

# ANALISIS TANTANGAN YANG DIHADAPI MAHASISWA TEKNIK ELEKTRO UNIVERSITAS ISLAM KALIMANTAN DALAM MENGEMBANGKAN KEMAMPUAN BERBICARA BAHASA INGGRIS

## *An Analysis of the Challenges Faced by Electrical Engineering Students at Universitas Islam Kalimantan in Developing Their English Speaking Skill.*

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### Abstrak

Kemampuan berbicara dalam bahasa Inggris menjadi tantangan signifikan bagi mahasiswa teknik elektro. Observasi menunjukkan bahwa keterampilan bahasa mereka, terutama keterampilan spesifik, masih sangat kurang berkembang, meskipun mereka memiliki keinginan untuk meningkatkan hasil belajar. Perkembangan teknologi komunikasi diharapkan dapat mendorong mahasiswa untuk meningkatkan kemampuan bahasa Inggris mereka secara efektif. Penelitian ini berfokus pada mahasiswa yang secara konsisten menghadapi hambatan unik dalam menguasai bahasa tersebut. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis tantangan yang dihadapi oleh mahasiswa teknik elektro dalam mengembangkan kemampuan berbahasa Inggris. Data untuk penelitian ini diperoleh dari populasi yang terdiri dari 30 mahasiswa teknik elektro yang bersedia berpartisipasi. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode analisis data kualitatif yang didukung oleh instrumen untuk mengukur tingkat kecemasan melalui kuesioner yang diadaptasi dari Horwitz's Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLAS). Kuesioner tersebut terdiri dari 15 item yang dianalisis menggunakan skala Likert dengan rentang 1 hingga 5. Untuk meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara, pendekatan komunikatif dan teknik role-playing diterapkan, memungkinkan mahasiswa untuk berlatih secara intensif melalui percakapan berbasis teks yang terdiri dari 4 hingga 10 dialog. Penelitian ini mengikuti model Classroom Action Research (CAR), yang mencakup siklus perencanaan, tindakan, observasi, dan refleksi yang dilakukan dalam dua siklus. Analisis Likert menunjukkan bahwa peserta jarang berlatih dengan cepat, mengalami kepanikan (65%), kesulitan menghafal (52%), lambat merespons (63,2%), kurang percaya diri (65,6%), takut membuat kesalahan (64%), takut dikritik (68%), takut dinilai (64,8%), merasa kurang mampu untuk berpartisipasi (67,2%), kesulitan menulis (71%), dan kesulitan memahami instruksi (61,1%).

### Kata Kunci:

Kemampuan Berbicara Bahasa Inggris  
Tantangan Belajar  
Pembelajaran Bahasa Asing

### Keywords:

English Speaking Skill  
Learning Challenges  
Foreign Language Learning

### Abstract

Speaking English poses a significant challenge for local electrical engineering students. Observations reveal that their specific language skills are notably underdeveloped, despite their desire to improve learning outcomes. The development of communication technology is expected to naturally encourage students to enhance their English skills effectively. This study focuses on students who consistently encounter unique obstacles in mastering the language. The aim of this research was to analyze the challenges faced by electrical engineering students in developing English proficiency. The data for this study was obtained from a population of 30 electrical engineering students who agreed to participate. The research utilized qualitative data analysis methods, supported by instruments designed to measure anxiety levels through a questionnaire adapted from Horwitz's Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLAS). The questionnaire comprised 15 items, which were analyzed using a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. To improve speaking skills, a communicative approach and role-playing techniques were implemented, allowing students to practice intensively through text-based conversations consisting of 4 to 10 dialogues. The study followed the Classroom Action Research (CAR) model, which includes iterative cycles of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, conducted over two cycles. The Likert analysis indicates that the participants never did practice rapidly, they have a panic (65%), difficulty in memorizing (52%), slow response (63.2%), and low self-confidence (65.6%), fear making mistakes (64%), Afraid being criticized (68%), fear being judged (64.8%), insufficient for participating (67.2%), difficult to write (71%), and difficult to understand the instructions (61.1%).

