CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher discussed the background of the research, the research questions, objectives, scope and limitations, the significance of the researchrese, and the definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Research

As globalization has grown, speaking English has become one of the most important skills that students in Indonesia need to have.[1] In 2019, Indonesia ranked 61st out of 100 countries in terms of English proficiency, but by the end of 2023, it had dropped to 79th.[2] This is still relatively low, especially considering that English has become an integral part of the educational curriculum. Mastering speaking skills in English also has become a primary requirement for entering the workforce, particularly in multinational companies that prioritize effective communication. As an international language, the ability to speak English also plays an important role in various professional and academic interactions, as well as in preparing Indonesia's younger generation to compete in the global market.[3] Speaking is not just about delivering messages verbally, but also involved critical thinking skills

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[1] Asna Robah and Nur Fitria Anggrisia, "Exploring Challenges and Strategies in English Speaking among Indonesian University Students: A Case Study of AKM University," *Englisia: Journal of Language, Education, and Humanities* 11, no. 1 (October 31, 2023).

[2] Masrifatul Afifah et al., "Self-Efficacy, Anxiety, and Emotional Intelligence: Do They Contribute to Speaking Performance?," *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching* 12, no. 2 (April 22, 2024): 793.

[3] Robah and Anggrisia, "Exploring Challenges and Strategies in English Speaking among Indonesian University Students: A Case Study of AKM University."

needed to analyze, construct arguments, and present ideas in a structured and logical manner.[4] In the professional world, the ability to express well-structured opinions based on critical analysis becomes crucial for decision-making and problem-solving. Speaking effectively helps students develop the cognitive skills necessary to face global and academic challenges, and to make more significant contributions.

However, in Indonesia developing English speaking skills among university students remains a crucial challenge. The focus of teaching is often still centered on reading and writing skills, while speaking skills are often neglected.[5] Students frequently struggle with speaking due to a lack of confidence and a fear of making mistakes when speaking in public.[6] The issue is further exacerbated by traditional teaching methods that still focus on *one-way teaching*, where the lecturer is the center of learning activities. Large classes and time constraints prevent lecturers from providing adequate individual feedback, which is crucial for improving speaking profiency.[7] This one-way teaching condition encourages the need for innovative solutions that can actively involve students in the learning process.

In the era of modern learning, evaluation and learning methods increasingly focus on collaborative approaches that involve active student participation. The

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[4] I Putu Indra Kusuma, "Speaking Issues Faced by Indonesian Students during Classroom Discussions in the US," *Electronic Journal of Foreign Language Teaching* 18, no. 1 (June 2021): 5–17.

[5] Sadia Ayub, "Role of Teachers and Students: An Analysis of Higher Education Commission Speaking Curriculum at Graduate Level in Pakistan Subtitle: Implication of the Role of Teachers And," *International Journal of Emerging Issues in Social Science, Arts, and Humanities* 2 (2024): 23–34, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/383196342.

[6] Afifah et al., "Self-Efficacy, Anxiety, and Emotional Intelligence: Do They Contribute to Speaking Performance?"

[7] Andi Asri Jumiaty and Heri Kuswoyo, "Undergraduate Students' Perceptions Towards Lecturer's Classroom Management in the Indonesian Tertiary," *Linguistics and Literature Journal* 4, no. 1 (2023): 89–99.

active learning approach has also become an effective strategy to overcome various educational problems in Indonesia.[8] One method that continues to develop is *peer feedback*, which has been proven to play an important role in improving students' speaking and critical thinking skills. According to Chekol, peer feedback is an interactive process in which students have a dialogue regarding performance and assessment standards.[9] This method provides an opportunity for students to not only evaluate the performance of others but also analyze their own learning. The application of peer feedback encouraged students to provide constructive input to their peers, thus creating a collaborative and constructive learning environment.[10] In learning speaking skills, peer feedback allows students to practice their communication skills as well as critical thinking through analyzing the performance of their peers.

