

## EFL STUDENTS CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES IN LEARNING SPEAKING

**Tawali<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>English Lecturer, Faculty of Culture, Management and Business, Mandalika University of Education. Indonesia

Corresponding Author Email: [tawali@undikma.ac.id](mailto:tawali@undikma.ac.id)

ABSTRACTS	ARTICLE INFO
<p>Speaking is a tool to communicate with other people. With speaking ability, EFL students will be fluent at communication and sharing information with other people especially in an academic context. Therefore, this research aimed to find out EFL students challenges during learning speaking, students strategies in learning speaking, and students strategies in solving the challenges in learning speaking at English Department State Islamic University of Mataram. This research used a mixed-methods research design (quantitative and qualitative) and involved 16 EFL students at the English Department as informants. The data were obtained by using a questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. The result of this research showed that students faced challenges during learning speaking, such as; Lack on Vocabulary, Difficult in achieving Speaking Fluency, Limited exposure to English, Fear of making mistakes, and Lack on overcoming nervousness. Meanwhile, there were strategies students used in learning speaking, such as; Join a Speaking Club, Watching Movies/Series in English, Regular Spoken Language Practice, Conversation With Native Speakers, Using Speaking Learning Apps, and Reading Book/News in English. However researcher also found students strategies to overcome the challenges they faced during leaning speaking, such as: Use Social Media, Practice Speaking in Front of the Mirror, Learn from Song, Debate and Speaking English with Partners.</p>	<p><b>Article History:</b> Received: December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024 Revised: December 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Published: December 2024</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Speaking, EFL students, Challenges, Strategies</p>

### INTRODUCTION

Learning a new language is a long-term commitment. It takes a lot of time and effort to learn it. Each language has its own peculiarities, which students must be aware when they learning a new language (Avery & Ehrlich). One of the most studied languages is English. English has become global and brings the impact to people around the world to be able to communicate with the language. English also become the most favorite language among students at under graduated level, because English provides many advantages for students especially those who want to establish relationships at an international level. There are several basic skills in learning English one of them is speaking.

According to Byrne, speaking is oral communication in a two way process between the speaker and listener(s) which involves both productive skill of speaking and the receptive skill of understanding (listening with understanding). According to Nunan, “speaking is the ability to express opinion, ideas, or thought orally; it consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning in order to be understood by the people are speaking with”. In addition Armasita, state that speaking is a system of expression in which someone interacts

in. Therefore, the researcher conclude that in language learning, speaking ability is to produce voice, share information, ideas, and others people will understand with the meaning. However some people when learning speaking have a different purpose, especially for English Foreign Language (EFL) students. For EFL students speaking is important, because speaking is the tool to communicate with other people. With speaking ability student will fluent at communication and share information with other people in academic context. Not only that, but also mastered speaking help students to get better job in big countries and the students will have opportunities for continue their study on aboard. That why EFL students must be mastered speaking ability because of speaking, they will have a better future. Nevertheless, while learning speaking EFL students find some challenges that still exist along the process. Especially learning English in non-English speaking countries, one of that's countries is Indonesia. The potential challenges for EFL students in Indonesia for learning speaking process might arise bigger than in English-speaking countries.

According to Al-Esaifer and Al-Shareef, the common challenges of speaking faced by the students are mother tongue and linguistic, for example, vocabulary. Thompson also state The challenges were affected by some factors such as learners' ability, motivation, environment, practices, and previous knowledge of learning foreign languages. The most challenges faced by EFL students is that they understand what other people talk about, but they have less confidence when speaking in English. In this case, speaking is not merely about the way how people communicate but also how they try to share the information (Abrar).

In addition, based on the researcher observation at English Department State Islamic University of Mataram, the researcher found challenges that some students faced during learning English. One of the most challenges that students faced is lack on confident when speaking. Students always afraid to communicate with other people because Students hasn't felt fluent in English and think pronounce of the word students used is not correct. However, every student has their own strategies in learning English speaking.

