such as group discussions, role plays, presentations, and spontaneous interactions is necessary. In addition, the presence of the lecturer as a facilitator and constructive feedback giver also plays an important role in building students' confidence.

The observation results support the interview data, where it was found that students who are more active in speaking activities tend to show an increase in self-confidence, speaking fluency, and understanding of feedback. However, there are still many students who show passivity, a voice that is not heard clearly, and difficulty conveying ideas coherently. This indicates that the learning program needs to put more emphasis on strengthening active participation, courage to perform, and self-reflection through voice recording or peer evaluation.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that the speaking skills of second semester students of the English Education Study Program at IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro are influenced by three main factors, namely psychological, linguistic, and external. From the psychological side, anxiety and lack of confidence are the main obstacles, especially when students have to speak in public. However, confidence can be improved through good preparation and positive environmental support.

Linguistic factors also become obstacles, especially in terms of vocabulary mastery and the application of grammar when speaking spontaneously. Students showed difficulty in constructing sentences with correct structures, especially in the use of tenses and complex sentence forms. Meanwhile, external factors such as the lack of speaking practice opportunities in class, lack of continuous feedback, and limited access to English-speaking environments also hinder the development of students' speaking skills.

Thus, a more communicative and contextual learning approach is needed, such as increasing speaking activities in class, providing constructive feedback, and creating an environment that encourages students' courage and active participation. Collaboration between students, lecturers, and institutions is essential in creating a learning atmosphere that supports the development of optimal speaking skills.

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factors that influence students' speaking skills in the context of English language learning.

Finally, the author hopes that the results of this study can make a real contribution to the development of strategies and methods for teaching speaking skills, especially in higher education, as well as being taken into consideration by educators and researchers in improving the effectiveness of the English language learning process.

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