

## AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN SPEAKING ENGLISH

*Analisis Kesulitan Mahasiswa dalam Berbicara Bahasa Inggris*

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to find out the causes of students' difficulties in speaking English. This research uses descriptive quantitative method. In collecting data, the researcher used a closed questionnaire and also a Liker scale to determine the factors that cause students' difficulties in speaking. Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires to 30 students of class XI IPS. The results of this study indicate that the inhibiting factors, having nothing to say, the lack of participants and the use of the mother tongue can be a source of student difficulties. From these four aspects, the results showed that 72.40% of students experienced inhibition, 60% could nothing to say, 60.93% low participations and 64.4% used their mother tongue. It can be concluded that of the four factors there is one factor that shows high presentation value, namely the obstacle where most students have obstacles in speaking English so they find it difficult to speak.

**Keywords:** Difficulty Factors, Speaking, Speaking Difficulty

### ABSTRAK

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui penyebab kesulitan siswa dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kuantitatif. Dalam mengumpulkan data, peneliti menggunakan angket tertutup dan juga skala Liker untuk mengetahui faktor-faktor yang menyebabkan kesulitan siswa dalam berbicara. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan menyebarkan angket kepada 30 siswa kelas XI IPS. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa faktor penghambat, tidak ada yang bisa dikatakan, kurangnya peserta dan penggunaan bahasa ibu dapat menjadi sumber kesulitan siswa. Dari keempat aspek tersebut, hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa 72,40% siswa mengalami inhibisi, 60% tidak bisa berkata apa-apa, 60,93% partisipasi rendah dan 64,4% menggunakan bahasa ibu. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa dari keempat faktor tersebut terdapat satu faktor yang menunjukkan nilai presentasi yang tinggi, yaitu kendala dimana sebagian besar siswa memiliki hambatan dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris sehingga sulit untuk berbicara.

**Kata Kunci:** Berbicara, Faktor Kesulitan, Kesulitan Berbicara

## A. INTRODUCTION

English is a language that is being studied by many people. It plays an important role in constructing the global aspects such as technology, business, agriculture, economics, science, research, social interaction, application, etc (Syaripuddin, 2022b). Speaking English has become a trend in the world. Herni and Ayu (2021) said that many people use English as their second language to communicate with other people from various countries, as well as cultural backgrounds. Learning to speak is the most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language (Shteiwi & Hamuda, 2016).

In studying English, Angraini et al. (2022) argues that there are four competencies that need to be understood in learning English, in particular: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Because these four competencies can help students understand English without difficulty. Speaking is one of the skills that must be mastered in learning English because it can help us express ourselves to others, convey our thoughts, spell words well, and make other people believe and say what they want to say. As stated by Rao (2019) that speaking is one of the important skills that must be mastered by English learners or second language learners.

Herni and Ayu (2021) say that English is difficult for Indonesian students because speaking English is not their mother tongue. Bueno et al. (2006) stated that many students who have studied English for years but are not fluent in speaking English properly and correctly like learning English from

school to university, but still cannot speak English well. Students may understand a little what people say in English. According to Afisa (2015) there are some difficulties experienced by students in speaking English, namely very minimal knowledge of vocabulary, difficulty in pronouncing words, students are still confused in composing words and students have difficulties in grammar and pronunciation.

Based on the background, the research question is: What are the causes students' difficulties is speaking English in senior high school?

### a. The Definition of Speaking

Many definitions of speaking have been put forward by researchers in language studies. Gert & Hans (2008) in Efrizal (2012) defines speaking as a way of conveying what people want to say such as ideas, opinions, information, and information. Meaning that speaking is an expression and its purpose is meaningful. One can share their thoughts, opinions, information, and knowledge. Therefore, the ability to speak has a dual function in everyday life, such as: to convey ideas or opinions and tell something orally. One can learn English if they use native English. For example, they can try to talk in daily activities such as simple conversation. According to Putri et al. (2020) argues that speaking is conveying one's events, ideas, thoughts, feelings to others by using spoken language in a clear, logical, directed and systematic manner, so as to understand other people's intentions. It also consists of apprehending, synthesizing, analyzing, and evaluating the ideas (Syaripuddin & Ammade, 2023). Therefore, speaking is

an important skill when teaching and learning English because speaking makes it easy to communicate with someone interactively.

