

**PERCEPTIONS OF INDONESIAN EFL STUDENTS ABOUT A
PUBLIC SPEAKING COURSE IN IMPROVING SPEAKING
SKILLS: A STUDY AT IAIN PALOPO**

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**POST GRADUATE PROGRAM OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES
FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITAS HASANUDDIN**

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As one of the requirements for achieving Master's Degree

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Written and Submitted by

Faisal Amir
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**POST GRADUATE PROGRAM OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES
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Tesis

sebagai salah satu syarat untuk mencapai gelar magister

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Disusun dan diajukan oleh

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**PROGRAM MAGISTER STUDI BAHASA INGGRIS
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2023**

THESIS

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I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work. If it is proven at any time that any part of this thesis is the work of others, I am willing to accept all sanctions for my academic dishonesty.

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The Author

Faisal Amir

ABSTRACT

FAISAL AMIR. *Perceptions of Indonesian EFL Students about A Public Speaking Course in Improving Speaking Skills: A Study at IAIN Palopo* (supervised by Abidin Pammu and Nasmilah)

This research aims to explore the perceptions of Indonesian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students in the Public Speaking course offered by IAIN Palopo and assess whether the course improves their speaking abilities. The research design employed a mixed-method approach, incorporating both qualitative and quantitative methods. Data were collected through interviews and surveys involving third-semester students majoring in English at IAIN Palopo. Thirteen students were purposively interviewed, and 56 students completed the survey. The findings of the study reveal that students perceive the Public Speaking course as challenging but beneficial. The course helps them become more confident speakers and reduces their fear of public speaking. Students appreciate the practical exercises and course materials but suggest more diverse topics and engaging activities. The survey results confirm the qualitative findings, with students agreeing that the teaching methods are effective, and the instructors are knowledgeable and engaging. Overall, the Public Speaking course has a positive impact on students' speaking abilities. 80% of the students agree or strongly agree that the course content is relevant, and 81% agree or strongly agree that the objectives of the Public Speaking course are clear. This indicates that most students have a good understanding of the course. Participants are also satisfied with the course materials, with 84% of students finding them helpful. However, there is room for improvement in some areas. 28% of students are neutral about class activities, and 37% are neutral about class organization. This suggests that further enhancements may be beneficial. In summary, this research highlights the positive impact of the Public Speaking course at IAIN Palopo on EFL students. Despite its challenges, the course effectively boosts students' speaking confidence and reduces their fear of public speaking.

Keywords: public speaking, speaking skills, students' perceptions, English as a foreign language (EFL)



ABSTRAK

FAISAL AMIR. *Persepsi Mahasiswa Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing (EFL) Indonesia tentang Kelas Public Speaking dalam Meningkatkan Kemampuan Berbicara: Studi di IAIN Palopo* (dibimbing oleh Abidin Pammu dan Nasmilah)

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi persepsi mahasiswa Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing (EFL) Indonesia dalam kelas Public Speaking yang ditawarkan oleh IAIN Palopo dan menilai apakah kelas ini meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara mereka. Desain penelitian menggunakan pendekatan metode campuran, menggabungkan metode kualitatif dan kuantitatif. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara dan survei yang melibatkan mahasiswa semester ketiga jurusan Bahasa Inggris di IAIN Palopo. Sebanyak tiga belas mahasiswa diwawancarai secara sengaja, dan 56 mahasiswa menyelesaikan survei. Hasil penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa mahasiswa menganggap kelas Public Speaking menantang tetapi bermanfaat. Kelas ini membantu mereka menjadi pembicara yang lebih percaya diri dan mengurangi ketakutan mereka dalam berbicara di depan umum. Mahasiswa menghargai latihan praktis dan materi kelas, tetapi mengusulkan topik yang lebih beragam dan aktivitas yang lebih menarik. Hasil survei mengkonfirmasi temuan kualitatif, dengan mahasiswa setuju bahwa metode pengajaran efektif, dan para instruktur kompeten dan menarik. Secara keseluruhan, kelas Public Speaking memberikan dampak positif pada kemampuan berbicara mahasiswa. 80% mahasiswa setuju atau sangat setuju bahwa konten kelas ini relevan, dan 81% setuju atau sangat setuju bahwa tujuan kelas Public Speaking jelas. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar mahasiswa memahami kelas ini dengan baik. Peserta juga puas dengan materi kelas, dengan 84% mahasiswa merasa materi tersebut membantu. Namun, masih ada ruang untuk perbaikan di beberapa area. 28% mahasiswa bersikap netral tentang aktivitas kelas, dan 37% bersikap netral tentang organisasi kelas. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa peningkatan lebih lanjut mungkin bermanfaat. Secara keseluruhan, penelitian ini menyoroti dampak positif kelas Public Speaking di IAIN Palopo pada mahasiswa EFL. Meskipun ada tantangan, kelas ini efektif dalam meningkatkan rasa percaya diri berbicara mahasiswa dan mengurangi ketakutan mereka dalam berbicara di depan umum.

