

**STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN SPEAKING ENGLISH
CONVERSATION PRACTICE AT AN ISLAMIC HIGH
SCHOOL IN PEKALONGAN**

A THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Sarjana Pendidikan in English Education

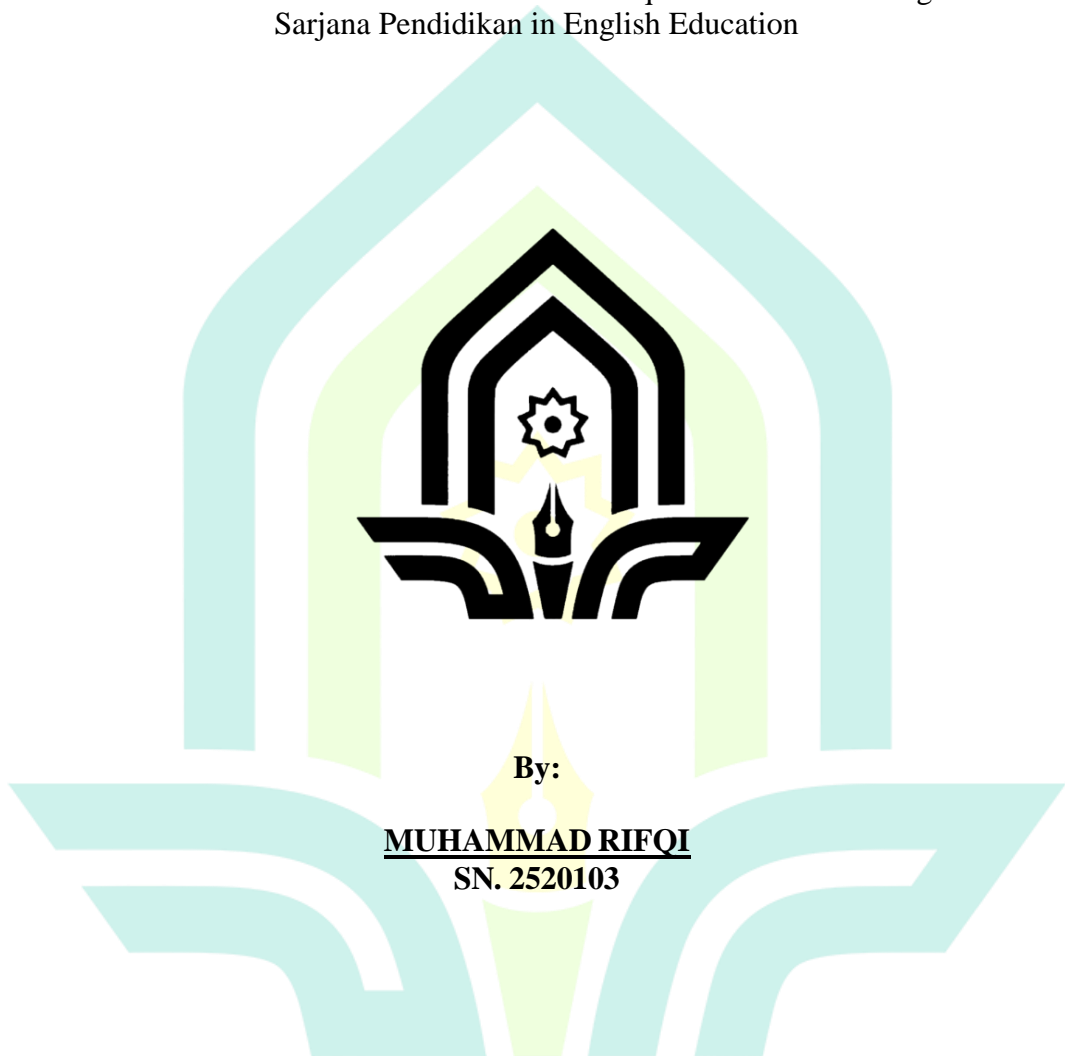


**ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND TEACHER TRAINING
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K.H. ABDURRAHMAN WAHID PEKALONGAN
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2025**

LEMBAR PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN KARYA ILMIAH

Yang bertandatangan dibawah ini :

NAMA : MUHAMMAD RIFQI

NIM : 2520103

FAKULTAS : TARBIYAH DAN ILMU KEGURUAN

Dengan ini saya bahwa skripsi yang berjudul **“STUDENTS’ DIFFICULTIES IN SPEAKING ENGLISH CONVERSATION PRACTICE AT AN ISLAMIC HIGH SCHOOL IN PEKALONGAN”** adalah benar benar hasil karya penulis, kecuali dalam bentuk kutipan yang telah penulis sebutkan sebelumnya.

