

AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS DIFFICULTIES IN SPEAKING ENGLISH AT SMP MUHAMMADIYAH 49 MEDAN

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ABSTRACT

Speaking seems to be the most important skills of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing), because people who know a language are usually referred to as speakers of that language. It is the means through which learners can communicate with others to achieve certain goals or to express their opinions, intentions, hopes, and viewpoints. Speaking is one of the most important skills to be developed and enhanced as means of effective communication. One of language skills that should be mastered by students is speaking. Speaking skill is regarded one of the most difficult aspects of language learning. Therefore, to overcome this problem, the researcher agreed to conduct a study entitled “An Analysis of Students Difficulties in Speaking English at Smp Muhammadiyah 49 Medan”.

Keywords: Speaking Difficulties, Students’s Problems in Speaking, Speaking

English is a language which is mostly used in many countries. So, it becomes an international language accepted in many fields. For example, when people get vacation to many countries, they need to use English to communicate with people there. English speaking ability is very important for people interaction, where almost speak everywhere and everyday through English. In this global era, many people used English as a media of communication and it makes people who come from different countries to be easier in making interaction and communication.

There are many factors that make speaking difficult for foreign learners. According to Brown (2007:270), there are some features that make speaking as a difficult language skill. They cover clustering, redundancy, reduced forms, performance variable, colloquial language, rate delivery, stress, rhythm, intonation of English and interaction. Besides the students lack of vocabulary, their less confidence to speak and judge of English as a difficult subject make speaking as the difficult language.

Facing the global development, Indonesian people need to study English especially for students in schools have a duty to learn English language in order to make them ready to face the demands of the age. School as formal institution must be able to produce students who can speak English well because most of parents and people in general still trust their children to be taught at school besides at English courses, especially in facing the national exam, there are still many schools have bad experiences in facing the standard value that has been set by the government and it happens from year to year. Based on the characteristics of the problems, they can be solved by giving appropriate techniques. The researcher gives solutions to applying the technique in speaking English, namely action learning strategy. Action learning strategy is a process for bringing together a group of people with varied levels of skills and experiences to analyze an actual work problem and an action plan.

The action learning process attempts to achieve this blend through giving rigor and pace to the cycle of learning and through using the positive powers of small groups to sustain this discipline and rhythm. The groups continue to meet as actions are implemented, learning from the implemented and making mid-course corrections. Action learning is a form of learning by doing. Learning is done in groups where each group is presented an action and dialogue by students with attention to pronunciation, vocabulary, accuracy and fluency. This is done to improve students' English speaking skills in daily life. Speaking is one of the productive skills that we use for many purposes in social life. Starting with (Cameroon, 2001)

has said that speaking is the active of using language to express the meaning so that the other people understand with the idea. An addition (Richards, 2008) states that the mastery of speaking skills in English is a priority for many second language or foreign language learners. Consequently, learners often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course based on how much they feel they have improved their spoken language proficiency. According to (Hornby, 1985), speaking is making use words in an ordinary voice. Brown defined speaking as an interactive process of making meaning that includes producing, receiving, and processing information (Brown, 2000). It is mean that speaking is not only about saying words through mouth also more than that, such as grammar, fluency, pronunciation. (Bygate, 1987) defined speaking as the production of auditory signals to produce different verbal responses in listeners.

Speaking ability in English is useful in many situations and places in the era. Such as in the school education, apply to get a job, or when someone goes to the other country, because English is international language. Speaking skill is the most important thing to be mastered when people learn English because speaking is a process of constructing meaning, it covers almost all of language components. Through speaking someone can express their minds, ideas, and thought freely and spontaneously.

Guoqiang (2009) stated that, to be a good speaker the English learners have to master all of the components. However, besides those linguistic components above there are many factors that influence speaking ability. Although speaking has been included in the educational plan for English teaching in colleges and university in the past years, the percentage of time devoted to activities in which students can communicate with each other in English remains small in the whole class. Speaking is the skill that the students will be judged upon most in real life situation. It is an important part of everyday interaction and most often the first impression of a person is based on his or her ability to speak fluently and

comprehensibly. Speaking is important for the students. However, some problems were still found in the students speaking abilities. Speaking skill was considered difficult to be accomplished by the students. The students were not confident to speak. They often refused to speak and preferred to be silent. They hesitated to express their ideas and opinions because they were afraid of making mistakes. They had difficulties in grammar and pronunciation. They also lacked vocabulary. They were also less motivated because of the monotonous and less fun learning activities in the classroom. Speaking is one of the skills in the language learning and it is essential in communication. Speaking has a complex process that consists of three parts. In the communicative activities, teacher feedback is needed by students to revise their speaking because mistakes must appear in students, speaking for English is a foreign language for them. It is quite hard for the students to correct their own mistakes for example their pronunciation in their speaking. That is why, teacher oral feedback can be used as guidance for the students to correct their mistakes and make their speaking better.