According to Jones et al. (2017) a person's success in speaking is seen from his ability to speak the language. There are many factors that influence the success of learning a language that doesn't go well. It can be concluded from the discussion above is what was said, in views, feelings, and thoughts. What can you hear say. Therefore, this process is called the interaction of the two parties. According to Bailey (2005) speaking is a productive speaking skill. It includes production systematically expresses meaning in words. Brown (2001) defined speech competences in language teaching is the ability to express thoughts, feelings, opinions and wishes when performing speaking tasks in class.

#### **b. The Nature of Speaking English**

In general speaking, can be interpreted as conveying such as ideas, thoughts, one's person's thoughts to others. Speaking skill is one of the skills that can be developed through practice. By speaking can make the other person understand what is meant. As stated by Nurgiyantoro (2010) argues that speaking is an activity of giving and receiving language, as well as conveying ideas and messages to the interlocutor at the same time in order to receive the ideas and messages conveyed by the interlocutor.

An important part of learning English is speaking; linguistics is very influential on students' speaking ability. Spolsky and Hult (2008) stated that linguistics consists of vocabulary and grammar. Ramyani (2019) said that grammar is important to learn because

grammar regulates the use of words and sentences to show certain meanings, besides grammar is how words are put together to make correct sentences. Then, Salam and Nurnisa (2021) also explained that knowledge and mastery of vocabulary had a major influence on language proficiency and use. This means that vocabulary is very important to be mastered to improve students' skills. With vocabulary students can speak English.

#### **c. The difficulties in Speaking English**

Speaking English is not easy, when speaking English students face many problems. Desmayani et al. (2019) said that there are several problems in speaking English namely, cultural, language problems, and communication difficulties. Speaking is a skill that is a little difficult to master because it requires knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Meanwhile, according to Chen (2009) the difficulties that are often experienced by students are lack of self-confidence, not fluent in speaking English and also do not memorize vocabulary. In addition, Heriansyah (2012) said that speaking difficulties occur because of little knowledge of vocabulary; don't know how to use grammar, difficult in pronunciation. So do not know to say. Dalem (2017) also stated the same thing that students were afraid to make mistakes when speaking for fear of being laughed at, feeling embarrassed and lacking confidence.

Meanwhile, Inayah and Lisdawati (2017) said that students understand English well but students still have difficulty and do not feel comfortable when practicing speaking. With this, many students understand English, but

they still feel they can't speak because they have difficulties in speaking such as pronunciation problems, lack of vocabulary mastery, and are also embarrassed to look wrong in front of their friends. That is what underlies the students' speaking performance does not increase.

### **e. The Factors Contribution in Difficulty Speaking English**

Speaking as one of the skills in learning English that must be mastered by students. It is one of the skills that can be developed through practice (Syaripuddin, 2022). However, most of students are still found several factors cause difficulties in speaking well in English. According to Ur (1996) there are four mains' factors: (1). Inhibition, (2). Nothing to say, (3). Low participation, and (4). Mother tongue used.

#### **1. Inhibition**

Most students often inhibited in trying to say something when speaking a foreign language in class. Such as worried about making mistakes afraid of being commented on, or simply embarrassed by the listeners paying attention. According to Latha (2012) inhibition is one of the most common factors faced by students in learning a foreign language. Sometimes students just worry about making a mistake when speaking English because they are afraid that listeners will comment on and laugh at them while speaking. So, under these conditions they had quite a high inhibition and caused them to mostly shut up. Common problems faced by students when learn

something, not only English especially speaking but also another subjects.

