

FACTORS CAUSING SPEAKING DIFFICULTY FACED BY THE ELEVENTH-GRADE STUDENTS OF SMK NEGERI 6 PALU

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to discover the factors causing speaking difficulty faced by the eleventh-grade students of SMK Negeri 6 Palu. The researcher used qualitative descriptive research. The population of this research was the eleventh-grade students of SMK Negeri 6 Palu. The sample of this research was 48 students of the eleventh-grade class hotel accommodation chosen by applying a purposive sampling technique. In collecting the data, the researcher used a questionnaire and group discussion. The questionnaire and group discussion data were analyzed statistically and descriptively. The researcher found that the factors causing students difficulty in speaking are internal factors and external factors. The internal factors are students' interest, motivation, and lack of confidence. The external factors are teachers' strategy, learning facilities and the environment. This research implies that the teacher builds students' interest and motivation and encourages and increases students' self-confidence. In addition, the teachers choose the best teaching method to keep their learners involved in speaking. In a social environment, people are encouraged to use Indonesian combined with English, even though only for several words. This is so that students are accustomed to using English. In learning facilities, the teacher and school always try to provide interesting media for students so students are more interested and excited when learning to speak.

Key Words : *Students' difficulties; Speaking; Internal Factors; External Factors*

INTRODUCTION

Speaking skills are the most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language. Success is measured based on the ability to converse in the language Nunan (1995). Speaking English has become one of the most important skills of all four language skills because individuals who learn a language are referred to as speakers of that language. The main aim of English language teaching is to allow learners to use the English language effectively and correctly in communication.

The low EFL speaking proficiency of Indonesian students is a topic that has received a lot of attention in the literature. A number of reports show that Indonesian learners commonly have not attained a good level of oral English proficiency. Some factors affect speaking people, particularly English Speaking. "The successfulness of learning English is not only greatly affected by the strategy of teaching speaking but also by students' vocabulary mastery, the facility of learning, student's interest and the environment where the teaching-learning process is taking place" Rusnawati (2004).

The speaking materials English in vocational high school is one subject matter that must be learned by grade X, XI and XII students. In English learning, students are usually assigned to interpret the expression daily. It is in relation to the need for the ability of the students to communicate in English. Interaction becomes a vital part of language learning because it is what people do in everyday activities. The purpose of learning English is to can speak fluently in English, especially the dialogue that often occurs every day. Following the Standards of Competence in English, which is seen in vocational high school English syllabus, speaking objectives is to disclose the various meanings (interpersonal, conceptual, textual) in a variety of oral texts, interactional and monologues, especially in the form of descriptive, narrative, spoof/recount, procedures, reports, news items anecdote, exposition, explanation, discussion, commentary, and reviews.

Thus, material related to speaking at the high school level is a matter of monologue text in which the students are expected to reveal the meaning contained in each text. But many students still failed to express their thoughts in speaking English because of many factors that caused speaking difficult for them.

Some difficulties experienced by students in speaking English which is seen in a study written by Pradya (2015). Firstly, the student's low vocabulary. Secondly, the students have difficulties in pronouncing certain words. Thirdly the students are still confused about arranging words, and there were still some mistakes in their grammar. The last, the students were often afraid of speaking English.

Students must experience these difficulties, which can occur because of factors that cause speaking difficulty. Based on the background of the problem above, researchers are interested in researching the factors that cause speaking difficulty faced by students at SMK Negeri 6 Palu.

METHOD

In conducting this research, the researchers used descriptive qualitative design. In this research, the researchers were focused on describing data on factors causing students' difficulties in Speaking. As a result, the researcher describes what causes the difficulties faced by the eleventh-grade students of hotel accommodation of SMK Negeri 6 Palu.

In this research, the researchers want to discover the causes of students' difficulties in Speaking English in the eleventh grade of SMK Negeri 6 Palu. The subject of this research is the students in the eleventh grade of SMK Negeri 6 Palu. The subject of this research consists of 48 students of XI Perhotelan, and five students have conducted the group discussion. The students are expected to provide rich information needed to answer this study's research question.

In this research, the researchers need the instruments; the instruments include questionnaires and group discussions. The researchers distributed twelve questionnaire items to the forty-eight students in this research. The researcher analyzed the questionnaire result by using the percentage formula of Heaton (1990) as follows.

$$P = F : N \times 100\%$$

Where:

P = Percentage of the students' answer

F = Frequency/number of students who get difficulties in each factor

N = Number of students

The researchers also interview students in a small group discussion to get more information about the causes of students' difficulties in Speaking English. In analyzing the data, the researcher used both descriptive and statistical analysis. The data obtained from the questionnaire was analyzed statistically and the data from group discussion was analyzed descriptively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULTS

The result of the questionnaire

The Questionnaires were distributed to students to find out the factors causing difficulties in speaking English. The questionnaires consist of 12 items. The six items were concerning internal factors, and six were concerning external factors. The result of the questionnaire was analyzed by using the percentage formula.

