The difficulties of elementary teacher education students' speaking performance: a comprehensive analysis

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ABSTRACT

Speaking English plays a fundamental role in the personal development of students. However, many students struggle when speaking, which limits their capacity to communicate effectively and self-assuredly in a foreign language. The goal of this study is to investigate the elements influencing these difficulties in students' speaking abilities. To effectively design measures to improve kids' speaking abilities, educators and policymakers must have a thorough understanding of these challenges. This research also offers techniques to improve students' speaking abilities. This research used the qualitative research methodology. The data was gathered through observation, documentation, and interviews. The findings demonstrate that the factors that influence the students' difficulties are anxiety, low self-confidence, limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation, and grammar challenges. The strategies for enhancing the students' speaking performance are building a supportive learning environment, improving vocabulary, using technology, and giving feedback on the students' speaking performance. Thus, students and lecturers can contribute to creating strategies to enhance students' speaking performance.

1. Introduction

In today's global society, effective communication is a crucial skill. Furthermore, English has become the universal language for global communication. Writing, speaking, listening, and reading are the four language skills in English. Although all four skills are essential, speaking ability is particularly significant as it enables individuals to express their thoughts, ideas, and emotions. Among these language skills, speaking ability is the most crucial skill to develop and learn when studying a foreign language. According to Jao *et al.,* speaking abilities are vital [1], because speakers of a language are people who can communicate in that language. That implies that they will be able to speak any language. speaking skills are the ability to perform linguistic knowledge in actual communication. Additionally, it encourages social contact, encourages cultural interchange, and increases self-confidence. In order to build effective teaching strategies and promote students' language development, educators must have a thorough understanding of how students perceive their speaking performance. Gultom *et al.* [2] also state that speaking is essentially the act of expressing thoughts aloud and using one's voice. For this reason, speaking proficiency has been declared as the ultimate goal of language acquisition for students by Woods *et al.* [3]. Moreover, speaking abilities play a crucial role in teaching other languages, as asserted by Yalcın [4].

English is essential for communicating with the broader international community, as it serves as the global language. Consequently, English is a mandatory course for students across all majors. Regrettably, many students learning English as a foreign language encounter challenges, especially in practicing it in class, particularly in terms of speaking skills. This problem is especially prevalent among students enrolled in non-English study programs. According to Shen and Chiu [5], students'

difficulties in speaking English stem from three types of issues. These include psychological challenges such as nervousness, fear of making mistakes, and lack of confidence; linguistic challenges such as limited vocabulary, grammar, expressions, and sentence structure; and environmental challenges such as a lack of opportunities for English conversation.

According to Hasriani [6], students' challenges in speaking English can be categorized into three main groups: affective-related issues, social-related issues, and linguistic-related issues. Affective-related problems encompass attitudes, self-confidence, motivation, anxiety, duration of language exposure, classroom environment, family background, and the proficiency of both students and instructors. Socially related difficulties emerge when students face comprehension problems while speaking in class or practicing English outside the classroom. Language-related issues involve vocabulary, fluency, grammar, and pronunciation. Students often grapple with affective issues that hinder their speaking abilities. This can be due to anxiety, lack of confidence, or nervousness, leading them to speak slowly and unclearly in an effort to avoid mistakes. They struggle to speak in front of the class and tend to halt abruptly. In response to questions from instructors, they often limit their responses to a simple 'yes' or 'no,' avoiding extended conversations. Social issues further impede students' ability to understand spoken English outside the classroom. Once class ends, English-speaking activities cease, and students revert to conversing in their native language or regional dialect with friends and family. Additionally, personal factors such as a lack of reading motivation and infrequent practice speaking at home contribute to language difficulties.