Dang & Le also emphasized that the role of teachers as the sole assessors is no longer relevant.[11] Students are now expected to take on the role of active participants who also evaluate and assess their own performance and that of their peers. Peer feedback helps students develop critical thinking skills, enhance learning reflection, and build independence in the learning process. Through the process of giving and receiving feedback, students are trained to analyze the

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[8] Iksal, Ratu Amalia Hayani, and Aslan, "Strengthening Character Education as a Response to the Challenges of the Times," *Indonesian Journal of Education (INJOE)* (2024): 761–774.

[9] Abiot Dagnew Chekol, "Investigating the Influence of Using Peer Feedback on EFL Students' Speaking Achievement and Their Perceptions Towards Peer Feedback," *Arabic Language, Literature & Culture* 5, no. 3 (2020): 23.

[10] Thi Nguyet Dang and Thi Huong Le, "Students' Perceptions on Using Rubrics as a Peer and Self-Assessment Tool in EFL Speaking Courses," *International Journal of TESOL & Education* 3, no. 3 (August 10, 2023): 119–136.

[11] Ibid., 130.

performance of their peers based on predetermined criteria. In its application, peer feedback has various types that can be adjusted to learning objectives. One type that is commonly used is formative feedback, where students provide specific and clear input to help peers correct mistakes or improve their performance.[12] Another method, motivational feedback, focus on providing positive support to motivate students to be more confident in speaking.[13] Another form of peer feedback is descriptive feedback, which provides an in-depth explanation of the parts that need to be improved without having to directly criticize student performance.[14] To ensure the effectiveness of peer feedback structred strategies such as 'two stars and a wish' and 'plus, minus, and what's next?', can also be used to ensure that feedback is constructive and balanced. Such methods not only can improve student's speaking skill but also encourage active engagement and critical thinking in learning processes.

Speaking skills in English are closely related to critical thinking abilities. Critical thinking helps improve the quality of speaking by enabling students to analyze, evaluate, and reflect on ideas before articulating them verbally. In learning English as a foreign language (EFL), critical thinking skills help students formulate

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[12] Aulia Nisa Khusnia, "Strategies to Enhance Peer Feedback and Self-Assessment in Extended Speaking Course," *PEOPLE: International Journal of Social Sciences* 1, no. 1 (May 31, 2017): 1334–1344.

[13] Aminabibi Saidalvi and Abdul Samad Adlina, "Online Peer Motivational Feedback in a Public Speaking Course," *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies* 19, no. 4 (2019): 258; Kamila Misiejuk, Barbara Wasson, and Kjetil Egelandsdal, "Using Learning Analytics to Understand Student Perceptions of Peer Feedback," *Computers in Human Behavior* 117 (April 2021): 106658.

[14] Kamila Misiejuk, Barbara Wasson, and Kjetil Egelandsdal, "Using Learning Analytics to Understand Student Perceptions of Peer Feedback," *Computers in Human Behavior* 117 (April 2021): 106658.

appropriate responses supported by strong evidence. In understanding conversations, critical thinking involves analyzing and evaluating information before being able to convey clear ideas.[15] Research also indicates that 99% of college students agree that critical thinking skills, especially in speaking classes, are essential for undergraduate education.[16] This is because critical thinking enhances the ability to interpret data, analyze information, and evaluate the validity of arguments being presented.[17] As a result, students develop good communication skills that are clear, credible, and precise.[18] The information students convey is also stronger because it is based on data and not merely criticism without evidence or appropriate theories.

Furthermore, Mall-Almiri & Askarzadeh explained that philosophers of education agree that critical thinking through speaking skills is a basic survival skill in education and workplace, because it helps in setting right goals and making logical inferences.[19] Speaking English with peers reduces student passivity, especially for students who are still shy and sometimes struggle to apply English in real-life situations. Through speaking practice, students are encouraged to analyze arguments in depth, build strong reasons, and ultimately express opinions supported

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[15] Tribhuwan Kumar et al., "Self vs. Peer Assessment Activities in EFL-Speaking Classes: Impacts on Students' Self-Regulated Learning, Critical Thinking, and Problem-Solving Skills," *Language Testing in Asia* 13, no. 1 (July 24, 2023): 36.

