

# FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENTS' SPEAKING DIFFICULTIES IN GIVING ORAL PRESENTATION

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## **Abstract**

*Speaking is one of the abilities that is needed to perform a conversation. The writer observed and found that the students of SMP Negeri 7 Sungai Raya, tended to be difficulties in speaking when oral presentation occurred. She chose to remain silent rather than participating in an oral presentation. This study aimed to investigate the factors for students' speaking difficulties in the classroom using the case study method. The participant was 1 student of the eighth-grade student. The participant was chosen by the characteristics of difficulties in speaking such as tending to be silence in the classroom and the student always use the mother tongue to speak. Using direct observation and semi-structured interview, the study found that the main factors of students' difficulties in speaking were lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, shyness, and the environment. Based on the findings, it showed that internal and external factors had a great influence on students' speaking difficulties in giving oral presentation.*

**Keywords:** *Factors, Speaking Difficulties, Oral Presentation*

## **INTRODUCTION**

As an international language, English has gained popularity all over the world. English has four main skills: listening, writing, reading and speaking. Speaking is one of the abilities that is needed to perform a conversation. According to Gert and Hans (as cited in Efrizal, 2012, p.127), "speaking is speech or utterances with the purpose of having the intention to be recognize their intentions". Therefore, students should have good English speaking ability in order to communicate easily and effectively with other people. There is much importance of speaking in language learning such as students can express their emotions, students can communicate with others to express ideas and to know others' ideas as show the various functions of language, and students are not afraid to speak with a native speaker because students can feel confident with their language. According to Sadiku (2015, p.31), "when you have words read, ideas are written and thoughts

heard, all you need is to express your speaking skill". This means students are obligated to learn speaking English in order to get information, messages, and students can develop their skill in communication.

As known, English has four main skills that should be mastered by the students. The most difficult skill language learners face in language learning is speaking skill as Rababa'h (as cited in Al Nakhalah, 2016, p.100) said: "there are many factors that cause difficulties in speaking English among EFL learners". Therefore, speaking is often ignored by some teacher because students do not have an opportunity either in their classes to speak English. In fact students can read or write better, but they faced some difficulties in speaking. Those problems make students not able to communicate fluently and accurately because students do not have enough knowledge and an opportunity in this field. However students need a lot of

practice to speak through speaking, listening, and repeating in class.

Based on curriculum 2013 students are asked to interact with teachers and friends inside and outside the class verbally. It is clearly by curriculum 2013 to make sure everyone that even if the name of the subject is 'English', in this course the students do not learn about English language, but they learn to do things that are useful for his life by using English. The purpose of English subjects in junior high school is to develop the potential of learners to have communicative competence in interpersonal, transactional, and functional discourse, using various spoken and written English texts coherently by using accurate and acceptable language elements, factual and procedural knowledge, and instill the noble values of the nation's character, in the context of life in the home, school, and community. According to Imaniah (2018), an oral presentation is an activity with the presenters communicate with the audience. Oral presentations have become a useful and effective way to increase students' awareness of communication skills. Thus, students' presentations become an important element in delivering positive learning experiences.

Cognitive, pedagogical, situational and cultural factors have been attributed to students' speaking difficulties when giving an oral presentation in a number of studies. Among these reasons, students' higher anxiety, lack of confidence and low motivation have been mentioned frequently. For instance, Leong and Ahmadi (2017) studied the students in EFL classroom have serious difficulties in speaking such as feeling anxiety and having problems in delivery the material. Similar findings were achieved by Tuan and Mai (2015) who studied the difficulties of the nonparticipation and always used mother tongue of students in EFL classrooms in Le Thanh Hien High School, Vietnam. The research findings indicate that a number of students in speaking difficulties to respond to the teacher and remained silent in oral English language classrooms due to many factors such as fear of speaking in front of others, shyness, lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes and used mother tongue.

