

## STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN SPEAKING ENGLISH AT THE SECOND GRADE OF MTs NEGERI 1 BUNGO

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### ABSTRACT

This research sought to identify students' difficulties in speaking English and the root causes of those difficulties. This research was carried out in MTsN 1 Bungo. The research design utilizes qualitative descriptive methodology. This investigation focuses on the second-grade MTsN 1 Bungo students. The data for this research were gathered through observation and interviews. The researcher determined, based on the findings and discussion, that speaking English presents and is accompanied by a number of difficulties and causes of difficulty. The linguistic difficulties the student encountered when speaking English were a lack of pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. When speaking English, students struggle with a lack of confidence, shyness, and apprehensiveness. pronunciation difficulties predominate among difficulties. The majority of students stated that they are afraid of pronouncing English words incorrectly. Student difficulties are caused by a fear of making a blunder.

*Keywords:* Students' Difficulties, Speaking English, Teaching Speaking

### A. INTRODUCTION

Global language English. Speaking English has become a global fad. Many people worldwide utilize English as a common language to communicate across countries, languages, and cultures. According to Crystal (2008), about two billion people speak English. Speaking English is crucial for our future in the globalization era. Speaking is crucial for EFL learners as it facilitates communication with others. Mastering speaking is crucial for English foreign language learners (Rao, 2019).

English speaking skills are crucial for academic success, allowing EFL learners to research abroad and present in front of peers in the classroom. Mastering English speaking skills can help EFL learners secure better jobs in global firms. Speaking English is a crucial ability to develop. Indonesian students find it challenging to speak English as it is not their first language. S. AlSaadi (2013) identifies speaking as a challenging skill for second language learners or English foreign language learners. An Indonesian student has been learning

English for 2 years. Was young until university, but cannot speak. People who struggle with English may understand what others say but struggle with pronunciation. According to Bueno, Madrid, & Melaren (2006), many English language learners struggle to speak accurately and effectively despite years of training. According to the 2020 English Proficiency Index by Education First (EF), the Netherlands ranks first in the world with a score of 625 (very good), indicating that Indonesian students are not proficient in English. Indonesia ranks 74th globally and 15th in Asia with a low score of 453.

Speaking English may be difficult for linguistic and nonlinguistic reasons. According to Heriansyah (2012), lack of vocabulary, confidence, and ideas about what to say might lead to fear of making mistakes and being laughed at by friends. Al Hosni (2014) found that students struggle with speaking English due to a lack of vocabulary and fear of making mistakes in front of peers. According to Dalem (2017), students may fear making mistakes due to lack of confidence, shyness, and fear of ridicule. Many students have trouble speaking English.

Prior to observing MTs N 1 Bungo, the researcher visited two second-grade kids and asked them questions about the investigation. Interviews with two MTsN1 Bungo students revealed difficulties in speaking English. Students fear making mistakes when speaking English in front of friends due to fear of ridicule. The researchers discovered that students were hesitant to request permission in English. After interviewing two students, the researcher feels that more interviews and observation are needed to fully understand the challenges faced by students. The student was unable to speak English due to speaking issues.

Numerous studies have examined students' English speaking challenges. According to Salihun (2019), students in the second grade at MTs Hamzanwadi NW Gelogor struggle with speaking English. The research aims to examine the causes of students' English speaking challenges in the second grade at MTs Hamzanwadi NW Gelogor. The research identified hesitation, lack of words, limited involvement, and mother language use as common speaking challenges among students. The causes of English speaking difficulty are cognitive style and personality. Differences between this research and other studies include the environment and objective of the investigation. Siti Salihun does research at MTsN 1 Bungo, while in the second grade of MTs Hamzanwadi NW Gelogor. In her research, Siti Salihun aims to

examine the causes of students' difficulties in speaking English at MTs Hamzanwadi NW Gelogor in the second grade of MTsN 1 Bungo in 2020/2021. The research titled "Students' difficulties in speaking English and their strategies to overcome them" (Paramudhita, 2015) and "Students' difficulties in speaking English at the second grade of MTsN 1 Bungo" (this research).

The research indicated that students struggled with speaking due to a lack of grammatical comprehension, fear of being mocked, and anxiousness. The research differs from past studies in its environment, data collection method, and objective. Putri Anggia does research in software engineering (SE) at a vocational school in Bandung. This research in MTs Negeri 1 Bungo, Putri Anggia employs questionnaires, interviews, and observations to obtain data, while this research will simply use observation and interviews. Putri Anggia's research focuses on students' English speaking issues and techniques to overcome them, while this research aims to understand the causes of these difficulties. In a 2016 research, Al found that students struggle with English word pronunciation and sentence grammar. The research differs from earlier studies in its environment and topic matter. Al Nakhalah is a second-grade research student at MTsN 1 Bungo and a student at Al Quds Open University. In a similar research (Ibnian, 2019), the researcher investigated the challenges faced by EFL students in Jordan.