One of the strategies that can be used by students is find the appropriate learning strategy. Appropriate learning strategies are particular tactics or methods that efficient and suitable for accomplishing learning goals. These techniques aid in improving students engagement, conceptual understanding, and knowledge retention. There are some appropriate learning strategy students can used, such as; Practice conversational skills. Students actively look for chances to speak English in conversation. This can be done through conversation groups, language exchange programs, or with native English speakers. Next, Immerse in spoken English by listening to podcasts, audio- books, or interviews on a regular basis. Also, mimic and recite. Students should practice mimicking and repeating what they hear from fluent English speakers. Students' general fluency, intonation, and pronunciation will all benefit from this. The last students as much as possible include English into their daily lives.

According to Chamot, strategies act broadly as "procedures that facilitate a learning task".It's mean, strategies are appropriate techniques or behaviors that students used to improve understanding, application of knowledge, and retention of skills. Lessard-Clouston Hismanoglu affirm that learning strategies contributed to the development of the communicative competence of the student. In addition Dunn and Dunn states that students do best when instruction and learning context matching learning style. In their book, Lang and Evans also admit that although each person has unique ways of learning, people also share learning similarities. Therefore, EFL students must have strategies to make their learning process more effectively, especially in learning speaking skills.

## RESEARCH METHODS

In this research researcher used mixed method as the research design. Mixed method

is a combination of quantitative and qualitative method. According to Cresswell, he stated that mixed methods focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or series or studies. Its central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone. So it's mean that the combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies in a single study can provide a greater understanding or answer to the research problem than either method alone. It is preferable to use both of them rather than just one.

The data for this research was collected from varied previous research that related to the data needed in this study and from the researcher, who has experience learning English at the English Department of the State Islamic University of Mataram. The EFL students served as the primary source of information for the researcher, and they provided the majority of the data for this study. The data for this research was taken through a questionnaire and an interview with EFL students at English Department State Islamic University of Mataram.

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. EFL Students Challenges in Learning Speaking at English Department State Islamic University of Mataram**

The result of this current research that showed there were EFL students Challenges during learning speaking at English Department State Islamic University of Mataram. Based on the findings there were the most challenges that many EFL students experience faced during learning speaking:

1. Lack on Vocabulary. The result showed that 9 students faced challenges in vocabulary.
2. Limited Understanding of Grammar. The result showed that 4 students faced challenges in Limited Understanding of Grammar.
3. Difficult in Achieving Speaking Fluency. The result showed that 3 students faced challenges in Difficult in Achieving Speaking Fluency.
4. Limited Exposure to English. The result showed that 3 students faced challenges in Limited Exposure to English.
5. Fear of Making Mistakes. The result showed that 3 students faced challenges in Fear of making mistakes.
6. Lack on Overcoming Nervousness. The result showed that 3 students faced challenges in Lack on overcoming nervousness.

So, in this chapter, researcher discussed about the results of current research with previous research by several researchers. Based on the questionnaire and interview there were various challenges that students faced during learning speaking. According to Aisha, there are several challenges faced by students while learning speaking, such as; lack of vocabulary, nervousness, unsupportive environment, and lack of grammar knowledge. So, this research in line with current research, because based on the questionnaire and interview, researcher found the EFL students stated that the most challenges in learning speaking was lack on vocabulary. For students lack of vocabulary is challenges in learning speaking. Because Vocabulary is an important component of speaking, as it allows students to express their thoughts, ideas and emotions when speaking. If students have a limited vocabulary then it can hinder their ability to understand and communicate in English.

Another result that researcher found based on the questionnaire and interview is EFL students limited in understanding grammar, it line with previous research Netty and Yuni found that there were four problems that were experienced by students at the class A

fourth semester first was inhibition, when speaking the students tend to be worried about making mistake, getting criticism from others, and shyness. The second was lack of ideas; the students tend to be silent participants in speaking due to lack of vocabulary and grammar. The third was low or uneven participation in speaking. So, this research in line with current research, because the researcher also found there were students faced challenge in limited understanding grammar during learning speaking and because of this challenge, students difficult to produce language fluently.

