# STUDENTS' ENGLISH SPEAKING DIFFICULTIES AND TEACHERS' STRATEGIES IN ENGLISH TEACHING: A CASE STUDY AT SMA NEGERI 10 GOWA

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### Abstract

*This study aims to find out the students' English speaking difficulties at SMA Negeri 10 Gowa and then to know the teachers' strategies used. The researcher uses a case study method through a qualitative approach. To achieve the research objectives, data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. The participants who were included in this study were twelve students from classes X and XI of SMA Negeri 10 Gowa who had met the applied criteria (purposive sampling) and three English teachers. The results of this study indicate that students have speaking problems which are divided into two types, namely psychological problem and language problem. So, the role of the teacher as a facilitator in implementing strategies to overcome student English speaking difficulties is very important based on needs. Various strategies used by teachers to improve students' English speaking skills, such as traditional method, mini dictionary, and role play.*

**Keywords:** *English Speaking, student difficulties, teacher strategies used*

## INTRODUCTION

Spoken language production is still one of the most difficult aspects of language learning  (Brown, Gilllian, & Yule, 1983). In reality, until now there are still many students who have difficulty expressing their though and what they feel when trying to speak English. In English, the most common ways to identified  four main skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, (Harmer, 1990).

Speaking skills are considered one of the most difficult aspects from language learner this happens because many students find it difficult to express them verbally meanwhile if the speaker cannot speak well then the messages to be conveyed cannot be understood or may even make the listener misinterpret the actual meaning conveyed so the communication is not achieved as expected.

Learning to speak English fluently and accurately is a huge task for students' studying English as a foreign language because of the importance of mastering English with various needs, so that every element considers the development and learning of English, especially

speaking, it is necessary to keep upgrade by knowing the problem first and then looking for the right solution.

Speaking English learning needs direct interaction this is the same as the opinion (Brown, 1983) spoken language is interactional, to establish and maintain social relationships, it's supported by (Khan, 2013) modern teaching is characterized by interaction, communication, and participation. It is believed that an interactive class must incorporate participation to assure learner-centered teaching and better results. So, it can be concluded that the interaction between students and teachers affects the success of students' speaking learning where good interactions and strategies between students and teachers in speaking English produce good learning outcomes as well.

From that, to achieve the main goal of English language teaching in dealing with students' difficulties, appropriate strategies are needed to minimize existing problems. Teachers should prepare well strategies and methods before the learning process, thus teachers have a good way of teaching English, especially speaking skills to help students minimize students' difficulties by applying learning methods that can make students enjoyable in learning to speak English.

## LITERATUR REVIEW

### 1. The Concept of Speaking

1.1. Definition of Speaking

According to Thornbury, (2005:1) interactive speaking and requires the ability to cooperate with others in terms of speaking, so when people speak its means they are exchanging information, ideas, and emotions. Speaking is used for a variety of purposes, including expression, explanation dissatisfaction, persuading someone, and polite demands (Richards and Renandya, 2002).

Based on the above definition, it can be concluded that speaking is the ability to interact with others using language to exchange experiences, ideas, information, suggestions and feelings in daily life.

1.2. Function of Speaking

Viewing its functions, Brown & Yule (1983), divide the functionality of speaking into three partial versions, According to Richards, (2008: 21), they are three functions of speaking: speaking as interaction, speech as a transaction, and speech as performance.

## 2.1 Speech as Interaction

Speech as interaction refers to what we know as a conversation in which two or more people interact to exchange ideas, opinions, and so speaking for interaction has social purposes, to build relationships with certain people to get personal knowledge, and to share meanings with one another.

## 2.2 Speech as transaction

Richards (2008), revealed that the main focus of transactional talk is on the message and making oneself understood and the participants and how they interact socially with each other is not considered. Speakers are talking to give and receive information or obtain goods and services. For example, asking and giving an opinion, ordering food in a restaurant, checking into a hotel, etc.

## 2.3 Speech as performance

According to Richards (2008), another function of speaking, this is talk as performance. It refers to speaking which is performed in front of people. It can be group presentations, classroom presentation tasks, and public speakers. This is usually done in monologue form and is closer to written language than spoken language. So this performance function refers to talking in public, announcements, speeches, and so on.

## 1.3 Types of Speaking

Nunan in Brown (2000: 250) said that there are two commonly spoken languages: monologue and dialogue. According to Brown (2000), a monologue is a speech in which the speaker uses spoken language for any period, like speech, lecture, reading, newscast, etc., and the listener must process the information uninterrupted whether the speech listener understands the meaning of the speakers. On the other side, a dialog is a conversation involving two or more speakers, and there may be interruptions in the middle of the conversation if the listener does not understand what the speaker is saying.

