

OVERCOMING ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS BARRIERS IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS: FINDING EFFECTIVE SOLUTIONS

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ABSTRACT

English is one of the international languages that has global mastery in many areas of life, including science, information technology, education, politics, economics, social, and cultural aspects. The problems with learning English that still exist today are that many students from elementary school to college cannot speak English and have not been able to maximize their English skills well, despite having mastered English and studied for many years in educational institutions. One of the causes is that some of them use English as a subject and course without any implementation or practice in the areas of reading, speaking, listening, writing, and so on. The aim of this article is to find out the solution to the problem of English skills.

Key Words: English; Problems; Skills; Solution.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization is a process of integration and interaction between countries worldwide in various aspects, including economic, political, social, cultural, and technological. Globalization has resulted in significant economic growth and increased connectivity between nations through international trade, foreign investment, and the rapid flow of information and technology. One of the aspects affected by globalization is the use of language. English is the dominant international language in global communication. This is due to a

number of factors, including the cultural and economic dominance of English-speaking countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, as well as the influence of the mass media and information technology which use English as the primary language. So, English is a global language which is very important in all fields of knowledge since it was decided to become an international language (Lysandrou, 2011).

Actually, learning English is very important, especially in terms of education. Because by mastering

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English, our nation will not be left behind in facing globalization and changes in civilization in the future. Besides that, by mastering and being skilled in English, we can also tell the world about diversity and Indonesian culture in the international arena (Emiliasari, 2019).

However, the importance of English in the context of globalization can also raise challenges and concerns. For example, there is pressure for non-English countries, one of which is Indonesia, to adopt English as the dominant language in their education and business, which can threaten local cultural and linguistic diversity. In the end, the influence of English in the era of globalization is a complex phenomenon with pros and cons. While English provides broad access and opportunities in a global context, it is also important to maintain the diversity of local languages and cultures and respect other languages.

Talking about the importance of learning English, this cannot be separated from the questions that some people often ask about the benefits of speaking English. The problem is that not a few of them still lack knowledge of English despite having studied English at school and even university for years, especially among students where speaking English is a skill they have to

master. Of course, if they do not know and do not master English, it will have a big impact on the country's development, resulting in being left behind in science and technology and will not be able to compete with other developed countries (Yuhendra, 2018).

If we trace some of the previous articles used as references by the author, we found several previous writers who studied the problems related to mastery and skills in English. However, every research that has been done should have its own uniqueness, characteristics, and differences. The differences and uniqueness can come from the problems that occur, the research methods used, or even the place of research. This research focuses on the problems of language skills that occur in Indonesian educational institutions starting from the elementary school and tertiary levels, as well as solutions to deal with these problems.

Through this writing, it is found several problems that are often faced by teachers and students in the process of learning English, in which there are still many students who do not have the interest and motivation to deepen their mastery of English language skills. As well as the need for teachers to utilize existing learning media. In fact, if teachers have creativity, they can make learning media

that are cheap and attractive so that they attract more students' interest in learning English. Furthermore, in the field, there are still many English teachers who do not master their disciplines. Maybe some teachers are skilled in one of the English language skills, but the teacher is not from an Education Personnel Education Institution. Even though the teacher is proficient in English, theoretically, the teacher will experience difficulties when teaching English to students.

Therefore, this article aims to discuss the importance of English language skills and solutions to current English skills problems. With this article, it can be a reference and even a reference in dealing with issues regarding English language skills in Indonesian educational institutions and can add insight into how important English skills are for future generations, in which in the future the world will be more advanced in all aspects of life.

METHODS

This research is included in the type of qualitative research. The method used in this research is the library research method. Research that seeks data sources that are appropriate to the problem is being researched through various sources of literature, such as journals, articles, books, e-books, and e-

journals. Then the data collection is by reading, collecting information, recording, and processing the information obtained through the various literature obtained (Hamberg et al., 2016).

Research design

The approach that is suitable for this research is a descriptive approach that describes existing phenomena, both phenomena that occur naturally and phenomena that are caused by human engineering.

Research site and participants

The data collection tool uses humans and note-taking tools. After data collection, data testing was also carried out to check the accuracy of the data

Data collection and analysis

In this research, the data collection technique used is documentary research technique, namely old research documents are used as data sources which are then used for testing, interpretation, and even prediction in many cases.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Importance of Having English Language Skills

English has become an important international language and has a significant role in education. In this era

of globalization, mastery of English is not only an additional skill but also a mandatory for educational institutions in Indonesia. Therefore, apart from Indonesian and its mother tongue, which must be mastered, English which is an international language is also a second language that must be mastered.

By mastering English, Indonesian educational institutions can access abundant international educational resources such as English-language books, journals, articles, and other educational resources are becoming more accessible. This will help improve the quality of education by presenting the latest information, innovative teaching methods, and the latest research. Teachers and students can gain broader and deeper insights through this access.

English is a global communication tool that enables Indonesian educational institutions to establish relationships with educational institutions in other countries, such as international collaborations, student exchanges, and joint projects with educational institutions in other countries. It can bring great benefits to the development of education in Indonesia. Teachers and students who speak English can participate in cultural exchanges, academic discussions, and collaborative

activities with educational institutions abroad.

English serves not only as a means of communication but also as a window into understanding the world's culture and diversity. Through learning English, educational institutions can broaden students' understanding of diverse cultures, traditions, and perspectives of the world. This helps students gain a global outlook, encourages a broader understanding of diversity, and helps them become more civilized citizens.