Based on the previous studies about factors difficulties in speaking are good findings to be used in English Language Classroom. The findings of the research above showed that it is important for the students who involved in English Classroom to know the factors students' speaking difficulties because it can contribute to the betterment of learning practices. In this present study, the researcher conducted the research in English class. In this class, although speaking is not the main point to be assessed, the activity in the class was mainly carried out through discussion. The students were asked to do oral presentation in pair about ability and willingness. They did make a dialog in a group about capability and willingness after that every group had to present their dialog in front of the class and the students also present in front of the class by used read a book. Although the students read a book, they were difficult to say the word in English. So, the students were expected to learn to speak in English in the discussion.

In fact, the participation in that class at the time remained low. It was supported by the research pre-observation at the class. By the pre-observation, the researcher interviewed one of the students at the class, and he said that one student from his class tends to have difficulties in speaking English. The students chose used mother tongue than speaking English when giving an oral presentation. Then, the researcher did an observation directly to the target class and the result remained the same. She was difficulty in speaking when giving an oral presentation. She tended to be silent and did another activity such as used mother tongue. The speaking difficulties not only found when giving in oral presentation occurred but also when the teacher asked about her understanding and if she had any questions or not. She only said "No", "Please used mother tongue, sir" when the teacher said, "Do you have any questions?". It showed that the speaking difficulties in the target was high.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research method applied in this study was a case study. Case studies involve an in-depth examination of a single person or a few

people. According to Marczyk, et al. (2005, p.147-148) "the case study requires a considerable amount of information, and therefore conclusions are based on a much more detailed and comprehensive set of information than is typically collected by experimental and quasi-experimental studies". The goal of the case study is to provide an accurate and complete description of the case. The focus of the case-study approach is on individuality and describing the individual as comprehensively as possible.

The participant was determined by using purposive sampling. In purposive sampling, researchers build up a sample that is satisfactory to their specific needs. According to Ishak and Bakar (2014, p.32) "purposive sampling is useful for case study in three situations: (1) when a researcher wants to select unique cases that are especially informative, (2) when a researcher would like to select members of a difficult to reach, specialized population, and (3) when a researcher wants to identify particular types of cases for in-depth investigation". Moreover, in selecting the participants of this research, the researcher applied several criteria.

The criteria showed that she had low oral performance in English. The low oral performance means the student who did not want to participate, apply and communicate in English in classroom activities. She was reluctant in participating when presentation and discussion session. The researcher found that the participant in this research or "AD" used Indonesian to communicate when giving an oral presentation. After applying the criteria to the students, during observation, the researcher found one student who fulfills the criteria. The participant is referred to as the AD. The researcher used code names in order to protect the privacy of the student.

In this research, the researcher took one student only as the participant in the eighth grade of SMP Negeri 7 Sungai Raya class D in academic year 2019/2020. The researcher chose AD to be the participant of this research based on the criteria of the speaking difficulties such as lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, used of mother tongue and shyness. Seeing how

being speaking difficulties in giving oral presentation can be a great help for AD, it is important to encourage the optimality in the learning process through conducting oral presentation. This is the reason why this research is conducted. These research documents both students' discussion and delivery phase in conducting oral presentation.

The data collection was organized into two stages. In the first stage, the data was gathered using observation field note and interview. AD was observed by the researcher for two meeting. This is considered to be appropriate, because the researcher intended to observe one performance for AD and habitual AD in the class when learning English. As Cin (2013) said that using the direct observation, the researcher observes the behavior of the participants rather than relying on reports. In this case, it might be as simple as show feeling not confident during speak in front of class, show feeling of underestimating by other students when answering the question, show feeling shy to speak up, difficulty to active in class, show feeling lack of concentration when teacher asking something, use the wrong word in vocabulary choice and always using mother tongue to speak in the discussion. Moreover, for collecting the data, the researcher noted taking the important information in the form of a field note.

The second stage, data gathered through interview. AD was taken as sample to be given the interview. The form of an interview in this research was a semi-structured interview. The form of an interview in this research was a semi-structured interview. Easwaramoorthy and Zarinpoush (2006, p. 1) said that in a semi-structured interview, the interviewer will use a set of questions and the respondents answer in their own words. Interviewers generally start with some defined questioning plan but pursue a more conversational style of interview that may see questions answered in order more natural to the flow of conversation. In this case, the researcher provides the interview guide questions, but the questions can be added depending on the interviewees' answers. So, it is not only focused on the interview guide questions.