Implementing a questionnaire revealed students' fear of making mistakes and lack of drive when speaking English. The variations between this research are the setting, method, and purpose. Ibnian research utilized questionnaires, while this research employed interviews and observations. Ibnian research aims to identify university students' issues, while this research focuses on the causes of student difficulty in speaking English. Students in the second grade of MTsN 1 Bungo still struggle with speaking English, as explained above. This research aims to identify students' English speaking issues. The researcher titled the research "Students' English speaking difficulties in second grade at MTsN 1 Bungo."

## **B. METHOD**

The researcher employed a qualitative descriptive approach based on the factors and research methodology. That descriptive research is the research of natural and man-made phenomena

that already exist (Sukmadinata, 2015). Qualitative descriptive is presumption causes relationship between behavior and outcome, but this method only allows you to postulate and describe the problem (Sugiyono, 2015, p. The objective of qualitative descriptive writing is to identify and provide evidence to support the fact that a particular element exists.

Therefore, the researcher used qualitative descriptive methods to identify the difficulties and causes of second-grade MTsN 1 students' difficulties in speaking English. Bungo makes English difficult to communicate

## **C. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Finding**

In summary, this section of the research delved into the intricacies of students' difficulties in speaking English among the second-grade students of MTsN 1 Bungo. Through a combination of observations and interviews, a comprehensive understanding of the challenges encountered by students in their English speaking endeavors was obtained. The findings revolved around two major categories: linguistic problems and personality-related challenges.

Regarding linguistic problems, the research identified five distinct difficulties that students grapple with in speaking English: pronunciation, vocabulary, confidence, grammar, and feelings of nervousness and shyness. Pronunciation surfaced as a primary challenge due to the disparities between pronunciation and written form in English. The fear of being laughed at for mispronunciation further exacerbated this challenge. Similarly, vocabulary limitations hindered students' ability to express ideas effectively during conversations. Lack of confidence emerged as a significant obstacle, inhibiting students from speaking freely in front of their peers. Grammar complexities also contributed to students' speaking difficulties, as constructing well-structured sentences became a challenge.

Moving beyond linguistic problems, the research explored personality-related issues, specifically lack of confidence, shyness, and nervousness. These emotional barriers hampered students' willingness to engage in English conversation. The fear of making mistakes, coupled with the belief that their English proficiency was inadequate, led to diminished confidence. Shyness and nervousness further exacerbated these insecurities, causing some

students to shy away from speaking English publicly. This was evidenced by observable traits like rapid body movements, avoidance behaviors, and expressions of discomfort.

The research also addressed the underlying cause of these challenges: the fear of making mistakes. It was found that many students harbor apprehensions about making errors while speaking, often leading to heightened anxiety when engaging in English conversations. This fear can be attributed to the perception that mistakes will lead to negative social consequences, such as ridicule or embarrassment.

In conclusion, this section of the research provides valuable insights into the multifaceted nature of students' difficulties in speaking English. The diverse range of challenges, encompassing linguistic and personality-related factors, underscores the complex landscape of language acquisition. By identifying these challenges and their underlying causes, educational institutions can tailor strategies to address them effectively. Empowering students to overcome these obstacles is essential for fostering confident, capable English speakers who can navigate linguistic complexities with greater ease.

## **2. Discussion**

In this section, the researcher presents research findings from observation and interviews. The debate focuses on students' English speaking issues and their causes.

### **1. Second Grade MTsN 1 Students' English Speaking Challenges Bungo**

- **Linguistic issues with students**

Research indicates that second-grade students at MTsN-1 Bungo struggle with English language proficiency. The research identifies five English speaking challenges experienced by students. These include poor pronunciation, vocabulary, confidence, grammar, anxiousness, and shyness.

The primary challenge for students speaking English was poor pronunciation. Practice speaking English requires pronunciation. Improving pronunciation can help children understand the meaning of our words in conversations and interactions. Speakers who frequently mispronounce phonemes might be challenging for non-native speakers (Gerard,

2000, p. 11). The researcher discovered that many students struggle with English pronunciation due to the distinction between writing and pronunciation. Students often struggle with pronunciation (Hetrakul, 1995, p. 76).

