ENGLISH LITERATURE STUDY PROGRAM STUDENTS MINDSET OF GRAMMAR FOR SPEAKING PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

Speaking in English language learning has significant benefits for communication in this era. Moreover, this is a requirement for English Study Program students since they get Speaking courses several times in the university academic year. They also need this skill to support their professionalism in future careers. However, in real practice, the students seem to face obstacles to reaching this objective. Accordingly, this study describes the student's problems in Speaking English in-depth understanding. The data are taken from interviews with 5 students in the second semester of the English literature Study Program at Dehasen University. The results show that the students have problems in conducting English communication, namely low Grammar mastery, and nervousness. From this finding, it is expected that the students make some efforts to overcome their problems.

Keywords: *Speaking Problems; English Communication; Grammar*

I.   INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English is taught from the lowest to the highest level of education. For foreign language learners, learning speaking skills is not an easy thing. At the tertiary level, English is one of the compulsory subjects taken by all students, and English has become a foreign language studied by the public, especially academics. In language education, pupils master four language skills: listening, speaking, writing, and reading. To be proficient in the language, they must master all four talents. Among the four language abilities, speaking is usually the most desired and is used to determine whether or not someone has learned a language. That is why most students make effective speaking performance their ultimate objective in language acquisition. (Richards & Rendaya, 2002; Rao, 2019).

English is an ideal means of communication and language users must dominate four inseparable skills: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. In addition, to be fluent in English, you need to dominate some parts of it (vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation). English language skills are often considered difficult to dominate because they involve forming a series of words orally to convey an idea or message. Speaking is normally imitative and reproductive providing students to practice patterns of language and communication (Becker & Roos, 2016). In spoken language, speaking has a crucial role in conveying messages that show different characteristics from written ones. If you want to talk well, you need to be able to use a series of words that your listeners can easily understand. Speaking strategies should also be learned to avoid misunderstandings and confusion in communication. Oxford (1990) states that speaking English is stressful for students. This is due to the fear of making mistakes in grammar and the lack of English vocabulary to facilitate speaking activities.

The students hesitated and were reluctant to speak because they had nothing to say. Even though they had something in mind, they were inhibited by not being

confident since they were afraid of making grammar mistakes and were worried that the other students would laugh at them when they made mistakes (Syamsurizal, 2015). Students are not only expected to use grammar correctly, have strong pronunciation, and have a large vocabulary, but they must also understand how to utilize the language appropriately. Alyan (2013) discovered that communication challenges emerge when pupils encounter a word they don't comprehend, a kind of phrase they don't know how to use, or find themselves unable to articulate their intended meaning.

The Fear of speaking a foreign language can be caused by various factors. Some of these factors are psychological factors (emotions, self-esteem, fear, attitudes, anxiety, motivation), instructional factors (teaching practices used and teacher-student relationships), and situational factors (e.g. speaking in front of a crowd). Students will find it difficult to express ideas, and words and not be confident in speaking. At the university level, the main goal of teaching speaking is to train the students to speak fluently with good fluency and accuracy (Wahyudi, 2017). One of the reasons for their fear of speaking English is that students often make unrealistic demands on themselves and consider less-than-perfect exam results as failures. Another important reason is that students are afraid of being judged badly by their peers. Most of the students still had a lot of difficulties speaking in English, such as a lack of vocabulary, not confidence, being afraid to speak, and making a mistake also, they used their mother tongue or local dialect to talk with their friends and family. In addition, students also face linguistic problems due to personal reasons such as laziness in reading books and the rare practice of speaking at home and so on.

According to Cubukcu (2007), the fear of negative evaluation is a common factor in language learning. However, it is not surprising that classmates and peers still contribute to language anxiety in students' learning processes. Due to the phenomenon in this era, it is known that many students are still afraid and worried about speaking English in class. This can be seen from the low level of class participation. In the classroom, only certain people often speak English. These cases are related to the original data that we did on English Literature students in the second semester that many things can be done to change the mindset of students who are initially reluctant to use English because of fear of making grammar mistakes when speaking to become confident and also this research can help provide the right solutions and strategies to overcome their anxiety problems.

a. Grammar usage

Learning grammar has been part of language skills since grammar is a fundamental feature of a language. If learners fail to understand grammar rules, they will fail to communicate effectively in that language. strong speaking produces strong public speaking when it is accompanied by good grammar. Grammar is the scientific study of language. Every field of study relies on its norms to evolve, and language has its own rules denoted by the adorable name "grammar." Grammar is derived from grammaire (French), grammatikos (Greek), or grammatical (Latin), all of which imply "relating to letters," according to the Oxford Concise Dictionary. Why we need grammar for speaking is frequently debated. Spoken communication typically expands beyond the confines of grammar, establishing its own domains and usage rules of speech. Written language, however, has the same ancient forte of usage constraints, and has always shown inhibition to come forth.