Kata Kunci: berbicara di depan umum, keterampilan berbicara, persepsi mahasiswa, bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing (EFL)



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background

In recent years, the ability to speak proficiently in a public event has been increasingly recognized as a crucial skill that students must develop in order to become successful professionals in various fields. However, for many Indonesian EFL students, improving their speaking performance in English remains a significant challenge. According to Leong and Ahmadi (2017), speaking skills are among the most difficult aspects of language learning for students. Many of the Indonesian EFL students struggle with expressing themselves in spoken English due to various reasons such as fear of making mistakes, lack of vocabulary and confidence, among others. Despite this push for English learning, Indonesian EFL (English as Foreign Language) learners still struggle with effective communication, especially in public speaking.

Effective public speaking is vital for individuals to succeed in the business and public sectors (Sulistiyorini & Mulyono, 2020). Recent developments in education have seen universities in Indonesia start to incorporate public speaking courses into their curriculum as a way to enhance EFL students' communication competency skills. Such courses expose students to real-life situations where they can practice their public speaking skills in English.

Research has shown that public speaking training can be beneficial to EFL learners in improving their overall English proficiency (Kamayanti, 2017). Kamayanti's study showed that public speaking training could enhance active communication skills and speaking strategies among EFL learners. With the integration of such courses into university curriculums, it is important to explore

how Indonesian EFL students perceive the value of public speaking courses in enhancing their English proficiency skills.

Another research study conducted by Sugiyati & Indriani (2018) found that public speaking was an essential ability to master, considering the demands of today's world in many fields, including delivering information and giving speeches in large forums or even running entertainment. Speaking skills, play a critical role in enabling individuals to communicate effectively with their peers. As such, the teaching of speaking skills has become a required component in EFL curriculums, including in Indonesia.

IAIN Palopo, one of the Islamic institutes in Indonesia has integrated public speaking courses into its EFL curriculum, students are taught to various real-life situations where they can practice their public speaking skills in English. However, limited research has been conducted to explore how students perceive the value of this course. Thus, the researcher was curious to address this research with the objective of exploring the Indonesian EFL students' perception toward the public speaking course and how this course could improve their English-speaking skills.

This study explored the public speaking course offered at IAIN Palopo and its effect on the EFL students' English-speaking skills. Through interviews and surveys, this study gathered data on EFL students' perceptions of the public speaking course offered at IAIN Palopo and how they believed that it had contributed to the development of their English-speaking skills.

By understanding the students' perceptions of the public speaking course and its effect on their English-speaking skills, this study is expected to provide valuable insights to lecturers in designing and implementing an effective public speaking course. Additionally, this study could contribute to the development of

best practices for teaching English speaking skills in EFL contexts, particularly in Indonesia.

Overall, this study could help improve the quality of English language teaching in Indonesia and support EFL students' speaking development by shedding light on the importance of public speaking skills in language learning. The findings of this study could be significant for EFL curriculums in Indonesia, where the acquisition of English-speaking proficiency is essential due to the global demand for English communication.

1.2. Problem Statement

The ability to speak in public is an essential skill for most professionals, yet many students struggle with public speaking anxiety (Akbari & Sahibzada, 2020). This is especially true for English as a foreign language (EFL) student in Indonesia, where the curriculum may not prepare them adequately for English-medium public speaking situations. IAIN Palopo offers a public speaking course to improve students' speaking skills, but there is limited research on students' perceptions and the effectiveness of the course. Therefore, this study aims to address these gaps by investigating Indonesian EFL students' perceptions of the public speaking course and its effect on their speaking skills.

1.3. Research Questions

1. What are the perceptions of Indonesian EFL students about a public speaking course offered at IAIN Palopo?
2. To what extent does the public speaking course improve the speaking skills of Indonesian EFL students at IAIN Palopo?

1.4. Objectives of the Research

1. To explore the perceptions of Indonesian EFL students about the public speaking course offered at IAIN Palopo.

2. To assess the extent to which the Public Speaking course improves the speaking skills of Indonesian students at IAIN Palopo.