The questions covered such aspects as a participation in the classroom activities/behavior in English class, the students' general feelings about speaking English and personal assessment of proficiency in oral English. Finally, for collecting the data, the researcher recorded the conversations and transcribe them. The recorded data will then be transcribed, all transcripts were then reduced by removing unnecessary data and keeping the relevant ones. The extracts took from the source themes according the categories. Furthermore, the conclusion was drawn from the categories of data. The researcher did an interview after learning activities was over so that can be AD was relax. According to Cin (2013) in conducting an interview, the interviewer should attempt to create a friendly, nonthreatening atmosphere. In the interview, the researcher used Indonesian spoke that was the student can easy to understanding about the question and feel relax with this interview.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

This research was conducted in two meetings. In this activity was visible on the meeting of delivery. Some groups observed were ready with the presentation.

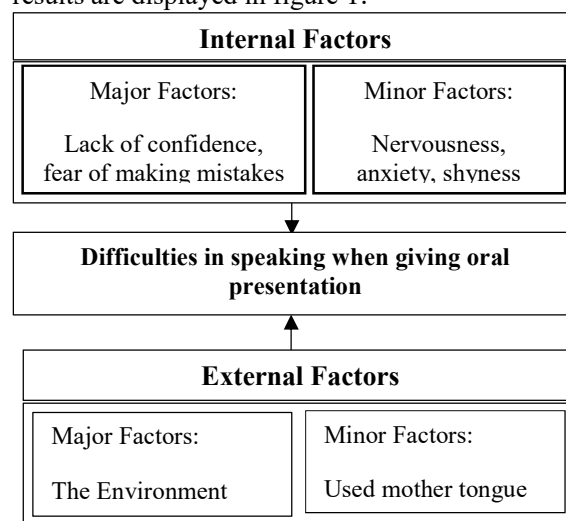
In the first meeting, the researcher found that AD was not interested in the presentation. She was remained silent during the presentation but it is not because paying attention to the presentation. Meanwhile, she did other activities as talking to the friend beside her used of mother tongue. It was shown that AD has difficulties in speaking when the teacher asked her to presentation. In the second meeting, during the presentation. The researcher found AD as the moderator being the first presenter seemed very nervous when speaking. It could be seen from her body language and voice. She made much unnecessary stop and also the speech tended to be short, brief, and incomprehensible. Sometimes, she spoke in Indonesian. In the presentation, she has not used the projector to present but only used a book.

The difficulties in speaking behavior were not only found when the presentation occurred

but also in giving suggestion session, In second meeting, especially in suggestion session, the students found to be silent as well. In the presentation 1, when the presenter opened suggestion session, only one student started to give suggestion. After that, there was a long period silent for about two minutes to other suggestions were asked. The total of the students who asked were 6 students.

Meanwhile, in the second presentation, the total of students who asked decreased as only 3 students. AD was silent and it took a long time for the audiences to give suggestion, it seems with the first presentation. It was also found that AD was silent talked softly. It may be that AD tried to solve one another's problems. It seemed that she does not have enough courage to give a suggestion because she feels nervous, anxious, and unconfident. She chooses to be an effective listener.

As discussed before, AD was unwilling to participate in the classroom discussion, oral presentation and to respond to the teacher. When asked to comment on what factors her to be difficult to speak English in oral presentation of English language classrooms, AD identified a range of factors. There were two factors AD faced in the class, internal and external factors. Each factors have minor and major factors. The results are displayed in figure 1.



**Figure 1. Factors influencing students' speaking difficulties in giving oral presentation**

As shown in figure 1 there are a number of sources of students' difficulties in speaking when giving an oral presentation based on the interview result.

