

Students' Perceptions of English Development Program on Their Speaking Skill at Islamic Boarding School

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Abstract. The purpose of this study was to determine students' perceptions of the English Development Program on students' speaking skills. English Development Program is a program established to help students learn English better, especially in terms of speaking. The subjects of this study were 4 students from Pesantren Nuris who participated in the English Development Program selected by purposive sampling. This research uses qualitative methods, and the research instrument uses interviews. The interview results show that the majority of students have a positive perception of the English Development Program. The students believe that the English program can support them to speak English fluently. Students also have the perception that the English program is a place for students to develop their English skills, especially in terms of speaking. Not only that, students also think that the English program can make them more confident in speaking English.

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INTRODUCTION

Speaking ability is a very important aspect to learn and further improve in learning English. When students are fluent in English, they will have no difficulty expressing ideas, thoughts, and feelings and exchanging information with foreigners. According to Ladouse (1991), speaking is an attempt to express oneself and is also referred to as the act of expressing an activity through the right words to express the correct sequence of ideas. This can be interpreted as speaking is one way of communicating that can affect a person's life. With this explanation, it can be concluded that speaking is a way to convey what we feel and then realize it in the form of spoken language between two or more people. Speaking is a skill in English that needs to be learned to improve communication between students and others. Some of the students also still difficult to speak English fluently.

Learning a language is a habit-forming approach, therefore we must practice a lot to speak the language. However, what often happens is that students only learn English when in class, when outside the classroom they do not have the slightest opportunity to practice English because the environment around them uses native languages, such as Indonesian and local languages. This makes it difficult for students to speak English fluently and causes students to have several problems such as doubt, mistrust, and lack of confidence.

Therefore, formed English Language Development Program, a language institution under the auspices of the Nuris Jember Islamic Boarding School, was formed as a forum for developing foreign language skills as a provision for students to communicate easily using these languages. Davison and Downson (2003: 107) say that students need opportunities to speak and listen in a variety of contexts and for a variety of purposes, to improve their thinking abilities and develop their communication strengths, as well as provide examples of language used to develop their explicit knowledge of speaking and listening. The activities are *Muhadasah* activities carried out every Tuesday - Saturday morning, containing a deposit of 3 vocabs / *mufradat* that have been given and reading the results of a series of sentences that have been compiled from the *mufradat*, there is also *Ta'limul Lughoh* activities carried out every Sunday - Friday night, which contains learning material related to how to compose sentences in *Ingeris* with proper grammar in material activities and interspersed with games, such as listening songs, *nobar* and others that are filled by a tutor.

To find out whether the establishment of the English Language Development Study Program succeeded in helping students' speaking skills, it is necessary to study students' perceptions of their speaking skills. Students' perceptions become a picture or assessment of how the English Language Development Program helps students' speaking skills. One person's perception can be different from another person's perception even though the situation is the same. The perceptions of students who take part in the English Development Program will also be different, even though they follow the same program and activities.

Previous research has also been written by Wahyuni (2014) who researched the influence of English day on students' speaking skills at the eighth graders. The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of English Day on students' speaking skills. The results of Jumroatul Lailia Ningsih's research (2022) *The Effectiveness of English Day Program to Improve the Students Speaking Ability at Senior High School Zainul Hasan 1 Genggong*, explained the effectiveness or development of students after participating in the English Day program. Based on some of the studies above, it is clear that no one is concerned with students' perceptions of the English program on their speaking skills, while the perceptions of students are very important for the success of a program because the students are directly involved in this program. For this reason, the researcher is interested in taking the title *Students Perceptions of the English Language Development Program in their speaking skills: A Descriptive study at the Nuris Islamic Boarding School* is expected to find out the perception of students towards this English program.