Anxiety is a mental disorder characterized by feelings of worry, fear or anxiety about things that can interfere with daily activities. Fear of speaking and acting according to Alfazari (2020) the language learned in a foreign language class is known as fear of speaking. The problem of students' anxiety when learning English can be in the form of learning performance. Indra (2021) said that anxiety is one that affects students in learning language, especially in English. This problem can cause students to speak less fluently. Therefore, the teacher must establish a learning climate in such a way that students can learn as easily as possible.

#### **2. Nothing to say**

Sometimes students are not inhibition, but students complain that they cannot think of what to say (Ur, 2000). Meaning they don't know what to say when they are about to speak. Students have difficulty thinking about what to say. The students couldn't think of anything to say because they didn't have the motivation to express themselves in speaking. Afisa (2015) states that students generally use Indonesian more when they have to speak English because they do not know a lot of English vocabulary. Sheila (2015) said that when students do not know vocabulary, they will spontaneously use Indonesian when they have to speak English. With a

lack of knowledge of vocabulary students do not know what to say even most students are often not confident in speaking for fear of being wrong when speaking. Then, grammar is an important part of learning English (Tasmia, 2019). By understanding grammar, speakers and writers become easy deliver information that others can understand. Lots of grammar rules that explain how words are combined, arranged, or changed to show them different kinds of meanings.

### 3. Low participations

There are only one to two participations who can speak during the lesson in a large group class, meaning that each person will have very little time to speak. This problem is exacerbated by the tendency of some students to lead, while others speak little or nothing. Petress (2001) stated that the low participation of students in class is very detrimental to student progress and hampers the ability of teachers to assess students' speaking progress.

Motivation is an important part of student learning achieving goals (Nijat et al. 2019). Motivation can easily influence students hate speaking English. In this case, motivation is just as important aspects that lead to effective communication Nunan (1999) in Nijat et. al (2019) there are many studies showings that students have a strong motivation to succeed and more likely to progress they learn and achieve better grades than

students who already do lack of motivation. There are several causes of lack of motivation, they feel quite bored during the teaching process English, do not understand what is being taught.

### 4. Mother tongue use

In classes where all students share the same mother tongue, they tend to use it because they find it easier to use the mother tongue it will be easier to understand and they feel it is not natural to speak another language or English. Students tend to use their mother tongue because using English is a bit difficult such as difficulty in pronunciation. Ghrib (2002) said that there are several problems that make it difficult for students to speak, one of which is the lack of pronunciation. With a lack of pronunciation when speaking will cause feelings of nervousness when speaking because they are not accustomed to speaking English and use intonation when speaking or in dialogue. If they speak in small groups tend to use their mother tongue it will be difficult to be able to speak especially those who are less disciplined or motivated to keep using their second language will not be able to improve students in learning to speak English.

## B. METHOD

In this study the researcher used a quantitative descriptive research design. According to Silaen (2018) quantitative research is a research procedure that



produces data in the form of numbers and is generally analyzed using descriptive or inferential statistics. The quantitative method uses a Likert scale to determine the factors causing students' difficulties in speaking English, while the descriptive method was used to explain the numbers obtained from the factors causing students' speaking difficulties.

The research subjects were class II high school students because in that class most of the students had low speaking scores. The researcher chose two classes, namely IPS 1 totaling 20 people and IPS 2 totaling 21 people. However, researchers only need 30 students to be research subjects. The sampling was based on the criteria of seeing students' speaking scores below 80, the researcher took samples from each class, namely in IPS 1 class which totaled 17 and IPS 2 class which totaled 13 based on the criteria mentioned above.

The collected data obtained from

the subject by using a questionnaire, the type of questionnaire that was used is a closed questionnaire in the form of a Likert scale. Likert scale was used to measure respondents agree and disagree with the questionnaire. Using a Likert scale on the questionnaire follows the steps based on Nazir (2005). Namely, organize the data, calculate the data, categorize the data, Meanwhile, the questions in this study were adapted from factors that can cause students' speaking difficulties as stated by Ur (1996).