### **Students' Lack of Confidence**

AD kept quiet when presented in the class and then the teacher asking about the material because they felt nervous when speaking. As AD said "when the teacher asks me in presentation, he always used English to speak. I cannot understand, afraid and feel shyness so I kept quiet than I am wrong" (A5). AD not only felt a lack of confidence when speaking in front of the whole class but also when responding to the teacher questions. Giving the presentation in the class has also been reported to be highly anxiety-provoking, one which makes the formal and stressful environment for the student. Some conversation with AD that she is very not confident when doing a presentation in front of the class or asking the question: "If the teacher asked me to ask the question in speaking English I felt shyness." (A5); "I've done some presentations. Firstly, I was so nervous because I don't know why every presentation that I did, I'm always so nervous, although I have prepared it at home. So, I only focused on reading and not explained much. I looked forward, but my eyes looked everywhere, but not to existing students." (A8)

### **Shyness**

Feeling shyness make AD failed to oral presentation at their best. As AD said that she was afraid of oral presentation because she thinks that if she makes mistake other friends will laugh at her when speaking in English. There are some conversations with AD said: "My presentation was maximal because I felt shyness if my teacher asked me for the presentation by using English. I am fearful of making mistakes" (A9); "No, I rarely respond to teachers' questions because I'm afraid of the teacher and shy, also fear of making some mistakes. I'm afraid that my saying is wrong and my friends will laugh at me." (A10)

### **Fear of Making Mistakes**

AD also worried about how she will sound and are scared of sounding silly and so on. In addition, this is also much influenced by the students' fear of being laughed at by other students or being criticized by the teacher. AD said that she chose to remain silent in the classroom because she fears of committing mistakes or errors. AD said that she chose to remain silent in the classroom because she fears of committing mistakes or errors "...I feel difficult to say something. And the other reason is I cannot to speak English because there is no friend to speak English too". (A3); "...I'm afraid of the teacher and shy, also fear of making some mistakes. I'm afraid that my saying is wrong and my friends will laugh at me". (A11)

Moreover, fear of being laughed at and fear of looking foolish by their classmates was one of the factors students' difficulties in an oral presentation. AD was afraid to volunteer a presentation in front of the class because she thinks that others will laugh at her if the English were wrong.

### **The Environment**

Used mother tongue is one of the factors from the environment, in the English classroom. AD chose to speak in Indonesian because she is not familiar with the English language. AD tend to speak in mother tongue when they discussed. AD also difficult to speak English, because there is no friend to speak English too, as AD, said: "I cannot speak English" (A2); "...I feel difficult to say something. And the other reason is I cannot to speak English because there is no friend to speak English too". (A3)

### **Discussion**

In this research, there are internal and external factors influencing students' speaking difficulties in oral presentation.

#### **Internal Factors**

The internal factors for students' difficulties in speaking were lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes and shyness. This factor greatly influenced students' presentation in the classroom that leads to difficult to speak

English. Lacking confidence makes her believe their language skills to be weaker than those of others in the class. Although some students might have good pronunciation and be at a high proficiency level, she still preferred to be silent because of the lack of courage. It is similar statement Al Nakhalah (2016) said that, the student would rather keep silent while others do talking showing that the students are lack of confidence to communicate. Based on the interview results, AD stated that they feel not confident when speaking in front of the whole class.

AD believed that there was a great difference between her and her peers. So that she feels nervous, and envious because of these differences. AD became nervous when she found her peers' English was better that lead them to rarely participate in an oral presentation. This present study showed that more than half of the interviewees felt a lack of confidence because she thought her peers were better than her. She compared herself with her classmates, feeling inferior to others.

The student had a (strong) desire to speak perfect English. Thus, she was afraid of speaking English and/or making mistakes, which again made them anxious to speak the target language in class. Consequently, she became more hesitant to respond to their teachers or other students in the class. During the interview AD clearly stated that she was afraid of making mistakes while speaking English. For example, AD said that she was not confident in responding to teachers' questions because she was afraid of making mistakes. In addition, AD afraid of making mistakes have something to do with her classmates.

The minor factor for students' difficulties in speaking when giving an oral presentation was the fear of being laughed at. AD was reluctant to speak English in front of the whole class because she was afraid of being the focus of attention and other students would laugh at them if they make mistakes. Being the focus of

attention is not comfortable for some students. When she asked to present her task and speaking in front of the whole class, she feels anxious and uncomfortable because all the students look at her. The other students look to focus on and stare at her. So, she feels shy and anxious to speak English. It will make her always looking at the floor and afraid to see her classmates. Therefore, it can affect their performance and score. Besides, AD in the present study also worried about losing face in oral English language classrooms. They kept quiet and waited until they were required to speak English.

