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Speaking Problems Faced by Lower Secondary School Efl Learners

Masalah Berbicara yang Dihadapi oleh Peserta Didik Sekolah Menengah Pertama

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Abstract

Speaking is one of the important English learning skills to master. This study is about the analysis of students' difficulties in speaking English at SMP Muhammadiyah 10 Sidoarjo, which aims to find out the problems of speaking English experienced by students in grades 7A and 7B of SMP Muhammadiyah 10 Sidoarjo.In this study, researchers used qualitative research methods. By using the subject of classes 7A and 7B consisting of 44 students. In collecting data, researchers used questionnaires, interviews, and observations. Researchers used three main phases of data analysis: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. From the data analysis, the researcher found the difficulties and factors experienced by students in learning to speak English at SMP Muhammadiyah 10 Sidoarjo, as follows: lack of vocabulary, lack of pronunciation, fear of making mistakes, and shame. Of these problems, the most dominant problems are vocabulary and pronunciation. Most of them stated that they were afraid to speak because of their lack of vocabulary and pronunciation. They feel afraid if they make mistakes in pronouncing words in English.

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Introduction

English is the global language. Most people think of English as an important language because it is one of the languages spoken and understood by the majority of the population in almost every region of the world [1]. Learning a foreign language is necessary to support us in communicating with foreigners. Given the significance of English, the Indonesian Ministry of Education has made English a required subject in the curriculum. With this statement, English subjects are compulsory subjects taught from elementary school until high school. There are four skills such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The four skills that must be mastered when we learn English lesson. Among the four language skills, speaking is one of the primary skills that classified as active. In consequence, learners must be capable of master English speaking skills well. Speaking as a communication tool used in everyday human life. Speaking is a very important skill. As human, we need to socialize with each other. One of the most frequently used ways of communication in human daily life is speaking. We can communicate our feelings, ideas, or just the information we have to others directly by talking. So without the ability to speak well, we can not tell others clearly what ideas are in our minds, what information we have, or even what we think about something. Most English learners find speaking to be the most difficult skill to master, and many are still unable to communicate effectively in English orally [2]. Unfortunately, learning speaking skills is not easy in Indonesia. Most of the students still have difficulty speaking English well. There are several things that cause students to have difficulty in speaking English such as students not knowing certain English vocabulary, their pronunciation being bad, they are afraid to make mistakes, and they are reluctant to speak English. Of these things make them difficult to express or convey ideas through speaking in English. Students' ability to speak is influenced by various of factors. There are two basic components in general. The factors that affect the difficulty of speaking English are lack of knowledge, lack of practice, audience attention, environment, accent or mother tongue, different writing or spelling, and lastly lack of motivation. The reason for doing this research at SMP Muhammadiyah 10 is based on the researcher's preliminary observation, when the teacher explained the material in English, some of them seemed to understand the material and what it meant. However, when the teacher asked some questions in English, most of them answered in Indonesian. They were hesitant to try answering the questions in English. Based on the student's score, there were found that many students in the seventh grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 10 Sidoarjo still got under average score in learning speaking. There were 45% of class 7B who had the lowest score under minimum completeness criteria (KKM). Whereas in class 7A there were 75%. Therefore, the researcher wants to analysis what the difficulties and the factor of students' speaking difficulties. Then the researcher became curious and decide to look at it further with a study titled "Speaking Problems Faced by Lower Secondary School EFL Learners"

Methodology

The design of this study is descriptive qualitative research. Qualitative studies are an outline that is carried out through the writer without having to contain numbers in the data collection process [3]. Descriptive qualitative research is a research method that is based on the philosophy of post positivism which is usually used to examine conditions objective nature in which the researchers acts as a key instrument [4]. This research aims to find out the problem of speaking English experienced by srudents in grades 7A and 7B of SMP Muhammadiyah 10 Sidoarjo. The data acquired can be including documents, field notes, questionnaires, and interviews. Qualitative research aims to better understand social phenomena or phenomena. The population of this study was the seventh grade students in SMP Muhammadiyah 10 Sidoarjo. Which consists of two classes, 7A for boys and 7B for girls, each class contains approximately 40 students.

In this study the researchers collected the data by using interview, questionnaire and observation. Research instruments are simply devices for obtaining information relevant to your research project [5]. The questionnaire is the primary source in the reasearch which can designed to support the information from observation and interview. The first write to do is the researcher asked permission from the English subject teacher at SMP Muhammadiyah 10 in advance to carry out direct observation activities during the learning process. This was done for the author to analyze how the teacher delivered English learning materials, especially in speaking skills. The researcher saw directly the students' struggles as they tried to practice speaking English. In addition, the researcher also asked for permission from the teacher who teaches English in sevent-grade to conduct interviews with her. Interview is an activity carried out directly by two people to obtain information which is usually done by question and answer [6]. After conducting interviews for teacher, the writer distributed a questionnaire which is distributed to 20 students in grades 7 A and B, each of which is 10 people per class based on the lowest and the highest score. This questionnaire was used to know more deeply about what factors were the students' difficulties in speaking English. Questionnaire is one of the ways that chosen by the researcher to collecting data in qualitative research and as the instruments to students to find out how many of the students had difficulty in speaking English. The questionnaire is a set of written questions that are submitted to respondents to be filled out by them without intervention from researchers or other parties [7]. Researchers conducted data analysis in accordance with what proposed by Sirajuddin in [8], that the data analysis in this study consisted of several steps, namely data reduction, data model, and making conclusions.