### **C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **Findings**

To find out the factors that cause students' difficulties in speaking English, the researcher uses factors that can cause students' difficulties in speaking from Ur theory (1996). Percentages of factors that influence students' difficulties when speaking English can be seen in the table below.

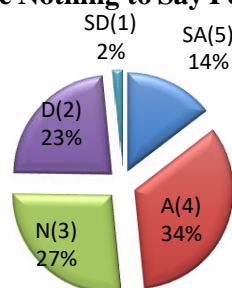
<b>No</b>	<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Inhibition	72,40	Affected
2	Nothing to say	60	Affected
3	Low participations	60,93	Affected

4	Mother tongue use	41% agree that Affected will find it difficult if they make mistakes when speaking in front of the class, because they are embarrassed to be noticed and they are not confident so they are worried when speaking will be commented on. Meanwhile, 29% of students strongly agree that speaking in front of the class causes difficulties for them. Although 25%
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Based on the table above, when measured using the interval scale from Nazir (2005), it can be seen from the four aspects that affect student difficulties, namely the inhibition aspect reaching 72% then the nothing to say aspect reaching

60% while the low participations aspect reaching 60% and mother tongue use reached 59%. With this it expressed doubts and 7% did not find it difficult because of inhibition, this shows that the number of

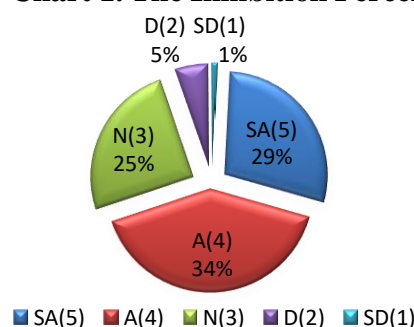
**Chart 2. The Nothing to Say Percentage**



60% while the low participations aspect reaching 60% and mother tongue use reached 59%. With this it

expressed doubts and 7% did not find it difficult because of inhibition, this shows that the number of

**Chart 1. The Inhibition Percentage**



can be said that from every aspect that may be a source of student difficulties and affects students' difficulties

students who agree and strongly agree that inhibition cause students to have difficulty getting 72% which is the effect of students' difficulties in speaking English.

For more details, the effects of each factor from each aspect can be seen from the points below.

#### a. Inhibition

From the chart above, almost

#### b. Nothing to say

The graph above shows that, almost 34% agree that they do not know what to say so that it makes it difficult for them to speak

English. and 26% of students were not sure if having nothing to say made it difficult for them to speak and 14% strongly agreed that nothing to be said would make it difficult for them to speak. Meanwhile, the percentage of disagree and strongly disagree is slightly lower, namely 24% of students disagree if nothing will be said to be a factor in their difficulty. However, the average percentage influences students' speaking difficulties.

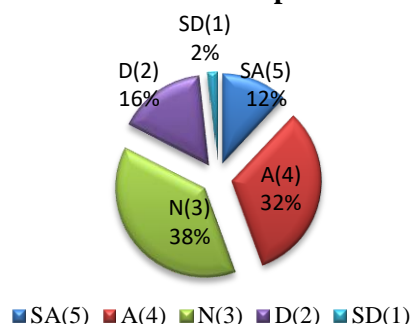
#### c. Low Participations

disagree, more agree and the results affect students' speaking difficulties.

#### d. Mother Tongue Use

The use of mother tongue shows that almost 18% of students strongly agree that the use of mother tongue is part of the factors that make it difficult for them to speak English. 31% agree and neutral 36% while disagree and strongly disagree 14%. However, because of the large number of students who agree about the use of the mother tongue, it can be categorized as quite affected

**Chart 3. The Low Participant Percentage**



For low participants 12% strongly agree that low participants are one of the factors that cause their speaking difficulties where, they are less motivated, not interested in English lessons, 32% also agree and 38% quite sure. While the remaining 16% did not agree that low participation was a factor causing students' speaking difficulties. However, when viewed from the number of students who agree and

students' difficulties in speaking English.

