

A Descriptive Research on Learning Difficulties Encountered by PPAPK Students of The English Language Program

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Abstract

This study aims to find out the difficulties in learning PPAPK 2017/2018 of English students. The analysis focused on the analysis of difficulties based on interviews and questionnaires. The researcher used the descriptive quantitative technique to evaluate ordinal data to determine the percentage of students who had learning difficulties. There are 30 participants in this research. The results showed that learning difficulties received a high percentage. The questionnaire fields included reading, spelling and writing, math and logic, emotion and self-control, listening, and attention. The researcher got the data from the questionnaire that had been distributed. One of the most prominent suggestions made in this study is to focus on the need to diversify teaching methods, reduce the teaching burden for teachers from lessons, and open channels of communication between family and university to follow up on students' affairs

Keywords: Descriptive Research, Learning Difficulties, English Students, Language Education.

INTRODUCTION

English is an international language. The demand for English is increasing day by day. Its necessity cannot be described in a word or language. We cannot think of our existence without English. The role of the English language cannot be ignored in developing a country's education system. The syllabus design, lesson plan, test method, and script evaluation should be prepared for the younger generation to develop the ultra-modern implementation project. If this field starts at the high school level, many young learners may be able to increase their knowledge of English, particularly future English learners. Therefore, students and teachers will be able to get rid of English learning difficulties.

English is the language that people all over the world use the most (Sujarwo, et al., 2022; Wongso, 2022). When two or more people of diverse backgrounds meet in a discussion, English is also a unifying language (Sahib, & Kusmianti Rahayu MH, 2022; Sukmawati, 2022). Harmer (2001, p. 14) states that the role of English as a lingua franca makes English widely used by many people. Moreover, Abrar (2018) states that foreign learners have spoken English all over the world. Thus, learning English will help people have a conversation and avoid misunderstandings in giving information. English in Indonesia is a foreign language where English is not the main language, but students can still learn it, and most schools oblige students to learn it. English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students still face some spoken or written challenges in learning English. Every student has challenges in learning. English (Abdulrahman, 2013, p. 15) . Jin (2014, p. 5) adds that English helps enhance students' capabilities, especially students proficiency. As far as this study is concerned, it aims to discover English students' PPAPK 2017/2018 difficulties in learning a foreign language, such as English. The analysis focuses on the analysis of difficulties from interviews and questionnaires. Raharjo conducted a previous study of learning difficulties in 2015. The difference between this research and previous research is the analytical method used. Raharjo did observation and a questionnaire. The result showed that the students had problems with their speaking ability, particularly in terms of inhibition, having nothing to say, low or uneven participation, mother tongue use, and speech acts (pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency).

Other research was conducted by Henna from her observation and experience of analyzing the language of adult learners of English to know the informants' experiences of difficulties in speaking English with the title "Difficulties in Speaking English", the result of her research was the kinds of problems in speaking English in second language acquisition theory, and the factors that affect them. Meanwhile, in this study, the researcher used interviews and questionnaires.

The study aims to provide practical examples of methods that would strengthen and promote English learners with minimal difficulties for future students. The goal is to recognize the challenges and some practical steps so that students can gain proper from learning English for their studies. Before evaluating teaching strategies that help English students with their learning difficulties in English as a foreign

language, the main emphasis should be on the learning language process in general. Joan Tough, who has a lifetime of experience in language teaching as a primary school teacher, has revealed very interesting findings. Her research and practice show a connection between learning one's mother tongue and learning a foreign language.

The fact that young children learn their first language with such speed and competence must mean that, if the process can be better understood, it should be possible to design experiences through which children learn a second language in much the same way they learn their first language. Children's potential begins to broaden when interacting with others, mainly with parents, is intensive, and children experience the language (Tough, 1999, p. 213). This communication is, initially, based on children's non-verbal reactions (e.g., gestures, facial expressions, actions, and vocalizations), and later the first verbal responses are presented. The stage of verbal communication is preceded by a long process of gaining experience in learning a second language.

Lack of teacher training courses, proper teaching materials, infrastructural facilities, lack of proper teachers, teacher motivation, lack adequate teaching experience, lack of science teaching methods, and lack of ELT research are the main problems of teaching and learning. Citing sources correctly is vital in academic writing, including research proposals. Despite its significance, students seem to perform it poorly due to a lack of knowledge and awareness of its role in their writing. As the result, they are often accused of committing plagiarism (Rezeki, 2018).

Some other complexities are the overemphasis on grammatical accuracy, the preference for English teachers in teaching English, and the restricted scope for practice. One of the critical problems noticed when teaching English in Senior High School is the lack of teacher preparation. For teachers of this level, there is a shortage of training opportunities, and most English teachers are reluctant to be educated. They always sneer at the teaching of the instructor. Without preparation, the teachers feel they know much better than the trainers. Their conceit destroys itself and the learners' latent potential.

METHOD

The analysis focuses on the analysis of difficulties from interviews and questionnaires. Quantitative research methods focus on objective measurements and mathematical data acquired through questionnaires. The researcher used the descriptive quantitative technique to evaluate ordinal data to determine the percentage of students who had learning difficulties.

