

THE EFL STUDENTS' CHALLENGE AND PROBLEM ON SPEAKING ACTIVITIES DURING ONLINE LEARNING

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Abstract: The purpose of this research was to investigate the EFL students' challenges on speaking activities during online learning and EFL students' problems on speaking activities during online learning. The data were collected by qualitative method within questionnaire and interview. The data were collected by online within questionnaire and interview. From the data investigation, students have many challenges on speaking activities during online learning, most of students felt there is no motivation, less understanding and lack of self-confidence. Then, students also faced several problems on speaking activities there were internet network, students' devices, online learning environment, less interaction and limited time. As a result, online learning is not effective for speaking activities.

Keywords: EFL students' challenge, EFL students' problem, Speaking activities, Online learning.

INTRODUCTION

Online learning might be efficient, but in enlightening the speaking ability of English Foreign Language students online learning have their own challenges and problems during online learning. Learning to speak a language is probably more difficult than learning to comprehend it. Having the ability to communicate implies that one has bravery or confidence (Abdullah, 2017). There are some online learning weaknesses; lack of interaction with others, physical or psychic attention and passive interaction, that's why English Foreign Language students' being lazy to interact and communicate with others during online learning. As a result, it goes a bad way for students to improve speaking ability, if face-to-face (offline learning) still can't be implemented. According to Rahmawati et al. (2021), students cannot do the speaking activities as much as possible, because there is no contact that encourages the students to speaks that may be directly implied in order to improve their speaking abilities.

In pandemic situation, English Foreign Language students must do speaking activities in different situation and atmosphere. This is a new challenge and problem for English Foreign Language students', that how they adapt the new online habit, moreover

they have to do indirect speaking activities. According to Salleh et al. (2020), stated that online learning has a negative effect for the students (1) no self-discipline, (2) no face-to-face interaction and contact and (3) it is hard to do perfect online learning. Those are why nowadays educators and students does not like to have online teaching and learning activities. It makes students feel difficult speaking English during lessons. Lectures pursue to include online learning media into their courses despite having limited insight of how their students use online learning media to improve their speaking ability. Because, the main center of learning process is students, lectures must recognize their thoughts on online learning in order to aid students evolving educational activities that allow students to enhance their speaking abilities.

Speaking activities using English has become EFL students' habit during class, and speaking skill is one of English skills that must be mastered by EFL students. Speaking skill to the English Foreign Language students are accustomed to communicating and interacting in English face to face during teaching and learning activities in the classroom. Speaking is a system of expression in which someone interacts in (Armasita, 2017). In other words, speaking skill need direct interactions and this online situation is something that is challenging for the English Foreign Language students to improve their speaking activities towards speaking ability, because when a student has good speaking skills, they will be more active in class but now they must do the speaking activities online (Dhawan, 2020).

However, in Indonesia speaking English is still struggle for students and it is not always used in social environment of students in online class. Besides that, English Foreign Language students are required to use English as a language for their communication tool to interact with each other during class. When English Foreign Language student speaking English during teaching and learning activity, indirectly they have built their speaking ability. According to Jannah (2021), classroom environment supporting students to be success in speaking activities. Which means, EFL students need direct interaction to improve their speaking ability.

Therefore, based on the background of this research, there are still undiscussed challenges and problems that have not been found. So, the researcher needs to investigate further and deeply about the English Foreign Language students' challenge on speaking activities during online learning.

Regarding to the English Foreign Language students' challenges, there are several previous studies related to this research, the researcher found some relevant researches. There are three types of researches as following:

The first research was on 2020 conducted by Yustina Fitriani, Murti Bandung and Mohtana Kharisma Kadri that investigated about *students' perspective of online learning on speaking class during covid-19 pandemic*. There were 83 non- English Department students as participants in this research. Mixed method used to collect the data in this research. The result of this research that the 14 items of 20 disagree that online learning did not assist them in enhancing their speaking abilities. Some of issue were from internet connection and the pupils' data and some of them want to express their idea in offline learning. However, there are 6 items feel free to express their idea during online class. Which means agree that the introvert students prefer online learning to offline learning.

