

TEACHERS' PERSPECTIVES TOWARDS EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING PERFORMANCE IN POST COVID-19 PANDEMIC ERA

^{1*}Hilda Fauziyah, ¹Agus Gozali, ¹Putu Dian Danayanti Degeng

¹English Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Cultural Studies, Universitas Brawijaya, Indonesia

*Corresponding Author Email: hildafauziyah26@student.ub.ac.id

Article Info	Abstract
Article History Received: March 2023 Revised: March 2023 Published: April 2023	<i>The appearance of Covid-19 in 2020 required educators and schools to use online learning and teaching method. This situation also limits students to practice their speaking face-to-face. However, after teachers and students adapt to online learning for 2 years, in 2022 suddenly learning process back to offline learning with certain regulations. Due to that problem, this descriptive qualitative study came up intending to explore the perspective of the teacher regarding EFL students' speaking performance in the pandemic context and the factors affecting it. Using a purposive sampling technique, three English teachers who teach English pre, during, and post-pandemic in one of the senior high school in Malang has been interviewed in this research. The results of this study revealed EFL students' speaking performance during and after the pandemic differ, therefore teachers delivered their opinion regarding it and the factor affecting it. Furthermore, it is suggested for future research to explore this topic more but using different methods and different samples.</i>
Keywords Teaching Speaking; Speaking performance; Teacher's perspective; Covid-19 pandemic;	
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INTRODUCTION

When learning a new language, speaking skill is an important aspect to acquire. This also comes with learning English. One of the four English skills that are important to be learned is speaking. Not only important to be learned but also important to be mastered by students (Mustafa, 2015). Mastering speaking English will make students able to know what happens in the world and communicate with people. Qureshi (2012) stated that people can connect with others, express their thoughts, and learn about others' ideas by mastering English speaking skills. Speaking is an important part of communication. Supramaniam and Kholidi (2022) defined speaking as a valuable skill in communication. So, in order to communicate with others effectively, students must develop their ability in speaking. The ability to speak is needed because it is used to perform a conversation (Leong et al., 2017).

However, learning to speak is more challenging than learning other skills in English. Bailey and Savage (1994) stated that when it comes to learning a foreign language, the most demanding skill among the four skills is speaking. Speaking English is challenging because students need to think about how to construct their ideas in words and convey their messages. Moreover, the difference between pronunciation and the word itself made speaking challenging (Supramaniam & Kholidi, 2022; Hidayatullah & Haerazi, 2022). It is challenging for EFL students because they need a great attempt in order to speak and it is not their first language (Fauzan, 2016).

Thus, in order to reduce the challenge of learning to speak English, students need to practice their speaking regularly. Stevick (1982:103) said that one of the English skills that need to be practiced with full expression is speaking. However, the appearance of Covid-19 in 2020

required educators and schools to use the online teaching-learning method (Tafazoli, 2021) which limits students to practice their speaking and the lack of face-to-face interaction. This situation also required teachers to use online platforms such as Google Meet, Zoom, and more to teach speaking which are unpredictable and have never been used before. Furthermore, when implementing online learning using different platforms, most teachers are still not able to operate it and integrate various learning activities. Lee & Pyun (2019) stated that this situation could be caused by their digital literacy.

However, after two years of conducting online learning, teacher and students started familiar with online platforms but in the middle of 2022, most of the schools in Indonesia were back to offline learning with certain regulations from the government, including vaccination programs, mandatory mask-wearing, and strict health protocol. As Saepul and Mashur (2020) stated that in order to return to activities normally during the new normal era, educators have to follow strict health guidelines and adapt to a new situation. Switching from online to offline learning, challenges teachers to adapt to a new learning environment (Gozali et.al., 2020). It also challenges students in learning English, especially how they perform speaking in the classroom.

Several researchers have been done in conducted research on factors that affect EFL students' speaking performance. The first research was done by Vietnam, Tuan & Mai, (2015) with the use of questionnaires and class observation as the instrument. This research investigates the problem of speaking, and what factors affect students speaking performance. The findings of this study indicated that the problem they faced was the students speak a little and often use Vietnamese in the classroom. This study also demonstrated the students speaking performance was influenced by several factors, including their thematic knowledge, ability in listening (Jupri et al., 2022), time preparation, and feedback given by teachers during the learning process (Nugraha et al., 2022). Ariyanti (2016) investigated what factors affected EFL students' speaking performance and focuses on psychological factors using qualitative methods. According to the findings of this study, students are too worried of making mistakes and have low self-esteem thus they prefer to keep silent in the classroom.

