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Enhancing Speaking Proficiency through Kampus Mengajar: Empirical Insights from Bosowa University's English Education Department

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Abstract

This qualitative study explores the influence of the Kampus Mengajar program, under the broader Kampus Merdeka-Merdeka Belajar initiative, on the development of speaking skills among students at the University of Bosowa's English Education Department. Conducted with a cohort of 12 students who completed the program, the research employed a saturated sampling technique to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the participants' experiences. Data were gathered through questionnaires and in-depth interviews, followed by a thematic analysis as per Braun's framework to interpret the findings. The results indicate a notable improvement in students' speaking abilities, attributed to the immersive, practical experiences provided by the Kampus Mengajar program. Participants not only enhanced their linguistic skills but also developed key soft skills such as leadership and teamwork, underlining the program's holistic impact on their educational journey. The program's multifaceted approach also enabled students to engage in diverse educational activities, positively influencing their teaching skills and overall educational experience. This study highlights Kampus Mengajar's effectiveness in bolstering speaking proficiency, suggesting its potential as a model for similar educational programs.

Keywords: *Kampus Mengajar, Speaking Proficiency, English Education*

INTRODUCTION

National education goals will be achieved if supported by all levels of society. The government's efforts in realizing the achievement of national education goals are by holding education through three channels as stated in Law no. 20 of 2003 Article 13 paragraph (1) which reads: "Education pathways consist of formal, non-formal and informal education". Formal education is held in the form of schools and colleges. Non-formal education is held in the community in the form of courses, TPA, and so on, while informal education is a path of family and environmental education. Education can be obtained through formal, non-formal, and informal educational institutions ranging from basic education to higher education.

On January 24, 2020, the Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Makarim launched a program called "Merdeka Belajar" intended at Universities/Universities which is

also known as “*Kampus Merdeka*” (Tabroni et al., 2022). The discourse conveyed by the Minister of Education and Culture regarding the *Kampus Merdeka* has four policies within the scope of universities, namely (1) Opening of new study programs, in which this program provides autonomy for State and Private Universities to open or establishment of new study programs, (2) Higher education accreditation system, (3) Freedom for PTN Public Service Agency and Work Units to become PTN Legal Entity, (4) Rights to students to take courses outside the study program and make changes to the definition of the Semester Credit System.

There are various kinds of activities that can be carried out by students in *Kampus Merdeka Belajar*, one example of this activity is the Pioneer *Kampus Mengajar* program. The Pioneer *Kampus Mengajar* itself is a program where during the pandemic. These students, especially students of the education faculty, were given training from various competent parties so that they are ready to assist the implementation of learning in schools in the area. The purpose of this program is for schools to those affected by Covid-19 can continue to carry out learning and apply the independent learning program that has been launched by the government. The school that became the partner of the KMP program itself must be at the elementary school level.

In the program of a *Kampus Mengajar-Merdeka Belajar*, researcher want to know more about the implementation of a *Kampus Mengajar-Merdeka Belajar* in English learning, especially in improving the speaking skills of students who are enrolled in a *Kampus Mengajar-Merdeka Belajar*, then the researcher proposed the title: “Implementation of *Kampus Mengajar* on The Program of *Kampus Merdeka- Merdeka Belajar* In Developing Speaking Skill At English Education Department Of Bosowa University”..

Conceptualizing Implementation in ELT Context

Some experts define several implementation terms as follows. According to Usman (2002:70) Implementation is led to activities, actions, actions, or the existence of a system mechanism, implementation is not just an activity, but an activity that is planned and to achieve the objectives of the activity. The definition of implementation according to Setiawan (2004:39) Implementation is the expansion of activities that mutually adjust the process of interaction between goals and actions to achieve them and requires a network of implementers, an effective bureaucracy.

According to Hamalik (2007:237) implementation is a process of applying ideas, concepts, policies, or innovations in the form of practical actions so that they have an impact in the form of changes in knowledge, skills, as well as values and attitudes. Based on the explanation above, it is found that implementation is an action taken to achieve the desired change.