Result And Discussion

The researcher presented the finding and the discusson about her thesis which entitled about 'An Aanalysis of Students Difficulties in Speaking English at SMP Muhammadiyah 10 Sidoarjo. The findings were from data analysis of quistionnaire, interview, and observation. In connection with the researcher who had been analyzed what the students' difficulties in speaking English and what factors cause students to have difficulty in speaking English by 7th grade students of SMP

Muhammadiyah 10. As the discussion in the previous chapter, the researcher used data analysis from questionnaires, interviews, and observation. This questionnaire was distributed to the 20 students to know more deeply about what factors were the students' difficulties in speaking English.

Besides that, the questionnaire contains 29 questions which are divided into 2 kinds of factors, external and internal. From number 1 to 18 are the questions from internal factors which consist of 3 subfactors, namely psychology, language competence, and topical knowledge. Furthermore, from number 19 to 29 it is part of the question of external factors which have 3 sub-factors as well such as performance, environment, and learning style.

Based on the questionnaire result, the results of the 7A class questionnaire showed that 40 percent of them agreed on the difficulty aspect of pronunciation. Because they felt they had difficulty pronouncing words correctly in English and found it difficult to distinguish between words with similar pronunciations. Besides that, they also feel afraid of making mistakes in speaking English and feel uncomfortable when making mistakes, therefore 47 percent of them were agree that one factor is fear of making mistakes of the difficulties experienced in speaking English. But other aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, fluency and the psychology aspects such as interest, confident, motivation they generally choose neutral. Also that about the environmental aspect, especially from the teacher, they 40 percent agree that the teacher always speaks English when they deliver the material.

While the results of the 7B class questionnaire have shown that 35 percent of them agreed if they feel less confident to speak or express opinions using English in class or in front of many people. For the aspect of language skills, 43 percent of them agreed that they feel they lack sufficient vocabulary knowledge or can be said to be lack of vocabulary. Beside that in the aspect of fluency 37 percent of them agreed because they could not speak like native speakers and were less able to use stress, rhythm, pause and intonation well when speaking English. Meanwhile 25 percent of them chose to disagree and were neutral on the grammar aspect. For the aspect of performance condition, 56 percent of them made the decision to agree that they are afraid of making mistakes when speaking English and feel awkward if they do. In addition, 30 percent of them choose strongly agree and agree that they feel ashamed to speak English in front of friends and teachers. When the teacher asked them to answer questions in front of the class, they felt anxious to speak in English, as evidenced by the fact that 27 percent of them strongly agreed or agree with the features of anxiousness. On the other hand, on the environmental aspect, 40 percent of them chose to strongly agree with family support in learning English. The factors that make students difficult in speaking English in the research results are relevant to Nurfitri in [9], most of these students were afraid of making mistakes in pronunciation when practicing speaking in English classes and some were afraid of grammar errors. In the practice of speaking in English classes, most students were not confident when speaking English.

Another data collection techniques that have been carried out by researcher are interview and observations. The researcher was conducted interview with English teacher who teach 7th grade. The interview was conducted on January 27, 2022, after the researcher made observations in class 7B. The researcher asked the English teacher nine questions about his opinion on the difficulties experienced by students in speaking English. While the observation were made to aimed at knowing the state of the class when students carried out the English language learning process. The researcher has made observations in each of the 7th grades on different dates. Class 7A was conducted on January 24, 2022 and March 24, 2022, while class 7B was conducted on January 27, 2022, and February 11, 2022. In this observation, the researchers analyzed what difficulties students experienced when learning English, especially in the way they spoke English

Based on the result of research finding from interview with teacher. The class 7A and 7B students, according to the teacher, had trouble in speaking English. Fear of making a mistake, shyness, poor pronunciation, lack of confidence, lack of vocabulary, nothing to say, usage of one's mother tongue, and low or uneven participation are among them. It could be explained as follows:

1. The teacher said some students did not understand what her instruction when she speak using English.
2. The teacher said that the most aspects of students problem when they learning to speak English were pronunciation, vocabulary, and fluency.
3. The teacher claimed that they were afraid of making mistakes because they were a little shy, unable to express themselves, and worried that their friends would tease them.
4. The teacher said that some of them had low participation when learning speaking. But there still between 2 until 3 students who had high participation.
5. According to the teacher, students' inability to speak English fluently is primarily caused by a lack of vocabulary. And also most of them still use their mother tongue to speak English cause they can not pronounce well.

