A STUDY ON MULTICULTURAL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' MOTIVATION IN SPEAKING ENGLISH: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

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Abstract

The ability to speak English is a skill that is difficult to master. Some problems must be faced by someone who wants to master these skills, including multicultural students. This research aims to investigate the problems faced by multicultural students and find solutions that can be applied to deal with these problems. This research uses descriptive qualitative research methods. This research involved three students from various majors and cultures. This research data was collected through observation and interviews. The results of this research show that there are three problems, namely those related to a less supportive language environment, lack of self-confidence, and lack of opportunities to practice speaking English. The results of this research also reveal the existence of solutions to these problems. The solutions are to form a community, find practice friends, and submit mandatory and non-compulsory courses to campus. However, this research is limited in the number and variety of participants. Therefore, it is recommended for future research to conduct research on similar topics but to increase the variety of research participants.

Keywords: Student; Multicultural; Interest; English Speaking

INTRODUCTION

Higher education plays an important role in shaping students' personalities and worldviews. One of the key elements that make the campus environment richer and more dynamic is diversity (George, 2023; Gordon et al., 2023; Resch, 2023). K.H. Abdul Chalim University, a quality educational institution, is not only a place to gain knowledge but also prioritizes diversity among its students. The diversity of students on this campus covers many aspects, ranging from cultural backgrounds, religions, and ethnicities, to educational differences. This campus brings together various tribes and ethnicities from all over Indonesia, thus creating a diverse student experience. Furthermore, religious diversity is evident when students of different religions harmoniously attend lectures and interact with each other in campus activities (Afifuddin & Burga, 2023). Diversity is not just a superficial feature, but an important aspect that enriches the educational experience. One of the positive impacts is the formation of a broader understanding of the realities of life.

During class discussions, students from different backgrounds bring their unique perspectives to enrich the discussion and deepen our understanding of a particular topic. This creates a dynamic learning atmosphere and encourages students to think more broadly. Diversity can also be a catalyst for personal growth. Students learn how to interact with people from different backgrounds and develop tolerance, empathy, and openness to new ideas (Li et al., 2023; Querol-Julián, 2023; Zahner & Wynn, 2023). Based on this, we will produce human resources who can play an active role in a globalized and diversified society. In addition, diversity on campus

creates an inclusive environment where all students feel accepted and valued. K.H. Abdul Chalim University has created programs that allow students from diverse backgrounds to actively participate in campus life. Self-development programs, diversity seminars, and cultural festivals are effective ways to respect differences and strengthen bonds between students.

However, managing diversity is still a challenge. Universities need to have policies and programs that support the inclusion of students from diverse backgrounds (Obispo, 2023; Roszak & Kudła, 2023). Teacher supervision and training also need to be improved so that teachers and administrators can effectively manage diversity and create an inclusive environment. The diversity that exists on the campus of K.H. Abdul Chalim University is not just a policy, but a reflection of the values it represents. This provides students with valuable capital to face future challenges and build a more inclusive society. By understanding and appreciating diversity, K.H. Abdul Chalim students prepare themselves to become future leaders who can contribute to improving diversity in society. Abdul Chalim as a leading educational institution seeks to provide quality education to its students. An important indicator to evaluate the quality of education is the student's English proficiency. Success in understanding and learning English is primarily measured by students' academic performance in courses that use English as the language of instruction. The extent to which students can understand content, participate in class discussions, and express their ideas through written assignments are strong indicators of students' English proficiency.

If a student can overcome the challenges in this course, this may be a sign of good English skills. Having knowledge of English and actively participating in extracurricular activities is also an indicator. K.H. Abdul Chalim University organizes various activities such as seminars, conferences, and English clubs. Students who dare to participate and contribute to these activities show that they not only have passive knowledge of English but can actively apply it in real-life situations. English communication skills outside the classroom can also be measured through students' social interactions (Zuhairati et al., 2022). These skills build an inclusive campus environment and support the exchange of ideas and cultures between students from different backgrounds. It is important to note that English proficiency assessment focuses not only on students' level of English proficiency but also on their previous efforts and progress. K.H. Abdul Chalim University guarantees that.