## 1.4 The Components of Speaking

According to Hughes (2003), there are five components of speaking, they are: pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

## 4.1 Pronunciation

Pronunciation is a way for people to express their speech more clearly. According to Kline (1989), pronunciation is a way of producing words clearly when they are spoken. It means that even if someone speaks with incorrect grammar and vocabulary because it is said

with the right pronunciation, the meaning of the message to be conveyed is easier for listeners to understand. Pronunciation covers all aspects of pronunciation. Fraser (2001) said it can be concluded that in speaking the right pronunciation with aspects of intonation, articulation, rhythm, phrasing, gestures, body language and eye contact are very important in conversation so that the actual meaning conveyed is understood well by the listener.

4.2 Grammar

Grammar is the arrangement of words into correct sentences in both spoken and written speech. The same thing was said by Nelson & Greenbaum (2018), Grammar refers to the set of rules that allow words to be combined into larger units of language. This is done with a set of language rules to produce a complete and meaningful sentence form.

4.3 Vocabulary

According Richards and Schmidt (2002:580): A vocabulary is a set of lexemes containing single words, compound words, and idioms. Vocabulary is a very important basic asset for language proficiency. In speaking, knowing a lot of vocabulary will make it easier to express ideas, feelings, and what they think expressed in written or oral form.

4.4 Fluency

Fluency is defined as the ability to speak fluently and accurately. Fluency is the ability to express speech freely without interruption. A small example is process learning in class, the teaching and learning process is when teachers want to check the fluency of their students. Teachers let students express themselves without interruption to practice their fluency.

4.4 Comprehension

Comprehension is the ability to comprehend and process the meaning of sentences. Understanding a foreign language is considered very difficult as it must be completed in the form of direct observed, as well as verbal and non-verbal responses. Thus, language comprehension refers to understanding what the speaker is saying to the listener so that the message being conveyed is not misunderstood, whereas comprehension refers to the ability of the listener to obtain correct information from the speaker more easily.

**2. The Concept of English Speaking Difficulties**

English peaking is not as easy as it seems. In mastery of speaking skills as previously stated that speaking skills have a fairly important meaning among other language skills but behind the importance of mastering English, it turns out that learning to speak is not an easy thing to master because students face many problems in the process of mastering it. According to Ur (1996:121) four parts covering psychological and language problem, there are several students

problem in speaking that teachers may face when getting to talk in the classroom. These are inhibition, lack of topical knowledge, low or uneven participation, and mother-tongue use.

First, inhibition the students are often worried about making mistakes, afraid of being criticized or laughed at by others so they are embarrassed and end up not speaking at all. Second, lack of topical knowledge where students often complain that they cannot think of anything to say and they don't have no any ideas or knowledge to express, this can happen in the classroom because the teacher has chosen an inappropriate topic and students' knowledge of the topic discussed is less or not familiar at all so when the teacher asks it is very difficult for students to answer.

Third, low or uneven participation, this problem occurs to students usually because some students in the class tend to dominate while others do not speak at all or even very little. The last, mother-tongue use, a problem that occurs in the classroom is the use of the mother tongue, this happen when teachers are asked to discuss a topic that has been chosen in class but students are unable explaining it well in English because of the habit of using their mother tongue so students choose to use their mother tongue to speak and explain the topic in their native language because it is easier for them.

Furthermore, the students' problem in students speaking is anxiety. Brown, (2000: 151) also found that anxiety is related to emotion of uneasiness, such us frustration, self-doubt, apprehension, or worry. The others Hinkel (2005) argues, communication problems occur because learners find words they don't understand, from words they find don't know how to use or find that they cannot express the intended meaning.

From several theoretical reviews and previous research findings, it can be said that the majority of students' difficulties in speaking English are caused two-aspect they are psychological aspect and the language aspect. The previous study discusses students' speaking difficulties related to psychological problem in the classroom; such as worried about making mistakes, lack self-confidence, anxiety, lack of motivation, negative psychological reactions, shyness, and lack of pronunciation. Furthermore, the second aspect of students' difficulties in speaking English is language aspect; they lack vocabulary, mother tongue used, and nothing to say. This then becomes a big task for the teacher to find out what strategies are appropriate to be applied so that students' speaking problems can be overcome at least the problem is minimized so at the end that learning objectives can be achieved.

