

THE DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY NON-ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS IN SPEAKING ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

As a communication tool, speaking is a study that must be learned by the learners because it is the most important factor in the development of English language skills. However, students consider this more difficult than other skills because there are various difficulties encountered by students in speaking English. The research purpose is to investigate the difficulties encountered by Non-English Department students in speaking English and their strategies to solve the problems. The respondents were 15 students from the sixth semester of the Civic Education Department, Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo. The researcher collected the data by using a questionnaire. The findings showed that the highest difficulties encountered by Non-English Department students in speaking English were a lack of vocabulary, lack of confidence, and difficulty in expressing words and sentences in a direct speech. It was also found that the students' strategies to solve these difficulties are as frequent use of various vocabularies, regular practice with friends, opening and consulting dictionaries, reading English text as possible, listening to English songs, watching English films, and discussing with partners.

Keywords: *Speaking, ESP, learning strategy*

INTRODUCTION

English is considered and used as a global language. Since then, it has become relatively popular, and almost everyone in the world has spoken and studied it. In this

era, English was used as a medium of foreign communication. In several regions, English is regarded as a second language, whereas in others, it is considered a foreign language. A foreign language is defined as a target language that is not used as a language community in a nation (Pertiwi et al., 2020).

Speaking is one of language major skills. Speaking is seen as one of the most crucial of the four abilities. Students must be able to communicate in English. The researcher attempts to get more details about the meanings of speaking from several experts. According to Richard (2008), for many foreign language or second language students, acquiring English speaking abilities is a priority. Speaking is an encoding process, in which we convey our ideas, emotions, or sentiments through one or more forms of language (Harris, 1974). Furthermore, Brown (2004) mentions that Speaking is a productive ability that can be observed directly and empirically and that the accuracy and effectiveness of those observations are invariably colored. While he also mentions that speaking is the result of innovative linguistic string design, the speaker makes structure, lexicon, and discourse choices. Speaking becomes a vital component of everyday interaction since a person's ability to communicate effectively and comprehensibly (Rahmawati et al., 2018).

Speaking is how we generate spoken language and prevent communication gaps, thus it should be significant. Speaking is a useful linguistic skill (Siahaan, 2008:95). Therefore, speaking is the ability of someone to make a voice that is meaningful and are understood by other people so that effective communication can be made. In speaking, some components must be considered. On the other hand, speaking was regarded as the most challenging ability since it needs the development of all language abilities and speaking strategies at the same time (Mufanti et al., 2018). Zhang (2009:93) argued that for the majority of English learners, the most difficult ability to master is speaking, and they are still incompetent in oral English communication.

However, Based on pre-study research, there are several problems faced by students of Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo, they are as follows less confidence, lack of motivation, improper pronunciation, and inadequate vocabulary. Based on Ur (1996:117), various causes cause speaking problems, among others are: 1. With inhibition. 2. There's nothing to say. 3. Poor or unequal involvement. 4. Use of mother-tongue.

According to Pollard (2008), speaking is one of the most difficult skills to learn. The cause is that English should be used in everyday circumstances. So, students will have the ability to communicate in English fluently and students will be able to improve their speaking abilities automatically. In fact, in their daily life, many students do not practice speaking in English. Mixed code can be considered as part of a language speaker's conscious and fundamental diversity in using elements of other languages as well as the communication strategy to explain or translate (Mustikawati, 2016).

In addition, Floris (2005: 56) asked students to assess the importance of speaking English mastery, and the results showed that 86.8% of the respondents regarded mastery of English as extremely significant (51.7%) and significant (35.1%), particularly for communication relating to their research goals. As a result, in fulfilling the standards, students should learn English more completely. In other words, individuals must find ways or strategies to overcome the challenges they face while attempting to communicate in English, regardless of the difficulties they face.

The ability to speak English is not only important in education, but it is also very useful in other fields, there are a business, pharmacy, technology, health, tourism, and other fields. In this case, people who learn English for a specific purpose are closely related to English for Specific Purpose. English for Specific Purpose is often used to

refer to teaching for utilitarian purposes (Rahmaniah & Asbah, 2018). So, English is learned in obvious situations and according to their proficiency or profession.

In Higher Education, English for Specific Purposes is a mandatory subject. English for Special Purposes (ESP) has an important role in university. ESP is a method of language education in which all content and method decisions are made based on the learners' motivation to learn (Asiyah, 2018). Students must prepare to reach the global workforce as successful participants. Speaking English is difficult because the person must be able to master various aspects of the language, especially grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, intonation, fluency, body language, and gestures.

