

Students' Speaking Challenges at Different English Courses in *Kampung Inggris* Pare Kediri

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini membahas tantangan berbicara yang dihadapi siswa dan alumni di Kampung Inggris Pare, Kediri. Menggunakan pendekatan campuran, penelitian ini melibatkan 92 partisipan dari tiga lembaga. Data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner dan dianalisis secara kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Hasil menunjukkan 40,3% mengalami tantangan linguistik, serta masalah psikologis seperti kurang percaya diri (25%) dan kecemasan (23%). Dalam aspek lingkungan, 28,5% mendapat kesempatan berbicara namun bingung harus berkata apa, dan 31,7% jarang berinteraksi dengan penutur asli. Studi ini menyarankan penelitian lanjutan menggunakan wawancara atau observasi untuk mencari strategi mendukung kepercayaan diri berbicara siswa.

Kata Kunci: Tantangan berbicara, Kursus Bahasa Inggris

Abstract

This study investigates the speaking challenges faced by students and alumni in Kampung Inggris Pare, Kediri. Employing a mixed-method approach, 92 participants from three English institutions took part in the research. Data were collected using both close- and open-ended questionnaires, then analyzed through quantitative and qualitative methods. The findings revealed that 40.3% of respondents experienced linguistic difficulties related to vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Psychological issues such as low confidence (25%) and anxiety (23%) also hindered their speaking performance. Additionally, 28.5% had the opportunity to speak but did not know what to say, while 31.7% lacked interaction with native speakers. These results emphasize the need for integrated language instruction that also considers psychological and environmental factors. Future research should involve interviews or classroom observations to further explore effective strategies that support learners' speaking confidence.

Keywords: Speaking challenges, English course

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is considered one of the most complex and essential skills in language learning. Among the four language skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing speaking is the most directly linked to real-life communication. It requires learners not only to have a strong foundation in grammar and vocabulary but also the ability to produce utterances fluently, accurately, and appropriately in a given context. Speaking involves both linguistic and psychological processing, making it one of the most demanding skills to master. Learners must retrieve words quickly, structure them correctly, pronounce them clearly, and maintain interaction all under time pressure. For EFL learners, particularly in countries where English is not used in daily life, these demands are often intensified by limited exposure and lack of authentic communication opportunities.

In Indonesia, English is taught formally starting from junior high school to university. However, despite years of learning, many students still struggle with speaking English fluently and confidently. Murti & Jabu (2022) highlight that Indonesian EFL students often experience

problems in constructing sentences, recalling vocabulary, and managing pronunciation, which in turn affect their speaking fluency. Moreover, speaking is not just about knowing the language; it also involves overcoming emotional and social barriers such as anxiety, fear of making mistakes, and low self-confidence (Murti et al., 2022). The factors are frequently observed in Indonesian learners, many of whom hesitate to speak unless prompted and feel uncomfortable initiating English conversations. This combination of internal and external limitations results in speaking being perceived as the most challenging of all language skills.

To overcome these difficulties, many students seek alternative learning environments that offer more practical and communicative approaches. One of the most well-known centers in Indonesia is *Kampung Inggris* Pare, located in Kediri, East Java. *Kampung Inggris* offers a range of English courses designed to improve fluency through daily practice, interactive activities, and immersion in English-speaking environments. A widely used technique across many institutions there is storytelling, which allows students to develop their speaking through narration, creativity, and meaningful

communication. Storytelling encourages learners to organize their thoughts, connect with the audience, and focus on delivering messages rather than worrying solely about accuracy (Rahmadani et al., 2024). This method is seen as effective not only for enhancing fluency but also for reducing speaking anxiety, especially in informal or peer-based settings.

Nevertheless, even in immersive environments like *Kampung Inggris*, learners continue to face various speaking challenges. Despite the communicative atmosphere and speaking-focused programs, many students still report issues such as limited vocabulary, grammar errors, and pronunciation difficulties, as well as emotional obstacles like fear of making mistakes and lack of confidence. Moreover, some learners feel that their environment does not provide enough authentic exposure or structured speaking practice. These challenges suggest that the immersive method alone may not fully address all learners' needs. While several studies (Haryanti & Yuliana, 2024; Sabata et al., 2024) have examined speaking difficulties in classroom-based contexts, there is still a lack of research focusing on learners in informal, full-practice environments like *Kampung Inggris*.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the speaking challenges faced by students and alumni from three major English course institutions in *Kampung Inggris* IP, SP, and PEA. The research focuses on identifying the dominant linguistic, psychological, and environmental factors that influence learners' speaking ability. By collecting and analyzing data from students who have directly experienced the immersive learning environment, the study seeks to provide practical insights for teachers, program developers, and institutions in refining their approaches to English speaking instruction. The results are expected to contribute meaningfully to the development of more targeted, learner-centered speaking programs within non-formal English education settings.

