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Research Article

Navigating Language Proficiency Challenges: Enhancing Business Presentations in Indonesian Vocational Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the complex terrain of language competency issues that Indonesian Vocational Higher Education students are faced with, particularly an emphasis on developing their abilities for effective business presentations. Considering the growing significance of English literacy in the increasingly interconnected business sector, it is crucial to comprehend the subtle challenges that students face. The project seeks to uncover individual language issues and investigate tailored possibilities for development through a mixed-methods study approach which involves surveys and interviews. In addition to investigating pronunciation issues, vocabulary proficiency, self-confident, and the effect of language proficiency on the overall efficacy of business presentations, the research explores students' experiences. By bringing these issues to light and asking students for their opinions. In the context of Indonesian Vocational Higher Education, this article seeks to bridge the gap between academic preparation and the prerequisites of professional business communication by offering helpful suggestions for improving language proficiency.

Keywords: *Business presentation, anxiety, self-confidence, business communication*

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INTRODUCTION

The significance of proficient communication has increased due to the globalization of business, and mastery of the English language has become an indispensable ability in the professional arena and as business lingua franca (Roshid et al., 2022). Learning the specifics of English is not just a language challenge for students in Indonesian Vocational Higher Education; it is also an essential part of making effective business presentations. This essay explores the complex landscape of language proficiency issues that Indonesian Vocational Higher Education students encounter, particularly with regard to making effective business presentations.

A crucial part of these students' academic path includes overcoming language obstacles as they are ready to enter the fast-paced world of business. A distinct set of obstacles arises when one must be able to communicate concepts clearly, interact professionally with a variety of audiences, and do it in a language other than their mother tongue. The purpose of this investigation is to clarify the complex nature of these issues and, more significantly, to identify methods and approaches that can improve language competency in a way that is especially appropriate for business communication. Through comprehension and resolution of these obstacles, our goal is to enhance the overall growth of Indonesian Vocational Higher Education students by providing them with the language proficiency required for a smooth transition into the international business world.

"The article explores the difficulties Indonesian higher education students face in language proficiency, emphasizing the importance of institutional support in enhancing business presentations and effective communication."

LITERATURE REVIEW

Language Proficiency

English language competency is now essential for success in the workplace as the global corporate environment changes. This is especially true for Indonesian Vocational Higher Education students who want to master corporate presentation complexity (Anas et al., 2020). This study of the literature looks at the corpus of research on the difficulties students have with language competency in this setting and looks at methods to help them become more proficient presenters of business presentations.

Language Proficiency Challenges

Studies highlight the complexity of language proficiency issues that non-native English speakers confront in higher education (Kuo, 2011). Due to linguistic barriers, cultural quirks, and the particular requirements of business communication, Indonesian students, in particular, confront considerable difficulties (Gebhard, 2019). Typical obstacles include vocabulary restrictions, learning how to pronounce words correctly in English, and the

general effect that language competency has on one's confidence when giving presentations (Zhai & Razali, 2020)

One cannot overstate the impact of cultural quirks on language use. Students from Indonesia might find it difficult to modify their communication style to conform to Western business standards, which could hinder their capacity to effectively communicate ideas (Ismail, 2007). In order to customize treatments that cater to the unique needs of students in Indonesian Vocational Higher Education, it is imperative to comprehend these problems.

Strategies for Enhancing Language Proficiency

Researchers recommend a combination of focused interventions and all-inclusive language support programs to lessen language proficiency issues. Programs for improving vocabulary have shown to be successful in helping students articulate ideas more precisely by broadening their knowledge of business-related language (Simona, 2015). In order to address pronunciation issues and help students acquire more confident and clear oral communication abilities, pronunciation clinics and speech therapy interventions have been suggested (Deterding, 1997)

In addition, it has been suggested that including cultural competency training into language programs can help close the gap between linguistic and cultural differences. Students can adjust their language use more successfully in professional situations by receiving insights into Western business etiquette and communication conventions (Gudykunst, 2017).