Research related to motivation, multicultural, and English has been carried out previously. The first is entitled "*Investigating Students' Motivation to Speak English in EFL Classroom* (Andhara & Alfian, 2023)". The results of this research indicated that the students were equally motivated to learn English, either intrinsic or extrinsic. However, this research does not examine the problems faced and solutions that can be applied by multicultural students regarding their ability to speak English.

The second previous research was entitled "*Motivation and English language learning in a multicultural university context* (Bensoussan, 2015)". The results of this research indicated the importance of motivational issues in language learning. Links were found among EAP course grades, attitudes toward university studies, and attitudes toward language learning and English. The differences in EAP course grades across native languages did not appear to affect students' attitudes toward university or language study. However, this research does not examine the problems faced and solutions that can be applied by multicultural students regarding their ability to speak English.

The third previous research was entitled "*A Study on the Correlation between Motivation and Students' Speaking Performance at an Indonesian Vocational High School Context* (Nurul Isma & Bahasa Asing UMI, 2019)". The results of this research revealed that the correlation between motivation and speaking performance for vocational high school students indicated that it was strong enough or categorized as a medium correlation. Furthermore, the findings showed that motivated students usually feel more comfortable in their learning, allowing the students to

speak up confidently wherever they are even though English is considered a foreign language. However, this research does not examine the problems faced and solutions that can be applied by multicultural students regarding their ability to speak English.

Based on previous research, there is a research gap, namely that there is no research that examines the problems faced and solutions that can be applied by multicultural students regarding their ability to speak English. Therefore, this research aims to fill this research gap. This research leads to two research questions, namely: (1) What problems do multicultural students face in developing English speaking skills? (2) What solutions can multicultural students apply in developing English-speaking skills related to the problems they face? The results of this research will add insight into the field of English education, especially English language skills.

METHOD

The qualitative descriptive research approach is an appropriate method to explore students' meanings and experiences related to their interest in English in an academic environment such as K.H Abdul Chalim University to investigate. This study uses a qualitative descriptive research method mainly because it aims to deeply understand the experiences of research subjects. On the other hand, qualitative explanation allows for a detailed description of the context and characteristics of the phenomenon under study (Lambert & Lambert, 2013; Seixas et al., 2018). When investigating interest in English, this approach allows researchers to better understand and explain precisely the factors that influence students' interest. The choice of this method was also based on the desire to approach the research question by considering the situation and uniqueness of the students at K.H Abdul Chalim University who were working on it.

Identifying factors that influence interest in learning English: This research investigates various factors that may influence students' interest in English. These may include personal factors, learning environment, education, and cultural influences. Description of the campus situation: The study includes a description of the campus situation of K.H Abdul Chalim University and how these factors affect students' interest in English. This includes an understanding of the campus facilities, curriculum, and cultural environment.

The main objective of this study is to provide constructive recommendations to increase students' interest in English. This could include suggestions for curriculum development, improvement of teaching methods, and the creation of a campus environment that fosters interest in English. Through the qualitative descriptive phenomenological research method, it is hoped that this study can make a valuable contribution to the understanding of English language interest at K.H. Abdul Chalim University offers many opportunities and provides a foundation for the improvement and development of English language programs in this multicultural campus environment.

This research involved three students from various departments at K. H. Abdul Chalim University. The participants were selected using purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling technique was considered for use because it can lead to participants who have the potential to provide clear and in-depth data (Campbell et al., 2020; Etikan, 2016a, 2016b). Data from this research was collected through observation and interviews. Observations and interviews are considered for use because they can provide clear and detailed data (Cacciattolo, 2015; Jamshed, 2014). Observations and interviews were carried out offline at a time and place agreed between the researchers and research participants. The data that has been collected is then analyzed through three stages, namely data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusion (Miles et al., 2014). In the end, the processed data can become the result of this research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

In this research, the participants are students of the K.H Abdul Chalim University women's dormitory who come from various regions and educational backgrounds. Starting from Sabang to Merauke, starting from high school, vocational high school, and also boarding school. Participants were as many as three people interviewed and asked about their interest and interest in speaking English.