### 3. The Concept of Strategies

3.1 Definition of Strategy

Sudjana, (2005) defined: "Strategy is regarded as a plan or set of explicit intentions prior to and controlling action. Strategy is understood as a plan or will that precedes and controls activity". Strategies are methods or ways, to achieve the specified goals. So that it can be concluded that strategy is a plan or a series of wills in controlling something to achieve a specified goal.

3.2 Definition of Teaching Strategies

According to Hamruni (2009), ``A strategy is defined as a plan, method, or set of activities aimed at achieving a particular educational goal". So from that teachers are required to better prepare themselves before entering the classroom in the sense that the teacher is ready with a set of learning tools that have been prepared complete with learning strategies for teaching so that learning goals can be achieved.

3.3 Strategies in English Teaching

According to Ur (2000 p: 121), there are three ways the teacher solves some of the problems encountered in the speaking class. The strategies are described in the following terms:

3.3.1 Use the group work

Using group work in one class will encourage all students to actively participate in speaking in class during the lesson with limited time. When the problem of students who cannot speak in the class can be solved by using group work where the use of the oral practice is more helpful the students when its full class setting, an example of the strategy is that first, the teacher gives assignments to students, and then the teacher forms group work consisting of 2-4 students in a group depending on the need to achieve learning then the students will discuss the material given by the teacher and then present it in front of the class, the other way also can used by the teachers is role play, according to Ur (1996:133), role play are an expansion of the dialogue technique, where a class learn and performs.

3.3.2 Base the activities on simple words

The language used in the speaking class should be easy to understand with simple basic words, so that students can easily understand the meaning of sentences thrown. For example, before the start of class, teachers use dialogue about students' daily activities and repeat tasks related to the day's material. This allows students to gradually understand the meaning of words uttered later after reviewing the vocabulary.

3.3.3 Give some instruction or training in discussion skills

The students should be given clear directions for group discussions so that teachers can

ensure students of each group contributed to the discussion. Another way is participation in discussions keeping students speaking the target language is important so the best way to keep students in English speaking is: to try to be a model for them by using English as the target language, always reminding them to use the target language and the most important is to monitor the activities of students in class.

The others study Ur (1996: 120), Students should aim to speak more than teachers do, and if possible the students speak about for 80% STT (student talking time) to 20% TTT (teacher talking time). Some characteristics of successful speaking are; learners speak a lot and teachers as facilitator. Much of the time allocated to the activity is occupied by the learner's conversation so must have high motivation and students like to talk. So, they are interested in a topic and need to express something new about it, because they want to join achieve the task goal.

**METHODS**

1. Research Design

The research design of this research is case study research. Yin (2002) stated, case study research is a general knowledge process by knowing and examining phenomena that occur in real life, this case study can be used when there are phenomena that have vague or blurred boundaries. The type of case study used in this study is an intrinsic case study, which is a type of case study that focuses on objects of interest that describe the case itself. This case study design is used to describe an intervention or phenomenon and the real-world context in which it occurred. So, this study focused on the point of interest where something is a specific topic or unit that is the subject of research attention in this study.

2. The Subject and Sampling of the Research

The subjects of this study are three English teachers and the students of class X and XI by using purposive sampling. This study used purposive sampling technique to collect the data. In purposive sampling researcher determine the sampling based on certain specific characteristics that are suitable for the research purposes so to answer research question, researcher select students that is expected to answer the research problem in which the researcher chose students in each category based on achievement were each two students with high, medium, and low ability in English speaking from the Tenth and Eleventh grade.

3. Data and Data Sources

The data used in this study are primary data. Primary data is data obtained directly from the source. In this research, primary data was obtained from questionnaire and interviews. The researcher used a questionnaire to gather data the data collection, while this questionnaire

is self-made. The purpose of this questionnaire is to set a quick result to gain the students' difficulties when they speak English while to gain the strategies from the teachers the researcher using the in-debt interview.

4. The Procedure of Data Collection

The procedure for collecting the data, related of the object of the studied using predetermined techniques. First, the researcher used a questionnaire for the students to investigate their problems with English speaking after that the researcher used an interview with the English teachers by asking several questions related to the research question to know the teachers' strategies used. Furthermore, at the last stage, researcher collected a variety of supporting documents related to conducting teaching and learning processes to support data collection.

5. Data Analysis

Data analysis techniques were performed using the data analysis technique proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, (2018) which included data condensation, data display, conclusion, drawing and verification.

**THE FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

1. Finding

   a. The Students Difficulties in Speaking English

Researchers found students' difficulties are influenced by two aspects, namely psychological problem, and language problem. The researcher found that the students face difficulties they are worried of making mistakes, lack self-confidence, anxiety, lack of motivation, shyness of criticism and laughing by others, lack of vocabulary, nothing to say, lack of pronunciation, and lack of topical knowledge.

