

TEACHERS' PERCEPTION OF CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ENGLISH DAY PROGRAM : IMPLICATION FOR IMPROVING STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS AND SELF-EFFICACY

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore teachers' perceptions of the challenges in implementing the English Day program at MAN 1 Kota Pekalongan and identify its implications for the students' speaking skills and self-efficacy. The English Day program is designed to increase the use of English in the school environment, but it faces various barriers, both from the student's and teachers' side. The research method used was qualitative with a case study design, involving in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. The research participants comprised three English teachers and ten grade XI students directly involved in the program. The results show that the main challenges in implementing the program include low student motivation and confidence, limited teacher competence in English, and lack of adequate supporting facilities. Nevertheless, the program has the potential to improve students' speaking skills if supported by training for teachers and strengthening learning facilities. This research provides important implications for the development of English Day programs in other schools, with recommendations to improve teacher competence and create a more supportive learning environment for students to practice English.

Keywords: *Teachers' perceptions, challenges, English Day program, speaking skills, students' self-efficacy.*

A. Introduction

English has an increasingly significant role in education, especially in the current era of globalization. Mastery of English is an important requirement for students to improve their competitiveness, both at the national and international levels. However, students' ability to speak English is still a big challenge in many schools in Indonesia, including in

Pekalongan City. Based on data revealed by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC, 2022), only around 25% of students in Indonesia can speak English well. This shows a gap between global needs and students' English mastery (Darmawan, 2024).

In this context, the English Day program has been implemented at MAN 1 Kota Pekalongan as one of the

strategic efforts to improve students' English speaking skills, especially in grade XI. The program aims to create a learning environment that encourages students to use English in their daily activities at school. Direct language practice in real situations can improve students' speaking skills while building their confidence (Toro et.al., 2020). However, implementing this program at MAN 1 Kota Pekalongan faces various challenges. Based on initial observations, many grade XI students feel shy or afraid of being wrong when speaking English. In addition, not all teachers can optimally utilize this program due to limited English competency or lack of relevant training. Research by Avillanova & Kuswando (2019) also shows that low student motivation, limited teacher competence, and lack of facility support are the main challenges in implementing English Day programs in various schools in Indonesia.

A similar phenomenon occurs at MAN 1 Kota Pekalongan, where only some teachers actively use English during the program. In addition, the lack of interactive learning materials and limited supporting technology are other

obstacles that affect the effectiveness of this program. For example, some students feel that they are not maximally supported by the learning environment, so they lack the confidence to speak in English. Previous research has discussed various aspects related to implementing the English Day program. Canals and Al-Rawashdeh (2029) emphasized the importance of teacher training in improving their competencies to support the success of this program. Meanwhile, Tsai et.al., (2020) research revealed that a creative approach to designing English Day activities can increase student participation. However, these studies have not specifically explored teachers' perceptions of the challenges they face in implementing this program, especially at MAN 1 Kota Pekalongan.

In addition, the English Day program has significant implications for students' speaking skills and self-efficacy. According to Rao (2019), speaking skills are one of the main components in mastering English, which can only be developed through consistent practice. Self-confidence is also an important factor that influences students' courage to speak

English. Chen & Hwang (2022) research found that students who feel supported by the learning environment tend to be more confident in speaking English. In this context, this study focuses on teachers' perceptions of the challenges in implementing the English Day program in class XI of MAN 1 Kota Pekalongan. It also examines the implications of the program on improving students' speaking skills and confidence. Using a qualitative approach, this study is expected to provide a deeper insight into the obstacles faced by teachers, as well as strategies that can be applied to improve the effectiveness of the English Day program. The results of this study are also expected to serve as a basis for policymakers in designing a more comprehensive training and development program to support the implementation of the English Day program at MAN 1 Kota Pekalongan and other schools.

B. Method

This study uses a qualitative approach to deeply explore teachers' perceptions of the challenges in implementing the English Day program and its implications for students' speaking skills and self-

efficacy. Researchers chose this approach to gain a holistic and contextual understanding of phenomena through direct interaction with participants (Creswell, 2022). The research design used is a case study, which was chosen because the focus of this research lies on a specific situation at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri I Pekalongan, namely the implementation of the English Day program. This case study design is descriptive exploratory, aiming to describe and analyze the challenges faced by teachers and their impact on students (Yin, 2018).

The research location was determined purposively by selecting Madrasah Aliyah Negeri I Pekalongan, which has implemented the English Day program for at least one year. The research participants consisted of five English teachers who were directly involved in the implementation of the program, as well as ten students who were purposively selected based on teacher recommendations, including students with varying levels of participation in the program. The varying levels refer to students with different levels of involvement in the English Day program. This could include active students, moderate

students, and passive students. By selecting students from these varying levels of participation, it is possible to gain a more comprehensive perspective of the challenges faced in the program and how this affects students' speaking skills and self-efficacy. This selection of participants aims to gain a comprehensive perspective on the challenges and impacts of the program.

