



Exploring Speaking Challenges Among Grade XI Vocational School Students: A Case Study at SMK Negeri Pertanian Pembangunan Tapsel

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore speaking challenges among Grade XI vocational school students. It is an important area in conducting of the research, as it can help teachers understand the obstacles students face and develop strategies to overcome the problem. The issues that students have when communicating in English. Students of the grade XI are the subject of this study, which is being conducted using a Descriptive Qualitative Method. Test and interview are used to gather research data. The results show that the students experience a lot of difficulties, such as lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, limited practice opportunities, vocabulary and, grammar issues, and cultural differences. The causes of this problem are vocabulary, self-confidence, pronunciation, and anxiety. One of the most important components of the problems that exist is pronunciation, because they are unable to accurately pronounced the use of English Language.

Keywords: *speaking*

INTRODUCTION

In addition to being a communication tool that is vital to social interactions, language also helps you define yourself, adapt to new situations, and implement social control. Their mother tongue, which they have had since they began to grow, is the language that the general population uses on a regular basis for communication. However, as times change, individuals are using foreign languages, especially English, which has become a worldwide language, n addition to their mother tongue for communication.

Language is a system of arbitrary sound symbols that members of social groups use to collaborate, communicate, and identify themselves, claim Kridalaksana and Djoko Kentjono

(in Chaer, 2014: 32).¹ The primary purpose of language is to facilitate human communication. Language serves as a bridge between members of a community and a tool for both individual and collective communication.

English is an international language that is vital to our daily lives and has a significant impact on people worldwide. It is believed that learning English opens up the world (Michelle Maxom 2009:9). On the international scene, professional advancement in science, business, and industry has become more and more dependent on English as a second language (ESL) instruction (David J. Alonso 2011:1).² Because English may open doors to the globe, it means that students will be motivated to learn the language.

For Indonesians, English is a foreign language. Studying the four fundamental abilities of speaking, listening, reading, and writing is an integral part of learning a foreign language. We use it to communicate our feelings, needs, and desires through writing and speaking, as well as to learn our surroundings by reading and listening. Gaining more language proficiency increases our chances of understanding others, being understood, and obtaining what we need and want from those around us (Jamlan 2008:1).³

Speaking is a type of active or productive ability. Speaking becomes the most crucial communication skill that must be mastered, even though the other four are as vital. To put it another way, the purpose of language is to facilitate communication, and speaking in a language environment is meant to increase communicative effectiveness. Speaking is one method of communication (Kline 2001:1).⁴

As the digital world and human civilization have grown, so too have linguistic and technological advancements in many facets of human existence. The vast amount of technology available now is one area where language development has increased. The significance of language mastery basically, the application of technology in the field of education, specifically language and grammar is impacted by technological advancements.⁵ The goal of this important advancement is to help human resources become more competitive, particularly in the industry 4.0 revolution leading to the society 5.0 age.

¹ Chaer, & Muliastuti, L. (2014) *Semantik Bahasa Indonesia. In: Makna dan. Semantik*. Universitas Terbuka, Jakarta.

² Nunan, David. 2003. *Practical English Language Teaching*. NewYork: McGraw Hill. p.48, 54-56.

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⁴ Kline. J.A. 2001. *Speaking Effectively: A Guide for Air Force Speakers*. Alabama: Air University Press.

⁵ Greenbaum, S. & Nelson, G. 2002. *An Introduction to English Grammar*. Second Edition. London: Pearson Education Limited.

⁶(Batko: 2004)

The ability to learn foreign languages, in conjunction with the MBKM curriculum offered by the *Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia*, is one of the challenges facing human resources in the global and professional world. Since the business, industry, education, social, economic, and cultural worlds require a variety of abilities, including communication, teamwork, critical thinking, computation, compassion, and creativity, a group of students will not be able to use the MBKM that is supplied.

One tool that can be used to address challenges and issues in the advancement and revolution of civilization is needs analysis (Need Analysis), which identifies the fundamental limitations and issues in order to reduce future obstacles at the school and university levels and give the education sector a tangible contribution to improvements in teaching and learning strategies.

In order to encourage students to participate in the learning process, not only as a school subject but also as a means of preparing for skills or expertise in the workplace and in higher education (university), the teaching and learning process has evolved beyond simply listening to the teacher explain the material in the classroom.⁷ Students can now study the material at anytime, anywhere, and with anyone. In addition, language proficiency facilitates international educational programs like summer courses, student exchanges, overseas scholarships, and the Indonesian International Student Mobility Awards (IISMA).

However, in order to influence the educational process that is followed in schools and to encourage more active participation in learning activities, they must be able to more easily access facilities, areas, or language communities that facilitate communication about the global world. This essentially needs to be demonstrated through research. The purpose of this study is to offer a foundation and justification for resolving the issues with students' use of English.