The participants were randomly selected, especially those in the girls' dormitory. The random selection of participants is because the students in the dormitory already come from different educational backgrounds and also different regional languages and habits. Interviews are often used as a data collection method for KH. Abdul Chalim University students because they allow for direct interaction between the researcher and the respondent. This approach allows for a thorough consideration of students' views, experiences, and knowledge. Through interviews, researchers can extract richer and more contextualized information from respondents as well as identify nuances and complexities that other data collection methods may not reveal. In education, interviews allow researchers to understand individuals' perspectives regarding their learning experiences, academic challenges, or potential contributions to organizational development.

Problems

This interview was conducted with RP1, a student majoring in Arabic language education with a boarding school education background and from Papua province. RP2 is a student majoring in Islamic religious education with a vocational high school education background and from Central Sulawesi. And finally, RP3 is a student majoring in Indonesian language education with a high school education background and from East Java.

The results of the interview process can be presented as follows:

RP1: "*In my boarding school, English lessons were available, but practice opportunities were limited. Many students only use Indonesian in daily interactions, which makes English speaking skills cannot be developed, and also the campus environment which mostly speaks Indonesian and also mostly uses their respective regional languages*"

The research participant conveyed the circumstances in his boarding school, detailing the availability of English lessons juxtaposed with the limited opportunities for practical application. According to the research participant, a significant number of students opted for Indonesian in their day-to-day interactions, creating an impediment to the cultivation of proficient English-speaking skills. The research participant further underscored the linguistic landscape of the campus, where the prevalent use of Indonesian and various regional languages posed additional barriers to English language immersion.

The research participant's tone reflected a blend of awareness and concern as they delved into the intricacies of the linguistic challenges. The frustration emanating from their words hinted at a sincere desire for a more conducive environment for English language development. The nuanced expression on the research participant's face during the interview suggested a genuine commitment to addressing these obstacles. It was evident that the research participant considered language acquisition not merely as an academic pursuit but as a practical skill crucial

for broader communication. In unveiling the layers of the language dynamics within the school, the research participant provided a comprehensive insight into the complexities of fostering an English-friendly atmosphere, painting a vivid picture of the intricate interplay between educational policies, student practices, and the overall cultural context.

RP2: "*Lack of confidence in speaking English and tend to be shier. When there is an opportunity to speak in English, many feel awkward and afraid of being wrong. Fear of mistakes or being ridiculed by friends often discourages them from trying*"

The research participant conveyed that there is a noticeable lack of confidence in English speaking, and individuals tend to exhibit shyness. The research participant shared that when presented with opportunities to speak in English, many experience feelings of awkwardness and fear of making mistakes. The research participant elaborated on the psychological barriers, explaining that the fear of being wrong or facing ridicule from friends acts as a significant deterrent. This fear, according to the research participant, creates a pervasive hesitancy, discouraging individuals from actively attempting to engage in English conversations.

As the research participant discussed these challenges, their facial expressions and body language conveyed a sense of empathy and understanding for those grappling with language insecurities. Their eyes reflected a genuine concern, possibly drawing from personal experiences or observations. The subtle change in their tone and the thoughtful pauses indicated a reflective stance on the emotional aspects associated with language apprehension. The research participant's willingness to delve into the psychological intricacies of language learning suggested a commitment to addressing not just the surface-level linguistic obstacles but also the deeper, emotional barriers hindering individuals from overcoming their fear of speaking English.

RP3: "*Most of the time we only learn through textbooks and there are rarely discussions or conversation simulations that can help us practice what we learn, more theory delivered by the teacher than practice*"

The research participant conveyed that the predominant mode of learning revolves around textbooks, with infrequent opportunities for discussions or conversation simulations to apply acquired knowledge. The research participant expressed a sense of imbalance, noting that the instructional focus leans more towards theoretical aspects delivered by the teacher, leaving a gap in practical application. The research participant elaborated on the limited scope for interactive learning experiences, emphasizing the scarcity of platforms that facilitate the application of theoretical concepts into real-world scenarios.

