Students' Difficulties in Achieving Effective English Learning

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Abstract: English is an important foreign language to learn. This language is international and is used in various countries including Indonesia. In fact, in its application there are still many problems faced for both teachers and students during the learning process. Many reactions are be established in the learning process towards these difficulties, especially on students' outlooks in the learning process, results of students' learning, and contribution in carrying out set of activities. This research purposes to explain the students' problems in the process of English learning and the reasons that influence it. This research applies a qualitative approach such as questionnaire instruments, observations, and recording of video. The research data analysis is carried out through three procedures, they are reduction of data, presentation of data, description of conclusion and confirmation. The outcomes revealed that the subjects of research had various difficulties in learning English.
Key Words: learning problem, competence, English

Introduction

English as foreign language is one of the causes of students' difficulties to learn, so for students of non-English study programs. This can be seen during English learning in the Management study program at Universitas Mahkota Tricom Unggul. Nowadays, English has a very important role in the international arena in all fields, particularly within the area of understanding and advancements in technology. Because the importance of English, in this case, students of the Management study program, must improve their English skills, which are assessed based on academic scores, are very lacking. In addition, the importance of having good English skills is a demand of the world of work and industry, and as requirement if students want to continue their higher education.

Especially nowadays, in the revolution of industry 5.0, competency of English is mandatory for all students to keep up with world developments. English, which has become the linguafranca (language of instruction), has been used as a general course at all universities that must be followed by all students (Juliansyah, R. et al., 2022). Students often face various difficulties in achieving effective English language learning. Some of the main factors that can affect their success in learning English include limitations in basic skills in English. S Axelsson stated that the English learning process is inseparable from the difficulties for students both in primary education and college. This is focused on language skills either partially or completely (Rahmatunissa, A. et al, 2020), Many students start learning English with limitations in language basics such as vocabulary, grammar, and listening or speaking skills. These limitations can hinder their ability to keep up with more complex material.

Lack of speaking practice is also a success factor in learning English. Most students, especially in non-English countries, do not have the opportunity to interact in everyday English. They may only practice English in the classroom, which is limited, and not enough to speak or hear in a natural context. This causes them to have difficulty developing speaking skills and understanding language in real conversations. Kustanti and Prihmayadi stated that how brave it is to communicate in English is apparently a problem because English is not a mathematics that must be calculated first but a behavior that must be practiced and there is courage to speak English (Dalilah, W. K., & Sya, M. F., 2022).

This can happen due to a lack of motivation. Low motivation can be a major obstacle in learning English. Students who don't see immediate benefits or don't feel confident in their English language skills may be less motivated to go the extra mile. Negative attitudes towards learning foreign languages can also affect their learning outcomes. Mubarok stated that motivation is something important in teaching English because the absence of student motivation in learning English has a great influence on the learning actions (Juliansyah, R., & Ritonga, M. M., 2024). Meanwhile, Sardiman stated that motivation can also be described as a sequence of attempts to create specific circumstances that encourage an individual to desire and engage in certain activities, and if he finds it unappealing, he is likely to abandon it (Juliansyah, R. et al., 2022).

Lack of motivation can arise due to the fear of trying. Most students are worried about the errors in speaking or writing, which can hinder them from practicing actively. This fear often makes them more likely to be silent or not dare to try to communicate using English, thus reducing the opportunity to learn. Therefore, teachers must have interesting teaching methods to motivate students. In order to optimize the potential of technology-based teaching in improving speaking skills in English, it is necessary to focus on developing balanced learning strategies and taking into account existing needs and challenges. Thus, learning English can become more effective and relevant to face the demands of globalization today (Melati, E. et al, 2023). Teaching methods that are monotonous or do not involve a lot of interaction can make students feel bored and less interested in participating in lessons. Learning that is more interactive, uses technology, and is based on real contexts is more effective in improving English language skills. This problem must also be supported by the many access to learning resources. The Internet is one of the learning resources. The internet offers advantages like simplifying our ability to find a range of accessible information, as it can enhance our quality of life via learning. The web can also obtain different resources, including findings from research and papers from investigations across multiple areas (Sasmita, R. S., 2020). Students in some areas may have limitations in accessing quality learning resources, such as books, online learning media, or additional courses. This limits their opportunities to learn independently and deeply outside the classroom.

Another thing that is an obstacle in learning English is the accent or accent of the language itself. English accent and pronunciation are often a challenge for students. They may have difficulty understanding various accents or speaking with clear pronunciations that can be understood by native English speakers. Language is the most complete system of human symbols so that language can be used as a symbol of a culture of an ethnic group (ethnoculture) based on the existence of dialects or dialects of language with various variations (Triyanto,T. dkk, 2019). In addition, language as a part of life has a great influence on the development of knowledge, experience, and communication. As the official language of the state, Indonesian is used in every official state activity, including as a language of instruction in the field of education.