Then, Jusuf et al. (2021) conducted a case study on eleventh-grade senior high school students using qualitative methods, and the findings revealed that there are internal factors and external factors such as language competence, psychological aspect, teaching method, classroom environment, and large scale of students that affect students' poor speaking performance. Regardless, research by Supramaniam and Kholidi (2022), focused on teachers' and students' perspectives and using a survey design involving 189 students and 8 teachers as participants, revealed that the biggest problem they found in the study was when speaking English students tend to be worried of making mistakes, and the main problem was students have little confidence because they were unfamiliar with English (Kenza-Tacarraocht & Zamorano, 2022; Karya et al., 2022).

Although previous research discussed factors affecting EFL students' speaking performance, studies that discussed EFL students' speaking performance post-pandemic in the Indonesian context have not been observed. Vietnam, Tuan & Mai, (2015) discussed EFL students' speaking performance but not in the Indonesian context and pandemic context. While Ariyanti (2016) only focused on psychological factors. Then, Jusuf et al. (2021) discussed internal and external factors in senior high schools in Indonesia, but not in a pandemic context. Finally, Supramaniam and Kholidi (2022) investigated the perspective of teachers and students regarding EFL students' speaking performance, but not in a pandemic context. Therefore, this research was carried out with the questions: (1) "How are EFL students' speaking performance in post-pandemic from the perspective of teachers?" and (2) "What are factors that affect EFL students speaking performance after the pandemic from the perspective of teachers?"

The present study contributes to the field of language teaching by providing valuable insights into the selection of appropriate teaching methods and multimedia resources for enhancing students' speaking performance. The findings of this investigation offer valuable guidance for teachers to gain a more profound comprehension of this area, thereby enabling them to select pedagogical strategies that cater to the individual needs and learning styles of their students. Additionally, this study provides teachers with an in-depth understanding of the key factors that positively impact students' speaking proficiency. By taking into account the insights gained from this research, educators can effectively design and deliver language lessons that foster the development of students' speaking abilities. Thus, this study holds significant implications for language teachers seeking to optimize their teaching practices and enhance their students' speaking performance.

RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, the researcher implemented a qualitative approach using descriptive analysis as the research method. Natural conditions are carried out in qualitative research, which is why qualitative research is often called naturalistic research (Sugiyono, 2010). Further, Kumar (2011) describes the descriptive study as a study that attempts to describe a circumstance, provide information, or describe an attitude toward an issue. Through the purposive sampling technique, three English teachers in one of the senior high schools in Malang were selected as the subject of this study. The teachers were chosen based on their prior experience teaching English, namely speaking before, during, and after the Covid-19 outbreak, which is relevant to the focus of this study.

Semi-structured interviews with participants were used to collect data. As Hatch (2002) stated that the researcher can get new insight from participants' perspectives by doing an interview. Then, in order to explore the participants' points of view, perspectives, and also experiences, the researcher provided several questions about how are teachers' perspectives towards EFL students' speaking performance in the classroom after the pandemic, and several factors that affect students' speaking performance after the pandemic. The interview guide was adapted and modified from Alrasheedi (2021), which focuses on teachers' views. The interview sheets contain ten questions, focusing on 5 aspects that are the results of this research. During the interview session, the researcher also developed the questions to find out more participants' perspectives. The researcher used audio recording and transcribed the data into Microsoft Word then classified the result into 5 parts.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The researcher conducted a face-to-face interview with the participants and ask questions based on the 5 aspects. The first aspect is vocabulary knowledge and students' speaking performance. The second aspect is students' self-confidence in speaking English. The third aspect is students' willingness to speak in English. The fourth aspect is multimedia factors improving students' speaking performance. The last aspect is the teachers' teaching methodology. Here is the answer from the interview as follows.

Students' vocabulary knowledge and speaking performance

In this part, the researcher asks several questions regarding the relationship between vocabulary knowledge and students' speaking performance. Both Teacher 1, Teacher 2, and Teacher 3 agreed that students can perform speaking better if they have better vocabulary knowledge. The more students master vocabulary, the more their speaking performance will improve. As Teacher 1 delivered his opinion "...Vocabulary is seen as a crucial part of the public speaking performance. That is why when students have less vocabulary knowledge they cannot perform speaking well...". According to Teacher 3, students' speaking performance is strongly influenced by their vocabulary knowledge, which is why she conducts vocabulary

building and exams at every meeting during and after the pandemic to inspire students and help them memorize new vocabulary. Besides, Teacher 2 also said, *"...I think most English teacher agrees that vocabulary and speaking performance are connected. Both during and after the pandemic, vocabulary knowledge is an important factor for students' speaking performance..."*. That opinion is in line with the findings in observation by Afna, M. (2018) that one variable (vocabulary knowledge) and one variable (speaking) have a positive relationship. If one variable (students' vocabulary) is rising, one variable (students' speaking) also rising.

