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ANALYSIS OF THE BENEFITS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF GOOGLE TRANSLATE IN WRITING CLASS

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ABSTRACT

Google Translate offers several benefits and has proven effective in supporting English learning. It assists students by enabling quick translation of words, sentences, and phrases, enriching vocabulary and sentence construction. Its features like text, voice, camera translation, and offline mode make it a versatile tool for language learning. It also helps learners improve vocabulary, understand complex sentences, and practice pronunciation. Therefore, Google Translate can be chosen as a main supplementary learning tool particularly in learning English. In this study, the writers analyze the benefits and effectiveness of Google Translate in supporting English writing skills among students of Polytechnic Tonggak Equator. The research employs qualitative descriptive methods and involves sixth-semester students as respondents. Findings indicate that Google Translate helps improve vocabulary, grammar comprehension, and writing confidence, although over-reliance can reduce students' critical engagement with language. With guided use, this tool contributes positively to students' writing development. Furthermore, it also assists students by helping them solve vocabulary and grammar issues, which facilitates their writing process and promotes greater independence in completing assignments.

Keywords: Google Translate, writing skills, vocabulary, grammar, confidence, language learning.

INTRODUCTION

In the English language learning process, writing is one of the essential challenging skills for many students. According to Nation (2001), one of the main problems faced by students in writing classes is limited vocabulary mastery. The lack of vocabulary not only hinders their ability to understand English texts, but also reduces their ability to express their ideas effectively in writing. This has an impact on the low quality of the writing produced, as students often struggle to find the correct words to convey the desired meaning (Laufer, 1997).

In addition, the lack of understanding of grammar is also a significant obstacle. Errors in sentence structure, such as inappropriate word placement or tense usage, reduce the clarity and coherence of their academic writing. The absence of a strong grammar foundation causes many students to make fundamental errors in constructing sentences, which leads to a decline in the overall quality of their writing.

Another problem is the lack of writing practice outside of class, which causes students to be unfamiliar with expressing their thoughts and ideas in the form of English writing. This unfamiliarity affects their confidence level in producing good writing. Students who rarely practice writing tend to feel anxious and hesitant when they have to compose writing, especially in academic contexts that demand accuracy and fluency.

In dealing with this problem, the use of tools such as Google Translate is one of the solutions that students often rely on. According to Novitasari and Mardiana (2022), Google Translate has been increasingly utilized by students to support their English learning

process, particularly in writing. However, the effectiveness and benefits of using Google Translate in improving students' writing skills need to be analyzed further to ensure that this tool helps the writing learning process, especially in improving vocabulary mastery, grammar understanding, and confidence in writing. Based on these problems, the writers want to analyze public speaking problems among Polytechnic Tonggak Equator students in a research entitled **Analysis of Benefits and Effectiveness of Google Translate in Writing Class**.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Writing is one of the four basic skills in language learning that involves the ability to effectively communicate ideas and information in written form. According to Harmer (2017, p.23), "writing is a complex process that involves cognitive and linguistic skills." In the context of language learning, writing is a skill that requires students to have sufficient vocabulary as well as an understanding of grammar and coherence in order to produce meaningful texts.

In academic settings, writing fulfills multiple functions, including expressing knowledge, developing arguments, and communicating research. According to Hyland (2003, p.9), "academic writing plays a central role in academic communities, shaping how knowledge is constructed and shared." There are several types of writing commonly used in academic settings. Raimes (1983, p.45) explains that "descriptive writing enables students to convey images and descriptions, helping to develop vocabulary and expressive detail." Expository writing, as noted by Oshima and Hogue (2006, p.78), "involves explaining ideas logically, commonly used in essays and research papers to clarify information for the reader." Persuasive writing, according to Murray and Moore (2006, p.103), "is writing that seeks to convince the reader of a specific viewpoint, requiring structured arguments and logical support." Lastly, Brown (2001, p. 132) describes narrative writing as "an engaging way to present a sequence of events, allowing students to practice organizing ideas chronologically."

Each type of writing serves distinct roles in language learning, each presenting unique challenges and benefits. For instance, descriptive and narrative writing expand vocabulary and sentence variety, while expository and persuasive writing encourage critical thinking and analytical skills. This study focuses on how tools like Google Translate can assist students in these types of writing, particularly in translating and constructing coherent, well-structured texts.

Vocabulary mastery plays a crucial role in writing, as students need a sufficient variety of words to express their ideas. Nation, I. S. P. (2001, p.129) states that "vocabulary limitations are a common barrier that reduces the quality of students writing." This highlights the importance of adequate vocabulary for effective written communication. Additionally, the specific vocabulary requirements vary across writing types; for instance, descriptive writing demands expressive and varied vocabulary. Persuasive writing requires the right understanding or terms to build clear arguments in order to persuade readers (Hyland, K. 2003).

Various strategies, such as reading extensively, using dictionaries, and practicing with language apps, can aid in vocabulary development, helping students to improve their range and accuracy. Research also supports the connection between vocabulary size and writing proficiency, as a larger vocabulary contributes to richer, more coherent texts (Harmer, J., 2017). Furthermore, vocabulary mastery enhances coherence, as students are better able to use connectors, synonyms, and topic-specific terms to link ideas smoothly, ultimately creating more structured and compelling texts.

Google Translate offers various benefits for students in writing classes, particularly in improving vocabulary, enhancing grammar comprehension, and increasing confidence in writing. One of its primary advantages is aiding in vocabulary development. According to Nation (2001, p.128), “vocabulary limitations are a common barrier that reduces the quality of students' writing.” Google Translate provides students with instant access to translations and synonyms, which can help them expand their vocabulary range and more precisely articulate their ideas. This tool allows students to quickly identify unfamiliar words and use them appropriately, leading to greater fluency and accuracy in their writing (Hidayah & Rahman, 2021).

In addition to vocabulary, Google Translate can enhance grammar comprehension, helping students better understand sentence structure and correct grammar usage. Research has shown that digital tools like Google Translate significantly impact the learning process by improving students' grammar comprehension, which ultimately enhances the accuracy and quality of their writing (F Fatimah 2018). However, it is important for students to use this tool cautiously, as Google Translate sometimes struggles with nuanced meanings and complex grammatical forms. With instructional guidance, students can use Google Translate to observe examples of correct grammar while developing their understanding of sentence construction.

The use of Google Translate also contributes positively to students' confidence in writing. Google translate is a digital media that can support learning English, because it can play an important role in helping students acquire new vocabulary in a more efficient way. This ease of access provides students with immediate support, allowing them to focus more on expressing their ideas than worrying about language accuracy. This sense of support helps students feel more capable and confident when approaching writing tasks, resulting in greater engagement and better outcomes in their written work.

In terms of effectiveness, Google Translate serves best as a supplementary tool rather than a primary resource for language learning. According to Clifford et al (2013, p.104), “Google Translate can be an effective support tool for students to understand foreign texts, but its excessive use without guidance can hinder their ability to develop a deep understanding of language”. Excessive reliance on Google Translate may lead to a superficial understanding of the target language, as students might skip the process of internalizing grammar rules or vocabulary through active learning. When used thoughtfully, with guidance from instructors, Google Translate can promote active engagement with vocabulary and syntax, fostering long-term language development. Moreover, while Google Translate can enhance productivity and improve accuracy in vocabulary, it is important to note its limitations. Google Translate often fails to provide accurate translations for complex sentences, idiomatic expressions, or context-dependent words. For example, Google Translate might not capture the full cultural context or intended nuance of a word or phrase, leading to awkward or incorrect translations. This can be especially problematic in academic writing, where precision and clarity are crucial.

Despite these limitations, the benefits of Google Translate are evident in its ability to assist students in overcoming immediate language barriers, improving fluency, and building confidence in writing. Studies have shown that when used strategically, such as for vocabulary enhancement and as a grammar-checking tool, Google Translate can be a valuable asset to students, helping them write more effectively in a second language (Godwin-Jones, 2018). Thus, while Google Translate is not a substitute for comprehensive language learning, it is an effective tool when integrated with active learning strategies. In writing classes, its strategic use can improve students' overall proficiency by supporting vocabulary acquisition, grammar comprehension, and fostering confidence in their ability to produce written work.

Confidence in academic writing is significantly influenced by students' writing habits and their perception of their abilities. Zotzmann and Sheldrake (2021, p.130) states that "students' beliefs about their writing skills, especially those who are non-native English speakers, directly impact their self-confidence and writing performance." Students who view themselves as capable writers are more likely to approach writing tasks with a positive mindset, leading to better outcomes. This self-perception is crucial because it shapes how they approach challenges in academic writing. For instance, students who believe they can improve through effort tend to exhibit higher confidence levels and are more willing to engage in writing practices that enhance their skills (Zotzmann & Sheldrake, 2021).

On the other hand, students who lack confidence in their writing abilities often struggle more with their academic writing tasks. This lack of self-belief can result in avoidance of writing assignments or reduced persistence in revising and improving their drafts. Such students might focus more on potential errors or shortcomings, which can inhibit their growth as writers. The relationship between confidence and writing practice highlights the importance of fostering a positive mindset about writing in academic settings. Encouraging students to view writing as a skill that can improve with consistent practice, rather than a fixed ability, can lead to greater motivation and, ultimately, improved writing performance. This section explores how building confidence through positive reinforcement, feedback, and reflection on progress can play a vital role in the development of effective writing skills.

Technology is important in language learning, particularly in second language acquisition. Digital tools such as Google Translate are widely used to help learners understand and produce the target language. Digital translation tools, such as Google Translate, can help students access the language content they need and improve their language skills (Godwin-Jones, 2018). These tools provide instant translations, which can facilitate comprehension and help students formulate ideas in the target language more efficiently.

However, there is ongoing debate about their effectiveness in promoting deeper language proficiency and enhancing writing skills. For example, Gracia & Pena (2011, p.67) states that "Google Translate may offer direct translations but often struggles with contextual nuances, leading to errors or awkward phrasing in academic writing." Furthermore, an over-reliance on such tools can sometimes result in students bypassing the critical cognitive processes involved in language learning. Instead of engaging deeply with grammar structures, vocabulary, and sentence construction, students may simply rely on the translation tool to bridge gaps in their knowledge.

This passive approach can hinder students from developing a strong foundation in the target language, which is essential for achieving fluency and accuracy in writing. However, when integrated thoughtfully into a writing curriculum, Google Translate and similar tools can be valuable as supplementary aids. They can serve as starting points for vocabulary building and syntactic exploration, offering students a sense of confidence in their writing process (Harmer, 2017). These tools can act as a bridge between understanding the target language and applying it effectively in writing tasks.

Moreover, studies indicate that using TALL tools in a guided setting, where learners receive feedback on their translations and linguistic choices, can encourage them to refine their language skills over time, fostering more active engagement with language mechanics. This study therefore explores how Google Translate, when used intentionally and with instructional support, can play a crucial role in developing writing skills in second language learners. By balancing immediate translation assistance with long-term skill-building, learners can benefit both from the tool's efficiency and its potential to enhance their writing competency in the target language.

METHODOLOGY

The research method of this study is descriptive research. According to Sugiyono (2011, p.56) "qualitative research is research used to research the conditions of natural objects, where researchers are key instruments." According to Bogdan and Biklen (2016, p.54) "qualitative research is one of the research procedures that produces descriptive data in the form of speech or writing 37 and the behavior of people observed." According to Rahmasari (2017, p. 90), classifies qualitative research into two types, the first is Interactive Qualitative Research is an in-depth study using direct data collection techniques from people in the environment being studied. Second, Non-Interactive Qualitative Research is also called analytical research, conducting studies based on document analysis. As the name implies, this research does not collect data interactively through interaction with human data sources.

In this research, data collection was carried out at the Tonggak Equator Polytechnic (Polteq). The writers distributed questionnaires to Polteq students to ensure a broad representation of perspectives. This research was conducted in March-April 2025. The writers chose fifth semester students of English for Business and Professionals Communication class as the subject of research because the student had taken the writing course. The writers will take research subjects with as many as 10 students to be interviewed. With the criteria of being willing to be subject of this study and having attended and completed the Writing course. In this research, the writers will use unstructured interviews to collect the data, and the interviews will be conducted through online platforms such as Zoom.

In this research, the results of the interview will be analyzed qualitatively. According to Sugiyono (2011), Qualitative research methods are research methods based on the philosophy of post-positivism, used to research on natural object conditions (as opposed to experiments) where the researcher is the key instrument, sampling of data sources is done purposively and snowball, collection techniques with triangulation (combined), data analysis is inductive or qualitative, and qualitative research results emphasize meaning rather than generalization.