Based on the background of the research that has been written above, the researcher wants to discuss one research problem: How are the students' perceptions of the English language development program in their speaking skills? focus of this research is to investigate students' perceptions of the English language development program in their speaking skills. the researcher formulated the objectives of the study to investigate students'

perceptions of the English language development program in supporting their speaking skills. The significance of this research can be categorized into two: practical and theoretical in English language teaching. For practical purposes, it is expected that teachers can increase their knowledge and motivation to implement some programs effectively. This research is also expected to give students a way to learn English and make them more confident in speaking English. For theoretical purposes, it can be used as a reference for future researchers who are interested in conducting research on the same topic.

METHODS

In this research, the method used is descriptive qualitative methodology. Qualitative research is an approach to understanding and observing the meaning of a person or a group in describing social or human problems. To achieve this goal, the researcher conducted interviews with several students who joined the program. The experiences and perceptions of respondents are the subject of qualitative research, which is used to investigate problems and gain a thorough understanding of a particular phenomenon (Merriam, 2009; 2012 Creswell). In this study, the researchers sought to collect, interpret, and describe students' perceptions of the English program on their speaking ability by looking at their responses.

Participants in this study were members of the English Development Program at Nuris Islamic Boarding School consisting of four female students. In selecting the subject the researcher used purposive sampling as a sampling technique. Purposive sampling is sampling by giving its own assessment of the sample among other populations. According to Arikunto (2006) purposive sampling is a technique of taking samples not based on random, regional but based on considerations that focus on specific goals. In this study, the researcher chose students who had participated in this program for three years and hoped that their experience during this program could be satisfying and provide information about their perceptions of their speaking skills during this program.

In the research the instrument used was the interview. Researchers used semi-structured interviews used in this study the interview that took place referred to a series of open questions. This method allows new questions to arise because of the answers given by the interview so that during the session, extracting information can be done in more depth. Researchers conducted interviews one by one, with a duration of about 20-30 minutes each and then recorded and recorded in order to obtain valid data. The number of questions asked was 6 questions that would be asked to students who participated in this program. The interview questions were adopted from Nurul Hikmah (2021) which consisted of 7 questions, but the researcher only took 6 questions according to the researcher's needs.

Data analysis in qualitative research is the process of systematically searching and compiling data obtained from interviews. In analyzing the data in this study, researchers adopted the Miles and Huberman (1994) model using the data reduction method, data display and conclusion drawing.

FINDINGS

The interviews were conducted with the aim of gathering information about the perceptions of the students of the English language development program towards their speaking skills. The interviews were conducted in September 2023. The interview data will be analyzed to provide findings regarding English language development program students' perceptions of their speaking skills

1. What benefits do you get after joining the English Development Program?

The students get benefits in speaking, vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation, this can be seen from the interview results of 4 students.

AAI: *"I have more English knowledge, better speaking, and vocabulary every day."*

ADW: *"I'm more focused on learning English."*

HAH: *"The benefits are that my speaking is better, and my vocabulary has increased."*

ARW: *"More knowledge of vocabulary and grammar."*

From the answers of some students above, the researcher can conclude some of the benefits that students get when joining the English Development Program. Most of the students said that by joining the English program their speaking improved from what was originally just speaking without paying attention to pronunciation after joining the English program their speaking improved with good pronunciation as well. In addition to speaking, they also stated that their vocabulary increased, this is because every day they are required to memorize 3 vocabularies. Not only that, they also said that their grammar knowledge is better. By joining the English program they can focus more on learning English, this is because of the supportive environment.

2. Does the English language development program help you speak English well?

The researchers also found that the students felt helped by the English development program. Here almost all students answered if the English program can help them in speaking English more specifically in speaking, it can be seen from the students' answers.

