# The Students' Challenges In Speaking English At MTs Al Washliyah Kolam

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Abstract. One of the most important skills that students must learn in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is speaking. By mastering speaking skills, students can express their ideas during the communication process to achieve their communication goals. To achieve the goal of communicating in English speaking, the teacher's role in providing stimulation or strategy is also very necessary. However, in reality, many students in Indonesia have studied English for years but still find it difficult to speak English. Not only that, it turns out that the teacher's does not have a good strategy used by the teacher in the class, which is very monotonous so that students are bored and cannot accept speaking material well. The study aims to investigate the students' challenges in speaking English to describe strategies used by the teacher to overcome the speaking problems. The method of this research is qualitative. The data collection techniques used in this study were observation, interview, and documentation. The results of the interview show that there are internal and external factors. However, internal problems are most influence for students' speaking skill. Students who experience a high level of anxiety have a hard time developing their speech. Appropriate learning activities as the teacher's strategies can help teacher to overcome students' challenges in speaking English.

Keywords: Speaking, Students' challenges, teacher's strategies

### I. INTRODUCTION

One of the most important skills that students need to learn in learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) besides listening, reading and writing is speaking. This is very important because by mastering speaking skills, you can express your thoughts to others during the communication process in other to reach your communication goals. But, in reality there are many students have been studying English for years and still struggling to able to speak English fluently. There are some problems in acquiring language skills in Indonesia. First, students get bored in learning English because it difficult to remember words and pronounce English (Astuti, 2018). Second, students rarely use English to communicate in and out of the classroom. This makes them less unaccustomed to speaking good English. Third, students only learn words when they have to practice speaking of the class. They usually imitate words and phrases in books. They do not understand what is said and they do not speak spontaneously in their own words. The teacher's strategy is used by teacher can affect the development of speaking skills

Related previous studies are first, "Exploring Students' Difficulties in Speaking English and Their Attitude In Speaking English" conducted by Ratih Inayah, S.Pd, M.Pd & Ida Lisdawati, M.Hum (2017). This study belongs to descriptive qualitative research which aim was to seek the students' difficulties in speaking English and to know their attitude and perception toward speaking English as a foreign language in Indonesia. The result of this study showed that students who experience difficulty with speaking often have problems with motivation and self-confidence but the researchers didn't explain the strategies to overcome the students' problem in speaking.

Second study was conducted by Endang Komariah, Nira Erdiana and Triya Mutia (2020) entitled "Communication strategies used by EFL students in classroom speaking activities". This study belonged to mix method (qualitative and quantitative). The results of this study reveal that the students employed 12 types of communication strategies. These are: message abandonment, literal translation, code-switching, foreignizing, approximation, word coinage, circumlocution, use of the all-purpose word, self-repair, appeal for assistance, mumbling, and fillers. The most frequent strategy utilized is self-repair (36.2%), followed by fillers (28.5%) and code-switching (11.8%), whereas the least frequent employed strategy is foreignizing (0.4%). It is recommended that lecturers train students to use communication strategies and integrate them as part of speaking activities in



all content courses. But now days, the impact of the pandemic period, the learning system in Indonesia is online learning. Therefore the strategy used by the teacher should be a strategy related to online learning activities.

Third study was conducted by Hanum Mufidah (2017) which entitled "Factors Affecting The Speaking Difficulties of The Tenth Grade Hotel Accomodation Students At SMK Negeri 6 Palembang" 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 but the researcher didn't explain internal factor of the students such anxiety.

Based on the above explanation the researcher is interested to conduct the present research. The objectives of this study are to explain the students' challenges in speaking English and to describe the strategies used by the teacher to overcome the students' problems in Speaking English of the ninth grade of MTs Al Washliyah Kolam .Thus the research questions are as follows:

- 1. what challenges do the students' face in speaking English?
- 2. what the teacher's strategies to overcome the students' problem in Speaking English?