According to an interview with a student, she found it challenging to pronounce English words due to the distinction between pronunciation and writing. Pronunciation challenges me when speaking English due to fear of mispronunciation. Afterward, my friend will mock me. Interview, RF April 28, 2021). Based on interviews with students, it is evident that many struggle with English pronunciation. The research found that students fear making mistakes when pronouncing English words due to the fear of ridicule from friends. They also find it difficult to speak English due to the differences in writing and pronunciation, which can be confusing.

The second research revealed students' difficulty speaking English due to a lack of vocabulary. Kamil and Hiebert (2005) state that vocabulary is a source of knowledge and word meanings. In the learning process, students may struggle with speaking due to a lack of vocabulary. Some children struggle to communicate with friends due to inadequate language. A research by Heriansyah (2012) indicated that students' difficulty speaking English was due to a lack of vocabulary. From observation, the researcher discovered that most students lacked vocabulary. Student conversations with friends and researcher inquiries reveal limited vocabulary and hesitation in answering questions due to limited language knowledge.

The third finding revealed that students struggle with speaking English due to a lack of grammar. Grammar construction for dialogue. Grammar is needed to communicate (Nunan, 1999, p. 100). Grammar studies sentence structure. Students who lack knowledge of grammar principles and sentence structure will struggle to communicate effectively in English. Grammar is challenging because students do not learn structure sequentially (Celce-Murcia, 2001). Some students interviewed had grammar issues. According to an interview with RF on April 28th 2021, a student expressed difficulty with grammar and word arrangement when speaking English. The researcher concluded from the interview that students struggle with English grammar and sentence structure.

- **Student personality issues**

The primary reason students struggled with English was a lack of confidence. Speaking English confidently is crucial. A confident kid can talk in front of others. According to Nunan (1999), students who lack confidence in their English often experience communication anxiety. Lack of confidence in front of the class might negatively effect students. The researcher observed that many second-grade students at MTsN 1 Bungo lacked confidence in practicing conversations in front of the class. This is seen in their shy facial expression, lack of confidence in body language, and tendency to move fast, such as playing with a skirt or pen. Students lost confidence due to poor English language knowledge and perceived inability to speak fluently. The primary reason for students' low confidence is their English speaking abilities (He & Chen, 2010). Many students feel their English is poor and that they cannot talk well.

The second research indicates that students struggle with speaking English due to shyness and nervousness. Shyness and nervousness are common emotions experienced by students when speaking English in class. This suggests that shyness may hinder English speaking. It is crucial to focus on this component to improve students' speaking skills in the classroom. According to Saurik (2011), many students are cautious about speaking the language due to fear of making mistakes. According to Susilawati (2007), shyness and anxiousness can hinder students' English speaking abilities. In her research, the researcher discovered that students who were unable to speak English felt shy and nervous.

Students often struggle with speaking English due to shyness and lack of confidence in public (Brown, 2002, P. 345). An interview with a second-grade student at MTsN 1 Bungo revealed that she felt embarrassed and nervous when speaking English in front of her friends and teacher. Speaking English is hard since I'm frightened of making mistakes. Interview. According to Baldwin (2011), students often experience shyness and nervousness when speaking in front of large groups, leading to a fear of forgetting what they say. From the explanation, the researcher concludes that when individuals are frightened and shy, they may forget their words.

## 2. English Speaking Challenges in Second Grade MTsN 1 Bungo Students

Based on interviews and observations, the researcher identified students' English speaking challenges as fear of making mistakes. Harmer (2007) states that all students make mistakes whether speaking or writing in English. Many students fear making mistakes when speaking English. According to Fadlan (2017), students' fear of making mistakes increases while speaking before a critical audience. According to an interview with a student, she expressed fear of making mistakes when speaking in class. Interview, R April 28, 2021). Heriansyah (2012) revealed that students struggle with speaking English due to fear of making mistakes. According to the interview, students often struggle with speaking English due to fear of making mistakes.

### D. CONCLUSION

Previous research indicates that second-grade students at MTsN 1 Bungo struggle with English speaking. The interview and observation results obtained by the researcher demonstrate this. English learners face challenges such as poor pronunciation, limited vocabulary, lack of confidence, poor grammar, shyness, and anxiousness. The main issue is difficulty in pronouncing and conveying English words and sentences. Most students struggle with English pronunciation during class discussion practice.

Many students lack confidence in speaking English or practicing communication due to incorrect pronunciation of English words. Students found it challenging to speak English due to the differences in writing and speaking styles, leading to confusion in word pronunciation. Students struggled with speaking English due to fear of making mistakes.

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