Table 1- Factors Causing Students' Difficulties in Speaking

No	Factors Causing Students' speaking difficulties	Percentage
Internal Factors		
1.	Students' interest	54%
2.	Students' motivation	56%
3.	Lack of confidence	76%
External factors		
1.	The Teachers' strategy	71%
2.	The facilities for learning	66%
3.	The environment	82%

Table 1 above shows the percentage of each factor causing difficulties in speaking. The table shows in the External factors that the environment is the highest factor causing difficulties in speaking faced by students with the highest percentage (82%), followed by lack of confidence (76%) as the second highest factor causing difficulties in speaking faced by students, the teachers' strategy (71%) as the third highest factor causing difficulties in speaking faced by students, the facilities of learning (66%) as the fourth highest factor causing difficulties in speaking faced by students, students' motivation (56%) as the fifth highest factor causing difficulties in speaking faced by students, and the lowest percentage is students' interest (54%).

The result of the Group Discussion

In this part, the researcher got the data by undertaking the interview as a group discussion. The interview was conducted with seven students who were chosen purposively. In this data collection, they represented all of the samples. The researcher provided five questions that still related to external and internal factors that caused them difficulty speaking English. The researcher used these findings as further data to strengthen the early data that have been collected. The researcher elaborated on the questions and students' answer as follow:

1. What difficulties did you face when you would like to speak English?

They mentioned that there were various difficulties in speaking that they got. These difficulties became the problem's source of their speaking difficulties. Their lack of vocabulary, poor grammar and pronunciation became the main obstacles that hindered their speaking. Concerning vocabulary, they explained that the lack of vocabularies made them speak less. They sometimes stopped talking when they knew the English words they wanted to express in their communication and started speaking in their native language. In addition, pronunciation certainly affected them in producing speaking. They had difficulty with it because the words written were different from how they were pronounced. The researcher can conclude all those difficulties

mentioned faced by students when they want to speak English. Those difficulties happened because there are factors caused by it.

2. What factors make it difficult to speak English?

They mentioned some factors that obstructed them from speaking. They are the environment, the teachers' method, lack of confidence and did not like English. On the factor they mentioned, the environment ranked first. It was a significant barrier for them to speak. It happened because their environment was not used to using English, so they are used to using more their native language than English. Then when they tried to talk in English, their surroundings did not accept them; it happened because it sounded strange to people around them when speaking English. Besides, the teachers' strategy applied, and lack of confidence did not help them to speak. They said that sometimes the teacher only gave them homework or assignments, but there was no speaking activity in the classroom. The teacher only gives the material and then leaves the students in the class.

Furthermore, they also mentioned a lack of confidence. The student was not confident in participating in the classroom because they felt that their English was not good enough, or even they said that they did not know how to speak and often felt their classmate would underestimate them when they spoke English. Some of them also mentioned that they did not like English. Therefore when they learnt in the speaking process, they were just silent or passive.

3. What factors support you to speak English?

Several factors support them in speaking English. They are the environment and the facilities of learning. Those factors allowed and helped them to acquire English. The facilities could be used to practice English, such as dictionaries, audiovisual, and appropriate textbooks.

4. Which external factor made it difficult to speak English?

Group participants stated the environment that was not supported to speak English was the external factor causing them difficulty speaking English. They said the environment did not support speaking English by seeing their social life in the family; they are not used to speaking English in daily activities. Therefore other people laughed at them when they tried to speak English, making them afraid to express their opinion or idea in English.

5. Which internal factor made it difficult to speak English?

They mentioned lack of confidence made them difficult to speak. They said they often felt their classmate underestimated them when speaking English. The reason the student are not confident to participate in the classroom is because they feel that their English are not good enough. In addition, they felt shy when the teacher asks them to speak in English. They are afraid to laugh at their friends, especially when they make mistakes; the lack of vocabulary also causes it then made them not confident to speak in English.

DISCUSSION

Based on the finding above, the researcher found that the eleventh-grade students of hotel accommodation at SMK Negeri 6 Palu faced two factors causing speaking difficulty. They are internal and external factors. The internal factors are students' interest, motivation and lack of confidence, while the external factors are teachers' strategy, learning facilities and the environment.