Suryani, Suarnajaya, and Pratiwi [7] stated that students' difficulties in speaking English can be categorized into two factors: affective and cognitive factors. The affective factor includes sub-factors such as shyness, lack of motivation, self-confidence, self-esteem, feelings toward the interlocutor, feelings toward the topic, and self-consciousness. Cognitive factors encompass grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, familiarity with the genre, and knowledge of the topic. Additionally, according to Chan *et al.* [8], for many students learning English as a second or foreign language, mastering speaking abilities is crucial. Consequently, learners often use their perceived improvements in spoken language ability to assess both their level of language learning achievement and the effectiveness of an English course. These issues include (1) Insufficient vocabulary: Effective communication relies on a broad vocabulary. People draw from their vocabulary when speaking, and students need a wide range of words to understand and convey ideas successfully. According to Mouhoubi *et al.* [9], in actual conversations, the focus is more on the topic and how to respond rather than on using proper syntax; (2) Incorrect pronunciation: Proper pronunciation is essential when learning a new language. According to Curtis *et al.* [10], consistently mispronouncing phonemes can make it exceedingly challenging for speakers from other linguistic communities to understand someone. Improving pronunciation is crucial for enhancing speaking abilities; (3) Poor grammar: Understanding grammatical norms is vital for effective English communication. Without a grasp of grammar, students will struggle to speak English proficiently.

Additionally, as outlined by Hornberger [11], speaking issues encompass inhibition, a lack of content, uneven participation, and resorting to the mother tongue. Speaking demands precise timing, unlike writing, reading, or listening, due to inhibitions. Common barriers students face when practicing speaking in class include fear of criticism, apprehension about making mistakes, and embarrassment when speaking a foreign language. 'Nothing to say' signifies situations where students, typically struggling, find themselves at a loss for words, lacking the motivation to express their thoughts. Limited or uneven participation describes scenarios in which some group members dominate discussions, depriving others of opportunities to contribute. Mother tongue usage refers to students frequently resorting to their native language in educational settings like schools and colleges. They often perceive their mother tongue as more natural and simpler to use compared to foreign languages. Previous research has explored the challenges related to speaking skills. Gan [12] conducted research on two Chinese populations (China and Hong Kong) and identified several difficulties in their speaking performance. These challenges were linked to linguistic deficiencies, oral language processes, conversational skills, academic speaking conventions, affective factors, and the availability of opportunities to use English for spoken communication within students' learning contexts. In addition, Al Hosni [13] observed that Omani students in grade 5 encounter difficulties in speaking due to their limited vocabulary and unfamiliarity with grammar structures. Forming a simple sentence poses a challenge, often leading to the use of their native language. Finally, Basic [14] highlighted anxiety as a significant factor contributing to the difficulties Swedish students face in speaking English.

Based on the previous studies, the research regarding the difficulties of students in the elementary education department has never been conducted before. Students in the Department of Elementary Education are expected to have good skill in speaking since the competition in the working environment is severe. English has become one of the most important skills nowadays, not to mention in Indonesia, which makes most elementary schools transform into bilingual education institutions by using English as the instructional language. Therefore, teacher candidates are expected to have good English skills, especially speaking performance. Not only will they teach subjects in Indonesian, but they also will teach the subjects in English. It is because making elementary school students get used to English earlier will make them comfortable to use it in the future. Hence, research regarding the difficulties of elementary teacher candidates in their speaking performance is urgently needed. This research aims to find out the difficulties of students, especially the students of the Elementary Teacher Department of Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, in their speaking performance. This research comes up with two research questions, namely (1) what are the students' difficulties in their speaking performance? and (2) What are the strategies to enhance students' speaking performance? This research is expected to be able to find out the problems of students' speaking performance as well as give some suggestions to improve their speaking skills.