1.5. Scope of the Research

The scope of this research was restricted to Indonesian EFL students who had completed the public speaking course at IAIN Palopo. The study involved 56 third-semester students who were enrolled in the English Language Teaching program at IAIN Palopo and had finished the public speaking course. The study examined the students' views on the course and how it improved their speaking skills. Data was collected through interviews and surveys with students who had completed the course. The research concentrated on the students' experiences and opinions, excluding the viewpoints of instructors or other stakeholders.

1.6. Significances of the Research

1.6.1. Theoretically

This research brings new insights into the teaching of public speaking courses in EFL contexts. By exploring Indonesian EFL students' perceptions of the public speaking course offered at IAIN Palopo and its effect on their English-speaking skills, this research contributes to the development of best practices for teaching public speaking skills in EFL contexts, particularly in Indonesia. This research aims to bridge the gap in the literature on Indonesian EFL learners' perceptions of the value of public speaking courses in enhancing their English proficiency skills, thus filling an important research gap.

1.6.2. Practically

a. For English Lecturers

This research can be useful for English teachers who want to improve the teaching of English-speaking skills in Indonesia and other EFL contexts. By understanding how public speaking courses are perceived by Indonesian EFL students, English teachers can improve their teaching methods to better support EFL students' communication competency skills.

b. For English Learners

By understanding the perceptions of Indonesian EFL students towards public speaking courses, English learners can learn about the potential benefits of these courses for improving their communication skills.

c. For other Researchers

This research is significant for other researchers working in English education, as it provides insights into how public speaking courses can help improve English proficiency skills for EFL learners. The study's recommendations can inform future research on how to design and implement more effective public speaking courses, and the mixed-method approach used in the study can serve as a useful example for other researchers studying perceptions related to language learning.

CHAPTER II

REVIEWS OF LITERATURE

2.1. Previous Studies

The previous studies cited in this research suggest that public speaking can be an effective way to improve English speaking skills, confidence, and academic achievement. To ensure that the current study is feasible, the researcher has reviewed at least five recent studies on the perception and effectiveness of public speaking courses.

Kamayanti (2017) conducted a study on *The Effectiveness of A Public Speaking Program in Improving EFL Learners' Spoken Communication*. The study found that the program was effective in enhancing the learners' active communication skills and speaking strategies.

Rahmawati and Nurjannah (2019) explored *The Role of English Language Learning in Indonesia and the Government's Efforts to Promote It*. The study emphasized the importance of English as a tool for communication in the globalized world and suggested that effective communication skills, including public speaking skills, are critical components of language proficiency.

Sugiyati and Indriani (2021) studied *The Importance of Public Speaking in Preparing EFL Learners for the Demands of the Working World*. The study emphasized the need for learners to develop speaking skills that would enable them to communicate effectively in various contexts.

Zhang and Guan (2021) conducted a study on *The Effect of A Flipped Classroom Approach on EFL Learners' Public Speaking Proficiency and Motivation*.

The study found that the flipped classroom approach was effective in improving learners' speaking performance and motivation.

Gorman and Nelson (2021) studied *The Benefits of Incorporating Online Videoconferencing Software in A Public Speaking Course for EFL Learners*. The study found that the use of videoconferencing software helped improve learners' confidence and engagement in the course.

All the studies focus on the effectiveness of public speaking courses in improving EFL learners' speaking skills. However, there are some key differences between the studies: each study focuses on a different aspect, such as English proficiency skills, the government's role, or the value for EFL students. Additionally, different teaching methods and approaches have been used in these studies, such as experiments and case studies while the current study used a mixed-method approach. Therefore, more research is needed to explore the specific effects of these different methods and approaches on learners' speaking skills, confidence, and engagement in the course.

2.2. Some Pertinent Ideas

2.2.1. Concept of Perceptions

a. Definition of Perceptions

Perception is the experience of an object, incident, or relationship that comes from the processing and interpretation of information. Rahmat (2001:51) illustrates that perception is an experience of an object, phenomenon, or connection in which we conclude information and interpret its meaning.

Anyone's perceptual experience will be determined by personal and situational factors. As cited in Sudamo (2001:3), perception begins with the senses, which are related to the reception of messages or information by the

human brain. In this process, a person interacts with their environment using their five senses: vision, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. People interact with the environment using these five senses, and the stimuli are then registered by the brain and sent to the nervous system. Koentjaraningrat, as cited in Sahal (2001:7), explained that perception is the realization of the human brain's processing of information, and it appears as a view of a phenomenon. Many factors are involved in this process, such as feelings, needs, motivation, education, preferences, and experiences. The process is then followed by a reaction to the object.