METHOD

Research design

A mixed-methods study (Creswell & Cresswell, 2018) strategy comprising surveys and interviews will be used to thoroughly investigate the language proficiency problems experienced by students in Indonesian Vocational Higher Education (Musdariah et al., 2016) and to investigate practical techniques for improving business presentations. When it comes to tackling language proficiency issues, institutions are essential. The research highlights the necessity of an institutional structure that is supportive and cognizant of the particular language requirements of students enrolled in vocational education (Kaliyadan et al., 2015). To guarantee relevance and application, curriculum customization should incorporate business-specific language modules, hands-on activities, and real-world case studies (Trace et al., 2015)

Mentorship programs that involve business executives or language specialists can provide beneficial one-on-one advice, enabling students to get tailored feedback on how they use language in business presentations (Ruecker & Ives, 2015) Additional resources such as workshops on corporate communication skills and tutoring services are made available via the development of language support centers on campus (Trace et al., 2015).

Participants

The study involved 41 female and 16 male students majoring business administration, with an age range of 18 to 22. In order to evaluate the results, identify possible gender-based disparities, and customize interventions, it is imperative to comprehend the demographic background.

Data collection

The objective of the survey is to collect quantitative data regarding the particular language challenges that students encounter when presenting their projects in a business setting. The focus of the questions was on issues including vocabulary mastery, pronunciation issues, confidence, and how much language competence they believe affects how well their presentations work. An electronic copy of the questionnaire was emailed to a sample of students from different vocational programs.

Semi-structured interviews with a selection of participants will be carried out to supplement the quantitative data. Through the interviews, participants will be able to expound on their experiences and thoughts, leading to a fuller knowledge of the subtleties of language problems. Open-ended questions were designed to examine the many approaches students have used to get beyond language obstacles as well as their opinions on the institutional assistance that they believe is necessary for progress.

A thorough examination of language competence issues in the context of business presentations among students in Indonesian Vocational Higher Education will be possible thanks to the combination of quantitative data from the surveys and qualitative insights from the interviews. The goal of this investigation's approach is to provide practical responses and provide guidance for improving language competency in ways that are specific to these students' needs.

Data analysis

The data analysis for this study employs a dual approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods to comprehensively explore language challenges in business presentations among students in Indonesian Vocational Higher Education. Quantitatively, descriptive statistics and categorical analysis are applied to the survey responses, offering insights into variables such as vocabulary mastery, pronunciation, confidence, and the perceived impact of language competence. On the qualitative front, transcribed semi-structured interviews undergo coding and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), revealing recurring themes related to language challenges, strategies for overcoming obstacles, and opinions on institutional support. The integration of both sets of findings enables a holistic interpretation, providing practical and nuanced responses to improve language competency tailored to the specific needs of the students in the context of business presentations within Indonesian Vocational Higher Education.

FINDINGS

Language Proficiency Challenges

In order to gain initial students responses on Language Proficiency Challenges in delivering business presentations in Indonesian Vocational Higher Education". The following are the result of questionnaire

Level of Confidence and Anxiety Level

The results of online questionnaire about students' responses to level of self-confidence showed that 3 of 57of the respondents were Very confident, 24 of 57 student were confident, 20 were neutral, 9 students were not very confident, and 1 of 57 were not very confidents at all.

In terms of self-confidence in expressing complex business ideas in English: that 3 of 57 of the respondents were extremely confident, 24 of 57 student were confident, 20 were neutral, 9 students were not very confident, and 1 of 57 were extremely unconfident. When they were are about their self-confidences, some of them said that it was affected by their anxiety. Here are students' responses:

> *"I frequently experience anxiety in the lead-up to my presentation. (SRJ 12)*
>
> *"Pronouncing industry-specific words can be tricky, and I fear it influences how proficient I come over in presentations." (SJR 26)*
>
> *"I'm nervous because I don't want to miss my opportunity to attract the interest of the audience and stumble through my opening remarks." (SRJ 31)*
>
> *"I believe that nervousness is increased by the pressure to make a good first impression. I'm concerned that a poor start might characterize the presentation as a whole." (SRJ 40)*

The findings show that students' degrees of confidence in their ability to conduct business presentations vary widely. Anxiety was found to be a key element impacting students' self-confidence. They expressed worry about their initial impressions and how to pronounce phrases related to their sector.

Preparation Level

In terms of level of preparation for business presentations of the pupils, twenty felt adequate, seven felt underprepared, five felt extremely well prepared. Remarkably, none admitted to being totally unprepared. These discrepancies may result from disparities in study techniques, time management strategies, or the weight assigned to preparation.