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Pekalongan, 19 Februari 2024
Yang menyatakan



MUHAMMAD RIFQI
NIM.2520103

NOTA PEMBIMBING

Kepada

Yth. Dekan Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Ilmu Keguruan
UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan
c/q. Ketua Program Studi Tadris Bahasa Inggris
di Pekalongan

Assalamu 'alaikum Wr.Wb.

Setelah melakukan penelitian, bimbingan dan koreksi naskah skripsi saudara :

Nama : Muhammad Rifqi

NIM : 2520103

Program Studi : Tadris Bahasa Inggris

Judul : **STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN SPEAKING ENGLISH
CONVERSATION PRACTICE AT AN ISLAMIC HIGH
SCHOOL IN PEKALONGAN**

Saya menilai bahwa naskah skripsi tersebut sudah dapat diajukan kepada
Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Ilmu Keguruan UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid
Pekalongan untuk diajukan dalam sidang munaqasyah.

Demikian nota pembimbing ini dibuat untuk digunakan sebagaimana mestinya. Atas
perhatiannya, disampaikan terima kasih.

Wassalamualaikum wr.wb

Pekalongan, 14 Maret 2025
Pembimbing


Isriani Hardini, S.S.,M.A., Ph.D
NIP. 19810530 200901 2 007



KEMENTERIAN AGAMA REPUBLIK INDONESIA
UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI
KH. ABDURRAHMAN WAHID PEKALONGAN FAKULTAS
TARBIYAH DAN ILMU KEGURUAN
Jl. Pahlawan Km. 5 Rowolaku, Kajen, Kabupaten Pekalongan 51161
Website: fik.uingusdur.ac.id email: fik@uingusdur.ac.id

APPROVAL SHEET

The Dean of Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, confirms that the undergraduate thesis by:

Nama : MUHAMMAD RIFQI
NIM : 2520103
Judul : STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN SPEAKING ENGLISH
CONVERSATION PRACTICE AN AT ISLAMIC HIGH
SCHOOL IN PEKALONGAN

Has been examined and approved by the panel of examiners on Wednesday, February 19th, 2025 as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of *Sarjana Pendidikan (S.Pd.)* in English Education.

The Examiners,

Examiner I

Fachri Ali, M.Pd.

NIP. 19890101 202012 1 013

Examiner II

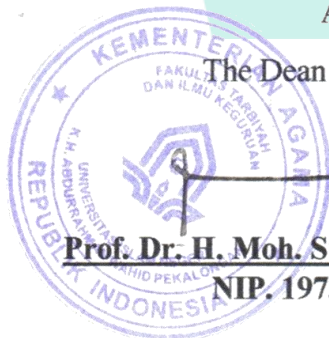
Nadia Faradhillah, M.A.

NIP. 19930406 202012 2 015

Pekalongan, March 14th, 2025

Assigned by

The Dean of FTIK Pekalongan



Prof. Dr. H. Moh. Sugeng Solehuddin, M. Ag.

NIP. 19730112 200003 1 001

MOTTO

“Reading is windows to the world”

“Victory is ours”

-war thunder-

” **وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّ النَّصْرَ مَعَ الصَّبْرِ، وَأَنَّ الْفَرْجَ مَعَ الْكُرْبِ، وَأَنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا**
*“ketahuilah bahwasannya kemenangan itu Bersama kesabaran, dan
jalan keluar itu Bersama kesulitan, dan bahwasanya kesulitan ada
kemudahan”*

