

**EXPLORING STUDENTS' HABITS IN ENHANCING ENGLISH-SPEAKING
ABILITY: A STUDY AT THE FACULTY OF PSYCHOLOGY, BUANA
PERJUANGAN KARAWANG UNIVERSITY**

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ABSTRACT

Considering the importance of English-speaking ability in both academic contexts and daily communication, this study explores students' everyday habits that support the mastery of speaking, including fluency, pronunciation, and verbal interaction. The purpose of this research is to identify habits that contribute to the development of English-speaking ability among students. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed, with data collected through classroom observation and in-depth interviews. The participants were second-semester students from the Psychology Study Program, Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Buana Perjuangan Karawang. The findings reveal eight key habits that enhance speaking performance: practicing self-monologues, watching films and repeating vocabulary, listening to songs, recording new vocabulary, reading English texts, engaging in social interaction, using learning applications, and setting gadgets to English. These habits indicate that effective English learning extends beyond formal instruction and is shaped by reflective, contextual, and sustained personal practices. The study provides implications for the development of adaptive learning strategies that integrate cognitive and behavioral aspects of language acquisition.

Keywords: English-speaking ability, learning habits, English Language

ABSTRAK

Mengingat Mengingat pentingnya kemampuan berbicara bahasa Inggris dalam pembelajaran akademik maupun kehidupan sehari-hari, penelitian ini menyoroti kebiasaan sehari-hari mahasiswa yang mendukung penguasaan keterampilan berbicara, termasuk kefasihan, pengucapan, dan interaksi verbal. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi kebiasaan yang berkontribusi terhadap pengembangan kemampuan berbicara bahasa Inggris mahasiswa. Metode penelitian yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif, dengan pengumpulan data melalui observasi kelas dan wawancara mendalam. Subjek penelitian adalah mahasiswa semester dua Program Studi Psikologi, Fakultas Psikologi, Universitas Buana Perjuangan Karawang. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan delapan kebiasaan utama yang meningkatkan performa berbicara, yaitu: latihan monolog mandiri,

menonton film dan mengulang kosakata, mendengarkan lagu, mencatat kosakata baru, membaca konten berbahasa Inggris, melakukan interaksi sosial, menggunakan aplikasi pembelajaran, serta mengatur perangkat elektronik ke bahasa Inggris. Kebiasaan tersebut membuktikan bahwa pembelajaran bahasa Inggris yang efektif tidak hanya bergantung pada instruksi formal di kelas, tetapi juga dibentuk oleh praktik pribadi yang reflektif, kontekstual, dan berkelanjutan. Penelitian ini memberikan implikasi bagi pengembangan strategi pembelajaran adaptif yang mengintegrasikan aspek kognitif dan perilaku dalam pemerolehan bahasa.

Kata Kunci: Kemampuan berbicara Bahasa Inggris, kebiasaan belajar, bahasa Inggris

A. Introduction

Education plays a crucial role in improving the quality of human resources, as the progress of a nation is largely determined by the quality of its people (Sultan & Hajerina, 2020). Education encompasses all aspects of life and should continuously evolve toward better outcomes. Therefore, educational innovation must be consistently pursued to enhance the quality of learning. One of the most effective ways to develop qualified individuals is through education, both formal and non-formal.

One form of formal education is higher education. According to Government Regulation No. 4 of 2014, higher education refers to institutions that provide academic education within a specific field of science or technology. Students generally choose a major according to their interests and focus on knowledge

related to their chosen discipline. However, aside from specialized courses, students are also required to take general compulsory courses designed to broaden their knowledge and skills. These general courses typically include subjects such as Pancasila Education, Civic Education, Indonesian Language, English, Mathematics, and Religious Education.

English is one of the compulsory courses offered as a medium of communication across multidisciplinary fields. Its inclusion is based on the fact that English is an international language. Many scientific references and textbooks are written in English, the global job market often requires English proficiency as a qualification, and technological developments frequently employ English terminology.

Students from various majors outside English Education typically study English during their early semesters, usually in the first or second semester. This course is delivered in the form of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as part of the general compulsory curriculum. The learning process is conducted for 120 minutes per week in class, and the achievement of learning objectives is the responsibility of each lecturer. Within the context of English as a general course, the primary goal is to enable students to communicate effectively in English. Among the four language skills, speaking ability plays a particularly important role as it serves as a key indicator of successful communication. English classes that emphasize practice provide opportunities for students to develop their speaking skills. Those who already possess good speaking ability can continue to refine their skills, while others gain direct experience to improve their communication competence. Thus, English learning at the university level is expected to support students in mastering speaking skills as preparation for both academic and professional needs.

