



## An Analysis of Factors Influencing Students' Speaking Skill in Triatma Mulya University

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### Abstract

As a productive skill, speaking plays an important role as a means of effective communication. In English learning process, speaking is considered of the most difficult aspects due to many students are hard to express themselves in English. The population in this study is all of the students in the English Language Education at Triatma Mulya University. This study aims at knowing the factors affecting students' English speaking skill. This review paper focusses on the research in term of speaking, especially some factors affecting students' speaking skill. Based on the review of literature and the result of interview showed that the students' psychological and students' linguistic problems become the factors affecting students' English speaking skill. The students' psychological problem includes lack of confidence (posture, gesture, and eye contact) and fear/anxiety. However, the students' linguistics problem includes vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. This study can be used by the teachers and future researchers who focused on factors affecting students' English speaking skill.

**Keywords:** Speaking; Psychological Problems; Linguistic Problems

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### 1. Introduction

As a foreign language, English plays an important role in Indonesia. In the newest curriculum that is Merdeka Curriculum, the government places English to be learned by the students from Elementary School. So, the students will be more ready to use English and face some challenges in learning process. English also important to update education source due to some sources in education are written in English. In learning English, there are four skills to be mastered by the students such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing. From those skills, speaking and writing are categorized as a productive skills. Turan & Akdag-Cimen (2020) state that speaking is an important skill to be mastered beside the three language skills.

As one of productive skill in language learning, speaking can be categorized as an important skill because people who learn the languages are deal with the speaker of that languages (Ur, 1996). The aim to teaching English is to make the students able to speak English effectively and correctly to communicate effectively with others (Davies & Pearse, 2000). This skill is different with others because it needs more effort if it will be done in front of the audience and the speaker will express

their ideas directly through speaking (Amiruddin et al., 2022). However, speaking tends to be difficult because those who want to speak and express their idea should help those who listens to understand the ideas.

Despite its importance, speaking looked hard to be done by the students. They looked shy to express their idea in front of the class. Then, they seemed hard to pronounce English correctly. They also looked hard to use English with grammatically correct when they express their feeling and ideas to others. Besides, due to the limitation of the time, they need more time to practice English speaking. Moreover, speaking has been absent in testing due to the objectivity in assessing this skill and time requirements in carrying out the test (Clifford, 1987). According to Leong and Ahmadi (2017), the students cannot speak English accurately and fluently due to the lack of their knowledge in English. Those problems make speaking skill deserves attention in both first and second languages.

In learning English, the students need more speaking practice to make them able to communicate with others and avoid misunderstanding. To make them able to speak, they should listen more through the language that they want to learn. Through listening and repeating, they can improve their speaking skill because they already know the correct pronunciation. The teacher can give some statements in English and asks them to repeat it. So, it can increase their confident to speak English. Most of the student feel that they have studied English for many years from Elementary school until University students but they cannot speak English fluently and appropriately (Bueno, Madrid, & McLaren, 2006).

## **2. Method**

Research methodology is the study of how research is conducted scientifically (Patel & Patel, 2019). Some steps are implemented logically to solve the research problem. Thus, it is important to know the right method to be able to solve the research problem effectively. This research is a qualitative research which focuses on analyzing the factors influencing the students' speaking skill during the learning process in the classroom. According to Fraenkel & Wallen (2000) the writer will analyze the quality of relationship, activities, situation, or materials. This research was done at Triatma Mulya University especially in English Language Education program. The population in this research is all of the students in English Language Education program. The researcher analyze all of the students in this program from the first until the seventh semester. There are 27 of students in English Language Education program. All of the population here act as the subject of this research.

## **3. Findings**

Based on the result of observation and interview during the classroom learning process, the students faced difficulties in English learning especially speaking. There are many reasons why they have difficulty in speaking. Their problem could be differentiate into that is students' psychological problems and students linguistics problem.

### **3.1. Students Psychological Problems**

According to Arifin (2017), in speaking lack of confidence, anxiety (shyness, and fear) sometimes occur and become the psychological problem..

#### **a. Lack of Confidence**

Students' confidence can be seen when they try to talk directly with others. Burgoon, et al (1989) mentions that u "60% of all communication is nonverbal". Based on the observation, when the students tried to speak in the target language which is English, they looked nervous. The people who are confidence enough to speak will have a good tends to show a calm and non-anxious facial

expression. However, the students mostly showed their anxious facial expression when they talked in English.

- **Posture**

Posture also can show the students' confidence in speaking. Most of the students showed their unconfident in speaking through their posture. Their feet looked tremble when they are asked to speak in front of the class. Sometimes they also looked stammering to speak in English. Students' posture includes their head, hand, foot, and back. The students' head and hand also looked sweaty in speaking.

- **Gesture**

Gesture is related to the speaker's body movement in speaking process in order to express their idea (Tai, 2014). People who are confident enough about their ideas and language that they used will use gesture to communicate with other. It is used to make their ideas clearly and avoid misunderstanding in speaking.. However, most of the students did not use body gesture when they are asked to speak in front of the class. They only speak without body movement. It seems that they are unconfident to speak.

- **Eye Contact**

Eye contact plays an important role in communication. Alforque, et al (2023) state that eye contact can make the communication can run effectively and make people understand the ideas you are expressing through eye contact. If people do not use eye contact, they tends to not listen or understand what the speaker said or it can show that they are not interested with the topic being discussed (Shafir, 2021). However, most of the students looked nervous and did not use eye contact in speaking. They only looked at one point.

