

# **THE IMPACT OF USING MOTHER TONGUE ON STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS IN ESL CLASSROOM**

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**UNIVERSITI PENDIDIKAN SULTAN IDRIS**

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SKILLS IN ESL CLASSROOM**

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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the work in this research paper is my own except for the quotations and summaries which I have duly acknowledged.

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## DEDICATION

I dedicate my dissertation work to my love ones who at least did their best part to help me finish it.

My parents Vincent S/O D. Arokiasamy and Ramayee D/O Ponnusamy as my source of inspiration. Without their warm love and emotional support, this project would not have been made possible.

My loving and supportive supervisor

Dr. Puteri Zarina binti Megat Khalid

Thank you for your endless guidance, moral support and words of encouragement in realization of this work.

My friends for being my best cheerleaders and motivation throughout the process

Last but not least

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## ABSTRACT

The English language plays a crucial role in everyone's life. The English language is a universal language and it is important to learn it properly, especially for the purpose of communication. However, ESL students are still struggling to learn and communicate by using the English language. Instead, they just prefer to communicate with their friends and teachers using their mother tongue in the classroom. Therefore, each and every student should give more importance to the English language. This qualitative case study aims to study the impacts of using mother tongue on students' speaking skills in ESL classrooms. A systematic literature review based on the data was performed from thirty different articles pertaining to the use of mother tongue in ESL classrooms. Specifically, this paper focuses on how the use of mother tongue affects students and their speaking skills in ESL classrooms. The perceptions of using mother tongue by students in ESL classrooms are also discussed in this study. Based on the findings, it is proven that mother tongue helps students in various ways to learn the English language in the ESL classroom. This research has significantly provided justification on the impacts of using mother tongue by students in ESL classrooms as well as its effect on students' speaking skills in general.

**Keywords:** Communication, mother tongue, English language, perceptions, impacts



## KESAN PENGGUNAAN BAHASA IBUNDA TERHADAP KEMAHIRAN PERTUTURAN PELAJAR DI BILIK DARJAH ESL

### ABSTRAK

Bahasa Inggeris memainkan peranan yang sangat penting dalam kehidupan setiap orang. bahasa Inggeris merupakan bahasa sejagat dan sangat penting untuk mempelajari dengan betul dan teratur, terutamanya untuk tujuan berkomunikasi. Walaubagaimanapun, pelajar masih bersusah payah untuk mempelajari dan berkomunikasi dengan menggunakan bahasa Inggeris secara betul. Pelajar berasa lebih selesa untuk berkomunikasi dengan menggunakan bahasa ibunda bersama dengan rakan dan guru mereka. Oleh itu, pelajar perlu memberi kepentingan terhadap pembelajaran dan penguasaan bahasa Inggeris. Kajian kes kualitatif ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji kesan penggunaan bahasa ibunda terhadap kemahiran bertutur di dalam kelas oleh pelajar. Kajian literatur sistematik berdasarkan data telah dilakukan daripada tiga puluh artikel berbeza yang berkaitan dengan penggunaan bahasa ibunda di dalam kelas. Secara khususnya, kertas kerja ini memberi fokus kepada bagaimana penggunaan bahasa ibunda mempengaruhi kemahiran pertuturan pelajar di dalam bilik darjah ESL. Persepsi pelajar terhadap penggunaan bahasa ibunda juga turut dibincang dalam kajian ini. Berdasarkan dapatan kajian, terbukti bahawa bahasa ibunda banyak membantu pelajar dalam pelbagai aspek untuk mempelajari bahasa Inggeris di dalam bilik darjah ESL. Kajian ini telah memberikan justifikasi secara signifikan terhadap kesan penggunaan bahasa ibunda oleh pelajar dan juga kesannya terhadap kemahiran pertuturan pelajar di dalam bilik darjah ESL.

**Kata Kunci:** bahasa ibunda, berkomunikasi, bahasa Inggeris, bilik darjah

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

English language is a very important language in this modern era and it is an undeniable truth. English language is widely used all around the world by all the people. English language is a universal language and wherever we go English language is a good and easy medium to communicate with others. English language is playing an integral part in everyone's life as we are using English language in various fields. According to Mohamad Ahmad Saleem Khasawneh (2022) English is the language which plays the role of communication and understanding between many countries of the world, as it is the language of political and scientific conferences and forums, and the language of publishing and scientific research in many fields, especially technical and medical ones. This clearly implies that English language is widely used in all the fields as an important medium. Education is one of the important fields where English language is used every day and very crucial for students to learn English language since school. English language is providing many opportunities to many and therefore each and everyone must give equal importance to English language. Students are really facing many challenges to learn the English language in the ESL classroom, one of the challenges is they were unable to communicate in English language in the classroom instead





communicating using their mother tongue. Students have no choice as they have very low proficiency in English language (second language) and end up using mother tongue to communicate with their friends or teachers in classroom, to ask questions and to answer teachers' questions.

