

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Research Background

This research aims to investigate the correlation between students' oral performance and their writing ability in English at a *pesantren* in West Java. English language skills, particularly in speaking and writing, are essential for students' academic and professional success (Brown, 2007; Harmer, 2007). In *pesantren*-based education, particularly in institutions that implement English programs or bilingual curricula, students are often encouraged to use English intensively during both academic and non-academic activities. According to Richards and Renandya (2002), such environments foster the daily use of English through structured practices like classroom discussions, public speaking forums, and informal conversations with peers and teachers. These English-enriched settings are designed to enhance students' communicative competence in real-life contexts. Despite the focus on these skills, students often face challenges in balancing their speaking and writing ability (Nation, 2009; Ur, 1996).

Students must be able to write effectively, logically, and coherently in order to demonstrate their critical writing ability (Weigle, 2002). Students' writing communication Ability are assessed through writing tests that concentrate on vocabulary, grammar, and organization (Weigle, 2002). Beyond gauging students' comprehension of the course oral performance, these writing ability examine their capacity for effective writing communication by incorporating spoken vocabulary and grammar into writing work (Brown, 2004). Speaking and writing skills are closely related since they both use similar language and cognitive resources, and mastery of one can have a beneficial impact on the other.

Although the relationship between speaking and writing has been studied separately, there has been limited research on how writing ability performance specifically correlates with oral performance, particularly in a *pesantren* context. Previous studies have often explored these skills in isolation, but there

is a need to understand how these skills interact in environments like *pesantren*, where English is actively used for both academic and daily communication (Richards & Renandya, 2002). This research seeks to fill that gap by examining the correlation between students' writing ability performance and their oral performance, specifically through arrangement Writing tasks.

This study is important because understanding how speaking and writing ability are interconnected can help educators design integrated lesson plans that simultaneously oral performance both skills (Hyland, 2004). Furthermore, this research adds to the growing body of literature on skill transfer in second or foreign language learning, where cognitive and linguistic resources from one skill support the oral performance of another (Cummins, 1981; Ellis, 2008). Such insights are especially valuable in *pesantren* settings, where speaking fluency is often emphasized, but the impact on writing proficiency is frequently overlooked (Brown, 2007; Nation & writing ability on, 2009).

Some previous studies have explored the relationship between speaking and writing skills in English language learning. Rahman and Suryanto (2022) found a small positive correlation ($r=0.0776$) between speaking and writing skills, indicating that writing ability in one area does not significantly affect the other. Lestari et al. (2019) also examined the relationship between English learning anxiety and both speaking and writing achievement, finding weak negative correlations ($r=-0.269$) and ($r=-0.213$). Similarly, Phillips (1992) highlighted the detrimental effects of language learning anxiety on students' speaking Ability, underlining the importance of affective factors. Although these studies provide initial insights, there remains a significant gap in research regarding the direct relationship between speaking performance and writing ability in a *pesantren* context. Therefore, this study aims to bridge that gap by focusing on students in a *pesantren* environment, where intensive use of English may influence speaking and writing skills in ways that differ from other educational settings.

Thus, there remains a significant gap in understanding how intensive oral English use in *pesantren* contexts influences students' writing ability, and

whether proficiency in speaking predicts proficiency in writing. The present study seeks to fill this gap by examining the correlation between students' oral performance and their writing ability results at Al-Mu'awanah. Understanding this relationship is crucial for improving curriculum design, particularly by integrating oral communication activities with writing instruction. As Hyland (2004) argues, linking speaking and writing within the same pedagogical cycle helps learners transfer organizational and grammatical competence across modalities. This study, therefore, not only contributes to the theoretical discussion of skill transfer (Cummins, 1981; Swain, 1985) but also provides practical insights for teachers in *pesantren* to oral performance more integrated teaching strategies that enhance both oral and writing proficiency simultaneously.

B. Research Questions

The primary aim of this research is to explore the relationship between students' oral performance and their writing ability in English. As proficiency in both speaking and writing plays a crucial role in language acquisition, understanding the correlation between these two skills is essential for educators in enhancing students' overall language competence. Based on this context, the following research questions are formulated:

1. What are the students' oral performance in English?
2. What are the students' writing ability in English based on their writing ability?
3. What is the correlation between students' oral exam performance and their writing ability in English?

C. Research Purposes

This study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of students' English language skills, specifically focusing on their speaking and writing ability. The research seeks to fill the gap in understanding the relationship between oral and writing communication in language learning. The specific purposes of this research are:

1. To describe the level of students' oral exam performance in English.
2. To identify the students' writing ability in English based on the writing ability.

