

STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN SPEAKING ENGLISH AT THE SECOND GRADE OF MTsN 1 BUNGO

Herni Tika¹, Ayuliamita Abadi²

Mahasiswa UIN SulthanThaha Saifudin¹, Dosen UIN SulthanThaha Saifudin²
Jln. Jambi – Ma.Bulian Km.16 Simp Sungai Duren Muaro Jambi 36363
Sur-el :hernitika24@gmail.com¹, ayuliamitaabadi@gmail.com²

Abstract:It cannot be denied that speaking is a necessary skill to be learnt. But in fact, Indonesian's students have difficulties in speaking English. It can be due to linguistic aspect and non-linguistic aspect. The objectives of this study were to find out students difficulties in speaking English and the causes of the students difficulties in speaking English. The research design was descriptive qualitative method. The subject of the study was the second grade students of MTsN 1 Bungo. The result study showed that the students of second grade of MTsN 1 Bungo had difficulties in speaking English. In linguistic problem there were three difficulties in speaking English (lack of pronunciation, lack of vocabulary, and lack of grammar). In students' personality problem there were two difficulties (lack of confidence and nervous). The cause of the students' difficulties in speaking English was afraid of making mistakes.

Keywords: *Difficulties, Speaking, English*

Abstrak:Tidak dapat dipungkiri berbicara adalah sebuah keahlian yang penting untuk dipelajari. Tetapi faktanya pelajar Indonesia memiliki kesulitan dalam berbicara menggunakan bahasa Inggris. Hal ini bisadari aspek linguistic ataupun aspek non-linguistic. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui kesulitan siswadalam berbicara menggunakan bahasa Inggris dan penyebab yang membuat siswa mengalami kesulitan dalam berbicara menggunakan bahasa Inggris. Desain penelitian ini adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Subject penelitianadalah siswa kelas dua MTsN 1 Bungo. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa siswa kelas dua MTsN 1 Bungo memiliki kesulitan dalam berbicara menggunakan bahasa Inggris. Terkait dengan kemampuan ilmu bahasa, ada tiga kesulitan yang dihadapisiswa (kurangnya pronunciation, kurangnya kosa kata, dan kurangnya pemahaman akan grammar). Terkait dengan kepribadian siswa, ada dua kesulitan (kurangnya rasa percayadiri, dan adanya rasa malu dan gugup). Penyebab kesulitan dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris adalah rasa takut dalam membuat kesalahan.

Kata kunci:*Kesulitan, Berbicara, BahasaInggris*

1. INTRODUCTION

English is a global language. Speaking English has become trend in the world. Many people in the world used English as lingua franca to communicate with other people from different country, language, and cultural background. According to Crystal(2008), over two billion people speak English. It means in this globalization era able to speak English is important for our life.

For EFL learners speaking is important because speaking is the tool to communicate with other people. Speaking is the important skill to be mastered by English foreign language learners or second language learners (Rao, 2019). The function of mastered English speaking skill for academic are, EFL learners or second language learners they can study abroad if they able to speak English, for second language learners or English foreign language they can presentation in front of their friend in the classroom if they have speaking skill. The

specific function of mastering English speaking skill for EFL learners or second language learners they can get better job in international big companies. It cannot be denied that speaking English is an important skill to be mastered.

For Indonesian' students, speaking English is difficult because English speaking is not their mother tongue. Even though, they had been studying English since they were young, but they still cannot speak. They may understand the other people say in English, but they find difficulties to pronounce the word in English. Indonesian student don't speak English so well as shown by Education First (EF) released the 2020. English Proficiency index report the first rank of English Proficiency in the world this year is the Netherlands with score of 625 (very good). Indonesia was ranked 74th in the world and 15th in the Asian region with score of 453 which was classified as low.

Difficulty in speaking English might be due to linguistic aspect and non- linguistic aspect. Lack of vocabularies, not being confident, no ideas about what to say, afraid of making mistake and afraid of being laughed by friend (Heriansyah, 2012). According to Al Hosni (2014), students unable to speak because of lack of vocabulary, student also afraid of making mistake in speaking English in front of their friend. Dalem (2017) also stated that students afraid of making mistake because they afraid of being laughed by other people, shy, lack of confident. Many difficulties that student face in speaking English.

Some recent studies have shown that students have difficulties in speaking English. Siti Salihun (2019) through her study showed

that the difficulties that students have in speaking were inhibition, nothing to say, low and uneven participation and mother tongue use. And the causes of the difficulties in speaking English were cognitive style and personality. Paramudhita (2015) in her research study also showed that the reason of why students have difficulties in speaking were because lack of understanding grammatical pattern, afraid of being mocked by others, and nervousness.