According to Sugiyono (2011, p.57), qualitative research is suitable for application in several situations. First, when the research problem is not yet clear, still vaguely understood, or even completely unknown, qualitative methods are appropriate because researchers go directly into the field, allowing the problems to be identified more clearly. Second, qualitative methods are effective for understanding social interactions, as complex social dynamics can be explored through techniques such as participant observation and in-depth interviews with the social group being studied. Third, these methods are highly suitable for developing theories, particularly those constructed from field-based data. Fourth, qualitative research is also useful for verifying the accuracy of social data, which is often challenging to determine with certainty.

According to Cresswell (2018, pp. 42–43) outlines two qualitative approaches that can be applied in research. First, Constructivist Knowledge Claims and Ethnographic Design involves understanding the meaning participants give to their experiences, often within a specific cultural or social context. It uses ethnography to identify and analyze shared behaviors and practices within a cultural group over time. The researcher often participates in activities to observe behaviors closely and interpret their significance. Second, Advocacy/Participatory Knowledge Claims and Narrative Design. Here, the focus is on addressing social injustices and giving voice to marginalized groups. Using a narrative approach, researchers collect stories and open-ended interviews to explore personal

experiences of oppression, aiming to foster empowerment and change within the community.

According to Sugiyono (2011, pp. 246–253), there are three components of data analysis in qualitative research. First, data reduction. The data obtained from the field is quite a lot, for that it needs to be recorded carefully and in detail. The longer the researcher goes to the field, the more the amount of data will be more numerous, complex and complicated. For that it is necessary to immediately analyze the data through data reduction. Reducing data means summarizing, examining the main things.

Second data display involves analysis activity is data display. Data presentation can be done in the form of brief descriptions, charts, relationships between categories, flowcharts, and the like. The most commonly used to present data in qualitative research is narrative text. In this case the author will present the data in text form, to clarify the research results, it can be assisted by including tables or pictures.

Third, Drawing and Verifying Conclusion involves analysis activity is conclusion drawing and verification. In qualitative research, conclusions may answer the initial research questions posed at the beginning, or they may evolve throughout the research process as issues and questions develop in the field. The qualitative analyst identifies new findings, which could include a detailed description or clarification of an object that was previously unclear, causal relationships, or interactive patterns. From the onset of data collection, researchers interpret the meaning of findings by noting patterns, explanations, and relationships within the data. These conclusions, initially tentative, become more explicit and grounded as the analysis proceeds. The final conclusions may include hypotheses or theories derived from in-depth field data. This iterative process ensures that the conclusions are meaningful, relevant, and reflective of the complex realities of the research subject.

FINDINGS

In this research, the writers distributed questionnaires to 35 respondents, all of whom are sixth-semester students of the Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator. The first finding is the use of Google Translate is common among students when working on writing assignments show that 42,9% of respondents frequently use Google Translate for writing tasks. The second finding is the type of writing for which students primarily use Google Translate varies show that 42,9% of respondents primarily use Google Translate for persuasive writing. The third finding is the use of Google Translate has shown varying levels of effectiveness in helping students expand their vocabulary show that 37,1% of respondents stated that Google Translate has slightly helped them expand their vocabulary.

The fourth finding is students' confidence in understanding the grammar of the target language after using Google Translate varies across different levels show that 48,6% of respondents stated that they are somewhat confident in their ability to understand the grammar of the target language after using Google Translate. The fifth finding is the effectiveness of Google Translate in helping students use words and phrases in the correct context shows varied responses show that 45,7% of respondents stated that Google Translate occasionally helps them use words and phrases in the correct context.

The sixth finding is students' confidence in writing in the target language after using Google Translate varies in degree show that 45,7% of respondents reported that they feel slightly more confident when writing in the target language after using Google Translate. The seventh finding is students' revision practices after using Google Translate show a range of habits show that 57,1% of respondents reported that they sometimes revise their writing after using Google Translate. The eighth finding is students' confidence in submitting their written work after using Google Translate varies show that 48,6% of

respondents reported that they feel slightly more confident in submitting their written work after using Google Translate.

The ninth finding is Google translate on students' overall writing performance shows varying perceptions show that 40% of respondents believe that Google Translate has slightly contributed to their overall writing performance. The tenth finding is students' experiences in using Google Translate for writing tasks show that challenges still persist show that 37,1% of respondents encountered minor challenges when using Google Translate in their writing tasks. The eleventh finding is many students are open to recommending Google Translate for academic writing, though perspectives vary show that 45,7% of respondents are likely to recommend using Google Translate for academic writing tasks. The last finding is overall, students' experiences with Google Translate in improving writing skills are mostly positive, despite some limitations show that the majority of respondents 57,1%, rated their experience with Google Translate in improving their writing as Good.

DISCUSSION

In this part, the researchers discussed the findings of the research they had done based on the findings of the questionnaire. Based on the questionnaire, the results indicate that 42.9% of the respondents frequently use Google Translate for their writing tasks. It is in line with Novitasari and Mardiana (2022), Google Translate has been increasingly utilized by students to support their English learning process, particularly in writing. Then, 42,9% of respondents primarily utilize Google Translate for persuasive writing. It is in line with Hyland (2003), who states that "persuasive writing requires a clear understanding of terms to construct strong arguments." Additionally, Hidayah & Rahman (2021) argue that "Google Translate helps students expand their vocabulary range, which is essential for articulating persuasive ideas effectively." Furthermore, Fatimah (2018) highlights that "digital tools like Google Translate significantly improve grammar comprehension, allowing students to produce more structured and coherent persuasive texts."

Next, 37,1% of respondents stated that Google Translate has slightly helped them expand their vocabulary. This is in line with Nation (2001), who emphasizes that "vocabulary limitations can hinder the quality of students' writing, highlighting the importance of tools that assist in vocabulary development." Then, 48,6% of respondents stated that they are somewhat confident in their ability to understand the grammar of the target language after using Google Translate. This finding aligns with Fatimah (2018), who highlights that "digital tools like Google Translate significantly improve students' grammar comprehension, ultimately enhancing the accuracy and quality of their writing." Moreover, 45,7% of respondents stated that Google Translate occasionally helps them use words and phrases in the correct context. This finding aligns with Nation (2001), who states that "vocabulary limitations are a common barrier that reduces the quality of students' writing."

Then, 45,7%, respondents reported that they feel slightly more confident when writing in the target language after using Google Translate. This statement is suitable with what Zottmann and Sheldrake (2021) state that "students' beliefs about their writing skills, especially those who are non-native English speakers, directly impact their self-confidence and writing performance." 57,1% of respondents say that they sometimes revise their writing after using Google Translate. This statement is suitable with what Zottmann and Sheldrake (2021) state that "students' beliefs about their writing skills, especially those who are non-native English speakers, directly impact their self-confidence and writing performance." Moreover 48.6% of respondents reported that they feel slightly more confident in submitting their written work after using Google Translate. This statement is suitable with what Harmer (2017) states that "writing is a complex process that involves

cognitive and linguistic skills, and with consistent practice, students can develop greater confidence in their writing abilities."

Then 40% respondents believe that Google Translate has slightly contributed to their overall writing performance. This statement aligns with what Godwin-Jones (2018) states that "when used strategically, such as for vocabulary enhancement and as a grammar-checking tool, Google Translate can be a valuable asset to students, helping them write more effectively in a second language." Next, 37,1% of respondents encountered minor challenges when using Google Translate in their writing tasks. This finding aligns with what Clifford et al. (2013, p.104) state that "Google Translate can be an effective support tool for students to understand foreign texts, but its excessive use without guidance can hinder their ability to develop a deep understanding of language."

Next, 45,7% respondents are likely to recommend using Google Translate for academic writing tasks. This finding aligns with the statement of Godwin-Jones (2018), who emphasizes that "digital translation tools such as Google Translate can help students access the language content they need and improve their language skills." 57% respondents rated their experience with Google Translate in improving their writing as good. This finding aligns with the statement of Godwin-Jones (2018), who explains that "digital tools like Google Translate can be a valuable asset to students, helping them write more effectively in a second language." The accessibility of Google Translate enables students to enhance their vocabulary and grammar comprehension, ultimately improving the overall quality of their writing.

Based on the questionnaire spread to the respondents, the writer resumed the Google Translate provides several notable benefits and demonstrates a certain level of effectiveness in supporting students' writing activities. The data reveal that many students rely on this digital tool to assist them in composing texts, particularly in persuasive writing. This shows that students view Google Translate as not only a means of translating words or sentences but also as a helpful resource to strengthen arguments and express ideas more clearly in English. This growing reliance reflects the increasing role of technology in shaping students' writing habits and learning strategies.

In terms of benefits, the majority of respondents reported improvements in vocabulary development, grammar comprehension, and writing confidence. These benefits are essential components of writing competence, especially in a second language. Students acknowledged that Google Translate helped them expand their Vocabulary choices, better understand grammatical structures, and feel more comfortable when composing texts. The ability to revise and evaluate the translations provided also promotes critical thinking and encourages students to learn from the tool rather than depend on it entirely.

Regarding effectiveness, while Google Translate is not flawless, its role in facilitating writing tasks is evident. Students found it moderately effective in enhancing the quality of their written work. Many were able to submit their writing with more confidence after using the tool. The responses also suggest that when used correctly, such as for checking vocabulary accuracy, grammar, and sentence structure Google Translate can serve as a practical aid in academic writing contexts.

However, the results also highlight some limitations and challenges, particularly when students rely on Google Translate without fully understanding the context or structure of the translated text. Some reported encountering difficulties with meaning accuracy, word usage, and coherence. These challenges point to the importance of using the tool strategically, rather than as a substitute for learning. Overall, the findings show that **Google Translate offers meaningful benefits and moderate effectiveness** in the writing classroom. It supports learners in overcoming linguistic barriers and provides them with a sense of autonomy in composing written texts. Nonetheless, to maximize its effectiveness, it is

essential that students receive proper guidance on how to use it critically. As such, Google Translate should be seen not as a replacement for language instruction, but as a complementary tool that, when integrated thoughtfully into the learning process, can contribute positively to students' writing development.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussion, the writer could draw the conclusions as follow: First, Google Translate helps students improve their vocabulary by providing access to a wide range of synonyms and contextual meanings. According to the questionnaire, over 90% of students experienced some level of vocabulary development, which aligns with Nation's (2001) idea that vocabulary limitations are a barrier to writing quality. Second, the tool assists in understanding grammar better. Most students felt more confident in their grammar knowledge after using Google Translate, as it provides examples of proper sentence structure, verb tenses, and subject-verb agreement. Although not always accurate, it helps students observe and internalize grammatical rules through repeated exposure.

Third, Google Translate increases students' confidence in writing English. More than 94% of students reported a boost in their confidence, as the tool allows them to focus on expressing ideas while relying on its language support. This finding supports Zottmann and Sheldrake's (2021) view on the role of self-efficacy in writing development. Overall, while Google Translate has its limitations, when used thoughtfully, it proves to be a practical and supportive tool for improving students' vocabulary, grammar understanding, and writing confidence in English.

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**THE ANALYSIS STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES TO COMMUNICATE IN ENGLISH
IN DAILY CONVERSATION****David Candra¹, Daniella Damarwulan Winata², Yohanes Alvin³***david.candra234@gmail.com¹, danielladamarwulanwinata@gmail.com², yohanes.6728@ski.sch.id³*
Politeknik Tonggak Equator^{1,2,3}**ABSTRACT**

This research investigates the difficulties students face in communicating in English during daily conversations in EBPC (English for Business and Professional Communication) classes at the Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator. The study aims to identify the primary factors that hinder students from actively using English in class and social settings. Using a quantitative approach, the researchers distributed questionnaires to 39 EBPC students. The findings reveal several key barriers to English communication: insecurity, low language proficiency, environmental influences, fear of making mistakes, cultural and social pressure, limited vocabulary, and lack of speaking practice. The data show that most students feel insecure about their speaking skills, often prefer to use their native language on campus, and are afraid of being judged or laughed at when speaking English. The results suggest that students' communication difficulties stem not only from linguistic limitations but also from emotional and cultural factors. The research concludes that to improve students' speaking ability, a more supportive English-speaking environment and increased opportunities for practice are needed. These changes would help students gain confidence, expand vocabulary, and reduce fear of embarrassment in daily English conversations.

