ANALYSIS OF GEN Z'S DIFFICULTIES IN SPEAKING AND TECHNOLOGY TO OVERCOME THE DIFFICULTIES

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Abstract

The objective of this study is to examine the challenges encountered by students in speaking classes. The ability to articulate ideas verbally is an essential skill for students pursuing a major in English, particularly in achieving academic and professional success. The factors influencing this speaking ability encompass linguistic elements, including vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency, as well as non-linguistic factors such as fear, anxiety, and lack of motivation. The research method employed was a descriptive qualitative approach, with data obtained through the administration of questionnaires and interviews. The results indicated that the predominant challenges encountered by students were in the domains of grammar, vocabulary, and the apprehension of making errors and facing criticism. A variety of strategies have been employed by students to overcome the aforementioned difficulties. These include independent practice, the utilization of social media, learning through music and movies, and participation in a course program. The present study offers insights that may be of use to students in the process of self- reflection, as well as to lecturers in the evaluation of teaching methods. Furthermore, educational institutions may find it useful in the development of more effective curricula.

Keywords: Gen-Z; speaking difficulties; linguistic factors; non-lingustic factors; learning strategies

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary global context, English has emerged as a unifying language, transcending geographical and cultural boundaries to foster interconnectedness on a global scale. English's status as a universal language has facilitated communication across cultural boundaries, making fluency in English a

valuable asset for both professional and academic success. This assertion is supported by empirical evidence from educational settings, where effective communication skills have been demonstrated to promote teamwork and equip students with the necessary tools to address global issues (Rustaman, 2011).

Speech proficiency constitutes one of the four fundamental competencies that students pursuing a major in English in higher education are expected to demonstrate (Megawati, 2016). For students at TBI UIN Mataram, the mastery of spoken language skills is imperative for both academic success and future careers in education. The notion of effective communication and engagement in discourse is paramount for academic progress and professional readiness (Junedi et al., 2020). The ability to communicate in English can present significant challenges for many students, often due to a variety of factors, including a limited vocabulary, grammatical errors, a fear of communication, and a lack of confidence.

The objective of this study is to examine the existing body of knowledge concerning the barriers to fluency in English among university students. The study will suggest that these challenges are caused by a combination of internal and external variables.

To facilitate a more profound examination, as previously delineated in the background of the problem, this research endeavors to conduct an initial analysis of the extant literature or works that are more pertinent to the subject under study. Accordingly, the compiler endeavors to meticulously document the extant literature, with particular attention directed towards notable works that have been published and merit consideration.

As Astuti (2019) contends, student speaking performance is influenced by a combination of linguistic and non-linguistic factors. The linguistic factors encompass vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar. In contrast, the non-linguistic factors include confidence, anxiety, and mastery of the subject matter. Students frequently encounter challenges in employing the appropriate vocabulary and pronunciation. These challenges are often compounded by feelings of anxiety and a deficiency in self-assurance when engaging in verbal communication within an academic setting. The present study employed a qualitative descriptive method, utilizing data collected through observation, questionnaires, and documentation. These data were then analyzed thematically to identify factors that affect students' speaking performance. A study by Cut Intan Meutia, Fadhillah Wiandari, and Ade Hilda Husaini in 2020 with the title "Students' Non-Linguistic Problematics in Speaking English" in (Astutik et al., 2024) found that non-linguistic factors such as anxiety, nervousness, shyness, and lack of confidence were the main obstacles for students in practicing speaking English (Raqib et al., 2023). Furthermore, factors such as diminished motivation, the employment of suboptimal teaching methodologies, and the utilization of inadequate

learning materials have been identified as contributing elements that impede students' proficiency in spoken communication. The present study employed a qualitative approach, with data collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and closed questionnaires. The data analysis process was methodically executed through three sequential stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Meutia et al., 2020). As stated in the study by Raqib et al., (2023), the analysis was conducted to address the challenges encountered by sixth-semester students at Universitas Muhammadyah Makassar in their English language proficiency. The present study employed a qualitative descriptive method with a phenomenological approach to data collection, utilizing observation and interview techniques. The findings indicated that the predominant challenges were of a linguistic nature, encompassing grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, as well as non-linguistic concerns such as confusion, embarrassment, and anxiety. These issues were attributed to insufficient practice and motivation.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative descriptive method, which involves meticulous analysis of the findings through a data-driven lens, underpinned by a comprehensive examination of the extant literature. Qualitative research is defined as research that focuses on solving a problem. The decision to utilize descriptive research was predicated on the assumption that the collected data would be adequately described in words.

