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**Challenges Faced Students  
in Speaking English in  
Indonesia: A Literature  
Study**

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**Abstrak**

Berbicara merupakan salah satu dari empat keterampilan dasar yang harus dikuasai oleh siswa Bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing atau English as Foreign Language (EFL). Dalam berlatih berbicara bahasa Inggris, ada banyak tantangan yang dialami oleh siswa EFL. Penelitian ini berfokus untuk menjelaskan tantangan yang dihadapi oleh siswa EFL di Indonesia dalam keterampilan berbicara. Metode penelitian kepustakaan digunakan untuk merancang penelitian ini. Data diperoleh dari kompilasi buku, artikel, jurnal, dan media kepustakaan lainnya sebagai penunjang penelitian ini. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan empat tantangan yang dihadapi siswa English as Foreign Language (EFL) di Indonesia dalam keterampilan berbicara seperti bahasa ibu, kosa kata, kepercayaan diri, dan motivasi.

**Kata Kunci:** *Berbicara, English as Foreign Language (EFL), tantangan*

**Abstract**

*Speaking is one of the four basic skills that must be mastered by English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students. In practicing speaking English, there are many challenges experienced by EFL students. This research focuses on explaining speaking skill challenges faced by English as foreign language students in Indonesia. A library research method is in this research. The data were obtained from compiled books, articles, journals, and other literary media as support for this research. The result showed four challenges of speaking skills faced by English as a Foreign Language Students in Indonesia such as mother tongue, vocabulary, confidence, and motivation.*

**Keywords:** *Speaking, English as Foreign Language (EFL), challenges*

## **1. Introduction**

Education is a process to help people to obtain skills and knowledge. There are many methods in education such as teaching, exercising, storytelling, criticism, and research. Education can be divided into two types; they are formal and informal education. Formal education is when someone obtains skills or knowledge from the guidance of teachers. However, informal education is when students want to obtain skills or knowledge by educating themselves. Formal education in Indonesia is divided into several steps such as kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, and university. The English language is one of the important subjects that should be learned by students in Indonesian formal education.

In the English subject, four basic skills are important to be mastered such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These four basic skills are equally important and all must be mastered by the students, especially speaking skills. Febriyanti (2011) stated that speaking is a communication form to transfer the individual ideas to other people into verbal communication or nonverbal communication. Speaking is important to learn because communication orally is an aspect in mastering an English subject. Speaking is an instrument for communication and people will see the fluency of students in speaking English (Ihsan et al., 2018). Students should practice speaking English often to be ready in a real-world situation. According to Hornby (1995) speaking skill is the competency to execute linguistic knowledge in the current communication. In short, speaking is transportation to convey an idea to the other person and fluency is one of the speaking aspects that affect convenience when communicating.

Although speaking skill is important, it is often underestimated by schools. This is supported by Clifford (1987) speaking is often neglected by schools because learning takes a lot of time and is difficult to assess objectively. Even

so, speaking is still an important thing in the process of learning English. This is supported by Nunan (1995) although in school exams speaking skills are often ignored, people still think that speaking skill is one of the factors to determine the success of students in learning English.

There are several similar studies done by other researchers. The first is a case study designed by Ratnasari (2020), this research shows some of the challenges faced by Mechanical Engineering in developing speaking skill. The second study conducted by Dewi & Jimmi (2018) shows that students that mastered vocabulary are affected by their speaking skill. The third study conducted by Juhana (2018) shows psychological factors that affect students in developing speaking skills.

From the previous research, there are a lot of challenges for EFL students especially in Indonesia. This research focuses on explaining challenges faced by EFL students.

## **2. Research Questions**

1. What are speaking skill challenges faced by English as foreign language students in Indonesia?
2. What are the factors to avoid when mastering speaking skills as foreign language students in Indonesia?

## **3. Research Methodology**

A library research method is used in this research. It is conducted by compiling books, articles, journals, and other literary media as support for this research. This research is represented qualitatively. The result of this research was collected by compiling resources that are similar to this research done by other researchers. It was also supported by theories that were collected from several reliable sources to find information and valid data. It was

started by discovering and reading the suitable journals and articles then classifying the data. After that, the data were analyzed to describe speaking skill challenges faced by English as foreign language students in Indonesia and then represent the results in finding and discussion.

#### **4. Result and Discussion**

In general, Indonesian people do not use English as the native language. They have to learn four English skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, Indonesian people especially EFL students have problems in practicing English skills, especially speaking. Consequently, there are many challenges faced by EFL students in speaking skill practice.

The first challenge faced by EFL students is vocabulary. It is a basic part of the language that must be mastered by students, especially in speaking skill. Vocabulary is important for EFL students to build a sentence while speaking. Lack of vocabulary will make students unable to build phrases well. The limitation of words caused by the lack of vocabulary makes it difficult for students to determine word variations and use the right word equivalents when speaking. Therefore, vocabulary is a challenge for EFL students in Indonesia.

The second challenge faced by EFL students is confidence in speaking skill. Confidence affects the convenience in communicating. Lack of confidence makes students feel insecure while speaking. Students feel nervous if they make a mistake while communicating with people. Lack of confidence can interrupt the learning process because mistakes are also part of learning. It means, confidence is a challenge for EFL students in Indonesia.

The third challenge faced by EFL students is motivation. It is important to make

students passionate when they find the trouble in practicing speaking skill. Teachers play an essential role to avoid the students from being unmotivated. In addition, Teacher's intimidation can also reduce the student's motivation in learning, especially in speaking skill. Teachers should know the character of students so they can motivate them to learn speaking skill well. In short, motivation is a challenge for EFL students in Indonesia. There are three challenges that are faced by EFL students namely vocabulary, confidence, and motivation. Furthermore, the detailed information related to the result can be seen in the discussion session.

Living in a country where English is not the native language, is a challenge for EFL students who are practicing speaking skill. This can be supported by Ihsan et al. (2018) students who do not use English as their mother tongue cannot learn the language quickly, they must learn it step by step and must be trained continuously.

Most Indonesian EFL students have problems with confidence in speaking skills. Vocabulary is a basic part of the language that must be mastered by students, especially in speaking skill. This can be supported by Dewi & Jimmi (2018) who stated that vocabulary is very important for students because lack of vocabulary makes students unable to build phrases because of the word's limitation. According to Al-Esaifer & Alshareef (2018) many students have problems with speaking skills because there are linguistics and mother tongue differences. Dewi & Jimmi (2018) stated that when students want to interact with another person, a lack of vocabulary can affect students' self-confidence.

Confidence is essential when practicing speaking skill. Without having confidence, students feel inconvenience when interacting with another person while speaking. This can be supported by Juhana (2018). Most students are embarrassed to practice speaking because they are afraid to be laughed at by their friends for

making mistakes. Students feel insecure with their ability in speaking when they have no confidence. According to (Juhana, 2018), students feel that their ability in English is not good, so they feel a lack of confidence and it affects psychological factors.

Motivation is the crucial factor for many EFL students in Indonesia who have a problem with speaking skill. Without motivation, EFL students find it difficult to learn speaking skills. This can be supported by Jin (2014) who stated

that student motivation is vital to make them passionate in language learning. The teacher is also responsible for students' motivation in learning to speak because the teacher's role in motivating is very important for students' progress in speaking. In addition, Juhana (2018) stated that students who are not motivated by their teachers feel less confident when learning English. The discussion shows that English skill is very important for EFL students and they faced many challenges which should be overcome.

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