Keywords: English communication, student difficulties, EBPC classes, insecurity, vocabulary, speaking practice

INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization, English has emerged as a global lingua franca, enabling communication across linguistic and cultural boundaries. It is widely used in education, international business, technology, travel, and diplomacy, and has become a fundamental skill for academic and professional success in the 21st century. In Indonesia, English is taught from elementary to tertiary education as a foreign language. Nevertheless, despite years of instruction, many Indonesian learners still struggle to use English fluently and confidently, particularly in spoken communication. Speaking, among the four essential language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—is the most interactive and immediate. It requires not only linguistic knowledge but also the psychological readiness to engage in conversation. Harmer (2007) states that speaking is a productive skill that involves mental, physical, and social elements; learners must simultaneously process language, manage pronunciation, and adapt to conversational flow. Yet, for many students, speaking remains the most difficult skill to master due to the fear of making mistakes, anxiety, and lack of vocabulary.

At Politeknik Tonggak Equator, students enrolled in the English for Business and Professional Communication (EBPC) program are expected to develop high levels of English proficiency, especially in oral communication. The curriculum includes courses such as public speaking, presentation skills, and business conversation to prepare students for professional environments. However, real-life observations suggest that many EBPC students are reluctant to speak English in casual settings, including during class breaks, group discussions, or campus interactions. Instead, they predominantly use Indonesian or their local mother tongue, contradicting the program's intended outcomes.

Preliminary interviews with students revealed several contributing factors to this reluctance: the strong habit of speaking Indonesian, fear of being laughed at due to mispronunciation or strange accents, limited vocabulary, and the perception that speaking English is complicated and unnatural in everyday contexts. These issues align with MacIntyre's (2007) observation that learners often experience psychological resistance to using a second language, especially when it disrupts their social norms or identity. As a result, even motivated students may feel intimidated when attempting to speak English in front of peers or instructors.

This situation represents a significant barrier to language acquisition, as frequent practice is necessary to develop speaking fluency and confidence. Swain (2000) emphasizes that output in the form of spoken language provides essential feedback for learners to internalize language rules and refine their communication strategies. Without consistent opportunities to practice speaking, students miss critical moments for growth and development.

Therefore, this study seeks to explore and analyze the key factors contributing to the students' unwillingness to communicate in English during daily conversations in the EBPC classes. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for educators, curriculum developers, and institutions to design more effective learning environments that support English language usage beyond the classroom.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Speaking as a Language Skill

Speaking is not only a means of communication but also a reflection of a learner's competence in a second language. According to Brown (2001), speaking is an active, productive skill that integrates listening, vocabulary retrieval, grammatical accuracy, pronunciation, and sociolinguistic competence. Effective speaking involves real-time processing, where speakers must formulate messages quickly and coherently. Thornbury (2005) outlines the core components of speaking proficiency: vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and fluency. Vocabulary provides the content of communication, grammar organizes the content into understandable structures, pronunciation ensures intelligibility, and fluency allows for natural and uninterrupted speech. Any deficiency in these areas can significantly hinder communication. For instance, Derwing & Munro (2005) found that

learners with good grammar but poor pronunciation are often misunderstood, which can lead to frustration and loss of confidence.

Psychological Barriers to Speaking English

Confidence plays a major role in learners' willingness to speak. Students with higher self-efficacy are more likely to take risks in speaking and view mistakes as part of the learning process. In contrast, students with low self-confidence often avoid speaking opportunities to protect themselves from embarrassment. Horwitz (2001) describes this phenomenon as language anxiety—an emotional reaction that includes nervousness, fear of negative evaluation, and worry about communication failure.

In the context of Indonesian learners, this anxiety is often exacerbated by cultural factors. Many students fear losing face or being ridiculed for mispronouncing words or having a "strange" accent. They may also perceive English as a foreign identity marker that distances them from their peers. This perception, combined with limited exposure to English-speaking environments, creates psychological resistance to speaking. Zhang and Head (2010) found similar issues among Chinese students, where fear of making mistakes and low proficiency led to reluctance in classroom participation. The learners viewed speaking as high-risk behavior, fearing criticism and embarrassment. This aligns with the findings of this study, in which students admitted feeling "afraid of being laughed at" or judged negatively when trying to speak English in class.

Environmental and Social Influences

The learning environment significantly affects learners' language use. Swain (2000) argues that immersion in a supportive environment encourages learners to use the target language more frequently and confidently. However, in non-immersive environments—such as those where Indonesian or local languages dominate—students may have little motivation or pressure to use English. Lucas (2011) emphasizes that peer influence is particularly strong in language learning. If most students speak Indonesian, others are less likely to use English, fearing social exclusion or awkwardness. The dominant use of the mother tongue creates a social norm that discourages English usage. Even when instructors encourage English communication, the surrounding environment can undermine these efforts.

Moreover, the habitual use of the first language often becomes automatic. As students communicate in Indonesian for years, they develop cognitive shortcuts and fluency in their native language that English cannot match. Switching to English requires more cognitive effort, leading students to perceive it as unnatural or difficult in daily interactions.

Limited Vocabulary and Speaking Practice

Another barrier to spoken communication is limited vocabulary. Nation (2001) argues that vocabulary is the most significant component of language competence. Students with insufficient lexical knowledge struggle to find the right words to express themselves, leading

to frequent pauses, incomplete sentences, or code-switching to Indonesian. Without adequate practice, students also fail to develop fluency—the ability to produce speech smoothly and without hesitation. Ur (1996) notes that speaking practice must be regular, meaningful, and interactive to foster confidence and competence. Unfortunately, in many cases, classroom speaking practice is limited to controlled tasks like reading dialogues or answering scripted questions, which do not simulate real-life communication. Fauzan (2014) highlights that in the Indonesian context, students often lack opportunities to speak English outside the classroom. Even in English-major programs, peer interaction in English is rare, and speaking practice is often confined to academic tasks rather than informal, spontaneous conversation.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a qualitative descriptive method to explore the underlying causes of students' reluctance to use English in daily conversations. A qualitative approach allows for an in-depth exploration of participants' experiences, thoughts, and perceptions. It is suitable for uncovering the social, psychological, and environmental dimensions that quantitative methods may not fully capture (Creswell, 2014).

Research Setting and Participants

The research was conducted at Politeknik Tonggak Equator in Pontianak, West Kalimantan. The institution offers a Diploma 4 (D4) program in English for Business and Professional Communication, designed to prepare students for careers requiring high English proficiency. The study focused on fifth-semester EBPC students who had completed key speaking courses, including Public Speaking and Business Communication. A total of 39 students completed the questionnaire, providing a broad overview of speaking challenges within the program. From this group, 10 students were selected for in-depth interviews using purposive sampling. These students were chosen based on their willingness to participate and their below-average performance in oral English activities. The selection ensured that the most relevant and informative cases were studied.

Data Collection Instruments

Data for this study were collected using two main instruments: a structured questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire was given to all 39 participants and contained both closed and open-ended questions. The closed questions used a Likert scale to assess students' confidence, how often they used English, and the difficulties they perceived. Meanwhile, the open-ended questions gave students a chance to share their personal experiences, challenges, and suggestions for improvement in their own words.

In addition, semi-structured interviews were held with 10 students to gain deeper insights into the emotional, social, and language-related barriers they faced. This interview format allowed the researcher to ask follow-up questions and explore important themes that came up during the conversations. To ensure that students felt comfortable and to maintain

accuracy, all interviews were conducted in Indonesian, then later translated and transcribed for detailed analysis.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, following the approach described by Braun and Clarke (2006). This method involves several key steps: becoming familiar with the data, generating initial codes, searching for patterns or themes, reviewing and refining those themes, defining and naming them, and finally producing the report. Thematic analysis was selected because of its flexibility and its strength in identifying patterns across qualitative data.

From the analysis, four main themes emerged: first, the fear of embarrassment caused by pronunciation and grammar mistakes; second, the habitual use of the mother tongue, which is reinforced through peer interactions; third, a limited vocabulary that leads to hesitation and communication breakdowns; and fourth, a lack of confidence in speaking, often linked to low self-efficacy and anxiety. By triangulating the data collected from both the questionnaires and the interviews, the study achieved a comprehensive understanding of the students' difficulties in communication. This mixed-method approach enhances the credibility and depth of the findings, enabling more accurate interpretations and practical recommendations.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

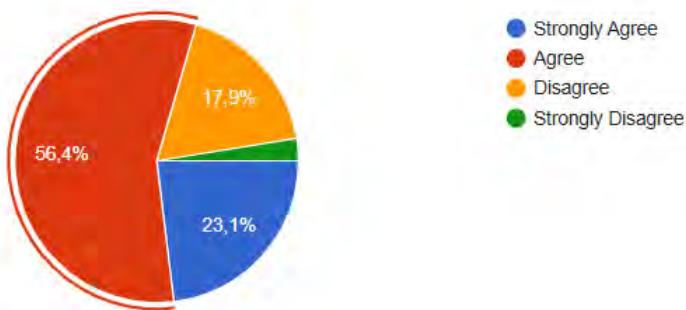
In this research, the writers spread questionnaires to 39 people respondents. All of the respondents are students of Polytechnic of Tonggak Equator. The finding of the questionnaires can be seen in the following pictures.

Picture 1. students feel insecure about their speaking ability.

1. Student feel insecure about their speaking ability.

 Salin diagram

39 jawaban



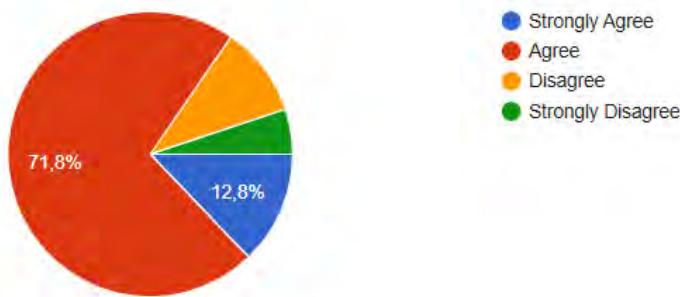
Based on table 4.1, it can be seen that 56,4% respondents agree that student feel insecure about their speaking ability. Then, 23,1% students state strongly agree, 17,9% states disagree, and 2,6% states strongly disagree.

Picture 4.2 Students have weakness in English skills.

2. Student have weakness in English skills.

 Salin diagram

39 jawaban



Based on table 4.2, it can be seen that 71,8% respondents agree that students have weakness in English skills, 12,8% states strongly agree, 10,3% states disagree, and 5,1% states strongly disagree.

Picture 4.3 Students still use Bahasa or mother tongue in the campus

3. Student still use bahasa or mother tongue in the campus

 Salin diagram

39 jawaban



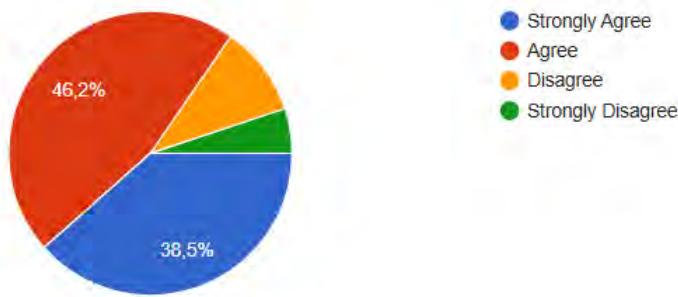
Based on table 4.3, it can be seen that 48,7% respondents agree that students still use Bahasa or mother tongue in the campus, 43,6% states strongly agree, 5,1% states disagree, and 2,6% states strongly disagree.

Picture 4.4 students are afraid of making mistakes when speaking

4. Student are afraid of making mistakes when speaking.

 Salin diagram

39 jawaban



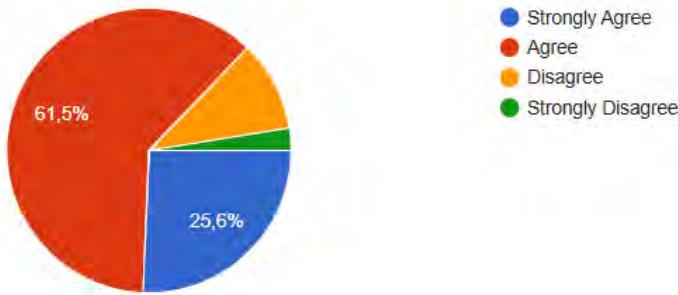
Based on table 4.4, it can be seen that 46,2% respondents agree that students are afraid of making mistakes when speaking, 38,5% states strongly agree, 10,3% states disagree, and 5,1% strongly disagree.