Examining the research participant's facial expressions during this segment of the interview revealed a mix of earnestness and subtle frustration. Their furrowed brows and occasional sighs underscored a desire for a more dynamic and engaging learning environment. The research participant's tone carried a nuanced blend of critique and constructive suggestion, indicating a thoughtful approach to addressing the identified shortcomings in the educational process. The wistful gaze and thoughtful pauses in their speech further emphasized the importance they placed on a holistic educational approach that combines theory with practical application. Overall, the research participant's demeanor hinted at a genuine commitment to enhancing the learning experience, suggesting that a more balanced integration of theory and practice could significantly enrich the educational journey.

Solutions

Based on the results of the interview, several solutions were put forward for implementation. These solutions are considered as a way out to deal with the problems faced.

RP1: "*Forming a community to speak English will be very good because its members can practice communicating using English even though they are not learning English in class. This will also be beneficial in terms of motivation among members*"

The research participant suggested that establishing a community for English communication would prove highly beneficial, enabling members to practice the language outside formal classroom settings. He emphasized that such a community could serve as a valuable platform for honing communication skills in English. The research participant elaborated on the advantages, highlighting that the initiative goes beyond classroom learning and fosters a practical, real-world application of the language. This, he explained, not only enhances linguistic proficiency but also contributes significantly to maintaining motivation among the community members.

Analyzing the research participant's expressions during this segment of the interview revealed genuine enthusiasm. His eyes lit up as he discussed the potential positive impact of forming an English-speaking community. A subtle smile played on his lips, conveying a sense of optimism about the proposed initiative. The research participant's body language, characterized by animated gestures, suggested a keen interest in the idea and a belief in its potential to create a supportive environment for language development. Overall, his demeanor exuded a passion for fostering collaborative learning outside formal education settings, emphasizing the intrinsic value of community-based language practice for sustained motivation and skill enhancement.

RP2: "*Looking for friends who are willing to commit to developing together regarding your English-speaking skills. By having friends who are also willing to commit, you will be able to reduce feelings of embarrassment and fear when practicing speaking English*"

The research participant conveyed the idea that seeking friends with a shared commitment to mutual English-speaking skill development is crucial. He emphasized the collaborative aspect, explaining that having friends equally dedicated to the cause helps alleviate feelings of embarrassment and fear during English-speaking practice. According to the research participant, the camaraderie formed in such a group fosters a supportive environment, allowing individuals to comfortably navigate the challenges of language practice.

Examining the research participant's expressions during this part of the interview revealed warmth and sincerity. His eyes sparkled with the enthusiasm of someone who had experienced the positive impact of communal language development. A genuine smile graced his face, underscoring the joy associated with the prospect of shared commitment to linguistic growth. The research participant's body language, characterized by open gestures, suggested an eagerness to convey the interpersonal benefits of forming language-focused friendships. Overall, his demeanor communicated a belief in the power of collective dedication to language learning, portraying the idea not just as a practical strategy but as a source of encouragement and comfort in the often challenging journey of improving English-speaking skills.

RP3: "*Propose to the campus to hold special lessons to practice English speaking skills. This learning can be in the form of compulsory classes and non-compulsory classes. Thus, we will get more opportunities to practice speaking English*"

The research participant proposed suggesting to the campus the implementation of specialized lessons dedicated to practicing English speaking skills. He emphasized the potential for both compulsory and non-compulsory classes to enhance opportunities for honing speaking proficiency. The participant highlighted that the incorporation of such sessions would offer a structured platform for consistent language practice, catering to varying levels of commitment among students.