The Nation (2015), "In English as a second language (ESL) and English as a foreign language (EFL), vocabulary study is essential for all language skills." This implies that vocabulary development can improve pupils' ability to express their ideas or emotions about a subject. This suggests that speaking skills and vocabulary are closely related (Tawarik, 2021). The main purpose of language as a tool for communication is speaking, which is one

⁶ Batko, A. 2004. *When Bad Grammar Happens to Good People: How to Avoid Common Errors in English*. Franklin Lakes, NJ: Career Press.

⁷ Harmer, J. (2007). *The Practice of Language Teaching* (4th edition). London: Longman Group Ltd.

of the four language talents. Pupils need to work on expressing their ideas, opinions, and thoughts clearly.

Humans typically fall into one of two groups when communicating: oral or written. Speaking, which is mostly done by individuals, is the type of oral communication. One useful linguistic talent is speaking. More specifically, speaking can be defined as a system of audible indicators that utilizes human articulatory sounds and muscle tissue to represent and transmit thoughts, feelings, and ideas. According to Tarigan (2008), speaking is a vital tool for social control because it harnesses a variety of physiological, psychological, neurological, semantic, and linguistic components (Tarigan, 2008: 16). This understanding clearly shows that speaking entails articulating words in a way that aims to convey the meaning, whether it be thoughts or emotions.

According to experts, there are various ways to convey ideas, messages, or thoughts, depending on the purpose and objective. Three types of speech are distinguished by Keraf (in Slamet, 2009a: 38): persuasive, educational, and recreational. People may be inspired, convinced, and motivated to take action by this type of persuasive discourse. Eliciting feelings in order to convince listeners to agree with ideas, attitudes, and even actions, or hoping for reactions in order to acquire inspiration. This type of informative or instructive communication requires the audience to respond by exhibiting proper comprehension. This type of conversational communication is entertaining and seeks to stimulate the audience's interest.

Meanwhile, Haryadi and Zamzani (in Slamet 2009b: 38) divide the types of speaking into two categories: public speaking, which includes notification, kinship, persuasion, and negotiation, and conference speaking, which includes group discussions, parliamentary processes, and debates. Taking into account these multiple assertions, it can be said that speaking is fundamentally the vocalization of one's ideas and emotions. Speaking ability in this sense can be defined as the capacity to produce articulatory sounds or utter words in order to communicate thoughts, ideas, and feelings. A range of persuasive, educational, entertaining, and effective tones, stresses, and pause locations are used to convey information to listeners.

Skills are a person's ability to use concepts, reasoning, and actions to do tasks efficiently. Someone may be deemed skilled in speaking if they are able to express themselves intelligibly and effectively. Arsjad and Mukti (1991: 87) state that speaking efficacy is influenced by a variety of linguistic and non-linguistic factors. Linguistic factors include things like word choice, appropriate speaking tone, stress placement, length, proper

pronunciation, and the usage of coherent sentences.⁸ Speaking fluency, knowledge of the content, suitable gestures and expressions, speaking flexibility, visual contact with the audience, and sufficient voice volume are examples of non-language elements.

Four components make up speaking abilities in addition to language and non-linguistic factors: social, semantic, phonetic, and voice capabilities. The capacity to engage in social interactions successfully is known as social skills. Knowing what to say, how to say it, where to say it, and when not to say it are all necessary for social skills. The capacity to utilize words in a meaningful and suitable way is known as semantic abilities. We must possess a thorough understanding of the meanings of words as well as their accuracy and usefulness in usage if we are to develop semantic skills. The capacity to appropriately form the phonetic components of our language is known as phonetic abilities, because it plays a role in determining social acceptance or rejection, this ability is necessary. The capacity to use the voice to produce the intended emotional effect is known as vocal abilities.

An evaluation of the learning performance outcomes must be conducted at the conclusion of each learning process session. Students might receive this evaluation by taking tests. Tests are a means of assessing and determining how well students follow the continuous learning process. Speaking practice tests are, in theory, the main emphasis of the exam or test of pupils' speaking abilities. Linguistic and non-linguistic components make up the assessment in the speaking skills exam (Nurgiyantoro, 1995a: 152). Grammar/language structure, vocabulary/vocabulary, and pronunciation/pronunciation are all evaluated linguistic factors. In the meantime, Nurgiyantoro (1995b: 152) lists voice loudness and speaking serenity as non-linguistic elements.