Many studies show that feedback can effectively reduce students errors in speaking. Students perception is a vital part in the learning process. Students perception will affect the students response and attitude in the learning process. There are some main factors that affect it, such as students expectation, motivation, and previous experience. In this case, students experience will be teacher oral feedback. If the students perception is positive, the acceptance information of the teacher oral feedback will be affective but if the students perception is negative, the acceptance information of the feedback will be disturbed. It means that students perception will give a big influence to the success of feedback. This study, therefore, concerns students perception towards teacher immediate oral feedback. Some experts point of views are used as the reference to answer the research problems. Those points of views play a significant role in exploring, identifying, and analyzing the teacher oral feedback and students perception. Theories of feedback helps to identify the types and contents of teacher

immediately feedback. The types of teacher immediate feedback consist of recast, explicit correction, elicitation, clarification request, metalinguistic cue, repetition. Contents of teacher immediate, feedback can be categorized into two, they are form and meaning. Feedback on form concerns on grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation while feedback on meaning concerns idea organization, and logic of ideas. Furthermore, theory of feedback and students perception suggested helps to reveal the students perception towards teacher oral feedback. Students perception may focus on the clarity, the objectivity, the assistance, the encouragement and the proportion of oral feedback by the teacher. This research will conducting by using descriptive qualitative research. Descriptive research can be explained as a statements of affairs as they are at present with the researcher having no control over variable. Moreover, “descriptive studies may be character as simply the attempt to determine, describe or identify what is, while analytical research attempts to establish why it is that way or how it came to be”. Descriptive research is aimed at casting light on current issues or problems through a process of data collection that enables them to describe the situations more completely than was possible without employing this method. Arranging the research method is the initial step before doing the process of collecting data and analyzing them. The method in research is selected by considering its appropriateness with the research object. In this case, the objet determines the method. This research arranged based on the problem analyzed and the main purposes of the research.

Research is one of alternative ways done to investigate and improve the knowledge. The knowledge gained through research based on the reality and it is describe and measure systematically. The researcher used descriptive as a research method. Ary (1979:295) stated that descriptive research studies are designed to obtain information concerning the current status of phenomena. This is directed toward determining the nature of situation as it exist at the time of the study.

The finding in this study are discussed in relevance to the statements of problems mentioned in chapter I, there are to identify the students speaking difficulties in report text at the eighth grade of Smp Muhammadiyah 49 Medan.

Based on the result of data analysis, some problems faced by students in speaking English are found as follow, Based on the questionnaire, students speaking problems in relation with inhibition are 56.25% of students feel shy to speak English, 81.25% worried about making mistakes.37.5% feel afraid to be criticized when spoke English incorrect.

Some students speaking problems in speaking English that related with nothing to say are found by the researcher. 50% Students have no idea to start speaking English, students are afraid of being faulted when speak English 63.5%, and 31.25% students are lazy to speak English.

Next, the students participation in speaking English are low. It is showed by questionnaire that 50% of students seldom speak English in the class, 37.5% of students do not speak English during the lesson, and 62.5% of students uncertain to speak English. The last problem is mother tongue used. The data shows that 43.75% students use mother tongue during the lesson.

The causes of students speaking problems faced by students such as shy, worried about making mistakes in speaking English, feel afraid of being criticized when speak English incorrect are caused they have little vocabulary 43.75% , little understanding in grammar 43.75% , and have no good in pronunciation 6.25% . vocabulary 43.75% , little understanding in grammar 43.75% , and have no good in pronunciation 6.25% . The causes of students speaking problems faced by students such as shy, worried about making mistakes in speaking English, feel afraid of being criticized when speak English incorrect are caused they have little vocabulary 43.75% , little understanding in grammar 43.75% , and have no

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Many students seldom speak English or worse they do not speak English during the lesson. It is happened because they do not master grammar 43.75%, 43.75% do not master vocabulary, and 12.5% of them do not master the pronunciation.