Picture 4.5 Students rarely use English to communicate

5. Student rarely use English to communicate.

 Salin diagram

39 jawaban



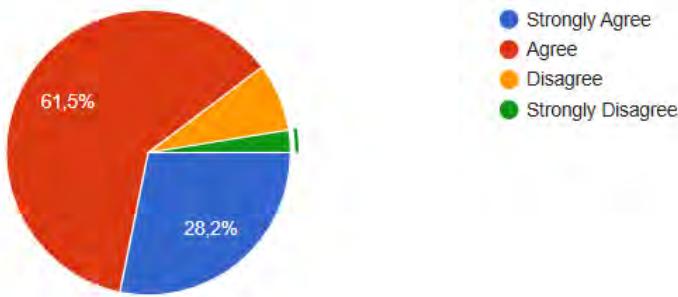
Based on table 4.5, it can be seen that 61,5% respondents agree that students rarely use English to communicate, 25,6% states strongly agree, 10,3% states disagree, and 2,6% strongly disagree.

Picture 4.6 Students low vocabulary level affects their speaking ability

6. Student low vocabulary level affects their speaking ability.

 Salin diagram

39 jawaban



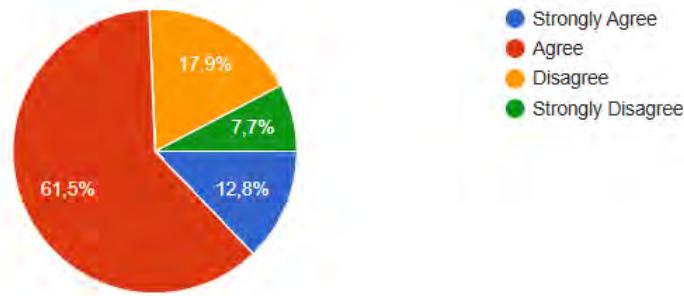
Based on table 4.6, it can be seen that 61,5% respondents agree that students low vocabulary lever affect their speaking ability, 28,2% states strongly agree, 7,7% states disagree, and 2,6% strongly disagree.

Picture 4.7 Students have difficulties in pronouncing English words correctly

7. Student has difficulties in pronouncing English words correctly.

 Salin diagram

39 jawaban



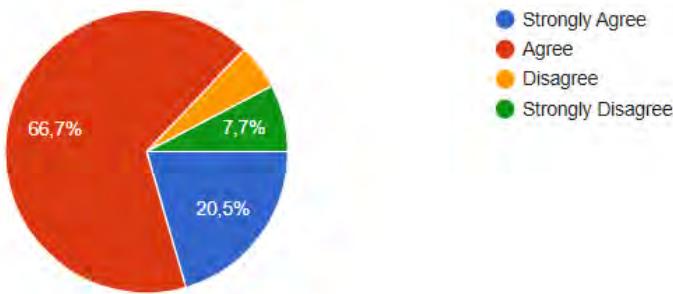
Based on table 4.7, it can be seen that 61,5% respondents agree that students have difficulties in pronouncing English words correctly, 17,9% states strongly agree, 12,8% states disagree, and 7,7% strongly disagree.

Picture 4.8 Students feel afraid and embarrassed when speaking English when gathering with friends

8. Student feel afraid and embarrassed when speaking English when gathering with friends

 Salin diagram

39 jawaban



Based on table 4.6, it can be seen that 66,7% respondents agree that students feel afraid and embarrassed when speaking English when gathering with friend, 20,5% states strongly agree, 5,1% states disagree, and 7,7% strongly disagree.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings and discussions, the writers could draw the conclusion that the main factors that cause students to have difficulty communicating in English during daily conversations in EBPC classes are: insecurity, low proficiency, environmental factors, fear of mistakes, cultural influences, limited vocabulary, and lack of practice.

The influence of student's habits in speaking Indonesian or their mother tongue affect their difficulties in using English in daily interactions in EBPC are: frequent use of Indonesian or their mother tongue on campus creates a speaking environment that does not support regular English practice. This habit limits their exposure to English in natural, everyday situations, making it harder for them to become comfortable using the language. Without consistent practice in real-life settings, students miss opportunities to improve their fluency and confidence. Additionally, cultural and social norms further discourage the use of English. Many students feel uncomfortable or embarrassed speaking English with their peers, which reinforces their tendency to default to their native language. These patterns contribute significantly to their struggles in using English during daily interactions in EBPC.

The impact of limited vocabulary and fear of embarrassment on student's hesitation to engage in English conversations in EBPC classes are: Students' hesitation to speak English in class is heavily influenced by both a lack of vocabulary and a fear of embarrassment. When students do not have enough vocabulary, they struggle to express their thoughts clearly, which leads to frustration and low confidence. This limitation makes them reluctant to participate in conversations. At the same time, many students are anxious about making mistakes in

pronunciation, grammar, or word choice. This fear of being judged or laughed at causes them to avoid speaking altogether. The combination of linguistic limitations and emotional pressure create a strong barrier to active engagement in English conversations during EBPC classes.

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THE USE OF ROLE-PLAY IN ENHANCING STUDENTS' CONFIDENCE IN SPEAKING

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ABSTRACT

Role-play activities are interactive exercises where participants act out roles in specific scenarios to simulate real-life situations. They help develop communication, empathy, problem-solving, and social skills by encouraging creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration. This study explores the effect of role-play activities on increasing students' confidence in speaking English, focusing on sixth-semester students at Politeknik Tonggak Equator during the 2024/2025 academic year. Confidence issues in speaking often arise from fear of making mistakes, limited vocabulary, and lack of real-life communication practice. A qualitative descriptive method was applied, with data collected through open-ended questionnaires to gain insights into students' perceptions and experiences. Thematic analysis showed that role-play helped reduce anxiety, encouraged spontaneous speaking, and improved fluency. Participants reported that role-play created a safe and engaging environment where they could experiment with language and gain speaking confidence. Findings indicate that role-play is a practical and effective teaching method to enhance both communicative competence and learners' self-assurance. Integrating role-play into regular speaking activities is recommended to support students' oral language development.

Keywords: Role-play, speaking confidence, English language learning, communicative competence, qualitative research, language fluency, student perception, multilingual environment

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is a crucial skill in language learning, enabling individuals to communicate effectively in various contexts. However, many students, particularly in higher education, struggle with confidence when speaking, especially in a foreign language. Lack of confidence often leads to hesitation, anxiety, and ineffective communication, which can hinder academic and professional development (Brown, 2001). One of the methods widely used to improve students' speaking confidence is role play (Oradee, 2012). According to Ladousse (1987), role play allows students to engage in simulated real-life conversations, helping them practice speaking in a more interactive and less intimidating environment. By assuming different roles, students can explore various perspectives, enhance their fluency, and gradually build confidence in expressing their thoughts verbally. Several studies support the idea that role play can reduce anxiety and improve speaking skills by providing structured opportunities to practice (Ur, 1996; Harmer, 2007). Additionally, this method fosters a supportive classroom atmosphere where students feel more encouraged to speak without the fear of making mistakes. Despite these advantages, the extent to which role play influences students' confidence in speaking still requires further investigation.

In relation to this, many students experience difficulties in speaking confidently due to fear of making mistakes, limited vocabulary, and lack of exposure to real-life communication situations. Traditional teaching methods, such as lectures and textbook exercises, often fail to address these issues effectively. Role play, as an interactive learning strategy, is proposed as a potential solution. However, its effectiveness in increasing students' speaking confidence remains an area of inquiry. Therefore, this study seeks to answer the following research questions: How effective is the role-play method in enhancing students' confidence in speaking? What are the challenges students face when engaging in role-play activities? And how do students perceive the impact of role play on their speaking confidence?

This study was conducted during the sixth semester of the 2024/2025 academic year at Politeknik Tonggak Equator, focusing exclusively on students' improvement in speaking confidence. The purposes of the research are to help students overcome speaking anxiety and improve their communication skills, offer an alternative teaching strategy that fosters interactive and engaging speaking activities, and provide a foundation for further studies on interactive learning methods in language acquisition.

The significance of this study can be viewed from both theoretical and practical perspectives. Theoretically, this research contributes to the existing body of knowledge in language learning by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of role play in developing speaking confidence. It supports the theories of communicative language teaching (CLT) and interactive learning strategies, reinforcing their role in modern language education. Moreover, the findings may offer insights for future researchers investigating psychological and pedagogical factors affecting speaking confidence. Practically, this research helps students overcome speaking anxiety and develop communication skills in a safe and structured environment. It provides educators with practical strategies to implement role play effectively in their teaching, creating a more engaging and supportive learning setting. Furthermore, the results may influence curriculum designers to incorporate role play as an essential component of speaking courses, ensuring students receive sufficient practice in real-life communication scenarios.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Speaking Skills in Language Learning

Speaking is one of the core language skills that enables individuals to communicate effectively in various social, academic, and professional settings. Unlike other language skills, such as reading and writing, speaking requires real-time processing and interaction. It involves the ability to organize thoughts, use appropriate vocabulary and grammar, and convey messages clearly and fluently.

Many language learners struggle with speaking due to several factors, including limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation, grammatical errors, and anxiety. These difficulties often lead to hesitation, lack of participation in discussions, and ineffective communication. As a result, developing speaking skills requires not only linguistic competence but also confidence and practice in real-life communication settings.

In language teaching, various strategies are employed to enhance students' speaking abilities. These include discussions, presentations, storytelling, debates, and role-play. Among these methods, role-play is particularly effective because it simulates real-world interactions, allowing students to practice speaking in meaningful contexts.

Confidence in Speaking

Confidence is a crucial factor influencing students' speaking performance. When learners feel confident, they are more likely to speak fluently, take risks, and engage in conversations without fear of making mistakes. Conversely, low confidence can lead to hesitation, avoidance of speaking activities, and difficulty in expressing ideas clearly.

Language anxiety is one of the main barriers to speaking confidence. It can be caused by fear of negative evaluation, lack of practice, or past negative experiences in speaking. Research suggests that students with high levels of anxiety tend to speak less, struggle with fluency, and exhibit signs of nervousness, such as excessive pausing and repetition.

To improve speaking confidence, it is essential to create a supportive learning environment where students feel comfortable expressing themselves. Encouraging active participation, providing constructive feedback, and using interactive teaching methods such as role-play can help reduce anxiety and enhance students' willingness to speak. (Suparman, U. 2012).

Role-Play as a Language Learning Method

Role-play is a widely used technique in language teaching that involves students acting out different roles in simulated real-life situations. This method provides learners with opportunities to use language in a practical and interactive way, helping them develop fluency, spontaneity, and confidence. (Ur, P. 1996) Role-play allows students to experiment with different speaking styles, practice various language functions, and improve their ability to respond naturally in conversations (Ladousse, G. P. 1987) By taking on different roles, learners step outside their comfort zones and engage in meaningful interactions, which can enhance their speaking proficiency over time.

Additionally, role-play promotes social and communicative competence by exposing students to different perspectives and cultural contexts. It encourages creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills, as students must adapt their language use to different scenarios. In a classroom setting, role-play can be implemented through dialogues, simulations, interviews, and improvisational activities. The key advantage of role-play is that it reduces the fear of speaking by shifting the focus from individual performance to collaborative interaction.

Previous Studies on Role-Play and Speaking Confidence

Several studies have examined the effectiveness of role-play in improving speaking confidence. Research in communicative language teaching has demonstrated that students who engage in role-play activities tend to develop greater fluency and confidence than those who rely on traditional grammar-based instruction.

Studies on classroom interaction have shown that role-play encourages active participation, allowing students to practice speaking in a relaxed and engaging environment. Unlike structured speaking exercises, role-play gives students the freedom to express themselves naturally, making the learning process more enjoyable and less stressful.

Additionally, research on language anxiety indicates that role-play helps reduce speaking-related stress by providing a safe space for students to practice without the fear of making mistakes. When learners are placed in simulated real-life situations, they become more accustomed to speaking spontaneously, which in turn boosts their confidence.

Other studies highlight the long-term benefits of role-play in language learning. Students who regularly participate in role-play activities tend to develop better public speaking skills,

improved pronunciation, and greater adaptability in conversations. The ability to take on different roles and respond to various social contexts enhances their overall communication competence.

Despite its advantages, some studies have also pointed out challenges in implementing role-play. Factors such as students' reluctance to participate, difficulty in assigning appropriate roles, and time constraints in classroom settings can affect the effectiveness of role-play activities. However, with proper planning and teacher support, these challenges can be minimized to maximize learning outcomes.