Data were collected through three main techniques: in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted with teachers to explore their perceptions regarding the challenges in implementing the program, the strategies used, and the impact on students. The interview guide was developed based on relevant indicators, such as teacher competence, student motivation, and facility support (Alif & Yulianto, 2020). Participatory observation was conducted during English Day activities to record interactions between teachers and students, the use of English in daily activities, and the obstacles that arise. This observation aims to complement data from interviews and provide a more real picture of program

implementation (Lareau, 2021). In addition, documentation includes the analysis of related documents, such as the schedule of English Day activities, learning materials used, lesson plans, and program evaluation reports, which help identify the extent to which the program has been planned and implemented by its original objectives.

The main instrument in this study was the researcher herself as the key instrument, as is common in qualitative research (Creswell, 2022). The researcher also utilized interview guides, observation sheets, and document checklists as supporting instruments to ensure that the data obtained were relevant and in-depth. Data analysis was conducted thematically with steps including data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation were summarized, simplified, and categorized based on main themes, such as implementation challenges, teacher strategies, and impacts on students. The reduced data was then presented in the form of descriptive narratives, tables, and diagrams to facilitate understanding

and interpretation. Conclusions were made based on patterns found in the data, taking into account theory and previous research findings. Validation was conducted through triangulation of sources and methods to ensure data validity (Lemon & Hayes, 2020). Data validity was guaranteed through source triangulation, method triangulation, and member checking. Data from observations, interviews, and documentation were compared in order to perform source triangulation. Method triangulation was done by using various data collection techniques. Member checking was done by asking participants to review the interview results and the researcher's interpretation (Motulsky, 2021). This research also adheres to the principles of research ethics, such as providing clear information to participants about the purpose and procedures of the research, maintaining the confidentiality of participants' identities, and obtaining informed consent before data collection begins (Creswell, 2022).

C. Result and Discussion

The results of the qualitative study on the English Day program's execution at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri I

Pekalongan are shown in this section. To determine the main difficulties teachers encounter and the consequences for students' speaking skills and self-efficacy the information gathered from in-depth interviews, participant observations, and documentation was subjected to a thematic analysis.

Challenges Teachers Face

According to the findings, teachers faced a number of significant difficulties when putting the English Day program into practice. Table 1 below provides a summary of these difficulties.

Table 1: Challenges Faced by Teachers in Implementing the English Day Program

Challenge	Regularity	Level of impact
Low Student Motivation	5	High
Lack of Interactive Materials	3	Medium
Insufficient Training for Teachers	4	High
Limited Technological Support	2	medium

According to the data, the most commonly mentioned difficulties were low student motivation, both of which had a significant effect on the success of the program. Teachers said that many students' engagement had been limited by feelings of shyness or fear of making mistakes when speaking English. Teachers' interviews provided a more in-depth understanding of these difficulties. One English teacher, for example, said, "A lot of my students are scared to speak up in class." They are less willing to take part in English Day activities because they are afraid of making mistakes. Another teacher agreed, saying, "We try to encourage them, but the fear of judgment is a big barrier."

Teachers noted a lack of interactive learning resources as a major challenge in addition to low student engagement. "We need more engaging materials that can stimulate students' interest in speaking English," said one teacher. The resources on hand frequently lack interactivity and are too conventional.

During the interviews, students also shared insightful opinions. "I get nervous when I have to speak to my friends in English," a student stated.. I wish there were more enjoyable

exercises that would allow us to practice without feeling nervous. "I sometimes don't understand the materials well, and that makes me less confident to speak up," said a different student.

The study of relevant documents, including lesson plans and program evaluation reports, provided additional evidence in support of the difficulties mentioned in the interviews. For instance, the lesson plans on examination showed a dependence on conventional teaching techniques, which might not be the best way to get students interested in speaking exercises. Program assessment reports also emphasized the need for further professional development opportunities for teachers, pointing out that a common topic in the feedback was a lack of training.

Implications for Students' Self-Efficacy and Speaking Skill

The findings also demonstrated the effects of the English Day program on the students' speaking skills and sense of self-efficacy. The data collected through interviews and observations revealed that while the program's objective was to enhance students' speaking skills, several

challenges limited its self-efficacy. The observations provided insight into how students interacted and engaged in English Day activities, while the interviews revealed personal details of their struggles and experiences.

Table 2: Implications of the English Day Program on Students

Inference	Observed Effect	Teacher Comments
Improvement in Speaking Skills	medium	Some students show progress
Increased Self-efficacy	Low	Many still hesitate to speak
Enhanced Classroom Interaction	medium	Group activities help

Teachers gave insightful explanations of the program's observable benefits during the interviews. "While I have seen some students improve their speaking skills, many still struggle with self-confidence," said one teacher, for instance. They frequently hesitate to engage, particularly when their classmates are around. This comment

confirms the conclusion that students have low self-efficacy, which is supported by Table 2.

"Group exercises have been helpful; they allow students to practice speaking in a less frightening setting, but we need to do more to encourage those who are shy," said another teacher. This is consistent with the effect of improved classroom engagement, showing that although group activities are beneficial, they are insufficient to completely solve the problem of self-efficacy.

