The Effect of a Competency-Based Learning Approach on Improving English Speaking Skills: Survey Study in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Background. During ongoing learning, many students are found who do not master how to speak English properly and correctly. This can be seen when they communicate. For this reason, improving the ability to speak English in higher education is very important in facing the challenges of globalization and increasing workforce needs. A competency-based learning approach is a solution that is used as an effective method to achieve improvements in speaking abilities.

Purpose. The aim of this research is to find out whether implementing a competency-based learning approach can improve students' ability to speak English.

Method. This research method uses quantitative research methods with a survey approach. The survey used in this research was seen from student participants at several universities that implement a competency-based learning approach in learning English. Data was collected through questionnaires given to students who assessed the learning approach and their English speaking skills before and after implementing the learning approach.

Results. The results of this research state that universities that implement a competency-based learning approach provide a positive impact and great opportunities for students in higher education to improve their English speaking skills. The survey results also show that students are satisfied with competency-based learning.

Conclusion. The conclusion of this research explains that the competency-based learning approach is effective in improving English speaking skills in higher education. The implication of this research is the importance of implementing a learning approach that is appropriate to current global needs to prepare students with relevant and competent skills in English.

KEYWORDS

Competency Based Learning, Higher Education, Speaking Skills.

INTRODUCTION

The approach in learning is an important thing that aims to guide the teaching and learning process in various educational contexts (Allen dkk., 2022). This approach reflects views on how

students learn and how lecturers can manage learning to achieve certain educational goals (Alsubaie, 2022). Various approaches have been developed and applied in educational practice, each of which has a different focus and principle.

Higher education is an important place in building in-depth skills and knowledge for students. In this context, the objectives of the approach to learning in higher education are crucial in forming an effective and sustainable learning experience (Bamber dkk., 2006). The approach applied at the tertiary level does not only aim to convey subject matter, but also to develop critical, analytical and creative skills, as well as forming professional attitudes needed in an increasingly complex world of work. With the right approach, higher education can be a vehicle for students to gain a deep understanding of their field of study, hone practical skills, and prepare themselves to contribute significantly to an ever-evolving global society (Gao dkk., 2019).

REVIEW OIF LITERATURE
Competency Based Learning

The benefits of competency-based learning are very diverse. First, this approach helps increase the relevance of learning to real life, so that students can see the connection between what they learn at school and their daily experiences. This can increase students' motivation and interest in learning (Alsawaier, 2018). Second, competency-based learning prepares students to be successful in the world of work by developing the skills needed by industry and the job market. This can help reduce the gap between school graduates and job market needs (Arfani & Nakaya, 2019). Third, this approach allows students to develop broader and deeper skills, because it focuses on applying knowledge in various contexts. This allows them to become adaptive and flexible lifelong learners (Gligorea dkk., 2023).

Competency based learning has become increasingly prominent in higher education, particularly in the realm of language acquisition such as improving English speaking skills . This approach focuses on the development and mastery of specific competencies or abilities rather than traditional methods that solely prioritize theoretical knowledge (Azlan dkk., 2020). In the context of enhancing English speaking skills in universities, competency-based learning offers a structured and effective framework for students to acquire proficiency in verbal communication. The implementation of this approach involves several key steps aimed at fostering a supportive learning environment and facilitating measurable progress.

The first step in implementing competency based learning to enhance English speaking skills is to clearly define the desired competencies or outcomes. These may include fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary usage, comprehension, and effective communication in various contexts (Hu dkk., 2021). By identifying these competencies, educators can tailor instructional strategies and learning activities to address specific areas of improvement for each student (Albanese & Mitchell, 1993). Additionally, setting clear learning objectives provides students with a roadmap for their language development journey and enables them to track their progress over time.

The next step is to design a curriculum that integrates speaking-focused activities and assessments aligned with the identified competencies (Gregersen-Hermans, 2021). This may involve incorporating role-playing exercises, group discussions, presentations, debates, and real-life simulations into the coursework. Such activities not only provide students with ample opportunities to practice speaking in English but also encourage active participation and engagement in the learning process (Ion dkk., 2016). Assessment methods should be designed to accurately measure students' speaking abilities, whether through recorded speeches, oral exams, peer evaluations, or self-assessments.