The usage of grammar is not the only key to accurately understanding language, especially in speaking, even though learning grammar will help the students organize words and messages and make them meaningful in speaking we don't have grammar usage because even if we don't use it, our partner is still understood. Moreover (1989) (Arief et Al., 2016:3) said that grammar is a model of those linguistic abilities of speakers of language which enable them to speak fluently. A lack of grammar expertise will result in grammatically incorrect statements, which might lead to misunderstandings of what is being said or written. Furthermore, knowledge of grammar is vital for comprehension because its intricacy can be difficult. A simple clause is more understandable than a complex cause. If there are more complex clauses than simple ones, the text's grammar complexity will be high. According to Readence (1985), reading a text is an interactive process that depends on the reader's grammar competency.

With or without knowing the grammar our abilities are improved in using an effective style to train expression in speaking. As has been already conveyed by experts about grammar usage and speaking fluency, both of them are so closely related they are inseparable. People who use grammar or not will still understand their speaking.

b. Speaking

In actuality, speaking English is more difficult than writing or reading. It is also shared among the researchers. The most common challenges encountered when speaking in English are due to a mismatch between the written and pronunciation of a word or phrase. In addition, there are several obstacles that students have when speaking English, as shown in the following study by Afisa (2015).

1. The students' low vocabulary mastery was caused by their limited knowledge of meaningful words, which made understanding the discourse challenging.
2. The children struggled with pronouncing specific words because English words varied between pronunciation and writing.
3. The students continued to struggle with word arrangement. Then there were some errors in their grammar
4. Students were often hesitant to talk.

There are several factors that influence students' fear of speaking English. Factors that make students hesitate to speak in English because they feel less confident about their ability to speak English. They cannot speak English well because they are afraid of making grammar mistakes. In addition, shy and nervous nature is also a barrier for students to speak English. So, the role of a lecturer is important to help students overcome their anxiety, nervousness, and fear with encouraging words. A good atmosphere and appropriate environment can also help students to speak actively, correctly, and fluently (Mueen, 1992). It is difficult for students to respond when the lecturer asks them to say something in English because they may have little idea of what to say, the vocabulary used, or how to use grammar correctly (Baker & Westrup, 2003).

The fear of speaking English is an unpleasant situation for someone when in public it is usually also affected because someone has experienced an unpleasant experience when speaking a foreign language in public, this fear is influenced by the wrong mindset because they think they are wrong when someone feels nervous about using English in public usually that person will be seen from the other side. Physical where there is movement or

body language that describes if the person is experiencing psychological anxiety.

When students of English literature experience the fear of using English in public is, of course, a big problem, because students of the English literature study program are certainly required to have the confidence to show their English skills in front of many people. Anxiety can cause serious problems for a group of students. In the English literature study program, of course, most of them learn about speaking and this is expected to solve the problems that arise. faced by students of English literature in improving their abilities speaking to be more confident.

c. Mindset

Many students think that understanding grammar and part of speech is difficult, even though this is the initial capital in English. Educators should prioritize addressing the mindset of students who believe English is difficult, especially when it comes to grammar and reading. This mindset plays a crucial role in molding their thoughts and emotions. Mindset and social context are wide Crum (2017) recognizes that these factors can have an impact on medical encounters. Her research found that improving the patient-provider relationship, including empathy and understanding, can lead to demonstrable physiological improvements beyond treatment outcomes. It achieves this by elevating patient expectations, reducing anxiety, providing psychological support, and improving mood.

Mindsets are typically fixed or growth-oriented. Dweck (Cimpain, Arce, Markman, & Dweck, 2007) defines a stuck mentality as believing that failure is the extent of one's talents and lacking the necessary skills for success. Individuals who dislike being pushed often adhere to their comfort zone and prefer to focus on tasks they are confident with. Individuals with a growth mindset

view failure as a learning opportunity, view feedback constructively and are open to trying new things.

Usually, students tend to think and compose sentences before speaking. This fear arises when thinking about constructing sentences, starting from the fear of using the wrong tenses because as we know in English there are 16 tenses. Students only feel afraid but don't do anything so fear alone is useless if they don't study hard and practice. Then even though you often practice and learn but you don't practice it directly, it will only be in vain. Fear or inferiority with friends who are more proficient in English also makes our abilities not develop even though this can be a good opportunity where we can mutually share and learn through those who are more proficient than us.

II.   RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, researchers used a qualitative descriptive research method. The researcher chose to interview 5 semester 2 students of the English Literature Study Program at Dehasen University, Bengkulu, as research subjects purposively with several considerations. First, in the second semester, they have taken speaking courses, meaning they are considered to have adequate speaking competence. Second, because they have entered the second semester, they are expected to be able to apply their English skills communicatively both in academic and social life. In an academic context, they can express their ideas on campus with their friends and lecturers. Meanwhile, in social life, they can build communication in English during teaching practices in selected schools.