Students also talked about their experiences with speaking skills and self-efficacy. One student said, "I still get anxious when it's my turn to speak in front of everyone, but I feel a little better when we work in groups." The statement supports the conclusion of low self-efficacy by showing the continuous difficulties students encounter in developing their self-efficacy.

"There are times when I want to speak up, but I'm afraid of making mistakes, so I just keep quiet," said another student. This highlights even more how classroom environments need to be more encouraging to promote involvement and self-efficacy.

Approaches Teachers Use to Get Overcome Challenges

In response to the problems identified, teachers employed a variety of strategies to increase the efficiency of the English Day program. Among these strategies were:

1. **Establishing a Supportive Environment:** Teachers emphasized the importance of establishing an environment in the classroom where students may express themselves without fear of judgment. One teacher remarked, "I always remind my students that mistakes are a necessary part of learning, and I encourage them to support each other."
2. **Using Group Activities:** It has been observed that cooperative learning-promoting group activities can increase student engagement and reduce anxiety. A teacher said, "Students tend to feel more comfortable speaking, and it helps build their confidence when they work together."
3. **Using Technology:** To make learning more engaging and dynamic, some teachers have used technology in their

lessons. "Our English Day activities have become more engaging with the use of multimedia resources, and students are more motivated to participate when they find the content engaging," a teacher said.

These strategies demonstrate the teacher's attempts to address the challenges they encounter and improve the learning environment in their classrooms.

The results demonstrated that facility support, English language proficiency for non-native teachers, and student enthusiasm and self-efficacy are critical components of the English Day program's effectiveness at MAN 1 Pekalongan City. This result is consistent with Gardner's (1985) theory of motivation, which highlights the impact of instrumental and integrative motivation on students' foreign language acquisition (Nurhidayah, 2020). With only 30% of students actively participating, it is evident that the biggest barriers to learning English, particularly in speaking skills, are students' low motivation and self-efficacy. The study by Rajitha & Alamelu et al. (2020), which claims that speaking anxiety is

the primary barrier to language acquisition, further supports this.

However, the fact that only 40% of teachers are proficient at using English for non-English speakers suggests that these teachers require more assistance and training. The significance of teachers' roles as role models for learning in order to facilitate the process of learning (Canals & Al-Rawashdeh, 2019). Teachers serve as role models for the use of technology in the classroom, which is bolstered by successful teaching methods (Baran et al., 2019). According to the theory of educational ecology, an unsupportive learning environment can impede the learning process. This is particularly evident in the area of adequate technology, where only 40% of teachers believe that supporting facilities are adequate (Coronado et al., 2021).

The findings of this study are consistent with earlier research that demonstrates the substantial impact of the teacher proficiency and student motivation on language acquisition. For instance, research by Safitri & Ockta (2024) demonstrated that project-based learning techniques and the fear of making mistakes can affect student engagement. Furthermore,

Issa et al.'s research from 2024 made clear that a barrier to the adoption of English-based programs is teachers' lack of training. This study advances our knowledge of the variables affecting English language learning programs' effectiveness in Indonesian classrooms.

The implications of these findings are important both practically and theoretically. Practically, the results show the need for a real practice-based approach to increase students' motivation and confidence, as well as technology-based training to improve teachers' competence. Theoretically, this study supports existing theories regarding the importance of motivation, teacher competence and facility support in language learning. The findings also open up opportunities for the development of more effective learning models in the future.

This study has several limitations. First, the sample size being limited to only one school may limit the generalizability of the findings. Secondly, the data collection methods used may not fully cover all aspects that influence motivation and competence. In addition, interpretation of the results may be affected by

respondent bias. Acknowledging these limitations is important to increase readers' confidence in this study and open up opportunities for further research.

Drawing from the findings and constraints of this study, the following recommendations for future research are proposed: First, expanding the sample size to include more schools so that the results can be generalized. Second, the use of mixed methods that combine qualitative and quantitative to gain a deeper understanding of the factors that influence language learning. Third, further research could explore other variables that might contribute to motivation and competence, such as parental support and students' social environments. Thus, future research can provide more comprehensive insights into the development of English language learning programs in Indonesia.

E. Conclusion

Based on the research findings regarding teachers' perceptions of the challenges in implementing the English Day program at MAN 1 Kota Pekalongan, it is evident that several key factors significantly influence the program's success. A primary

challenge is the low motivation and confidence among students when speaking English, as many fear making mistakes, which hinders their active participation. Additionally, teachers' competence in using English effectively is crucial; the observed low proficiency among teachers indicates a pressing need for enhanced training and support. Furthermore, limited technological resources and interactive learning environments restrict the program's optimization, highlighting the necessity of a supportive atmosphere conducive to language learning.

The implications of these findings are substantial for improving students' speaking skills and self-efficacy. While the English Day program holds great potential for enhancing language proficiency, its success relies heavily on the collaborative support of teachers, students, and the broader school environment. This study underscores the importance of communicative learning theory, which advocates for real-life speaking practice as essential for language acquisition. By addressing the identified challenges and fostering a more supportive learning environment, educational

stakeholders can develop more effective strategies to enhance English language learning programs in Indonesian schools, ultimately leading to improved student outcomes.

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