Personalization is another crucial aspect of competency-based learning for English speaking skills (Jefrizal dkk., 2017). Recognizing that students may have varying levels of proficiency and learning styles, educators should offer customized learning experiences tailored to individual needs and preferences. This may involve providing additional support or resources for students who require extra assistance, as well as challenging advanced learners with more complex tasks or projects (Beier dkk., 2019). By catering to diverse learning needs, competency-based learning ensures that all students have the opportunity to reach their full potential in English speaking proficiency (Nita dkk., 2023).

Furthermore, integrating technology into language learning can greatly enhance the effectiveness of competency-based approaches. Online platforms, multimedia resources, language learning apps, and virtual reality simulations offer interactive and immersive experiences that supplement traditional classroom instruction (Adeyeye dkk., 2022). These tools provide students with additional opportunities for practice, feedback, and self-directed learning outside of class, thereby accelerating their progress in English speaking skills. Additionally, technology-enabled assessments can provide real-time feedback on pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary usage (Susanto dkk., 2023), allowing students to identify areas for improvement and track their linguistic development over time.

The advancement of competency-based learning for English speaking skills in today's digital age is further supported by the availability of vast online resources and communities (Sistermans, 2020). Students have access to a wide range of authentic materials, such as podcasts, videos, articles, and social media platforms, which expose them to diverse accents, dialects, and cultural contexts. Engaging with authentic content not only enhances students' language proficiency but also fosters cultural competence and global awareness (Saint, 2021). Moreover, online forums, language exchange programs, and virtual language cafes enable students to connect with peers from around the world, practice their speaking skills in real-life situations, and receive feedback from native speakers (Boahin & Hofman, 2014).

In conclusion, competency-based learning offers a comprehensive and student-centered approach to improving English speaking skills in higher education (Poth dkk., 2020). By focusing on specific competencies, personalized instruction, and technology-enhanced learning experiences, this approach enables students to develop fluency, confidence, and proficiency in verbal communication. As advancements in technology continue to transform the landscape of language learning, competency-based approaches will play an increasingly integral role in preparing students for success in an interconnected and multilingual world (Vail, 2019). Through innovative instructional strategies, collaborative learning environments, and meaningful interactions with authentic language materials, competency-based learning empowers students to become effective communicators and global citizens.

Forms of competency-based learning approaches to English speaking skills in higher education

One form of competency-based learning approach in English speaking skills in higher education is to adapt the curriculum to relevant competency standards (Audhkhasi dkk., 2018). This means that learning programs are designed to teach not only grammar and vocabulary, but also speaking skills in contexts that suit students' real-world needs. For example, students may be taught to speak in presentation, negotiation, or group discussion situations, which is an important skill in many professions (Irvine & Kevan, 2016). Apart from that, this approach also emphasizes student-centered learning. This means that students are given the opportunity to be actively involved in their

own learning process, including developing English speaking skills. Student-oriented learning methods, such as group discussions, work-based projects, and simulations of real-life situations, can be used to actively improve students' speaking skills (Adeyeye dkk., 2022).

In addition, the use of technology in learning can also be an integral part of this approach. Students may be asked to use technology such as video conferencing, online learning platforms, or speaking training software to practice and improve their speaking skills in English (Aju & Mack, 2022). This technology can also enable students to practice independently outside the classroom, expanding their access to learning resources and accelerating their progress (Albashtawi & Al Bataineh, 2020). A competency-based approach can also strengthen connections between classroom learning and practical experience outside the classroom. For example, students may be given the opportunity to take part in internships or collaborative projects with companies or organizations that use English as the main language of communication. This allows students to apply their speaking skills in real contexts and get direct feedback from experienced practitioners (Henri dkk., 2017). Assessments in accordance with a competency-based approach are also needed to ensure that students have truly mastered relevant English speaking skills. Assessment can involve a portfolio of a student's speaking work, evaluation by a lecturer or expert practitioner, as well as exams or practical assignments that simulate real-life situations where speaking skills are needed.