Through classroom activities, students can practice initiating conversations and optimizing their speaking ability. Speaking ability refers to an individual's capacity to express ideas, information, or feelings orally in a clear and effective manner. In the context of language learning, this skill involves accurate pronunciation, appropriate vocabulary use, correct sentence structure, and the ability to interact in conversations. Speaking ability is essentially the capacity to articulate words or sounds to express, convey, and communicate thoughts, ideas, and emotions. However, mastery of this skill is not solely determined by formal classroom learning; it is also shaped by habits developed independently by students. Speakers must select language styles appropriate to the context and audience. The ultimate goal of speaking is effective communication, which requires clarity, logic, and systematic delivery (Hilaliyah, 2017).

Previous studies have explored various factors influencing the development of English-speaking ability. Abugohar et al. (2019) examined the use of smartphone applications as a teaching technique to enhance students' English-

speaking ability, as well as their perceptions and practices in using such tools. Similarly, Ebadi and Asakereh (2017) investigated the development of English-speaking ability among EFL learners through dynamic assessment, comparing progress between beginners and advanced learners. These studies highlight that habits, practice, technology, and assessment methods play significant roles in strengthening students' communication skills.

The phenomenon observed among Psychology students of the 2023/2024 cohort reveals that only about 10% possess basic English-speaking ability. Most students perceive English as difficult to apply in daily communication, largely due to limited opportunities for practice, which are confined to classroom sessions with restricted duration. Based on an analysis of daily assessments, midterm exams, and final exams, out of 379 active students, only around 10% demonstrated mastery of English-speaking ability. This data reinforces the notion that the majority of students have not yet achieved adequate communication competence.

Furthermore, informal interviews with five students who possess basic English-speaking ability revealed several habits that unconsciously support language acquisition. One prominent habit is watching English-language films with subtitles, which helps students expand their vocabulary while simultaneously practicing speaking skills. This phenomenon illustrates a gap between the intended objectives of English learning at the university level—namely, equipping students to communicate effectively—and the actual outcomes achieved. Therefore, research exploring habits that support the mastery of English-speaking ability is essential, as it may contribute to more effective and relevant learning strategies tailored to students' needs.

A study conducted by Arianti et al. (2020) further emphasized that the more individuals engage in habits that support English acquisition, the more fluent they become in communication. Habits have proven to be an effective method in language learning, as repetitive practice strengthens memory and facilitates continuous improvement in communication skills.

Accordingly, the more students develop habits that support their

English-speaking ability, the greater their chances of communicating fluently and naturally. Based on this foundation, the present study aims to identify the habits that contribute to the mastery of English-speaking ability among Psychology students at Universitas Buana Perjuangan Karawang.

B. Research Methodology

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach, aiming to gain an in-depth understanding of students' habits in supporting the mastery of English-speaking ability. This approach was chosen because it allows the exploration of meaning, perceptions, and subjective experiences of students regarding their routine activities, both in formal and informal contexts, that contribute to the improvement of speaking skills (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Moleong, 2017).

The research was conducted at Buana Perjuangan Karawang University, specifically within the Psychology Study Program. The site was selected based on the consideration that psychology students possess an academic

background that enables exploration of learning habits, motivation, and social interaction related to English acquisition. The participants were second-semester students of the 2023/2024 cohort in the Psychology Study Program.

A purposive sampling technique was applied to select informants based on criteria relevant to the research focus (Sugiyono, 2019). The number of informants was determined to be approximately 10% of the total population of the cohort, or until data saturation was reached—defined as the point at which additional interviews no longer yield significant new information.

Three main techniques were employed to collect data:

1. Observation

Direct observation was conducted during English classes to examine:

- a. Verbal interactions between lecturers and students.
- b. Students' responses to instructions delivered in English.
- c. Informal communication patterns among students using English.

Observations also extended beyond the classroom, including discussions, organizational activities, and interactions through campus social media platforms.

2. Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted using open-ended questions to allow deeper exploration. The purpose of the interviews was to investigate students' English-learning habits outside the classroom and their strategies for improving speaking ability, along with supporting factors. Interviews were conducted both online and face-to-face, with flexible durations depending on the depth of information provided.

3. Documentation

Documentation included students' study records, academic performance data, and evidence of digital habits such as gadget settings in English, use of learning applications, and relevant excerpts from social media.