Difficulties in speaking English were still encountered by some students in the second grade of MTsN 1 Bungo. Therefore, the researchers conducted the study about students' difficulties in Speaking. Through the study, the researchers would like to find out (1) what are students' difficulties in speaking English at second grade of MTsN 1 Bungo? And (2) what are the causes of the difficulties in speaking English at second grade of MTsN 1 Bungo?

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Method

This study was conducted based on qualitative descriptive research method. According to Sugiyono (2015), qualitative descriptive is presumption causes relationship between behavior and outcome; however this method only let you hypothesize about problem and describe them. The researchers used this method to identify the students' difficulties in speaking English and to know the causes of students' difficulties in speaking English.

2.2 Setting and Subject of the Research

This study was conducted in MTsN 1 Bungo, Kecamatan Muko-Muko, Kab. Bungo, in Jambi Province. The subject of the study was the students who had the lowest grade in English. They were 12 students in the second grade of MTsN 1 Bungo.

2.3 Technique of Collecting the Data

The researchers used two techniques in collecting the data. The first technique was observation. The researchers joined the class and observed learning activity. The researchers observed passively without any involvement in the classroom learning process. The researchers observed students in the classroom for four times. The field note was used as the instrument during observation. The second technique was interview. The researchers used semi-structured and face to face interview. Bahasa Indonesia was used during interview to avoid with the students. Each student was interviewed in 10-15 minutes.

2.4 Technique of Analyzing the Data

In this research, the data will be analyzed by using technique of analysis of descriptive qualitative. There were several steps.

First is reduction the data. Data reduction means summarizing, choosing or selecting the important points that most needed in research, focusing on the main things from the data that appear in interview transcripts and field note of observation, describing them into units, synthesizing, compiling into in patterns (Sugiyono, 2021). The reduction of data would continuously until the end of the research. The

main purpose of qualitative research is on findings.

Second is data display. Data display is the second components in analyzing the data. Miles and Huberman (2002) stated that a display is an organized, compressed assembly of information that allows conclusion drawing and action. It means reduce data and displaying it in organized, compressed way so that conclusion can be more easily drawn.

Third is conclusion. This step in analyzing data is drawing conclusion and verification. The researchers collected the data and analyzed the data with valid, consistent, enough the data. The researchers read the entire transcript of the interview and describe all the experience in the field. The researchers take conclusion from the field note of observation and transcripts of interview. In conclusion the researchers take conclusion the data after analyzing the data and presenting the data.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Observation Result

The observation was conducted three times during April until Mei 2021. Based on the observations, it was found that there were many students cannot produce good pronunciation when speaking English because most of students were afraid if they make mistake in term of pronouncing the word. When the students felt their pronunciation is wrong the students slow the voice. Some time Student also made

mistakes when the teachers order the students to repeat what the teacher uttered. They make mistake when pronounce the word the teacher order because in English between pronunciation and writing is different.

The researchers also found that the students were lack of vocabularies. They cannot practice with their friend because they do not know much vocabulary. The teacher gave them some vocabularies to memorize. They only memorized the vocabularies but they did not use it in practice speaking English with their friend. The student will forget the vocabulary because they do not practice the vocabulary.

It was found that most of the students were in low of mastering grammar. The students often get difficulty in using grammar when they speak and the student made mistake in simple grammar points like singular form and a verb third-person. For instance, they used *does* when the subject is *I* or they were not used verb 2 when they made some sentence in paste tense. While speaking English, the student confused to arrange sentence with grammar rules. Some of students were lack of grammar as shown during practice conversation in front of the class the students making grammar mistakes. The students have no mastered grammar like tenses formula, singular and plural form and etc., then the student afraid of making grammar error when they speak English. For

example they were not used “s” for third person.

The researchers also found that the student felt lack of confidence when speaking English. When the student felt lack of confidence the student will low their voice when speaking English because they afraid their speaking English is bad. Some of students were not confidence talking with their friend using English language. Some students were shy and nervous when they speak in English with their friends and teacher in the classroom.

3.2 Interview Result

The interview was conducted face to face with the students. The researchers interview the students in their leisure time after the teaching and learning process was done. From the interview, the researchers found that the students think their ability in speaking English is not good, When they try to speak English their feel worry abouttheir pronunciation. They told that to pronounce English words is difficult. One of them said “I feel that my pronunciation is very bad, and I also feel that the pronunciation of English words is very difficult so I can't pronounce English words or sentences correctly” (RS). Meanwhile, the other student said “I got difficulty to pronounce English when speaking English, because the writing and the pronunciation are different”(FRI). Those statement was supported by one of their classmates who said that “In my opinion, pronunciation in English language is very difficult, some time I got confused to pronounce

English word because between pronunciation and writing are different. Pronunciation that make me difficult to speak English because I afraid my pronunciation is wrong and then my friend will laugh at me” (RF). From those statements it can be concluded that students felt difficult to speak English because of lack of pronunciation.

