

An Analysis of Students' Perception of Difficulties Speaking English: A Case Study at 11th Grade Students' of SMAN 7 Kota Serang

Analisis Persepsi Siswa dalam Kesulitan Berbicara Bahasa Inggris: Studi Kasus pada Siswa Kelas 11 SMAN 7 Kota Serang

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Received : 12 October 2023, Revised : 20 October 2023, Accepted : 1 November 2023

ABSTRACT

The problems raised in this research were based on field conditions located at SMAN 7 Serang City. Based on the class observations that have been carried out, several problems have been found. Among them, are students' passivity in English classes, lack of interaction and communication using English during class, and students' disinterest in speaking in English. However, in reality, speaking is an important aspect of learning a language. This is considered the key to individual success in learning a language. To assess whether he is proficient or not. In this research, the researcher tries to find the difficulties of students in speaking English by their perception. Then the data is collected by sharing the questionnaire with Thirty-one students in 11th grade and doing interviews with some students to know their perception of difficulties in speaking English. As for the results obtained from the questionnaire and interview activities, they generally regretted the teacher's learning methods, which in practice rarely used English in delivering material and teaching. On average, they think conversation practice can improve their English-speaking skills. Apart from that, another factor is the limited facilities and support for them in speaking English. Only one of them took an English course outside of school. Some conclusions from interview activities and distributing questionnaires in class 11 of SMAN 7 Kota Serang for data collection carried out by researchers include: 1. Lack of awareness of the importance of English, desire, and self-confidence in grade 11 students of SMAN 7 Kota Serang affects their ability to speak English which is accompanied by their anxiety about speaking English. 2. The influence of teachers' teaching methods and lack of motivation influence students' speaking abilities, where in their teaching methods teachers very rarely interact and communicate using English. So, students are also not motivated and encouraged to speak English in class. 3. Lack of application of English in students' daily lives so that they are not used to using English in class or outside of class. These three factors are proven to influence students' English-speaking abilities. The most important difficulty they face is the problem of pronunciation where the difficulty is based on the underlying factors.

Keywords: *Speaking, Students' Perception, Difficulties in Speaking English.*

ABSTRAK

Permasalahan yang diangkat dalam penelitian ini didasarkan pada kondisi lapangan yang terletak di SMAN 7 Kota Serang. Berdasarkan observasi kelas yang telah dilakukan, ditemukan beberapa permasalahan. Diantaranya adalah kepasifan siswa dalam kelas bahasa Inggris, kurangnya interaksi dan komunikasi menggunakan bahasa Inggris selama kelas, dan ketidaktertarikan siswa dalam berbicara dalam bahasa Inggris. Namun pada kenyataannya, berbicara merupakan aspek penting dalam mempelajari suatu bahasa. Hal ini dianggap sebagai kunci keberhasilan individu dalam mempelajari suatu bahasa. Untuk menilai apakah dia mahir atau tidak. Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti mencoba menemukan kesulitan siswa dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris berdasarkan persepsi mereka. Kemudian data dikumpulkan dengan membagikan kuesioner kepada tiga puluh satu siswa di kelas 11 dan melakukan wawancara dengan beberapa siswa untuk mengetahui persepsi mereka tentang kesulitan berbicara bahasa Inggris. Adapun

hasil yang diperoleh dari kegiatan angket dan wawancara umumnya menyayangkan metode pembelajaran guru yang pada praktiknya jarang menggunakan bahasa Inggris dalam menyampaikan materi dan pengajaran. Rata-rata mereka menganggap latihan percakapan dapat meningkatkan kemampuan berbahasa Inggris mereka. Selain itu, faktor lainnya adalah terbatasnya fasilitas dan dukungan bagi mereka dalam berbahasa Inggris. Hanya satu dari mereka yang mengambil kursus bahasa Inggris di luar sekolah. Beberapa kesimpulan dari kegiatan wawancara dan penyebaran angket di kelas 11 SMAN 7 Kota Serang untuk pengumpulan data yang dilakukan peneliti antara lain: 1. Kurangnya kesadaran akan pentingnya bahasa Inggris, keinginan, dan rasa percaya diri pada siswa kelas 11 SMAN 7 Kota Serang mempengaruhi kemampuan mereka dalam berbahasa Inggris yang disertai dengan kecemasan mereka dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris. 2. Pengaruh metode mengajar guru dan kurangnya motivasi mempengaruhi kemampuan berbicara siswa, dimana dalam metode pengajarannya guru sangat jarang berinteraksi dan berkomunikasi menggunakan bahasa Inggris. Jadi, siswa juga tidak termotivasi dan terdorong untuk berbicara bahasa Inggris di kelas. 3. Kurangnya penerapan bahasa Inggris dalam kehidupan sehari-hari siswa sehingga belum terbiasa menggunakan bahasa Inggris di kelas maupun di luar kelas. Ketiga faktor tersebut terbukti mempengaruhi kemampuan berbahasa Inggris siswa. Kesulitan terpenting yang mereka hadapi adalah masalah pengucapan dimana kesulitan tersebut didasari oleh faktor yang mendasarinya.