Conceptual Framework

This study is based on the premise that role-play contributes to speaking confidence through three key mechanisms:

1. Reducing Anxiety: Role-play provides a structured and supportive setting where students feel less pressure when speaking. By engaging in interactive activities, learners gradually overcome their fear of making mistakes and become more comfortable expressing themselves.
2. Encouraging Active Participation: Role-play motivates students to take an active role in communication by simulating real-life conversations. The interactive nature of role-play fosters engagement and helps students build confidence through repeated practice.
3. Building Communication Skills: Role-play helps students improve their fluency, pronunciation, and ability to adapt to different conversational contexts. Through meaningful interaction, they develop the skills necessary for effective communication.

The relationship between these elements is illustrated as follows:

Role-Play Activities → Reduced Anxiety → Increased Confidence → Improved Speaking Skills

This framework serves as the foundation for the study, guiding the investigation into how role-play influences students' confidence in speaking.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to delve into students' lived experiences with role-play and their perceptions of its impact on their speaking confidence. This approach facilitated the collection of rich, descriptive data through open-ended questionnaires, allowing for an in-depth understanding of participants' perspectives on the phenomenon under investigation. The research focused specifically on how students perceive the influence of role-play activities on their self-assurance in speaking English. The research was conducted over a four-month period, spanning from March to April 2025, at Politeknik Tonggak Equator. The participants for this study were purposefully selected from students who had prior or current experience participating in role-play activities within their speaking classes at the institution. The target sample size ranged from 30 to 50 students. The selection criteria for participation included: current or previous enrollment in a speaking class, demonstrable experience with role-play as a component of their speaking practice, and a willingness to provide honest and detailed responses in the questionnaire.

The primary instrument for data collection was an open-ended questionnaire meticulously designed to explore students' experiences and perceptions regarding the effectiveness of role-play

in building their speaking confidence. The questionnaire was structured into several key sections. The first section gathered Demographic Information, including participants' age, level of education, and English language learning background. The second section, Experience with Role-Play, inquired about the frequency and various types of role-play activities the students had engaged in. The third section, Confidence in Speaking, aimed to explore students' self-reported levels of confidence both before and after their participation in role-play activities. Finally, the Perceived Benefits and Challenges section encouraged students to articulate how role-play had either facilitated their speaking improvement or presented challenges in their learning journey.

The data collection process adhered to a structured approach. Initially, the questionnaire underwent a rigorous Questionnaire Development phase, where it was carefully crafted to align directly with the research objectives. To ensure clarity, relevance, and effectiveness in capturing students' perspectives, the questionnaire was subjected to expert review. Following the refinement process, the final version of the questionnaire was distributed online via Google Forms during the Questionnaire Distribution phase. Clear and concise instructions were provided to the participants to ensure they understood how to provide thoughtful and comprehensive responses. Upon completion of the data collection, the Data Compilation and Organization phase involved reviewing, categorizing, and preparing the collected responses for subsequent qualitative analysis.

The data obtained from the open-ended questionnaires was analyzed using qualitative content analysis. The data analysis process involved several key steps. First, Data Organization entailed sorting and categorizing the responses based on emergent themes directly related to role-play and speaking confidence. Subsequently, Thematic Analysis was conducted to identify recurring patterns and significant themes within the students' responses, aiming to gain deeper insights into their experiences. Finally, the Interpretation and Discussion phase involved analyzing the identified themes in relation to the initial research objectives and existing scholarly literature, allowing for a nuanced understanding of the findings.

FINDINGS

A survey conducted with 30 sixth-semester students at POLTEQ who had experience with role-play in their language classes indicated a widespread positive perception of its impact on their speaking abilities and confidence. A significant majority of the respondents reported that engaging in role-play was effective in enhancing their speaking fluency (63.3%), enabling them to speak more spontaneously in English (56.7%), and notably increasing their overall confidence in using the language (63.3%). Beyond these core aspects, a substantial number of students also agreed that role-play helped to alleviate nervousness when speaking in front of others (53.3%) and provided a valuable platform to experiment with diverse speaking styles (56.7%). Moreover, a considerable proportion of the participants acknowledged that role-play facilitated their understanding and application of vocabulary within appropriate contexts (60%) and contributed to the enhancement of their creativity in using the English language (63.3%). While a little over half agreed on the improvement of general speaking fluency through role-play (53.3%), a notably high percentage of students (66.7%) perceived that role-play activities even aided in the development of their problem-solving skills in English. Taken together, these findings strongly suggest that the students in this study largely view role-play as a beneficial and multifaceted pedagogical approach that contributes significantly to the development of various crucial speaking skills and the bolstering of their confidence in using English.

DISCUSSION

The present study explored the effect of role-play on enhancing students' confidence in speaking English, with a specific focus on sixth-semester students at Politeknik Tonggak Equator. The findings obtained from questionnaire responses reveal that role-play is broadly perceived as an effective instructional strategy, positively impacting various dimensions of speaking skills. These include technical aspects such as fluency and vocabulary use, as well as affective components such as confidence, spontaneity, creativity, and anxiety reduction. The overwhelmingly positive responses highlight the relevance of implementing communicative strategies like role-play in English language teaching.

One of the most significant indicators of role-play's effectiveness emerged in the area of speaking fluency. Data analysis showed that 100% of participants either agreed or strongly agreed that role-play contributes to improved fluency, with 63.3% agreeing and 36.7% strongly agreeing that engaging in role-play was effective in enhancing their speaking fluency. This is consistent with Harmer (2007), who emphasized that extended speaking turns within structured yet flexible activities such as role-play allow learners to engage in meaningful language use. Unlike isolated grammar drills, role-play activities provide learners with real-time language practice, enabling them to produce language more naturally and fluently in context. The repetition and routine involvement in dialogues or scenario-based tasks help internalize language patterns and boost overall fluency.

Another area where role-play demonstrated clear benefits was in promoting spontaneity. A combined 96.7% of students indicated that role-play encouraged them to speak more spontaneously in English. This supports the findings of Ur (1996), who argued that communicative activities foster real-time interaction and help learners respond more quickly and naturally. The ability to speak spontaneously is a crucial marker of communicative competence and requires students to process language cognitively under time pressure. Through role-play, students learn to think on their feet, choose appropriate expressions, and react to conversational cues, thereby improving their capacity for spontaneous communication.

Equally notable is the role of role-play in enhancing students' confidence when speaking English. The findings revealed that 96.6% of respondents experienced increased confidence due to their involvement in role-play sessions. Confidence is a critical affective factor in language learning, often acting as either a motivator or a barrier to performance. According to Brown (2001), lowering affective filters such as fear and anxiety leads to more effective language acquisition. In this study, the safe, controlled, and collaborative nature of role-play activities allowed students to take risks and speak freely without fear of criticism or failure. The repeated exposure to simulated conversations enabled students to become more familiar with various speaking contexts, gradually reducing their fear of public speaking.

However, the response to the role-play's ability to reduce nervousness in front of the class was more varied. While 80% of students acknowledged its usefulness in easing anxiety, 20% disagreed. This variation suggests that while role-play can be a valuable tool in managing performance anxiety, its success may depend on individual differences such as personality traits, previous learning experiences, or cultural background. Some students, particularly introverted ones, may still feel discomfort when speaking in front of peers regardless of the activity's format. This supports the argument by Horwitz et al. (1986), who pointed out that speaking anxiety remains a persistent challenge in foreign language learning and cannot be fully addressed by teaching methods alone.

Another key outcome of the study was that all respondents agreed or strongly agreed that role-play provided a platform for experimenting with different speaking styles. This flexibility allowed students to embody various roles, such as customer, professional, or peer, broadening their communicative competence and awareness of sociolinguistic norms. According to Ladousse (1987), role-play provides a valuable opportunity for students to develop pragmatic skills, including tone modulation, politeness strategies, and turn-taking behaviors. By stepping into different roles, learners enhance their ability to adapt language based on context, which is crucial for effective communication.

Vocabulary development was also positively affected. All participants agreed that role-play activities helped them understand and use vocabulary appropriately in context. Harmer (2007) emphasizes that meaningful and contextualized vocabulary use promotes better retention and application than rote memorization. In this study, students encountered new vocabulary within specific scenarios such as a restaurant setting or a job interview making the words more relevant and memorable. This contextual learning also encouraged incidental vocabulary acquisition, where learners pick up language naturally through interaction.

Creativity in language use was another area of significant improvement. About 63.3% of students agreed, and 36.7% strongly agreed, that role-play enhanced their English language creativity. Engaging in unscripted dialogues and improvising responses required students to use their imagination and linguistic resources, which nurtures creative thinking. Role-play allowed them to generate original responses, invent scenarios, and apply language in novel ways. This aligns with communicative language teaching principles, which advocate for activities that stimulate creativity and authentic use of language.

Furthermore, the study found that 93.3% of participants agreed that role-play improved their smoothness in speech. Speaking smoothly involves more than just fluency; it includes rhythm, intonation, and coherence. The practice provided by role-play, especially when done regularly, helps learners reduce hesitation, self-correction, and filler words, contributing to more polished oral performance.

Lastly, the role-play method was perceived to enhance students' problem-solving skills in English. A total of 96.7% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that these activities helped develop their ability to think critically and respond appropriately in unpredictable situations. Role-play scenarios often involve decision-making, negotiation, or conflict resolution, which simulate real-life communication challenges. According to Ladousse (1987), such tasks cultivate not only language proficiency but also strategic competence—the ability to manage communication breakdowns and adjust speech to achieve communicative goals.

In summary, the discussion highlights that role-play is highly effective in developing both technical and soft skills related to speaking English. Students benefit not only linguistically through increased fluency, vocabulary, and pronunciation but also psychologically and socially through boosted confidence, reduced anxiety, enhanced creativity, and improved problem-solving. Despite some limitations in anxiety reduction for a minority of students, the overall findings strongly support the integration of role-play into speaking classes. Future research should consider examining how individual learner differences—such as introversion/extroversion, prior speaking experiences, or language proficiency levels—affect students' responses to role-play. Longitudinal studies could also assess whether the benefits of role-play are sustained over time, offering further insights for curriculum development and pedagogical innovation in English language education.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to explore the effectiveness of role-play in enhancing students' confidence in speaking English, identify the challenges they faced during the activities, and understand their perceptions of role-play as a learning strategy. Through a questionnaire distributed to 30 sixth-semester POLTEQ students, valuable insights were gathered regarding how role-play contributes to language learning, particularly in building speaking confidence.

The findings of this study indicate that the role-play method is highly effective in enhancing students' confidence in speaking English. By engaging in role-play activities, students were able to practice speaking in realistic and interactive scenarios, which allowed them to use English more fluently and naturally. This repeated practice helped reduce their fear of making mistakes and increased their willingness to speak, resulting in improved confidence over time. Most students expressed that role-play gave them a safe space to experiment with language, boosting their courage to speak in front of others.

Despite its effectiveness, the study also revealed several challenges faced by students when participating in role-play activities. Some students experienced nervousness, anxiety, and fear of being judged by their peers, especially during their first attempts. Others struggled with limited vocabulary or difficulty staying in character during the activity. These challenges suggest that while role-play is beneficial, it requires careful facilitation by teachers to ensure students feel supported and prepared to participate confidently.

In general, students perceived role-play as a fun, engaging, and valuable learning method for improving their speaking confidence. They appreciated the opportunity to practice English in meaningful, contextualized situations that resembled real-life conversations. Students believed that role-play not only enhanced their speaking skills but also improved their creativity, vocabulary usage, and problem-solving abilities in communication. Overall, they viewed role-play as a positive and effective approach that made them more confident and motivated to speak English.

In conclusion, the study highlights the significant role of role-play in language learning, particularly in fostering confidence, creativity, and communicative competence among students. While some challenges remain, the overall positive perceptions and outcomes suggest that role-play should continue to be implemented and developed as part of speaking practice in English language education.

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THE IMPACT OF SPEECH ANXIETY (GLOSSOPHOBIA) ON STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SPEAKING CLASS

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ABSTRACT

Speech anxiety, also known as glossophobia, is one of the most common psychological problems that affects students' performance in public speaking classes. It can cause physical symptoms like trembling and a fast heartbeat, as well as emotional stress, which makes it difficult for students to speak confidently in front of others. This study aims to understand how speech anxiety affects students' performance and to identify the main causes and useful strategies to reduce it. The research was conducted with sixth-semester students from the public speaking class at Politeknik Tonggak Equator during the 2024/2025 academic year. A descriptive method was used, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data were collected through questionnaires given to students and interviews conducted with the lecturer of the course. These methods provided both general and detailed information about students' experiences. The results show that low self-confidence, lack of preparation, and fear of being judged are the main causes of speech anxiety. Students who practiced more, received supportive feedback, and gradually became familiar with speaking in front of others were better at managing their anxiety. These findings are expected to help teachers build a more supportive classroom environment and help students improve their confidence and public speaking skills.