Indonesia’s *Kampus Merdeka* Program

The Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia is a ministry within the Government of Indonesia that carries out affairs in the fields of early childhood education, basic education, secondary education, and community education as well as cultural management. The Ministry of Education and Culture is under and responsible to the President, the Ministry of Education and Culture is led by a Minister of Education and Culture (Mendikbud). Based on the directives of the Minister of Education and Culture Nadiem Makarim as stated in the *Merdeka Belajar* Guide – *Kampus Merdeka* issued to the Ministry of Education and Culture (2020), in order to prepare students to face social, cultural, work, and rapid technological advances, student competencies must be prepared to be more engaged with the needs of the times. Link and match not only with the world of industry and the world of work but also with a rapidly changing future.

Through a well-designed and well-implemented program of *Merdeka Belajar*,

students' hard and soft skills will be formed strongly. The Program *Merdeka Belajar – Kampus Merdeka* is expected to be able to answer the challenges of higher education to produce graduates who are in accordance with the times, advances in science and technology, the demands of the business and industrial world, as well as the dynamics of society.

Speaking Skill in ELT

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Based on the objectives described above, which states that the implementation of the *Kampus Merdeka-Kampus Mengajar* is to have a relationship between the world of universities and the real world or the world of work. Which is following their majors, namely the English department. Students are required to be more proficient in English, especially how they communicate with people using English. The relationship between *Kampus Mengajar* and improving English, based on the results of interviews the researcher have conducted with one of the students who participated in the *Kampus Mengajar* program stated that by participating in the program students become more active in interacting with teachers and students, so of course speaking skills will increase.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative descriptive research approach, focusing on providing a comprehensive summary of events in the naturalistic setting of the *Kampus Mengajar* program at Bosowa University. This approach was chosen for its effectiveness in capturing detailed, rich descriptions of participants' experiences and perceptions, particularly in the context of language development and educational practices.

Participants

The participants comprised English Education students from Bosowa University who had completed the *Kampus Mengajar* program. A total of 12 students were included in the study, representing a purposive sample. This sampling technique was utilized to select individuals who had direct experience with the *Kampus Mengajar* program, ensuring that the study focused on those most relevant to the research questions.

Research Instrument

Data were collected primarily through semi-structured interviews and open-ended questionnaires. These instruments were designed to elicit detailed responses about the students' experiences and perceptions of their language development within the program. The semi-structured interviews allowed for flexibility in probing deeper into topics of interest, while the open-ended questionnaires provided participants with the opportunity to express their views and experiences in their own words.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis, as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2017). This method involved a systematic process of coding the data and identifying patterns or themes within the responses. The analysis began with a familiarization phase, where the data were read and re-read to gain a deep understanding of the content. Initial codes were then generated, which were systematically collated into potential themes. These themes were

reviewed and refined to ensure they accurately reflected the dataset. The final stage involved defining and naming the themes, providing a detailed analysis of the data. This thematic analysis was instrumental in uncovering nuanced insights into the participants' experiences and the impact of the Kampus Mengajar program on their language development and educational journey.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The research, conducted between February 3 and March 3, 2022, utilized a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative data from questionnaires with qualitative insights from interviews. This comprehensive methodology facilitated a multi-dimensional understanding of the Kampus Mengajar program's impact on English Education students at Bosowa University.

Table 1. Interview Data

No	Interview Description
1.	<i>Misriyana is an English education student at the University of Bosowa who is enrolled in the 2nd class Kampus Mengajar program. Misy, her nickname, is a 6th-semester student who has completed her tenure in the Kampus Mengajar program. In the results of the interview, Misy said that they not only taught on Kampus Mengajar, but also assisted teachers in completing and compiling administrative files at school, in addition, Misy and other teaching campus students also held UKS rooms and also rearranged administration. in the school library. Even college students teach also help teachers provide learning media and also questions used in school exams. In addition, according to him, this program, students who participate in this program gain new experiences and knowledge, such as learning to be a teacher who not only teaches but also guides students to behave well in real life. Misy also said that the impact she felt when participating in this activity was very much, one of which was that she felt an improvement in her speaking ability even though she stated that she did not always use English, but combined it in English and Indonesian</i>
2.	<i>Risma Sanda is a 2017 student at the University of Bosowa majoring in English Education who participated in a program launched by the government, namely the Kampus Mengajar. Risma Sanda is a student who is a member of the 2nd generation of Kampus Mengajar. According to her, the teaching campus is a program from the government that can allow students to be directly involved in the world of education, especially students from the education department to be able to teach students directly at school. This program allows him to have so many experiences such as being able to chat directly with teachers and students at school so that it becomes a memorable experience while participating in this program. "Besides the experience, the Kampus Mengajar has given me knowledge in my soft skills, namely the improved public speaking that I get when I chat with teachers and I can apply it to students," he added. Risma also helps teachers in managing the administration at the school where she serves, and she also organizes training on IT development for students at the school. Risma closed the interview by saying that this program gave her a lot of experience and knowledge and felt grateful to have met so</i>