Furthermore, it can be concluded that perception is the process by which a person's brain arrives at a meaningful interpretation of stimuli. Perception consists of certain processes. It starts with the reception of stimuli from an object through the sense organs, followed by the registration of stimuli to the nervous system, which is called sensation. The process ends with thinking, analyzing, and interpreting the stimuli in order to achieve a meaningful understanding of the object.

In relation to the process of perception, Moskowitz et al. (as cited in Walginto, 2010:54) explained that perception is a complex process that consists of the following:

- a. Physical process: This is the process when an object arouses stimuli that are caught by receptors. This process is called sensation.
- b. Physiological process: This is the process of sending stimuli to the brain by the sense organs.
- c. Psychological process: This is the process of changing the stimuli in the human brain to get a meaningful understanding of the object.

After defining perception, we can conclude that it is the process of human thought about a particular phenomenon after receiving sensation from the environment through the sense organs.

b. Types of Perception

Lee et al. (2016:228) identify two types of perception: positive and negative.

They are:

1. Positive perception

Positive perception is the tendency to view people, situations, and events in a favorable light. People with a positive perception are more likely to see the good in others and in the world around them. They are also more likely to focus on the positive aspects of a situation, even when things are difficult.

There are a number of benefits to having a positive perception. For example, research has shown that people with a positive perception are more likely to be happy and healthy. They are also more likely to be successful in their careers and relationships.

2. Negative perception

Negative perception is the tendency to view people, situations, and events in an unfavorable light. People with a negative perception are more likely to see the bad in others and in the world around them. They are also more likely to focus on the negative aspects of a situation, even when things are going well.

There are several drawbacks to having a negative perception. For example, research has shown that people with a negative perception are more likely to be depressed and anxious. They are also more likely to have difficulty in their relationships and to be less successful in their careers.

c. Factors that Influence Perceptions

To understand what we have in common in our interpretations of reality, we need to begin with the factors that influence our perceptions. A few factors shape and sometimes distort perception. These factors can reside in the perceiver, the object being perceived, or the situation in which the perception is made.

1. Factors in the perceiver:
 - a. Personal characteristics: Our age, gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and other personal characteristics can all influence our perceptions.
 - b. Attitudes: Our attitudes are our predispositions to respond favorably or unfavorably to something. Our attitudes can have a significant impact on our perceptions of people, objects, and events.
 - c. Personality: Our personality traits, such as extroversion, introversion, neuroticism, conscientiousness, and openness to experience, can also influence our perceptions.
 - d. Motives: Our motives, or needs and desires, can also influence our perceptions. For example, if we are hungry, we may be more likely to notice food.
 - e. Interests: Our interests, or the things that we are curious about or enjoy, can also influence our perceptions. For example, if we are interested in art, we may be more likely to notice details in paintings that others might miss.
 - f. Past experiences: Our past experiences can also influence our perceptions. For example, if we have had a negative experience with a certain type of person, we may be more likely to perceive all members of that group negatively.

- g. Expectations: Our expectations, or what we believe is likely to happen, can also influence our perceptions. For example, if we expect someone to be rude, we may be more likely to interpret their behavior as rude, even if it is not meant to be.
2. Factors in the object being perceived:
- a. Loudness: Loud objects are more likely to be noticed than quiet ones.
 - b. Attractiveness: Extremely attractive or unattractive individuals are also more likely to be noticed.
 - c. Size: Large objects are more likely to be noticed than small ones.
 - d. Movement: Moving objects are more likely to be noticed than stationary ones.
 - e. Complexity: Complex objects are more likely to be noticed than simple ones.
 - f. Similarity: Objects that are similar to other objects in the environment are more likely to be noticed.
 - g. Contrast: Objects that contrast with their surroundings are more likely to be noticed.
3. Factors when the perception is made:
- a. Time of day: The time of day can influence our attention, as can location, light, heat, or situational factors.
 - b. Location: The location in which we perceive something can influence our perception. For example, we may perceive someone as more attractive in a romantic setting than in a professional setting.
 - c. Lighting: The lighting conditions can also influence our perception. For example, we may perceive someone as more attractive in soft lighting than in harsh lighting.

- d. Heat: The temperature can also influence our perception. For example, we may be more likely to perceive someone as angry on a hot day than on a cold day.
- e. Situational factors: Other situational factors, such as the presence of others or the level of noise, can also influence our perception.