#### II. REVIEW AND LITERATURE

In conducting the research, theories related to use in students' challenges in speaking English are:

#### 2.1 Speaking

According to the idea of Brown (2003: 140), speaking is a productive skill that can be directly an empirically observed, those observations are always influenced by the accuracy and effectiveness of the test taker's listening ability, this inevitably affects 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.

Speaking is one of the four skills in English subjects as a tool to communicate with each other. Ur (1996:43) considers speaking as the most important skill among the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) because people who know a language are called speakers of that language.

In Indonesia, there are some problems in speaking skill learning, both internal and external. Internally, speaking skill learning makes students feel anxious. They probably reluctant to use the target language because they probably afraid of making a mistake.

#### 2.2 The Challenges in speaking English

Learning disabilities are situations in which students are unable to learn well due to multiple threats, difficulties, or learning difficulties. In addition, Ahmadi and Widodo (2013: 77) describe learning disabilities students cannot study properly. On the other hand (Heriansyah, 2012), There are some issues related to non-linguistic problems, that is you may not be confident in speaking, you may not be accustomed to speaking in class, you may make mistakes, and afraid of being ridiculed by your friends.

Tsiplakides (2009) explained that speaking anxiety is a person who is reluctant to participate in conversations using a particular language. It is due to lack of motivation and poor performance. Fear of speaking is a common phenomenon in learning English as a foreign language. English learners are more anxious in speaking foreign language because they have no ability and less practice in speaking English in class. In examining English-speaking students on how they learn a foreign language, Cohen and Norst (1999) found that when studying English Speaking students learning a foreign language, they expressed fear and anxiety when they were placed in a situations where they had to play in front of colleagues or teachers. Did these fears and anxieties are reflected not only in the use of words such as embarrassment, trauma, anxiety, fear, resentment, and frustration and so on, but also physical reaction.

#### 2.3 The Teacher's Strategies

Because speaking is two ways communication, where there must be at least a speaker and a listener, so that it can be a communicative dialogue. The teaching how to speak a target language aims to enable the students to use the language verbally for many purposes. The success of the teaching-learning process can be achieved if the teacher can present the materials in such a good way that can increase the students' interest. The teacher must be creative in presenting English to the their students. They also have to practice various techniques of teaching, carefully select the materials, and use interesting instructional media that are suitable for the students in order to help them to speak in the language.

a. Classroom Activities.



Classroom speaking activities contextually involve students' speaking and related to communicative necessities of given population. Students have the opportunity to use the target language in real-world scenarios. In his review, Harmer (2007) identifies six classroom speaking activities: acting from the script, communication games, discussion, prepared talks/presentation, questionnaires, simulation, and role play. He stated that there are many classroom speaking activities that can be used in teaching a language, such as acting from the script, communication games, discussion, prepared talks, as well as simulation and role play. In every classroom speaking activity, teacher must give students opportunity to speak what is in their mind, just like what is important and interesting for them to talk. It's better if teacher give students opportunity to express their understanding in English.

#### b. Online Activities.

To prevent the pandemic, the Indonesian government has adopted a policy requiring universities to encourage all students to attend lectures at home (Wahyu & Simanullang, 2020). Therefore, lectures are conducted by conducting online learning. Online learning is an educational innovation that incorporates elements of information technology elements in learning (Wulandari & Agustika, 2020).

Online learning is a solution for staying engaged in teaching and learning activities, even when not face-to-face (Purwanti & Krisnadi, 2020). The benefits of online learning are achieved when the prerequisites: online media availability, time management and internet connectivity are met (Harunasari, Dwigustini, Halim, & Susilawati, 2021). Online Learning methods are highly reliable to support the teaching and learning process. Of course, this method is very suitable for today's generation of technology-oriented student. Therefore, it is not be difficult to teach each student. There are so many websites, applications and online media that can help you improve your speaking skills. The teacher's strategy for managing proper learning activities to overcome student problem when speaking English.