Pronunciation Issues and Their Effect on Professionalism

Forty-eight students, or the majority, admitted that they occasionally had trouble pronouncing words correctly during business presentations. The answers brought up a variety of pronunciation-related concerns, including pronouncing names, acronyms, numerals, and trade words. Students understood how pronunciation may affect their overall professionalism and how important it is to pronounce words correctly in order demonstrate

competence and trustworthiness in a professional setting. The following are students' responses taken from Students Journal Reflection (SRJ)

> *"I've encountered pronunciation challenges with financial terms, and it makes me feel less confident in my business presentations." (SJR31)*
>
> *"Certain trade language is difficult for me to convey precisely, and I concern it may divert from the main point of my presentations." (SJR 50)*
>
> *"I have challenge with pronunciation, particularly with technical terms, and I'm worried about how it influences my trustworthiness." (SJR 52)*

The data above showed that students realized how pronunciation may affect their overall professionalism and how important it is to pronounce words correctly in order demonstrate competence and trustworthiness in a professional setting.

Vocabulary Issues

In Indonesia's continuously shifting vocational education system, business administration students sometimes struggle with vocabulary during presentations. The data gathered from student responses highlights prevalent issues and the demand for focused solutions. Students emphasized the significance of improving their vocabulary by expressing difficulties in remembering technical jargon and in finding the appropriate terms. Effectively conveying ideas promptly using suitable business language became apparent as a major issue, which led to the realization that skill development was needed. The apprehension of use industry-specific terminology deceptively underscores the need for further experience and exposure. The aforementioned data emphasizes how crucial it is to deal with language difficulties in order to equip students for successful business communication.

Strategies in Navigating Language Proficiency Challenges

Techniques for Handling Pronunciation Issues

The following are responses from Students Journal reflection showed the Techniques for Resolving Pronunciation Problems in Business Presentations:

> *"I practice a lot, concentrating on the words I struggle with, until I feel confident." (SJR 2)*
>
> *"I focus in in pronunciation practice using internet-based materials and applications." (SJR 7)*
>
> *"I prefer to seek suggestions from friends and lecturers during improve activities." (SJR 12)*
>
> *"I separate down challenging terms, study pronunciation, and rehearse them autonomously." (SJR 14)*
>
> *"Going to articulation training provided by the college." (SJR 26)*
>
> *"Exercising front a mirror allows me to watch and adjust my pronunciation." (SJR 36)*
>
> *"Paying attention" on business presentations by experienced presenters and imitating their pronunciation." (SJR 44)*
>
> *"Exercising with friends and providing shared advice on pronunciation." (SJR 49)*

These data showed initiative in dealing with pronunciation issues, such as: Focused practice, using online resources, asking peers and lecturers for feedback, breaking down

difficult terms, studying pronunciation on one's own, listening to native speakers' audio resources, attending articulation training, using speech recognition software, practicing in front of a mirror, and modeling skilled presenters were some of the strategies used. These various approaches highlight the value of a customized and comprehensive strategy to address a range related speech problems.

Boosting Confidence Strategies

Students practiced in front of a mirror, recorded themselves, wrote comprehensive scripts, asked other students or instructors for feedback, and received it all in order to build their confidence prior to presentations. These approaches demonstrate that the significance of thorough preparation and the crucial role confident plays in successful presentations are highlighted. The Students Journal Reflection are displayed below:

> *"I either record myself or rehearse my presentation in front of a mirror several times. This ensures that I know the subject matter completely and makes me to get acquainted with it. (SJR 2)*
>
> *"I feel more comfortable presenting the material with ease the more I practice." (SJR 5)*
>
> *"I write a complete script or outline before I deliver. A well-organized strategy reduces the possibility that "I will forget key information and gives me a greater sense of control (SJR 51).*
>
> *"I ask mentors or peers for their opinions. Receiving helpful feedback after seeing my presentation to someone else enhances its content and gives me confidence (SRJ 55).*

Institutional support

Students emphasized how important institutional support is to improving their language skills so they are able to deliver business presentations. The campus's wide support is reflected in the following aspects:

> *"The institution provides courses where we learn and get advice on effective business presentation English." (SRJ 4)*
>
> *"We receive access to internet-based courses that focus on business vocabulary and presentation speech." (SRJ 5)*
>
> *"Language support includes individual sessions with English instructors to deal with particular presentation issues." (SRJ 19)*
>
> *"There are language laboratories where we are able to practice pronunciation and get assistance on language use." (SRJ 37)*
>
> *"The institution supports involvement with English club or forums for discussion, facilitating language development." (SRJ 54)*
>
> *"We obtain modules and manuals on English strategies for business presentation." (SRJ 55)*