In conclusion, there are a number of factors that can influence our perceptions. These factors can reside in the perceiver, the object being perceived, or the situation in which the perception is made. It is important to be aware of these factors so that we can better understand our own perceptions and the perceptions of others.

d. Students' Perception

Students are learners who receive information from their instructors. Students are typically young people who need the assistance of others to grow and develop into adulthood. Perception is a complex process that allows people to receive and interpret information from their surroundings. Perception is relative, selective, and orderly. The better a student's perception of something, the easier it is for them to learn and remember it (Tarmiji, 2016:148).

2.2.2. Concept of English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

a. Definition of English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

English as a foreign language (EFL) describes situations where students are learning English in order to use it with any other English speakers in the world, such as when they are tourists or businesspeople. Brown (2001: 116) says that foreign language contexts are those in which students do not have ready-made contexts for communication beyond their classroom. EFL students are prepared to use English in specific situations or events, such as international communication,

especially on the internet. As part of a global target-language community, they are prepared to communicate using English as a global language in the future. Because English is a powerful influence in daily life, it is important to learn it from an early age.

b. EFL in Indonesia

English plays a vital role in accelerating Indonesia's development, according to Madya (2002). First, English is essential for mastering science and technology. Second, English is a global language used for communication in trade, diplomacy, politics, and education. This is especially true in the era of globalization, where English is widely used in education and technology. Indonesian businesses collaborate with foreign companies from many countries, making English essential for many aspects of life in Indonesia. English has a great influence on Indonesia's development.

c. Obstacles in EFL

Madya (2002) observes that the results of EFL teaching in Indonesia have not significantly reflected the achievements of TEFLIN. Many people complain that EFL teaching in schools has failed to develop students' communicative skills in English. This is a disappointing and even frustrating situation, given the strong international competition in the globalized world.

There are several problems with EFL teaching in Indonesia. Two obvious factors are large class sizes and teachers with inadequate English proficiency. Other problems include:

1. Limited time allocated for teaching English.

2. Students not having enough time to practice speaking English in class because the teacher focuses more on grammar and syntax than on speaking practice.
3. The absence of high-quality and authentic learning resources.
4. Limited opportunities to use English in social contexts outside the classroom.

Indonesia has a diversity of mother tongues, such as Javanese, Sundanese, and Bangka. However, Indonesian is the national language and is used in all subjects in schools. Unfortunately, English is rarely used in conversation during all subjects, especially among students.

2.2.3. Concept of Speaking

a. Definition of Speaking

Speaking is the act of using language to communicate with others through the production of sounds, words, and sentences. It involves cognitive, physical, and sociocultural processes that work simultaneously to convey messages. In language learning, speaking refers to the ability of learners to communicate and exchange meaningful communication with others in real time.

According to Burns (2010), speaking is a highly complex skill that requires not only language knowledge but also the ability to use that knowledge quickly and effectively in different contexts and situations. Furthermore, speaking is considered the most important language skill due to its transactional function and the fact that people use it more frequently than written communication in daily life.

While another definition of speaking by Robinson and Nunan (1991) focuses on the expressive nature of speaking, stating that it involves conveying ideas and

emotions through oral expression. This definition emphasizes the importance of speaking as a means for personal expression and self-presentation.

Overall, the definition of speaking varies depending on the perspective and context in which it is being discussed. However, it is widely agreed that speaking skill is an essential component of effective communication and should be mastered by language learners to engage in meaningful conversations.

b. Elements of Speaking

(1) Pronunciation

Pronunciation is one of the fundamental elements, as incorrect pronunciation can lead to difficulty in understanding spoken language and result in communication breakdowns. It involves the proper articulation of individual sounds, stress, and intonation patterns within words and sentences. As asserted by Derwing and Munro (2015), correct pronunciation is vital for effective communication as it enables the speaker to convey meaning accurately and reduces listener strain.

In addition, pronunciation is integrated into communicative competence and can affect the quality and quantity of a person's speaking skills. Moreover, it plays a vital role in learning a second language speaking skill and distinguishes one's ability to speak. Harmer (2015) states that good pronunciation can also positively affect one's self-confidence in speaking.

(2) Vocabulary

Vocabulary refers to the words or lexicon used in spoken communication. As defined by Krashen (1981), vocabulary acquisition is an essential part of language learning and plays a vital role in effectively communicating one's ideas and opinions. Learning new words helps in language acquisition,

improves reading skills, and enhances comprehension. While efficient communication requires a considerable vocabulary in both first and second languages, the importance of expanding one's vocabulary in second or foreign language acquisition cannot be overstated. It is agreed by many researchers such as Meara, Nation, and Laufer that vocabulary development is necessary for proficient communication in a second or foreign language.