Nationally, the position of Indonesian is at the first level, regional languages at the second level, and foreign languages at the third level. But for most Indonesians, in terms of emotions, familiarity, and acquisition, regional languages occupy the first level, Indonesian occupies the second level, and foreign languages occupy the third level. This has a great influence on Indonesian language learning, and allows code mixing to occur (Puspitasari, T., & Devi, A., 2019). The influence of the mother tongue (e.g., sentence structure, phonology, and vocabulary) is often a barrier for students to learn English properly. They may tend to

translate directly from their native language, which can lead to errors in the use of English. So this is also a trigger for students to be unconfident. meanwhile self-assurance is an individual aspect that contributes to the success of acquiring a foreign language. Foreign language learners who have a high sense of self-assurance well and are More often than not, they tend to exhibit assurance in their abilities as learners. In contrast, when self-assurance is minimal, students suffer from uncertainty and insecurity (Syafitri, A. et al, 2019).

Some students may feel unconfident in using English, whether speaking, writing, listening, or reading. This lack of confidence hinders them from trying, which ultimately slows down the activities of learning. according to the ideas outlined in the introduction, one can deduce that students encounter numerous challenges while acquiring English, particularly as a second language since it is utilized in specific contexts and among certain individuals rather than in everyday situations. Consequently, this article aims to delve further into the difficulties that students face across the four language competencies., namely, speaking, listening, writing and reading. This is specifically for learning English that is not from an English major of English special purpose learners. This is necessary to be created as informational content that can subsequently be utilized to enhance the idea of efficient English education for learners who are not part of the English program (English special purpose) learners.

Research Methods

Based on The aim of this study is to identify the challenges faced by students when acquiring English. This research falls under the category of qualitative analysis, which generates noticeable written or verbal expressions. The research was carried out on students in the even semester of 2023-2024 in June 2024. The subjects of the study are students of Universitas Mahkota Tricom Unggul of Management study program semester 2 who take the English for Academic Purpose course. In this course, students get a discussion of the basic concepts of English specifically that relate English to their major. Previously, they received a General English course. The research subjects are 52 students.

The collection of data was carried out by distributing methods of questionnaires, recordings, and observations. A survey was given to the participants to understand how students reacted to their English learning journey over two semesters, including the challenges they faced during the studying process. Furthermore, the researchers gathered information through video recordings. The recording contains experiences, impressions and messages of students learning English in these two semesters for about 4 minutes. The outcomes of the recording were subsequently analysed, focusing particularly on students' presentation and speech delivery. Observations occur throughout a semester of learning activities to assess students who are identified as active, less active, and passive..

Students can be classified as engaged when they demonstrate involvement by responding to inquiries, posing questions, and frequently sharing their viewpoints during collaborative tasks. In contrast, students who exhibit lower levels of engagement often display minimal interaction with their instructors. Their participation tends to arise solely when prompted or designated by the instructor to share their thoughts. The final group is identified as passive, as these students hardly ever communicate verbally with their teachers and typically perform poorly on quizzes or midterm assessments. (under 50). Triangualization Methods were employed to confirm the authenticity of the research information. Sugiyono mentioned that in the process of triangulation, the researcher gathers

information and verifies the reliability of the collected data using different techniques and sources for reference. (Alfansyur, A., & Mariyani, M., 2020). In this research, the analysis of data consisted of three steps, namely reduction of data, presentation of data, and conclusion or verification.

Result and Discussion

From the results of the questionnaire obtained, each student has a different opinion about the most challenging skills to lear. No skill is missed. Nonetheless, when evaluating different language abilities, the findings indicate that Speaking ranks as the most proficient. The reasons behind their preference for Speaking include insufficient English vocabulary, challenges in memorization, pronunciation difficulties due to significant differences from Indonesian, anxiety about errors, fear of ridicule from peers, a deficiency in motivation, and a gap in knowledge of Grammar. This is supported by findings from research conducted by Wahyudi, N, who indicated that challenges in learning to communicate in English stem from the limited opportunities for speaking practice and insufficient motivation and lack of confidence (2020).

Listening skills are in second place after speaking. When they hear an English-language video or show, they feel they can't keep up with the voice of a native English speaker. This is because of the speed of native speakers' speaking. Insufficient command of vocabulary and comprehension of English accents hinders their ability to grasp the conversation's content, regardless of whether the pace has been altered to match Indonesian or the speaker is a non-native.. Problem of listening was also found by Tustiawati, I. A. M., & Noviantari, N. K. who researched students' perception of learning to listen to "listening" in English. It was stated that the use of accents that were not familiar to students' ears and also the speed of speaker speech in the audio media used during learning made it difficult for students to understand the information conveyed. Despite these difficulties, all research participants agreed on the importance of recognizing and using various English accents in listening learning media (2023).