many characters and teachers at the school

3. *Vetricia is a 2018 Bosowa University student majoring in English Education who joined the Campus Teaching program in the 2nd batch period. According to her, Campus Teaching is a program that should be appreciated by the government because this program is a superior program that provides many opportunities for campus students in develop talents and also gain a lot of experience outside the campus area. In this program, not only campus students feel the impact, but teachers and students at schools also feel helped by the presence of this campus teaching program. "The teaching campus gave me a lot of experience, met many new friends, met teachers and students at school, and also got certificates and pocket money," he continued. In addition, his listening and speaking skills also improved because Ica, as he is usually called, practiced it with his fellow campus participants, teaching teachers and students in class. This program, not only teaches students in improving literacy and numeracy, but campus students teach also play a role in assisting teachers in arranging school administration. "From what we heard from the teachers, they felt helped by this program, they felt a lot of impact from this program, especially in improving students' knowledge and behavior at school, and we didn't forget to remind them to always be kind to others," he concluded*
 4. *Mr. Andy Hamzah Fansury is a lecturer at the University of Bosowa and is also the Head of the Postgraduate study program majoring in English education and the head of the Mandarin language study program. Mr. Fans, as he is familiarly called, are assigned by students on campus, and also registered as a course lecturer in the English education department, according to him, Kampus Mengajar is a very good program from the government because it can improve students' ability to teach and also gain a lot of experience. However, on the other hand, Mr. Fans have not been able to judge that with this program students' speaking skills have increased significantly, but with this program, according to Mr. Fans, there is a slight change in the ability of students who participate in Kampus Mengajar compared to students who do not participate in Kampus Mengajar. In addition, students also gain a lot of knowledge and experience with this program regardless of the PPL program held on campus. The quality of students in teaching and also participation in the learning process is also considered to have greatly improved with the presence of this Kampus Mengajar program*
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From the interview data above, the findings are categorized into several key areas:

a. Enhanced Speaking Skills

The most significant outcome of the Kampus Mengajar program was the enhancement of English speaking skills among participants. Students reported an increased ability to communicate more fluently and confidently in English. This improvement was not limited to academic contexts; many students experienced a boost in their everyday conversational abilities, allowing them to engage more effectively in English-speaking environments (Suyatno et al., 2023).

Alongside linguistic proficiency, there was a noticeable increase in students' confidence when speaking in public settings. This newfound confidence was attributed to the hands-on teaching experiences and interactions with diverse groups of people (Akmalina & Prastyo, 2023), including peers, teachers, and school students, which the program facilitated.

The practical application of theoretical knowledge gained in classrooms was a key factor in this improvement. Students were able to practice and refine their speaking skills in real-world scenarios, thus bridging the gap between theoretical learning and practical application.

b. Broader Educational Impact

The Kampus Mengajar program offered students a variety of educational experiences outside the traditional classroom setting. Participants engaged in activities such as assisting teachers with administrative tasks, organizing health and IT seminars, and managing school libraries. These activities provided a holistic learning experience, contributing to the participants' overall educational development.

Based on the interview data, students not only improved their speaking skills but also developed a deeper understanding of teaching methodologies and educational practices. This was particularly evident in their approach to literacy and numeracy education, where they implemented innovative teaching strategies learned during the program. Furthermore, the program played a pivotal role in the development of essential soft skills such as teamwork, leadership, and time management. Engaging in various organizational and administrative tasks allowed students to hone these skills, which are crucial for their future professional careers.

c. Social and Professional Development

The Networking and Relationship Building of the *Kampus Mengajar* program fostered significant networking opportunities. Students interacted with a range of individuals including teachers, educational staff, and fellow students. These interactions were instrumental in building a professional network, which is valuable for their future career prospects. Additionally, students gained exposure to diverse perspectives and teaching environments. This exposure was beneficial in broadening their understanding of the educational landscape, allowing them to appreciate the complexities and challenges of the teaching profession.