The data for this research was derived from the primary issue concerning EFL UIN Mataram students' engagement in speaking course learning activities, whether in group or individual settings. As is widely recognized, the pedagogical approach employed in sentence-course learning engenders a greater degree of student engagement in oral communication. This heightened level of activity encompasses the formulation of opinions, the posing of inquiries, and the exchange of ideas with both peers and instructors. These activities, in essence, assume a pivotal role in the instructional framework.

In this study, researchers employed questionnaires and interviews as methods of data collection. The survey instrument was disseminated among English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students at the University of Islamic Nusantara (UIN) Mataram to ascertain the challenges encountered by students in verbal communication and the factors that influence their speech. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, with the first addressing internal challenges and the second addressing external ones.

To ascertain the methods employed by students to solve these problems, interviews were conducted.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A multitude of factors have been identified as contributors to students' English speaking abilities. In the study of Astuti, (2019) outlined two primary factors influencing this performance: linguistic and non-linguistic factors. The predominant challenges are of a linguistic nature, encompassing grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, as well as non-linguistic concerns such as confusion, embarrassment, and anxiety. These issues stem from a deficiency in practice and motivation (Wafiqni, 2023). These two factors are the primary focus of this research because we are cognizant of the existence of linguistic factors and non-linguistic factors.

1. Linguistic Factors

Linguistic factors are defined as elements associated with students' proficiency in English. In this research, the researcher proposed five statements in a questionnaire answered by 57 TBI UIN Mataram students. The ensuing results are as follows:

LINGUISTIC PROBLEMS					
SATATEMENT	SA	A	N	D	SD
	5	4	3	2	1
The student is experiencing difficulties with the speaking component of their course due to deficiencies in their grammar.	6	13	29	6	3
The student is experiencing difficulties in the domain of spoken language acquisition, specifically in the area of verbal communication, due to deficiencies in their vocabulary.	2	24	17	12	2
The student is experiencing difficulties with the spoken component of their course, specifically with pronunciation, which is having a detrimental effect on their performance.	2	16	22	16	1

The subject is experiencing difficulties with the spoken component of the course due to impaired fluency.	5	24	20	6	2

The majority of respondents who completed the questionnaire distributed above indicated that the issue of linguistic competence is a significant challenge encountered by students in their oral proficiency. This conclusion was reached upon further analysis of the survey responses, which revealed that the majority of respondents selected option 4, indicating their experience of linguistic challenges. The primary issue is the limited command of grammar, the paucity of vocabulary, the challenging pronunciation, and the students' reluctance to speak English. These issues must be addressed to ensure effective communication and academic success.

2. Non-linguistic Factor

Non-linguistic factors have also been identified as contributing elements to students' English language proficiency. As previously delineated, non-linguistic factors encompass elements associated with the cognitive and environmental challenges experienced by students. The study's methodology entailed the administration of a questionnaire comprising six statements to a sample of 57 respondents, who were students. The following results are presented herein:

NON-LINGUISTIC PROBLEMS					
	SA	A	N	D	SD
SATATEMENT	5	4	3	2	1
I encounter challenges when participating in speaking courses due to my apprehension regarding the possibility of making errors.	6	17	18	11	5
I encounter challenges when participating in speaking courses due to my apprehension regarding potential criticism. I encounter challenges when participating in speaking courses due to my introverted nature.	4	13	21	11	8
I encounter challenges when participating in speaking courses due to a lack of motivation to articulate my thoughts and ideas.	5	13	17	16	6

I encounter challenges when participating in speaking courses, as the predominant students tend to dominate the discourse.	5	24	20	6	2
I encounter challenges when participating in speaking courses due to my inclination to utilize Indonesian or the local language.	2	7	29	12	7
I encounter challenges when participating in speaking courses due to a lack of motivation to articulate my thoughts and ideas.	0	10	27	16	4

The majority of respondents who completed the aforementioned questionnaire indicated that non-linguistic problems are issues that impact students enrolled in speaking classes. The conclusion is reached due to the fact that the majority of the respondents selected point 3, which indicates the presence of situational challenges, and subsequently point 4, which signifies difficulties pertaining to non-linguistic domains. A thorough examination of the aforementioned data reveals the necessity to direct greater attention to non- linguistic issues and those pertaining to students' mentality and environment. A favorable mentality and environment have been demonstrated to enhance students' proficiency in speaking in language classes.

