

AN ANALYSIS OF TUTOR'S STRATEGIES AND CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS: A STUDY OF THE BRITISH ENGLISH COURSE (BEC) CAMP

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Abstract

This study analyzes the strategies and challenges faced by tutors in teaching English speaking skills at the British English Course (BEC) Camp in Sungai Penuh, Kerinci. A descriptive qualitative method was employed, with data collected through observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The participants were two experienced tutors who have been teaching for a minimum of three years. Data was analyzed using thematic analysis to identify key patterns and themes. The findings revealed that tutors employed strategies such as mouth movement training for pronunciation and the implementation of an immersive "English Area" environment. Tutors also adapted their teaching methods based on students' abilities and personalities. The challenges encountered included internal factors like anxiety and lack of confidence, and external factors such as local language interference and limited fluency. The study emphasizes the importance of a personalized and flexible approach to teaching speaking skills to support students' language development effectively.

Keywords: *Immersive environment, Personalized approach, Speaking skills, Teaching strategies, Tutor challenges*

1. Introduction

Speaking is the act of producing and conveying verbal language to communicate thoughts, ideas, or information. It is a fundamental human skill that enables interaction between individuals and groups. Speaking can be formal or informal, spontaneous or planned, and it involves various elements such as pronunciation, tone, fluency, and clarity. It plays a crucial role in everyday conversation, public speaking, debates, storytelling, and other forms of communication.

Speaking is also an essential skill for communication, serving as a

fundamental ability that requires further guidance (Santiana & Marzuki, 2022). Furthermore, speaking is often recognized as a common form of expression that utilizes an esteemed colloquial register, with skilled speakers generally receiving greater recognition. Since almost everyone can engage in communication, it is frequently undervalued as a skill (Muthmainnah & Umami, 2024). Therefore, experienced and qualified English tutors are necessary to facilitate speaking practice effectively.

The directorate of course and training, directorate general of education and

culture (2020) states that English courses are competency-based education and training programs designed to equip students with skills that enable them to engage in various meaningful learning experiences. These courses aim to achieve specific objectives. According to (Ilmu et al., 2023), one of these goals is to fulfill the community's educational needs, which may not be met through formal schooling. One way to support this objective is by ensuring the presence of competent English teachers. In this regard, the role of an English teacher is crucial in the learning process. As (Mumary Songbatumis, 2017) explains, beyond teaching and assessing students' language proficiency in reading, writing, speaking, and listening, teachers also provide support, encouragement, and motivation, helping students develop a positive attitude and enthusiasm for learning English.

The strategies used by tutors are essential in the teaching and learning process. To be effective, English tutors must have specific skills and competencies. They should be able to design instructional materials and apply appropriate teaching strategies that cater to students' needs, academic levels, and other relevant aspects. As stated by (Shafie et al., 2019), English instructors should be proficient in developing and adapting learning materials to suit students' abilities and requirements. Additionally, they must be capable of delivering lessons efficiently by utilizing various teaching methods that actively engage students and enhance their interest in learning English.

British English Course (BEC) is one of the English courses in Kerinci, which is located in Sungai Penuh. This course

has a unique system called a "camp", where every student who join BEC has a chance to join the camp and they should stay there until the time ended. In these cases, students forcing to implement their skill aside to train their English skill, especially speaking. Tutors at BEC camp play a vital role in enhancing students' speaking skills by utilizing various teaching strategies and methodologies. These approaches may include communicative language teaching (CLT), task-based learning (TBL), translation, drills, role-playing, debates and error correction techniques. However, despite the effectiveness of these methods, tutors encounter several challenges, such as students' lack of confidence, limited exposure to English beyond the classroom, pronunciation difficulties, and reluctance to engage actively. Moreover, external factors like curriculum restrictions, time constraints, and limited resources can also affect the success of their teaching strategies.

Tutors encounter various challenges when teaching and engaging with students, making it crucial to implement effective teaching strategies (Sukmojati et al., 2023). The term "tutor challenge" refers to obstacles that must be overcome in the teaching process. In every lesson, particularly in speaking, tutors inevitably identify potential difficulties. As they are expected to manage the classroom independently, tutors must also develop solutions to the challenges they face while assisting students in their learning process (Cristina et al., 2022).