# 3. RESEARCH METHOD

#### 3.1 Research Setting

This research was conducted at the MTs Al Washliyah Kolam. MTs Al Washliyah Kolam is a school equivalent to Junior High School in the field of Islam. MTs Al Washliyah Kolam is located in Kolam Village, Percut Sei Tuan District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra province - Indonesia. This research was conducted during December 2021. The subject of this research is the students' of ninth grade and teacher at MTs Al Washliyah Kolam. The researcher assumed that the ninth-grade students have a competency of speaking since they have taken the speaking subject start from elementary school and seventh grade in Junior high school.

# 3.2 Data and Data Source

The data are informations or facts used in discussing or deciding the answer of research question. The source of data in the study is the subjects from which the data can be collected for the purpose of research (Arikunto, 2010)<sup>16</sup>. The data of this study are the interview guide and the observation guide. In this study, the data source consists of two informants. First, the student as the key informant and the second are the teacher and the other students as the supporting informants. As a case study, the present study is contextual and will be conducted in a specific situation. In observation, There was one student from ninth grader chosen as the key informant of the research, namely: Nursyahdilla (ND). Meanwhile, to compare the validation of the data. There were two supporting informants. Another student namely: Mukhlis Aditya (MA) and the English teacher namely: Artika Pratiwi (AP). The researcher applied observations from 7th up to 11th December 2021. The researcher observed students' challenges in speaking English for ninth grader at MTs Al Washliyah Kolam.

# 2.3 Research Method

The method used in this study is descriptive qualitative. In this study, the data collection techniques used are observation, interviews, and documentation. These techniques and methods are needed to collect and process data obtained from the field so that it is hoped that this research will run smoothly and systematically. According to Alwasilah<sup>17</sup> (2011), the descriptive method is claimed to have some benefits. The first is it goes deep into the topic measured, it is to ensure a depth discussion on the topic. The second is it provides the researcher with data recorded, so it makes that possible for the researcher to revise the data obtained to have in-depth analysis.

# 3.4 Technique of Collecting Data

In order to collect the data, The analysis is the technique of analyzing the instrument of Observation, interview and documentation. Observation is needed to make the data stronger. The interview is one of the most commonly used as the source of data collection. Researcher conduct informal face-to-face interviews. This is an instant, roughly structured



interview. We also conduct guided interviews. That is, as the interviewer attends the session, he plans to investigate a problem related to the student's speaking skills and outcomes and ask the interviewer specific open-form questions.

#### 3.5 Technique of Analyzing Data

The concept of the descriptive analytic approach (the filed of descriptive analytic approach) isas follows: "A detailed descriptive way for scientific researchers to explain various scientific phenomena and problems and solve problems and questions contained in the scientific research department. The collected data can be used to extract appropriate explanations and results. Analyzed by a descriptive analysis approach.

#### 3.6 Technique of Establishing Trustworthiness

In this research, the researcher focuses only on the credibility of the data. Gasson<sup>18</sup> (2004) suggests the criterion of trustworthiness in qualitative research is credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. This research the researcher limits on the triangulation technique.

# IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This part presents the result of the research. The discussion is given based on the presented finding covering the teaching and learning English process and the students" challenges in speaking English.

# 4.1 Result

Interview from students as the key informant

The result of the interview from student that there is factor influence the students' challenge in speaking English, namely Internal factor such low-self confident and anxiety. But anxiety as the most impact to students' challenges in speaking English.

Question 1:

Do you have any difficulty when speaking English?

ND: "I'm anxious if I make mistakes in arranging the words. I'm anxiety if my pronunciation is bad".

Interview From the another student as supporting informant

Question 1:

Do you have any difficulty when speaking English?

MA: "I don't understand what I want to speak. I'm so afraid. I'm anxious if my friends will laugh at me".

Interview From the English teacher as supporting informant

Ouestion 1:

In your opinion, why can't the students speak English?