Students' self-confidence in speaking English

Several questions related to self-confidence in speaking English were asked in this part. *"..There is a huge difference between students' self-confidence during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, their confidence seems low. I think it is because they cannot grasp the material..."* Teacher 1 said. During the pandemic, the interaction was only done synchronously through online platforms including Google Meet, Zoom, and others platforms which make students cannot get the material clearly. Khanafiyah et al. (2021) discovered that various factors, including a lack of understanding of material and time preparation, reduced students' self-confidence during online learning. Furthermore, research by Pratiwi and Prihatini (2021) also revealed that the most problem in speaking skills that students' faced during the pandemic is confidence.

On the other hand, Teacher 3 gives a different opinion regarding this *"...In my opinion, we as a teacher cannot see whether students are confident or not to perform, but we can provide support and create a classroom environment that makes them relaxed and confident to speak..."*. Teacher 2 also support this statement *"...During online learning and offline learning, I always said to my students no need to worries if they make mistakes during the learning process, the most important thing is they want to try, and they will get a score..."*. The encouragement given by the teacher during the learning process boosts students' self-confidence. This is supported H. Begaj (2014) found that positive feedback from teachers, relationships between students and teachers, and teacher appreciation are all crucial determinants in students' self-confidence.

Student's willingness to speak in English

After the pandemic, most of the students are still have the willingness to speak in English, despite their limits in vocabulary and how to pronounce it. Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 said, *"...Students are more willing to speak when the learning process is done in the classroom rather than through an online platform..."*. The same opinion was also delivered by Teacher 3 *"...After the pandemic students look excited to learn in the classroom and their willingness to speak increases. While during pandemic I need to invite them one by one and they still don't want to speak..."*. This situation is in line with what Riasati (2012) found in her study that a classroom atmosphere that makes students feel secure and relaxed helps them to speak more. Teacher 1 adds *"...During online learning, when I choose them to speak, most of them just do it because they need a score, not because they want to speak in English..."*.

Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 also give a similar opinion regarding this. They stated that sometimes students are suddenly out from Zoom or Google Meet when the teacher invites them to speak or makes a lot of excuses so that they do not need to speak. It is understandable if this situation can be caused by the online learning environment or the unstable connection that makes them lazy to follow the speaking process. Altunel (2021) found in her study that an online learning environment makes students feel more individualized and isolated which affects their willingness to communicate in English and less enthusiastic. However, the willingness to speak has a large influence on speaking performance. The more students are willing to speak, their participation in class will increases, and students can achieve better speaking performance.

MacIntyre et al. (2001) stated a successful language student is one who is willing to communicate more.

Multimedia factors improving students' speaking performance

Besides all the multimedia, ICT became the most that affect students' speaking performance, especially after the Covid-19 pandemic. By implementing ICT, students have more interest and motivation in learning speaking in the classroom. "...For example, today's material is about asking and giving opinions, I divided them into several groups, then I played a Youtube video. From the video, each group must present and guess what we are going to learn in front of the class in English. They look excited and the class is not boring..." said Teacher 1. The Youtube video which provides audio and pictures will be helpful for students vocabulary enrichment, learning how to pronounce a word or sentence, and gaining new ideas in producing a sentence. Research conducted by Riswandi (2016) revealed that implementing Youtube in teaching speaking helped students improve their speaking performance and it can be seen from the speaking score that fulfilled the criteria of success in his study. Further, Teacher 2 mentioned, "...of course I implement ICT in my class whether it is during the pandemic or after the pandemic. Recently I used Duolingo for students' speaking performance and it works..."

The use of YouTube videos gives a valuable addition to language teaching practices to enhance speaking performance in this study. Teachers use their discretion to select appropriate videos and incorporate them effectively into their lesson plans, taking into account their students' needs and preferences (Rahmawati et al., 2023; Arndt & Woore, 2018). By harnessing the potential of YouTube videos, language teachers create a more engaging, authentic, and learner-centered approach to teaching speaking skills. The use of YouTube videos as a teaching tool for enhancing speaking skills has gained increasing attention in recent years. YouTube is an online video-sharing platform that allows users to upload, share, and view videos (Lin, 2022). It provides a vast array of content that can be easily accessed, making it a valuable resource for language teachers to incorporate into their teaching practices.