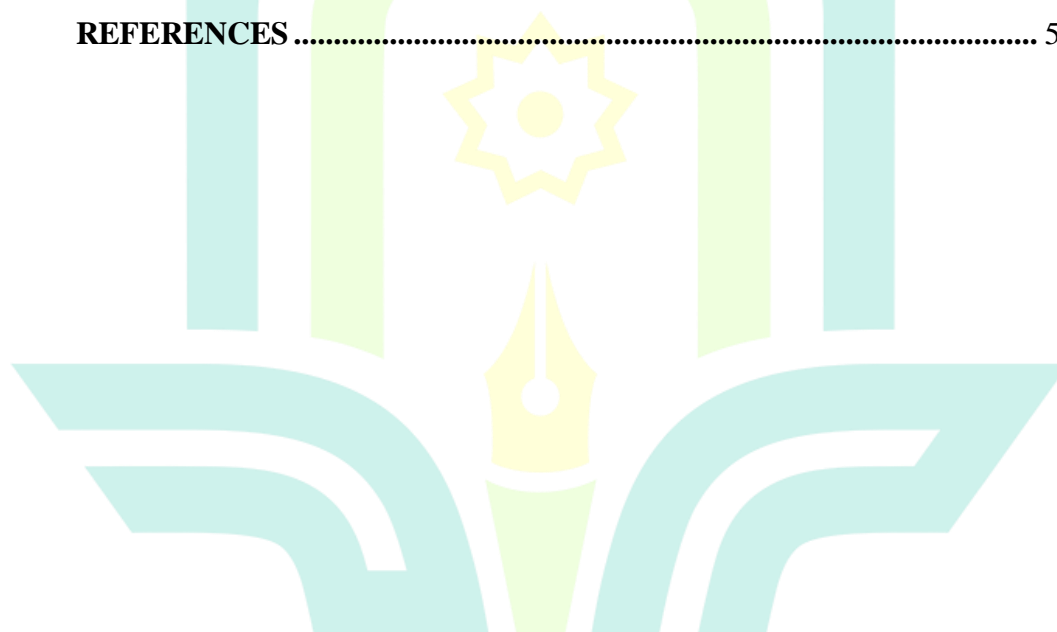
(H.R. Tirmidzi)



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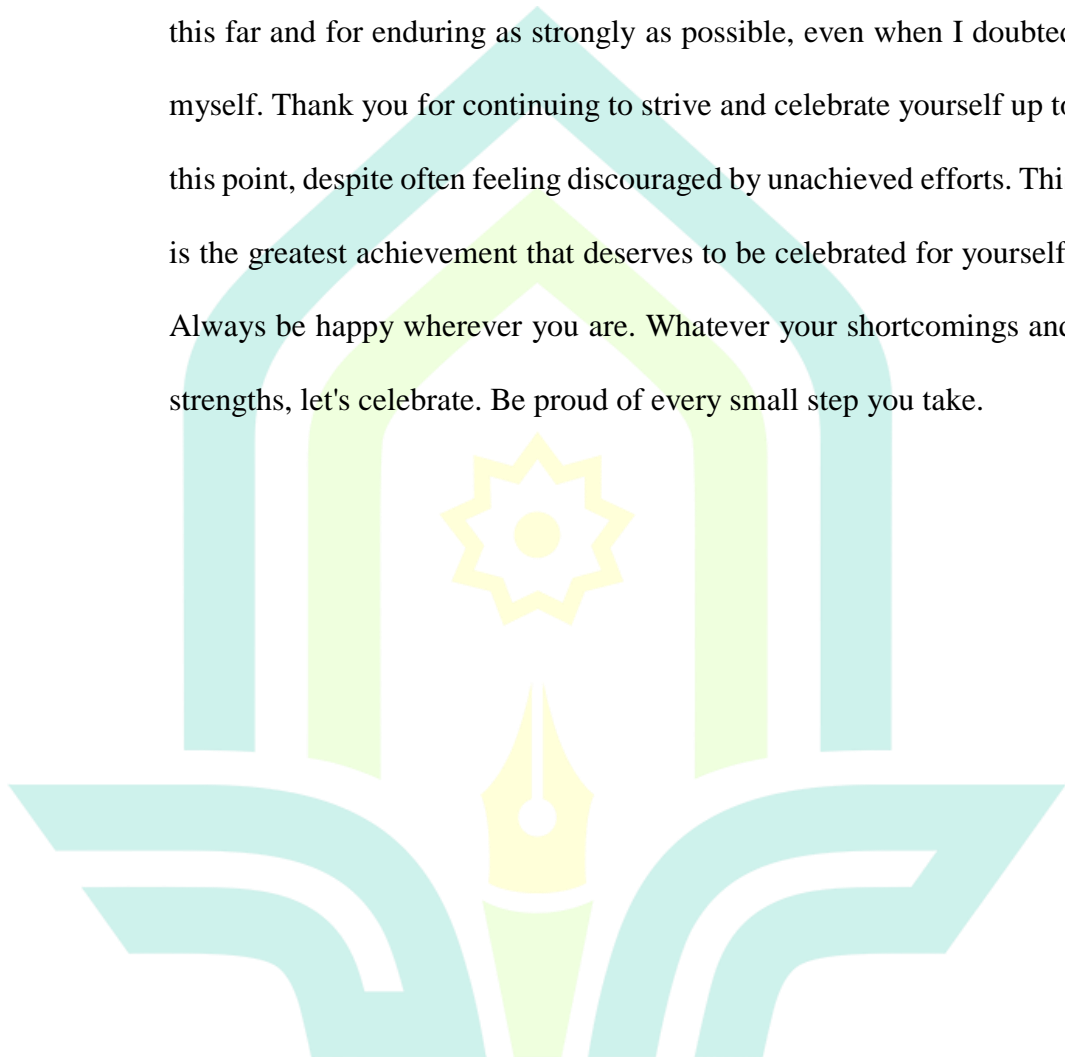
All praise is due to Allah SWT who has bestowed His countless blessings and grace upon me, allowing me to complete this thesis. This thesis is prepared to fulfill the requirements for obtaining a Sarjana Pendidikan Degree at the Islamic State University of K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan. I am fully aware of all the limitations and numerous shortcomings that need to be addressed in the writing of this thesis. I hope that the results of this research can provide information and benefits to everyone who reads it, especially for the field of education. In the preparation of this thesis, I received various forms of support and assistance, both material and non-material, from many parties. Here, with pride and respect, I present several acknowledgments as a token of gratitude to those who have played a role in assisting me in completing this thesis:

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PREFACE

Praise and gratitude I offer to Allah SWT, for by His blessings and mercy, I am able to complete this thesis. This thesis was written as a requirement for obtaining a Bachelor's degree in Education in the English Tadris Study Program at the Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan. I realize that without the help and guidance of various parties, from the time of my studies to the preparation of this thesis, it would have been a challenge for me to complete this work. Therefore, I would like to express my gratitude to:

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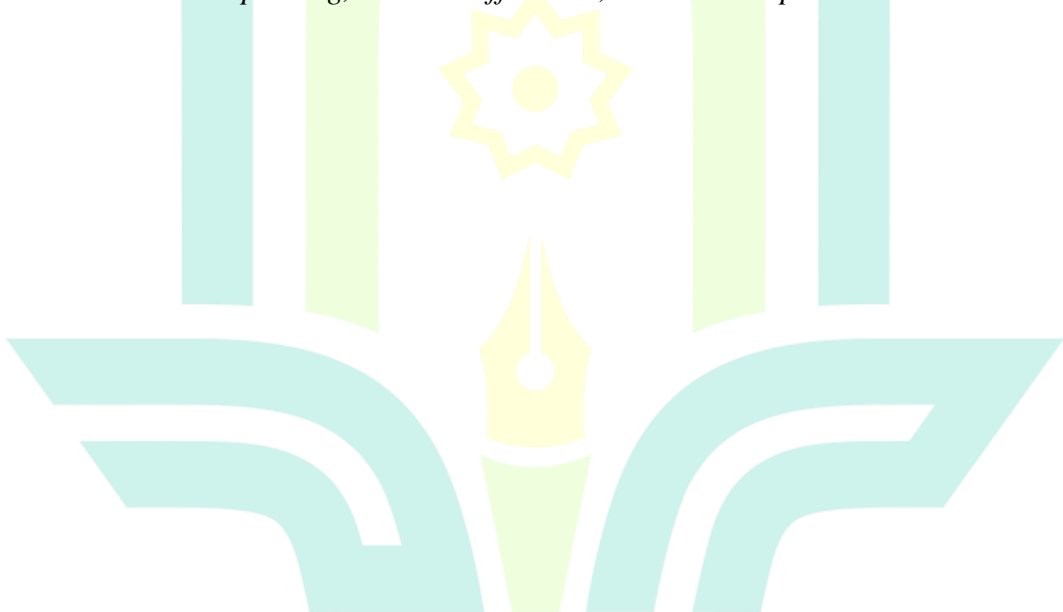
Lastly, I hope that Allah SWT rewards all the kindness of those who have helped me. May this thesis contribute to the advancement of knowledge.