### **External Factor**

The external factor for students' difficulties in speaking was the environment. AD tend to be silent because she does not have any word to say about the topic being discussed. So, she chooses to not participate or speak in English. She did not know what to say' during the class discussions in English. She gets anxious to raise her hand because she was confused about what to say.

Based on the discussion above, there were two kinds of difficulties in speaking when giving oral presentation such as major factors and minor factors that put into two categories. The major factors in the category include lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, shyness, and the environment. It is similar what Leong and Ahmadi (2017) states that the students in EFL classroom have serious difficulties in speaking such as feeling anxiety and problems in delivery skills. Meanwhile, the minor factors in the category include nervous, anxiety, shyness, and use of mother tongue. It is also similar findings were achieved by Tuan and Mai (2015) states that the difficulties of the nonparticipation and always used mother tongue of students in EFL classrooms in Le Thanh Hien High School, Vietnam.

## **Conclusion and Suggestions**

### **Conclusion**

According to the research findings and discussion, the researcher can conclude this study attempted to investigate the factors influencing students' speaking difficulties in giving an oral presentation on an eighth-grade student of SMP Negeri 7 Sungai Raya. In the light of the analysis and discussions presented in chapter IV, it can be concluded that AD appeared to be silent or nervous in English classroom because of various factors including lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, shyness, and the environment. AD often encounter is inhibition. When AD tried to say something in a foreign language in the classroom she often inhibited. She worried about making mistakes, fearful of criticism or losing face. She is shy of the attention that their speech attracts. AD often complain that she cannot think of anything to say and they have no motivation to express themselves. AD have nothing to express maybe because the teacher had chosen a topic which is not suitable for her or about which he knows very little. It is difficult for the student to respond when the teachers ask her to say something in a foreign language because she might have little ideas about what to say, which vocabulary to use, or how to use the grammar correctly. Another factors AD faced when she asked to have a discussion about a topic that she is incapable of, if she want to say anything about the topic, she will use her own language. Another reason is that the use of mother-tongue is a natural thing to do. Sometimes, AD spoke very little or nothing in speaking class. Most of the time, she could not think of anything to say so she used mother tongue to speak. In addition, using the first language to explain something to another if there is no encouragement from the teachers.

### **Suggestions**

Referring to the discussion of the research, the writer provides some constructive suggestions. For the student who feel difficulties in speaking when giving oral presentation, firstly, the teacher needs to help

the student to being active use English in classroom activities and comfortable classroom environment. Second, teacher should tell her that making mistakes is part of learning. Third, the teacher should help the students overcome inhibition and shyness by having friendly, helpful and cooperative behaviors to make students feel comfortable when speaking in the class, reminding the student not to worry about making mistakes and giving them clear instructions and sufficient guidance. Fourth, the teacher should personalize and simplify the topics in the textbook to make them easier, more interesting and relevant to their lives. Moreover, speaking skills should be included in tests because the students will be more motivated to learn speaking skills because they are tested. The teachers should create an English speaking environment by encouraging the students to use English in the classroom to make it a habit, letting them watching films or videos in English and the teachers should also use English in the classroom frequently so that the students have more exposure to the language. The teacher might also teach, train students to be supportive of one another in class and she needs to practice developing the questions into effective questions. For instance, the teacher could encourage students to take different viewpoints or role play in order to practice asking questions and engaging in dialogue with a teacher. Thus, she could learn to question anything unclear to her and get used to the way of raising a question.

Moreover, all of the students should also be aware of and acknowledge the existence of difficulties in speaking when giving an oral presentation. They should take the initiative to seek strategies to deal with it such as being independent active learners in the classroom and actively seek and make use every chance to practice speaking English to others. It is also useful for the students to improve their speaking in English, English proficiency, expand vocabulary, and be supportive of one another during classroom discussion and presentation.

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