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4.3.1 Internal Factors

a) Students' interest

The data analysis result showed that students' interest is one of the factors causing them difficulties in speaking. 54% of students chose yes or agreed that their low interest in speaking caused them difficulties in speaking. The students stated that they did not like English. They claimed that English is one of the most challenging subjects. The students who did not like English would also not feel interested in learning anything about English. The low interest of the students in learning English, speaking in particular, will cue their achievement in speaking, Elder (1994). The teacher should provide teaching material that the student may be interested in. So the researcher concludes that students' interest based on materials also encourages students to speak English, and it can be one of the factors causing speaking difficulty.

b) Students' motivation

Based on the data, 56% of students agreed the lack of motivation is one factor causing them difficulty performing speaking. They claimed that they did not like English as one factor causing them difficulty in speaking English. It means they were not motivated to learn anything about English. Therefore when they learnt in the speaking process, they were just silent or passive. Harmer (1983) in Anita (2004) states: "Motivation is an internal drive that encourages somebody to pursue a certain action". It shows that motivation is also very important to success in teaching-learning. Motivation can also influence someone to fulfil his needs.

c) Lack of confidence

From the data analysis result, 76% of students answered yes or agreed that lack of confidence has a part in obstructing them from speaking English. They mentioned in the interview section that a lack of confidence cause them difficulty in speaking English. They said that they do not know how to speak or even they do not like English. It is also because they often felt their classmate would underestimate them when they spoke English, and they felt that their English was not good enough. According to Juhana (2012), fear of negative evaluation becomes one leading cause of students' anxiety. It is commonly understood that students' lack of confidence usually happens when they realize that their English ability is not good enough, then they would rather keep silent. So, building students' confidence is an important role for lecturer's focus of attention.

4.3.2 External Factors

a) The teacher strategy

Based on the research finding, 71% of students agreed that the teacher strategy plays a role for students in speaking difficulties. Based on the explanation of the students in the interview section, the factor refers to the teacher's teaching methodology. Mostly, the teacher still uses the old version of the teaching method. The traditional teaching methodology is considered that it cannot stimulate the students to be active in participating in teaching and learning activities. In this teaching method, the teacher took too much portion to talk and explain; meanwhile, the students remained to listen and watch. Underwood (1987) stated that the fundamental principles of the students as the object and the subject of education should be considered by the teacher. In this case, the need of the student should be considered to the learning process. Teachers should facilitate the students by giving more exercises in speaking and using suitable teaching techniques.

b) The facilities of learning

Based on the data analysis, 66 % of students agreed that learning facilities are one factor causing them difficulty in speaking. In addition, the result data from the interview, students mentioned that the learning facilities can support them to achieve speaking skills. The facilities of learning allowed and helped them to acquire English. The facilities, such as dictionaries, audiovisuals, and appropriate textbooks, could be used to practice English. It means that if the facilities do not support this, it will influence students' difficulty speaking English. Students must have speaking activities, adequate training, and opportunities to interact with the target language with the appropriate facilities to support them. Manurung (2015) argued that contextual instructional materials are a motivating factor in developing speaking skills. Implementing the three-phase techniques in the instructional process allows the students to read the chosen topic individually and then in the small group before the classroom meeting and presentation. The findings imply that TIRS (Teaching Integrated Reading and Speaking) potentially improve the speaking skill of the students in the Speaking class in EFL teaching at the university level.

c) The environment

From the data analysis result, the total percentage of students chose yes or agreed that environment was the source of speaking difficulties is 82%. It indicated that the environment has a big contribution as one of the factors causing students' speaking difficulties. Students mentioned in the interview section that environmental factors can support and difficult them to speak. If the environment supports them, it also allowed and helped them acquire English. On the contrary, students said that their environment did not support them to speak English by seeing their social life in the family background they are not used to speaking English in daily activity. The environment was a major barrier for them to speak. They are used to using more their native language than English it happened because their environment was not used to using English too. Then when they tried to talk in English, their surroundings did not accept them, it happened because it sounds strange for people around them when speak using English. The environment that affects students' speaking skill development is not only the environment in their school or classroom where the teaching-learning process is carried out, but also at home and outside where the students spend more of their time learning or doing other activities (Rusnawati, 2004). When the students always listen or speak English just for one or several English words in daily activity at home or outside it will make them familiar and can build their ability to speak English well.

The researcher finding above aligns with the previous research by Indrawati, (2019). Based on the result of the study, she concluded that two factors influence students' speaking problems. The first is internal factors: fear of mistakes, anxiety, shyness and lack of confidence. The second is External factors, these are; low motivation, mother tongue use, lack of parents' attention, and learning media use. Furthermore, compared to previous research results, it can be determined that this research is supported by Mufidah (2017). Based on the finding of her study, it is found that the factors affecting in the students' speaking difficulties, namely (1) the student's affective factor, (2) the students' social factor, (3) the instructor factor, (4) the Indonesian education system and facilities factor, and (5) students' linguistically factor. In addition, this research is also supported by Putri, Amri, and Ahmad (2020). They found that the four factors of speaking difficulty have a positive value or more than 50%. The values of these four factors were 62.5% for personal factors, 95% for teaching strategies factor, 90% for curriculum factor and 57.5% for the environmental factor. Therefore, it can be inferred that the dominant factor which causes students' difficulties in speaking is teaching strategies.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results using questionnaires and interviews, which have been described previously. The result of the research proved that two kinds of factors caused the difficulty in Speaking English at SMK Negeri 6 Palu: internal factors and external factors. The internal factors are students' interest, motivation and lack of confidence, while the external factors are the teachers' strategy, learning facilities and environment.

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