Several factors influence an English tutor's ability to teach effectively, including the repetitive use of the same teaching methods, student's diversity, and the generally low English

proficiency of learners. Moreover, tutors need to employ various teaching strategies to present lessons engagingly, maintain student interest, and capture their attention. Previous research conducted by (Ahmad Latif Mahruf & Sari, 2022) investigates teachers' strategies in teaching speaking at English courses for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in kampung Inggris. English teachers utilize a variety of teaching techniques, such as lectures, drills, dialogues, discussions, presentations, debates, role-plays, cooperative learning, games, and assignments. The interaction between teachers and students during the learning process plays a crucial role in creating a positive classroom atmosphere and enhancing students' self-confidence. Without a strong teacher-student relationship, the teaching process may not proceed effectively. Furthermore, the unique environment of kampung Inggris requires participants to communicate exclusively in English, especially in designated areas like the English camp. By engaging and dynamic teaching methods, it stands out as an excellent choice for individuals looking to improve their English language skills. Apart from these challenges, (Hidayat, 2021) identifies several difficulties in speaking English, such as a lack of confidence, fear of public speaking, insufficient practice, limited exposure, inadequate speaking materials, and a general lack of practice.

Since interaction among peers, students, and teachers is essential for enhancing speaking skills, knowledge, and motivation to learn, tutoring strategies for teaching speaking require careful attention. Additionally, (Syafryadin, 2020) emphasizes that adopting a

personalized approach for each student can help minimize speaking difficulties. For example, students are more likely to feel comfortable and satisfied with their learning experience when they are familiar with and at ease with the material presented in class.

At this point, the study focuses on identifying the strategies, methods, and implementations which can enhance student's speaking skill. The term which uses on BEC would be the main topic that the researchers must explore, such as the way of communication, treatment, and relation between students among the tutors. So that, the researcher would like to present "AN ANALYSIS OF TUTOR'S STRATEGIES AND CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS IN BEC CAMP".

Several previous studies have investigated similar issues in the context of English camp programs. For instance, a study by (Jannah & Aziz, 2024) examined students' perceptions of participating in Kampung Inggris and found that English camp environments significantly improve students' speaking skills, including vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and self-confidence. Other studies have also highlighted the positive impact of English camp programs on motivation, attitudes, and speaking performance. However, these studies mainly focus on students' perceptions and learning outcomes rather than exploring the role of tutors in depth.

Therefore, a clear research gap can be identified. Previous studies tend to emphasize students' experiences, perceptions, and achievements, while limited attention has been given to

tutors' strategies and the challenges they face during the teaching process, especially in specific institutions such as the British English Course (BEC) Camp. This study offers novelty by focusing on tutors as the central subject, analyzing their instructional strategies as well as the practical challenges encountered in teaching speaking skills. By doing so, this research provides a more comprehensive understanding of how speaking instruction is implemented in English camp settings and contributes new insights to the field of EFL teaching, particularly in intensive learning environments.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Nature and Importance of Speaking Skills

Speaking is widely recognized as a fundamental component of language proficiency. Richards (2008) states that speaking is not merely the production of sounds but involves the ability to communicate meaning effectively in various contexts. It requires mastery of pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and interactive competence. In line with this view, Santiana and Marzuki (2022) emphasize that speaking serves as a primary medium for communication and is often considered the most visible indicator of language mastery.

However, speaking is frequently undervalued because it is perceived as a natural ability that everyone possesses (Muthmainnah & Umami, 2024). In fact, effective speaking requires structured guidance, consistent practice, and appropriate instructional strategies. Therefore, the presence of competent tutors plays a crucial role in facilitating students' speaking development, particularly in EFL (English as a

Foreign Language) contexts such as English courses and camps.

2.2 Teaching Strategies in Developing Speaking Skills

Teaching strategies significantly influence students' speaking performance. Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011) explain that effective language teaching requires the integration of various approaches rather than reliance on a single method. Teachers must adapt their strategies to learners' needs, proficiency levels, and learning characteristics.

Kesuma and Ahmad (2022) found that English tutors in non-formal education settings employ diverse techniques such as drills, dialogues, discussions, role-plays, debates, and cooperative learning. These strategies aim to increase students' participation and confidence. Similarly, Sukmojati et al. (2023) highlight that tutors' flexibility in selecting and modifying strategies contributes to improved speaking outcomes.

Pronunciation training is also considered essential in speaking instruction. (Singh et al., 2019) argue that pronunciation practice, including mouth movement awareness and phonetic training, helps learners reduce rigidity and improve clarity. This aligns with communicative language teaching principles, which emphasize intelligibility and fluency over strict grammatical accuracy in early stages of learning.