AP: "I have asked many students about their problems of speaking English learning, and most of the students say that they are anxious about speaking English in front of the class. It is very disturbing for their speaking in English".

Question 2:

What are your strategies to overcome the problems?

AP: "During the pandemic era, I do not use any strategy for speaking lessons. Students are only given assignments and sending answers via wa".

From the interview with students and teacher above, the researcher can conclude that the situation of course psychologically such anxiety gave a negative effect on the students who tried to show themselves up in front of their friends. And the teacher's strategy in learning can be influenced in developing speaking skills.

#### 4.2 Discussions

# 1. Students' Speaking Skill

The average of the student's score from the data speaking score is 72,5. According to the category of ability that is described in the 2013 curriculum, it belongs into the poor category. Therefore, based on this result, the researcher concludes that in general, the student's ability in speaking skills at the ninth grade of MTs Al Washliyah Kolam in the academic year of 2021/2022 is poor, because the average show in the middle of low and high.



Table 1
Category of students' ability in 2013 curriculum

SCORE	GRADE	CATEGORY OF ABILITY
96-100	A	Very good
91-95	A-	
86-90	B +	Sufficient
81-85	В	
75-80	B-	
70-74	C+	Poor
65-69	С	

# 2. Students' challenges in Speaking

The students' challenges were obtained from the questionnaire analysis. Based on the analysis it is found that the students' challenges in speaking English consist of external factors such as linguistics problems and internal factors such as non-linguistic problems. Linguistics problems are vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Nonlinguistic problems are inhibition, nothing to say, uneven participant, mother tongue, anxiety, shyness, lack of self-confidence, and low motivation. But anxiety is the most influential to speaking English.

#### 3. Teacher's strategies

a. Classroom Activities

# Roleplay

One of the classroom activities is Role-Play. Roleplay 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 the 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 increase their vocabulary. Role-play is an explicit situation established with students playing specific roles, spontaneously saying and doing what they understand their "character" would, in that situation(Arham, Yassi, & Arafah, 2016; Bowman, Crow, Nelson, & Heeter, n.d.; Çerkez, Altinay, Altinay, & Bashirova, 2012; Graves, 2008; Kilgour, Reynaud, Northcote, & Shields, 2015; L. Saptono, 2010).

# Drilling

Drilling technique is a technique for teaching language through dialogues which emphasize on the students' habit formation by repetition, memorizing grammatical structures, and tense transformation, using the target language and the culture where the language is spoken (Setiyadi, 2006, p.54), In addition, drill is part of audio-lingual method (ALM). On the other hand, drill means forcing the students to use the target language. There are several types of drilling techniques in ALM (Setiyadi, 2006, p.63-66), which are repetition drill, substitution drill, transformation drill, replacement drill, response drill, cued response drill, rejoinder drill, restatement, completion drill, expansion drill, contraction drill, integration drill, and translation drill. In this study, the writer chose three of them: repetition drill, substitution drill, and translation drill.

The teacher used the 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 gives instructions that students must repeat and follow. The teacher says an utterance or words with correct pronun ciation, then, the students repeat and follow the teacher's instruction.

#### **Brainstorming**

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

The teacher uses brainstorming techniques in teaching recount text speaking activity. According to Lince and Defriyanti (2013:2) say that Brainstorming is a group or individual creativity technique by which efforts are made to find a conclusion for a specific problem by gathering a list of ideas spontaneously contributed by its members. By using brainstorming technique, the students can speak easily, because of the students free to think and give information about the topic. And then, the students can be responsible for recording the thoughts and ideas which are simply written up on their mapping. According to Oxford dictionary, Brainstorming literally means using the term brain to storm a problem. It is a technique by which a group attempts to find a solution for a specific problem by amassing all the ideas spontaneously contributed by its members. The Brainstorming technique uses Mind Mapping and Story Mapping as the



tools in speaking activity related to a recount text. By using this technique, the learning goals can be fulfilled. In addition, Borich (2004) mentions that there are some other purposes, including to help people understand more about character, to make students interested and motivated learning in class, to encourage students expressing what's on their mind, and to help evaluate students' development and comprehension about the materials. These functions can encourage students to speak English more fluently.

