



THE STANDPOINT OF PRIVATE ISLAMIC COLLEGE STUDENTS TOWARD ENGLISH-SPEAKING MATERIAL: A NEED ANALYSIS STUDY AT STIT TANGGAMUS

Sandi Pradana

Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Tarbiyah Tanggamus

Email: sandi@stittanggamus.ac.id

Abstract

This research aimed to understand the opinions of first-year students at STIT Tanggamus regarding the most suitable English-speaking material for their studies. Questionnaires were distributed to 20 respondents. The results showed that 60% of the students recognized the importance of speaking in daily conversations. 40% of them felt that they lacked proficiency in grammar and required more discussion activities to improve. Additionally, 50% of the students believed that music would be a valuable tool for learning to speak English. The findings indicate that STIT Tanggamus students have specific needs regarding English-speaking content. Therefore, the institution must provide appropriate materials and resources to address these needs. The research raises questions about the effectiveness of English-speaking material in enhancing students' language skills and the specific learning needs of STIT Tanggamus students regarding speaking skills.

Keywords: English Learning Material, Higher Education, Standpoint

INTRODUCTION

English has become an important international language and plays an essential role nowadays. Speaking proficiency becomes a critical skill in acquiring a second or foreign language. As English lecturers, it is essential to understand the standpoint of private Islamic college students towards English-speaking material. The need analysis study examines the students' perspectives on the relevance and effectiveness of such materials in enhancing their English language skills. By understanding their viewpoints, educators can tailor their teaching methods, such as student-centered or discovery learning, and select appropriate materials catering to students' needs and interests, facilitating a more engaging and practical learning experience.

This research aims to explore the perspectives of first-grade students at STIT Tanggamus on English-speaking material and determine their learning needs.

Acknowledging the significance of English proficiency, this study seeks in-depth views from students and evaluates present teaching techniques. The importance of English-speaking skills for STIT Tanggamus students impacts future academic and professional performance. This study also aims to identify any challenges or barriers the first-grade students at STIT Tanggamus may face in developing their English-speaking skills. Appropriate strategies and interventions can be implemented by understanding these challenges to support the student's language learning journey (Chamot, 2005). Ultimately, this study's findings will improve English language education at STIT Tanggamus, ensuring students have the necessary skills to excel in their future endeavors. The current teaching methods used to improve English-speaking skills at STIT Tanggamus and an evaluation of their effectiveness based on student perspectives will be examined in this study.

Additionally, this study seeks to contribute to the ongoing conversation on

effective language instruction and provide practical recommendations for educators at STIT Tanggamus. Students at STIT Tanggamus face limited exposure to English outside the classroom, a lack of resources and technology, and cultural barriers that hinder language acquisition. These challenges make it crucial for educators to adopt innovative teaching methodologies that promote active engagement and create a language-rich environment. By addressing these issues and incorporating socio-cultural factors into language instruction practices, educators can enhance the language learning experience for students at STIT Tanggamus and ultimately improve their language acquisition outcomes. By understanding the students' perspectives and identifying their learning needs, the study can provide valuable recommendations for improving English-speaking material and teaching approaches at STIT Tanggamus. After finding the students' needs, the lecturer has a foundation for optimizing students' English proficiency (Walker et al., 2004).

First-grade students at STIT Tanggamus face challenges and barriers in developing their English-speaking skills. Limited exposure to English outside the classroom is one such challenge. Many students may need more opportunities to practice speaking English in real-life situations, which can hinder their ability to apply what they learn in the classroom to everyday conversations. Additionally, more resources and technology are needed to ensure students access interactive and engaging speaking activities and materials that facilitate language learning. This lack of exposure to technology can also disadvantage students in a world where technology plays a significant role in language acquisition. Furthermore, cultural barriers, such as differences in communication styles and norms, can affect students' confidence and ability to speak English fluently. These challenges make it crucial for educators at STIT Tanggamus to implement innovative teaching methodologies and address these specific

barriers to enhance students' language acquisition outcomes.

Incorporating technology into speaking instruction can revolutionize language learning experiences for students at STIT Tanggamus. By integrating technology into the curriculum, lecturers can create interactive and immersive activities that engage students and motivate them to practice their speaking skills (Kessler, 2018). Virtual conversations, online language exchange programs, and speech recognition software are just some technological tools and resources that can enhance speaking practice. These tools provide instant feedback and evaluation, allowing students to track their progress and identify areas for improvement. Moreover, incorporating technology into speaking practice allows for increased flexibility and convenience. Students can access these activities from anywhere with an internet connection, enabling them to practice outside of the classroom setting and at their own pace. This flexibility mainly benefits Tanggamus, which must address students with busy schedules or limited access to language exchange programs or conversation partners. By leveraging technology, STIT Tanggamus can create a language-rich environment that promotes active engagement and provides valuable opportunities for students to practice and improve their speaking abilities.