The next problem is mother tongue used. The researcher finds that students use mother tongue in the class. It is caused they do not know the words in English 75%, 6.25% the material was difficult, and 18% in other reasons. To make the result more accurate, the researcher does interview to some of the students on grade VIII B Smp Muhammadiyah 49 Medan about the causes of students speaking problems. From the interview, the researcher gets the data about the causes of students speaking problems. The causes are, they have difficulties understanding on grammar , vocabulary, and pronunciation. This section presents the discussion based on the findings of the study. The discussion is concerned with the students problems in speaking English and the causes of the problems occurred. The result of the questionnaire shows that students the students on grade VIII B Smp Muhammadiyah 49 Medan face some problems that make them do not actively in speak English. Such as inhibition, most of them face this problem. Jordan said in his book, difficulty in speaking may be caused by shyness or personality factor which are independent of the language being used. They feel shy, afraid and worried about making mistakes when speak English. These findings are supported by Ur statement that learners are often inhibited about trying to say things in classroom, worried about making mistakes, fearful of critics or losing face, or simply shy of the attention that their speech attracts. If the students always feel that personality feeling, the students will have difficult time to practice their English. Next, many students do not speak English during the lesson. It may be caused by some factors that make them be motivated to speak English. Whereas, motivation is important factor for learning. Students who have

motivation will express their idea briefly. Harmer explains about intrinsic motivation in his book, that intrinsic motivation comes from within individual. Thus a person might be motivated by the enjoyment of the learning process itself. So, teachers have an important role to motivate the students, because the teacher as the center of the learning process who can create an atmosphere in class. If the teacher is creative and the material is interesting, the students will have spirit and motivation.

The last, students still use their mother tongue in the class. If the students do not speak English during the lesson, an English environment will not be created. Usually students use their mother tongue when they do not know the words in English, and the topic or material is difficult, it is caused by the students do not master the vocabulary in the topic. So, they use their mother tongue to make their speaking clearer. As Ur states that in classes where all, or a number of the learners share the same mother tongue, because it is easier, it feels unnatural to speak one another in a foreign language. Based on the research findings of this thesis, the researcher finds that there are some causes of students' problems in speaking English. The result of the observation and test shows the causes of students' speaking problems that most of the students do not completely master the three primary elements of speaking, they are vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Students feel afraid to speak English in the class because of the interference of grammar in speaking. Many of them think that grammar is the most difficult component. They do not master grammar well so it makes them feel shy and afraid to speak English. They have no idea if they think too long about grammar when they make good sentences. Grammar is sometimes defined as the way words are put together to make correct sentences. Grammar is an important role in the language where it can guide the speaker to the purpose he wishes to when he is delivering ideas through language. Moreover, grammar will make someone's communication clearer and more accurate. In short, correct grammar will avoid misunderstanding among the people or students in their communication.

The researcher also finds vocab as the causes of students speaking problem. This is ironic because vocabulary constitutes the main element that should be mastered by every student if he wants to be able to speak English well. In the other hand, if a student or someone wants to speak English, he must firstly master vocabulary before mastering other elements of speaking. Based on Burns and Joyce's opinion in Hanunah that vocabulary or content words is the first recognizable elements of spoken language to develop. It indicates that there are two possible reasons. Firstly, the students seldom practice their English. Secondly, the students are lazy to open dictionary. Next, the other caused are the material is not interesting and the teacher is not innovative, these cause make students lose their motivation and loose their interest. In this case, the teacher should motivate the students by using some techniques to keep motivation up. If the right activities are taught in the right way, speaking in class can fun, raising general motivation and making the English language classroom a fun. The causes of students who do not active in speak English is also that some of them more difficult to pronounce words clearly. They are still difficult to differ in pronouncing vowel and consonant. It is caused in pronouncing vowels and consonant between Indonesian and English are different so sometimes it made them confuse to pronounce vowel and consonant in English. The teacher should be able to identify and correct the students sound that they are mispronouncing. They also use their mother tongue when the material is difficult, so it inhibit the students to be active in English. Based on the fact above, it is not surprising that many students speak English less fluently. All of them are because most of the students are not really enthusiastic to practice their English. The causes of problems mentioned before make some of the students become passive and unconfident in speaking English in the class. Based on the result of the observation and test , the researcher can take conclusion about the students speaking difficulties in report text at the eighth grade of Smp Muhammadiyah 49 Medan .

Most students have problems on inhibition. Inhibition can be meant as something in their self that can inhibit them to practice speaking english. For example, worried about making mistakes in speaking english, fearful of critics and shy of the attention that their English attracts. All of that feeling there must be some causes that should be attention by students.

Next, the problems is nothing to say, this problems faced by students when the topic or material is not interesting, so it does not make students to be motivated to speak. If the topic or material is interesting students get spirit to speak. Sometimes the teacher less of innovative in teaching, it make the students feel bored during the lesson, so that things make students do not active in speaking English.

The last problem is mother tongue used. Sometimes students use mother-tongue in the class because they feel unnatural speak foreign languag with their friends. Beside, students use mother tongue because of they do not know the word in English and the material or topic is difficult.