2. Method

This study aimed to learn more about how students perceive and struggle with speaking in class. This research was conducted in the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Ahmad Dahlan. The participants of this research were students in semester one in the elementary teacher education study program in the academic year 2022/2023, class E and F. This research was conducted on the subject of English for Institutional Course. The sample of this study was random sampling. Therefore, the researchers chose the students to be participants randomly. There were 10 participants in this study. This research was carried out using a descriptive qualitative method. Then, observations, interviews, and document study were used as data collection methods. Based on Miles and Hubberman's hypothesis, the researcher qualitatively assessed the data acquired in three contemporaneous flows of activity. They included data condensation, data visualization, and conclusion generation and verification [15]. Data condensation was the first stage. This step was the process of choosing, concentrating, streamlining, abstracting, and/or changing the information found in the entire body of written-up field notes, interview transcripts, documents, and other empirical materials. Following the transcription of taped interviews, review of field notes, and expansion of documentation, the investigator identified and chose the data according to the categories of problems being studied. The data display stage was the second. Presenting the data is the task at hand. After the data display was complete, the researcher came to a decision. The problem statement was addressed in the conclusion. To obtain accurate and trustworthy data for qualitative research, the researcher must assess the data. Thus, the researcher used triangulation to assess the validity and reliability of this research. The triangulation method is a qualitative data-collecting strategy that is obtained by combining several methods for obtaining data sources or methods for gathering data [16], see Fig 1.
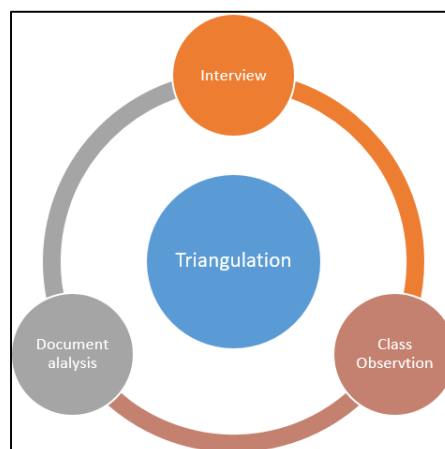
Fig. 1. Triangulation Technique

By utilizing a separate technique to verify the same data, it evaluates the believability of the data. In order to obtain the same resources, various methodologies were used to assess the authenticity and

credibility of the data in this study. Data from observations, document analysis, and interviews were used to compile the data. The researcher reaffirmed the research's findings to the participants in order to prevent biases in the study. Due to participant agreement over the research's conclusions, it is deemed credible.

3. Results and Discussion

This part discusses the research findings about students' challenges faced by students majoring elementary teacher education department in speaking English. Foreign language learning might be difficult for non-English students to talk with fluency since language acquisition is a complex process. The most challenging aspect of learning English, in the opinion of many English Foreign Learners' students, is speaking. Simultaneously, speaking is the skill we use most frequently in our daily activities, even more so than reading and writing, as noted by Alneyadi *et al.* [17]. In this research, the author identified several factors contributing to students' difficulties in speaking and proposed strategies to enhance their speaking performance.

3.1. Factors influencing Students' difficulties in Speaking Performance

The ability to speak in front of an audience is crucial for both academic and professional success. As a result, it is critical to comprehend how students view their speaking abilities because this perspective has a big impact on how well they learn.

- Anxiety: Anxiety plays a significant role in hindering students from speaking fluently. In classroom activities, students often feel too shy to speak English due to the fear of being laughed at by their classmates. Based on observations in the classroom, when a student practices speaking in front of the class and makes mistakes, their peers tend to mock them. According to Mak [18], students commonly grapple with communication anxiety, fear of receiving poor grades, and exam anxiety, all of which negatively impact their ability to articulate their thoughts effectively. This fear of making mistakes and facing criticism from others creates a psychological barrier, preventing children from seizing opportunities and fully engaging in speaking activities.

- Low Self-confidence: Students' perception of their speaking performance is influenced by various factors. As noted by Jindapitak *et al.* [19], students' perspectives are significantly shaped by their level of confidence. Individuals with high self-confidence tend to have a positive view of their speaking skills, while those with low self-confidence might doubt their abilities. This underscores the importance of building students' confidence through instructional support, encouraging strategies, and ample opportunities for practice.

- Limited vocabulary: Another common challenge students face in their speaking performance is having a limited vocabulary. In this research, students encountered challenges in expressing their opinions in English due to their restricted vocabulary. Therefore, before starting the task and speaking, they looked up difficult words using Google Translate.

  "I cannot speak English fluently because I don't know the meaning in English. Usually, I always use Google Translate to translate my words before I speak and write." (Student 1).

  Furthermore, studies by Khan *et al.* [20] emphasize the importance of vocabulary knowledge for clear speaking. Students lacking the necessary language to express their views clearly often hesitate and have less coherent conversations.