First, psychological problems, where the students feel worried of making mistakes, lack of self-confidence, anxiety, and shyness it's happening because students admit that they are afraid to speak because they are nervous that their friends will be laughed at them when they make mistakes in speaking English because their pronunciation is not good enough and there are still too many vocabularies that they do not know because according to their knowledge of their English is still very limited and minimal, students' psychological problems in speaking English also are present because of an unsupportive environment that makes students lazy and unmotivated. Judging from the result of the students answer can be seen below:

(S.2) "*yang membuat saya kesulitan berbicara bahasa inggris adalah kekhawatiran membuat kesalahan, saya khawatir akan kritikan dan ditertawakan orang lain saat membuat kesalahan dalam berbahasa inggris,*" what makes it difficult for me in speaks English is the worried of making mistakes, I worry about being criticized and laughed at by others when I make mistakes in English"

(S.10) "*tidak adanya motivasi yang di dapatkan dari lingkungan sehingga membuat saya jadi malas untuk mempelajari bahasa inggris,* the lack of motivation that comes from the environment makes me lazy to learn English"

(S.12) "*Ya saya mengalami kesulitan berbicara bahasa Inggris karna tidak percaya diri dengan pengetahuan kosa kata saya yang terbatas. Saya juga cemas ketika salah pengucapan bahasa Inggris,* Yes, I have difficulty speaking English because I am not confident with my limited vocabulary knowledge. I also get anxious when I mispronounce English"

The second, language problem, the students answered lack of vocabulary, this is mostly students' problem, and this is because students admit that their main problem in speaking English is that they don't know the vocabularies and others language problem is lack of pronunciation, the students admitted that pronunciation is one of the main problems in their English speaking. They admit that actually fear, shyness, and anxiety arise because their English pronunciation is still lacking and much stammered. The students answered can be seen below:

(S.1) "*saya merasa bahwa pengucapan saya di dalam berbahasa inggris belum cukup baik dan saya juga belum terlalu banyak mengetahui kosa kata bahasa inggris,* I feel that my pronunciation in English is not good enough and also I don't know much English vocabulary"

(S.10) "*masalah saya dalam berbahasa Inggris tentang bagaimana saya berbicara tetapi saya masih belibet atau terbata-bata,* my problem in speaking English is I still stutter or stammer"

(S.8) "*Kurangnya mengetahui kosakata dalam Bhs. Inggris sehingga sulit untuk mengungkapkan apa yang ingin diungkapkan*", Lack of vocabulary in English so it's hard to say what I want to say"

So, based on the result of the students' difficulties above the teacher's strategy is needed to minimize existing problems. According to Hamruni (2009) "the teaching strategy is defined as a plan, method, or set of activities designed to achieve specific educational goal."

The researcher found that each English teacher has different strategies used in English-speaking classes to achieve learning objectives. The strategies often used by the English teacher are traditional method, mini dictionary, and role play.

The first, in teaching English speaking using the traditional method with the procedure

is the first step of giving the text while the students are reading the entire text then looking for at least 10 words that are difficult or whose meaning is not known of the students, written and interpreted with the help of a dictionary in addition  also searching through ask and discuss with the others student, so the students are also directed to interact with other friends to discuss the difficult word together, and last memorized.

The second is mini dictionary, The steps of this strategy are; first the teachers direct students to make a mini dictionary before the learning process begins, after that the teacher starts learning by displaying a text then directs students to look for words that students do not know, then write them down in their mini dictionary made by students before, then look for the meaning of the word and finally memorize it, so that students understand the contents of the whole story in the text.

The third is role play, with the steps directing students to pair up about 2 people, then asking students to make a dialogue or monologue then inviting students to play the dialogue or monologue in front of the class.

In addition the other parts of strategies used by the teacher in the classroom, it provides motivation before the class starts, and continues to be a model in speaking English so that students do not feel pressured and experience psychological problems so that the previously planned learning can run well on qualifications as well achieved by students.

This can be seen from the following interview results;

T.1 "*When I want to teaching in the class, especially for the skill of speaking just memberitahukan kepada students to active in speaking it's means of don't worry in speaking even the students' make false in speaking but so I motivated them to don't be worry or don't be afraid to make a mistakes or nervous because the mistakes atau berbuat salah itu adalah human being apatah lagi in learning English, dan yang kedua adalah try to give models dalam berbicara how to pronounces the words.*"

Based on questionnaire and interview, we can concluded that the students are having difficulties in English speaking they are two aspects namely, psychology and language problem, including worried of making mistakes, lack self-confidence, anxiety, lack of motivation, shyness of criticism and laughing by others, lack of vocabulary, nothing to say, lack of pronunciation, lack of topical knowledge, and the teachers strategies are using traditional method, mini dictionary and role play, and addition the parts of teachers strategies are giving motivation for students  so that students do not feel pressured and psychological problems so that the previously planned learning can run well.