There are several previous research opinions regarding competency-based learning approaches. The first research according to Misbahillah dkk., (2023), with the research title Improving the English Speaking Ability of Madrasyah Ibtidaiyah Students Through Picture and Picture Learning Techniques. The results of his research stated that indicate an increase in speaking of students in each cycle, first cycle with a percentage of 62,5% and 78,75% in scond cycles'. The second research according to Suhardiana, (2019), with the research title The Role Of Technology In Supporting English Learning In Primary Schools. The results of his research stated that there are various opportunities for students to gain self-confidence to practice and expand themselves, particularly for those who are learning English as a foreign language that learns the language for more than just having fun. If they want to be able to follow the learning process and gain more confidence, they must step into the world of multimedia technology. The third research according to Septiyana dkk., (2021), with the research title Training to Improve English Speaking Skills Through the Task-Based Language Teaching Method for Sharia Economics Students. The results of his research stated that 1) there is an improvement in knowledge and understanding of Islamic Economics students of IAIN Metro about Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) learning method and 2) there is an improvement of Islamic Economics students' skills in speaking English.

The research that the researchers conducted is different from previous research in that the researchers stated that universities that implement a competency-based learning approach provide a positive impact and great opportunities for students in higher education to improve their English speaking skills. The survey results also show that students are satisfied with competency-based learning.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method used in this research is a quantitative research method with a survey research design (Bauer & Scheim, 2019). Researchers conducted a survey at universities that have implemented a learning system with a competency-based learning approach with the aim of improving students' ability to speak English. The research population is the entire group, object, phenomenon that is the focus of a study. The research sample is a small part of the population. So the population in this research is university students involved in an English language learning

program that applies a competency-based learning approach (Bauer dkk., 2021). This population can include students at various levels, from first year to advanced level in English. In this case, it is important for researchers to choose the right population so that research results can be validly applied to a wider context. Meanwhile, the population in the penita research were all first year students in the field of English at tertiary institutions.

Research instruments are tools used in conducting research. Instruments are designed to help researchers measure the variables that researchers are studying (Ardiansyah dkk., 2023). Instruments can be written tools, interviews, questionnaires, observations, and others. The instrument used in this research is interviews with students at universities who have studied a learning process that uses a competency-based approach in the field of English. These interviews will allow researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of students' experiences, perceptions and views regarding the influence of a competency-based learning approach on their English speaking abilities. By using appropriate and appropriate instruments, researchers can collect relevant and valid data.

This research method may include several steps involving data collection, analysis, and interpretation of information obtained from study participants. First, this research began by designing a conceptual framework that identified the main variables to be studied. This includes clearly defining what is meant by a competency-based learning approach and English speaking ability, as well as establishing the indicators that will be used to measure changes in English speaking ability as a result of implementing a competency-based approach. Furthermore, this research will involve a survey study design that collects qualitative data from college students who are taking competency-based learning programs in English.

After the data is collected, the next step is to analyze and interpret the information obtained. Quantitative data analysis can be carried out using a thematic approach, where thematic patterns or categories that emerge from the data are identified and analyzed in depth. This allows researchers to understand the diversity of students' experiences and discover common patterns that illustrate the influence of a competency-based learning approach on their English speaking abilities. Furthermore, the results of this research can be used to provide recommendations to universities and educational practitioners on how to improve English language learning by implementing a competency-based approach. Finally, provide conclusions on the research conducted.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Competency based learning is an approach to the learning process that emphasizes the development of skills, knowledge and attitudes that suit the needs of the world of work or real life. In this context, competence refers to a collection of knowledge, skills and attitudes that can be applied effectively in various situations. The aim of this approach is to prepare students to be able to face real world challenges by mastering relevant and needed skills. Through competency-based learning, students are expected to develop a deep understanding in a field, be able to apply this knowledge and skills in different contexts, and have a positive attitude towards learning and work.

One of the main goals of competency based learning is to increase students' readiness to face future challenges, both in their careers and in everyday life. By focusing on developing relevant competencies, this approach aims to reduce the gap between what is learned at school and the demands of the world of work. Apart from that, another goal is to help students gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter, because competency-based learning emphasizes the application of knowledge in real contexts. In this way, students are expected to develop the critical, creative and analytical thinking skills needed to succeed in various fields.