- Poor pronunciation: The researcher learned from conversing with students that pronunciation issues were a problem for students in speaking English. The students claim that because English and Indonesian reading styles differ, they are unable to pronounce English words.

  "It is difficult to pronounce English words because how to read the words are different in English and Indonesia. I often make mistakes in pronouncing many words." (Student 2)

  The document data from the video of the speaking performance regarding the procedures also supports this information. Many students pronounced words incorrectly. For example, the student makes a mistake in pronouncing "Teacher" [ˈtēCHər]. He pronounced it by "Teacer" [teacər]; see Fig 2.
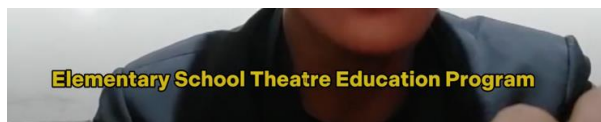
Fig. 2. Documentation of Pronunciation error

One of the key components of learning a foreign language is pronunciation. To enhance students' speaking abilities, they must pronounce words correctly, although pronunciation issues are common challenges faced during speaking practice. According to Pennington *et al.* [21], it can be extremely challenging for speakers from another language community to understand someone who consistently mispronounces various phonemes.

- Grammar challenges: Furthermore, the students faced difficulty in using grammar correctly. The students said that grammar is difficult when it is applied in speaking practice.

  "When I speak English, I don't know the grammar structure that should I use in the sentence because it makes me confused." (Student 3)

Grammatical and syntactical issues may also contribute to students' speaking performance challenges. According to research by Robert *et al.* [22], effective communication depends on using proper grammar and sentence construction. Students often struggle with word order, verb tenses, and sentence structure, leading to frequent mistakes and decreased fluency. Additionally, students who master proper grammar will be able to write and speak with confidence [23].

3.2. Strategies to enhance students' speaking performance

Students' academic progress and personal growth are greatly influenced by their ability to communicate effectively, especially while speaking. Exploring methods that might improve students' speaking abilities is crucial since speaking is a basic component of language acquisition. The findings showed that first-semester Elementary Teacher Education students had several tried-and-true methods of learning to speak by putting their learning skills into practice.

- Building a Supportive Learning Environment: Creating favorable impressions of speaking performance requires a supportive and inclusive learning environment. Based on the data, students try to reduce their anxiety and try to build their confidence in speaking.

  "I will train myself to have the confidence to speak English in front of my friends and the courage to do so, and hopefully, we, as the learners in the class, do not ridicule the other friends who want to try to speak English" (Student 4)

The lecturer may be accomplished by promoting peer cooperation, offering chances for speaking practice in a secure environment, and recognizing students' advancement and accomplishments. A supportive classroom environment can reduce communication anxiety and enhance students' self-confidence in their speaking skills [24]. It can be set in a cooperative learning classroom with small-group discussions. Small-group settings are crucial for fostering relationships between students, encouraging English language learners to communicate about the topics they are studying, and giving students the opportunity to practice the academic information and skills they need to gain.

- Improving Vocabulary: To assist students in increasing their word knowledge, they should manage themselves to add new vocabulary every day. Furthermore, teachers also should implement explicit vocabulary education. As it is stated by the student:

  "In my opinion, the students should prepare many vocabularies and the lecturer also can help the students to improve the vocabulary using interesting techniques." (Student 5)

The lecturer could use several techniques in the class. Word mapping, context-based learning, and routine vocabulary tests are all techniques that can help in vocabulary learning and application in spoken dialogue. The students also can play games to improve their vocabulary, such as playing Scrabble, see Fig 3.

Fig. 3. Scramble Game to improve vocabulary (https://www.britannica.com/sports/Scrabble)

- Technology usage: Including technology in speaking exercises might help students feel more confident about their performance. Students can film and publish their presentations on platforms, which opens up the possibility for peer and self-reflection. As it is stated by the student:

  "Maybe sometimes, we can practice speaking English using online tools or other technology because it can reduce anxiety" (Student 6).