In learning speaking students also must be fluency in speaking, but that is challenge for EFL students, it same as the result of previous research by Irfan. The research found that students faced challenges in learning speaking such as; fluency, pronunciation, lack of vocabulary, nervous, anxiety, and afraid of making mistakes. So, this research it line with current research, because based on the questionnaire and interview researcher also found achieving fluency is very challenge for EFL students.

In addition, according Nurul and Yani, they found that there were students challenges during learning speaking, such as type of the task, fear of making mistakes, the role of the language teacher, self-perception and the last is the limited exposure to English. So, this research in line with current research, because based on the questionnaire and interview, researcher found there were challenges that students faced in learning speaking and one of them is limited exposure to English. Samer Mahmoud Al-Zoub, exposure to a language is considered successful when the learner can produce the language because learning can happen anywhere and anytime.

According to Asna Robah, Found the findings reveal that psychological problems are the problems that many students experience when speaking English. Such as nervousness, lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, and being laughed at. In contrast, confusion in the use of tenses in English, lack of grammatical understanding grammar, and confusion in choosing the correct vocabulary are the linguistic problems experienced by the students in the linguistic problems experienced by the students in this study. So, this research in line with current research, because researcher also found that EFL students faced challenge in Fear of making mistake during learning speaking. For English department students, confident is needed in learning speaking, because it will make student more understand about English.

In addition, Another result by Gambhir Bahadur Chand found that students challenges in learning speaking especially in Personal problem aspect such as; Nervousness, lack of confidence, and hesitation anxiety. So, this research in line with current research, because based on the questionnaire and interview, researcher found the EFL students stated that one of the students challenges in learning speaking was Overcoming Nervousness. So, students have challenge in learning speaking, and because of the inability to remember the words and sentences that students want to use as a result of their nervousness. It can be prevent students from improving their capacity to communicate effectively. In essence, nervousness prevents them from communicating well and assertively. Students who struggle with public speaking or who feel under pressure to perform vocally often experience this.

This nervousness may come from a multitude of factors, including fear of making mistakes, being judged by others, or having difficulty speaking properly. Overcoming these challenges is crucial in order to become a more confident and successful English speaker, as nervousness can interfere with students' ability to express themselves properly and confidently in the language.

Therefore, the findings of Questionnaire and interview showed there were many EFL students faced those challenges during learning speaking. The findings of the previous research in line with the result of the current research as like previous research by

kala and parilah. Those EFL students have challenges in learning speaking such as; anxiousness, lack of confidence, shyness and afraid of making mistakes while speaking.

### B. EFL Students Strategies in Learning Speaking at English Department State Islamic University of Mataram

The result of this current research showed there were learning strategies EFL students used during learning speaking at English Department State Islamic University of Mataram. Based on the findings there were the most learning strategies that many EFL students used in learning speaking:

1. Join Speaking Club. The result showed that 5 students used Join Speaking Club as their strategies in learning speaking.
2. Watching Movies/Series in English. The result showed that 5 students used Watching Movies/Series in English as their strategies in learning speaking.
3. Regular Spoken Language Practice. The result showed that 4 students used Regular Spoken Language Practice as their strategies in learning speaking.
4. Conversation with Native English Speakers. The result showed that 4 students used Conversation with native English speakers as their strategies in learning speaking.
5. Using Speaking Learning Apps. The result showed that 4 students used Using Speaking Learning Apps as their strategies in learning speaking.
6. Reading Book/News in English. The result showed that 2 students used Reading Book/News in English as their strategies in learning speaking.