Furthermore, mastery of English is also an important preparation for students who plan to continue their studies to a higher level, both domestically and abroad. Many undergraduate, master's, and doctoral study programs at universities in Indonesia and in various parts of the world use English as the medium of instruction. Not only proven by direct skills, but these skills are also proven by having an IELTS, ITP, or TOEFL test certificate. Through this, it can be evidence and added value to one's ability to use English, and this expertise will also make it easier for students to get educational scholarship in the country and even abroad.

In addition, in an increasingly competitive world of work, proficiency in English gives graduates an edge in finding work in multinational

companies, import-export companies, the tourism industry, and other globally connected fields. If someone has expertise in English language skills, the job opportunity will be greater, especially now that English is a mandatory requirement in order to be accepted for work in various large companies.

Problems in English Language Skills

English in this era of globalization has an important role. Moreover, language functions as a means of communication. As is well known, one of the languages that is made the official international language is English. So that this language is mandatory to be mastered, especially for students and students in Indonesia, because English is one of the languages that is used globally in every aspect of life, such as science, information technology, education, politics, economics, society, and culture.

One of the problems faced in English language skills that are happening right now is inseparable from the lack of motivation for self-awareness and understanding of how important it is to master English in facing the challenges of life in the future, which of course, will be increasingly advanced in world civilization and the rapid development of science and technology in every country time (Susini & Ndururu, 2020).

Some students may be less motivated to learn English because they don't see its relevance and benefits in everyday life. In addition, awareness of the importance of mastering English in facing global challenges may also be lacking.

Furthermore, several problems were found in English language skills, one of which was in the process of learning English. The education curriculum in Indonesia tends to focus more on mastering English grammar than speaking and listening skills which are actually needed in active communication. Curriculums that are oriented toward tests and written assignments often neglect other important aspects (Hayati, 2016).

Another problem in English language skills faced by students also lies in the lack of mastery of vocabulary, speaking, reading, writing, and also listening. In contrast, a good mastery of all of these skills will give you the confidence and ability to interact effectively in English in various situations, especially in the field of Education, in everyday life, or in a career. These skills complement each other and help build a holistic understanding of the English language.

The problems above occur due to the large number of students from elementary school to tertiary level who

only make English as a subject and course without any practice in real life, then there is no full awareness and motivation within them of the importance of mastering the English language in the future, and problems will also occur in mastering English vocabulary, skills in speaking, reading, listening and writing (Santoso, 2014).

Solutions to the Problem of English Language Skills

Learning English is very important for all forms of interest, especially in the field of education. But to achieve this goal is also not an easy thing. To overcome the problem of English language skills in education, here are some solutions that can be implemented. By implementing these solutions, it will help students overcome English skills problems in education and significantly improve their abilities. It is also important to provide support and encouragement to students to continue practicing and practicing English in various contexts.

The first thing to do is provide an effective English education program. Schools or educational institutions can develop programs specifically designed to improve students' English language skills. This program should involve components such as reading, writing, listening, and speaking. A variety of

teaching methods, including interactive activities, can help students acquire better English skills (Wijaya et al., 2014).

The second thing is to integrate English into the curriculum. English does not only have to be taught in English lessons itself but also needs to be integrated into the curriculum in all subjects. Teachers can use English when giving instructions or explaining concepts in other subjects such as math, science, or history. This will help students get used to using English in different contexts and improve their understanding (Hayati, 2016).

Next is to prepare it by utilizing technology. Technology can be a powerful tool for improving English skills. The use of language learning software, mobile phone applications, or online learning platforms can help students practice and improve their skills in reading, writing, listening, and speaking English. Technology can also provide opportunities to interact with native English speakers through online forums or video calls (Andrei, 2016).

Then, encourage active communication in English with students. It is important to create an environment in schools that encourages students to use English actively. This can be done by holding activities such as language games, presentations, group discussions, or

public performances in English. Encouraging students to actively participate and practice regularly will help them gain confidence and improve their English-speaking skills.

In addition, educational institutions must also provide adequate English resources. Schools must ensure the availability of adequate resources for learning English, such as textbooks, dictionaries, reading books, or digital learning materials. These resources should be appropriate to students' ability levels and provide interesting and varied materials to motivate them.

While the solutions or efforts that can be made for students may be more to socialize how important and urgent the English language is to improve competence and excellence as students at a higher level because, in some tertiary institutions, one of the requirements is that they graduate by proving a TOEFL certificate, IELTS and so on. So, to get this certificate, students are required to be able to have skills in terms of reading, listening, speaking, writing, mastering grammar, and having to master a lot of English vocabulary and others. So, the conclusion is for students to grow their awareness of how influential and important English skills are to support their lives in the future.

The explanation above explains that there are many different solutions to improve English skills for learners. Then it remains to be seen how we, as educators, can make the best use of various current technologies and media to improve English language skills in students. And no less important, to be able to master and be skilled in English properly, the learning process should emphasize the practice aspect, namely trial and error, so that students will be actively involved in conveying an idea/opinion in accordance with the actual situation. Finally, grow and instill confidence in practicing or demonstrating English proficiency with various available sources (Kholid, 2017).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Problems in English language skills are very often found. One of the problems faced in English language skills that occur today is inseparable from the lack of motivation for awareness and understanding of how important it is to master English in facing life's challenges in the future. Thus, the need for changes in the learning process so that learning English is given more attention considering how important English skills are in the current era of globalization. There are still many problems in learning, such as Unintegrated curriculum, low interest

and motivation, and so on. As well as the discovery of other cases, such as students' lack of mastery or skills in reading, listening, speaking, and writing.

So, one of the most important solutions in improving English language skills is to grow interest and motivation in practicing English, such as speaking, pronouncing vocabulary, and so on. As well as always implementing the English lessons that have been learned, maybe by integrating English with other subjects and showing its relevance in everyday life such as listening to English songs, reading English books and so on.

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