## INTRODUCTION

Difficulties in learning English as a second language (L2) are still commonly experienced by many students, particularly at the college level. Observations reveal that their initial L2 proficiency levels (intakes) are quite low. This is significant because the quality of input strongly influences both the learning process and its outcomes. In the context of higher education, the quality of these intakes is a crucial factor, especially in an era of globalization where communication is increasingly seamless. English remains the most widely used language for communication, yet it poses challenges for some students in the electrical engineering program. Proficiency in vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension is required for effective English speaking, and deficiencies in these areas can hinder students' ability to express their thoughts effectively or understand others' ideas (Sayuri, 2016).

Communication skills are categorized into receptive and productive skills. Listening and reading are typically considered receptive skills, while speaking and writing fall under productive skills. Receptive skills involve receiving and processing information without the need to produce language, whereas productive skills require learners to generate language, such as delivering a speech (Harmer, 2007: 246). In the digital era, learning across all disciplines is significantly shaped by internet media, websites, and multimedia, often presented with English terms and symbols. This facilitates easier access for learners to engage with a second or foreign language through electronic communication platforms, both audio and visual. These tools provide learners with greater opportunities to interact with the target language. It is expected to learn English L2, students can utter words, phrases, sentences correctly, and proper speech produced by speakers of English is the highest goal (Grace, Munaiseche, and Putung, 2016).

The researchers investigate the challenges students face in speaking English. This study was carried out during classroom teaching and learning activities, utilizing a communicative approach combined with role-play techniques. The researchers explored internal factors contributing to English-speaking difficulties, such as students' behavior and attitudes toward the language. Speaking in public likes it or not is something that must be done by someone with the students.

English skill challenges are speaking in category 1) nervous (excessive anxiety, lack of confidence, fear, traumatic, afraid assessed/judged perfectionist, less preparation, stress, and blank. Some reasons include a lack of confidence, often accompanied by physical symptoms such as a rapid heartbeat, trembling knees, a shaky voice, hot flashes, nausea, stomach cramps, hyperventilation or difficulty breathing, watery eyes, or a runny nose. Speaking difficulties can also be categorized by emotional factors such as feelings of inadequacy, loss of control, helplessness, shame, and panic.

Some students perceive that the primary challenge in public speaking, particularly in English, lies in linguistic factors, such as the sound system (phonic level), which impacts word comprehension (lexical level). Communication becomes difficult for listeners due to the speaker's limited control over grammar. Perception lecturer "...Electrical Engineering Students have low motivation because they assume that taught English language materials not related to their field of study that cannot support academic success... (Grace and Munaiseche, 2017). "... The same thing is expressed by Witt, et al. (2008) that anxiety causes distress makes them doubt that they will successfully convey meaning clearly. This causes the students with a low English-speaking ability is increasingly anxious and depressed because they feel always behind and less able to follow the lessons... "(Joni and Dharmayanti, 2017). This research aims to examine the challenges in learning

English and identify the factors influencing students in the Electrical Engineering program.

## METHOD

The research employed both qualitative and quantitative methods, utilizing a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach with two cycles, following the model of Kemmis & McTaggart. This design involves four stages: first, planning the action; second, implementing the plan in the classroom; and third, observing the action.

Data was collected throughout the process. The first step involved identifying a classroom-related issue to investigate. Next, it was confirmed that the students faced challenges such as a lack of confidence, panic, slow learning, and difficulty memorizing English. Then, a specific model was selected to address the speaking challenges of each student. Data was collected from participants through questionnaires and observations. The participants are 30 students who study at an electrical engineering department. The methodology has been applied through Classroom Action Research with two-stage investigation. They are given a theme conversation in groups which divide into 2-3 people. This activity takes place in once a week each class. The students are given 15-20 minutes for speaking with a group in front of the class.

The first stage involved observing the students' English speaking skills to assess their speaking practices and analyze individual behavior during speaking activities. This observation took place in classrooms, focusing on dialogue-based interactions. During the observation, the researcher identified significant challenges in each lesson, with many students exhibiting physical symptoms such as fear, nervousness, and panic due to the unfamiliar nature of the practice.

