

AN ANALYSIS OF NON-ENGLISH STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN SPEAKING ENGLISH

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Abstract: English proficiency becomes a significant factor following the global development around the world and speaking is the most noticeable skill that shows language proficiency. In this case, the majority of the language learners in the world aim to develop speaking proficiency. However, speaking is not an easy task, especially for Non-English learners. Therefore, this study aimed to identify speaking difficulties faced by non-English students at the University of Islam Malang and its impact on their speaking ability. This study was implemented using a descriptive qualitative research design with semi-structured interviews on five students of non-English students at the University of Islam Malang. The data in this study is in the form of an interview transcript that is used to present the findings. The results revealed speaking problems related to languages such as vocabulary, grammar, fluency as well as lacking attention to grammar and pronunciation. Moreover, the study also found many problems regarding psychological difficulties such as lacking confidence and motivation, being nervous, the mind goes blank, being out of topic, being confused as well as unprepared. In terms of the effect caused by speaking difficulties on students' speaking ability, the researcher found that the difficulties mostly lead to an inability to speak fluently, blank, confusion, and afraid of making mistakes. Moreover, the researcher found that both linguistic and psychological difficulties have an impact in the form of lacking fluency in speaking.

Key Words: English Entertainment, Benefits, Language Acquisition

INTRODUCTION

English proficiency becomes determining quality that an individual must have in the future for global competition as almost every media, application, science, and knowledge are delivered in English. There are many things that determine English proficiency, but the most significant parameter of good English is being able to speak fluently. The use of speaking is to deliver a message to the listener to build communication. Speaking involves social context. According to Nazara (2011),

speaking includes pronunciations, grammar, and vocabulary. As well as speaking has its functions to deliver message in clarity. Speaking is the most noticeable aspect that shows language proficiency. As stated by Richards (2002) that the majority of the language learners in the world study English to develop speaking proficiency.

However, speaking is a practical skill that requires practice to master, a study conducted by Al Nakhalah in 2016 showed that there were challenges in English speaking. First, students were afraid of making mistakes, Second, the students felt shy when they talk in English as well as they felt not confident. Aziz (2018) found that the students are having difficulties such as grammar, pronunciation, deficient language learning curriculum, and lacking exposure to English. According to Rahmaniah, Asbah, and Nurmasitah (2018), non-English students did not master or have difficulty, there were some aspects of the problem, the first was Grammar and the second was fluency in speaking, third was understanding and the last was lack of vocabulary. Besides, they also have psychological problems such as lack of motivation.

Thus, based on the issues above that there were some difficulties faced by non-English students to speak in English that related to linguistic and non-linguistic difficulties. Realizing that the importance of English-speaking skills in this era for non-English students, therefore, the study purposed to investigate the study of English-speaking skills entitled "An Analysis of Non-English Students' Difficulties in English Speaking". Since being highly skilled in English speaking gives benefit for students to enjoy the English language (Kusdianang & Bharati, 2016). Mastering the English language involves mastering English speaking also because through speaking language users can deliver a message well, convey and build strong relationships. The study aims to identify the difficulties and the factors causing difficulties in speaking encountered by students. As the novelty considering the gap from previous studies, the researcher also identifies the impact of those difficulties and factors on students' speaking ability.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Speaking is considered a productive skill used to deliver the message to the listener by conveying an idea, information, and feelings in spoken language (Ur, 1996). In addition, Hidri (2018) stated that speaking process of performing vocal symbol in a speech to provide information, idea, and opinion to the other. Richards (2002) stated that learners study English in order to develop proficiency in speaking as the ability of English is measured by the result in speaking skill or oral communication. The main goal of speaking is to convey the message effectively. The speaker evaluates the effect of communication with the listener to effectively convey their thoughts (Rahayu, 2015). Therefore, speaking is a productive skill to express communication with others.