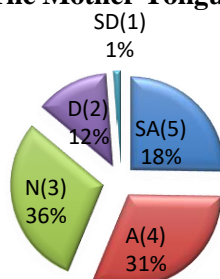
#### Discussion

Based on the results of the analysis, it is known that there are 4 factors that make it difficult for students to speak, namely: inhibition, nothing to say, low of participations, and the use of the mother tongue.

#### 1. Inhibition

According to the data

**Chart 4. The Mother Tongue Percentage**





obtained. When viewed from the percentage values obtained, there are 72% of students who stated that inhibition were one of the factors that become students' difficulties in speaking. According to Latha (2012) inhibition are one of the factors that make it difficult for students' to speaking in learning foreign languages. These inhibition make students feel anxious to start speaking, and afraid to act. This is in line with the theory put forward by Afzari (2020) that fear of speaking has a major impact on self-esteem because when a person is unable to do so, it often creates a feeling of failure to say and demonstrate what others are saying. Must be able to understand. In addition, other inhibiting factors are fear of making mistakes and lack of confidence. As a teacher the solution that can be offered to overcome these inhibiting factors is to take a personal approach to students, provide as much feedback as possible, and as much as possible invite students to always be actively involved in learning. However, this cannot have more impact if the student does not develop his learning patterns.

## 2. Nothing to Say

The data that has been obtained has nothing to say to be the cause of students' speaking difficulties. From the resulting percentage value, 60% of students stated that there was really nothing to say about their difficulties in speaking English, meaning that students did not know what to say because knowledge of vocabulary

and grammar was still lacking. Afsar and Asakereh (2016) said that students always make mistakes in speaking due to the use of wrong grammar when expressing something. From the results of student statements, almost all students find it difficult to speak English. This is because knowledge of grammar and vocabulary is very minimal. They also say that English words are hard to remember. Too bad because they will always use Indonesian dominantly several times. With this it is proven that speaking English requires mastery of vocabulary in order to be able to speak properly and correctly. For this reason, the solution that can be offered to this problem, especially for teachers, is to have more impact on students by stimulating students' vocabulary mastery at each meeting, using pictures, cards or video blog media.

## 3. Low Participations

Data obtained from the aspect of the lack of participations can be the cause of students' difficulties, but student inactivity does not mean they are difficult to speak. When viewed from the resulting percentage values, 60% of students stated that their speaking difficulties were not only caused by a lack of participation in class but due to a lack of motivation from the teacher so they were embarrassed to try to speak. In addition to the lack of motivation, students are also shy to speak. Nurdin (2014) said that most students failed to do good speaking skills. The inability of

students to speak is influenced by their own feelings, namely: shame it can be said that shyness makes it very difficult for students to be able to speak. From the results of student statements, quite a number of students stated that they felt embarrassed when speaking in English learning classes. This shows that shyness is one of the causes of students' difficulties in learning English in the classroom. Petress (2001) stated that the low participation of students in class is very detrimental to student progress and hampers the ability of teachers to assess students' speaking progress. With this, the teacher must be able to provide motivation and support to some students who are less active in speaking so they do not feel embarrassed to try to speak in class during learning.

#### 4. Mother Tongue Use

From the data that has been obtained, the use of the mother tongue has quite an effect on students' difficulties. When viewed from the percentage value produced there were 56.11% of students stated that they found it difficult to speak English because the difficulties in pronunciation and intonation used in English were very different from the intonation of the language they used so that students had quite a hard time speaking. In line with that, Ghrib (2002) in his research stated that the problem that made it difficult for students to speak English was due to a lack of mastery of pronunciation.

#### D. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings presented in the previous chapter, the researcher found that the percentage of students' difficulties in speaking English was found to be the influence of factors that could cause students' difficulties. Based on category adjusted findings on Nazir intervals (2005). Inhibition has the highest percentage value, reaching 72% which is categorized as the factor that most influences students' difficulties in speaking English.

From the data above it can be concluded that the causes of students' difficulties in speaking English are influenced by several factors. However, the factor that most influences student difficulties are the obstacle that causes students to find it difficult to speak.

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