ABSTRAK

Speaking merupakan salah satu keterampilan yang harus dikuasai oleh pelajar Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing (EFL) untuk mendukung mereka dalam berkomunikasi atau bercakap-cakap. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah menganalisis dan mengungkap kesulitan siswa dalam praktik percakapan bahasa Inggris. Untuk mencapai tujuan tersebut, peneliti menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain narrative inquiry. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur dengan lima siswa dari salah satu sekolah menengah Islam di Pekalongan, kemudian data dianalisis menggunakan teknik analisis tematik. Beberapa temuan terkait kesulitan siswa dalam praktik percakapan bahasa Inggris meliputi masalah kosakata, pengucapan, tata bahasa dan kelancaran berbicara. Peneliti juga menemukan bahwa kesulitan tersebut pada akhirnya muncul akibat faktor psikologis yang dialami siswa saat harus berbicara bahasa Inggris di depan kelas. Hasil penelitian ini memberikan rekomendasi informatif bagi pelajar EFL, guru EFL, dan peneliti selanjutnya untuk mengeksplorasi topik ini dengan metode yang berbeda, misalnya melalui strategi untuk mengatasi kesulitan siswa.

Kata kunci: *Speaking, students difficulties, conversation practice.*



ABSTRACT

Speaking was one of the skills that had to be mastered by EFL learners, which could support them in conversing or communicating. This research was to analyze and reveal the students' difficulties in English conversation practice. To achieve the purpose of this study, the researcher used a qualitative approach and narrative inquiry design. The researcher collected data for the purpose of this research using semi-structured interviews with five students from one of the Islamic high schools in Pekalongan, and the data were analyzed using the thematic analysis. Some findings regarding students' difficulties in speaking English conversation practices included vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar, and fluency problems. The researcher also found that these difficulties ultimately arose due to psychological factors experienced by students who presented speaking English in front of the class. The results of this study provide for the EFL students, EFL teachers and the next researcher to research this topic with difference method for example, strategies to countered students difficulties.

Keywords: Speaking, students' difficulties, conversation practice.



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

In this era, there are many ways to learn English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Foreign language learners generally look for ideal methods to learn English, especially in speaking contexts. Limited interaction between speakers of these languages and foreign language learners is an obstacle for foreign language learners. Speaking plays an important role in English language proficiency, alongside other skills such as reading, writing and listening. If someone neglects to learn to speak, effective communication and expressing actions or ideas becomes a challenge such as is conversation. There are still many EFL students at a high school in Pekalongan who experience difficulties in conversation practice. The causes of these difficulties are due to various things. However, according to Supriadi (2021) the most common type of error, followed by information errors, additions, and sorting errors.

According to Harris (1974), speaking is a complex skill that requires the simultaneous use of various abilities, which often develop at different rates. Speaking is a crucial skill closely related to our daily lives, where we constantly communicate with each other. English speaking conversations are particularly challenging, as supported by Bueno et al (2006), stating that speaking is one of the most difficult skills for

language learners. English conversations in school can be problematic for some students, especially during class discussions. Conversations not only occur in educational settings but also in students' daily lives, both in real and virtual environments, given the fast-paced nature of the current era.

The purpose of this research was analyzed the students difficulties English conversation practice at Islamic high School in Pekalongan it must include elements of understanding such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking, all of which are crucial for EFL learners to fully comprehend the ins and outs of vocabulary. Thus, effectiveness should not only be judged by the word itself but by how well it is described.

