

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

Language serves as the primary means of communication and cultural expression. English, as a global language, has significantly influenced non-native speakers, including the Javanese. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language and is widely used in education, business, and tourism. However, the way Javanese convey English is influenced by their native linguistic and cultural background. This study aims to explore how Javanese people integrate English into their daily communication, considering linguistic adaptation, pronunciation patterns, and socio-cultural influences.

Language is a fundamental aspect of human communication, and the way a person speaks a language is often influenced by their first language or local dialect. In Indonesia, especially in Java, many students grow up speaking Javanese as their mother tongue before learning Bahasa Indonesia and then learning a foreign language such as English. This linguistic background often influences the way students speak English, especially in terms of pronunciation, intonation, rhythm, and sentence structure.

Speaking ability is one of the main components in learning a foreign language, including English. In the context of higher education, especially in the English Language Education Study Program, speaking skills are one of the important indicators to assess the extent to which students are able to use English actively and communicatively. Students are required not only to understand

grammar and vocabulary, but also to be able to express ideas, concepts, and carry out social interactions with fluent and contextual language. Success in speaking is often a reflection of students' overall ability to master English.

In the current era of globalization, English speaking skills are very important not only in the academic world but also in the professional world and cross-cultural communication. Students who have good speaking skills tend to be more confident in facing various formal and informal situations. They also have greater opportunities in the world of work, especially in fields that require active communication such as education, international business, and tourism. Therefore, speaking learning must receive proportional attention in the curriculum and English teaching strategies.

However, in practice, the ability of Indonesian students to speak English still faces various challenges. One of these challenges is the influence of the mother tongue or first language (L1) used daily by students. Different mother tongues cause differences in pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm when using English as a second language (L2). This condition creates a phenomenon called language interference, namely the carrying over of sound elements and speech patterns from the first language into the second language. This interference is very pronounced in speaking skills that require clarity of sound and intonation.

One of the most dominant forms of interference in Indonesia comes from the use of various regional dialects, especially the Javanese dialect. The Javanese dialect is a dialect used by most people in East Java, Central Java, and Yogyakarta. Students from these areas are usually accustomed to using local dialects since

childhood and use them in their daily lives. This causes the characteristics of the local dialect to be carried into the way they speak English. For example, speakers of the Ngapak dialect often replace the sound /f/ with /p/, while speakers of the Arekan Surabaya dialect replace the sound /θ/ with /t/.

At the University of Muhammadiyah Malang, a large number of English Department students come from the Javanese-speaking community. These students are expected to develop good English language skills for academic and professional purposes. However, in everyday conversations, many still show the influence of the Javanese dialect when speaking English. This influence can result in pronunciation errors, unnatural stress patterns, or the use of expressions directly translated from Javanese.

Understanding the impact of these dialect features is essential to improving English language teaching. Educators need to be aware of the special challenges that students face because of their linguistic background so that they can develop more effective teaching strategies. In addition, exploring the influence of local dialects on English contributes to the broader fields of sociolinguistics and second language acquisition.

At the University of Muhammadiyah Malang (UMM), there are students from various regions who bring different Javanese dialect backgrounds. Common dialects include the Malangan dialect (Arekan typical of Malang), Surabayaan, Kediri (soft Arekan), Blitar, Solo (Krama), and Ngapak (Banyumasan). Each of these dialects has unique phonological and intonation characteristics, which indirectly affect the way students pronounce words in English. For example, the

Malangan dialect is known for its omission of final vowels, while the Solo dialect tends to be soft and has a distinctive flat intonation.

The differences in phonological characteristics between dialects give rise to variations in English pronunciation by students. In formal situations such as class presentations or group discussions, the influence of dialects often appears in the form of incorrect pronunciation of sounds, inappropriate voice stress, and flat or excessive intonation. This can interfere with the understanding of messages, reduce the effectiveness of communication, and reduce students' confidence in interacting using English. This problem is important to study, especially in the context of English language learning in higher education.

The influence of dialect on English speaking ability is not new in linguistic studies. Several previous studies have discussed how local dialects affect pronunciation and intonation in a foreign language. Fauzia et al. (2022) found that students who speak the Yogyakarta dialect experienced significant changes in the pronunciation of certain phonemes in English. Another study by Purnama (2018) showed that the open vowel pronunciation typical of Ngapak speakers causes errors in rhythm and stress in speaking English. These findings confirm that the influence of dialect cannot be ignored in speaking learning.

However, most previous studies have only examined one type of dialect separately and used a quantitative approach. This has led to a lack of comprehensive understanding of the subjective experiences of students from various dialect backgrounds in facing speaking challenges. In this context, a qualitative approach becomes relevant to use because it allows researchers to explore in more depth the

perceptions, strategies, and real experiences of students in dealing with the influence of local dialects on their speaking abilities. This approach also provides space to explore sociolinguistic and psychological aspects that may not be covered by a quantitative approach.