  Challenges in speaking, mediated by technology, foster engagement, motivation, and self-efficacy, ultimately enhancing students' speaking abilities [25]. Additionally, using technology in language learning may be quite advantageous. Students can practice speaking with native speakers or other learners from across the world via online platforms, language learning applications, and video conferencing technologies. In the twenty-first century, students can learn in many ways, especially using digital technology. There are many online platforms that can be used to learn to speak, for example Class Dojo platform, see Fig 4. It is an online forum where students may interact and finish their homework. The purpose of this program is to assist educators in enhancing communication among their students.
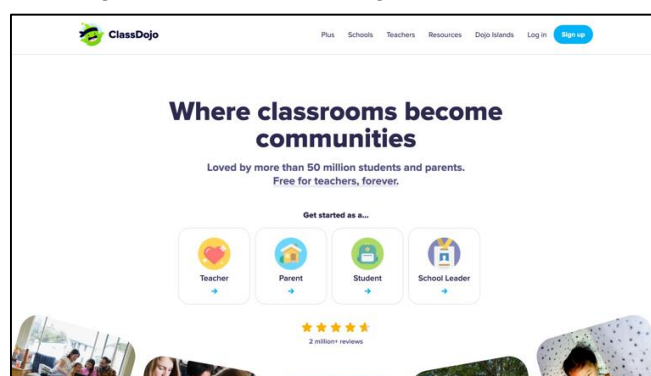
Fig. 4. Screenshot Class Dojo Platform (https://www.classdojo.com/)

  Students' perceptions of their speaking ability may be improved by this exposure to real language use, which also offers beneficial educational opportunities.

- Giving Feedback: Based on the data, the students need to get feedback from the lecturer about their speaking performance.

  "After we practiced speaking English, the lecturer can give us some comments or critiques about our speaking performance, maybe about the grammar or the pronunciation" (Student 7).

  Providing constructive criticism and correcting mistakes is another tactic to enhance students' speaking performance. According to Rusmiyanto *et al.* [26], timely and focused feedback can have a significant impact on students' language development. Both broad elements, like fluency and coherence, and particular language qualities, like grammar and vocabulary, should be the

focus of instruction. Teachers may help students grow and build their confidence by positively correcting mistakes made by their students.

4. Conclusion

To summarize, the students of the Elementary Teacher Education Department faced problems in speaking performance. The factors that influence those difficulties are anxiety, which makes students worry about making errors; low self-confidence, which makes them shy and fear practicing English; limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation, and grammar challenges. In addition, there are several tried-and-true methods for enhancing students' speaking abilities. The students and the lecturer can work together to enhance speaking performance by building a supportive learning environment in the class so that the students can develop speaking skills using collaborative learning. The students also can improve their vocabulary using many games, such as scramble games. Moreover, digital technology can increase curiosity and motivate students to learn English with fun learning; there are many online platforms that can be used, such as Duolingo or Class Dojo. Then, the lecturer should give feedback on the students' speaking performance. Students need to understand how important it is to speak English even if they are not English language students, and they also must speak the language accurately and fluently. They need to improve their capacity to communicate in English rather than focus on a subject they find difficult. Additional investigation may involve students with diverse backgrounds, abilities, and personalities. The current study has noted the performance elements related to students' difficulties speaking English. It focuses on issues related to psychology and language usage. Subsequent research endeavors may explore additional issues that are associated with the challenges that appear to be impeding students' ability to communicate in English.

Declarations

Author contribution	:	Ramadhani Uswatun Khasanah was responsible for the whole research project. Along with the second author, she wrote and revised the manuscript. Patria Handung Jaya participated in the data collection, transcription, and analysis. Both authors approved the final manuscript.
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The Difficulties of Elementary Teacher Education Students' Speaking Performance: A Comprehensive Analysis