Implementing a competency-based learning approach to improve English speaking skills requires a structured and integrated approach. Here are some steps you can take to implement this approach. First setting specific learning goals. The first step in implementing a competency-based learning approach is setting specific learning goals related to English speaking skills. These objectives should include key aspects such as clear pronunciation, appropriate vocabulary, good grammar, and the ability to express ideas clearly. Next identify required competencies. After setting learning objectives, the next step is to identify the competencies needed to achieve these objectives. For example, these competencies may include the ability to interact in different communicative situations, express opinions, and present information clearly.

Next, design a curriculum that focuses on developing the competencies that have been identified. The curriculum should include a variety of activities and learning contexts that enable students to develop their speaking skills progressively. This may include group discussions, role plays, presentations, simulations of real situations, and collaborative projects. Next use of relevant learning materials. It is important to choose learning materials that are relevant and appropriate to student needs and the learning context. These materials may include authentic audio and video materials, articles, short stories, and materials related to students' interests and needs. Supporting active and collaborative learning is key to implementing a competency-based approach. Students should be encouraged to actively engage in learning activities that allow them to practice speaking English in real contexts. For example, they can be invited to participate in group discussions, play roles in simulated situations, or make presentations in front of the class.

It is important to provide constructive feedback to students about their English speaking skills. The feedback should be specific, relevant, and help students to correct their mistakes and improve their overall speaking abilities. Lecturers can also provide useful guidance and strategies for students in improving their speaking skills. Technology can be a very useful tool in implementing a competency-based learning approach. Various apps and digital platforms can be used to facilitate speaking practice, provide feedback, and give students access to additional learning materials. Apart from that, technology can also allow students to practice speaking with others via online platforms.cContinuous evaluation is essential in implementing a competency-based learning approach. Apart from measuring student progress in achieving learning goals, evaluation can also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and learning methods used. By conducting regular evaluations, lecturers can identify areas that need improvement and make the necessary adjustments to increase learning effectiveness. Through these steps, a competency-based learning approach can be implemented effectively in improving students' English speaking skills in higher education environments. By focusing on developing competencies that are relevant to the needs of the world of work and everyday life, this approach provides a strong foundation for students to succeed in a variety of communication contexts.

NO	Influence Factors	Deskripsi
1	The Role of Students in Learning	Student activities and participation in the competency-based learning process are factors that can influence learning. Students who are actively involved in discussions, projects, and simulations will likely experience greater improvements in their English speaking abilities.
2	Learning Environment	A supportive learning environment, both in the classroom and outside the classroom, also plays an important role in the

		effectiveness of competency-based learning. A friendly and supportive environment can increase students' motivation and interest in learning English.
3	Availability of Supporting Facilities	The availability of supporting facilities, such as discussion rooms or recording studios, can also influence the effectiveness of competency-based learning in developing English speaking skills. This facility can increase student interaction and direct practice.
4	Lecturer Teaching Approach	The teaching approach used by lecturers also influences the effectiveness of competency-based learning. Lecturers who use active and interactive teaching methods may be more effective in developing students' English speaking skills.
5	Learning Technology	The use of technology in learning, such as speaking learning software or e-learning platforms, can also influence the effectiveness of competency-based learning approaches in developing English speaking skills.
6	Student Motivation	The level of student motivation in learning English can also influence the effectiveness of a competency-based learning approach. Students who have high intrinsic motivation tend to be more active and enthusiastic in learning.
7	Learning Resources	The availability of relevant learning resources, including textbooks, online materials, software, and other supporting facilities, can influence the effectiveness of competency-based learning in developing English speaking skills.
8	Curriculum Design	Curriculum design that is in line with a competency-based learning approach is also important. The curriculum should be designed to emphasize the development of English speaking skills in the context of real-life or work-world needs.
9	Lecturer Feedback	Clear, constructive and timely feedback from lecturers is also important for improving students' English speaking skills. This feedback can help students understand their strengths and weaknesses in speaking English and develop effective improvement strategies.
10	Student Independence Level	The level of student independence in learning also influences the effectiveness of the competency-based learning approach. Students who are more independent may be better able to take the initiative in improving their English speaking skills.