Keywords: Speech Anxiety, Glossophobia, Student Performance, Public Speaking, Politeknik Tonggak Equator

INTRODUCTION

Public speaking is an essential skill that is highly demanded in both academic and professional environments. However, many students experience intense fear or anxiety when they have to speak in front of an audience, a condition known as glossophobia or speech anxiety. Glossophobia is considered one of the most common forms of social anxiety, affecting approximately 75% of people worldwide (Daly et al., 2014, p.13). This anxiety often impairs students' ability to deliver presentations effectively, ultimately negatively impacting their performance in public speaking classes.

Speech anxiety can cause various negative effects, both physically and mentally, such as increased heart rate, sweating, trembling, and difficulty thinking clearly (Horwitz et al., 1986, p.5). In the classroom context, students experiencing this anxiety often feel hindered in delivering the material they have prepared, which in turn affects the quality of their presentation and their audience engagement. This is particularly concerning because public speaking is a core component of many higher education curricula, designed to enhance students' communication skills (Lucas, 2011, p.3).

Previous research has shown that speech anxiety directly impacts students' self-confidence, participation in class activities, and overall academic achievement (Beatty & Behnke, 1991, p.2). Furthermore, this anxiety is often exacerbated by several factors, such as the pressure to perform perfectly, fear of negative evaluation from the audience, and a lack of experience in public speaking (McCroskey, 1977).

This study was conducted during the sixth semester of the 2024/2025 academic year at Politeknik Tonggak Equator, focusing exclusively on students enrolled in the public speaking class. The study aims to explore the extent to which glossophobia affects students' performance in delivering presentations, identify the primary factors contributing to speech anxiety in classroom settings, and examine strategies that can be applied to reduce its negative effects. A better understanding of the relationship between speech anxiety and student performance is crucial to creating a more supportive and effective learning environment in public speaking classes.

Theoretically, the results of this study can serve as a foundation for further research on speech anxiety and public speaking performance, as well as enrich the academic literature. It helps broaden the understanding of psychological influences on student performance, particularly in relation to anxiety in communication contexts. Practically, this research offers insights that may help students improve their communication skills, not only in formal presentations but also in broader public speaking settings. It may also encourage the implementation of learning strategies specifically tailored for students with speech anxiety, such as more gradual or individualized public speaking practice. Additionally, the findings may inform educators in developing teaching methods that better support students in overcoming speech anxiety and enhancing their public speaking abilities.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The Nature of Speech Anxiety (Glossophobia)

“Glossophobia, also known as speech anxiety, is a fear associated with public speaking. The term comes from the Greek words *glōssa* (meaning “tongue”) and *phobos* (“fear or horror”)” (Gregersen, Horwitz, 2002, p.62). It is one of the most common fears in the world, affecting approximately 75% of college students, with more college students reporting a fear of public speaking than of death. This fear can affect both physical and emotional responses in individuals. “Physically, college students may experience symptoms such as dry mouth, trembling hands, flushed face, sweating, and irregular breathing. Emotionally, they feel intense anxiety, fear of embarrassment, and fear of looking stupid in front of their peers” (Kushner, 2004, p. 20).

According to Furmark (2002) and Pollard & Henderson (1998), “women, in particular, often report higher levels of speaking anxiety than men.” “This anxiety can also appear in the form of anticipatory anxiety, which means individuals may begin to feel anxious long before the actual speaking event, as they anticipate potential challenges or threats” (Scovel, 1991, p.101). For example, a college student may worry about an upcoming class presentation week in advance, imagining the fear of speaking in front of others. People with speaking anxiety may avoid these situations altogether or endure them with significant distress. Although they often recognize that their anxiety may be excessive or irrational, they find it difficult to manage these feelings without support or intervention.

Level of Speech Anxiety

The level of anxiety among individuals varies widely. Based on the intensity of symptoms and their impact on speech activities, it can be categorized into mild, moderate, and

severe levels. These levels affect the way students respond to situations when speaking in public.

1. Mild Speech Anxiety

College students with mild levels of speech anxiety may experience some signs of nervousness, such as stomach discomfort and slight sweating, but they are generally able to manage these symptoms and continue speaking in front of the class. Even this level of speech anxiety can increase focus or alertness. Based on Yerkes and Dodson's Law (1908, p.479), "mild levels of arousal or anxiety can actually improve speaking performance, as it keeps college students alert and engaged without feeling overwhelmed."

2. Moderate Speech Anxiety

At this level, speech anxiety starts to interfere with the college student's public speaking performance. Symptoms such as a rapid heartbeat, dry mouth or shaky hands and college students may begin to struggle to focus on their speech or organize their thoughts. "Moderate speech anxiety can also lead to overthinking where students excessively worry about their performance before they perform, which often leads to avoidance behavior" (Scovel, 1991, p.15)

3. Severe Speech Anxiety

Severe speech anxiety or panic level, involves intense symptoms that can make students feel "paralyzed." Students will experience symptoms of severe shortness of breath, excessive sweating, intense nausea, and even a feeling of great danger. At this level, college students will avoid public speaking situations because the fear and sense of embarrassment or failure is too great (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986).

Causes of Speech Anxiety in Students

According to Joseph A Devito writes that "one of the most important problems in speech or public speaking is the speaker's anxiety or what is often called stage fright." Devito says that there are 6 factors that cause a person's anxiety when speaking in public, namely:

1. Self-confidence

Self-confidence is a person's belief in their ability to perform certain behaviors or to achieve certain targets. Wahyuni's research (2013, p.221) shows that "there is a significant relationship between the level of public speaking anxiety and student self-confidence." Students' self-confidence is assumed to affect their level of anxiety in public speaking. Students who feel unsure of their ability to speak in front of the class often experience speech anxiety. Low self-confidence can make them worry about being evaluated or making mistakes that interfere with their performance when speaking in public speaking classes.

2. Preparation

One of the causes of anxiety in public speaking class performance is the lack of material preparation. This material should be well-prepared and supported with accurate data. The more they understand the material, the more knowledge they will have which can increase their confidence. When students feel underprepared or do not master the material well, they tend to experience confusion about how to convey information effectively. This lack of preparation causes them to feel unsure of their ability to speak fluently, which then exacerbates nervousness and anxiety (Scovel, 1991).

3. Practice

Practice in public speaking is essential to help students feel more confident and familiar with the situation at hand. "Lack of practice or speaking experience makes students tend to feel anxious when they have to speak in front of the class. When someone practices frequently, they become more familiar with the process of speaking in front of an audience,

so they can gradually overcome nervousness" (McCroskey, J. C., 1977, p.80). Practice allows students to hone their speaking skills, such as how to convey arguments clearly and techniques to interact with the audience. Without adequate practice, students will feel unprepared for the pressure of speaking in front of a large audience, making it easier to feel anxious.

4. Experience

Lack of public speaking experience often exacerbates anxiety when faced with similar situations. Students who rarely participate in public speaking activities usually feel awkward and anxious. Hancock et al. (2010, p.4) explain that "students who are less familiar with public settings often feel greater anxiety because they do not yet have the skills or strategies to deal with audiences." This limited speaking experience leaves them vulnerable to intense feelings of nervousness, especially as they lack the knowledge or practical skills to manage the pressures that arise in speaking situations.

5. Audience

Audience is one of the causes of student anxiety in public speaking practice. For example, if students speak in front of classmates or lecturers who are considered critical, the anxiety felt can increase significantly. Devito (2011, p.1) states that "unfamiliar audiences or those considered more senior and authoritative can trigger feelings of discomfort and fear of being judged." Students may feel that they have to meet certain expectations or standards from the audience, which makes them feel more strictly judged. These concerns often cause students to be anxious for fear of making mistakes that will tarnish their reputation or reduce positive perceptions from the audience.

6. Unfavorable experiences in the past

Unfavorable past experiences, such as being humiliated during public speaking, can create trauma and cause ongoing fear. According to Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986, p.132), "these negative experiences lead to internalized feelings of fear, which can resurface when it comes to speaking in front of an audience in a public speaking class. As a result, they feel anxious about repeating the bad experience and avoid situations that may cause them to feel embarrassed or fail."

Impact of Speech Anxiety on Student Performance

Speaking anxiety can significantly affect college students' performance in oral presentation and public speaking tasks. "This anxiety can cause physical symptoms such as increased heart rate, sweating and trembling, as well as cognitive challenges such as difficulty in concentrating and thinking clearly" (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986, p.132). These symptoms often lead to decreased confidence and poor delivery, which can hinder communication effectiveness. Students may experience mental blocks, which make it difficult for them to organize their thoughts, resulting in disjointed presentations. Additionally, speaking anxiety can reduce engagement, causing college students to rely too heavily on notes or avoid eye contact with the audience, further reducing the impact of their presentation.

Strategies to Overcome Speech Anxiety

To overcome the public speaking anxiety experienced by students, there are four strategies found by Kondo and Ying Ling (2004) there are:

1. Preparation

Preparation strategy helps students overcome speech anxiety by increasing learning, for example by re-read the material that will be presented, studying a lot of vocabulary and grammar, reading while looking for the material to be presented makes students get a lot of new vocabulary. "Students overcome their speech anxiety by increasing their knowledge of the language by reading lots of newspapers, books, watching TV News, cartoons and movies. Students also try to improve their pronunciation by practicing speaking with friends. In addition, students also practice more, make preparations and try to use English in everyday life" (Rafieyan, 2016, p.111).

2. Relaxation Strategies

Relaxation strategies that have been proven to be effective for overcoming speech anxiety and are suitable techniques for overcoming speech anxiety. The relaxation strategy has several ways to do one of which is to take a deep breath. "One of the techniques developed by Andrew Weil is 4-7-8. Inhaling, holding your breath, and exhaling for 4, 7 and 8 respectively, is the 4-7-8 breathing control method" (Vierra et al., 2022, p.10). Apart from that, relaxation techniques can be done by stretching the muscles, meditating, and listening to music.

3. Positive Thinking Strategies

"Positive thinking strategies that help students overcome speech anxiety with a palliative function that focuses on the cognitive problems underlying students' speaking anxiety" (Kondo & Ying-Ling, 2004, p.2). Positive thinking can also improve students' ability to manage stress. Positive thinking helps reduce student anxiety, and increases students' ability to manage stress, so they are able to connect their thoughts, feelings and behavior. "Apart from that, students can also try self-efficacy, self-efficacy is belief in one's own ability to successfully carry out, manage and carry out tasks, this can be a good motivation for students" (Maulidia & DJ, 2023, p.1).

4. Peer Seeking Strategy

Peer seeking strategy that helps students find comfort in thinking that they are not the only ones who have difficulty understanding speaking class. In addition, Kondo & Ying-Ling, (2004, p.11) also stated that "seeing people who have the same anxiety as themselves can be a source of emotional regulation by social comparison for students who experience speech anxiety.

METHODOLOGY

This research adopts a descriptive research design. It aims to describe the impact of speech anxiety (Glossophobia) on students' performance in public speaking class. The collected data will be used to explore the students' experiences and perceptions regarding their levels of anxiety and its impact on their performance. The research will be conducted at Politeknik Tonggak Equator, specifically in Public Speaking classes under English for Business and Professional Communication majors. This research has done in March-April 2025.

The writers selected fifth-semester students from the English for Business and Professional Communication study program as research subjects because they had completed the Public Speaking course and had classroom speaking experience. A total of 50 students who met the criteria and were willing to participate were chosen to complete the questionnaire.

This research employed a questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument. The questionnaire will be distributed online using Google Forms to facilitate easy access and efficient data collection. In addition to the questionnaire, a semi-structured interview will be

conducted with the lecturer of the public speaking course to gain deeper insights into students' speaking performance, anxiety symptoms, and classroom behavior. The interview will allow the researcher to collect qualitative data that will complement the questionnaire findings.

FINDINGS

This research was conducted to determine the impact of speaking anxiety (Glossophobia) on student performance in Public Speaking classes. Data was collected through a questionnaire of 51 POLTEQ students in the 6th semester who had taken the Public Speaking class as well as an interview with the lecturer teaching the course.

Findings of Questionnaire

Based on the diagram, the majority of respondents experience significant anxiety when speaking in front of the class. A large portion, around 74.5%, report feeling nervous and anxious before giving a presentation. Additionally, 56.9% experience physical symptoms such as trembling hands, sweating, or a racing heartbeat when it is their turn to speak. Many students, about 56.9%, tend to avoid situations where they are required to speak in front of others, while 64.7% admit to feeling a lack of confidence in these situations. Fear of criticism and judgment is also common, with 70.6% expressing fear of being criticized by lecturers or classmates, and 49% admitting they are afraid of being laughed at. Anxiety levels are even higher when speaking in English (62.7%) or in front of people who are more experienced (72.5%).