At the university level, English for specific purposes is very necessary for students in related fields of this major. Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo also regards English as an obligatory subject for non-English departments. For non-English students, mastering English is very important because to accept advances in technology and industry, increase their intellect or find a good job.

Based on the previous research, some studies have been carried out. First, Sudjasmara (2013) conducted research entitled, "Difficulties encountered by Non-English Department students". That is a study at a nursing college in Bandung. It also aims to find the solutions that have been employed to solve the problems. This study uses a case study with a qualitative technique, with 25 students from a college of Nursing in Bandung. To gather information, a questionnaire and an interview are used. According to the research, the most significant challenges faced by NEDS are vocabulary and anxiousness. Second, Rahmaniah (2016) conducted research entitled "The Difficulties Encountered by Non-English Department Students in Speaking English", which is research at Muhammadiyah University of Mataram's Faculty of Teacher Training and Education. It was completed to investigate the difficulties that students in the Non-English Department faced when speaking English. The

respondents were 15 students from the second semester of the Indonesian Department Muhammadiyah University of Mataram.

Based on the explanation above, this research aimed at investigating the difficulties faced by students in speaking English, especially among students from non-English departments of Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo, and explaining their strategies used to overcome the difficulties.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language is a tool for self-expression, expressing opinions, and problem-solving. It is very important in communication, whether it is oral or non-verbal. This is why in this era of globalization, English is a widely spread language and has become the main language among other languages in international relations (Maghfiroh, 2014).

Speaking is one of language major skills. Students must be able to communicate in English. The researcher attempts to get more details about definitions of speaking from some experts. Speaking is a decoding process, in which we convey our thoughts, feelings, or emotions through one or more aspects of language (Harris, 1974). Collie and Slater (2005:8) express their definition of speaking, "Speaking will encourage the development of fluency in spoken English. Speaking fluently, of course, involves speaking with others in a normal and appropriate manner, but it also involves a further assumption in basic terms". To be able to speak properly, learners must master vocabulary, grammar, fluency, pronunciation, rhythm, and accuracy. The learners also need confidence and courage to speak (Mufanti, 2015).

Based on the findings of such research about speaking abilities, there are some components of speaking. There are five components in speaking according to Harris (1974), they are; (1) Vocabulary. The correct diction employed in communication is referred to as vocabulary. Both oral and written means of communication may fail to

effectively communicate and convey their thoughts if they lack a large vocabulary. Poor vocabulary is frequently a challenge to the students mastering a language. Nothing can be expressed without grammar, and nothing can be communicated without vocabulary. As a result of this component, the researcher gets the conclusion that English learners who do not have an adequate vocabulary cannot speak and write English correctly;

(2) Pronunciation. When students communicate, they use correct pronunciation to develop clearer language. It is concerned with the phonological process, which is a part of grammar that consists of the components and rules that define how sounds change and pattern in a language. Two factors of pronunciation are phonemes and suprasegmental features. The researcher concluded from the 5 previous statement that pronunciation is the study of how words in a given language are formed clearly when individuals talk. Pronunciation is important in communication since it helps people understand what they are saying;

(3) Grammar. In a conversation, students must be able to construct correct sentences. It is related to Heaton's (1978: 5) that learners' ability to modify the structure and recognize proper grammatical form inappropriateness. Grammar is also useful for understanding the right approach for achieving spoken and written fluency in a language;

(4) Comprehension. Oral communication involves a subject who also can respond to and initiate speech;

(5) Fluency. The skill to read, speak, or write fluently, smoothly, and expressively is referred to as fluency. Fluency can be defined as the ability to speak fluently and accurately. To look at it another way, the speaker can read, understand, and respond in a language in a precise way and clear while relating meaning and context. Many learners desire to speak English fluency.

Based on Ur (1996:121), several factors cause speech problems, among others are: 1. With inhibition. Learners are concerned about making errors, afraid of scrutiny, or simply nervous about making mistakes. 2. Nothing to be told. Students have no reason for self-expression. 3. Poor or unfair participation. Because of the large classes and the habit of some students to dominate, only one person will speak at a time,

while others will speak only briefly or not at all. 4. Mother-tongue usage. Many learners prefer to use their mother tongue because it is simple. People can develop their English abilities in a variety of methods, including watching English films, listening to and imitating English music, enrolling in English classes, actively communicating and learning English, and making additional efforts. (Asiyah, 2018).