Kata Kunci: Berbicara, Persepsi Siswa, Kesulitan Berbicara Bahasa Inggris

1. Introduction

Learners must develop competency in four key language abilities when studying the English language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. A variety of elements, including vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and others support these abilities. Among these skills, speaking holds a pivotal role as it facilitates communication with individuals from diverse linguistic backgrounds across the world. Effective communication is essential in daily life, predominantly occurring through face-to-face interactions and conversations. Through spoken language, individuals are empowered to articulate their thoughts and engage in meaningful exchanges with others.

As noted by Hedge (2000), the significance of learning to speak English cannot be overstated. It is, indeed, a priority for students. Speaking, a form of oral communication, is an essential aspect of human life, integral to daily activities and interactions. Furthermore, Richard (2008) underscores the critical role of mastering English-speaking skills among language learners, emphasizing its priority. The main purpose of speaking is to enable learners to participate successfully in daily life communication situations. To excel in English speaking, students must not only speak fluently but also convey their ideas and emotions through speech.

Effective development of speaking skills necessitates ample opportunities for language practice. Students should be encouraged to practice speaking independently and during structured speaking lessons. Harmer (2008) highlights the motivational aspect of effective speech, emphasizing that well-organized speaking activities can foster student participation, empathy, and constructive feedback, ultimately leading to enhanced speaking proficiency. Quality speaking activities have the potential to motivate students to excel in spoken English.

When learning English speaking, students must progress through several stages to ensure comprehensibility. Thornburg (2005) defines the three important stages of speaking English as perception, structure, pronunciation, and self-examination which are necessary to ensure the audience comprehends a speaker's message. However, it is essential to acknowledge that speaking English is not a simple task. It requires the integration of various skills to construct sentences that are easily comprehensible to others. Learners of a language must contend with essential concepts such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Because of its intricacy and diverse character, speaking is sometimes regarded as the most difficult language skill to learn. The difficulties students encounter in speaking English can often be traced back to language-related problems, which have been identified as a significant factor contributing to poor

academic performance. Inadequacies in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation cause speaking difficulties (Jessica & Doris, 2007).

Athena (2004) discovered many elements that contribute to learners' difficulty speaking. These elements include difficulties such as prospects, drive, skills, behaviors, perseverance, and the confidence needed to talk successfully to recipients. To overcome these speaking difficulties, students must employ effective strategies. These strategies represent specific approaches, methods, and techniques for tackling problems or tasks. They constitute a set of deliberate plans and actions used by learners to assist in the acquisition, retention, and utilization of information (Brown, 2007). By addressing these challenges and employing effective strategies, students can enhance their speaking abilities and overcome the barriers to effective oral communication.

We selected SMAN 7 Kota Serang for our research since English was significant at this school. They recognize that speaking is required for communication whether studying or traveling abroad and that speaking English is also required for learners who will carry on their studies. Finally, some of the hurdles they experienced made it difficult for them to communicate in English. This study intends to investigate challenges faced by learners in speaking, as well as the variables that contributed to problems faced by learners in speaking and how learners could decrease their difficulties in speaking.