Previous negative experiences have also contributed to this anxiety, as 60.8% say that such experiences have made them more hesitant to speak again. The impact of anxiety on performance is notable, with 70.6% finding it difficult to concentrate and remember what they want to say during a presentation. Moreover, 68.6% often forget their words or lose track of what they want to say, while 64.7% tend to speak too quickly when nervous. Many also report trembling voices (with a combined 94.2% agreeing or strongly agreeing), avoiding eye contact due to discomfort (60.8%), and relying heavily on written notes (68.6%). This anxiety ultimately leads 70.6% of respondents to feel that their performance is less than optimal.

Despite these challenges, a majority of respondents have found certain coping strategies to be helpful. For example, 66.7% say that practicing repeatedly before a presentation helps reduce their anxiety, and the same percentage find breathing techniques effective for calming themselves. A large number, 80.4%, try to overcome fear by thinking positively, while 60.8% practice by speaking in front of a mirror or recording themselves. These findings suggest that while speaking anxiety is common among students, many are actively seeking and using methods to manage and reduce it.

Finding of Interview

Questions	Answers
How often does the Informant meet students who experience speaking anxiety in class?	Based on anecdotal observation maybe 5 out of 10.
From the Informant experience, what are the signs or symptoms of speaking anxiety that are often seen in students?	Again, anecdotal assumption, inability to carry on with speech, inability to establish eye contact, inaudible voice.
According to the Informant, what are the	Experience, lack of preparation, the

main factors that cause students to experience speaking anxiety?	unfamiliarity with the use of the language, and the old public speaking anxiety.
How does speaking anxiety affect students' presentation quality and confidence?	Sometimes poorly.
Do students who experience speaking anxiety tend to have difficulty in thinking clearly or conveying ideas in a structured manner?	Obviously. Due to the factors given for number 3.
From the Informant observation, does speaking anxiety also have an impact on students' academic grades in public speaking class?	Yes.
What strategies do the Informant use to help students overcome speaking anxiety? Or maybe based on your experience.	Tell them that it's normal, and to focus on the message.
What advice can the informant give for students who want to reduce their speaking anxiety so that they can appear more confident in presenting in public speaking class?	Other factors aside, preparation will help.

Table 4.1 Interview with the Informant

Based on the interview with the Informant, it was found that speech anxiety is a common issue among students in public speaking classes. According to his anecdotal observation, about 5 out of 10 students experience this problem, indicating that nearly half of the students struggle with anxiety when speaking in front of an audience. One of the most frequently observed symptoms of speaking anxiety includes inability to continue the speech, failure to establish eye contact, and an inaudible voice. These signs indicate a significant impact of anxiety on students' ability to communicate effectively.

Regarding the main factors causing speaking anxiety, Informant highlighted lack of experience, poor preparation, unfamiliarity with the language used, and general public speaking anxiety. These factors contribute to students' fear and hesitation when delivering presentations, making it difficult for them to perform confidently. Furthermore, speaking anxiety negatively affects students' presentation quality and confidence. In some cases, students struggle to think clearly and organize their ideas in a structured manner, making their delivery less effective. This aligns with the factors mentioned earlier, where a lack of preparation and experience leads to confusion during the presentation.

Additionally, speech anxiety has a direct impact on students' academic performance in public speaking classes. Since their ability to deliver a structured and clear presentation is compromised, their grades are also affected. To help students overcome this issue, the Informant encourages them to understand that anxiety is normal and advises them to focus on the message rather than their fear. He also emphasizes that preparation plays a crucial role in

reducing anxiety, as being well-prepared can boost confidence and improve overall performance.

In summary, the interview findings indicate that speech anxiety is a significant challenge for students, affecting both their performance and academic outcomes. However, by recognizing the causes and implementing strategies such as proper preparation and focusing on the message, students can gradually reduce their anxiety and become more confident speakers.

Discussion

The findings of the questionnaire and interview highlight that speech anxiety is a prevalent issue among students in public speaking classes. The results indicate that a significant majority of respondents' experience nervousness before speaking in front of the class. This aligns with the literature on glossophobia, which suggests that speech anxiety is one of the most common fears among students (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002). The physical symptoms reported by respondents, such as trembling hands, sweating, and a racing heartbeat, further reinforce the findings of Kushner (2004), who noted that speech anxiety manifests in both physical and emotional responses.

One of the key factors contributing to speech anxiety among students is past negative experiences in public speaking. The data indicate that more than half of the respondents believe that previous bad experiences have increased their fear. This supports the idea that anxiety can be reinforced by past failures or criticisms, making students more apprehensive about future speaking situations. Moreover, Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986) suggest that unfavorable past experiences, such as being humiliated or ridiculed, can lead to long-term speech anxiety, making students avoid speaking opportunities. This avoidance behavior can create a cycle where students do not gain enough speaking experience, thus exacerbating their anxiety further.

Furthermore, the findings show that fear of peer judgment and criticism from lecturers plays a significant role in increasing students' anxiety. This is consistent with Wahyuni (2013), who emphasized the relationship between low self-confidence and public speaking anxiety. Self-confidence, or the lack thereof, is a crucial factor affecting students' ability to perform well in public speaking classes. When students feel they are being scrutinized by peers or authority figures, their anxiety levels tend to rise, leading to hesitations, stuttering, or even avoidance of speaking opportunities. As Devito (2011) highlights, speaking in front of unfamiliar or highly authoritative audiences intensifies the fear of being judged negatively.

Language barriers also emerged as a significant factor contributing to speech anxiety. Many respondents reported feeling more anxious when speaking in English rather than in their native language. This aligns with Scovel (1991), who highlighted that unfamiliarity with the language can increase anticipatory anxiety and lead to avoidance behavior. The lack of fluency in a second language can create additional pressure, as students worry about mispronunciations, grammatical errors, or an inability to express their thoughts clearly. Rafieyan (2016) supports this finding, stating that students who feel unprepared linguistically tend to experience higher levels of anxiety when delivering presentations.

Additionally, students feel more nervous when speaking in front of an audience perceived to be more knowledgeable or experienced than themselves. This suggests that audience composition can greatly influence a speaker's confidence, a phenomenon also noted by Hancock et al. (2010). When students perceive their audience as critical or more skilled, their anxiety may escalate, causing them to struggle with coherence, voice projection, and overall delivery. The fear of failing to meet perceived expectations can cause mental blocks and reduce performance effectiveness.

Avoidance behavior was another common response to public speaking anxiety. More than half of the respondents admitted that they tend to avoid situations where they have to speak in front of many people. This supports Scovel's (1991) assertion that moderate to severe speech anxiety can lead to avoidance behaviors, which may further hinder students' ability to develop their public speaking skills. Avoidance not only limits students' opportunities to improve but also reinforces the belief that public speaking is a fearful experience, leading to a continuous cycle of anxiety and underperformance.

The results also highlight the coping strategies students employ to manage their anxiety. A majority of respondents practice speaking in front of a mirror or record themselves to improve their performance, which supports McCroskey's (1977) findings that practice can help reduce anxiety. This method allows students to identify areas for improvement, build familiarity with their speech, and gain confidence in their delivery. Kondo and Ying Ling (2004) suggest that structured preparation is one of the most effective ways to combat speech anxiety, as it provides students with a sense of control over their presentations.

Additionally, many students rely on breathing techniques and positive thinking to manage their fear, reinforcing the effectiveness of relaxation strategies in reducing anxiety (Furmark, 2002). Techniques such as the 4-7-8 breathing method (Vierra et al., 2022) have been shown to help students regulate their physiological responses, allowing them to remain calm and focused during their speeches. Positive thinking, as emphasized by Kondo & Ying Ling (2004), also plays a vital role in reducing anxiety. By shifting their mindset from self-doubt to confidence, students can improve their ability to handle stress and perform better in public speaking situations.

The interview findings with Informan provide further insight into the impact of speech anxiety. He observed that approximately half of his students struggle with this issue, with common symptoms including failure to establish eye contact, inaudible voice, and an inability to continue speaking. His perspective aligns with the research of Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope (1986), which states that severe speech anxiety can cause students to feel paralyzed and unable to communicate effectively. Moreover, he emphasized the importance of preparation in reducing anxiety, a point also noted by Scovel (1991), who found that students with well-prepared material tend to feel more confident.

Furthermore, the concept of peer-seeking strategies (Kondo & Ying Ling, 2004) was also evident in the responses of students. Many students mentioned that discussing their fears with classmates who share similar experiences helped them feel less isolated. Seeing others who experience the same challenges can serve as a source of emotional support and validation, reducing the perception that speech anxiety is an individual failure rather than a common experience.

Overall, the findings of this study confirm that speech anxiety is a multifaceted issue influenced by past experiences, language barriers, audience composition, and self-confidence levels. While anxiety negatively affects students' performance, the use of strategies such as preparation, practice, relaxation techniques, and peer support can help mitigate its impact. Recognizing the causes of speech anxiety and implementing effective coping mechanisms can contribute to students' long-term confidence and success in public speaking. Institutions should consider integrating structured public speaking training, workshops on anxiety management, and peer mentoring programs to support students in overcoming speech-related fears. By addressing speech anxiety comprehensively, students can develop greater confidence and competence in their communication skills, ultimately enhancing their academic and professional growth.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that speech anxiety has a significant impact on students' performance in delivering presentations. Most students experience noticeable physical and psychological symptoms such as trembling, excessive sweating, a racing heartbeat, mental blocks, and difficulty maintaining eye contact that negatively affect their ability to speak confidently and effectively. In more serious cases, students may even avoid speaking tasks altogether, which further hinders their growth in public speaking skills.

The research also identified several dominant factors that contribute to speech anxiety. One of the primary causes is students' past negative experiences, such as being criticized or embarrassed during previous presentations, which lead to a long-lasting fear of failure. In addition, fear of judgment, especially from peers and lecturers, low self-confidence, and limited language proficiency, particularly in English, were found to be major contributors. The audience composition also plays a role; students reported feeling more anxious when speaking in front of individuals perceived as more knowledgeable or authoritative.

Despite these challenges, the study also uncovered a variety of strategies used by students to manage their anxiety. Among the most common and effective methods are consistent preparation and rehearsal, such as practicing in front of a mirror or recording themselves. Many students also implement relaxation techniques, including deep breathing and positive thinking, to manage their physiological symptoms. Furthermore, peer support plays an important role. Students who openly discuss their fears with classmates tend to feel less isolated and more emotionally supported, which in turn helps reduce their anxiety levels.

Overall, speech anxiety is a multifaceted issue that affects students on both emotional and physical levels. However, with the right strategies such as adequate preparation, structured practice, self-regulation techniques, and emotional support, its negative impact can be minimized, allowing students to gradually improve their performance and confidence in public speaking.

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DEEP LEARNING CURRICULUM IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING: A CASE STUDY AT SMK NEGERI 1 BENGKAYANG

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the implementation of the Deep Learning Curriculum within English Language Teaching (ELT) at SMK Negeri 1 Bengkayang. The research explores how deep learning principles, such as inquiry-based learning, collaboration, creativity, and reflection enhance students' communicative competence and critical thinking. A qualitative case study design was used, involving classroom observations, interviews with English teachers and students, and analysis of lesson plans. The findings reveal that deep learning practices encourage active participation and authentic language use through project-based and problem-based tasks. Despite positive impacts on student engagement and confidence, challenges were found in aligning assessments, teacher readiness, and limited exposure to authentic English input. The study concludes that integrating deep learning into EFL promotes meaningful language learning and supports the goals of the Merdeka Curriculum in vocational education. Deep learning in EFL classroom emphasizes higher-order cognitive processes, creativity, and real-world application, moving beyond traditional memorization of language rules. It aligns with the goals of building global competencies such as character, citizenship, communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking, which are essential for success in both academic and vocational contexts.

Keywords: Deep Learning Curriculum, English Language Teaching, Vocational Education, SMK Negeri 1 Bengkayang

INTRODUCTION

Language learning in vocational education requires more than grammatical accuracy, it demands communicative competence, creativity, and adaptability to workplace contexts. Language learning in vocational education goes beyond simply mastering grammatical accuracy. It requires developing communicative competence so learners can effectively exchange information in real-world settings. Additionally, creativity plays a crucial role in enabling students to navigate unexpected situations and solve problems innovatively. Equally important is adaptability, which ensures learners can adjust their language use according to the specific demands and culture of various workplace environments. Together, these skills prepare vocational students not just to speak correctly, but to communicate confidently and flexibly in their future careers. The Deep Learning Curriculum promotes these values by emphasizing inquiry, collaboration, and reflection, aligning well with communicative language teaching (CLT)

principles in ELT (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). In the Indonesian Merdeka Curriculum, deep learning supports the goal of developing student agency and authentic learning. At SMK Negeri 1 Bengkayang, English teachers have begun integrating deep learning strategies to enhance students' speaking and problem-solving skills through meaningful communicative activities. This study aims to explore how deep learning is implemented in ELT classes, what challenges are encountered, and how it influences students' engagement and language development.