English for Special Purposes (ESP) is a way used to educating English users in certain fields of study based on user and professional field needs of English. What is meant by ESP in this context is studying English for specific goals in their different fields (Asiyah, 2018).

ESP must be viewed as a strategy rather than a product. ESP is not a specific language or approach, nor does it include a particular set of instructional materials (Walter and Hutchinson). English Specific Purposes should not be viewed as a specific language product, but rather as a method of language education that is guided by a specific and clear objective for learning.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive technique. Qualitative research is especially important in the behavioral sciences where the aim is to discover the underlying motives of human behavior (Kothari, 1985). Through such research can analyze the various factors which motivate people to behave in a particular manner or which make people like or dislike a particular thing. This technique is a technique for describing, analyzing, and summarizing many conditions and situations based on facts obtained through interviews or observations of the topics studied that occur in the field. The subjects in this study were 15 students from the Civic Education department semester 6 at the Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo. In this research, data were collected is qualitatively. The data was collected from the participants using a questionnaire. The questionnaire consists of several questions in a specific

order on the form. Questionnaires are sent to respondents who are expected to read and understand the questions and write the answers in the places intended for the purpose of the questionnaire. Respondents must answer questions according to what they experienced. Analyzing and explaining the questionnaire's results, then producing a conclusion based on the data analysis, is the technique for analyzing the questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

After collecting the result of questionnaire from the respondents, the next step is to analyze the results. The difficulties in speaking were shown in the following;

A. What difficulties do you often experience in speaking English?

From 15 respondents who were interviewed, it was found that some of the difficulties experienced by non-English education students. 7 of 15 respondents feel insecure and nervous when speaking. 4 of 15 respondents said that the difficulties they experienced having lack of knowledge of grammar. 5 of 15 respondents said that they were afraid of making errors and are confused about choosing the appropriate word. 7 of 15 respondents have afraid to speak, have poor pronunciation, have difficulty memorizing vocabulary, and feel that English is rarely used in class. 8 of 15 respondents having lack of vocabulary, are not confident to speak, and are difficult to express words and sentences indirect speech

B. What are the causes of the difficulties you experience when speaking English?

From 15 respondents who have been interviewed, there are several causes of the difficulties experienced by non-English students. 8 of 15 respondents stated that the difficulties they experienced were caused less confidence and fear of making mistakes, while the other 7 respondents felt they did not like English lessons, had

difficulty in translating, and had difficulty remembering vocabulary. 6 respondents revealed that they were rarely learning English.

C. What factors affect your English speaking skill?

From 15 respondents who have been interviewed, several factors affect students' English speaking skills. 7 out of 15 students revealed that motivation and self-confidence were influential factors in their speaking ability. 5 out of 15 respondents revealed that the most influential factor was the way of thinking and learning strategies. 4 out of 15 respondents revealed that mastery of language and talent is an influential factor in the speaking aspect. While 5 others think that the choice of words and the surrounding environment.

D. What is your strategy to overcome the difficulties in speaking English?

Of the 15 respondents who have been interviewed, there are several strategies used to overcome difficulties in speaking. 7 out of 15 respondents expressed their strategy in overcoming these difficulties, they were repeatedly reading vocabulary they did not understand and often reading dictionaries to find difficult vocabulary. 7 out of 15 respondents mentioned that they often read English texts and memorized vocabulary as their strategy to overcome their difficulties. 6 of them revealed that motivation, willingness to practice, and often practice with friends were the strategies they used. 8 out of 15 respondents revealed that their strategies were often listening to English songs, often watching English films, and asking friends if there were difficulties.

DISCUSSION

1. The student difficulties in speaking English

From 15 respondents that were interviewed, it was found that there were 12 types of difficulties that were encountered by the students in speaking. There are three difficulties related to language problems. They were; (1) Lack of vocabulary. Vocabulary refers to the words that the speaker uses when the speaker wants to speak.

So in this case, students must have a lot of vocabulary to get successful communication. For example when a student speaks and then gets stuck because he doesn't know what words to say, so the point of communication cannot be conveyed to the listener. In conclusion, in order for the conversation to run well, the speaker must have a lot of vocabulary; (2) Lack of grammar. Based on the observations, the students felt poor in grammar. Almost all students are at low mastery in English grammar. Sometimes some people think that when it comes to speaking, a person will not think much about what they are going to say. Actually, they want not to have time to think, and they will have to improvise. But in any case, they must be correct in English grammar. If learners do not know the rules of grammar, they will never be able to communicate using English effectively; (3) Bad pronunciation. Most of the students have problems with pronunciation in English language. Students face difficulties when they do not know how to pronounce the words. Even if they know how to pronounce it, sometimes they do not believe in themselves.