Considering the above background, this study focuses on the influence of Javanese dialect on the English speaking ability of students of the English Language Education Department at the University of Muhammadiyah Malang. This study will explore not only the forms of phonological influence such as pronunciation and intonation, but also aspects of self-confidence, social perception, and students' adaptation strategies in facing the challenges of speaking in English. This study is expected to provide a comprehensive contextual understanding of the challenges of learning to speak amidst the linguistic diversity of students.

This study also has practical urgency considering the importance of speaking skills in the academic and professional world. Students as prospective educators and professionals in the field of language must have good communication competence and be able to overcome obstacles caused by their regional language background. Therefore, this study is expected to provide real contributions in the development of learning strategies that are more responsive and inclusive of dialect diversity in the university environment.

This study also offers added value in terms of theory development in applied linguistics and sociolinguistics. By using a qualitative approach, this study provides a deeper and more reflective picture of the reality of English use by students with different linguistic backgrounds. The results of this study can be used as a basis for

designing English learning that is not only oriented to international linguistic standards, but also sensitive to the cultural background and local language of students.

Furthermore, by understanding how dialects affect English speaking ability, lecturers and teachers can design more fair and accommodating assessment methods. Students who have phonological limitations due to dialect influence can be given the right learning approach so that they are able to improve their speaking ability without losing their cultural identity. In this case, a humanistic and diversity-based pedagogical approach is very important (Norton, 2013; Goh & Burns, 2012).

Finally, this study has great hope to encourage the formation of more inclusive English language learning policies at the institutional level. Curriculum designed by considering the sociolinguistic realities of students will be able to create a supportive, fair, and relevant learning environment. This is in line with the goal of higher education which is not only to produce graduates who are academically intelligent, but also adaptive, open, and able to communicate effectively in various cultural and linguistic contexts.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Although speaking ability is a core focus in English language education, many students still face considerable challenges in achieving fluency and accuracy when speaking English. One key factor contributing to this difficulty is the influence of students' native dialects—particularly Javanese, which is widely spoken by students in the English Department at the University of Muhammadiyah Malang. The phonological features of Javanese dialects often interfere with English

pronunciation, intonation, and overall oral communication. This interference can affect not only the intelligibility of speech but also students' confidence and participation in English-speaking activities.

While previous research has explored dialectal influence on English speaking, most studies have focused on a single dialect and adopted quantitative methods. As a result, there is limited understanding of how students from diverse Javanese dialect backgrounds experience these challenges in real-life communication, especially from their own perspectives.

This study, therefore, aims to explore the issue through a qualitative lens, focusing on the lived experiences of students who come from various Javanese dialect backgrounds. The study seeks to answer the following main research question:

How does the Javanese dialect influence the English speaking ability of students in the English Department at the University of Muhammadiyah Malang, especially in everyday conversation?

To address this overarching question, the following sub-questions are posed:

1. How does the Javanese dialect influence students' pronunciation and intonation in speaking English in everyday conversation?
2. What are the types of Javanese dialects used by students of the English Department of the University of Muhammadiyah Malang, and how do their phonological interference characteristics affect their speaking ability?

3. How do students perceive the influence of their Javanese dialect on their spoken use of English?

Through these questions, this study aims to gain deeper insights into the sociolinguistic, phonological, and psychological dimensions of dialectal influence on English speaking skills, contributing both to theoretical knowledge and practical improvements in English language instruction.

1.3 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to explore how Javanese dialects influence the English speaking ability of students in the English Department at the University of Muhammadiyah Malang, particularly in everyday conversation contexts.

Specifically, this study aims to:

1. **Identify and analyze** how Javanese dialects influence students' pronunciation and intonation when speaking English in everyday conversations.
2. **Investigate the types of Javanese dialects** spoken by students of the English Department and examine the phonological interference characteristics of each dialect in relation to their English-speaking ability.
3. **Explore students' perceptions** of the influence of their native Javanese dialect on their ability to speak English and how they respond or adapt to these influences in real-life communication.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions, particularly in the fields of sociolinguistics, second language acquisition, and English language education, through a qualitative exploration of students' real-life speaking experiences.

1. Theoretical Significance

From a theoretical perspective, this research contributes to the understanding of how local dialects—specifically Javanese dialects—affect second language (L2) speaking performance in a non-native English-speaking context. By using a qualitative approach, this study offers a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the phonological, sociolinguistic, and psychological dimensions of dialectal interference, which may not be fully captured through quantitative methods. The findings can enrich existing literature in applied linguistics by highlighting the role of regional language identity in the process of L2 oral communication development.