3. To determine the correlation between students' oral exam performance and their writing ability in English.

D. Research Significances

1. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this study advances knowledge of the relationship between English writing skills and spoken performance, especially in a *pesantren* setting. The research supports ideas of skill transfer in second language acquisition by examining the association between students' writing ability based on the writing ability and their oral performance, including their conversational, vocabulary, and tenses skills. In addition to highlighting how gains in one skill (oral) may help oral performance in another (writing), this study advances the theoretical understanding of the interdependence of productive language capacities (Cummins, 1981; Brown, 2007). This study also contributes to the collection of research that examines the use of oral performance particularly in public speaking as a source of information for evaluating writing and speaking skills.

2. Practical Significance

a. For Teacher

The results of this study can assist English teachers in *pesantren* environments in creating more integrated and successful teaching methods that connect writing and speaking Ability. Teachers can oral performance targeted instructional strategies and assessment tools that support the simultaneous oral performance of both skills by having a better understanding of the relationship between students' oral performance particularly their conversational, vocabulary-based, and tenses skills and their writing ability. Furthermore, using public speaking data to evaluate oral performance provides information about how speaking exercises outside of the classroom can be utilized to evaluate and improve language proficiency in a more thorough manner.

b. For Future Researchers

This study provides a basis for future researchers to further explore the relationship between students' oral performance and their writing ability in English. The inclusion of aspects such as conversation skills, vocabulary, tenses,

and public speaking performance can serve as a valuable reference for oral performance more holistic assessment tools. These insights can guide future research into other factors that influence students' language skills, such as anxiety, motivation, or external learning environments. Furthermore, this study provides a foundation for exploring how these two language skills can be integrated into effective teaching and assessment practices in *pesantren* contexts.

This study focused on examining the correlation between grade 12 students' oral performance and writing skills in English at a West Java *pesantren*. The study focused on measuring oral performance, paying particular emphasis to vocabulary usage, tenses, and conversation skills. It also analyzed writing ability using essay writing assignments that evaluated writing coherence, grammar, and vocabulary. The study examined the relationship between students' writing performance and their oral performance Ability, specifically in structured speaking activities like public speaking and spontaneous communication. External factors such as students' social background, cultural context, or exposure to media, which have been found to influence language oral performance (Lightbown & Spada, 2020; Ortega, 2014), were not included within the oral performance of this study. The aim was to isolate and measure the direct relationship between oral performance and writing ability within a *pesantren* context, without accounting for additional variables that might affect language learning.

E. Conceptual Framework

Based on the idea of skill transfer, this study examines the relationship between students' oral performance and their English writing skills, especially in the setting of second language learning. The link between oral and writing skills is essential for comprehending overall language proficiency because, despite being evaluated using separate modalities, they both rely on similar cognitive and linguistic resources. According to the theory of skill transfer (Cummins, 1981), mastery in one modality speaking, for example can help and improve the oral performance of another, like writing. Recent studies, such as those by Pérez & Llamas (2021), reinforce this notion by highlighting the overlap of lexical and

grammatical resources between speaking and writing tasks, which can improve writing performance. Furthermore, Sociocultural Learning Theory (Vygotsky, 1978) underscores the importance of social interaction in language acquisition. In environments like *pesantren*, where English is used in both formal and informal settings, students' regular engagement in spoken communication helps internalize linguistic structures, which are later applied to writing tasks.

The study focuses on two main variables: students' oral performance and their writing ability. Oral performance is evaluated through fluency, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and comprehension, which align with the components outlined in Skehan's (2016) Complexity-Accuracy-Fluency (CAF) model. Fluency and accuracy in speaking are shown to positively affect cognitive engagement, leading to better writing expression. Writing ability, on the other hand, are assessed through writing ability that measure organization of ideas, grammar, vocabulary, coherence, and content, reflecting how well students can structure and communicate their ideas in writing form.

The correlation between these two variables is the central focus of this study, which hypothesizes that improvement in oral performance will positively impact writing ability, due to the shared cognitive and linguistic processes involved in both speaking and writing. This relationship is theoretically underpinned by the idea that speaking and writing, although distinct in their modality, both require students to employ similar linguistic competencies, such as grammar and vocabulary.

As a result, it is anticipated that enhancing oral performance like accuracy and fluency will enhance writing ability. This is consistent with research from Swain's (1985) Output Hypothesis, which contends that language production in both speaking and writing encourages deeper processing of linguistic structures. The theoretical framework integrates Sociocultural Learning Theory and Skill Transfer Theory to offer a thorough understanding of the connections between these Ability in a *pesantren* setting where English is utilized interactively in everyday and academic interactions.