Furthermore, immersion-based approaches support speaking development. Krashen's (1982) theory of second language acquisition stresses the importance of meaningful exposure and comprehensible input. Creating an "English Area" or immersive environment encourages students to use

the target language habitually, thereby enhancing fluency and confidence.

2.3 Personalized and Differentiated Instruction

Learners possess diverse backgrounds, abilities, and personalities; therefore, differentiated instruction is necessary. Tomlinson (2001) explains that differentiated instruction involves adjusting content, process, and learning environment to meet students' readiness levels and interests. In speaking classes, this may include simplifying vocabulary for beginners while gradually introducing more complex structures.

Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) further supports the importance of scaffolding in language learning. Tutors provide guidance and gradually reduce assistance as students gain competence. Syafryadin (2020) also emphasizes that personalized approaches help minimize speaking difficulties and increase students' comfort in expressing ideas.

Additionally, moving beyond literal translation is crucial in language acquisition. According to Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011), language learning involves internalizing conceptual frameworks rather than directly translating from the first language. This perspective helps learners develop more natural and internationally recognized speech patterns.

2.4 Challenges in Teaching and Learning Speaking

Teaching speaking presents various challenges, both internal and external. Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) introduced the concept of foreign language classroom anxiety, which significantly affects learners'

performance. Anxiety, fear of making mistakes, and lack of confidence often hinder students from actively participating in speaking activities.

Hidayat (2021) and Yahaya et al. (2021) identify additional factors such as limited vocabulary, insufficient exposure, lack of practice opportunities, and local language interference. In non-formal education settings, tutors must address these affective and linguistic barriers simultaneously.

From the tutors' perspective, Cristina et al. (2022) note that instructors also face challenges in managing diverse student abilities, maintaining motivation, and ensuring consistent engagement. Repetitive teaching methods and limited resources can further complicate the teaching process (Songbatumis, 2017). Therefore, effective speaking instruction requires not only strategic methodology but also emotional support, continuous evaluation, and adaptive classroom management.

2.5 Immersive Learning Environment in English Courses

English courses and camps often implement immersive systems to accelerate speaking proficiency. The Directorate of Course and Training (2020) explains that competency-based English programs aim to equip learners with practical communication skills. In environments such as English camps, students are encouraged or required to use English intensively, promoting habitual language use.

Immersive environments align with communicative and experiential learning theories, which assert that language is best acquired through meaningful interaction. Such settings foster confidence, reduce fear of making mistakes, and enhance students'

readiness to communicate in real-life situations.

3. Research Method

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design to explore the challenges in teaching speaking skills at the British English Course (BEC) Camp. Descriptive qualitative research is used to understand phenomena in their natural setting and to gain in-depth insights into participants' experiences (Yahaya et al., 2021).

3.2 Data and Source of Data

The data in this study consisted of primary and secondary data. In particular, the primary data were obtained from two English tutors at the British English Course (BEC) Camp, who were selected using purposive sampling based on their teaching experience and their involvement in speaking classes. Furthermore, this research was conducted at the British English Course (BEC) Camp, an English learning environment that focuses on improving students' speaking abilities. In terms of data type, the primary data were interview results with tutors, while the secondary data were books, journal articles, and relevant previous studies.

3.3 Data Collection

This study used semi-structured interviews as the main method of data collection. According to (Three et al., n.d.), semi-structured interviews allow flexibility while still guiding the discussion to obtain in-depth information. In this technique, open-ended questions were used to allow participants to express their experiences

and perspectives in detail. The data collection process involved several steps, including preparing interview guidelines based on research objectives, conducting interviews with the tutors, recording the interviews with participants' consent, and transcribing the interview data for analysis. Furthermore, the focus of data collection included teaching strategies used in speaking classes, challenges faced during teaching, and students' speaking development.

3.4 Data Analysis Technique

The findings are presented using a descriptive qualitative approach, organized into themes. Each theme is explained systematically and supported by participants' statements and relevant theoretical references. This method ensures clarity and helps readers understand the challenges and strategies in teaching speaking skills comprehensively.