The researchers also found that the students were lack of vocabularies. One of the students said “I have difficulty in speaking English with friend because I don’t memorize much vocabulary sister. English vocabulary is also difficult to memorize” (CM). In line with CM, another student also said “I have difficulty in speaking English because hmm I don’t know much vocabulary in English” (MRAG). From the statement above the researchers made a conclusion that students feel difficult in speaking English because of the students’ lack of vocabularies and do not much memorizing vocabulary.

Lack of knowledge about grammar was found as one of the difficulties faced by the students in speaking English. One of them said “I feel that grammar is very difficult, for example some of the verbs use s/es and I also worry that my grammar is wrong” (NR). Meanwhile, another student said “I have difficulties in grammar, because sometime I did not understand how to arrange word well when speaking English” (RF). It can be concluded that students felt difficult to speak English because lack of knowledge about grammar.

One important thing in speaking English is confidence. If the students have high confidence when speaking English the student

will continue their speaking English as good as he can although his speaking is bad. But based on interview with students, it was found that the students think their ability in speaking English was not good. And then students lost their confidence to speaking English in front of their friend because they think they were not good when speaking English. One of them said “I am not confidence speaking English in front of friends because I am afraid that my English is wrong, and I am also afraid that my friend will laugh at me” (RS). The other students said “I less of confident in speaking English in front of the class, because I feel that my English skills are very bad” (RC). In line with the others, one student said “I felt not confident when speaking English because my English language is very bad, I afraid my friend laughed at me when I speak English. Sometime not confident that made me difficult to speak English” (R). From those statement it can be concluded that student difficult speak in English because lack of confidence, and they afraid of making mistake when practice speaking in front of their friend, and afraid their friend will laugh at them.

Based on interview with the students, the researchers found that some students felt shy when speaking using English. One student said “I felt shy to speak English with my friend and also felt shy to speak English in front of the class, feeling shyness that made me difficult to speak English” (RS). Another problem the students faced during speaking English was about nervousness. Most of the respondents that the researchers interviewed explained that when they order to come forward and have to speak in front of their friend and the teacher, they were

very nervous. One student gave a comment, “I am very nervous when I speak the English language in front of the class, I am nervous that what I say is wrong”. The researchers also found the students were very nervous when they speak English. When they felt nervous, it would be possible for them to lose their words in their mind. One of the students said “I felt nervous when I speak English in front of the class, I afraid when I speak English my friend laugh, if my friend laugh I got nervous to speak English, when I nervous my brain goes blank sister so I forget and difficult to speak English” (MRAG). From the interview result the researchers concluded that the students difficult to speak because they were shy and nervous.

The researchers found that the cause of students felt difficult in speaking English was afraid of making mistakes and errors. From 12 students, most of them stated that afraid of making mistakes was the cause of students’ difficulties in speaking English. One of the students said “I rarely speak English in the class and in front of my classmate because I afraid that I make mistake in pronouncing English word” (FRI). It is in line with her classmate who said “I afraid make mistake when speaking English, that feeling afraid of making mistake that cause me difficult to speak English sister” (RC). From the result of interview above it is clear that student seldom speaking English because of the student afraid of making mistake when speaking English.

The objective of the study was to find out what the students’ difficulties in speaking English. The researchers discussed it from two aspects; students’ linguistic problem and students’ personality problem.

In students’ linguistic problem there were three difficulties in speaking English that faced by students. They were lack of pronunciation, lack of vocabulary, and lack of grammar.

The first findings, students’ difficulties in speaking English were lack of pronunciation. Pronunciation is important in practice speaking English. With good pronunciation will help other students understand well about the meaning of speaking that we say while doing conversation or interaction with other. Speaker who constantly mispronounces various phonemes can be very difficult for a speaker from other language community to understand (Gerhard, 2000). The researchers found that most of the students felt difficult to pronounce English word because in English between pronunciation and writing are different. Based on interview with one of the students, she said: “in my opinion, pronunciation in English language is very difficult, some time I got confused to pronounce English word because between pronunciation and writing are different. Pronunciation that make me difficult to speak English because I afraid my pronunciation is wrong sister. And then my friend will laugh at me”. (Interview, RF April 28th 2021). From interview with students above, the researchers can make conclusion most of the student have difficulties about pronunciation in English speaking. The researchers found most of student afraid if they make mistake when pronounce the

word in English because according to the students interview result before, when they make mistake in pronouncing English word, automatically their friend will laugh them, and they said that speaking English is difficult because how to write and to pronounce English are different and made them very confused.

