



Students' Difficulties in Speaking English at the Tenth Grade of Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan

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Abstract

The aims of the study are mainly to find out the students' difficulties in speaking, and to describe strategies used by teacher to overcome the speaking problems. The participants of the study were 36 students of the tenth grade of SMK N 2 Purworejo. The instruments used in this research were questionnaire, interview and documentation. After getting the data, the writer analyzed them to determine categories of students' speaking skill, students' speaking difficulties and teachers' strategies. The result of the study shows that the mean score of students skill in speaking is 64.8. It belongs to sufficient category. The students' speaking difficulties covered linguistic and non linguistics problems. The linguistic problems include lack of vocabulary, pronunciation, grammar knowledge, while non linguistic problems, namely inhibition, nothing to say, uneven participant, mother tounge interference, anxiety, shyness, lack of self confidence and low motivation. To solve the problems, the teacher has strategies such as drilling, brainstorming, role playing and giving the students motivation.

Keywords: *difficulties, English, speaking, strategies.*

Introduction

English is one of the international languages used in countries throughout the world, including Indonesia. As the most used language, English takes an important role as language for communication used in many sectors of life such as, trading, bilateral relationship, science, technology, business and so on. Considering the importance of English, The Ministry Education of Indonesia makes English as a compulsory subject to be taught in the school curriculum.

Nowadays, in the 2013 curriculum English is already taught in junior high school (SMP), Senior High School (SMA) or Vocational High School (SMK) as compulsory subject in Indonesia and it is included in National Exam (Ujian Nasional) as a reflection on students about English mastery. This proves that English is important to be learnt by all students in the level of education in Indonesia.

Learning English in a vocational high school (SMK) is different from learning English in a high school (SMA). In the vocational high school,

English is taught in specific ways based on their major because they prepare students to work in certain fields soon after they graduate. The purpose of teaching English in vocational high school is to improve students' communicative skills. It means the students are expected to be able to use English actively. Among the four skills of language, speaking is one of the basic skills that is considered active. Therefore, students are required to have good English speaking skill.

Unfortunately, in Indonesia mastering speaking skill is not easy. It was found that most of the students still have difficulties to speak English. It is because the students did not know certain English vocabularies, they have poor pronunciation, they were afraid of making mistakes, and they were reluctant to speak English. Those problems are resulting in their difficulties to express or convey ideas through speaking.

Therefore, the objectives of this study are to explain the students' difficulties in speaking English at the tenth grade of SMK Negeri 2 Purworejo and to describe the strategies used by the teacher to solve the students' problems in Speaking.

In conducting the research, theories related to speaking are used. According to Brown (2003, p. 140), speaking is a productive skill that can be directly an empirically observed, those observations are invariably colored by the accuracy and effectiveness of a test taker's listening skill, which necessarily compromises the reliability and validity of an oral production test. In addition, Thornbury (2005, p. 8) states that speaking takes the form of face to face dialogue and therefore involves interaction. Furthermore, Harmer (2013, p. 269) describes speaking as the ability to speak fluently presupposes not only knowledge of language feature, but also the ability to process information and language.

Meanwhile, difficulties is "mistakes, mis-judgments, miscalculations, and error from an important aspect of learning in acquiring information (2007, p. 226). While Djamarah (2011, p. 235) states that difficulties in learning is a condition where the students can not study well, caused some threat, obstacle, or disturbance of learning. In addition, Ahamadi and Widodo (2013, p. 77) state that difficulties in learning is the condition where the students can not learn as they should.

Related previous studies are first, "*Factors Affecting The Speaking Difficulties of The Tenth Grade Hotel Accomodation Students At SMK Negeri 6 Palembang*" conducted by Hanum Mufidah (2017). This study belongs to descriptive qualitative research which aim was to know the factors that influenced in the students' difficulties in speaking English. The result shows that there were several factors that contributed students difficulties in speaking English, namely affective factor, social factor,

instructor factor, Indonesian education system, facilities factor and linguistic factor.

Second study was conducted by Haidara (2016) entitled "*Psychological Factor Affecting English Speaking Performance for the English Learners in Indonesia*". This study belonged to descriptive qualitative research which aimed to describe the psychological factor that affected negatively the English speaking performance for the English learners in Indonesia. The result showed that students were fear of making mistakes, feeling shy, feeling hesitated, and lack of confidence.