In teaching speaking, most of teachers wish their students could speak English, but it is not as easy as they hope. It needs various ways in teaching the target. In this case, one of the ways of speaking is expressing gratitude and appreciation in conversation form. To make the students have strong interest in teaching and learning process, especially in learning speaking, the teacher should take the best approach, method, and strategies. Then, the teacher can use gratitude and appreciation in teaching of English language; both are used to

⁸ Fraser, H.2001. *Teaching Pronunciation: A guide for teachers of English as A Second Language*. Canberra: Department of Education Training and Youth Affairs.

help the students for speaking to make interaction between the students with students and the others.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach, which consists of research methods that yield descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words as well as the subject's observable behavior (Arif Furchan 1992:21). Research that does not use statistical methods or other types of computation to arrive at its conclusions is known as qualitative research (Imam Gunawan 2013:80).

Qualitative research, according to Sukmadinata (Nana Syaodih Sukmadinata 2009:53), is research that is used to characterize and examine events, social activities, phenomena, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and individuals or groups. Interviews, observations, and document use are the most common approaches in qualitative research (Lexy J. Moleong 2012:5).

Research that describes information based on actuality (facts) gathered in the field is referred to as descriptive research (Arikunto: 2006)⁹. The most fundamental type of study is descriptive research. to explain current occurrences, whether they are the result of human engineering or science. According to Nana Syaodih Sukmadinata (2007:72), this study looks at the forms, actions, characteristics, changes, relationships, similarities, and differences with other phenomena. In this study, qualitative descriptive methods were employed to formulate hypotheses based on field data.

The behavior of students and teachers, as well as their interactions during the teaching process, are the main subjects of qualitative research. According to Frankel and Wallen (2000:502), qualitative research entails the author examining the quality of a scenario, activity, connection, or material.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the results of the researcher's exam, observations, and interviews, students struggle with learning English, particularly when it comes to speaking the language, for a variety of reasons. Students have several difficulties when learning to speak English.

⁹ Arikunto. (2006). *Prosedur Penelitian: Suatu Pendekatan Praktek (6thed.)*. Yogyakarta: PT. Rineka Cipta.

Students' Linguistic Issues

The scientific study of language, including phonology, words, and grammar, is known as linguistics. Linguistics mainly includes the specifics of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Problems in linguistics are those that impair students' capacity to speak. Some language issues, like poor grammar, a lack of vocabulary, and poor pronunciation, might hinder someone's ability to communicate.¹⁰

1) Poor in Grammar

Halliday (2014:25) "Grammar is designed to bring a study of wording, but one that interprets wording by reference to what it means." Grammar was developed to aid in the study of interpreted words by analyzing their meanings. In order for the meaning of words to be accurately and successfully interpreted, grammar serves as a method of instruction on word arrangement. Gaining proficiency in grammar, one of language's functions, greatly aids kids' ability to listen. In essence, the order of words must follow proper writing conventions to prevent misunderstandings about their many meanings. When it comes to language structure, a listener might be considered to have understood the rules of grammar, particularly English grammar, if they can rearrange the speaker's words into a sentence. It is clear from the explanation above that grammar refers to the rules that are employed in language. For pupils to be able to use language as a means of correctly and appropriately expressing themselves both orally and in writing, they must first grasp it. Students are required to master these lessons in school. The study of language forms, which includes the unity of the sound system, lexicon, and sentence structure or syntax, includes grammar. The principles for assembling words into sentences are also known as language structure.

Observations show that the pupils believe their grammar is lacking. Nearly every pupil had a poor command of English grammar. Some individuals occasionally believe that when someone speaks, they won't give their words any thought. They will actually have to improvise because they won't have time to think. However, kids must utilize proper English language since their teacher will point out their

¹⁰ Maulana, Daud, and Heriansyah (2016). *Students' views on EFL speaking problems*. Syiah Kuala university.

errors if they do not. Although there were a few grammatical errors, the teacher claimed that they were not having a lot of trouble learning to speak English because their understanding of grammar and the materials they were using would improve as they progressed to the next level of study. However, even though the junior high school children were the focus of this term, speaking English was still difficult because grammar is one of the components of English. At least, though, they have been learning English grammar, the basic kind, of course. Additionally, the researcher looked through their books and found a wealth of information regarding English grammar, including the simple past tense and other topics.