#### b. Online Activities

There are so many websites, applications and online media that help improve speaking skills. This study only discusses three online media or websites that support speaking skills. namely; Free4talk.com, Open Talk and Eng-Breaking, etc.

#### a. Free4talk

"www.free4talk.com" is accessed on 06/05/2020 through Chrome Web Browser and observed to be a totally free and unconditioned language exchange platform which can be used by learners to interact with people from different linguistic backgrounds for the purpose to acquire one or more common target languages. Users can log in the website by using their e-mail addresses. It has a quite simple and easy to navigate design. Access to the website is possible via any web browser. On the home page, there are links for creating a new group, privacy policy and joining in their Facebook group and buttons for listing the already existing groups as rows of 3, 2 or just one at a time. Also, there is a button for adjusting the background light. When the page is scrolled down, exchange groups can be seen. And there is a notice of "rules and penalties" with a prison section below the groups (Gelen, 2021)

Free4talk. The best website of practicing English speaking, easy to find a conversation partner, improve your English speaking skills, make friends, language exchange ... Free4Talk is a digital piece of room created With fast matic Network polygon . Once you own a Free4Talk room , you will be populated it with all option and futures. Each room box is a unique (non-fungible) token to lying on the Public ethereum blockchain. (https://www.free4talk.com/privacy-policy)

#### b. OpenTalk

Opentalk is an application to practice speaking English and English talk. Opentalk aims to unlock world's knowledge through voice conversations. Opentalk lets you connect with people globally based on their profile and interests to enable voice conversations. Learn about new places by conversing with students from different cities and countries. Meet new users to practice spoken English and become fluent.

Opentalk is a platform to meet people from around the world and have interesting conversations. Once it was downloaded, simply the user can choose the topic would like to talk about. Immediately, Opentalk connects the user with another user from across the globe to have an interesting conversation ("Anonymous," 2019.). He also added that Conversing with people from around the world, makes us more tolerant, more helpful, more knowledgeable, good communicator and a great friend. In short, Opentalk strives to make the user more confident person. To operate "Opentalk" you need to follow the instructions below:

- a) First, search and download "Opentalk" app on Playstore for Android based, or App store for IOS Based.
- b) Next, open the "Opentalk" app.
- c) Then, login with phone number or Facebook account.
- d) After that, allow any permissions.
- e) Finally, you click "Talk Now". You will directly connect with the people globally. You also click "End" to finish your talking.

#### c. Eng-Breaking

The Eng-Breaking is an application that helps you with pronunciation through courses designed to achieve highest efficiency in the shortest time i.e. speak fluent English within 3 months. With a great mission, Eng Breaking has helped more than 167,300 learners who are total beginners in English to achieve success. Eng Breaking can help us to improve our English speaking.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o6gehi8I-Jc

By using online learning, students are more enthusiastic and motivated to dare to speak in English. while for teachers the media provided further improves the quality of teachers in teaching English, especially speaking English.

#### V. CONCLUSSION



From the result of observation and interview guide, the researcher concluded that the ability of students at MTs Al Washliyah Kolam in speaking is still low. In addition to the main factor that makes it difficult for students to speak English, it is student's anxiety in speaking English. Appropriate learning activities as the teacher's strategies can help teacher to overcome students' challenges in speaking English. The success of the teaching-learning process can be achieved if the teacher can present the materials in such a good way that can increase the students' interest. The teacher should be creative in presenting English to the students. They also have to practice various techniques of teaching, carefully select the materials, and use interesting instructional media that are suitable for the students in order to help them to speak in the language. The right classroom activity and online activity can help teachers to deal with students who have difficulty speaking English.

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