Learners struggle with speaking English because they lack optimism and are fearful of making errors or wrong information, in addition to other issues such as missing vocabulary and incorrect pronunciation (Maulana et al 2016). Low speaking abilities can be caused by a variety of issues, including awareness among learners, enthusiasm for learning, learner linguistic expertise, learner individuality, and speaking content (Dash 2012). Many factors contribute to difficulty communicating, including hesitation, a lack of something to say, a lack of contribution, and the usage of the mother tongue (Ur 1996).

The problems raised in this research were based on field conditions located at SMAN 7 Serang City. Based on the class observations that have been carried out, several problems have been found. Among them, are students' passivity in English classes, lack of interaction and communication using English during class, and students' disinterest in speaking in English. However, in reality, speaking is a significant aspect of learning a language. This is considered the key to individual success in learning a language. To assess whether he is proficient or not. In this research, the researcher tries to find the difficulties of students in speaking English by their perception. Then the data is collected by sharing the questionnaire with Thirty-one students in 11th grade and doing interviews with some students to know their perception of difficulties in speaking English.

Review of Related Literature

a. Speaking

The first way to connect and communicate is through speaking. People need practical English-speaking skills in the whole life aspects of this globalization era. Speaking is people's way of transmitting and sharing thoughts verbally to others. Bahadorfar and Omidvar (2014) stated that if the listeners can comprehend what someone is saying, the speaker is considered to have excellent speaking skills speaking is the act of delivering language using the mouth. In such cases, we make sounds using various parts of our bodies, including the lungs: vocal tract, vocal cords, tongue, teeth, and lips. Whether someone is effective in learning a language or not, speaking is a reference for language learners. Yule and Brown (2000, p. 45) Students learning foreign languages must master four fundamental skills: speaking, writing, listening, and reading. A speaker can use talking to communicate her thoughts, request something, exchange thoughts about lessons, and so on.

The capacity to master speaking measures how significantly a learner has progressed in learning the language. In this sense, speaking refers to people's capacity to communicate with others through the use of spoken language. Speaking is an action in which one

communicates with others. It has become an integral part of our everyday lives. When someone speaks, engages, and expresses ideas, feelings, and thoughts through language. Furthermore, they communicate to exchange information. Speaking can provide suggestions or get things done in various instances. From these experts' descriptions, people can master English speaking skills over active interaction with the respondents in delivering or expressing meaning regarding speaking skill aspects. There are pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and understanding.

b. Students' Perception

Before comprehending learners' perceptions, it is necessary to grasp what perception is and how perception is generated. As defined by Walgito (2004), perception is a process that is preceded by sensing, which is the act of receiving a signal through an individual's sensory organs. Furthermore, Unumeri (2009) stated that perception is defined as being aware of one's surroundings through bodily sensations, which indicates an individual's capacity to comprehend. Perception is described as the act of assuming an object and then giving it meaning through the senses (Qiong, 2017). In a nutshell, perception is the impression that a human obtains through a process that involves the five senses, which are processed, comprehended, and reviewed to create meaning.

The teacher's understanding of students' perceptions was critical since it allowed them to evaluate their teaching systems based on the results of learning systems. Chen and Hooswer (2010) confirmed that teachers must consider their students' perceptions to assess their teaching and learning efficacy.

c. The Difficulties in Speaking

Some features can make speaking difficult. There are major speaking difficulties encountered by the learners at this level, are errors in pronunciation, errors in grammar, and a lack of vocabulary (Ester Maji, 2022)

1. Errors in pronunciation

Almost all students in Indonesia who study English as a foreign language have a negative stereotype about studying English, particularly speaking English. Speaking a foreign language has often been a challenge for most individuals, particularly English learners (Nunan, 2003:342). Learners must make errors when learning a foreign language. These mistakes are a natural component of the learning process (Brown, 2000). According to preliminary observations, learners continue to make mistakes when speaking English, particularly in terms of pronunciation.

Pronouncing words properly is important in English because different pronunciations can give different meanings. The pronunciation error will lead to errors in understanding the speaker's speech to the person who hears the word. As a result, there will be a misinterpretation for both participants in communication (Wedana & Suryani, 2016).

2. Errors in grammar

Many explanations of grammatical errors can be found in numerous studies. Tsui (1995) defined a grammatical error in class as "anything that the educator did not accept because it was incorrect or incorrect," "anything that the educator did not want," or "anything that did not follow the guidelines that the educator wanted."