#### **b. Anxiety (shyness, and fear)**

- **Shyness**

Most of the students in English Education Program still shy when the lecturer asked them to speak in front of the class. It makes shyness become the problem of speaking in classroom learning process especially in speaking class. They fell afraid of making mistakes especially in pronouncing the words because their friend will laugh at them. Besides, the student shies to speak in front of their friends because all of them will look at him/her. It makes she/he feels awkward. Based on the interview with the students, they said they feel shy and it made them feel unconfident to speak English. They also feel nervous to speak in target language because they need to pay more attention in its spelling, grammar, and pronunciation at once. When they feel shy and nervous they lose their words in mind and become stuck to speak in front of the class.

- **Fear**

Most of the students in English Language program especially for those in the first semester were nervous and afraid of making mistake. They choose to be silent rather than try to express their idea in English. They are afraid of being judged, ridiculed, or criticized by others. When they wanted to present their presentation, they felt afraid of making mistake because they thought that the teacher would be angry at them. They also felt inadequacy and self-doubt about their English speaking ability due to the position of English in Indonesia as a foreign language. Then, they also afraid if their friends will laugh at them.

### **3.2. Students Linguistics Problems**

This part will explain more about the students' linguistics problem in term of their vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation.

#### **a. Vocabulary**

During the classroom learning process, the students chose to be silent due to the lack of vocabulary. They felt hard to express their idea in English because they were not mastering vocabulary. When the teacher asked their opinion, they needed time to translate some of the vocabularies on their dictionary to express their idea. They said that their problem in English speaking is lack of vocabulary mastery. The result of interview showed that most of them have problem in vocabulary in expressing their idea in English. Vocabulary itself refers to the word that is used in making a verbal conversation by using a language. Successful communication happens when both of the speaker and listener can understand the words that is used during the conversation.

#### **b. Grammar**

Grammar is focused on word formation and how sentences can be formed (Harmer, 2001; as cited in Juniar & Carissa, 2020). He mentions also that grammar is about how sentences are produced and how the variety of words can maintain the same structure. Achieving better linguistic and communication harmony is the main goal of grammar instruction.

Based on the interview with the students, grammar became the problem of them in speaking English. Different role of English and their mother tongue make them hard to learn English structure. Most of the students confused in arranging the English word. They also difficult to understand all of the role in English grammar especially the used of tenses. When they expressed their idea, they confused in using tenses and made mistake. Then they need time to make a complex sentences. Thus, it makes them afraid to speak in English.

#### **c. Pronunciation**

Hornby (2000) mentions that pronunciation refers to the way each language is spoken, the way some words in target language is pronounced, and the way a person speaks some words of language. Understandable pronunciation of the target language plays an important role in communication and avoid misunderstanding due to the existing of minimal pairs or tongue twister in English.

Based on the interview with the students, pronunciation becomes the other problem faced by the students in English speaking. The students could not speak English naturally like native speaker. Most of them said that English was very difficult because the different written words and how it is pronounced. Sometimes they pronounced English words as same as the Indonesian language. Then, the felt confused in pronouncing minimal pairs or tongue twister in English because there is similarities in pronouncing each words. Pronunciation becomes the most common problems in English speaking.

### **4. Discussions**

There are two types of problem faced in improving their speaking skill such as psychological problems and linguistics problems. Lumbatobing, et al., (2022) state that psychological problem are problems that often bother with emotional health. However, Spolsky & Hult (2008) state that linguistic focusses on the detailed of vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Lack of confidence can be seen from students' facial expression, posture, gesture, and eye contact. The students looked nervous during the English speaking practice. Azami., et al (2022) state that the students 'confidence can be seen from their facial expression (Azami, et al., 2022). Good facial expression can influence they people perceive the speaker and how the speaker feel about his self. The students also looked tremble in speaking. Tremble showed that they are unconfident to speak (Lisanias, et al., 2019). Then, they did not use any gesture in speaking. They speak without body movement and only stand up in front of the class. Through gesture people looked more interactive and expressive in sharing their ideas. Next, the students did not use eye contact during the speaking

activity due to the nervous that they felt. Actually, it is important to use eye contact in order to make an efficient communication (Eatough, 2021). Most of the students also feel shy and afraid of making mistake when they spoke with others.

In students' linguistic problem, most of the students have problem in English vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Most of the students chose to be silent. They hard to express their idea because of the lack of vocabulary. According to Neuman & Dwyer (2009) vocabulary refers to the words that should be known by the students to be able to communicate effectively: words in speaking is known as expressive vocabulary and words in listening is known as receptive vocabulary. Vocabulary learning is the ongoing process of encountering new words in meaningful and understandable contexts (Harmon et al., 2009). Without vocabulary it will be hard to get the meaning and make an effective communication with others (Laufer, 1997). Then, they also confused to arrange their idea in English structure or grammar. Different tense produced different meaning. Pawlak (2020) states that grammar refers to the structure of the target language and how its communication function. Without grammar, language becomes unworkable because through grammar words and sentences can be produce based on its rules so people will easy to understand. The last problem is pronunciation. Most of the students could not speak naturally like native speaker. They felt hard to speak English with a good pronunciation. Pourhosein (2016) states that pronunciation becomes the most difficult skills in learning English speaking because it hard for students to acquire a new language and they always need time to practice and improve their English pronunciation.

## 5. Conclusion and Suggestion

Based on the finding and discussion before, it can be concluded that most of the students in English Language Program at Triatma Mulya University have problem in speaking. Their problem were divided into two types that is students' psychological problem and students' linguistics problem. The students' psychological problem includes lack of confidence (posture, gesture, and eye contact) and fear/anxiety. However, the students' linguistics problem includes vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Based on the problem found in classroom learning process showed that most of the students need to practice more in speaking. Through practice to speak in front of the class, they will increase their ability in speaking. They also suggested to listen more in TV or youtube or others in order to learn English and able to pronounce the words like a native speaker.

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