Discussion

The findings of the Kampus Mengajar program at Bosowa University offer valuable insights into the development of students' speaking skills and overall educational growth. A significant improvement in students' speaking skills was observed, supporting the theory that immersive, practical experiences are crucial for language acquisition. This aligns with Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1992), which emphasizes the importance of meaningful interaction in the target language for effective language development. The Kampus Mengajar program provided an environment rich in such interactions, thereby not only enhancing language proficiency but also boosting students' confidence in public speaking (Noviana & Oktaviani, 2022; Sinaga et al., 2023).

In terms of holistic educational development, the program's emphasis on a variety of activities beyond conventional classroom teaching mirrors contemporary educational theories that advocate for experiential learning (Maipita et al., 2020). This is exemplified by Kolb's

Experiential Learning Theory (Bergsteiner et al., 2010), which views learning as a process where knowledge is created through transforming experience. The program enabled students to apply their theoretical knowledge in practical settings, significantly enhancing their overall learning experience.

Furthermore, the study observed an increase in soft skills such as teamwork, leadership, and time management among the participants. This finding is in line with current 21st-century educational research, which underscores the importance of these skills in modern educational environments. The development of these skills is critical, as they are increasingly recognized as essential for success in both academic and professional realms.

The improvements in language and soft skills identified in this study corroborate existing literature on the efficacy of practical teaching experiences in fostering language development and professional skills (Harizaj & Hajrulla, 2017). Numerous studies reinforce the notion that real-world teaching experiences significantly enhance not only subject-specific knowledge but also crucial transferable skills, which are indispensable for future career success. This concurrence suggests a broad consensus in educational research regarding the value of practical experiences in teaching environments.

When considering the implications for future educational practice, the findings of this study have significant relevance. For curriculum design in language education, the integration of practical teaching experiences appears to be a beneficial strategy. These experiences provide students with a real-world context for applying their language skills, thus enhancing both linguistic abilities and professional competencies. This approach could revolutionize language education, making it more relevant and effective for students (Rohiyatussakinah, 2021; Krishnapatria, 2021).

Finally, the study has implications for teacher training programs. Incorporating elements that provide hands-on teaching experience could be vital in adequately preparing future educators (Fuadi & Irdalisa, 2021). Such experiences allow prospective teachers to gain a deeper, more practical understanding of teaching methodologies and classroom management. This experiential approach to teacher training could lead to the development of more well-rounded, competent educators who are better equipped to face the challenges of modern educational environments.

CONCLUSION

The study on the Kampus Mengajar program at Bosowa University has yielded insightful findings on the impact of practical teaching experiences on the development of English speaking skills and other competencies among English Education students. The program not only enhanced students' linguistic abilities but also facilitated their overall educational development, including the improvement of vital soft skills such as leadership, public speaking, and social interaction.

Key findings indicate that hands-on experience in a real-world teaching environment significantly boosts students' confidence in using English in both academic and everyday settings. The program's diverse activities, ranging from administrative tasks to organizing seminars, provided students with a holistic learning experience, going beyond the traditional classroom environment. This approach aligns with contemporary educational theories that emphasize experiential learning as a cornerstone of effective education.

Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of such programs in teacher training curricula. The Kampus Mengajar initiative serves as a model for integrating practical teaching experiences, demonstrating their value in preparing future educators with the skills and confidence necessary for successful careers.

However, the study also acknowledges its limitations, including a small sample size and reliance on self-reported data. Future research should aim to address these limitations,

perhaps by expanding the sample size and incorporating more objective measures of skill development.

Overall, the Kampus Mengajar program at Bosowa University represents a significant step forward in English language education. Its success underscores the need for educational institutions to embrace practical teaching experiences as an integral part of their curricula. Such experiences not only enhance linguistic proficiency but also contribute to the comprehensive development of students, equipping them with the skills and confidence needed in their professional lives.

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