(3) Grammar

Grammar refers to the rules of language that govern sentence structure, word order, and grammar usage. As indicated by Harris and McCann (1990), while fluency is essential in communicating effectively, without proper grammar usage, meaning can be easily misconstrued. While creating complex sentences and using advanced grammatical structures can enhance one's speaking skills, the mastery of basic grammar rules is essential as well. However, according to Schmidt (1990), language learners should not focus solely on grammar rules and structures but also develop an intuitive understanding of the language by listening and engaging in meaningful communication. Thus, only learning the grammar rules cannot guarantee effective communication in a second or foreign language; it has to be accompanied by practical application and contextual understanding.

(4) Fluency

Fluency refers to the ability to speak a language smoothly and continuously without hesitation or grammatical errors. According to Boonkit (2010), fluency is a skill that depends on language knowledge and can be developed through restructuring of knowledge and making use of what is already known. Another definition by Bygate (1987) refers to fluency as the

ability to hold a conversation with mutual understanding and coherence. Fluency is considered one of the most crucial elements in language learning, particularly in second or foreign language acquisition. Successful oral communication requires proficiency in various aspects of speaking skills such as fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation (Tezel, 2021, p. 40). Therefore, language learners should strive to enhance their fluency skills by practicing speaking regularly and engaging in authentic communication with native speakers or other proficient speakers of the target language.

(5) Discourse

Discourse refers to the structure and organization of spoken and written language beyond individual sentences. It includes aspects such as coherence, cohesion, and genre-specific language features that allow speakers to convey meaning effectively in each context. As stated by Hinkel (2006), understanding discourse is essential for developing communicative competence since it involves the ability to produce and comprehend spoken and written language in various contexts. Lea and Street (2006) further maintain that familiarity with the discourse of an academic discipline is crucial for effective communication within that specific field. Language learners need to develop their discourse competence, particularly if they aim to communicate effectively in an academic context. In conclusion, language learners need to develop various skills and competencies to achieve effective communication in a second or foreign language.

c. Functions of Speaking

Speaking is a fundamental part of language use, and it serves several functions. One of the primary functions of speaking is to convey information or

express ideas and opinions. Brown and Yule (1983) made a significant distinction between transactional and interactional language use, where transactional language is used to convey information while interactional language serves the purpose of establishing and maintaining social relationships. In addition, speaking can also be used for entertainment and persuasion. For example, public speaking is a form of persuasion that aims to influence the audience's beliefs or actions. Moreover, speaking can facilitate learning and teaching processes in educational settings. Teachers and students use speaking to discuss ideas, ask questions, give feedback and achieve communicative goals. In the context of language learning, a significant function of speaking is to develop communicative competence by engaging learners in meaningful and authentic communication. Furthermore, speaking also helps individuals to negotiate social relationships and maintain interactions with others. Overall, speaking serves a multitude of important functions in human communication.

d. Importance of Speaking

Speaking is considered to be the most important skill in second or foreign language learning as it serves as a basic ability for communication. As Oradee (2019) suggests, the ability to speak a language is essential for effective communication. Thus, language learners need to develop their speaking skills alongside other language skills, such as listening, reading, and writing. Mastery of English-speaking skills is crucial for both second and foreign language learners. Hakim (2017) agreed that speaking skills play a vital role in communication, considering it as the tool for interacting and communicating with others. Being competent in speaking English not only helps students to initiate and participate in conversations but it also prepares them for participating in the new globalization. Furthermore, speaking practice is necessary to achieve language learning goals

and enhance communicative competence. Continuous speaking practice and assignments are key to improving learners' English-speaking skills.

2.2.4. The Concept of Public Speaking

a. Definition of Public Speaking

Public speaking can be defined as the act of delivering a speech or presentation to a live audience. Sellnow (2013) in Ibrahim & Yussof (2015) defines public speaking as "the systematic process of preparing and delivering a message intended to inform, persuade, or entertain an audience". Coopman and Lull (2008) further describe public speaking as a valuable skill that involves the effective use of verbal and nonverbal communication to deliver a message to an audience. Knowing how to speak publicly is an essential skill that can benefit individuals both personally and professionally.