Inaccuracies are faulty patterns of speech that often appear in learner languages. They are mismeasured because they violate linguistic norms. People make blunders when speaking a foreign or second language. Since not all erroneous grammatical statements by learners were referred to as errors, distinguishing between errors and mistakes by learners is critical.

According to Rod Ellis (1997), errors are gaps in learners' knowledge caused by a lack of competence (they do not know what is correct); mistakes are lapses in performance (learners are unable to accomplish what they know). Furthermore, as defined by Dulay (1982), a mistake is a performance flaw that is either any kind of guess or a "slip". It is a

poor use of a widely accessible system. Learners who are unskilled and frequently unwilling to notice or remedy their faults cause an error.

3. The lack of vocabulary

Vocabulary plays a significant part in language learning. Acquiring vocabulary is also necessary for learning how to write, talk, read, and listen. People with a large vocabulary can successfully communicate and express themselves in both spoken and written form. Without grammar, very little can be articulated, and without vocabulary, nothing can be transmitted, according to Wilkins in Thornbury (2004: 13). This suggests that even if someone has strong grammar, it is pointless if they do not have a large vocabulary.

According to learning English vocabulary, English vocabulary differs from Indonesian in terms of form, which includes pronunciation and spelling, meaning, and word use. Furthermore, the way the term is spoken differs greatly from how it is written. Hence, people especially learners who learn English often find difficulties in learning vocabulary.

2. Methodology

Research Design

Descriptive qualitative research is what this study is. The aim of this study is to learn more about the variables that contribute to learners' speaking issues as well as how difficult it is for them to speak English. There is one variable in this study. According to Widoyoko (2012), qualitative research explains how things are built on facts and expressed in statements or words.

Instrumentation

a. Questionnaire

The survey was adapted from Hosni (2014:26), and it includes three indications, including the shortage of appropriate vocabulary, the use of native speech, and the student's perception of how embarrassing it is to make mistakes when speaking in front of their peers. According to a questionnaire adapted from Juhana (2012: 64), linguistic issues include an inadequate vocabulary, a failure to comprehend grammatical structure, and poor pronunciation.

The final point, adopted from Amwazir (2013:2), is that students often hesitate to pronounce words in English word by word because their friends often laugh when they speak in English. Students also often feel afraid to sit in the front because lecturers frequently call on those who are seated there. Several kids could not speak English well; when speaking English, students frequently employ their "Native" tongue.

The questionnaires were graded using a yes or no scale. The questionnaire consists of 12 questions with yes or no options related to English learning that takes place during class, about students' personal views about what things can hinder them, and about what difficulties they feel in learning English, especially in speaking ability.

b. Interview

The second instrument in this investigation collects data through interviews. The interview is "One of the data collection methods hold interviews or question and answer (orally) to obtain data. This is in line with Sutrisno Hadi's opinion, that the interview method is one way to obtain data and verbal questions and answers where two or more people are physically face to face." Sutrisno Hadi (1986)

Interviews are used to learn about what happens throughout the teaching and learning process, as well as the learners' difficulties with public speaking. When the students talk, an interview is also employed to collect data. In this teaching and learning process, as well as to learn about the learners' speaking difficulties. In this instrument, the researcher asks the learners about the issues they have with their speaking skills and what kind of methods they can use to improve their speaking skills.

c. Observation

The observation technique is a data collection approach that involves methodically observing and recording the facts under investigation. Observation, according to Sutrisno Hadi (1991), is a scientific approach that is described as systematically observing and recording the occurrences under investigation. The systematic observation and recording of symptoms that emerge on the study object is known as observation.

Sanafiah Faisal divides observation into three categories: participant observation, overt and covert observation (overt and covert observation), and unstructured observation.

- 1) Participant observation, in which the researcher participates in the day-to-day activities of the individual who's being watched or used as a study subject.
- 2) Frank or covert observation, when collecting data, the researcher states openly to the data source that he is conducting research. However, at some point, the researcher is not straightforward or subtle in his observations, this is if the data sought is data that is still kept secret.
- 3) Unstructured observation, this observation was carried out because the focus of the research was not yet clear. Unstructured observations are observations that are not systematically prepared about what will be studied.