Table 1: Factors that influence a competency based learning approach on English speaking skills in higher education

The following are the results of a survey conducted by researchers at universities regarding the influence of a competency-based learning approach in improving English speaking skills. Researchers gave questionnaires to students at universities regarding competency-based learning. The questionnaire contains 10 statements related to competency-based learning in English. The statements that the researchers made have been tested and the effectiveness of the words used has

been seen. The questionnaire that had been created by paying attention to the appropriate rules and regulations was then distributed to students in the field of English at the first level. On average, students responded positively to the influence felt by students after they studied using a competency-based learning approach compared to learning that did not use an approach. The results of the researcher's survey are presented in graphic form below, namely in figure 1.
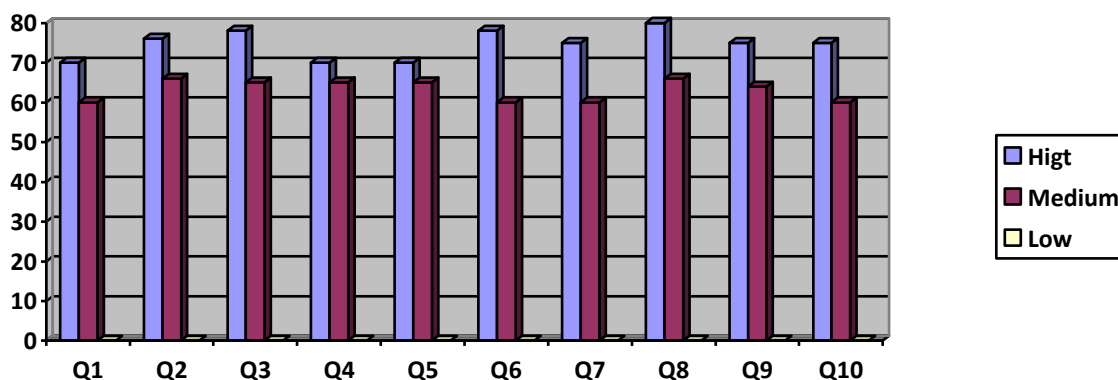
Figure 1: Student responses to the competency-based learning approach in improving English speaking skills.

The diagram above is the result of a survey given to students at universities who have studied using a competency-based learning approach in order to improve their English speaking skills. The information from the diagram above is that the blue bar diagram indicates that the response given by students is high, while the red bar diagram indicates that the student response is medium or at an intermediate level, and for the diagram the white color indicates that the response given by students is low. On average, students responded positively to the survey that was conducted. They felt directly that the results of the competency-based learning approach could improve their ability to speak English. Not only that, they also experience other benefits such as a deeper understanding of English, more motivation to learn, an interesting learning process, and so on.

Along with the influence that a competency-based learning approach has in improving English speaking skills, there are also several challenges and opportunities that it creates. As in the table below.

Competency Based Learning Approach	
Challenges	Opportunities
1. Limited resources Student response: 60	1. Improve English speaking skills. Student response: 80
2.Training and support from dosesn in universities. Student response: 50	2. Develop critical thinking. Student response: 75
3. Customize the evaluation Student response: 55	3. Develop students' skills and understanding in English. Student response: 85
4. Adjustment of the curriculum used in the field of English in higher education.	4. Increasing student motivation and independence in learning.

| Student response: 50 | Student response: 75 |

Table 2: Challenges and opportunities arising from a competency-based learning approach.

The number of student participation in perceived challenges and opportunities with a competency-based learning approach in English shows a relative number that reflects the involvement or response given by students. These figures are generated from surveys or assessments of student participation in each aspect.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this research explains that the competency-based learning approach is effective in improving English speaking skills in higher education. The implication of this research is the importance of implementing a learning approach that is appropriate to current global needs to prepare students with relevant and competent skills in English. The survey results show that the implementation of a competency-based learning approach in learning English in tertiary institutions received a positive response from both students and lecturers. Students admit that they feel more motivated and engaged in learning when using this approach. They also reported significant improvements in their English speaking skills after engaging in competency-based learning. Meanwhile, lecturers observed a marked improvement in students' communication skills and confidence in using English in academic and professional contexts.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

Look this example below:

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.

Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; In-vestigation.

Author 3: Data curation; Investigation.

Author 4: Formal analysis; Methodology; Writing - original draft.

Author 5: Supervision; Validation.

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