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1. Introduction

In today's worldwide society, effective communication is a crucial ability. In addition, English becomes the mean of global communication. Writing, speaking, listening, and reading are the four language skills in English. While all four talents are essential, speaking ability is especially important since it allows people to convey their thoughts, ideas, and emotions. Speaking abilities are the most crucial skill to build and learn when studying a foreign language out of all of those language skills. Speaking abilities are crucial, according to Ur [1], because speakers of a language are people who can communicate in that language. That implies that they will be able to speak any language. speaking skills are the ability to perform the linguistic knowledge in actual communication. Additionally, it encourages social contacts, encourages cultural interchange, and increases self-confidence. In order to build effective teaching strategies and promote students' language development, educators must have a thorough understanding of how students perceive their speaking performance. Brown [2] also states that speaking is literary to say things, express thought aloud, and uses the voice. For this reason, speaking proficiency has been declared by Richards and Rendaya [3] to be the ultimate goal of language acquisition for students. Moreover, speaking abilities play a crucial part in teaching other languages, according to Rao [4].

English is needed to communicate with wider society since this is the international language. Hence, English is a required course for all students in all majors. Sadly, many students who are learning English as a foreign language encounter some difficulties when trying to practice it in class, especially the speaking skill. Particularly, the problem occurs for those enrolled in non-English study programs. Students' difficulties speaking English are caused by three different types of issues, according to Shen and Chiu [5], including psychological issues like nervousness, fear of making mistakes, and lack of confidence, linguistic issues like a lack of vocabulary, grammar, expressions, and sentence structure, and environmental issues like a lack of learning context for English conversation.

Afshar & Asakereh [6] explain that the major problems faced by the students in speaking English could be divided into affective-related problems, socially-related problems, and linguistically-related problems. The affective related problems include attitude, self-confidence, motivation, anxiety, duration of the exposure to the language, classroom conditions, environment, family background, and students and teachers' competencies. The socially-related problems include comprehension to practice English outside the classroom, and comprehension in speaking class. The linguistically-related problems include vocabulary, fluency, grammar, and pronunciation. Students tend to have affective-related problems in speaking due to some reasons, for instance anxiety, low confidence, and nervousness. They will likely speak slowly and less fluently as they hope not to make mistakes. They are also shy to speak in the classroom and like to make frequent pauses while speaking. They always try to avoid speaking by answering the questions from their lecturers with a yes, or a no answer only. In socially-related problems, students usually have difficulties comprehending conversation when speaking outside of their classroom. The English-speaking activities are always over as soon as they finish the class. They use mother tongue or local dialect to speak with their friends and family. In addition, students also face linguistic problems due to their personal reasons such as laziness to reading book and rare practice to speak at home.

Suryani, Suarnajaya, & Pratiwi [7] stated that the factors of students' difficulty in speaking English are divided into two factors, namely; affective and cognitive factors. Shyness, lack of motivation, self-confidence, self-esteem, feeling toward interlocutor, feeling toward topic, and self-consciousness were the sub-factors under affective factor. Grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, familiarity of the genre, and knowledge of the topic were considered as cognitive factor.

In addition, according to Richards [8], speaking is a common area of difficulty for new learners. These issues include: 1) Insufficient vocabulary to communicate. When speaking, people employ words from their vocabulary. To understand communication successfully, students need to have a wide vocabulary. According to Sotillo [9], in actual conversation, people focused more on the topic and how to respond than on using the proper syntax. 2) Incorrect pronunciation in learning a new language which it is crucial. To improve one's speaking abilities, proper pronunciation is crucial. According to Gerald [10], it can be exceedingly challenging for a speaker from another linguistic community to understand someone who consistently pronounces a variety of phonemes incorrectly. 3) Poor Grammar. The students won't be able to speak effectively in English if they don't understand grammatical norms.

Furthermore, according to Ur [1], speaking issues include inhibition, a lack of something to say, a lack of or an imbalanced level of participation, and the usage of the mother tongue. Speaking requires more precise timing than writing, reading, or listening due to inhibition. Several causes, including fear of criticism, worry about making mistakes, and embarrassment at speaking in a foreign language, are common barriers that students encounter when practicing speaking in that language in class. Nothing to say indicates that students, who typically have a problem, were at a loss for words. Students lack the drive to communicate their own thoughts. Limited or uneven participation describes a situation in which some group members talk more than others and feel they are denied the chance to do so. Mother-Tongue Usage refers to the practice of students frequently using their own language or mother tongue when conversing in educational settings like schools and colleges. Compared to foreign languages, they claim that this language is more innate and simpler to use.