While the other 8 difficulties were; (1) difficulty in memorizing vocabulary. In the learning process, memory has a big role. Memory is very important in human life because it serves as a complement in thinking because good thinkers are people who have learned to recall their experiences. This is also the difficulty experienced by students in speaking English. Students find it difficult to remember vocabulary because they rarely use the vocabulary as a means of communication; (2) Lack of self-confidence. Lack of self-confidence can lead students to the impression that they will not be good English speakers. This lack of self-confidence is also a big problem that affects students' speaking performance. It is difficult for students to master speaking English if they are not confident in their own speaking ability; (3) Difficult to express words or sentences; (4) anxiety. Generally, anxiety refers to a temporary emotional state or condition characterized by feelings of tension and fear. They may face certain feelings like nervousness, anxiety, worry, embarrassment, feeling afraid that something worse will happen when they try to speak better. Students themselves

must be aware of their own psychological problems and they must also deal with their own anxieties; (5) not used to speaking in class; (6) confused about how to use the right words. In speaking, students must be good at choosing the right words. In this case, students find it difficult to choose the right meaning of words and also still confused in using words based on the context.

The result of this research is following the research conducted by Rahmania (2016) which states some difficulties encountered by the non-English Department in speaking English. They were: difficulty remembering vocabulary, poor pronunciation, lack of confidence, and afraid making mistakes.

2. The strategies for overcoming the difficulties in speaking English

About student strategies for overcoming their difficulties in speaking, there are several strategies they had done for this. They were read vocabulary repeatedly, regular practice with friends, opening and consulting the dictionaries, reading as much English text as possible, listening to English songs, watching English films, and discussing with partners when there were difficulties.

The students themselves are the most important factor in learning speaking. It is encouraged that the students be more confident in their speaking abilities and not be afraid of making mistakes. They have to be creative in finding ways to develop their speaking skills. They should take advantage of every chance to practice their English both in and out of class. The students may create agreements with their classmates to communicate in English as much as appropriate daily. Students can enhance their vocabulary in a variety of methods, including; (1) consulting a dictionary if they are having difficulty; (2) watching English films. Foreign films are very interesting to watch and we can also use them to learn English. Watching English movies can help us to get used to the words, sentences, expressions of native speakers; (3) listening

English music. One medium that is quite effective in order to quickly master English is to get used to and learn English love songs in English. By listening to these songs, the students can hear the words and sentences in English. The key is to like English songs, listen to it, and do not feel ashamed to sing it; (4) Read English text. Students should also set aside a special time to read extensively each day because reading can add and augment their vocabulary. The students can read books, short stories, novels, comics, magazines, newspapers, and others in English. The habit of reading English texts will practice pronunciation. In addition, we can find new vocabulary so that our English vocabulary will increase. Another strategy is to get students used to trying to memorize a few vocabulary items each day and use them in sentences so that the memorized words are not easily forgotten.

Because all of the 15 students who took part in this study said they had difficulty speaking, it would be interesting for other researchers to conduct another study with more participants, because the researcher believed that not only these students, but also other students, might have difficulty speaking.

The results of this research are in line with the results of a study conducted by A. Gani et al., (2015) that implied students' strategies in learning speaking skills included listening to English songs, discussing with partners when there were difficulties, watching English films, regular practice with friends, reading English books, reading vocabulary repeatedly, opening the dictionary, and memorizing new words. Some have different results because each respondent has a different strategy.

CONCLUSION

The research has explained the difficulties faced by students in speaking English, particularly among students from non-English departments of Universitas Muhammadiyah Ponorogo, and explaining their strategies used to overcome the difficulties. The research finding showed that the students have various difficulties in

speaking English such as lack of vocabulary, less confidence to speak, difficulty to express words and sentences, lack of grammar, bad pronunciation, difficulty memorizing vocabulary, afraid to speak, afraid of making errors, nervous, and confused how to use appropriate words. The strategies used by students to solve these difficulties include read vocabulary repeatedly, regular practice with friends, opening and consulting dictionaries, reading as much English text as possible, listening to English songs, watching English films, and discussing with partners when there were difficulties.

For subsequent research is expected to be able to discuss the strategies that can be done by students in overcoming the difficulty of speaking, so students can apply better strategies to overcome the difficulties and problems they face.