Then data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model, which consists of three stages:

1. Data Reduction: summarizing and categorizing relevant information.

2. Data Display: presenting findings descriptively to identify emerging patterns.

3. Conclusion Drawing and Verification: interpreting the data to generate insights and verifying them against the research objectives.

Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the study. Participants were informed about the research objectives, and informed consent was obtained prior to participation. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained to protect participants' identities and ensure compliance with academic research standards.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Classroom Observation

Observations were conducted during several English class sessions with second-semester Psychology students at Universitas Buana Perjuangan Karawang. The focus was directed toward verbal interactions between lecturers and students, responses to English instructions, and active participation in speaking activities.

Overall, the classroom atmosphere reflected considerable

enthusiasm toward English learning. Students were able to understand and respond to simple instructions such as “Dialogue with your friend!”, “Give your opinion,” or “Describe this picture.” Approximately 70% of students actively spoke when asked to present opinions, participate in group discussions, or perform dialogue simulations. Even in informal interactions, some students used English for greetings or light jokes, although limited to simple phrases.

However, several challenges were observed, including nervous expressions, long pauses, or switching to Indonesian when unable to find the appropriate vocabulary. During presentations, some students tended to read prepared texts rather than speak spontaneously. Two-way interaction was also limited, with only a small number of students daring to ask questions or respond orally.

These findings indicate that basic speaking ability has been established but has not yet developed into full fluency. This highlights the importance of continuous practice and habits. Habits such as self-monologue practice, watching English films, and recording new vocabulary—identified in interviews—were not yet fully

internalized in classroom contexts. Therefore, integration between informal habits and formal learning needs to be strengthened to foster greater confidence and spontaneity in speaking.

2. In-depth Interviews

The in-depth interviews conducted with Psychology students revealed diverse backgrounds in English-speaking ability and provided valuable insights into the habits they developed to improve their speaking skills. One of the most common strategies was self-monologue practice, reported by approximately fourteen out of twenty-three informants. Students explained that they often spoke to themselves in English, whether in front of a mirror, through voice notes, by recording videos, or by imagining themselves speaking in public. This practice was described as a way to build confidence, fluency, and pronunciation. As one student noted, “I often speak in front of the mirror to train my speaking performance before presentations.” Four respondents preferred practicing with friends or partners, while others admitted to doing it inconsistently. This habit reflects reflective and experiential

learning, enabling students to strengthen their speaking ability through independent rehearsal.

Another prominent habit was watching English films and repeating vocabulary. Around twenty informants reported that they regularly watched films in English, and rather than watching passively, they paused the films to repeat unfamiliar words. One student explained, "I often pause the film just to repeat words I have never heard before several times." This habit enhanced listening skills, improved pronunciation, and enriched vocabulary in a contextual manner.

Listening to songs and mimicking lyrics also emerged as a popular and enjoyable habit. Students explained that songs helped them acquire vocabulary and practice pronunciation naturally, with one respondent stating, "Most of my vocabulary comes from the songs I listen to." This habit was effective because it combined emotional engagement with repetitive exposure.

A number of students reported recording new vocabulary. Approximately ten informants kept notes of unfamiliar words they encountered in films, songs, or readings, using notebooks, mobile

devices, or digital applications. One student explained, "I write down idioms or slang I find on TikTok or YouTube, then look up the meaning and try to use them." This habit demonstrated active vocabulary building, creating a personal "bank" of words for speaking practice.

In addition, reading English books or content was reported by fifteen informants. They read novels, articles, and motivational books, both in print and digital formats. One student shared, "I have several English novels and often read e-books from apps." Reading strengthened grammar, sentence structures, and contextual comprehension, which are essential for effective speaking.

Social interaction in English was also identified as a meaningful habit. Eight informants actively engaged in conversations with peers or foreign speakers through social media, chat platforms, or online communities. One respondent explained, "I have friends in Dubai, Morocco, and Japan; I chat with them in English." Others reported that their WhatsApp groups often used English in daily communication. These interactions trained spontaneity, built confidence, and enhanced cross-cultural communication.

Students also reported using learning applications such as Duolingo, Elsa, Google Translate, and DeepL. These tools were used to practice grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. One student remarked, "I learn with Duolingo and chat with AI characters." This habit highlighted the role of technology as a flexible and personalized learning aid. Finally, setting gadgets to English was a common practice among seventeen informants. One student explained, "All my phone settings are in English." This habit increased daily exposure to English and created a form of digital immersion, reinforcing language use in everyday contexts.