2. Method

This study aims to learn more about how students perceive and struggle with speaking in class. Students in semester one (1) in the elementary teacher education study program were the research

subjects. Using the descriptive qualitative method, this study was carried out. In this study, observations, interviews, and document study were used as data collection methods.

Based on Miles and Hubberman's hypothesis, the researcher qualitatively assessed the data acquired in three contemporaneous flows of activity. They included data condensation, data visualization, and conclusion generation and verification [11]. To obtain accurate and trustworthy data for qualitative research, the researcher must assess the data. Thus, the researcher used triangulation to assess the validity and reliability of this research.

3. Results and Discussion

This part discusses the research finding about students' challenges faced by students majoring elementary teacher education department in speaking English. Foreign language learning might be difficult for non-English students to talk with fluency since language acquisition is a complex process. The most challenging aspect of learning English, in the opinion of many English Foreign Learners' students, is speaking. Whereas speaking is the ability that use the most in our daily activities, more so than reading and writing, according to Bahrani [12]. In this research, the researcher found some factors contributing to students' difficulty in speaking performance and identified the strategies to enhance speaking performance of students.

3.1. Factors influencing Students' difficulties in Speaking Performance

The ability to speak in front of an audience is crucial for both academic and professional success. As a result, it is critical to comprehend how students view their speaking abilities because this perspective has a big impact on how well they learn.

- Anxiety

    A big part of what prevents pupils from speaking well is anxiety. In the classroom activity, students felt shy to speak English due to laughing of classmates. Based on the observation in the class, when the student practice the speaking in front of the class, and he/she did the mistakes, the other friends will laugh. As stated by Horwitz et al. [13], students frequently struggle with communication anxiety, nervousness about receiving a poor grade, and exam anxiety, all of which have a detrimental effect on their capacity for intelligible speech. This anxiety about making errors and receiving criticism from others erects a psychological barrier that prevents kids from taking chances and engaging fully in speaking activities.

- Low Self-confidence
    The impression of speaking performance by students is influenced by a variety of circumstances. According to Brown [14], students' perspective is significantly influenced by their level of confidence. Those with strong self-confidence frequently have a favorable opinion of their speaking skills, whereas those with low self-confidence could think they are not good enough. This emphasizes the value of fostering students' confidence through encouraging instructional strategies and chances for practice.

- Limited vocabulary
    Another typical challenge students have in their speaking performance is a limited vocabulary. In this research, the students also have English speaking challenging to express their opinions due to their limited vocabulary. Therefore, before beginning the task and speaking, they looked up difficult words using Google Translate.

    > "I cannot speak English fluently because I don't know the meaning in English. Usually, I always use google translate to translate my words before I speak and write." (Student 1)

    In addition, studies by Nation and Webb [15] highlight how essential vocabulary knowledge is for speaking clearly. Students who lack the language necessary to express their views clearly hesitate and have less coherent conversation.

- Poor pronunciation
    The researcher learned from conversing with students that pronunciation issues were a problem for students in speaking English. The students claim that because English and Indonesian reading styles differ, they are unable to pronounce English words.

"It is difficult to pronounce English words, because how to read the words are different in English and Indonesia. I often make mistakes in pronouncing many words." (Student 2)

The document data from the video of the speaking performance regarding the procedures also supports this information. Many students pronounced words incorrectly. For example, the student make mistake in pronouncing "Teacher" [ˈtēCHər]. He pronounced it by "Teacer" [teacər].

Fig. 1. Documentation of Pronunciation error

One of the key components of learning a foreign language is pronunciation. To improve students speaking abilities, students must pronounce words correctly. Even though, pronunciation issue one of the difficulties that are faced by students in speaking practice. According to Gerald [10], it can be extremely challenging for a speaker from another language community to understand someone who consistently pronounces a variety of phonemes incorrectly.