Aside from its importance in communication and language proficiency, there are many problems that might hinder the speaking ability of an individual. Ur (1996) stated that there are some problems faced by the students in speaking. The problems of speaking include student inhibition, nothing to say, low participation, the theme to be spoken, and the use of mother tongue. Based on Richards (2008), mastering speaking is not an easy task, it requires learners to be good at all components of speaking such as spelling and vocabulary, fluency, pronunciation as well as grammar. In more recent studies Aziz (2018) found many problems with students' speaking ability such as accents, consonants, vowels, syllables, language structures. Additionally, Rahmaniah et al (2018) found more non-linguistic problems such as anxiety and nervousness that become major problems hindering speaking ability in English class. Thus, indicates that speaking difficulties are not only related to language aspects but also non-language aspects.

The English language has been applied in many aspects of life as the application of science and area of knowledge in university should be supported with mastery of the English language. Therefore, the English language learned by people

as compulsory subjects according to purpose, this is considered as English for Specific Purpose (Sudjasmara, 2013). According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), English for a specific purpose is generally refers to English teaching of a utilitarian purpose which is learned to be applied in real situations in accordance with their own field of knowledge, expertise, and profession. Additionally, English for specific purposes at the higher education level in Indonesia is applied in many sectors of knowledge as a compulsory subject for non-English department students. Mastering English is very important for Non-English department students to expands their knowledge to a world scale which is helpful for both local and global competition. Speaking involves producing, receiving, and processing information, thus, most people believe that good speakers always have good English language proficiency in general (Yahya, 2013). Mariam, Azeem, and Dogar (2011) stated that mastering English speaking is not an easy task especially non-English learners as English is not their main concern.

Speaking is not an easy skill to learn, it requires sufficient knowledge to perform and experience in the practice. Nunan (2003) divided speaking problems into monologue-related problems and dialogue-related problems. Monologue-related problems involve difficulties in one-way communication such as expressing ideas, public speech, narration, and description, while dialogue-related problems involve multiple ways of communication such as discussion, conversation, and sharing. Moreover, Maalamah (1991) stated that speaking difficulties involves language-related difficulties and psychological related difficulties. According to Brown (2001) linguistic and psychological problems in learning speaking are connected one to another, for instance, lacking linguistic skills such as grammar and vocabulary might lead to nervousness and being afraid to make mistakes while anxiety might hamper the development of linguistic speaking skills. Many efforts have been done in the attempt to find a solution for the problems in learning speaking. Maalamah (1991) noted that teaching speaking requires good classroom interaction, collaborative

exchange of thought, and sharing ideas between two or more people. Moreover, Harmer (2008) stated that in learning speaking it is necessary to involve the students in a communicative learning scenario. Additionally, Brown (2001) stated that communicative learning is the most effective way in learning speaking as the goal of speaking is to be able to communicate.

A study by Aziz (2019) aims to identify the difficulties of English speaking at the tertiary level of education students in Pakistan. The result shows that English speaking difficulties among Arab learners are caused mostly by huge differences in language systems, Arab students have difficulties in accents, consonants, vowels, syllables, language structures. Moreover, the international students from Arab have problems with the curriculum that did not fit with the need of international students in language learning. Meanwhile, a study conducted by (Nakhalah., 2019) aims to explore the causes of many difficulties in speaking encountered by English language students. The results show an indication of some speaking difficulties of the students due to factors like fear to make, mistakes, being shy, anxiety, and lack of confidence. This study focused on students in English language major as their participants, but the current study focuses on non-English language major students.

METHOD

This study was implemented using a descriptive qualitative approach in order to find the descriptive data of the research. The data in this study was in the form of interview transcripts that were used to represent the findings of the study based on students' experience with speaking difficulties on five non-English students at the University of Islam Malang. the researcher employed a descriptive method to presents data in the finding using the table to support the description, this is a research method designed to helps the identification of phenomenon based on the factual data in real-world.

The instrument used in this study is an interview question that consists of 15 items about speaking difficulties encountered by non-English learners. The items in the interview question are constructed to answer the research problems, three items related to linguistic difficulties each for lexical, syntactic, and pronunciation or phonology. Two items related to pre-speaking activity and while speaking, and another two for factors and impact of linguistic difficulties. Moreover, five items to identify non-linguistic difficulties such as nervousness, anxiety, motivation, environment, and speaking partner. The last three items related to factors and impacts of non-linguistic difficulties.