Based on pre-observation, it was known that the students there experienced difficulties in speaking. The researcher contributing reveal specific difficulties and discovered new facts that students experience face in learning conversation and whether conversation is a fundamental skill that supports English speaking proficiency. This study had argues that conversation is a skill that must be mastered, and changing times require EFL learners to be creative in their approach. In line with that, many previous studies have investigated about student difficulties in various aspect but in this case investigating about the student difficulties focused in brown theory including the vocabulary, fluency, pronunciation and grammar. Researcher aimed to enrich of knowledge by conducting

of this. The researcher interested in investigating the difficulties students in at Islamic high School Pekalongan experienced in conversation practice with the title “Students’ Difficulties In Speaking English Conversation Practice at an Islamic High School in Pekalongan”

1.2 Formulation of the problem

The research provide question of this study is

1. What are the Islamic high school students difficulties in speaking English conversation practice?
2. What causes the difficulties in speaking English Conversation practice?

1.3 Operational Definitions

To avoid misunderstanding about the terms in this study, the researcher provides several definitions related to research as follows:

1. Practice: is activities to try application or realize relating the theory.
2. Conversation: is interactive between two participant or more to to exchange information, feeling or ideas.
3. Student difficulties: is a condition when student cannot learn because of interference Learning disorders are caused by students' lack of understanding.

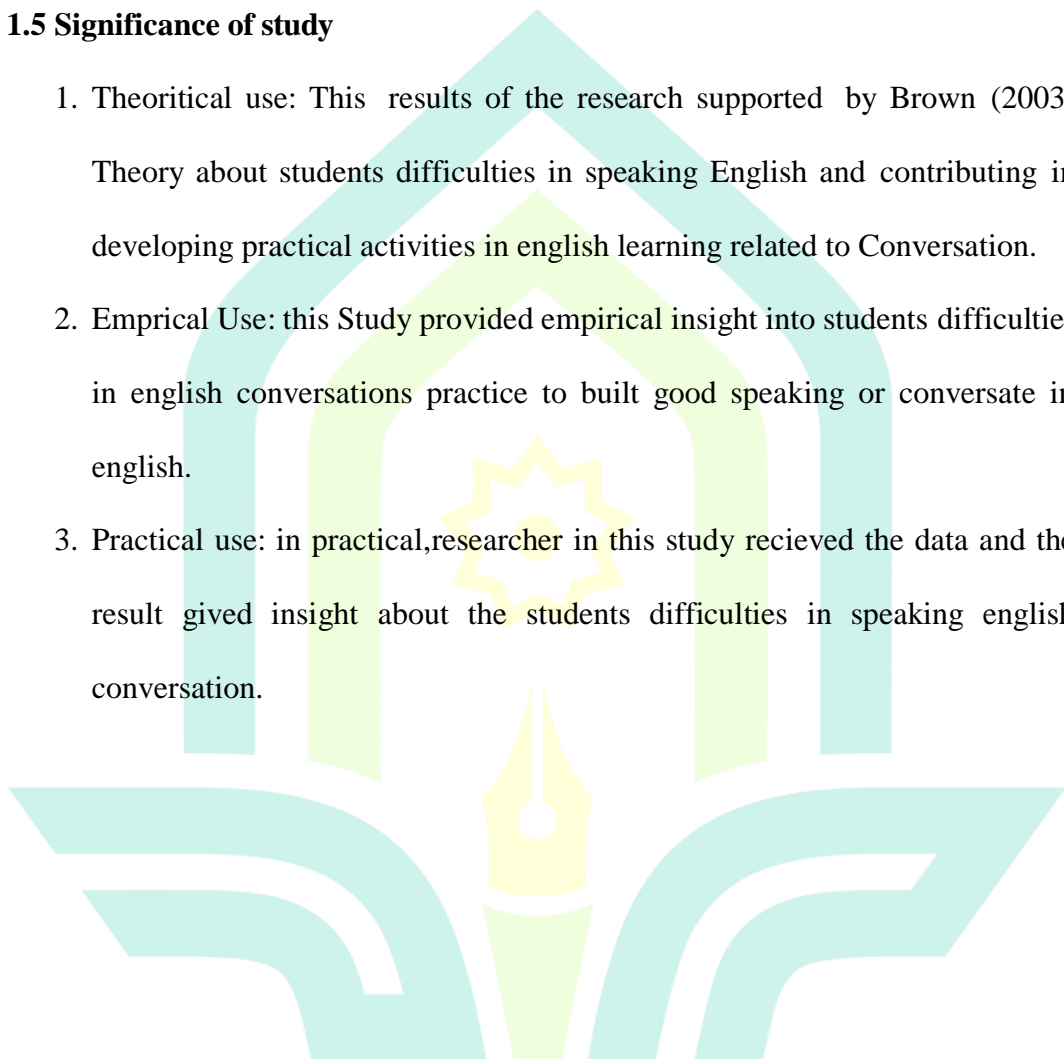
1.4 Aims of Study

The aims of This research below:

1. To explore difficulties in speaking English conversation practice
2. To Explore the causes of students difficulties in speaking English conversation practice.

1.5 Significance of study

1. Theoretical use: This results of the research supported by Brown (2003) Theory about students difficulties in speaking English and contributing in developing practical activities in english learning related to Conversation.
2. Emprical Use: this Study provided empirical insight into students difficulties in english conversations practice to built good speaking or conversate in english.
3. Practical use: in practical, researcher in this study recieved the data and the result gived insight about the students difficulties in speaking english conversation.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of the Findings

This chapter is based on the findings of this study regarding students' difficulties in speaking English during conversation practice. The researcher found that most students face challenges in speaking English, the study identifies four difficulties in students' English speaking such as vocabulary limitations, pronunciation inaccuracies, grammatical errors, and disrupted fluency. Vocabulary gaps hinder students' ability to express ideas coherently, while frequent mispronunciations reduce clarity in communication. Grammatical inaccuracies, such as incorrect verb tenses and sentence structures, lead to misunderstandings during conversations. Additionally, students' fluency is disrupted by excessive pauses and hesitations, reflecting insufficient practice in spontaneous speaking. These findings imply that EFL teachers must prioritize contextual vocabulary drills, phonetic training, and grammar-in-context activities to address skill gaps systematically. For students, this highlights the need for autonomous practice through tools like language apps and self-recording to monitor progress.

Psychological barriers significantly exacerbate students' speaking difficulties. Key factors include fear of mistakes, shyness, lack of motivation, anxiety, and low self-confidence. Fear of judgment from peers discourages participation, while shyness and anxiety create

reluctance to engage in conversations. Lack of motivation stems from perceived irrelevance of English to daily life, further reducing practice opportunities. These psychological challenges imply that teachers should adopt student-centered approaches to foster a supportive classroom environment, such as integrating ice-breaking activities and positive reinforcement. For students, building self-awareness through reflective journals or peer feedback sessions could mitigate emotional barriers.

5.2 Recommendation

For students are encouraged to adopt active and reflective strategies to overcome speaking barriers. They can leverage language exchange platforms like Duolingo to practice and expand their vocabulary and everyday expressions. Maintaining a speaking journal is also beneficial for tracking progress, challenges, and anxieties, thereby enhancing self-awareness. Furthermore, joining English clubs or online communities such as Reddit and etc, can provide peer support and reduce feelings of isolation. Regular self-assessment and seeking feedback from peers are crucial for identifying recurring mistakes and overcoming the fear of criticism.

For EFL teachers, address students' difficulties, teachers are advised to integrate structured and contextual exercises into their lessons. For instance, by conducting daily conversation practices focused on specific vocabulary themes or grammar rules, teachers can improve speaking accuracy and provide immediate feedback to help students correct errors. Additionally, activities such as timed short

speeches or simulations of real-life situations can help students build speaking fluency. Teachers should also create a supportive classroom environment through collaborative error analysis sessions and adopt a gradual approach—from individual speeches to paired dialogues and group discussions to foster students' confidence.

Through this research, future researchers suggested can focus on developing strategies and theoretical frameworks more relevant to EFL educational contexts. Researchers could explore differences in speaking instruction approaches, such as conventional methods versus accessible technology-based interactive approaches, to determine which better reduces anxiety and improves fluency. Studies might also compare the effectiveness of teacher training programs in implementing new methods versus traditional ones, providing deeper insights into existing research gaps in EFL education. By focusing on current and educationally relevant aspects, research outcomes could offer practical, easily implementable solutions for diverse EFL classroom environments.



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