Building on this foundation, the study employs qualitative methods to gather insights from both teachers and students regarding instructional practices and classroom experiences. It investigates the extent to which inquiry-based tasks, collaborative projects, and reflective exercises are incorporated in lessons and how these elements foster a deeper understanding of language use in vocational settings. Additionally, it examines obstacles such as limited resources, varying student motivation, and teachers' readiness to adopt innovative pedagogies. By analyzing these factors, the research contributes to identifying effective strategies for embedding deep learning principles in English language teaching, aiming to better prepare students for the communicative demands of their future careers.

Deep learning presents a promising solution for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education in vocational schools by addressing the complex demands of language proficiency needed in real-world, professional contexts. Unlike traditional rote memorization, deep learning encourages students to engage actively with language through critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and authentic communication tasks. This approach helps vocational learners develop not only linguistic accuracy but also the communicative competence and adaptability essential for workplace success. By integrating meaningful, learner-centered activities and reflective practices, deep learning supports continuous improvement and learner autonomy, which are critical in vocational settings. Furthermore, it aligns with the development of global competencies such as character, citizenship, and critical thinking, equipping students with broader skills for lifelong learning and professional challenges. However, successful implementation depends on adequate teacher training, resource availability, and curriculum alignment with vocational goals. Therefore, this study is going to investigate teachers' and students' perspectives to better understand the facilitators and barriers in applying deep learning strategies in English Language Teaching at vocational schools. This investigation will provide insights into how these stakeholders experience and respond to the deep learning approach, identify challenges such as infrastructural limitations, readiness levels, and curricular constraints, and suggest strategies for effective integration. Understanding these perspectives will contribute to designing supportive interventions that enhance the quality and relevance of English education in vocational settings, ultimately improving learners' communicative competence, collaboration, and critical thinking skills essential for their future careers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Deep learning in language education involves understanding meaning and applying knowledge to new situations (Marton & Säljö, 1976). Deep learning in language education emphasizes grasping the underlying meaning of content rather than rote memorization. According to Marton and Säljö (1976), it involves actively constructing knowledge and applying it flexibly to new and varied situations. This approach encourages learners to engage critically with language materials, fostering deeper comprehension and the ability to transfer skills beyond

the classroom. By focusing on meaningful learning, students develop stronger communicative abilities and problem-solving skills essential for real-life language use.

According to Fullan, Quinn, and McEachen (2018), deep learning develops six global competencies: character, citizenship, collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking, all essential in English communication and vocational contexts. Fullan, Quinn and McEachen (2018) identify six global competencies fostered through deep learning: character, citizenship, collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking. These competencies are crucial in both English communication and vocational settings, where learners must navigate complex social interactions and professional demands. Developing character nurtures personal responsibility and ethical awareness, while citizenship highlights active participation in community and societal contexts. Collaboration and communication skills enable effective teamwork and clear expression, essential for workplace success. Creativity and critical thinking empower students to innovate and solve problems efficiently, adapting their language use to dynamic vocational environments. Together, these competencies form a comprehensive skill set that deep learning aims to cultivate for holistic learner development. The Merdeka Curriculum encourages teachers to design project-based learning (PBL) experiences that connect classroom learning to real-life challenges.

In language education, this approach complements communicative methodologies that prioritize real-world use of language, critical thinking, and collaboration (Biggs & Tang, 2011). It encourages learners to move beyond passive reception of information toward active participation in meaningful communication. By emphasizing interaction and problem-solving, students develop not only language skills but also cognitive abilities essential for navigating complex social and professional contexts. Collaboration further enriches the learning experience by fostering diverse perspectives and mutual support, which are vital for mastering language in authentic settings. Integrating these elements creates a dynamic classroom environment where language functions as a tool for connection and critical inquiry rather than mere accuracy. Both CLT and deep learning emphasize learner autonomy, active participation, and meaningful communication.

Deep learning in English Language Teaching (ELT) emphasizes active engagement, critical analysis, and meaningful application of knowledge rather than surface-level memorization. It fosters deeper understanding by encouraging learners to connect prior experiences with new language tasks, promoting skills beyond rote learning such as critical thinking, creativity, and communicative competence (Marton & Säljö, 1976; Entwistle & Ramsden, 1982). This approach aligns with frameworks like Biggs' 3P Model, which highlights the interplay between presage factors, learning processes, and learning outcomes to support deeper language acquisition. Pedagogical strategies that support deep learning in ELT include inquiry-driven tasks, task-based learning, reflective activities, and formative assessment techniques, all aimed at developing learners' ability to apply language in authentic contexts. However, challenges such as traditional teaching methods, resource constraints, and the need for teacher professional development must be addressed to fully implement deep learning principles. Overall, deep learning transforms English classrooms into dynamic, student-centered environments, equipping learners with higher-order skills essential for both academic and vocational success.

The process of teaching English with deep learning involves several stages centered on active learner engagement and the development of higher-order thinking. According to recent

studies, this process begins with designing inquiry-based tasks that promote critical analysis, problem-solving, and authentic language use in context (Bachtiar, 2025; Marton & Säljö, 1976; Entwistle & Ramsden, 1982). Teaching strategies include observation, socialization, training and mentoring, and evaluation to ensure sustained teacher and learner development (Bachtiar, 2025). Deep learning pedagogy encourages students to connect new knowledge with prior experience, fostering creativity, communication, collaboration, citizenship, character, and critical thinking—the six Cs vital for vocational and communicative competence (Quinn & McEachen, 2018; Bachtiar, 2025). Formative assessments and reflective practices support learner agency and self-regulation, essential for deep engagement. The classroom becomes a dynamic environment that moves away from rote memorization toward meaningful, learner-centered activities, facilitated by supportive pedagogical frameworks like Biggs' 3P Model (Presage, Process, Product) that link learner characteristics, teaching methods, and outcomes. Challenges such as limited resources and teacher readiness require attention to achieve effective implementation. This holistic approach prepares students not only to master English linguistically but also to adapt and thrive in diverse real-world and vocational contexts.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative case study approach (Yin, 2018), exploring the implementation of deep learning in English classes at SMK Negeri 1 Bengkayang. Participants consisted of two English teachers and twenty students from Grade XI Accounting and Office Administration programs. Data were collected through classroom observations, teacher and student interviews, and document analysis of lesson plans and teaching materials. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to identify emerging patterns related to instructional design, engagement, and challenges.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The teacher's perspective in integrating deep learning into English Language Teaching (ELT) reveals a transformative shift in pedagogical approaches. Teachers experience a move from traditional, content-focused instruction toward more student-centered, inquiry-based learning that fosters critical thinking, creativity, and communicative competence. Teachers report increased student engagement and deeper cognitive involvement, appreciating the curriculum's emphasis on meaningful interaction and reflective practice. However, they also recognize challenges such as adapting to new methodologies, balancing diverse learner needs, and the necessity for ongoing professional development to fully realize the potential of deep learning in the ELT classroom. This perspective highlights the vital role of teachers as facilitators of dynamic and contextualized language learning, essential for preparing students to meet real-world communicative demands effectively. The following table shows the teachers' perspective of integrating deep learning on EFL classroom.

Table 1 Teachers' Persepctive on the integration of deep learning in EFL Classroom

Aspect	Teachers' perspective
Curriculum Changes	Teachers noted significant changes in material arrangement, content, and teaching approaches aligned with the 2013 curriculum.
Teaching Strategies	They adapted methods towards project-based learning and the scientific approach, focusing on students' interests and competences.
Challenges	Teachers experienced challenges including limited time allotment for English, adapting to new assessment styles, and managing diverse student needs.
Student Engagement	Teachers observed increased student motivation and active participation in learning activities using deep learning strategies.
Professional Development	Teachers expressed the need for continuous training and support to effectively implement deep learning strategies in their teaching practice.
Overall Impact	Despite challenges, teachers believe the Deep Learning Curriculum enhances students' communicative competence and critical thinking skills effectively.

Teachers applied deep learning through project-based tasks, such as designing English promotional videos, conducting role plays simulating workplace scenarios, and collaborative problem-solving discussions. These activities promoted authentic language use and encouraged critical thinking and creativity. From the teacher's perspective at SMK Negeri 1 Bengkayang, integrating the Deep Learning Curriculum into English Language Teaching has brought positive changes in students' communicative competence, collaboration, and critical thinking skills. Teachers report that the curriculum's emphasis on inquiry-based learning, project-based tasks, and reflective activities engages students more deeply and makes learning more meaningful. It is in line with Aditama, M. G., & Sugiharto, P. A. (2025). Enhancing EFL student engagement through deep learning strategies: Teachers' perceptions and implementation challenges. *Melek Literasi Journal*, 3(1), 61-80. They observe improvements in students' ability to work collaboratively, express ideas clearly, and think critically about language use. However, teachers also acknowledge challenges such as adapting to new teaching methods, managing diverse learner needs, and needing ongoing professional development support. Despite these challenges, teachers believe the deep learning approach aligns well with vocational education goals and prepares students effectively for real-world communication demands. The following table shows the students' perspective of integrating deep learning on EFL classroom.

Table 2 Students' Persepctive on the integration of deep learning in EFL Classroom

Aspect	Student's perspective
Communicative Competence	Students feel more motivated and confident in using English for meaningful communication beyond the classroom.

Collaboration	Group discussions and tasks have helped students develop teamwork and social skills essential for real-world contexts.
Critical Thinking	Inquiry and reflection activities have encouraged students to think critically and creatively about language use.
	Students appreciate active participation and find learning more interesting through project- and problem-based tasks
Engagement and Motivation	Students appreciate active participation and find learning more interesting through project- and problem-based tasks.
Challenges	Some students face difficulties with limited resources and adapting to self-directed and autonomous learning approaches.
Overall Value	Students recognize the deep learning approach as beneficial in enhancing language abilities and preparing for vocational demands.

Students reported higher motivation and confidence when using English for real purposes. They practiced communication strategies, negotiation skills, and collaborative learning, key aspects of both CLT and deep learning. Challenges included insufficient training in deep learning pedagogy, time constraints, and difficulty in developing authentic assessment rubrics for communication-based tasks. The success of deep learning in ELT relies on school-level support, flexible curriculum planning, and professional development. Students' perspective at SMK Negeri 1 Bengkayang, integrating the Deep Learning Curriculum into English Language Teaching has positively influenced their communicative competence, collaboration, and critical thinking skills. It is in line with Quinn & McEachen, 2018; Bachtiar, (2025) that students appreciate engaging in project-based and problem-based learning activities that require active participation and real-world communication. They feel more motivated and confident in using English for meaningful purposes beyond the classroom. Collaboration through group discussions and tasks has helped them develop social and teamwork skills, while inquiry and reflection activities have encouraged them to think critically and creatively. However, students also note challenges such as limited learning resources and the occasional difficulty of adapting to more autonomous and self-directed learning methods. Overall, students recognize the value of the deep learning approach in enhancing their language abilities and preparing them for future vocational and social communication needs.

CONCLUSION

Integrating the Deep Learning Curriculum into English Language Teaching at SMK Negeri 1 Bengkayang has enhanced students' communicative competence, collaboration, and critical thinking. Deep learning strategies, particularly project-based and inquiry-based learning, encourage students to use English meaningfully and creatively. To ensure sustainability, schools should provide ongoing teacher training, authentic assessment design, and institutional support aligned with the Merdeka Curriculum. This curriculum emphasizes higher-order cognitive processes, creativity, and real-world application, moving beyond traditional memorization of language rules. It aligns with the goals of building global competencies such as character,

citizenship, communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking, which are essential for success in both academic and vocational contexts. Teachers at SMK Negeri 1 Bengkayang have adopted inquiry-based tasks, collaborative projects, and reflective activities that engage students meaningfully and promote deeper learning. This approach also fosters learner autonomy and motivation while preparing students to navigate the communicative demands of their future workplaces. Challenges such as resource limitations and the need for continuous professional development for teachers have been recognized, but the overall impact points to a positive transformation in English language acquisition and use in vocational education settings.

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