2. Discussions

According to Ur (1996), students' difficulties with English have two aspect; psychological aspect and language aspect. Based on the results of the research findings the researcher found that the students face difficulties they are worried of making mistakes, lack self-confidence, anxiety, lack of motivation, shyness of criticism and laughing by others, these is the students problem in their psychologies aspect, furthermore; lack of vocabulary, nothing to say, lack of pronunciation, and lack of topical knowledge are the students language problem.

First, students are often worried about making mistakes, afraid of being criticized or laughed at by others so they are embarrassed and end up not speaking at all its supported Brown, (2000: 151) states that anxiety is related to emotion such as of uneasiness, frustration, self-doubt, apprehension, and concern. When the speaking class does not go well because of fear, worry, nervousness, and hesitation, the activities designed by the teacher in the classroom do not go as planned by the teacher.

Second, lack of topical knowledge where Learners often complain that they have no idea what to say and do not have the knowledge to express themselves., this can happen in the classroom because the and students' knowledge of the topic are less and exacerbated by students have limited vocabulary mastery. The result also supported Hinkel (2005), communication problems occur because learners find words they don't understand the meaning, from words that don't know to use or find that they cannot express the intended meaning. The other language problem is lack of pronunciation; the students admitted that pronunciation is one of the main problems in their English speaking. Meanwhile, according to Kline (1989), pronunciation is a way of producing words clearly when they are spoken. This becomes a problem because students feel afraid, anxious, and embarrassed when they are wrong and don't know how to pronounce it correctly.

Good cooperation between students and teachers is needed, student participation and the way from the teacher transfers knowledge or in other words the teacher's teaching is also very important, so that when students don't have the courage to speak English, it can be ensured that the speaking class cannot run as well. So, that why the teacher chooses the student center learner as an option where the teacher involves students in the class as can be seen from the teacher's answer as follows;

(T.1) *"Jadi pendekatan yang saya pakai adalah 80% students centre learning dimana siswa lah yang menjadi focus atau menjadi pusat perhatian yang artinya siswa terlibat secara langsung but sometimes sekitar 20% itu teacher's centric approach."*

(T.3): *"Karena speaking adalah skill yang harus diterapkan oleh peserta didik itu sendiri."*

This then supports the study of (Ur: 1996), the characteristic of successful speaking is learner speak a lot. Much of the time allotted for activities is spent talking to learners. Students should be speak more than teacher do, and if possible aim for 80-% STT (student talking time) to 20% TTT (teacher talking time). So, the class aren't dominated by the teachers but also participated by the students.

Therefore, teachers' strategies to overcome the students' difficulties and increase students' participation are needed in English-speaking learning. The first way of teachers' teaching English speaking are: first preparing the material based on the lesson plan and syllabus, after that in the class started learning by giving positive affirmations in the form of motivation so that students are no longer afraid to make mistakes and are more confident and start trying to train themselves in speaking, next the teachers also had different ways as their strategies in teaching speaking, they are: traditional method while being a good model that can be imitated by students to speak, making a mini dictionary while in explained using the simple direction in simple words, and the last role play by using dialog or monolog where students can perform or play it in front of the class.

The aforementioned strategies are thus the set of plans, methods and activities used in the teaching and learning process to control the means by which learning qualifications are achieved.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the result above the, the researcher concludes that students' difficulties are influenced by two aspects, namely psychological aspects, and language aspects. The students difficulties to speak English for several reasons, namely because students are worried about making mistakes and feel anxious due to lack of vocabulary, lack of pronunciation, and lack of topic knowledge, sometimes students want to try to speak but are hindered by lack of vocabulary and messy pronunciation on the other hand because the topics discussed cannot be understood so that students continue to feel insecure and afraid in trying speaks English in a class to appear in the front their class by speaking English and the last students didn't have motivation to improve it.

Therefore, teachers' strategies to overcome the students' difficulties are needed in English-speaking learning. Teachers should be well prepared their self and their strategies for dealing the students difficulties so the qualifications can be achieved. Where the teachers teaching speaking strategies are traditional method while being a good model that can be

imitated by students to speak, making a mini dictionary while in explained using the simple direction in simple words, and the last role play by using dialog or monolog where students can perform or play it in front of the class.

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