In 2021, Young Hua Ying, Winson Eng Wei Siang and Maslawati Mohammad, discovered *the challenges of learning English skills and the integration of social media and video conferencing tools to help ESL learners coping with the challenges during COVID-19 pandemic*. In this research, the researchers discovering the ESL learners' challenges through the use of video and social media such as: Facebook and WhatsApp, for teaching and learning process on online class. The result in this research, the researchers gained several challenges that faced by the ESL learners there are lack of motivation and self-confidence, fear, hesitation and limited vocabulary

Another research at the same year conducted by, Eka Rochimatul Jannah investigated *the EFL students' perception on online learning towards speaking ability*. In this research, the researcher used qualitative methods to identify the hole sample data with giving questionnaire and interview. There were sixth semester students as the participants in this research. As a result, from the data identification, students' perception on online learning, most of students disagree that online learning might improve their speaking ability. Students found problems in internet network, limited time, less interaction and limited vocabulary. Eventually, the researcher found, the students used 6 strategies to solve their difficulties for indication read a lot, speaking and listening practice, watch often, taking notes and search for interesting topics.

METHOD

This researcher used descriptive and qualitative data to procedure of collecting data, describing, categorizing, and evaluating the data, and then drawing conclusions. Qualitative method is a research method for ability to integrate information from people and their observed behavior in written and spoken form (Moleong, 2010). Qualitative research instead of using statistical procedures, descriptive data is used in the study. The participants in this research were 30 English Foreign Language students in 6th semester of English Education

Department. The students are required to fill out the questions related to the EFL students' challenge on speaking activities during online learning. Next, interview it was conducted to find out the reason why EFL students' struggling related to the research problems in speaking activities during online learning.

To get the data, the researcher guided the participants about how to fill out the questionnaire throughout Google Form. The questionnaire was adopted from the research by Fitriani et al. (2020). There were 20 questions related to the EFL students' challenges and problems on speaking activities during online learning. The second instrument was interview, the researcher asked some question to the EFL students that related to the research problems. The interview questions were adapted from (Jannah, 2021).

The responses from the questionnaires are presented into percentages. The percentages from each item are achieved by processing the raw of the data from the questionnaire into percentages. Selecting the most significant percentages from each question in the questionnaire. Then, the data findings have been displayed descriptively. Last, analyzing the interview data by transcribing the interview verbatim then summarizing the main point and selecting the most significant items with removing unnecessary data. Then, categorizing the interview data using "code" to differentiate one data with other. After processing the data, the data was presented by producing a brief description or narrative text based on data reduction findings from questionnaire and interview, then draw a conclusion based on the facts and information.

FINDINGS

• The EFL Students' Challenge on Speaking Activities During Online Learning

Table 4.1 EFL students' responses to online learning affects their study habits

No.	Question	Percent	Description
1.	Online learning helps me understanding the learning materials more easily.	46.7%	Disagree
2.	Online learning motivates me to study more diligently.	33.3%	Neutral

Table 4.1 the participants are disagree with Question 1. It means that the EFL students thought that online learning did not help them understanding the learning materials. Additionally, the participants choose neutral with Question 2. So, the EFL students felt normal that their motivation to study is not affected by online learning.

Table 4.2 EFL students' responses to online learning on their speaking activity

No.	Question	Percent	Description
3.	Online learning encourage me to be more active in speaking.	43.3%	Neutral
4.	I feel comfortable to answer the question given in online learning.	36.7%	Neutral

Table 4.2 shows that the participants are neutral for these two questions. Consequently, for these two questions, the EFL students had no responses to online learning on encouraging to be more active in speaking and felt normal to answer the question given in online learning.

Table 4.3 EFL students' responses to online learning affects their learning style

No.	Question	Percent	Description
5.	I prefer to choose online learning rather than traditional learning in the class.	26.7%	Neutral
6.	Online learning has a great contribution to my interest in learning.	50%	Neutral

Table 4.3 shows that the participants are neutral for these two questions. The EFL students felt that it is not a problem to learn in online or traditional learning. The EFL students also felt that the contribution of online learning is normal on their learning interest.