The second finding, students' difficulties in speaking English was lack of vocabulary. According to Kamil and Hiebert (2005), vocabulary is source of knowledge meanings and word. While in learning process Students cannot talk a lot because they were not mastering vocabulary. Some of the students difficult to express their idea with their friend because of limited of vocabulary. A similar result was found by Heriansyah(2012), lack of vocabulary that contributed students' difficulties in speaking English. Based on observation result, the researchers found most of student lack of vocabulary. It can be seen from student conversation with their friend and the researchers tried to ask about student difficulties but the student answer use little vocabulary and they look alike think before answer because they do not know much about vocabulary.

The third finding was lack of grammar that also contributes student difficulties in speaking English. It was constructing Grammar in providing discourse. In other word, Grammar is necessary to communicate (Nunan, 1999). Grammar is study in which sentence are structured. If the students do not know the rules of grammar and do not know how make in structured Grammar sentence they will never be able to communicate using English language very well. Grammar became difficult because

students do not learn structure one in a time (Murcia, 2001). Some of students had interviewed have problem with grammar. One of the students said "I have difficulties in grammar sister, because sometime I did not understand how to arrange word well when speaking English" (Interview, RF April 28th 2021). From the result interview above the researchers can make conclusion student have difficulties about grammar in English speaking and they do not know how to make sentence in English very well.

In students' personality problem there were two difficulties faced by the students in speaking English. The first was confidence. Confidence is very important in speaking English. By feeling confidence the student can speak in front of other person. According to Nunan (1999), students who lack of confidence in themselves, in their English necessarily suffer communication apprehension. If students felt lack of confident in front of the class, it is can bad impact. Based on observation, the researchers found many student of second grade of MTsN 1 Bungo were lack of confidence when practice conversation in front of the class. This can be seen from facial expression looked shy, making body movement looked lack confidence, usually move head and feet quickly, play something like skirt or pen. Students lost their confidence because the students think their English language is bad and they think cannot speak English well. The main cause

of students' confidence is their low ability in speaking English (He & Chen, 2009). In this case, many students think their English bad and feel that they cannot speak English well.

The second was shyness and nervous. Shyness and nervous is an emotional thing that many suffer from at some time when they required to speak English in class. This indicates that shyness could be a source of difficulties in speaking English. Therefore, paying attention on this aspect is also quite important in order to help the students do their best in their speaking performance in the classroom. Sayuri (2016) stated that most of students feel shy when they speak the language because they think they will make mistake when they talk. Supported by Fauzan (2014) who stated that some students are afraid of making mistakes and also feel anxious because the teacher always critics their mistakes.

Students often feel averse to speak English because they are shy and not predisposed to express themselves in front of other person (Brown, 2003). Based on interview with one of students at second grade of MTsN 1 Bungo, she said: "I felt shy and nervous when speaking English in front of my friend and my teacher. I shy speaking English because I afraid make mistake". (Interview, April 21th 2021). In line with this, according to Baldwin (2011) speaking in front of many people in the classroom or forum is one of the more common phobias

that student encounter feeling of shyness and nervous makes their mind go blank or that they will forget what to say. From the explanation above the researchers can make conclusion, when they were felt nervous and shy, it would really possible for them to lose their word in their mind.

From interview result, the researchers found that the cause of students' difficulties in speaking English was afraid of making mistake. It is in line with Harmer (2001) who stated that every student will make mistake when they are trying to speaking or even writing in English. Many students afraid they will make mistake when they speak English. Similar research result was found by Heriansyah (2012) that afraid of making mistake is the cause of students difficulties in speaking English. From the explanation above, the researchers made a conclusion that feeling afraid of making mistake was the cause of difficulties in speaking English.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the students of second grade of MTsN 1 Bungo had difficulties in speaking English. It was showed from the interview and observation result that had been conducted by the researchers. It can be classified into two aspects; students' linguistic problem and students' personality problem. In students'

linguistic problem there were three difficulties in speaking English that faced by students. They were lack of pronunciation, lack of vocabulary, and lack of grammar. In students' personality problem there were two difficulties faced by the students in speaking English. They were lack of confidence, shyness and nervous. The researchers found that the cause of students' difficulties in speaking English was afraid of making mistake.

In addition, the researchers would like to offer suggestion for the students and reader of this study as well as the future research study. Firstly, the students must do more practice to speak in English, practice to pronounce English words correctly, be more confident, and have to express their idea in speaking English. They also have to study about grammar to know the English structure therefore they can speak correctly. Secondly, for the future researchers, the same research with larger participant and higher level of students in English mastery would be necessary to confirm the findings of this current study.

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