2. Practical Significance

From a practical standpoint, the results of this study can benefit several stakeholders:

- **For English language educators**, the findings can inform more inclusive and dialect-sensitive teaching strategies that acknowledge students' linguistic backgrounds and support their development in speaking English confidently and accurately.

- **For curriculum developers and academic institutions**, the study offers insights for designing speaking assessments and instructional materials that accommodate phonological variations without compromising learning objectives.
- **For students**, particularly those from Javanese-speaking backgrounds, this research may help them reflect on their speaking challenges and develop better awareness of their own learning needs and adaptation strategies.

By emphasizing the voices and lived experiences of students through qualitative methods, this study seeks to promote a more empathetic and culturally responsive approach to English language instruction in multilingual settings like Indonesia.

1.5 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study focuses on the influence of Javanese dialects on the English speaking ability of students enrolled in the English Language Education Study Program at the University of Muhammadiyah Malang (UMM). The scope of this research is limited to the following:

Scope of the Study

1. **Participants:** The study involves students from the English Department at UMM who speak Javanese as their first language. The sample includes students from various regions in Java, specifically those from Malang, Kediri, Surabaya, Solo, Blitar, and Banyumas, each with distinct dialectal characteristics (e.g., Malangan, Surabayan, Ngapak, and Krama).

2. **Focus of the Research:** The primary focus is on everyday English conversation among the students, rather than formal or academic speaking contexts. The study aims to examine the phonological influence of Javanese dialects, including aspects like pronunciation, intonation, confidence and rhythm in daily conversations conducted in English.
3. **Qualitative Approach:** This study employs a qualitative research design to gain an in-depth understanding of students' experiences with dialectal interference. Data will be collected through interviews, observations, and audio recordings to capture students' spoken English and their perceptions of dialectal influences.

Limitation of the Study

1. **Geographical Limitation:** This research is limited to students from UMM, specifically those in the English Department, and does not include students from other universities or English language programs in Indonesia.
2. **Dialect Focus:** The study specifically investigates the influence of Javanese dialects on English speaking ability. It does not examine the influence of other regional languages or dialects in Indonesia, such as Sundanese, Balinese, or Batak.
3. **Research Context:** The research is confined to students' use of English in everyday communication. It does not cover formal language use such as public speaking, presentations, or academic writing, which may involve different linguistic challenges.

4. Participant Selection: The study focuses on a purposive sample of students who identify as speakers of Javanese dialects. The findings may not be generalized to all students or speakers of Javanese, as the sample only represents those enrolled in the English Language Education Program at UMM.

By recognizing these boundaries, the study aims to provide a focused and comprehensive understanding of the influence of Javanese dialects on English speaking ability within a specific educational context.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misinterpretation and ensure clarity in understanding the concepts used in this research, the following key terms are defined:

a. Javanese Dialect

In this study, "Javanese dialect" refers to the regional variations of the Javanese language spoken by students in Java, Indonesia. These include dialects such as Malang (Arekan), Surabaya, Kediri, Blitar, Solo (Krama), and Ngapak (Banyumas). Each of these dialects has distinct phonological and prosodic features that may influence English speech by Dardjowidjojo, S. (2003).

b. English Speaking Ability

This term refers to the students' capability to produce spoken English fluently, accurately, and appropriately in everyday communication. It encompasses pronunciation, intonation, fluency, coherence, and confidence during speech, especially in informal and semi-formal academic settings by Hughes, R. (2011).

c. Phonological Interference

Phonological interference occurs when a speaker's first language (L1) sound patterns influence their pronunciation in a second language (L2). In this study, it is used to describe the carry-over of sounds from Javanese dialects into spoken English, such as replacing the /θ/ sound with /t/, or /f/ with /p/ by Ellis, R. (1997).

d. Pronunciation

Pronunciation refers to the way English sounds are articulated by students, especially those that are typically problematic due to dialectal influence. This includes consonants, vowels, stress, and rhythm patterns that are shaped by the phonetic system of Javanese.

e. Intonation and Rhythm

These terms refer to the pitch patterns and speech tempo used in spoken English. Javanese dialects, especially Krama or Arekan, have distinct intonational and rhythmic characteristics that can affect how students express emphasis, emotion, and sentence flow in English.

f. Speaking Strategy

Speaking strategies in this study refer to the conscious efforts or techniques used by students to improve their English-speaking performance despite dialectal interference. Examples include peer practice, use of pronunciation apps, and mimicry or shadowing exercises.

g. Cultural and Linguistic Identity

This term represents the students' sense of belonging and pride in their dialect and cultural background, which may affect their confidence and willingness

to speak English. It also reflects how students view the interplay between their native language and English as a foreign language.