Table 4.4 EFL students' responses to online learning solve their learning problems.

No.	Question	Percent	Description
7.	Online learning eases me to find my learning needs.	46.7%	Neutral
8.	Online learning eases me to overcome my problem in learning.	50%	Neutral

Table 4.4 shows that the participants are neutral for these two questions. The EFL students felt normal that online learning eases them to find their learning needs and to overcome their learning problem.

The researcher gained more detail information from the participants about the challenges are EFL students felt on speaking activities during online learning. First, the EFL students felt that, it is hard to adapt the new learning method (online) that constrain the students to do speaking activities during online learning, other than that the students nervous every time when asked to speak (unmute the microphone) or speak English during online class. It makes the students fear out to speak in English and the online class situation become awkward. Last, there is no students' motivation to speak and learn English on online learning. The EFL students expressed that, online learning is not the solution to do speaking activities, it makes the students felt that there is no reason to speak English during online class

• **The EFL Students' Problem on Speaking Activities During Online Learning**

Table 4.5 EFL students' responses to online learning environment improve their speaking skill.

No.	Question	Percent	Description
9.	Online learning environment enhances my speaking skill.	33.3%	Neutral
10.	English online class helps me in improving my speaking skill.	36.7%	Disagree
11.	The environment in online learning has a huge influence on my speaking skills.	33.3%	Disagree and Neutral

Table 4.5 shows the participants are neutral with Question 9. EFL students feel normal about the enhancement of their speaking skill in online learning environment. The participants are disagree with Question 10. They did not feel that English online class helps them in improving their speaking skill. The participants are disagree and neutral with Question 11. EFL students felt that online learning environment normally influence their speaking skill, but some students felt no influence of online learning environment on their speaking skill.

Table 4.6 EFL students' responses to online learning environment effects on students' learning motivation.

No.	Question	Percent	Description
12.	The environment in online learning makes me difficult to study.	60%	Agree
13.	The environment in online learning has an effect on developing my ideas in speaking class.	50%	Neutral
14.	The environment in online learning affects my daily routine of learning.	60%	Agree
15.	The environment in online learning affects my learning style.	56.7%	Agree

Table 4.6 shows the participants are agree with Question 12. The EFL students felt that online learning environment makes them difficult to study. The participants are neutral with the Question 13. The EFL students felt that online learning environment has no different effects with face-to-face on developing ideas in speaking class. Additionally, the participants are agree with Question 14, and agree with Question 15. The EFL students also felt that online learning environment affects their daily routine of learning and learning style.

Table 4.7 EFL students' responses to online learning environment of students' interaction.

No.	Question	Percent	Description
16.	Speaking classes in online learning make me easier to interact with friends.	50%	Disagree
17.	Speaking classes in online make me easier to interact with lecturers.	30%	Disagree and Neutral

Table 4.7 shows the participants are disagree with Question 16 and the participants are disagree and neutral with Question 17. During online learning, EFL students felt that interacting with their classmates and lecturers is difficult, but some students felt that they interact with the lecturers normally.

Table 4.8 EFL students' responses to learning method preferences.

No.	Question	Percent	Description
18.	Speaking classes in online learning are more fun than face-to-face.	53.3%	Disagree
19.	Speaking classes in online learning make me more active in group discussions.	36.7%	Disagree and Neutral
20.	There is no difference between online learning and face-to-face lectures.	36.7%	Disagree and Strongly Disagree

Table 4.8 shows that the participants are disagree with Question 18. The EFL students felt that speaking classes in face-to-face are more fun. The participants are disagree and neutral with Question 19. Some of the students, similarly, did not felt and felt normal that speaking classes in online learning make them more active in group discussion. Then, the participants are disagree and strongly disagree with Question 20. Most of the students thought that there are differences between online learning and face-to-face lecturers.