This is in line with Hafifah (2021) in her study using a quasi-experimental study, Duolingo enhances students' speaking skills and is appropriate to be applied in class. Furthermore, several kinds of ICT including podcasts, Youtube, Quizziz, Duolingo, etc can be used to improve students' speaking performance depending on how teachers can process and utilize it in the classroom (Hidayatullah & Haerazi, 2022; Kinasih & Olivia, 2022). Teacher 3 stated that she rarely utilized ICT to teach speaking after the pandemic due to her low knowledge of technology and the time required to prepare to integrate it in the classroom, but she admitted that ICT can improve students' speaking abilities. Teacher's 3 statement aligned with research by Ekbert, S. and Gao, S (2018) which revealed that better quality of teaching can be achieved with the implementation of ICT, but it needs a lot of time to find and prepare the digital resources.

The teaching methodology used by the teacher

To reach the target or purpose of teaching, the teaching method is an important aspect that can be applied during the teaching and learning process. For teaching speaking, the method used is usually the Communicative Language Teaching method. Richard and Rodger (1999: 69) stated that the main objective of language teaching is to develop communicative competence. In using the teaching method, Teacher 1 and Teacher 3 have the same answer. They stated, "...There is no specific method for teaching speaking during and after the pandemic. I just make sure my students actively participated in my class...". The teacher's statement showed that it is good to apply teaching methods in the class, but making sure students engage and actively participated is also important. Every student has their own way to participate in class. Some students tend to speak when they are in a pair on a group, while others

prefer to speak with their teacher. So, the teacher needs to keep in mind that students' behavior and backgrounds differ, therefore they cannot apply the same teaching method in the classroom.

Further, Riazi (2008) mentions that different learners learn a language in different ways, which is why teachers need to remember that there is no fixed method when comes to teaching. Different from Teacher 1 and Teacher 3, Teacher 2 said that she usually used TPR (Total Physical Response) or other methods such as CTL (Contextual Teaching and Learning). She also adds "...After the pandemic, I often applied CTL for teaching. I think it's the best method because students can connect the material given with their real life and practice it. I can see their improvement in speaking and their enthusiasm in learning...". Widodo, U. (2020) conducted experimental research in vocational high schools. The result showed that students who taught using CTL get a high score in speaking, and reveal that CTL is considered an effective teaching method.

Contextual teaching and learning (CTL) is an instructional approach that integrates academic content and real-world contexts to promote active and meaningful learning. CTL in practice is an effective method for teaching language, as it provides students with opportunities to use language in authentic situations, which can enhance vocabulary, pronunciation, accuracy, and fluency (Muliani & Sumarsono, 2019). The use of various methods helps students practice their speaking activities. Teachers provide students with rich and varied contexts that can improve vocabulary acquisition. By learning new vocabulary in meaningful contexts, students can better understand and retain new words (Nugraha et al., 2022; Buana & Irawan, 2021). For example, if students are learning the vocabulary related to food, they can be taken to a local market or a restaurant where they can see, touch and taste different types of food items. This real-life experience helps them to understand the words in a meaningful context and enables them to use the words accurately and fluently.

CONCLUSION

Following the data transcribed from the interview, it can be summed up that there are various aspects influencing EFL students' speaking performance in the pandemic context from teachers' perspectives as follows. First, vocabulary knowledge is an important factor that affects EFL students' speaking performance. Students can perform speaking better if their vocabulary knowledge is better. Second, teachers confirmed that during the pandemic EFL students' self-confidence was low due to the learning material that cannot be understood by students. Thus, teachers can help by boosting students' self-confidence by providing positive feedback, encouragement, and by creating a relaxed classroom atmosphere. Third, teachers report that students are more likely to talk when learning takes place in the classroom rather than on online platforms. It is due to the relaxed atmosphere created in the classroom. Fourth, ICT is the best multimedia that affect students' speaking performance based on teachers' opinion. Various kinds of ICT including Youtube, Quizziz, and Duolingo can help students improve their speaking performance. Fifth, there is no fixed teaching methodology to teach speaking, but teachers can implement CTL (Contextual Teaching and Learning) the improvement in students' speaking performance and enthusiasm for learning.

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