[16] Raana Ramezani, Ebrahim Ezzati Larsari, and Mohammad Aghajanzadeh Kiasi, "The Relationship between Critical Thinking and EFL Learners' Speaking Ability," *English Language Teaching* 9, no. 6 (May 15, 2016): 189.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Eser Ordem, "Developing Critical-Thinking Dispositions in a Listening/Speaking Class," *English Language Teaching* 10, no. 1 (December 18, 2016): 50.

[19] Behdokh Mall-Amiri and Haleh Askarzadeh, "The Comparative Effect of Portfolio Assessment and Peer-Assessment on EFL Learners' Critical Thinking and Speaking Achievement," *Research in English Language Pedagogy (RELP)* 6, no. 2 (2018): 159–181.

by evidence. Research also shows that speaking skills, providing feedback to peers, and conveying ideas help increase students' self-confidence and critical thinking skills, making communication more effective and collaborative.[20]

One of the significant advantages of peer feedback is its role in fostering critical thingking skills. The importance of critical thinking in peer feedback is also emphasized by Wulandari et al., who stated that through peer performance analysis, students learn to evaluate and reflect on their own thinking.[21] In addition, critical thinking skills help students understand how to improve the quality of their speaking performance based on the feedback received. According to Harutyunyan & Poveda, critical thinking allows students to construct better arguments, improve problem-solving skills, and think reflectively.[22] These abilities are the basis for students to communicate effectively in academic and professional situations. Furthermore, the development of critical thinking through peer feedback created a more interactive and collaborative learning environment, where students are encouraged to share knowledge and experiences with each other.

Various studies have proven the effectiveness of peer feedback in improving speaking skills. Research by Rodríguez-González & Castañeda showed that students who were trained to provide structured feedback experienced increased

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[20] Didih Faridah, Luthfiyatun Thoyyibah, and Asep Dudi Kurnia, "Promoting Students' Critical Thinking Through Peer Feedback in Oral Communication Classroom," *Academic Journal Perspective : Education, Language, and Literature* 8, no. 1 (May 27, 2020): 50–59.

[21] Ika Wulandari et al., "Indonesian Novice EFL Teachers' Perceptions of the Use of Peer Assessment in Speaking Class," *JET (Journal of English Teaching)* 7, no. 1 (February 5, 2021): 67–79.

[22] Liliya Harutyunyan and Maria Fernanda Poveda, "Students' Perception of Peer Review in an EFL Classroom," *English Language Teaching* 11, no. 4 (March 28, 2011): 138.

confidence and reduced anxiety when speaking.[23] Triassanti et al., also found that students were able to provide comprehensive and constructive feedback, which significantly helped improve vocabulary, grammar, and fluency.[24] Saidalvi & Samad added that the application of peer feedback in public speaking activities helps students understand the expected performance standards and encourages learning motivation.[25]

As an effective method in improving speaking and critical thinking skills, a deep understanding of students' perceptions of using this peerfeedback method in speaking learning is needed. Students' perceptions can influence how they engage in the learning process. Perception is a cognitive process that allows individuals to interpret and understand information received through the five senses.[26] In the world of education, students' perceptions of learning methods such as peer feedback are very important because they can affect their attitudes, motivation, and learning outcomes. According to Chekol (2020), students' positive perceptions of peer feedback encourage them to be more open to receiving feedback, use the input given to improve performance, and develop critical thinking skills.[27] Conversely, negative perceptions can increase anxiety and hinder the learning process.

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[23] Eva Rodríguez-González and Martha E. Castañeda, "The Effects and Perceptions of Trained Peer Feedback in L2 Speaking: Impact on Revision and Speaking Quality," *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching* 12, no. 2 (April 3, 2018): 120–136.

[24] Risa Triassanti, Christina Innocenti Tumiar Panggabean, and Mansur Mansur, "Peer-Feedbacks Based Application in Teaching Speaking and Students' Perception towards Peer-Feedbacks," *Journal of Applied Studies in Language* 7, no. 1 (July 26, 2023): 99–106.

[25] Saidalvi and Adlina, "Online Peer Motivational Feedback in a Public Speaking Course."

[26] Ou Qiong, "A Brief Introduction to Perception," *Studies in Literature and Language* 15, no. 4 (2017): 18–28.