3. Documentation Results

To triangulate the interview data, classroom records were analyzed to assess students' academic achievement in English courses, particularly in speaking performance. Out of 23 respondents, 20 students (approximately 86%) obtained A grades, demonstrating fluency, clear pronunciation, and confidence. The remaining students received B+ grades, showing adequate speaking ability but with hesitation or limited vocabulary.

The correlation between learning habits and academic achievement was evident. Students with higher grades generally displayed active and diverse habits, such as self-monologue practice, vocabulary recording, and social interaction in English. Conversely, students with lower grades tended to lack consistent habits or relied on passive methods.

Digital documentation, including screenshots of online interactions and gadget settings in English, further supported the findings. These records demonstrated that English learning extended beyond the classroom, forming a digital, personal, and sustainable learning ecosystem. Visual and audio evidence confirmed that students engaged in active and reflective learning, with technology serving as a partner in their language development.

4. Thematic and Synthetic Analysis of Habits

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the habits most influential in supporting students' mastery of speaking skills include the following:

No	Key Habit	Impact on Speaking Skills
1	Self-monologue practice	Improves fluency and confidence
2	Watching films & repeating words	Strengthens listening and pronunciation
3	Listening to songs & mimicking	Enriches vocabulary and pronunciation
4	Recording new vocabulary	Expands vocabulary actively
5	Reading English content	Reinforces grammar and sentence structure
6	Social interaction in English	Trains spontaneity and cross-cultural communication
7	Using learning applications	Provides structured and flexible practice
8	Setting gadgets to English	Increases exposure and daily immersion

Based on the thematic analysis of interviews, it is evident that Psychology students at Universitas Buana Perjuangan Karawang adopt an independent, flexible, and experiential approach to English learning. They do not rely solely on formal methods but also cultivate learning habits through entertainment media, social interaction, and digital technology.

One of the most significant findings is that English learning does not occur exclusively within the classroom; rather, it extends into students' everyday lives. Songs, films, applications, and online conversations serve as active and meaningful sources of learning. This demonstrates that students have begun to internalize English as part of their academic and social lifestyle.

Confidence in speaking English is built gradually through reflective processes. Strategies such as practicing self-monologues, receiving corrections from peers, and immersing themselves in English-speaking environments are central to their progress. From the perspective of educational psychology, this highlights that affective factors—such as confidence, motivation, and social support—play an equally important role as cognitive factors like grammar and vocabulary.

The difficulties faced by students, including grammar mastery, listening comprehension with foreign accents, and fear of making mistakes, reveal that English learning is not only a matter of technique but also of courage to try and accept imperfection. Some respondents even

mentioned feeling laughed at when speaking, which underscores the importance of building a safe and supportive learning environment.

Overall, these findings reinforce the view that effective English learning must be contextual, experiential, and supported by an inclusive learning ecosystem. Students learn not only from instructional materials but also from interactions, habits, and self-reflection. Therefore, approaches that integrate cognitive, affective, and social dimensions of language learning should continue to be developed in higher education, enabling students to achieve fluency naturally while fostering resilience, confidence, and adaptability in real-life communication.

D. Conclusion

Based on the results of classroom observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation of both academic scores and digital practices, it can be concluded that the English-speaking ability of Psychology students at Universitas Buana Perjuangan Karawang has shown positive development, although it has not yet reached its full potential. Students demonstrated high

enthusiasm for English learning, actively participating in speaking activities and even using English in informal interactions.

The learning habits identified through interviews revealed that students have developed strategies that are independent, flexible, and experiential. The eight key habits that significantly contribute to the improvement of speaking skills include: self-monologue practice, watching films and repeating vocabulary, listening to songs and mimicking lyrics, recording new vocabulary, reading English content, engaging in social interaction, using learning applications, and setting gadgets to English.

Classroom documentation confirmed that students with active learning habits tended to achieve higher grades in speaking performance. Digital documentation further reinforced the findings, showing that the learning process extended informally and continuously beyond the classroom.

Overall, effective English learning for Psychology students depends not only on formal methods but also on the integration of contextual, reflective, and technology-

based habits. Affective factors such as confidence, motivation, and social support play a crucial role in shaping students' willingness to speak and their fluency in communication. These findings highlight the importance of designing higher education strategies that integrate cognitive, affective, and social dimensions to foster sustainable and meaningful language learning.

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