Observing the participant's expressions during this segment of the interview unveiled a blend of advocacy and optimism. His eyes gleamed with a sense of conviction, suggesting a genuine belief in the positive impact of the proposed initiative. A determined set to his jaw and a nod of assurance indicated a readiness to champion the cause for improved English language learning within the campus community. The participant's animated gestures conveyed not just the practicality of the proposal but also a passion for fostering a more robust language-learning environment.

In summary, the research participant's demeanor exuded a proactive spirit, portraying the proposal not merely as a suggestion but as an earnest endeavor to enhance the English-speaking skills of the campus community, with the underlying hope of creating a more immersive and supportive language-learning atmosphere.

Title: Unveiling the Rich Tapestry of Multicultural University Students' Motivation in Speaking English: Benefits of This Research

In the contemporary educational landscape, where diversity is a cornerstone, understanding the dynamics of language acquisition among multicultural university students is of paramount importance (Faubl et al., 2021). This research emerges as a beacon of insight, offering a myriad of benefits that extend to educators, administrators, policymakers, and the students themselves. One of the primary benefits of this research lies in its contribution to our comprehension of the motivational factors propelling multicultural university students toward improving their English speaking skills. This understanding is pivotal as it helps educators tailor language learning experiences that resonate with the diverse motivations prevalent among students from different cultural backgrounds. By acknowledging and accommodating these varied motivations, institutions can foster a more inclusive learning environment, ensuring that language education is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor but a tailored and responsive process.

This research's identification and exploration of challenges faced by multicultural students in speaking English are another notable benefit. Language acquisition is not devoid of hurdles, and this research sheds light on the specific obstacles that may hinder effective communication. Whether these challenges stem from cultural disparities, language anxiety, or other sources, recognizing and articulating them is the first step toward finding viable solutions. Armed with this knowledge, educators and institutions can implement targeted interventions, creating a supportive atmosphere that addresses the unique struggles faced by multicultural students.

Furthermore, this research is a valuable resource for educators seeking to cultivate cross-cultural understanding within their classrooms. Effective communication transcends linguistic

proficiency; it involves a nuanced understanding of cultural contexts. By unraveling the motivations behind English language learning among multicultural students, this research aids educators in fostering an environment where cultural exchange is not only encouraged but becomes an integral part of the learning experience. In doing so, the research contributes to the broader goal of preparing students to navigate a globalized world with cultural competence.

Discussion

The practical implications of this research extend beyond the confines of the classroom. In an era characterized by global interconnectedness, proficiency in English is often a gateway to various opportunities. This research's identification of challenges and proposed solutions directly contributes to the empowerment of multicultural university students, equipping them with the skills necessary for success in international collaborations, career advancement, and participation in global discourse. In this way, this research acts as a catalyst for personal and professional growth, opening doors to a plethora of opportunities for the students involved. Additionally, this research serves as a guide for policymakers and administrators in higher education institutions. The recommendations and solutions proposed in this research can inform the development of language policies and programs that not only acknowledge the diverse needs of multicultural students but actively address them. This aligns with the broader goal of creating educational environments that produce graduates who are not only academically proficient but also culturally adept and globally competitive.

In conclusion, this research stands as a valuable exploration into the complex dynamics of language acquisition in diverse educational settings. Its benefits resonate across various stakeholders, enriching our understanding of language learning, promoting inclusivity in education, and empowering multicultural students to thrive in a globalized world. This research, therefore, is not just a study but a catalyst for positive change in language education and cultural understanding.

CONCLUSION

To increase interest in speaking English, use topics that are relevant and interesting to students, such as hobbies, travel, and current trends. Invite students to group discussions or English clubs that provide a relaxed atmosphere. Make learning more fun with interactive learning media such as English apps and games. Collaborate with friends or lecturers to practice together and give positive feedback. Participate in online activities such as forums and communities to share experiences and learn from others. Confidence and courage are the main factors in learning to speak English in addition to the willingness to always try. Especially K.H Abdul Chalim University which is a large campus whose students come from various regions in Indonesia and also a campus that has spread its wings in the international arena which of course needs students who are proficient in speaking English.

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