Data collection techniques include interviews, observations (direct and participant), questionnaires, and relevant documents (Yin., 2014, p. 69). For detailed discussions of questionnaires, interviews, and observation. The use of multiple data collection techniques and sources strengthens the credibility of outcomes and enables different interpretations and meanings to be included in

data analysis. This is known as triangulation (Flick, 2014, p. 40). Responses from the participants were compiled, and problems and reasons for learning the English language were from the data. In descriptive research, the data collected is usually qualitative (words, meanings, views) but can also be quantitative (descriptive numbers, tables). Qualitative data analysis may be used in theory building and theory testing.

There are 30 participants in this research. A Google form was provided for the participants. There are five options in the question pattern. Thirty sets of questions for each participant. It took me 30 minutes to answer the question. In this way, the researcher investigates English language learning complexities through a questionnaire and interview process at Universitas Tanjungpura. The next step in the data collection process is data analysis. Quantitative research methods focus on objective measurements and statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data acquired through polls, questionnaires, and surveys and modify pre-existing statistical data using computing tools. The researcher used the descriptive quantitative technique to evaluate ordinal data to determine the percentage of students at Universitas Tanjungpura who had learning difficulties. The researcher used computer software for statistical analysis, Microsoft Excel, to calculate the result in the form of a percentage to examine the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Different factors contribute to students learning problems, including reading, spelling and writing, math and logic, emotion and self-control, listening, and attention. The researcher got the data from the questionnaire that have distributed. It shows that 64% of the students have learning difficulties. Based on the results of the study showed that 55% of the students have difficulty in reading and understanding what they have read, in spelling and writing, 60% of the students have difficulty getting thoughts down on paper, while 70% of the students claim to have struggled in math and logic concepts related to time or money, 65% of the students struggled with emotion and self-control and express anxiety or frustration, in listening 65% of the student's claims have difficulty understanding spoken language when there is a lot of background noise, 70% of the students have difficulty in the area of attention in planning and organizing tasks.

In the discussion, the table shows that 64% of the students have learning difficulties. Based on the study results, 55% of the students have difficulty reading and understanding what they have read. 60% of the students have difficulty getting thoughts down on paper in spelling and writing. In comparison, 70% of the students claim to have struggled in math and logic concepts related to time or money, 65% of the students struggled with emotion and self-control and expressed anxiety or frustration, in listening, 65% of the students claim to have difficulty understanding spoken language when there is a lot of background noise, 70% of the students have difficulty in the area of attention in planning and organizing tasks.

Students with learning disabilities have disorders in one or more of the basic psychological processes, which include understanding written or spoken language and its use (Khasawneh, 2019). Students face difficulties in learning English as a second language as a multifaceted problem that requires organized and multidimensional solutions. They also face other challenges related to mastering the skills necessary for reading comprehensions, such as rapid recognition of words and an abundant linguistic vocabulary. They need a kind of education that directly solves their deficits and promotes their language level (Islam, 2018).

Based on the learning difficulties above, an actual learning disability is something that genuinely prevents the person from learning as fast as some predetermined average person. When a person puts a lot of effort into learning to read, but the letters and words still don't make sense, dyslexia is in fact a real thing. Actual learning disabilities should be treated with compassion since it is no one's fault. Learning disabilities are problems that affect the brain's ability to receive, process, analyze, or store information.

These problems can make it difficult for students to learn as quickly as someone who is not affected by learning disabilities. There are many kinds of learning disabilities. Most students affected by them have more than one kind. Specific learning disabilities can interfere with a person's ability to concentrate or focus and cause a person's mind to wander too much. Other learning disabilities can make it difficult for students to read, write, spell, or solve math problems. The results showed that those with learning difficulties received a high percentage. The questionnaire fields included reading, spelling and writing, math and logic, emotion and self-control, listening, and attention.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the results of the study, the researcher concludes that: there are six learning difficulties with English PPAPK students at Universitas Tanjungpura. The study results showed that 55% of the students have difficulty reading and understanding what they have read. In spelling and writing, 60% of the students have difficulty getting thoughts down on paper, while 70% of the students claim to have struggled with math and logic concepts related to time or money, 65% of the students struggle with emotion and self-control and express anxiety or frustration. In listening, 65% of the students claim to have difficulty understanding spoken language when there is a lot of background noise, and 70% of the students have difficulty in the area of attention in planning and organizing tasks.

The explanation showed that 21 of 30 students faced math and attention difficulties. The table showed that 64% of the students have learning difficulties, which means 19 students have struggled in learning. In addition, to overcome their learning difficulties, students need to first discover themselves. First, they will be able to overcome their learning difficulties. They learn what they want to learn, not what others want them to learn, because they know themselves much better than others. They need to know how capable they are. Mindset and emotions could

also play a role. For example, learning something about feeling nervous versus feeling excited. In this case, working on the mindset would be helpful.

One of the most prominent recommendations made in this study is to focus on the need to diversify teaching methods, reduce the teaching burden for teachers from lessons, and open channels of communication between family and university to follow up on students' affairs. It is recommended to identify problems in learning English and increase the awareness of students and their families about the importance of learning English. In addition, encourage the university to establish a special English language laboratory equipped with the latest equipment to enable students to listen to the language better and with sound pronunciation and encourage teachers to develop remedial plans to improve the achievement level of students. Universities should focus on building an inclusive environment. What the researcher means by this is, even in classrooms, planning lesson plans and resources for all students (with and without learning disabilities). Every student is different in how they learn, but they all need someone to stand by their side, be patient through challenges, and encourage them to stay persistent. For the students, they need to talk to the university guidance counselor or psychiatrist, who can help them find out precisely what learning difficulties they have. They can then steer students in the right direction to get the help they need.

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