Here the researcher conducts interviews with students by asking several questions, but here the researcher conducts interviews secretly, in other words, students are not aware that they are being interviewed. After conducting the interviews, the researcher made a

transcription to analyze student answers that could be used to solve research problems. Then, the data is presented qualitatively by describing the types of students' speaking difficulties. At the time of the interview, they were first asked who was confident in using English and not confident, to find out whether they had an open or closed attitude towards English when being interviewed by the researcher. From these questions obtained 2 people who are confident in English, and 3 people who are not confident when they are speaking English.

Data was obtained through recorded interviews. The recording technique is carried out when students speak English. Furthermore, the initial recorded data is reduced and sorted to obtain accurate data. After the recording data is obtained, the data is considered phonetically to see the sound errors made by the students. After consideration, the data is classified based on the existing forms of interference. The data is coded according to the sentence number, and the data sequence number to make it easier for researchers to group data. Finally, conclusions will be made on the results of the research

III.   RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Students surveyed admitted they still had communication difficulties despite taking a language class. Once classified, there are three obstacles that affect their fear of speaking English. The first problem is that students think that poor grammatical comprehension plays an important role in their speech. As a result, they produce unstructured speech that can alter meaning. Second, low vocabulary mastery. This makes them express their ideas in limited oral expression. According to some students, they do not have enough vocabulary mastery due to their low reading habits. Finally, related to affective factors, namely nervous conditions. This

situation is closely related to the terms insecurity, shame, and fear. When students want to speak, they fear making mistakes in grammar and feel embarrassed, thinking that what they are saying does not sound great to the respondent or listener in terms of usage or performance. In other words, silence and short conversations are better than bad communication.

The Interview results for speaking impairment.

Interview 1

A: Hello!

B: Hi!

A: What semester are you in?

B: I'm in semester 2 now

A: What makes you want to join English Literature?

B: Actually when **I was in junior** high school **I was not umm.. *tertarik*** in English at all, but when **I was in senior** high school I thought **English was awesome** because almost all people use the English language.

A: Well do you think you have good English now?

B: Hm, **not good** because sometimes when I try to speak English **I always think** I make some mistake in grammar, so I decide to speak Bahasa

A: Okay thank you for the answer

Interview 2

A: Hi, Can I ask you a question?

B: Hi, yes of course

A: Could you please tell me about your feelings since you became an English Literature student?

B: Yeah sure, **I'm feel** insecure because **my English bad and my friend good**, wait *apakah* speaking *saya benar*? *karena saya takut melakukan kesalahan pada* grammar

A: There are some mistakes while you speaking but that's fine, you can speak without thinking you will make a mistake in grammar.

B: Hm okay **I try it**, thank you.

Interview 3

A: Hello, I wanna ask you some questions

B: okay sure

A: why do you think that student is afraid to speak English?

B: in my opinion, it is because **they are thinking** about grammar, **like me always afraid of making** grammar mistakes.

Interview 4

A: hallo, today I will ask a question for you

B: okay what is this?

A: do you think grammar while speaking English is important?

B: I think it is the second one, the first important thing is confident

A: well okay thankyou

Interview 5

A: Hii I would ask you a question

B: Well sure

A: Can you explain how important grammar is while speaking English?

B: I think grammar is the second important thing while we speak English because the first thing we have to be confident.

A: Oh, okay thanks for your answer

Based on 5 interviews, the writer found student's answer about fear of making mistakes while speaking is dominant. some students highlighted that their fear of making mistakes was exacerbated by past negative experiences, such as being corrected harshly by teachers or mocked by classmates. These experiences left a lasting impact, making them more self-conscious and hesitant to speak up. Furthermore, the interviews revealed that students often felt that their language skills were being constantly judged, not just by their teachers, but also by their peers and even by themselves.

The writer also noted that students believed that making mistakes was an inevitable part of the learning process, but the high stakes associated with academic performance made them overly cautious. They reported that this fear sometimes led to over-preparation and memorization, rather than genuine language use and practice, which in turn limited their ability to think and respond spontaneously.

Moreover, the students suggested that a more supportive and less judgmental learning environment could help alleviate their fears. They appreciated when teachers created opportunities for low-stakes practice, provided constructive feedback, and encouraged a growth mindset, where mistakes were viewed as valuable learning opportunities rather than failures. This approach, they believed, could foster greater confidence and willingness to take risks in using the language. Overall, the interviews underscored the importance of addressing the psychological barriers that students face when learning to speak a new language. By understanding and mitigating these fears, educators can create more effective and inclusive language learning experiences.