METHODS

This study employed a mixed-method approach using an ex-post facto research design to explore the speaking challenges experienced by students and alumni from selected English course institutions in *Kampung Inggris* Pare. The purpose of combining quantitative and qualitative data was to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the speaking challenges experienced by students. The ex-post facto design was chosen because the challenges investigated had already occurred, making it appropriate for analyzing students' actual experiences retrospectively without manipulating any variables (Campbell et al., 1963).

The participants in this study were 92 students and alumni from three English course institutions: IP English

Course, SP English Course, and PEA English Course. These institutions are known for their focus on speaking programs and communicative approaches. After reviewing the responses, 90 participants were included in the final analysis. The respondents came from various educational levels, including junior and senior high school students, university students, and adult learners. All had participated in English courses that integrated speaking practice through methods such as storytelling.

The data were collected using a Google Form-based questionnaire that consisted of 24 items. The questionnaire was divided into three main parts: (1) speaking challenges, (2) strategies used to overcome those challenges, and (3) suggestions for improving the speaking program. It combined close-ended questions (multiple-choice and checklist) and open-ended questions to capture both quantitative data and personal reflections. The instrument was designed based on prior studies and theoretical references and was validated by three former *Kampung Inggris* students to ensure that the questions were clear, relevant, and accessible.

The data from close-ended questions were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics, specifically percentage calculations, to identify the frequency of each type of challenge. Meanwhile, the data from open-ended questions were analyzed qualitatively through thematic analysis. The responses were coded and grouped into themes that represented the linguistic, psychological, and environmental challenges faced by the learners. The data analysis in this study followed three main steps. First, in the data extraction and preparation stage, all responses were exported from Google Form into Microsoft Excel. The researcher carefully checked for completeness and removed any invalid responses. Second, during the data coding and visualization stage, the researcher organized the close-ended responses by category and presented the results in the form of bar charts, which illustrated the frequency of each speaking challenge selected by participants. Third, the descriptive analysis and interpretation stage involved converting these frequencies into percentages to determine the proportion of students facing each type of challenge. Those multi-step approach allowed the researcher to examine both statistical trends and contextual insights, providing a balanced understanding of the speaking difficulties encountered by learners in an immersive English environment such as *Kampung Inggris* Pare.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

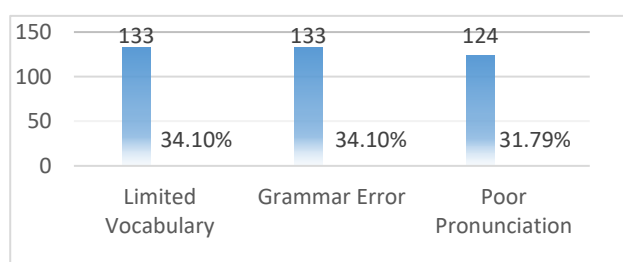
The analysis of the questionnaire responses provided a clear overview of the specific areas where students at *Kampung Inggris* Pare encounter difficulties in speaking English. From the data collected, it was evident that the speaking challenges experienced by learners do not occur in isolation but are distributed across three interrelated dimensions: linguistic, psychological, and environmental. These categories emerged consistently from both the close-ended and open-ended responses, revealing that each group of challenges contributes in unique ways to the learners' speaking performance.

Among the three categories, linguistic challenges appeared to be the most dominant, indicating that many students still struggle with core elements of the language, such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Psychological challenges, including anxiety and lack of confidence, were also reported frequently, showing that emotional readiness plays a critical role in oral communication. Environmental challenges, while less frequent, still showed noticeable influence, particularly in relation to practice opportunities and the availability of speaking partners.

The following sections present a detailed explanation of each type of speaking challenge. The descriptions are based on the frequency of responses, interpreted in relation to existing theories and previous studies to show both the pattern and the significance of the findings.

Linguistic Challenges

Chart 1. The Bar Chart of Linguistic Challenges



34.10% of the students reported facing challenges with limited vocabulary, which reflects that a significant number of learners lack the lexical range needed to support fluid and spontaneous communication. When students do not have access to a sufficient bank of words, they tend to rely on repetition, code-switching, or giving up mid-sentence, which disrupts both fluency and clarity. This limitation often forces learners to simplify their ideas or avoid expressing more complex thoughts. Vocabulary challenges are particularly common among EFL learners in Indonesia, as noted by Sabata et al., (2024), who emphasized that limited exposure to authentic English use

often leads to weak vocabulary acquisition. It supported by the opinion of respondents,

"Yes... Because limited vocabulary makes it hard to express ideas clearly or accurately, which can lead to misunderstandings or difficulty participating in conversations" (HW).