- Grammar challenges
  Furthermore, the students faced difficulty in using grammar correctly. The students said that grammar is difficult when it is applied in speaking practice.

    "When I speak English, I don't know the grammar structure that should I use in the sentence, because it makes me confused." (Student 3)

Grammatical and syntactical issues may also contribute to students' speaking performance issues. According to research by Larsen-Freeman [16], effective communication depends on using proper grammar and sentence construction. Students frequently struggle with word order, verb tenses, and sentence structure, which causes frequent mistakes and decreased fluency. In addition, learners don't acquire structures one at a time, which causes difficulty with grammar [17].

3.2. Strategies to enhance students' speaking performance

Students' academic progress and personal growth are greatly influenced by their ability to communicate effectively, especially while speaking. Exploring methods that might improve students' speaking abilities is crucial since speaking is a basic component of language acquisition. The findings showed that first-semester Elementary Teacher Education students had several tried-and-true methods of learning to speak by putting their learning skills into practice.

- Building a Supportive Learning Environment
  Creating favorable impressions of speaking performance requires a supportive and inclusive learning environment. Based on the data, students try to reduce their anxiety and try to build their confidence in speaking.

    "I will train myself to have the confidence to speak English in front of my friends and the courage to do so and hopefully, we, as the learners in the class, do not ridicule the other friends who want to try to speak English" (Student 4)

The lecturer may be accomplished by promoting peer cooperation, offering chances for speaking practice in a secure environment, and recognizing students' advancement and accomplishments. A supportive environment in the classroom can lower communication anxiety and boost students' self-confidence in their speaking skills [18].

- Improving Vocabulary
  To assist students, increase their word knowledge, they should manage themselves to add new vocabulary every day. Furthermore, teachers also should implement explicit vocabulary education. As it is stated by the student:

"In my opinion, the students should prepare many vocabularies and the lecturer also can help the students to improve the vocabulary using interesting techniques." (Student 5)

The lecturer could use several techniques in the class. Word mapping, context-based learning, and routine vocabulary tests are all techniques that can help in vocabulary learning and application in spoken dialogue.

- Technology usage
Including technology in speaking exercises might help students feel more confident about their performance. Students can film and publish their presentations on platforms, which opens up the possibility for peer and self-reflection. As it is stated by student:

"Maybe sometimes, we can practice speaking English using online tools or other technology, because it can reduce the anxiety" (Student 6).

Speaking challenges mediated by technology foster engagement, motivation, and self-efficacy, eventually enhancing students' speaking abilities [19]. Additionally, using technology into language learning may be quite advantageous. Students can practice speaking with native speakers or other learners from across the world via online platforms, language learning applications, and video conferencing technologies. Students' perceptions of their speaking ability may be improved by this exposure to real language use, which also offers beneficial educational opportunities.

- Giving Feedback
Based on the data, the students need to get the feedback from the lecturer about their speaking performance.

"After we practiced to speak English, the lecturer can give us some comments or critics about our speaking performance, maybe about the grammar or the pronunciation" (Student 7).

Giving constructive criticism and mistake correction is another tactic to enhance students' speaking performance. According to Ellis [20], timely and focused feedback can have a major impact on students' language development. Both broad elements, like fluency and coherence, and particular language qualities, like grammar and vocabulary, should be the focus of instruction. Teachers may help students grow and build their confidence by positively correcting mistakes made by their students.

4. Conclusion

To summarize, the students of Elementary Teacher Education Department faced problems in speaking performance. The factors that influence those difficulties are anxiety that make students worry about making errors, low self-confidence that make shy and fear in practicing English, limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation, and grammar challenge. In addition, there are several tried-and-true methods for enhancing students' speaking abilities. The students and the lecturer can work together to enhancing the speaking performance through building a supportive learning environment, improving vocabulary, using technology, and giving feedback to the students' speaking performance

Declarations

Author contribution   :   Ramadhani Uswatun Khasanah was responsible for the whole research project. Along with the second author, she wrote and revised the manuscript. Patria Handung Jaya participated in the data

collection, transcription and analysis. Both authors approved the final manuscript.

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