The third study was conducted by St. Kurniawati B. (2017) which entitled "*A Study of Speaking Class Anxiety of The Second Semester Students in English Education Departement at UIN Alauddin Makassar*". This study was a descriptive quantitative research which aimed to describe the level of students' speaking anxiety in speaking class. The result shows that from ninety students in the second semester, most of them (58%) had medium level of anxiety in speaking. These students tend to have indecisive perceptions regarding their feelings when they are asked to express their opinions regarding communicating in English meetings. Another findings result indicated that 40% of the learners experienced low anxiety and only 2% experienced high anxiety.

Research Methodology

The method used in this research is a descriptive qualitative data analysis involving 36 students of the tenth grade of SMK Negeri 2 Purworejo. The analysis is technique of analyzing the instrument of documentation, questionnaire and interview. Technique of analyzing the instrument of documentation that was students speaking score consist of calculating the data, categorizing the data. Technique of analyzing the data of questionnaire consist of identifying the data, tabulating the data, calculating the data. Meanwhile, technique of analyzing the instrument of interview consist of analyzing and describing the result of interview then writing conclusion base on the data analysis. Table 1.1 is the range of the students' ability in 2013 curriculum.

Table 1.1

Category of the students' ability in 2013 curriculum		
SCORE	GRADE	CATEGORY OF ABILITY
96-100	A	Very Good

91-95	A-	Good
86-90	B+	
81-85	B	
75-80	B-	Sufficient
70-74	C+	
65-69	C	
60-64	C-	Poor
55-59	D+	
<54	D	

(Muhammad, 2017 : 11)

Findings and Discussions

1) *Students' Speaking Skill*

The average of the students' score from the data speaking score is 64.8. According to the category of ability that is described in the 2013 curriculum, it belongs into sufficient category. Therefore, based on this result, the researcher concludes that in general, the students ability in speaking skill at the tenth grade of SMK N 2 Purworejo in the academic year of 2018/2019 is sufficient, because the average show in the middle of low and high.

2) *Students' Difficulties in Speaking*

The students difficulties was obtained from the questionnaire analysis. Based on the analysis it is found that the students' difficulties in speaking English consist of linguistics and non linguistics problems. Linguistics problems are vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Nonlinguistic problems are inhibition, nothing to say, un even participant, and mother tounge, anxiety, shyness, lack of self confident and low of motivation.

3) *Teacher Strategy*

Based on the interview analysis, the strategies used by English teacher in teaching speaking are presented below.

1) *Role play*

Role play is a strategy that helps students in speaking especially for students who do not want to speak. Not only helps their speaking, but also vocabulary. In role play, although teacher gave students selected topics, they selected the words

and phrases of their own, which helped them choose suitable words that were suitable with the situation and help them increased their vocabulary.

2) *Drilling*

The teacher used drilling technique to make students know how to pronounce words well in English. Drilling is a strategy to improve pronunciation by imitating and repeating words, phrases, and even whole utterances. In drilling, the teacher give instructions that students must repeat and follow. The teacher says an utterance or words with correct pronunciation, then, the students repeat and follow the teachers instruction.

3) *Brainstorming*

The English teacher believed that brainstorming strategy could help students improve their speaking skill. In this strategy, teacher gave some information or topics related to the lesson to the students. Then, the students brainstormed for the topic that had been chosen.

4) *Give the students motivation*

The teacher used motivation as his strategy to overcome students' problem in speaking English. The teacher needs to motivate them in order to make them confident to learn speaking. So, they did not feel fear of making mistakes or fell shy when they were in the process of learning, especially in learning English speaking.

Conclusion

Based on the data that have been collected and analyzed, the writer draws some conclusions as follows.

1. The speaking ability of the students of SMK N 2 Purworejo was still in sufficient level. Based on the mean score of speaking skill, they got 64.8 and based on the scoring criteria in *the 2013 curriculum* it belongs to sufficient category.
2. Most of the tenth grade students of SMK Negeri 2 Purworejo had difficulties in speaking English. The difficulties include linguistic aspects such as lack of vocabulary, pronunciation and grammar and non-linguistic aspects like inhibition, nothing to say, un even participant, mother tounge, anxiety, shyness, lack of self confident and low of motivation.

3. There are several teacher's strategies to solve the difficulties in speaking English, namely role play, drilling, brainstorming and giving the students motivation to learn English, especially in speaking skill.

The findings above have implication for teaching speaking at Vocational High School. It is important for teachers of English to use the various strategies in teaching speaking in order to increase the students' skill. It is important for the Vocational High School graduates to acquire good speaking skill for preparing for looking for jobs.

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