They were very focused on avoiding grammatical usage. This fixation with mistake avoidance made it difficult for them to take the risks that are always inherent when speaking in conversation in a language that is only

partly understood. For some, the concern about grammar seemed directly to inhibit speaking and listening skill development, then and now. Here the students' beliefs about language learning, instilled into them both implicitly and explicitly at campus, directly shaped the way they used and learned English in later life – and in the case of some of the students, continued to set limits on what they could achieve. If learners believe that making errors will impede their language learning progress, these learners may actually refrain from engaging in communicative activities, thus hindering the development of their communicative competence. In my opinion, it is because they are thinking about grammar, like me always afraid of making grammar mistakes.

Some people say grammar is not important. But the other says grammar is important because they know grammar can change the way they use English in many ways. Despite the great emphasis on the teaching of grammatical aspects at campus, the students still found it a difficult aspect of English to learn, then and now. When asked what part of learning English was difficult for them, most students referred to grammar. One reason for this was that as noted by one of the students, there were pronounced differences between the grammatical structure of English and that of the student's own language. Focusing on these elements, continuously translating grammatical structures mentally while trying to speak in English, continued to inhibit speaking.

The fixation on grammatical correctness often becomes a stumbling block in the journey of language acquisition. This persistent fear of making mistakes can cripple one's ability to take linguistic risks, which are essential for effective communication in a partially understood language. The students, deeply ingrained with the belief that any grammatical slip-up would hinder their

progress, found themselves paralyzed in conversational settings. Their apprehensions about grammar not only stifled their speaking and listening skills back then but continue to cast a shadow over their language development even now. The influence of campus culture, both overtly and covertly, played a pivotal role in shaping the students' attitudes towards language learning. The emphasis placed on error avoidance during their formative years left an indelible mark on their language usage and learning strategies. For some, these beliefs acted as shackles, limiting their potential for linguistic growth and constraining their achievements.

In the writer's view, the perpetual fixation on grammar stems from a deep-seated fear of making errors, a fear I can relate to all too well. This fear often leads individuals to shy away from communicative activities, thereby impeding the development of their communicative competence. The debate surrounding the importance of grammar in language learning is a longstanding one. While some argue that it's inconsequential, others recognize its pivotal role in shaping language usage. Grammar serves as the backbone of language, influencing how it is structured and utilized in various contexts. Despite the rigorous instruction in grammatical nuances on campus, many students still grapple with this aspect of English learning. When asked about their difficulties in learning English, the majority cited grammar as a major hurdle. One student aptly pointed out the stark disparities between the grammatical structures of English and their native language, which compounded their struggles. The incessant mental translation of grammatical constructs while attempting to converse in English proved to be a persistent obstacle, inhibiting their fluency and confidence in speaking.

IV.   CONCLUSION

The challenges encountered by students in English communication often stem from a trifecta of factors: inadequate vocabulary mastery, insufficient grasp of grammar rules, and a pervasive sense of low self-confidence, which perpetuates a cycle of tension and apprehension. Confidence or the lack thereof is a recurring theme among students, particularly when confronted with the daunting task of speaking English. During interviews, the prevailing sentiment among the majority of students was a palpable fear of committing grammatical errors. This fear, deeply ingrained in their psyche, acts as a formidable barrier to effective communication. It's not uncommon for students to feel a sense of unease and self-doubt when engaging in English conversation, fearing that any linguistic misstep might expose their perceived inadequacies.

The struggle with vocabulary is another significant hurdle that students face. Limited lexical repertoire often leaves them grasping for words, impeding the flow and coherence of their speech. Without a robust vocabulary foundation, students find themselves resorting to repetitive phrases or struggling to express themselves adequately, further exacerbating their communication woes. Similarly, a shaky grasp of grammar rules compounds the difficulties. Students grappling with the intricacies of English syntax and grammar often find themselves navigating a linguistic minefield, tiptoeing around potential errors with trepidation. The fear of incorrect grammar looms large, overshadowing their attempts at fluency and hindering their ability to convey their thoughts effectively.

Furthermore, the pervasive sense of low self-confidence exacerbates these challenges. Constantly plagued by doubts and insecurities, students approach English communication with a sense of timidity and reluctance. The fear of being judged or ridiculed for their linguistic shortcomings looms large, casting a shadow over their confidence and inhibiting their willingness to engage in conversation. Addressing these multifaceted challenges requires a holistic approach that goes beyond mere instruction in grammar and vocabulary. Fostering a supportive and nurturing learning environment that bolsters students' confidence, encourages risk-taking, and emphasizes communication over perfection is crucial. By instilling a growth mindset and nurturing a culture of resilience, educators can empower students to navigate the complexities of English communication with confidence and proficiency.

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