Public speaking is different from other forms of communication, as it requires individuals to be able to connect with and engage an audience. There are some aspects of public speaking that set it apart from other forms of communication, including the need to deliver a message in a structured and organized manner, tailor the message to the needs of the audience, and use effective delivery techniques to engage listeners. It is added by Hakim that public speaking can also be seen as a way to interact and communicate with other people, making it an important component of language skill. Moreover, it has been suggested by Litton (2002) in Sellnow (2013) that successful public speaking involves establishing and maintaining a relationship with the audience. Therefore, understanding the principles of public speaking is essential for anyone who wants to effectively communicate with others.

b. Benefits of Public Speaking

There are several benefits to learning and practicing public speaking. Below are some of the most significant benefits by Bodie (2009):

(1) Improving Communication Skills

Public speaking helps to improve verbal and nonverbal communication skills, which are essential for effective interactions in personal and professional settings. It enables individuals to express their ideas, thoughts, and emotions more clearly and confidently.

(2) Building Self-Confidence

Public speaking can be a challenging experience for many people, but it can also be an excellent opportunity to build self-confidence. Overcoming the fear of speaking in front of others can help individuals boost their confidence and self-esteem.

(3) Developing Critical Thinking Skills

Creating a message and delivering it effectively requires critical thinking skills such as analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information. Public speaking helps individuals to develop these skills systematically.

(4) Enhancing Career Prospects

Public speaking is a valuable skill that is highly sought after in the job market. It helps individuals to stand out in interviews, meetings, and presentations, leading to better career prospects and opportunities.

c. Elements of Public Speaking

According to Lucas and Katz (2016), public speaking involves several key elements that differentiate it from other forms of communication. These elements

include the purpose, the audience, the message or content of the speech, the delivery of that message, attire, and body language. To explain these elements further:

(1) Purpose

Understanding the purpose of the speech, whether it is to inform, persuade, or entertain, is crucial for developing and delivering a message that resonates with the audience.

(2) Audience

Knowing the audience is essential for tailoring the speech to their needs, interests, and beliefs. Understanding the audience's demographics, values, and attitudes enables a speaker to connect with them effectively.

(3) Content

Developing compelling and organized content is important for delivering a message that is clear and coherent. Using examples, data, and stories can help make a message more engaging and memorable.

(4) Delivery

Using effective delivery techniques, such as vocal variety, gestures, and eye contact, can make a speech more engaging and express the speaker's confidence and conviction. Proper use of pauses, pace, and tone can also help reinforce the key points of the speech.

(5) Attire and Body Language

Presentable attire and good posture demonstrate professionalism and confidence. Engaging with audiences through body language is also critical to effective public speaking.

d. Principles of Public Speaking

The principles of public speaking are essential to understanding how to effectively communicate a message to an audience (Liabo et al., 2020). They can be defined as:

(1) Connecting and Engaging with an Audience

The ability to establish a relationship with the audience and engage them in the presentation is critical for effective communication. This involves knowing the audience, using appropriate language, tone, and gestures, and incorporating personal experiences and stories to connect with them.

(2) Structuring and Organizing a Message

A well-organized message is easier for the audience to follow and remember. This involves creating an introduction, body, and conclusion that flow logically and coherently, using signposts to link ideas, and repeating key themes.

(3) Tailoring a Message to the Needs of the Audience

Knowing the audience's interests, values, and beliefs is an important aspect of public speaking. It helps in adapting the message to the audience to make it more relevant and meaningful to them.

(4) Using Effective Delivery Techniques

Effective delivery involves using appropriate gestures, vocal inflections, and eye contact to enhance the message's impact. Other techniques like the use of visual aids can also be used to reinforce key points and make the presentation more engaging.

e. Public Speaking Class

Taking a public speaking class is an excellent way to develop public speaking skills and become a more effective communicator. In a public speaking class, students can learn the principles of effective communication and practice delivering speeches in a supportive and constructive environment. In the case of public speaking class at IAIN Palopo, students are encouraged to explore and develop their own speaking style while receiving feedback from peers and instructors. The model of the class is designed to help students overcome their public speaking anxiety, develop confidence in delivering presentations and speeches, and hone their critical thinking skills. The course focused on the third semester of English department students, and it has several phases developed by the instructor/lecturer, including:

a. Practice sessions in which students are given the opportunity to deliver speeches to their classmates. The main goal of the practice sessions is to enable students to overcome their fear of public speaking by providing a safe and constructive environment for learning, where they can receive feedback and improve their speaking skills.

b. Deliver a topic to the senior students face to face. This is an important aspect of the public speaking class as it gives students a chance to apply what they have learned in front of a real audience.

c. The final project is a culmination of everything learned throughout the course, where students are tasked with delivering a speech or presentation on a topic of their choice to different audiences on the stage professionally. This aims to ensure that students develop not only their speaking skills but also the ability to adapt their message to different audiences and settings.