From the result of research finding from observation the researcher concluded that the problems faced by the students were:

1. A majority of the students did not know certain English words.
2. The students' vocabulary was lacking. Due to their limited vocabulary, they found it challenging to speak English.
3. Most of students were feel little bit shy when speak in front of class because they had no good in pronunciation or it is challenging to correctly pronounced the words.
4. Some students never speak English as a second language.
5. As they spoke in English, the students were anxious.

From the result of research conducted by researchers on analysis students' difficulties in speaking English, it can be discuss as follow :

a) Students' Difficulties in Speaking English

The most common problem that students face is pronunciation. They found it difficult to pronounce certain words because the contrast between pronunciation and writing in English is clearly different. As a result, they still don't recognize [10]. However, based on the results of the students' responses to the questionnaire, interview with teacher, and observation. It could be inferred that the difficulties in speaking faced by students 7A and B class were explained lacked of vocabulary, not good in pronunciation and also fluency, fear to make mistakes because they feel shy, they never practice speaking English and have low participation since they have nothing to say. The students' common difficulties, are lack of confidence, restricted fluency, and lack of vocabulary [11]. In addition, there are four different categories of difficult speaking situations, including inhibition, nothing to say, poor or inconsistent participation, and the usage of one's mother tongue [12].

b) The factors of students' difficulties in learning speaking English

The researcher found that the factor of student's difficulty in learning speaking English was because two factor. The researcher would discuss about two factor based on statement of Brown in [13], there are two main factors.

The first factor is internal factor which is come from inside the individual. Based on the questionnaire result that the statement was about internal factor that included psychology, language competence and topical knowledge. That was found some students had lack of confidence when they try to speak English but they have motivation to learn it. In addition, from language competence the result were they had lack of vocabulary, can't pronounce some word correctly, and unable to speak like native speaker. While the second factor was external factor which is come from outside the individual. Based on the questionnaire result that the statement was about external factor that included performance, environment, and learning style. It was found that some students were anxious about speaking English incorrectly, especially when doing in front of their peers. Besides that, from environment aspect they was agree that their teacher always speak English when delivering English lesson.

The results of this study are almost in accordance with Rahayu in [14]. Her result showed that the students' difficulties in speaking English are lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar and fluency. In addition, factors that influence students' difficulties in speaking English were lack of confidence, fear of mistakes, and anxiety. The difference between this study and Rahayu's research is that in this study, the researcher did not find difficulties in the grammar aspect but in shnyness and also the researcher did not explain strategies to overcome the difficulties experienced by the students.

Conclusion

Based on the research's findings, it can be said that the researcher identified some students who have trouble speaking English as well as the factors that contribute to those difficulties. Most English learners find speaking to be the most difficult skill to master, and many are still unable to communicate effectively in English orally [15]. Speaking is a very important skill. The ability to speak is one of the skills that must be mastered. This is because the majority of communication occurs through verbal activity, and students are considered able to speak English when they can confidently and fluently use it in front of a teacher, friend, or a large group of people [16]. As human, we need to socialize with each other. One of the most frequently used ways of communication in human daily life is speaking. We can communicate our feelings, ideas, or just the information we have to others directly by talking. Difficulty in speaking English itself has several aspects such as lack of confidence, limited fluency, lack of vocabulary, grammar, fear of making mistakes, and shyness. Based on research that has been done by researchers on the study of students' difficulties in speaking English at SMP Muhammadiyah 10 Sidoarjo.

The majority of the 7A and 7B students at SMP Muhammadiyah 10 Sidoarjo had struggled with the English speaking lesson. They lacked vocabulary, poor pronunciation, nothing to say, were shy, and spoke only their mother tongue. In lack of vocabulary, the students did not have any vocabulary when speak English, they were unable to comprehend and found it difficult to communicate. They were unable to speak English words correctly due to a lack of pronunciation skills. Sometimes the students struggled to understand what the speakers were saying, and they were also afraid of speaking English incorrectly out of shyness. As a result, they lacked confidence when using proper grammar and word pronunciation. When speaking English with their teacher, students continued to utilize their native tongue.

The students of SMP Muhammadiyah 10 Sidoarjo in grades 7A and 7B faced factor that made it difficult for them to speak English. There were two factors. The first factor was internal factor. That included psychology, language competence and topical knowledge. That was found some students had lack of confidence when they try to speak English but they have motivation to learn it. In addition, from language competence the result were they had lack of vocabulary, can not pronounce some word correctly, and unable to speak like native speaker. While the second factor was external factor that included performance, environment, and learning style. It was found that some students were anxious about speaking English incorrectly, especially when they speak in front of class it makes them felt shy. Besides that, from environment aspect they was agree that their teacher always speak English when delivering English lesson.

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