"Yes, limited vocabulary can make it difficult for us to express ideas or concepts appropriately" (RN).

Moreover, another 34.10% of students indicated that they struggled with grammar errors, such as difficulty using correct tenses, subject-verb agreement, or sentence structures while speaking. Grammar problems often result in broken or awkward sentence construction, making students hesitant to speak for fear of sounding incorrect. This is supported by a study of Maji et al., (2022), who observed that when students are not confident in grammar, they experience a cognitive overload during speaking, trying to process rules while attempting to communicate. It supported by the opinion of respondents stated,

"I think the problems are grammar error and pronunciation error because I'm not understand of the grammar, because the grammar has many various words" (EM).

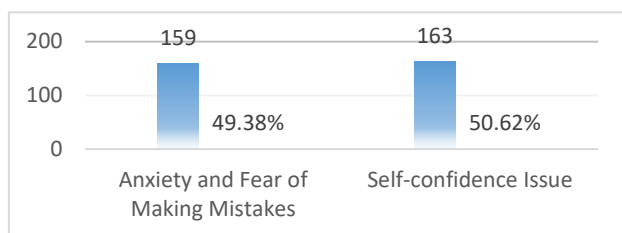
"I have problems with grammar and pronunciation. My vocab is lacking much, and I often find it hard when I want to speak." (LQ)

31.79% of students identified poor pronunciation as a speaking challenge. Though slightly lower than the other two linguistic aspects, pronunciation issues remain critical, especially in environments where mispronunciation leads to listener misunderstanding or negative judgment. Students often find it hard to produce certain English sounds that do not exist in their native language, leading to insecurity and a reluctance to speak aloud. Pronunciation difficulties can also affect intonation and stress, which are key to sounding natural in speech. This aligns with what Sabata et al., (2024) describe as "phonological stress," where incorrect pronunciation can trigger both communication breakdown and psychological stress, especially in peer interactions or group settings. Students shared their insights about pronunciation difficulties, *"I don't really understand and I find it difficult to pronounce"* (SC).

"I understand little vocabulary, I often make mistakes in pronunciation" (AW). "

Psychological Challenges

Chart 2. The Bar Chart of Psychological Challenges



The psychological challenges faced by students appear to have a strong impact on their speaking performance, as seen in the data. 50.62% of respondents reported experiencing self-confidence issues, which suggests that more than half of the students feel inadequate or insecure when asked to speak English. This lack of confidence is often rooted in negative past experiences, such as being laughed at, corrected harshly, or comparing themselves with more fluent peers. As a result, students may refrain from speaking altogether or speak in very limited ways, even if they understand the topic. In many cases, this manifests as a fear of public embarrassment, which can become a persistent block that holds students back from taking risks in conversation. The students delivered their opinion about the reason why they feel unconfident while speaking English.

"Sometimes, I lose my words because I didn't know the correct words to say. And I do care about the environment too, which is can support us more confident" (YRP).

"What makes me feel unconfident when speaking is that I do not master grammar and find it difficult to pronounce English words" (HW).

Based on the reasons, feeling unconfident is caused of not mastering linguistic aspects in speaking English.

Closely related, 49.38% of students admitted to suffering from anxiety and fear of making mistakes, further reinforcing the emotional barriers present in the classroom. This anxiety typically comes from the pressure to speak perfectly, the fear of being judged by teachers or peers, or the discomfort of speaking in a second language without enough preparation. These internal pressures often lead to physical symptoms such as stammering, sweating, or blanking out, and prevent learners from expressing even basic ideas fluently. The narrow difference between the two psychological factors indicates that they are deeply intertwined students who feel anxious often also experience low confidence. (Haryanti & Yuliana, 2024) explain that this psychological interference can prevent students from engaging with speaking tasks, even when they have the linguistic ability. Meanwhile, (Rahmadani et al., 2024) found that anxiety during speaking is triggered not only by fear of failure but also by the constant

perception of being evaluated, especially in group or public contexts. These emotional patterns create a learning environment that feels unsafe for risk-taking, which is essential in language development. Therefore, unless students are provided with a psychologically supportive classroom culture where making mistakes is seen as part of the learning process their speaking progress will remain limited, regardless of their linguistic competence. Students worried that they might offend others and afraid that people didn't understand what student said.