2) Lack of Vocabulary

Students in this pattern struggle with vocabulary, which prevents them from practicing English with their peers. They commit words that are specific to their school instruction to memory. They still lack the motivation and drive to learn English on their own. Observations showed that even in very basic sentences, the pupils found it quite challenging to communicate in English. During the observation, the researcher discovered a few issues. They found it quite challenging to respond to questions one after the other when the researcher attempted to have a conversation in English with some dejection. When the researcher attempted to inquire about their issue, they said that they were unable to articulate a word in English that they truly wanted to use. According to an English teacher's interview, they stated: *"kemampuan speakingnya menurut saya masih kurang disebabkan karena rata-rata anak-anak disini itu masih kurang menguasai kosakata."* Naturally, it was not just their responsibility; the instructor, particularly their English teacher, had a major responsibility to help students acquire as many different types of vocabulary as possible.¹¹

3) Lack of Pronunciation

Some students stated during the interview rounds that they had trouble pronouncing some English terms. They made mistakes occasionally, and they continued to pronounce things incorrectly even when they had to repeat what the teacher had said. It also occurred when they attempted to read an English-language text. They

¹¹ Hinkel, Eli. 2005. *Handbook of Research in Second Language Teaching and Learning*. London: Seattle University

encountered challenges when they were unable to enunciate certain terms correctly. Sometimes they didn't believe in themselves, even if they knew how to pronounce it. The majority of them feared mispronouncing the phrase incorrectly. The majority of them lacked confidence in their ability to speak English words since, as previously explained by the students, their peers would instinctively laugh at them if they made any pronunciation errors.

4) Fluency

According to the findings of the observation and interview, many pupils struggle to form short sentences and speak English fluently. Fluency is the final 20 factors to succeed when speaking English. The speed and ease with which language learners execute the four fundamental language skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing is known as fluency.¹² According to kids, "speaking English is very difficult because writing and speaking in English are different." Students who struggle with vocabulary also frequently experience shyness and lack enthusiasm for learning English. The ability to fully comprehend and be conscious of understanding what is being said by the speaker or in relation to the issues that are being discussed during the conversation is thus referred to as comprehension. It was discovered from the speaking test results that certain pupils were occasionally understandable but occasionally still less so. It suggests that they may have done so for one of two reasons.

First of all, they only consult the dictionary when they come across unfamiliar or challenging terms in the course materials. Second, when the students practice speaking English with their peers, they continue to feel ashamed. According to the researcher's findings from the interviews, students' proficiency in speaking English is a result of their continued difficulties with pronunciation and other issues, such as their limited vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

According the result of the test was done by the students, it can be concluded that based on the result, the students have problem in speaking. The problems consist of grammar,

¹² Dash, B. 2012. *Language Skill: VSRD International Journal of Technical and Non Technical Research*.

pronunciation, vocabulary, anxiety and shyness.

1. Grammar

Grammar is one of the fascinating topics to research in relation to having a strong grasp of the English language. Communication is the primary purpose of language. Every speaker should make an effort to express his thoughts clearly and concisely. He wants people to understand what he's saying. Nevertheless, this can be challenging at times; the message transmission process is often hindered by a number of problems, such as interruption and inadequate language skills (such as vocabulary and grammar), which are both typical among language learners.

Even though grammar is not a primary goal, grammar is very important in strengthening structure and improving fluency in language.¹³ Almost all of the students were in low mastering in English grammar. Sometimes some people think that in terms of speaking, someone will not think too much about what they going to say.

2. Pronunciation

Being a fluent English speaker is not simple, though. According to Syafraddin et al. (2013), speaking English can be difficult due to a variety of factors, such as a lack of vocabulary, poor pronunciation, and grammatical errors. Fluency in speaking English is also influenced by one's capacity to process language and its components, such as grammar and pronunciation. The ability to speak English well requires a strong grasp of grammar. This is consistent with the assertion made by Jaya et al. (2022) that there are multiple speaking-related issues that can be divided into three categories.

Pronunciation is important in practice English. Some students mentioned that they have problems in pronouncing some English words. Sometimes they made mistakes of it, even when to repeat what the teacher uttered before, they still in false pronunciation and they still dormitory intonation or their style in speaking English still using Indonesian style.

¹³ Floriasti, T. 2013. *Improving Speaking Skills Through The Use of Integrated Listening and Speaking Material For Student Teachers*.

3. Vocabulary

Nurdiyantoro (2014: 338) states that vocabulary is the wealth of words owned by (found in) a language. This is in accordance with the opinion of Djiwandono (2011: 126) that vocabulary is defined as a group of words in the form of loose words with or without affixes and is a combination of the same or different words; each has its own meaning. This opinion is also supported by Keraf (2010: 80) who states that vocabulary is all the words owned by a person which will quickly cause a reaction when heard or read. Chaer (2011: 131) states that Indonesian vocabulary is all the words found in Indonesian. Tarigan (2015: 2) states that a person's language competence is demonstrated by the quantity and quality of the vocabulary they have. This means that the more vocabulary, the more skilled a person will be in language. In turn, good language skills will have an impact on a person's success in life.

In this pattern the problems of students are lack of vocabulary, so they cannot practice English with their friends. They memorize the vocabulary that only relate with their lesson at school.

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