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1 Findings

4.1.1 The Strategies for Teaching Speaking Skills

The results indicated that there are two specific strategies implemented to enhance students' speaking skills. For beginners, tutors tend to encourage students to adapt their mouth movements to English pronunciation, with the goal of increasing their attention and shaping their perception of the language. Additionally, tutors provide useful expressions and essential aspects of communication that help students apply their knowledge in practical contexts. This finding is consistent with the clarification provided by the informant.

“For beginners, I place greater emphasis on helping them get used to moving their mouths in English, so that when they start using the language, they are less rigid. The second strategy involves providing key aspects of communication to help them understand more easily and avoid critical mistakes when speaking English.”

In addition, the environment plays a crucial role in achieving the desired learning outcomes. Therefore, tutors created a designated space known as the "English Area," where students are required to use only English and are prohibited from speaking other languages. This strategy is intended to enhance students' confidence and foster the development of their speaking abilities.

“In the English Area, even students with very basic English proficiency are required to speak English, regardless of whether their pronunciation or grammar is correct. The most important aspect is building their confidence so that they can continue to develop.”

Through these strategies, the main objective is to enrich students' knowledge—particularly in terms of phrases, sentence structures, and pronunciation—by simplifying the learning process as much as possible.

4.1.2 The implementation of teaching strategy

Tutors implement strategies that are tailored to each student's category, challenges, and capabilities. This approach influences students by starting with simple and accessible vocabulary before gradually introducing more complex material. Additionally, tutors must adapt their methods to align with each student's personality.

"Certainly, since each student faces different challenges, it is essential for

teachers to adapt their methods to address and overcome these challenges."

After implementing the strategies, tutors evaluate their approach by assessing factors such as the weight of the material, re-teaching, and testing. This evaluation aims to observe whether the students have successfully applied the lessons and achieved the intended learning goals.

4.1.3 The Challenges for the tutors

Based on the interview results, several challenges were identified in teaching speaking skills at the British English Course (BEC) Camp. These challenges were categorized into key themes derived from the participants' responses.

4.1.4 Lack of Students' Confidence

One of the main challenges faced by tutors is students' lack of confidence in speaking English. According to one tutor, many students feel afraid of making mistakes when speaking. This fear prevents them from expressing their ideas freely, even though making mistakes is a natural part of the learning process.

This finding is supported by (HORWITZ et al., 1986), who explain that anxiety and fear of making errors significantly affect students' willingness to communicate in a foreign language. As a result, building students' confidence becomes one of the most difficult aspects of teaching speaking.

4.1.5 Low Motivation to Speak English

Closely related to confidence is the issue of low student motivation. The tutor emphasized that encouraging students to actively speak English is a fundamental

challenge. Many students are reluctant to participate, which limits their speaking practice.

According to Dörnyei (2001), motivation plays a crucial role in second language acquisition. Without sufficient motivation, students tend to avoid speaking activities, which slows down their progress.

4.1.6 Cultural Understanding Differences

Another challenge identified is students' limited understanding of foreign culture. One tutor explained that understanding language also requires understanding the cultural context behind it. Differences in meaning and usage between Indonesian and English can lead to misunderstanding.

For example, the Indonesian term “nongkrong” generally refers to gathering with friends, while in English, similar expressions such as “hang out” can be used in broader contexts, including with friends, family, or even colleagues. This difference shows that language is closely related to cultural perspectives.

This is in line with Byram (1997), who states that language learning involves not only linguistic competence but also intercultural understanding.

4.1.7 Influence of Local Accent and Mother Tongue

Another significant challenge is the influence of students' local accents and native language. One tutor stated that local language interference affects students' pronunciation and speaking fluency in English.

This finding is supported by Ellis (1997), who explains that first language

interference is a common factor affecting second language learning, especially in pronunciation and speaking performance.

4.2. Discussion

The data in this study were analyzed using thematic analysis. The data were obtained from observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The analysis process involved several steps. First, the researchers organized and reviewed the data collected. Second, the data was coded to identify important patterns and recurring ideas. Third, the codes were grouped into broader themes related to the research focus. Finally, the themes were interpreted to explain the findings of this study.

4.2.1 The Strategies for Teaching Speaking Skills

The study identified two main strategies employed by tutors to develop students' speaking ability. First, for beginners, tutors prioritize to adjusting mouth movements on English pronunciation. This technique implies reducing stiffness and helping students become more familiar with the sounds of the language, which is supported by phonetic-based language acquisition theories (Celce-Murcia et al., 2010). Second, tutors introduce essential expressions and elements of communication that are often used in daily interactions, enabling students to practice and apply them in actual contexts.