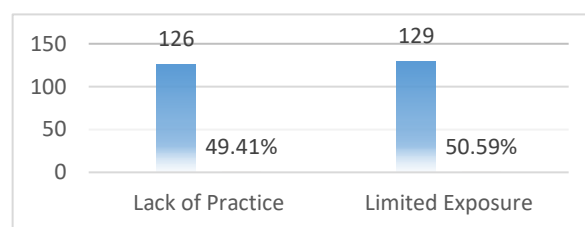
"I'm worried that my words might offend others, struggling to express myself clearly, and also people don't get what I mean" (SP).

"I'm scared that others won't understand what I am saying" (EJ).

"I am afraid of speaking with incorrect sentences and vocabulary mistakes" (N)

Environmental Challenges

Chart 3. The Bar Chart of Environmental Challenges



In addition to internal factors, the external learning environment also plays a crucial role in shaping students' speaking ability. According to the bar chart, 50.59% of students reported limited English exposure as a major challenge. This reflects the lack of regular interaction with English beyond classroom walls, such as through English-language media, conversations with native speakers, or English-speaking social settings. Even though *Kampung Inggris* is known for its immersive approach, these findings suggest that not all learners are taking full advantage of that immersion, or that it may not be as accessible or consistent across all institutions. Without authentic input, students find it difficult to internalize how English is naturally spoken, which affects their pronunciation, intonation, vocabulary usage, and confidence. (Saiful, 2023) asserts that real and repeated exposure to English is essential for learners to move beyond classroom formulas and develop natural speech habits. Without this exposure, even motivated learners tend to develop passive comprehension skills rather than active speaking ability. Students stated that limited interaction affect their speaking performance,

"One situation where I faced an environmental challenge due to lack of experience was during my office hours.

There were no expats, native speakers, or colleagues who spoke English fluently or could correct my mistakes” (FI). “As I see it, limited interaction with native speakers, just being passive learning, busy about daily life (could be the challenges for practice English efficiently)” (SH).

Additionally, 49.41% of students stated that they experienced a lack of speaking practice, which reinforces the idea that the environment may not provide sufficient opportunities for learners to actually use the language. This could be caused by various institutional or instructional limitations large class sizes, teacher-centered methodologies, insufficient time for oral activities, or even the dominance of written tasks over spoken ones. Students who do not engage in speaking practice regularly will often struggle with fluency, as they are not given the space to experiment, make mistakes, and refine their oral skills. (Lubis et al., 2024) highlighted that, students who lack structured, routine speaking opportunities tend to develop anxiety, stagnation, and low motivation over time. Even in a language-rich environment like *Kampung Inggris*, the mere presence of English instruction does not automatically translate into fluent speaking unless students are actively pushed and supported to speak. Regular group discussions, peer feedback, role plays, and open dialogue sessions are essential to transform passive learners into active communicators. Without such practice, learners may revert to silence or rote learning, failing to develop the real-time communication skills that speaking demands. *“Lack of practice speaking English because I don’t have much time to learning, listening all of the English language” (PH).*

“Because I don’t have basic English and lack experience studying at home” (NAF)

These qualitative insights suggest that speaking problems stem from multiple dimensions. Learners often face speaking difficulties because they are inhibited, have nothing to say, or lack vocabulary. Affective factors such as anxiety, low confidence, and fear of making mistakes can also hinder oral performance. In addition, speaking is cognitively demanding because it requires the speaker to retrieve words in real time, which may cause hesitation and breakdowns in fluency. Furthermore, speaking is an interactive process that involves more than grammar and vocabulary; it also requires the ability to use language appropriately in different social contexts.

These perspectives support the view that speaking difficulties among learners involve not only linguistic knowledge but also psychological and environmental aspects. A nuanced understanding of these interwoven factors is essential for educators and stakeholders to design pedagogical strategies and

institutional policies that are responsive, inclusive, and effective in promoting learners’ oral communicative competence.

CONCLUSION

This study investigated the speaking challenges experienced by learners at *Kampung Inggris* Pare, focusing on three main areas: language difficulties, psychological barriers, and environmental factors. The results showed that many students struggle with vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. In addition, fear of making mistakes and low confidence often prevent them from speaking actively. Some also lack enough practice, even in an English-speaking environment. These findings show that having a good learning environment is not enough if students still feel anxious or unprepared. Teachers and course providers need to support both the emotional and academic needs of learners.

This study involved three English institutions and used questionnaires as the main source of data. Although this is a limitation, the use of both close- and open-ended questions allowed the researcher to analyze the challenges from both a quantitative and qualitative perspective. The open-ended responses helped to explain the numerical results in more detail and supported the use of a mixed-method approach.

Future research is recommended to include other instruments such as interviews or classroom observations to explore students’ speaking problems more deeply. It is also suggested that future studies focus on practical efforts that can help students become more confident and reduce their fear of speaking. These may include creating a more supportive environment, applying interactive speaking tasks, and encouraging positive feedback during speaking practice.

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