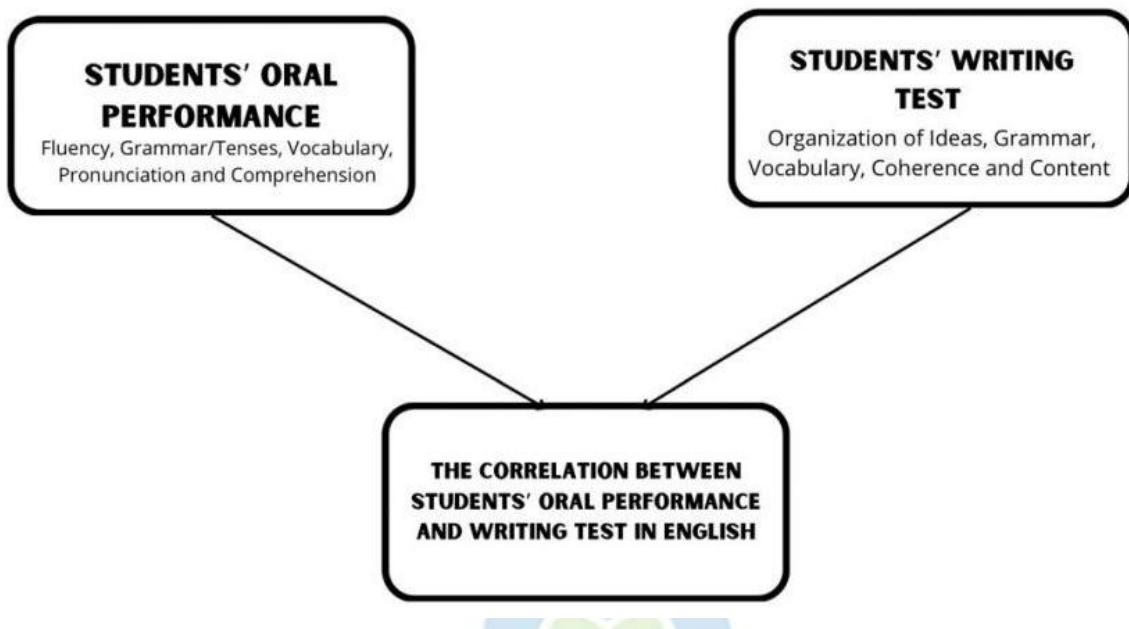


Figure 1. 1 Conceptual Framework of the Study

F. Previous Study

To establish a strong foundation for the current research, it is essential to examine previous studies that have explored the relationship between speaking and writing skills in English language learning. Reviewing earlier findings helps identify existing gaps in the literature, understand different methodological approaches, and position this study within the broader academic context. The following studies offer insight into how speaking and writing ability may be related, particularly in second language acquisition.

First, a study conducted by Lestari, Loeneto, and Ihsan (2019) examined the relationship between English learning anxiety, speaking performance, and writing achievement among high school students. Using a correlational quantitative design with Pearson product-moment correlation and linear regression analysis, the study involved 112 eleventh-grade students from Srijaya Negara High School Palembang Indonesia. Data were gathered using a questionnaire based on the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and performance assessments in speaking and writing. The study found weak negative correlations between learning anxiety and both speaking ($r = -0.269$) and

writing achievement ($r = -0.213$), indicating that higher anxiety levels were associated with lower performance in both skills.

Second, Kung (2017) explored the relationship between writing skills and oral performance among Taiwanese university students. The study, conducted using a quantitative design and multivariate linear regression, involved 32 randomly selected students from two writing classes. Kung (2017) found that students from northern Taiwan performed better than those from the southern regions in both writing and oral communication, suggesting educational disparities influenced by geographical factors. The study also recommended further qualitative exploration of how writing and oral skills influence one another.

Third, Rahman and Suryanto (2022) investigated the correlation between English writing and speaking skills among 49 fifth-semester students at Nurul Jadid University, East Java, Indonesia. The study applied a quantitative correlational design using final-semester oral and writing tests. Results showed a very weak positive correlation ($r = 0.0776$), indicating minimal relationship between the two skills. The authors suggested that other factors such as teaching strategies or student motivation may have a stronger influence on language oral performance and should be explored in future research.

The three previous studies explored the relationship between writing and speaking skills from various perspectives. Kung (2017) focused on how writing skills influence oral performance and identified regional disparities in education, indicating that environmental and demographic factors may play a significant role in language oral performance. Rahman and Suryanto (2022), on the other hand, found a very weak correlation between writing and speaking skills among fifth-semester students at Nurul Jadid University, East Java, Indonesia, suggesting that these two competencies might oral performance independently in formal EFL university contexts. This finding highlights the importance of exploring intervening variables such as instructional design or student motivation. Meanwhile, Lestari, Loeneto, and Ihsan (2019) analyzed the influence of affective factors specifically language learning anxiety on both speaking and writing skills,

revealing that emotional and psychological aspects should not be overlooked in language learning research.

Despite the insightful findings of these studies, none of them specifically investigate the relationship between oral performance and writing test scores in a *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) environment, where students are regularly immersed in English through both formal instruction and informal daily interactions. This immersion creates a unique learning context that may shape the correlation between oral and writing skills differently compared to general school or university settings. Therefore, this study aims to fill that gap by focusing on students in a *pesantren* environment. It contributes to the growing body of literature on skill transfer in second language acquisition and offers practical insights for educators to design more integrated speaking and writing instruction tailored to immersive environments.