### 1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

English language as a second language is very important for students to learn in the classroom. Ministry of Education and all educators are playing their role to enhance the learning of English language among students in classroom but still the proficiency and learning of English language among students are questionable. This is an alarming situation as our country is keep stressing on the importances of learning English language but all of us are keep trying our best to grasp English language. According to Rahmat (2022) Malaysia is one of the countries where English language is given more importance especially during the pandemic. Moreover, all the information online is written in English and this motivates many to learn and enhance their English language.

Learning a second language is always difficult. They tend to acquire their first language (mother tongue) more easily and it is a known fact that it will definitely take time for students to acquire second language in classroom. Their level of acquisition in their first language (mother tongue) is higher compared to second language. Students tend to use their first language (mother tongue) more than second language in the ESL classroom which poses a huge problem to teachers. This is because, when mother tongue overtakes second language or English language, students will never learn the second





language properly and they will have a very poor chance to enhance their second language in the classroom. Students will eventually lose the interest in the second language and soon they will stop using the language at all in the classroom.

It is not a very easy job to fully make students use a second language in the classroom as their L1 is better and fluent than L2, but still many measures need to be taken to solve this issue because English language is very important and students must learn it as a second language. Educators are doing their best to make sure that students can enhance their second language and learn English well. According to Kosimov (2022) teachers should design assessments and use them according to the students' needs. Assessments is playing a crucial role in improving the quality of the course. This clearly tells that teacher should prepare assignments or tests that fits students' capability



## 1.2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Learning English Language is a must for students in an ESL classroom where they are learning English language as a second language, but students are really struggling to learn the language. To them, learning English is always a big challenge. This is a huge problem in many schools around Malaysia. Second language acquisition is not something very easy for students and to be more specific it is really hard when it comes to learning a new language.





According to Spahiu (2021) it is a natural tendency to think that some grammatical functions of the second language is similar with native language. “Learners typically make errors or have learning difficulties that are characteristic of their particular language background”. This implies that sometimes students are facing same characteristics of language in both L1 and L2 but they cannot understand the second language properly that feeds their understanding.

Students keep using mother tongue in classroom no matter during the lesson or just to communicate with their friends. Whenever teacher asks questions to students, students were unable to reply using the English language instead they will reply in their native language where it disturbs the classroom interaction between students and teachers.



### **1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

Below are the research objectives for this study:

1.3.1 To determine the effects of using mother tongue in ESL Classroom on the students’ speaking skills.

1.3.2 To analyse the ESL students’ perception of the use of their mother tongue during the ESL speaking lessons.

### **1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

This research aims to answer the following questions:



1.4.1 What are the effects of using mother tongue in ESL Classroom on the students' speaking skills?

1.4.2 What are the ESL students' perceptions of the use of their mother tongue during the ESL speaking lessons?

## 1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

By the end of this research, teachers would be able to find out the reasons on why students are keep using mother tongue in the ESL classroom, and will know the effects on using mother tongue as a tool of communication in classroom. Furthermore, teachers will get to know about the side effects of this issue and they can take measures to avoid this issue in the ESL classroom. Teachers can make changes and they also tend to help students to overcome this issue. This is because, it is not only to help teachers but to help students too where teachers can help their students to improve their language proficiency. This research can be a reference for future researchers to know the effects of using native language in classroom and the reasons behind why students using their mother tongue in classroom.

## 1.6 CONCLUSION

In short, it can be said that teachers or educators need to know about their students in classroom so that they can help them in language problem and most importantly on speaking skills of students. Students sometimes unable to communicate in second language or in English language in classroom but teachers need to identify them and



help them to overcome this issue. Students really need teachers in this situation as English language is very important and it is an undeniable truth, therefore teachers must know how to solve this issue and enable students to learn English language as a second language in ESL classroom. Teachers are the hope for the students. Speaking skill is very crucial in students' life and therefore teachers are playing an important role on enhance students' speaking ability.