Overall, the public speaking class at IAIN Palopo is an important aspect of the English department curriculum as it equips students with valuable communication skills that are essential in their personal and professional lives. The course not only focuses on building speaking skills but also helps students develop teamwork and organizational skills, enhances their critical thinking abilities, and builds self-confidence.

2.3. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is based on the idea that the public speaking course at IAIN Palopo can have a positive impact on the perceptions and speaking skills of Indonesian EFL students. The independent variable in this study is the public speaking course, which is represented by the specific course offered at IAIN Palopo aimed at teaching public speaking skills to EFL students. The dependent variables are the perceptions of Indonesian EFL students and their speaking skills.

Mediating variables are factors that may influence the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variables. These include the learning experience, teaching methods, and instructor quality.

This conceptual framework provided a useful lens for understanding the potential impact of the public speaking course on the perceptions and speaking skills of Indonesian EFL students. The study examined the relationships between these variables in more detail and provided insights into how to improve the effectiveness of the course.

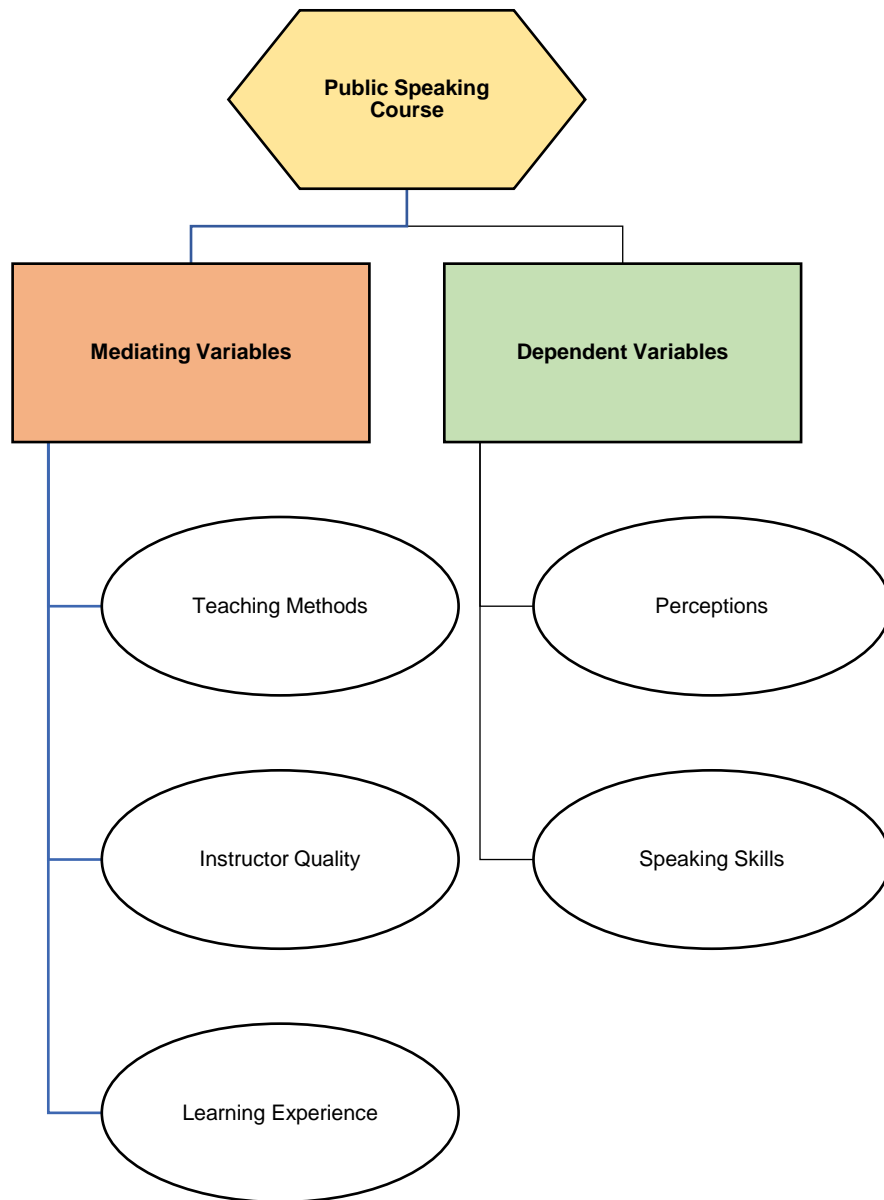


Figure 2.3.1. Conceptual Framework