The next stage focused on identifying the factors contributing to anxiety in English speaking, which occurred before, during, and after the activity. These factors were primarily linguistic: pronunciation,

accuracy, intonation, and fluency. Following this, a questionnaire was completed to gather participants' perceptions of the challenges they faced while speaking. The Likert scale was used for responses. After collecting the data, the researcher analyzed the responses using the Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), which includes the questions to identify errors. The scoring was done on a 1-5 Likert scale, with scores ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

The questionnaire was distributed to 30 respondents, and there are 15 questions to using the Likert scale, the responses were analyzed to measure the constraints faced by the students in learning English. Respondents selected a number from 1 to 5 based on the following criteria: 1. Strongly Disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. Undecided, 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of data gathered from 15 questions, 10 items were chosen as most relevant to the study's objectives. The Likert scale evaluation indicates that students seldom engage in speaking practice and experience significant anxiety. Participants frequently reported feeling anxious, struggling to speak, fearing judgment, and experiencing nervousness, all of which undermine their confidence in speaking English. The data, collected from 30 respondents, was compiled and analyzed. A Likert scale was employed to measure the challenges in learning English, with response options ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Table 1 Students' Perception

Answered	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
very panic		12	8	10	
difficult to memorize		1	1	17	11
slow	1	8	15	6	
have a confidence	3	2	15	10	
fear making mistakes	1	5	9	12	3
Afraid being criticized	2	3	10	11	4
fear being judged	3	4	7	7	9
insufficient for participating	1	2	8	12	7
difficult to write	1	4	9	10	6
difficult to understand the instructions	2	5	7	13	3

All results are:

- 70% have a Speaking Anxiety (Statement Negative)
- 30% have self-confidence (statement Positive)

There are four categories of students who tend to lack self-confidence. These students rarely listen to music, play games, watch movies or YouTube, or use applications that encourage frequent English-speaking practice. Based on the questionnaire results, 70% of respondents (negative perception) exhibited high levels of anxiety when using English. The data also revealed that students who demonstrate better English-speaking abilities tend to engage more frequently in activities such as listening to music, playing games, watching YouTube, and using internet applications to improve their English skills. In response to the questionnaire, 30% of respondents (positive perception) showed a better capability in speaking English.

During the second cycle of the study, the researcher implemented a learning strategy involving role-playing. This method, designed to make learning more engaging, involved forming small groups where students supported each other through turn-taking in conversations. To address the challenges students face in speaking English, the following steps were identified to boost their confidence:

- Understanding the basics of speech production: Students should study the theory of speech organs (phonetics and phonology). By using phonetic transcription, they can avoid pronunciation errors often caused by reliance on spelling alone.
- Mastering sound properties: Students need to learn the interconnected features of English sounds, such as duration, stress, and intonation, to use them accurately.
- Practicing consistently: Regular practice is essential. Memorizing challenging words, engaging in short dialogues with peers, and

applying appropriate learning methods can significantly improve fluency.

- Developing fluency in English: Consistent practice and strategic learning will help students acquire the language skills needed to achieve fluency.

## CONCLUSION

After conducting repeated speaking tests involving 4 to 10 dialogues, it was concluded that the primary constraint on English-speaking skills among electrical engineering students is their lack of a solid foundation. This leads to an anxiety rate of 70%, compared to 30% who demonstrate better confidence. The findings identified four key challenges based on data collection: panic (65%), difficulty in memorizing (52%), slow response (63.2%), and low self-confidence (65.6%), fear making mistakes (64%), Afraid being criticized (68%), fear being judged (64.8%), insufficient for participating (67.2%), difficult to write (71%), and difficult to understand the instructions (61.1%). These factors significantly impact the quality of students' learning processes, outcomes, and overall performance.

Based on these conclusions, it is recommended that lecturers and universities work to enhance students' motivation for learning a second language (L2) by conducting needs analyses and adopting appropriate teaching methods. The learning process should prioritize practice and incorporate innovative and updated learning models suitable for higher education. In the era of globalization, higher education institutions (HEIs) must ensure their graduates possess strong English language skills, enabling them to compete effectively in the industrialized world.

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