[27] Abiot Dagnew Chekol, "Investigating the Influence of Using Peer Feedback on EFL Students' Speaking Achievement and Their Perceptions Towards Peer Feedback," *Arabic Language, Literature & Culture* 5, no. 3 (2020): 23.

In addition, research conducted by Melly et al., showed that students' perceptions of the type of feedback, such as direct feedback or indirect feedback, also affect the effectiveness of learning.[28] Direct feedback is considered easier to understand because students can find out their mistakes specifically, while indirect feedback encourages students to reflect and find solutions to their mistakes independently. Thus, a deep understanding of students' perceptions can help lecturers in choosing the peer feedback strategy that best suits students' needs. Wulandari et al., also emphasized that students' perceptions of peer feedback are very important to understand, because students as the main actors have direct experience that can be used as a reference in evaluating the effectiveness of this method. [29]

Although various studies have explored the effectiveness and perceptions of peer feedback, its application to speaking skill is still relatively limited, especially in the Indonesian student environment. Most previous studies have focused more on writing skills and only a few have explored students' perceptions of peer feedback in the context of speaking. [30] . Anjarani & Alvianingrum

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[28] Sisilia Melly, Listyani Listyani, and Toar Yusak G. Sumakul, "Students' Perceptions Towards Direct and Indirect Feedback in Speaking for Social Purposes," *Satya Widya* 40, no. 1 (June 19, 2024): 1–18.

[29] Wulandari et al., "Indonesian Novice EFL Teachers' Perceptions of the Use of Peer Assessment in Speaking Class."

[30] Nafiseh Taghizadeh Kerman et al., "Online Peer Feedback Patterns of Success and Failure in Argumentative Essay Writing," *Interactive Learning Environments* 32, no. 2 (February 7, 2024): 614–626; Saeed Latifi, Omid Noroozi, and Ebrahim Talaee, "Peer Feedback or Peer Feedforward? Enhancing Students' Argumentative Peer Learning Processes and Outcomes," *British Journal of Educational Technology* 52, no. 2 (March 24, 2021): 768–784; Anahuac Valero Haro et al., "How Does the Type of Online Peer Feedback Influence Feedback Quality, Argumentative Essay Writing Quality, and Domain-Specific Learning?," *Interactive Learning Environments* 32, no. 9 (October 20, 2024): 5459–5478; Yong Wu and Christian D. Schunn, "The Effects of Providing and Receiving Peer Feedback on Writing Performance and Learning of Secondary School Students," *American Educational Research Journal* 58, no. 3 (June 25, 2021): 492–526.

highlighted the need for further exploration of how peer feedback can impact speaking skills and how students view this process.[31] This research aims to fill this gap by investigating how students at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung perceive and utilize peer feedback to enhance their speaking proficiency and critical thinking skills. By examining how students engage with peer feedback in speaking classes, this research offers insights into how peer feedback can improve speaking skills while also fostering critical thinking. The focus on critical thinking is crucial as students are expected to analyze their peers' performance, provide constructive feedback, and reflect on their own speaking. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting a research titled "*Perception of English Education Department Students on Peer Feedback in Enhancing Critical Thinking and Speaking Abilities at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung.*"

B. Research Problem

Based on the background explained above, the research problem is formulated as follows: "How are the perceptions of English Education Department students on peer feedback in enhancing critical thinking skills and speaking abilities at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung?"

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[31] Shelia Anjarani, "Oral Peer Feedback in Online Speaking Class: Implementation, Students' Attitudes, Preferences, and Usefulness," *IJEE (Indonesian Journal of English Education)* 11, no. 1 (June 28, 2024).

C. Research Objectives

Based on the research problem above, the objective of this research is to explore the perceptions of English Education Department students on peer feedback in enhancing critical thinking skills and speaking abilities at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung.