AAI: *"Yes, this English program helps me to speak better, because every day we are required to speak English to each member, because I am used to my speaking skills being better."*

ADW: *"Very helpful, I can be more confident when speaking because my friends support each other in learning English."*

HAH: *"Yes, it helps, because in this English program when there are students who when speaking their pronunciation is not correct, there will immediately be someone who corrects either from the management or fellow friends."*

ARW: *"It helps because in the English program, we are required to speak English every day, so it can slowly help us speak better."*

Based on the results of the interview above, students have an agreement that the English program can make them speak better because in the English program, they are required to speak English every day both in class and outside class. Students also argue that the English program can make them more confident when speaking, both when speaking with fellow English program members and with other people outside the classroom. In addition, they also think that the English program is a good environment for speaking English because their fellow members will support each other and correct each other if other students are wrong in learning English, such as if there are students whose pronunciation is not correct in speaking then other members will correct each other.

3. After joining the English Development Program, are you motivated to continue speaking English every day?

Many students who have joined the English development program feel motivated to continue speaking English. Most students answered that they are motivated to speak English.

AAI: *"Motivated, because I am already in grade 3 and have to be a good example for my classmates."*

ADW: *"Yes, because speaking English is fun and looks cool."*

HAH: *"Definitely, because I have more friends with whom I can communicate in English, it makes me more enthusiastic about speaking English."*

ARW: *"Yes, I am more motivated and I like speaking English more."*

Depending on the student's answers above, it can be concluded that the English Development Program provides students with motivation to speak English. The students admitted that after joining the English Development Program they want to always speak or communicate using English, because according to them speaking in English is very fun and makes them look cool, and they also have friends who can be invited to communicate using English which makes them enthusiastic about speaking English.

4. What do you think about practicing speaking in the regular class or the English development program. Which one do you prefer ?

The students prefer practicing speaking in the English development program rather than in the regular class. The students answered that they prefer learning to speak in the English program, according to them learning in the English program is more fun and exciting.

AAI: *"I prefer the English program, because in English we are not monotonous just doing questions, but we have to talk in English with our friends."*

ADW: *"I prefer the English program because in the English program, I have friends who like English and we have the same goals. So when we are talking and there is a wrong pronunciation of the word then we will correct each other."*

HAH: *"I prefer the English program, because in the English program the learning process is more fun and makes me more expressive."*

ARW: *"English program, because while learning we will be interspersed with games, so it makes us not bored and makes us more confident in learning to speak English."*

Focusing on the students' answers above, it can be seen that students prefer to learn speaking in the English program rather than in formal classes. They said that learning English in the English program is not monotonous just doing questions, they are required to speak English every day with fellow friends. The students also said that learning in the English program is very enjoyable, because in the learning process it will be interspersed with games so that it makes them not bored. Not only that, they also think that in the English program they can be more expressive and confident, this is because they have many friends and both want to learn English.

5. Do you believe that if the English program can support you to speak English fluently?

Based on the interview results, the researcher found that some students believe that the English program can support them to speak English fluently and well. This can be seen from the students' answers below.

AAI: *"Believe it, from the material and the daily requirement to speak English."*

ADW: *"I strongly believe, that the English program can help me to develop my English skills, especially in speaking."*

HAH: *"Yes, I believe, because it has been proven, from the first time I joined the English program my speaking ability was still very lacking, after joining the English program for a long time my speaking ability has increased and become fluent."*

ARW: *"Yes, because we have to speak English every day."*

Based on the answers of the 4 students above, the researcher concluded that the English program can support students' ability to speak English, this is because in the English program, they are required to speak English every day, this making students' speaking skills are better and become more fluent.

6. Do you think you have improved your speaking skills after joining the English Development Program ?

The answers of the 4 female students they get improved speaking skills after joining the English development program, it can be seen from the results of the interview.

AAI: *“Yes, it has improved from the initial messy pronunciation, now it has improved.”*

ADW: *“Yes, my speaking has improved, from the initial stiffness when speaking in English, now it is no longer.”*

HAH: *“As it increases, and pronunciation improves.”*

ARW: *“Yes, after joining this English program I am more confident in speaking English.”*

Depending on the students' answers above, all students have been good speaking English. They felt that their pronunciation which was initially messy became better after joining the English development program, the students also felt more confident in speaking, and some students who were previously stiff when speaking English after joining the English program and getting used to speaking in English gradually became fluent when speaking in English.