For ESP learners in this context, creating text is the most intricate task to excel in. Nevertheless, a small number of learners find writing to be a challenging skill to acquire. This occurs because during their education, they adopt a writing process method that involves various stages that need to be completed before they finalize their compositions in English.. The writing process consists of drafts (preparing the outline of the paragraph), drafting (making an initial draft of the paragraph), editing (verifying the correctness of the text), revising (ensuring the content's appropriateness), and publishing (sharing the outcomes of the writing with friends to view). The significance of the approach method in writing tasks is strongly advised since a process is essential to express an idea, nurture thoughts, and enhance its components. Furthermore, suitable educational materials are required to reduce the challenges encountered with these resources.. Megawati & Anugerahwati stated that one of the media that can be used is comic strips if the idea to be developed is related to the narrative text (Megawati, F. 2016).

Reading is considered the simplest challenge when it comes to learning English. Many students perceive developing reading abilities as the least challenging task. This perception is influenced by the lack of enthusiasm students have towards reading activities. Despite the fact that instruction is provided in English, students still find enjoyment in reading tasks. Furthermore, while engaging in reading, they have access to texts that serve as immediate

references for addressing questions about comprehension. Nevertheless, the belief that reading is a complex skill is not completely disregarded, even if it is held by a minority. Based on collected information, students encounter challenges in grasping the meaning of English texts because their vocabulary knowledge is limited, making it hard to understand the messages within the material. This insight should encourage all language educators to consider the difficulty level of English reading materials in relation to their students' capabilities.

As a supporting material for research data, the analysis was carried out on the results of video recordings as students' final projects. Students are asked to share their experiences while studying English for two semesters. in English. Then, make a draft that you want to convey a maximum of two paragraphs and consult with the lecturer. After receiving input from lecturers, students revise and prepare themselves by watching and listening to You Tube videos before making recordings. YouTube serves as a social media site where users can find videos. It features a diverse array of video content saved on its online platform, allowing anyone with internet access to watch and engage with these videos from any location. Additionally, individuals can freely upload their own videos to YouTube, provided they have a Google account to create a YouTube account. (Tutiasri, R. P., Laminto, N. K., & Nazri, K., 2020).

To make it easier to analyze the recorded data, the researcher classified the results of student recordings into three categories, namely active, less active, and passive students. The findings from the assessment indicated that learners who engaged actively in the English lesson could execute the project with confidence and fluency, displaying nearly accurate pronunciation. This is evident from their facial cues that fail to reflect their nervousness and articulate nature while sharing their stories, impressions and messages. They confidently convey what they feel during learning English in class. Some students even improvised very well to provide detailed information to the listeners. For students who engage less in the educational experience, their results are fairly impressive, particularly regarding English word pronunciation, even if it occasionally comes across as hesitant since they haven't committed the material or reviewed the handwritten notes. The notes that were created assist in offering concepts that will be expressed in the video recording. Regarding facial expressions, they appear calm and unstrained while sharing their individual experiences, feelings, and communications.

The outcomes of the spoken recordings from students who took a passive role in class throughout the two-semester English learning journey indicated a lack of confidence in expressing their experiences, feelings, and messages in English, despite having notes ready to read. When sharing their experiences, their voices were notably soft, and their facial expressions depicted either shyness or nervousness.

Furthermore, the way the language is constructed leaves much to be desired. This becomes apparent when they attempt to articulate English words sporadically and over and over again due to their uncertainty about the meaning. This stems from the challenges faced in converting Indonesian into English without verifying it again or proofreading. Although in the consultation the content of the description has received input, the results of the improvements made are not satisfactory enough. From all the results of the study, It can be determined that the challenge of mastering English and attaining full language proficiency is affected by each student's language skill level. This is illustrated by the remarks of the

research participants identified as active, who claim that Speaking is the simplest skill. Conversely, those categorized as passive express that Speaking is the hardest aspect to learn.

Conclusion

The English learning process cannot be separated from the appearance of numerous challenges arises, particularly among learners. These challenges are evident within individual language abilities or collectively. In educational settings where students possess diverse language skills, the difficulties encountered produce a range of outcomes. In this research, the participants demonstrated obstacles in acquiring English across four areas, ranked from the most challenging to the least as follows : Speaking, Listening, Reading, Writing.

The challenges faced in acquiring the English language are significantly shaped by each learner's proficiency level. Active learners often prefer writing tasks. Conversely, passive learners typically find speaking more challenging to practice. Findings from the video recordings revealed that both active and less engaged students successfully completed the final project, particularly regarding their confidence and grammar usage. In contrast, passive students exhibited a lack of confidence in their results and were unable to convey experiences, impressions and messages fluently.

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