Participant observation was employed by the researcher. This observation model is used by the author to collect all study data.

3. Result and Discussion

The result was obtained from the scores of students. This score was to know the percentage of students' difficulties in speaking English' perception. After getting the score, the researcher counted the number of scores. Then by viewing the highest score of each question.

Table 1. Responses of students about the student perspective in difficulties speaking English (N=31)

Question	Yes	No
Often speak English in class and outside class	11 (35,5%)	20 (64,5%)
Often speak English in daily life	2 (6,5%)	29 (93,5%)
Frequently communicate with colleagues using English (Online and Offline)	6 (19,4%)	25 (80,6%)
The teacher's way of teaching can attract students' interest in speaking English	21 (67,7%)	10 (32,3%)
Classroom learning methods can help practice English speaking skills	25 (80,6%)	6 (19,4%)
Worried about making mistakes when speaking English	25 (80,6%)	6 (19,4%)
Joining English tutoring outside of school to improve your English-speaking skills	1 (3,2%)	30 (96,8%)
Have confidence when speaking English	11 (35,5%)	20 (64,5%)
Has difficulty speaking English	24 (77,4%)	7 (22,6%)
Reading practice can improve speaking skills	25 (80,6%)	6 (19,4%)
Daily conversation practice can improve speaking skills	29 (93,5%)	2 (6,5%)

Table 2. Responses of students about the student's perspective in difficulties speaking English

Question	Errors in pronunciation	Errors in grammar	The lack of vocabulary
Major difficulties when speaking English	19 (61,3%)	8 (25,8%)	4 (12,9%)

Table 1 reveals that 11 (35.5%) students said that they often speak English in class and outside class 20 (64.5%) students denied it in this connection. When asked different questions were given to the students 2 (6.5%) students said often speak English in daily life, and 29 (93.5%) students replied that the question was the opposite not frequently speaking English in daily life. 6 (19.4%) students frequently communicate with colleagues using English, and 25 (80.6%) students said they did not frequently communicate with colleagues using English. 21 (67.7%) students said the teacher's way of teaching can attract students' interest in speaking English, and 10 (32.3%) students said the teacher's way of teaching cannot attract the students' interest in speaking English. 25 (80.6%) students said they worried about making mistakes when speaking English, and 6 (19.4%) students said they did not worry about making mistakes when speaking English. 1 (3.2%) student said they joined English tutoring outside of school to improve their English-speaking skills, and 30 (96.8%) students said they did not join English tutoring outside of school to improve their English-speaking skills. 11 (35.5%) students said they have confidence when speaking English, 20 (64.5%) students said they did not have confidence when speaking English. 24 (77.4%) students have difficulties speaking English, 7 (22.6%) students did not have difficulties speaking English. 25 (80.6%) students said reading practice can improve speaking skills, and 6 (19.4%) students said reading practice cannot improve speaking skills.

Table - 2 reveals that 19 (61.3%) students said they had major difficulty when speaking English with errors in pronunciation, 8 (25.8%) had errors in grammar, and 4 (12.9%) lacked vocabulary. Based on that data we can say that most of them have difficulty pronunciation.

As for the results obtained from the interview activities, they generally regretted the teacher's learning methods, which in practice rarely used English in delivering material and teaching. On average, they think conversation practice can improve their English-speaking skills. Apart from that, another factor is the limited facilities and support for them in speaking English. Only one of them took an English course outside of school

4. Conclusion

Some conclusions from interview activities and distributing questionnaires in class 11 of SMAN 7 Kota Serang for data collection carried out by researchers include:

1. Lack of awareness of the importance of English, desire, and self-confidence in grade 11 students of SMAN 7 Kota Serang affects their ability to speak English which is accompanied by their anxiety about speaking English.
2. The influence of teachers' teaching methods and lack of motivation influence students' speaking abilities, where in their teaching methods teachers very rarely interact and communicate using English. So, students are also not motivated and encouraged to speak English in class.
3. Lack of application of English in students' daily lives so that they are not used to using English in class or outside of class.

These three factors are proven to influence students' English-speaking abilities. The most important difficulty they face is the problem of pronunciation where the difficulty is based on the underlying factors.

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