So, in this section, researcher discussed about the results of current research with previous research. Based on the interview and questionnaire there were various strategies that students used in learning speaking. According to Annisa there are some strategies students used in learning speaking such as; practice with others, watch inspirational or motivational videos and join organization or club. So, this research in line with current research, because it same as the current research. This strategies was effective to improve speaking ability for the students, because by joining a speaking club, students will have frequent opportunity to engage in speaking activities such as dialogues, discussions, or presentations in English with other learners.

Another result by Nurul Masyithah, found the Findings Elucidated that the students applied the strategies of watching movies, listening to songs, creating mind maps, writing speaking outlines, repetition, utilizing smartphone applications and speaking english with partners. So, this research in line with current research, because based on the questionnaire and interview researcher found that EFL students used Watching movies/Serial in English as their strategies in learning speaking. By watching content in English regularly, individuals can improve their listening skills, vocabulary, pronunciation, and even gain a better understanding of cultural context and idiomatic language usage.

According to Nur, Ayu and Bushomi found that EFL students practice their speaking English as strategies for overcome their problem not only in classroom but also outside classroom, specifically trying to insert English in their daily activities. So, this research in line with current research, because researcher found that many EFL students used regular spoken language practice as students strategies to reach their speaking ability.

Another previous research by Nur Wahyuni and Indah Afrianti, found that conversations with native speakers can increase students' confidence in language, vocabulary and students are also familiar with the expressions used in everyday language, and finally from this research the researcher can find out about students' abilities in: Grammar, Vocabulary, Accuracy and Fluency. So, this research in line with current research, because based on the questionnaire and interview students used speaking with native speaker to improve their

speaking ability. Conversations with native speakers also can be invaluable to language learners as they provide exposure to natural speech patterns, idiomatic expressions, and authentic language usage. Such interactions can improve one's pronunciation, comprehension, fluency and confidence when speaking English.

According to Nurul and Nuraeni, they found that EFL strategies in solving their challenges such as; practising more, increasing vocabulary through memorizing, learning to speak through applications for instance; YouTube, song apps, and Duolingo (English learning application). So, this research in line with current research, because based on the findings researcher found that some students used this strategies to overcome their challenge because language learning apps often offer a variety of features and exercises design to improve speaking, including pronunciation exercises, conversation simulations and interactive exercises.

The last but not least, according to Diana Ansarey, found that better speaking skills can be adopted through reading and the Results indicate that 80% of those interviewed suggested reading helped them improve their speaking skills. So, this research in line with current research, because many EFL students used the strategies to reach their speaking ability. Although reading is primarily a receptive language skill, it can have some benefits for oral language development. Reading in English can improve vocabulary, comprehension, and exposure to sentence structure and grammar. These aspects, in turn, can contribute to better speaking skills. For example, a richer vocabulary can make it easier to find the right words when speaking, and a better understanding of sentence structure and grammar can result in more accurate and fluent oral communication.

### C. EFL students strategies to solves the challenges in learning Speaking at English Department State Islamic University of Mataram

In this step, researcher discussed about the results of EFL students' strategies for solving their challenges with previous research by several researchers. Based on the interview, there were various challenges that students faced while learning to speak. Although students have strategies in learning speaking, these strategies are different. Learning strategies are used before finding the challenges, while strategies for solving challenges are used after finding the challenges. Based on the result of current research, there were the most Strategies EFL students used to solve the challenges such as:

1. Use Social Media. The result showed that 4 students used Social Media as their strategies to solve the challenges in learning speaking.
2. Practice Speaking in Front of the Mirror. The result showed that 3 students used Practice Speaking in Front of the Mirror as their strategies to solve the challenges in learning speaking.
3. Learn from Song. The result showed that 3 students used Learn from Song as their strategies to solve the challenges in learning speaking.
4. Debate. The result showed that 3 students used Debate as their strategies to solve the challenges in learning speaking.
5. Speaking English with Partners. The result showed that 3 students used Speaking English with Partners as their strategies to solve the challenges in learning speaking.

These strategies are very effective for students in solving their challenges during learning speaking, because most of those strategies can be used every day in their daily activities.