The researcher applies many stages in conducting the research, the study involves 5 non-English language department students at the University of Islam Malang. The data collection through WhatsApp voice notes in the form of a semi-structured interview about the difficulties encountered in speaking the English language. After all the necessary data are accumulated, then data is analyzed using descriptive analysis based on Creswell (2009) that involves organization, selection, coding, description, and data interpretation. Then the researcher concludes the finding in consideration of the finding from related studies.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this chapter of the study, the researcher presents the result collected from interview transcripts from the participants of the study that consist of 5 non-English department students.

In terms of difficulties regarding vocabulary, it is indicated that all the participants have vocabulary-related difficulties. One student mentioned that the lack of vocabulary was caused by insufficient time in learning English. Moreover, some students stated that even for those who have learned English for a long time it is impossible to master every vocabulary. Richards (2008) stated that the reasons why the students are having speaking problems are linguistics problems such as poor

grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Speaking problems occur when someone is lacking the necessary vocabulary to talk and is unable to combine the vocabulary into a proper sentence (Fitriani, 2015) The researcher also found that all the participants are not paying enough attention to grammar, most of them tend to ignore grammar during speaking. Heriansyah (2012) also found that most participants who use proper grammar during speaking are slower but more comprehensible compared to other participants during speaking. Doris and Jessica (2007) noted that people are unlikely to give much attention to the correct grammar in real communication and only emphasize the content and how to respond.

The data indicated that all participants are also lacking skills in spelling and pronunciation, the data also indicates that lack of spelling and pronunciation are caused by lack of practice. Rahmaniah et al (2018) found that most non-English students in language classrooms are having a heavy accent and poor pronunciation that are difficult to understand. Another language-related factor that affects students' speaking ability is pre-speaking and while speaking. The result shows that there are three participants that have difficulties of pre-speaking in front of the class, but this problem is occasional and not always happens. However, the problems might occur when the speaker is not ready and nervous. Meanwhile, most participants have the problem to speak for a long time due to a lack of vocabulary or being out of a topic that holds them from speaking.

Another speaking difficulty that needs attention is being nervous, the data indicated that all the participants have nervous-related difficulties in speaking that based on the data are caused by blank, doing presentations in front of the class, and lack of preparation. This is in line with the finding of Humpries, Burns & Tanaka (2015) that all students in English class have experience mind goes blank during speaking which makes them cannot continue to speak. King (2013) also confirms that sudden silence in speaking is a common problem for EFL learners in Japan where English is not commonly used in society. Regarding difficulties with the speaking audience, the researcher divides the data into two questions, those are difficulties in

public speaking and difficulties due to speaking partners. The result indicated that there are 5 difficulties in public speaking such as lacking confidence, nervousness, lack of preparation, speaking anxiety, and blank. In terms of a speaking partner, Humpries et al (2015) found that the influence of peers as well as speaking in front of the class are the most frequently stated difficulties in speaking compared to linguistic difficulties.

In regards to speaking partner-related difficulties, the researcher found 6 problems such as nervous, blank, eye contact, anxiety and who the students speaking. The next speaking difficulty discussed is self-doubt, the data shows that four participants have no self-doubt and confidence in their ability. Mizayanti & Handini (2001) stated that most English learner in Indonesia is having difficulties in speaking spontaneously and requires a certain amount of understanding and preparation to speak fluently. Other aspects of speaking difficulties are the difficulties in self-motivation. The data shows that 3 of the students motivate themselves only when it is needed and 2 of them have difficulties in motivation due to laziness and anxiety. In term of lacking confidence, Varasarin & Patchara (2007) points out that confidence is an essential factor in speaking as lacking confidence might cause other problem in speaking such as nervous, sudden blank and repetition.

The summary of the findings related to speaking difficulties

No	Difficulties	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5
1	Lacking vocabulary	✓			✓	✓
2	Lacking grammatical knowledge	✓		✓	✓	✓
3	Lacking fluency	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Lacking practice	✓	✓		✓	
5	Lack of confidence	✓		✓		
6	Lack of motivation		✓			
7	Lack of attention to pronunciation			✓		✓
8	Lack of attention to grammar		✓	✓	✓	
9	Nervous	✓	✓			✓
10	Blank	✓		✓	✓	✓
11	Out of topic			✓	✓	✓
12	Being confused	✓				
13	Being unprepared		✓		✓	
14	Afraid of making a mistake			✓		
15	Speaking anxiety			✓		

The data above indicates that the study reveals sixteen difficulties in total together with the data of students who encounter those problems based on interview transcripts. Therefore, the list is the key answer to the first research question.