English-speaking skills are crucial for STIT Tanggamus students due to the increasing importance of English as an international language and its essential role in academic and professional contexts. Proficiency in speaking allows students to effectively communicate and interact in daily conversations, as well as in future academic and professional settings. It enables them to express their ideas, participate actively in discussions, and build strong relationships with others. Moreover, speaking skills are often considered a key component of language fluency and overall language proficiency. Therefore, STIT Tanggamus must address the specific learning needs of students in this area and

provide suitable English-speaking materials and resources.

Previous research discusses the analysis of student work preparation needs (Arianti, 2017), English for computer science (Puspitasari, 2013), Employee class (Sari, 2019), English for Islamic economics (Ninsiana & Nawa, 2019), and English for nursing (Syukur & Nugraha, 2019). However, no one has discussed the teaching material of speaking, especially in private Islamic colleges. For this reason, this study aims to discover students' perspectives, determine their learning needs, and identify difficulties they may experience in developing English speaking skills.

METHOD

This study is a survey conducted with 20 first-year students at STIT Tanggamus (Creswell & Poth, 2007). The data was collected through a questionnaire consisting of 20 questions, which was distributed to the students. Five students were randomly selected for a more in-depth understanding, and interviews were conducted with them. The researcher used a sound recorder to record the interviews, so it was optional to write the answers directly. The interview consisted of 15 questions and was conducted in person to observe non-verbal cues, such as body language, which could affect their speaking ability. The interview procedure was adapted from existing need analysis methods like Express and Nunan (2014). The questionnaires and interviews were conducted in Bahasa, Indonesia, to minimize misinterpretations and ambiguities. After collecting the data, the researcher categorized and compared the answers using Microsoft Excel 2016, selecting the solution with the highest percentage as the students' needs. The details of the research process are depicted in the flow chart below:

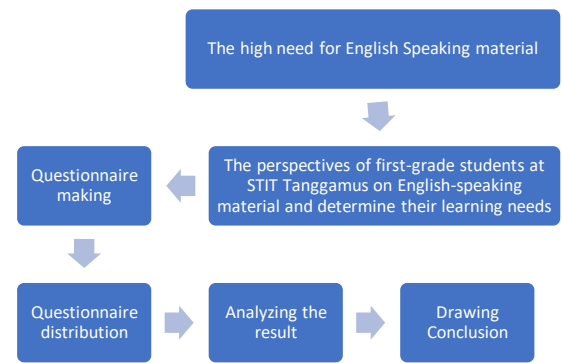


Figure 1 Research Flow

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

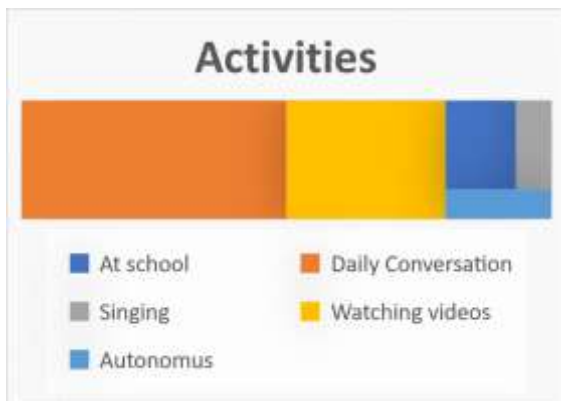
Finding

As mentioned in the introduction, this research aimed to analyze and discover the needs of first-year students at STIT Tanggamus. A total of 20 students participated in this research as respondents. The researcher used questionnaires and interviews to obtain more comprehensive answers. The questionnaires had 20 questions, while the interview had 15 questions. Based on the data gathered from both sources, the researcher came up with the following findings:

Many students highly desire to learn English for practical use in everyday conversations. According to a recent survey, 60% of respondents chose Daily Communication as their primary reason for learning English, while 20% are learning English to improve their skills. Another 10% want to master vocabulary, and 5% are interested in learning English to get a job. The remaining respondents have chosen all the answers, as they aspire to achieve multiple goals by learning English. The details of students' purposes could be seen on the chart below:



Based on a questionnaire, it was found that the majority of students, around 50%, rely on daily conversation to improve their speaking skills. Additionally, 30% of the students agreed that watching videos can be helpful. Around 10% of the students preferred engaging in activities at school, while the rest chose singing and autonomous activities to enhance their learning skills. The detail of the activities is shown below:

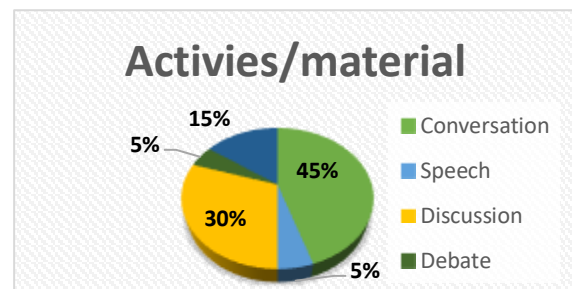


Based on the data collected, it has been found that a significant percentage of students need help with grammar. 40% of the students surveyed selected incorrect answers, indicating a clear need for improvement. Pronunciation is another challenging aspect of language learning, with 30% of the students' reporting difficulties in this area. The survey also revealed that 25% of the students struggle with fluency, highlighting the need for more practice in speaking and listening. Finally, vocabulary was identified as an area of difficulty for some students, although the exact percentage was not specified. Overall,

the data suggests that there is a need for further support and resources to help students improve their language skills in these critical areas.



Many students recognize the importance of English conversation in the classroom, with 45% preferring it as a learning activity. Group discussions are favored by 30% of students, singing by 15%, and the remaining students opt for debates and speeches.



Regarding preferred learning and teaching media, songs are the medium of choice for half of the students surveyed, with 30% enjoying English stories, 15% preferring movies, and 5% choosing English news.



Discussion

The findings of this study shed light on the specific language learning needs of first-year students at STIT Tanggamus. One of the key takeaways is that many students prioritize the practical use of English in daily conversations. This finding highlights the

importance of incorporating real-life scenarios and interactive activities that simulate conversational situations in the classroom (Barak, 2006). Additionally, students have different preferences for learning and teaching media, with songs being the most popular choice. This research suggests that lecturers should consider incorporating music into their lessons to make learning more engaging and enjoyable for students.

Another notable finding is that many students need help with grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary. This finding underscores the need for lecturers to provide targeted instruction and resources that address these specific areas of difficulty. Additionally, the results suggest that students value English conversation practice in the classroom, with group discussions being a favored activity. Lecturers should prioritize creating opportunities for students to engage in meaningful conversations with their peers (Zainuddin et al., 2020).

Based on the research findings, we understand that every student has a unique learning style and preferences. While we recognize the benefits of incorporating music into language learning, we also believe in providing a variety of teaching methods to accommodate a range of learning styles. As such, our language learning program offers a diverse range of activities and exercises, including traditional rote memorization and grammar drills, to provide students with a well-rounded learning experience (Honigfeld & Schiering, 2004).

Regarding the potential drawbacks of using music as a teaching tool, it could distract some students (Anshari et al., 2017). However, music can also be a powerful motivator and aid in retaining language content. The lecturer should carefully select appropriate music that aligns with the language content and use it to supplement other teaching methods. There are also potential cost and accessibility barriers associated with incorporating technology into classroom instruction. However, the benefits of technology in language learning

outweigh the costs. English classes should offer various options for students to access the technology they need, including providing it in the classroom and offering online resources that students can access from home (Szymkowiak et al., 2021; Tarus et al., 2015; Vaportzis et al., 2017).

Overall, the findings of this study suggest that integrating technology into speaking instruction and providing students with flexible and convenient access to language-rich environments can improve their English-speaking abilities. By leveraging the available tools and resources, lecturers at STIT Tanggamus can create more interactive and engaging learning experiences that cater to their student's specific needs and preferences.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has highlighted first-year students' specific language learning needs at STIT Tanggamus, focusing on English speaking skills. The findings indicate that many students prioritize the practical use of English in daily conversations and value English conversation practice in the classroom. Lecturers should consider incorporating real-life scenarios and interactive activities to simulate conversational situations and provide targeted instruction and resources that address specific areas of difficulty, such as grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary. Additionally, integrating technology into speaking instruction and providing students with flexible and convenient access to language-rich environments can improve their English-speaking abilities. By leveraging the tools and resources available, lecturers can create more interactive and engaging learning experiences that cater to their students' specific needs and preferences.

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