DISCUSSION

From the results of interviews with the four students, they argue that after joining the English program there are many benefits they get, including their speaking skills improving from what was originally a lot of mistakes in terms of vocabulary pronunciation, now it is even better. This is in line with Utari's statement (2021), that English club helps students improve their speaking skills so that they can speak English fluently and communicate appropriately in situations where someone needs to express thoughts, feelings, and opinions. Not only that, the benefits they get are that their vocabulary increases every day because in the English program, they are required to memorize vocabulary every day. Another benefit is that students can focus more on learning English because they are in an environment that supports them.

The students said the English program really helped them be more confident in speaking English, both when talking to fellow English program members and with other people. Nurhayati F.Z (2019) said that the English program is a group of people who gather together to practice speaking, listening, and writing in English, and they will help each other in solving problems. This is by students' opinions that the English program is a good environment for speaking English because their fellow members will support and correct each other if there are other students who are wrong in learning English.

The students stated that in the English program they are taught to speak English well, and the mentors and fellow members of the English program encourage the students to develop their speaking skills. In the English program, students are required to speak English every day, both in class and outside class, which makes them better and more fluent when speaking English. In addition, they said that after joining the English program, students feel more motivated to speak English, and they always feel enthusiastic about speaking English. This finding is consistent with Melviza, Syamsul and Neira (2017), who revealed that students believe that English club is the best way to motivate students to practice speaking

English with their peers. The students also feel happy to have joined the English program. The environment in the English program tends to be fun and help each other if other members feel difficult in learning English. This statement is in accordance with Yanti (2021) who revealed that students are happy to join the English program with the aim that students can improve their ability to speak.

Based on the results of the interview, the researcher concluded that students prefer to learn to speak in the English program rather than in regular classes, because in the English program the learning process is very fun, so it makes them enthusiastic in learning to speak English. In the English program, every learning activity will be interspersed with games, such as listening songs, nobar and others, so that it will not make students feel bored in learning, but will make students more enthusiastic in learning. On weekends, there will also be Sunday fun which contains evaluation and games related to English. This is what makes students prefer to learn English especially in speaking in the English program rather than in regular classes. Finally, the students also said that after joining the English program their ability to speak English improved and better, from the beginning they were messy when speaking, after joining the English program the students were more fluent in speaking English.

The limitation in this study is that this study cannot be generalized to other studies, because the number of participants used is only 4 people, besides that this research only focuses on student perception in general it did not investigate other things such as the methodology taught and the media used during the learning process.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the researcher's findings regarding Students' perceptions of the English language development program in their speaking skills at Nuris boarding school. The researcher concluded that the students have a positive perception of the English program. They believe that this English program can support them to speak English better. The students also have a perception that the English Development program is a comfortable place to develop their skills in English, especially in speaking. They also think that after joining the English language development program they are more confident in speaking English, not only that the students also say that the vocabulary they students are able to memorize more words. English language development is an alternative program for students who want to learn more about English, especially in speaking skills. So that students feel helped to improve their speaking skills, because of the environment that supports each other and encourages students to always be enthusiastic in practicing speaking English.

The students also agreed that their English skills, especially in pronunciation and fluency, improved after joining the English development program. It is because they are used to speaking English every day. After all, in this English program, they have to communicate in English, so their English level is much better than before. Most students prefer to learn English in the English development program rather than in regular classes. Indeed, in the English program the learning process is not boring because the mentor facilitates learning by providing games to make the learning process more interesting. Furthermore, in regular classes, students have very little opportunity to hone their speaking skills, because during the learning process students are free to use any language, so the use of English when studying in Regular classes is very weak, while when learning English. In the development

program, they have to speak English every day, this helps them to get used to it and motivates them to continue to improve their speaking skills, so that over time, with continued practice, their speaking skills will improve and become more fluent.

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