In regards to the factor causing all of those linguistic related difficulties, it is indicated that there are six factors causing linguistically related difficulties such as lacking vocabulary and grammar, lacking productive language skills, difficulties in getting used to the English language, lacking time to learn, and lack of practice. Moreover, in this study, lack of practice is considered the most frequent factor of language-related difficulties. Aziz (2019) indicated that insufficient time to practice is one major factor hindering speaking development.

In regards to the impacts of all those linguistic related difficulties, it is indicated that there are 7 impacts of linguistically related difficulties such as lacking vocabulary, confidence, being nervous and shy, afraid of mistakes, lack of fluency, and inability to speak for long. According to Richards & Renandya (2002). speaking involves many components of language such as lexical, syntactic, semantics, and phonology. The data shows that lack of fluency is the most frequent factor of language-related difficulties that are mentioned by 3 participants followed by lack of confidence by 2 students while other difficulties were only mentioned once.

In regards to factors causing psychological speaking difficulties, the result shows that there are 5 factors causing psychological difficulties such as lack of confidence, diligence, motivation, preparation, and being nervous. Psychological aspects difficulties contribute more frequently in language learning in comparison to the linguistic aspects (Horwitz, Howits & Cope, 1986). Moreover, lacking linguistic competence causes many problems during the whole process of speaking and might cause the emergence of mental related difficulties (Richards & Renandya, 2002).

In regards to the impacts of all those psychological difficulties, it is indicated that there are 5 impacts of psychological difficulties such as lacking fluency,

confusion, being nervous, blank, and total stop in speaking. The data shows that lacking fluency is the most frequent factor of language-related difficulties that are mentioned by 4 participants followed by nervous and blank by 2 students while other difficulties such as confusion and total stop only mentioned once. Al Hosni (2014) stated that speaking fluency is affected by linguistic and psychological factors in speaking. Moreover, Widodo (2019) stated that many serious problems in speaking are caused by mental factors such as nervousness and anxiety, these factors might cause blank or sudden confusion during speaking. Additionally, Nakhlah (2016) found that fluency is dominantly affected by psychological factors such as nervousness, anxiety, and afraid of mistakes instead of linguistic factors like vocabulary and grammar.

CONCLUSIONS

The result of the research reveals a total of 16 speaking problems, 5 from language-related difficulties and 11 from psychological difficulties. The difficulties encountered by students are mostly non-language-related problems, but the most dominant problem is lacking fluency from language-related problems. Moreover, the researcher also finds difficulties like being afraid of making mistakes and speaking anxiety. In answering the second research question, the researcher found that all those difficulties lead to an inability to speak fluently, blank, confused, and afraid of making mistakes. This condition might hamper the development of speaking ability as the main goal of speaking is fluency. Moreover, the researcher found that both linguistic and psychological difficulties have an impact in the form of lacking fluency in speaking.

SUGGESTIONS

In consideration of the problems and results of the current study, the researcher gives suggestions as follows:

It is suggested for non-English students to focus and solve mental problems in speaking by practicing to overcome nervousness, fear and anxiety. These mental problems are the hindrance in the development of speaking skill as linguistic problems is just the matter of practice and learning.

It is suggested to the lecturer to motivate, facilitate and encourage the students to practice and hone their skills in speaking instead of focusing on the theory of speaking. This is important because as the students are motivated and have overcome their mental problems they can practice speaking autonomously.

It is suggested for the next researcher to delve into more specific and deeper problems such as focusing more on one of the mental or physical problems and study the factor and the cause of that problems or find how students solve speaking problems on their own.

Complementing structured and contextual instruction to develop learners' awareness of the elements and processes in speaking to gain greater autonomy over the students' progress in speaking skills.

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Advisor I,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a long horizontal line followed by a stylized, cursive signature.

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