D. Significance of the Research

This research found that students of the English Education Department at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung had positive perceptions of peer feedback in enhancing their speaking and critical thinking skills. Peer feedback helped students become more fluent, improve pronunciation, organize ideas clearly, build confidence, and think more critically by analyzing, evaluating, reflecting, and solving problems. Based on these findings, this research offered the following contributions:

1. Theoretical Benefits

This study contributed to a better understanding of the role of peer feedback in enhancing both speaking and critical thinking skills among university students. It also strengthened the application of *Sociocultural Theory* by Vygotsky and the *Critical Thinking Framework* by Paul & Elder in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. Moreover, the findings are expected to serve as a reference for future research on peer feedback and its influence on language development.

2. Practical Benefits

   a. For Lectures

   This research suggested that lectures should use peer feedback in their lessons to improve students' speaking and critical thinking skills. When guided properly, peer feedback can be a powerful tool. Lectures can explain how to give good feedback and create a supportive environment that encourages active participation. This can help students feel more comfortable and motivated to improve their skills.

   b. For Students

   This research encouraged students to maximize peer feedback opportunities. By actively engaging in giving and receiving feedback from their peers, students were able to strengthen both their speaking and critical thinking skills. Through this process, they became more aware of their strengths and areas for improvement, which allowed them to reflect more deeply on their learning.

   c. For Next Researchers

   The findings of this study provided valuable insights for future research on peer feedback, particularly in its application to language learning. It also opened opportunities for further exploration into peer feedback's impact on other language skills such as listening, and on factors

that influence its effectiveness, such as student relationships and feedback quality.

E. Scope and Limitations of the Research

The scope of this research was limited to the subjects and topics under investigation. This research focused only on students from the English Education Department at UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung who had completed four speaking courses, specifically students in their 6th and 8th semesters. The study explored students' perceptions of peer feedback in enhancing critical thinking and speaking skills. The limitation of this study is that it relied only on questionnaire data, which may limit the depth and richness of the information gathered about students' perceptions.

F. Definition of the Key Terms

To avoid misunderstandings or misinterpretations, the researcher provided explanations of the key terms used in this research:

1. Student Perception

   Perception is the way an individual receives and interprets various information obtained through their senses, and then created an understanding of the meaning behind what they have received.[32] Students' perception is related to how they viewed and assessed their experiences in

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[32] Zhalfa, Putri Elisa, septa Diana Nabella, and Dewi Permata Sari, "The Influence of Role Perception, Human Resource Development, and Compensation on Employee Performance Universitas Ibnu Sina," *Enrichment: Journal of Management* 12, no. 3 (2022): 29444.

class, including aspects such as learning, media, teaching techniques, and interactions with peers and lecturers.

2. Peer feedback

   Peer feedback is a feedback method given by classmates to evaluate the work or assignments that have been completed. This feedback can be positive, negative, praising, or critical, and it can be used as material for evaluation to improve the quality of the work. The process involves students working together to provide input and suggestions, as well as identifying strengths and weaknesses in their work.[33]

3. Critical Thinking Skill

   Critical thinking is the ability to understand information, synthesize it, evaluate it, draw conclusions, and find solutions using well-considered thinking.[34] Critical thinking is an essential skill for students as it helped them think more effectively and logically. It involved not just intellectual analysis but also a critical mindset.

4. Speaking Skills

   Speaking referred to the ability produce spoken language as a tool for communication or to convey information. It also involved important elements in language development, such as vocabulary, accuracy, fluency,

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[33] Rizka Indahyanti and Mutmainah Mursidin, "Student to Self-Feedback in Improving Students' Speaking Ability," *EXPOSURE : JURNAL PENDIDIKAN BAHASA DAN SASTRA INGGRIS* 6, no. 1 (2017): 27–47.

[34] Dina Merris Maya Sari and Yudy Prasetyo, "Project-Based-Learning on Critical Reading Course to Enhance Critical Thinking Skills," *Studies in English Language and Education* 8, no. 2 (2021): 442–456.

etc.[35] The speaking process involved two part: the speaker and the listener. Good speaking required continuous practice to effectively communicate ideas or information in a clear, confident, and easily understandable.

[35] Milady Arini and Achmad Yudi Wahyudin, "Students' Perception on Questioning Technique in Improving Speaking Skill Ability at English Education Study Program," *JOURNAL OF ARTS AND EDUCATION* 2, no. 1 (2022): 2022.