Moreover, the implementation of the “English Area” contributes significantly for learning environment. In this space, students are encouraged—even required—to use English intensively, regardless of their proficiency levels. This immersive setting is designed to

build confidence and engage the habitual use of English, aligning with immersion-based language learning principles (Nattinger, 2014). The emphasis on communication over accuracy at early step also supports the idea that fluency should precede form-focused correction during contextual learning phases.

4.2.2 Implementation of Teaching Strategies

The implementation procedure reflects a learner-centered approach, as tutors tailor strategies based on students' categories, challenges, and abilities. Tutors typically begin with basic, high-frequency vocabulary and gradually introduce few complex materials.

Furthermore, instructional methods are adjusted to align with each student's personality and individual learning style, supporting ("The Development," 2020) theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which advocates for scaffolded learning based on learners' capabilities.

After the implementation phase, tutors conduct evaluations which consider the material's complexity, the effectiveness of re-teaching, and students' performance on assessments. This continuous evaluation reflects that instructional goals are met and that students are progressing in both fluency and accuracy.

4.3 The Challenges for the tutors

4.3.1 The Challenges for the Students

Based on the findings obtained from the interviews with the tutors at the British English Course (BEC) Camp, several challenges experienced by students in learning speaking skills were identified. These findings are discussed in relation to relevant theories to provide deeper interpretation.

4.3.2 Lack of Confidence and Fear of Making Mistakes

Based on the interview findings, the tutors emphasized that one of the main challenges is students' lack of confidence in speaking English. Students tend to feel afraid when making mistakes, which prevents them from speaking actively in class. One tutor stated that students often hesitate to speak because they are worried about producing incorrect sentences, even though mistakes are a natural part of the learning process.

This finding is in line with Horwitz et al. (1986), who explains that fear of making mistakes and negative evaluation can reduce students' willingness to communicate. Therefore, the students' anxiety becomes a major barrier in developing speaking skills.

4.3.3 Low Motivation to Speak English

The findings also show that students have low motivation to speak English. The tutors reported that encouraging students to actively participate in speaking activities is one of the most difficult tasks. Many students prefer to remain passive rather than engage in conversation.

This condition supports the theory proposed by Dörnyei (2001), who states that motivation plays a crucial role in language learning success. Without strong motivation, students are less likely to practice speaking, which limits their improvement.

4.3.4 Difficulty in Understanding Cultural Context

Another finding from the interviews reveals that students experience

difficulty in understanding the cultural context of the English language. The tutors explained that differences in meaning between Indonesian and English expressions often confuse students. For example, the concept of “nongkrong” in Indonesian does not fully match the broader meaning of “hang out” in English, which can be used in various contexts.

This finding is consistent with Byram (1997), who argues that language learning involves cultural understanding. Without this competence, students may struggle to interpret meaning accurately in communication.

4.3.5 Influence of First Language and Local Accent

Furthermore, the findings indicate that students’ first language and local accent significantly influence their speaking ability. One tutor highlighted that the use of local language affects students’ pronunciation and fluency in English.

This finding is supported by Ellis (1997), who explains that first language interference is a common issue in second language learning, particularly in speaking performance.

5. Conclusion

This study reveals the significance of speaking skills as a main aspect of English proficiency, as recognized by tutors at the British English Course. Tutors underline the importance of clear and natural communication, noticing speaking not only as a skill but also as a tool for teaching, learning, and interaction in both academic and real-world situations.

Two main strategies were determined for developing students' speaking skill: modifying mouth movements for pronunciation and introducing

fundamental expressions for real-life conversation. The creation of an immersive "English Area" also plays a vital role in fostering confidence and encouraging habitual use of the language.

Rather than depending on a single teaching method, tutors implement a flexible, learner-centered approach, modifying instruction to meet the individual needs and challenges of students. This coincides with principles of differentiated instruction and Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development. Tutors underline the importance of understanding vocabulary nuances and moving beyond literal translation to develop conceptual and pragmatic competence.

Despite these efforts, students face both internal challenges, such as anxiety and lack of confidence, and external challenges, like fluency issues and language interference. Addressing these challenges requires a supportive environment and strategic mentoring, ensuring that students’ progress is both in fluency and accuracy.

Overall, the findings emphasize the effectiveness of a personalized, adaptive approach of teaching speaking skills, supporting the importance of both language immersion and tailored support in fostering student success.

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