3. A Proposed Methodology for the Resolution of Speaking Problems Among Generation Z

As time progresses, the acquisition of English language skills has become a subject of significant interest for individuals worldwide. The utility of this approach extends beyond the confines of academia, finding significant application in the future preparation of students for the escalating competitive pressures in the professional realm. As with any other field, proficiency in English necessitates a systematic approach to learning. A series of steps that students use to enhance their learning and control their own learning process. These steps involve the development of language skills, an increase in confidence, and motivation in the learning process (Anggraini et al., 2023). One of the objectives of this study is to ascertain the strategies employed by students in their English learning. The following presentation will outline the strategies employed by English language students, presented as percentages that students can choose more than one. A survey was distributed to students, and 57 students completed the survey. The subsequent segment comprises a synopsis of the data procured from the aforementioned questionnaire.

The Strategies Employed by Students to Overcome Speaking Difficulties

Strategy	Amount	Percentage
Practice Alone	43	75,4%
Through Social Media	38	66,7%
Through practice with friends	36	63,2%
Joining a course program	16	28,1%
Participating in organizational activities	22	38,6%
Using AI artificial intelligence applications	20	35,1%
Reading the dictionary	13	22,8 %
Learning through music	35	61,%
Learning through movies	28	49,1%
Learning through games	20	35,1%

Speaking practice constitutes a pivotal method in language acquisition, with the efficacy of this approach being substantiated by empirical evidence. The implementation of this method can be executed in a variety of settings, including individualized sessions or collaborative group activities (Ariawan, 2023). The benefits associated with this practice are manifold, encompassing the enhancement of students' confidence levels, the cultivation of their cognitive abilities, and the accumulation of valuable experiential learning . The significance of output in the context of second language acquisition has been underscored, emphasizing the role of verbal communication in evaluating learners' hypotheses concerning the target language and facilitating constructive feedback (Rochmawati & Sylvia, 2023). The assertion that social interaction through speaking constitutes a pivotal element in language learning is further substantiated by its provision of an authentic context for language utilization (Hanafiah, 2019).

The integration of technology is imperative in contemporary society, as the majority of individuals utilize technology in all facets of life, including educational pursuits. The data presented indicates a high prevalence of social media as a learning medium, with a percentage of 66.7%. As asserted by Sahidillah &

Miftahurrisqi (2019) digital literacy is of paramount importance for language learners. He posits that, in addition to language aptitude, it is imperative for learners to cultivate proficiency in digital competencies to leverage technology adeptly in the learning process (Ariawan, 2023, 2024; Ulfa et al., 2025). In the domain of education, the integration of AI has the potential to enhance student engagement by offering a more interactive and engaging learning experience (Harry & Sayudin, 2023). The utilization of artificial intelligence in language learning instruments facilitates simultaneous multilingual acquisition. This can be advantageous for individuals seeking to enhance their language proficiency for professional or personal reasons (Agustina et al., 2025; Meliana et al., 2025). A multitude of artificial intelligence systems exist to assist students in enhancing their linguistic abilities. Prominent examples include Gigilish, Elsa, and Duolingo, among others. These are merely a few examples of the AIs that can be utilized during our academic pursuits. as stated by (Vall & Araya, 2023).

CONCLUSION

Common issues encountered by English language learners can be categorized as linguistic and non-linguistic. Linguistic problems are defined as issues pertaining to an individual's competencies in English, encompassing grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency. Conversely, non-linguistic problems are characterized as challenges relating to the cognitive and environmental factors that students may encounter. In order to address the issue of deficient communication skills, students have been instructed to engage in a variety of practices and methodologies. These include the utilization of hobbies and hobby facilities as educational resources, such as the viewing of films in English and the participation in international games.

In light of the aforementioned conclusions derived from this study, researchers anticipate that the integration of state-of-the-art methodologies, such as the utilization of social media, artificial intelligence, and the adaptation of learning from movies and games, will facilitate the enhancement of students' speaking skills, particularly within the context of speaking classes. These innovations and tools are designed to empower students to leverage the latest advancements to refine their grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency. The findings of this study have revealed certain fears that students of Tadris English are expected to confront. In order to address these concerns, it is recommended that students engage in regular independent or collaborative language practice. This practice has been shown to enhance students' confidence, cognitive abilities, and overall experience in language learning.

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