So, in this section, researcher discussed about the results of current research with previous research. Based on the interview and questionnaire there were various strategies that students used to solve the challenges in learning speaking. According Tubagus Zam Zam Al Arif, the findings indicated that a range of social media especially Instagram

and Facebook are used by the students. The students perceive that social media plays an important role to improve their English language skills. Furthermore, it promotes social media use and encourages students to use social media to improve their English language skills. So, this research in line with current research, because based on the findings researcher found that most of EFL students use social media as their strategies to solve their challenges in speaking ability. Including social media in communication practice not only improves confidence, but also ensures a more varied and resilient approach to facing speaking challenges in a variety of conditions.

Another result from Erlinda and Imanuel they found that the students' ability in delivering the speech particularly in pronunciation and confidence got improved after the practice of mirror talking. It is recommended then that the practice of mirror talking could be executed for other audiences. So, this research in line with current research, because based on the findings researcher found that some EFL students used Practice speaking in front of the mirror as their strategies to solve their challenges in speaking ability. Practice in front of a mirror also is an excellent tool for improving presentation skills. Standing in front of a mirror while preparing for a speech or presentation help students to polish not only their topic but also their delivery and timing.

According to Sri Wahyuni, Hijjatul Qomariyah, & Mulyadi Syahputra they found that the result of the study is shown that the t-score was 7,25 the critical value of the t-score for the degree of freedom is 34 at the level of significance 0,05. The result showed that the calculation of the score is 7,25, it is higher than t-table 2,14, thus the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted which means that the use of English songs can improve students' speaking ability. So, this research in line with current research, because based on the findings researcher found that some of EFL students use song as their strategies to solve their challenges in speaking ability. The students also can improve their speaking skills by pulling inspiration from the various styles of music, making their message more interesting, expressive, and compelling.

In addition found by Cut Nurhalizah Aziz & Atiyatul Kamilah, they found that the students believed debate was a good learning activity. The respondents believed that the debates helped improve and build courage their speaking skills. In addition, as the students claim, other benefits of the debates included build courage with a spontaneous argument, boosting confidence, have a new vocabulary, and learn how to thinking in a critical way. So, this research in line with current research, because based on the findings researcher found that some of EFL students use debate as their strategies to solve their challenges in speaking ability. Debate not only provides real experience in public speaking but also develops a variety of crucial communication skills, making it an effective technique for dealing various challenges with speaking.

The last result is found by Nurul Masyitah, the result show that to improve speaking skill the students applied the strategies of watching movies, listening to songs, creating mind maps, writing speaking outlines, repetition, utilizing smartphone applications and speaking English with partners. So, this research in line with current research, because based on the findings researcher found that some of EFL students use speaking with partners as their strategies to solve their challenges in speaking ability. Having an English-speaking partner or friends can help EFL students enhance their speaking skills. Because conversation in daily activities is effective, students will be aware of their speaking weaknesses.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion can be concluded: 1) The EFL students faced Challenges in learning speaking, the most challenges that many EFL students experience faced during learning

speaking are vocabulary, because vocabulary is the word that students must be memorize and expanding when make sentence in learning speaking. In addition there were also students' challenges during learning speaking such as; Limited understanding of grammar, Difficult in achieving Speaking Fluency, Limited exposure to English, Fear of making mistakes, and Lack on overcoming nervousness. 2) However in learning speaking, EFL students have strategies and there were the most strategies that students used such as; Join a Speaking Club, Watching Movies/Series in English, Regular Spoken Language Practice, Conversation With Native Speakers, Using Speaking Learning Apps, and Reading Book/News in English. These strategies were effective for students to achieving their speaking ability. 3) During learning speaking students also find some challenges in learning speaking. So, to solve the challenges students used some strategies such as: Use Social Media, Practice Speaking in Front of the Mirror, Learn from Song, Debate and Speaking English with Partners. These strategies are very effective for students in solving their challenges during learning speaking, and most of the strategies can be used every day in their daily activities.

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