The institution demonstrates a robust commitment to enhancing students' language proficiency, particularly in the context of business presentations, through a multifaceted approach. Firstly, dedicated courses are provided, emphasizing effective business

presentation skills in English, coupled with valuable advice to foster a comprehensive understanding. Additionally, students are granted access to internet-based courses targeting business vocabulary and presentation speech, leveraging digital platforms to supplement traditional learning methods. The institution recognizes the diverse challenges students may encounter in their presentations and addresses this by offering individualized language support through one-on-one sessions with English instructors. Furthermore, language laboratories are available for practical pronunciation practice and tailored language assistance, providing students with hands-on experiences to refine their language skills. The institution extends its support beyond formal settings by encouraging students' involvement in English clubs and forums, fostering a community that facilitates real-world language application and peer interaction. Lastly, the provision of modules and manuals focusing on English strategies for business presentations underscores the institution's dedication to equipping students with practical resources for success in professional communication. Together, these initiatives reflect a comprehensive and student-centric approach to language development within the academic context.

DISCUSSION

The investigation of language proficiency difficulties in Indonesian Vocational Higher Education has given rise to a more sophisticated knowledge of the problems that students encounter, especially when it comes to business presentations. The main conclusions are summarized in this talk, which also explores the consequences for teaching strategies, institutional support, and the field of language education as a whole.

The study found that students' limited vocabulary was a major source of difficulty. During business presentations, respondents reported having trouble finding and using terminology and idioms unique to their industry. This result is consistent with previous research emphasizing the value of focused vocabulary improvement initiatives (Simona, 2015). An idea for resolving this issue in the curriculum was to incorporate language modules that are unique to business. Students' frequent language restrictions highlight the necessity of focused assistance. Developing industry-specific vocabulary ought to be the main goal of curriculum design. Coursework that includes specialist language modules can introduce students to terminology related to their fields of study. Students' business presentations will be more effective if they can close the vocabulary gap and express concepts more clearly (Simona, 2015).

Pronunciation issues have a significant effect on students' confidence, so focused efforts are necessary. Speech therapy programs and pronunciation clinics can provide kids the skills they need to get past this obstacle. Developing oral communication skills helps with pronunciation problems and increases self-assurance when making business presentations. As pronunciation improves, students will probably approach presentations more confidently, which will lead to more meaningful communication (Deterding, 1997). Moreover, it is important to prepare students for the international business environment, as evidenced by the recognition that cultural subtleties influence communication styles. For students to modify their communication methods to conform to Western corporate norms, cultural competency training is essential. Students can more easily navigate a variety of

communication environments by participating in mentoring programs with language experts or business executives who can provide insights into cultural nuances (Gudykunst, 2017).

One of the most important things to consider when dealing with language proficiency issues is institutional assistance. Survey participants underscored the need of customized language assistance facilities, mentorship initiatives, and courses centered on business communication abilities (Kaliyadan et al., 2015). The perception was that the establishment of an environment that supports language development requires the integration of these resources into the institutional structure. Furthermore, The importance of institutions in offering the required support networks is emphasized throughout the debate. Important elements of institutional support include language assistance centers, business communication skills training, and mentorship programs. These systems establish a setting where students can ask questions, get tailored answers, and actively try to solve language-related problems. The larger objective of producing graduates who are well-rounded and proficient communicators is in line with the incorporation of these support systems into the institutional structure (Trace et al., 2015).

CONCLUSION

Managing language competency issues in Indonesian Vocational Higher Education is a complex process that calls for cooperation from academic staff, organizations, and students. This topic adds to the continuing conversation on successful language instruction techniques by discussing issues with pronunciation, vocabulary limits, cultural quirks, and supporting institutional assistance and technology integration. In order to keep language education relevant to the changing demands of students in a worldwide society, it acts as a call to action for educators and institutions to innovate and evolve.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there isn't any conflict of interest with this article's publishing. The study was carried out objectively, and the conclusions and results that were made were predicated on the data's objective examination. The substance of this work has not been impacted by any personal or financial links with persons or organizations. The integrity and reliability of the research given in this article are guaranteed by this transparency.

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