The researcher added more detail information from the participants about the problems are EFL students faced on speaking activities during online learning. First, internet network is the most problems that EFL students faced on speaking activities during online is the internet connection. Which means, internet network can interrupt their speaking activities if the internet network was in trouble and it made EFL students unable to follow the class. Next, unsupported students' devices the devices that student used to communicate during the lesson were considered less helpful, it happens when the students' device was in trouble. Then, online environment learning had negatives impact on speaking activities. The EFL students felt there was no point on speaking activities and learning English on online class. Less Interaction and Communication, EFL students felt it is difficult to communicate and interact during speaking activities during online class. It occurred passive interactions during online class. Last, limited time to speaking English, unlike face-to-face learning, where the EFL students can freely do speaking activities. The time during online learning was very limited and only took the speaking activities during class.

DISCUSSION

- **The EFL Students' Challenge on Speaking Activities During Online Learning**

There is no student's enthusiasm during online class. Even though, the students felt normally on study during online learning, but the lecturer cannot adequately to interact with students and makes students are lazy to do speaking activities. In line with Ying et al. (2021) students' motivation as the factor on speaking online class, that made them lazier to learning. It means, the students-lecturer interaction is important to the students' speaking skill, as if the lecturer support students about why they are need to learn. It tribulate students to speak with their classmates sometimes they might be hard to find speaking partner. Therefore, the students had no responses to be more active in online learning.

The students felt normally to responses to the answer the question given in online learning yet, speaking activities during online learning are more became discomfort. The student felt nervous and it is hard for them to adapt the online learning situation on speaking activities. Students are required to master on grammar, vocabulary and perform appropriately speaking English, therefore when students speak English, they feel nervous. In line with Ying et al. (2021) that students become afraid when they are unable to speak in English properly.

- **The EFL Students' Problem on Speaking Activities During Online Learning**

Internet network is most terrific problems that EFL students felt and the unsupportive devices make students cannot focus on online class. In this point, most students have trouble to access the internet during online class. In line Jannah (2021) internet network can recognize as a significant factor that influences students' speaking activities during online learning. Speaking activities can run impeccably, if direct interaction occurred in the classroom and not hindered by network and incompatible devices. Students' interaction is essential during face-to-face learning, it allow students to enhance their speaking activities by communicate with each other (Baron, 2020).

The students felt usual on online learning environment enhance their speaking skill, nonetheless English online class cannot support the students speaking activities. One of the matters which allows English students to speak English is the classroom environment. It means that students more less to do speaking activities during online class to improve their speaking skill. Online learning environment annoyed students while learning during class, seems that it is not easy for them to speak with others. The ineffective face to face interactions between students and lecturer or between the students that heavily depend on online learning environment. During online class students became more individualism,

indeed the students less active on online group discussion. Passive interaction occurs between student-student and students-lecturer, likewise group discussion not effective on online learning.

Lack of interaction, in line with Jannah (2021) during this COVID-19 pandemic there is a lack of interaction on speaking activities. The students declared that, face-to-face learning are more suitable and enjoyable for speaking activities. EFL students also faced difficulties to interact on speaking activities during online learning with their friends and lecturers. The effective and friendly interaction between student and lecturer are required, as the exitances of speaking training. Then, limited time on Speaking activities only applied during the class, because time required during online class not much as face-to-face learning. To improving students' speaking skill they keep practice, but they cannot do it due the limited time class (Baron, 2020). During online class, students cannot freely express their ideas on speaking activities.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings showed that the EFL students felt several challenges such as lack of understanding, lack of self-confidences (nervous and hard to adapt) and no motivation and they faced several problems on it such as internet network, unsupported students' devices, unsupported online learning environment, less interaction and communication and limited time on class. It can be concluded that speaking activities during online learning are not effective. So, the EFL students prefer face-to-face learning to online learning, the EFL students are more confident and enjoyable to express their ideas during the offline class. Therefore, it is necessary to motivate the EFL students to increase their speaking skill and keep on learning during online class by realizing the challenges and problems. For English lecturers and English teachers, it is appropriate to apply various learning methods in guiding, communicating and interacting with EFL students in the online classroom and keep providing students as many chances to make them speaking English as possible by building an active English vibe on class, that involves with collaborative work, credible materials and activities, and sharing information. Last for future researchers, it is required to find out more challenges and problems also the strategies how to solve it, with wider participants and research methods.

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