The Analysis of Students' Problems in Learning Speaking

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Info Artikel:	ABSTRAK
Kata Kunci: Permasalahan Siswa Pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris Berbicara	Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi apa saja permasalahan siswa dalam belajar berbicara dan untuk mengetahui faktor-faktor apa saja yang membuat siswa mempunyai masalah dalam belajar berbicara. Dalam penelitian ini, metode yang digunakan adalah metode deskriptif kualitatif, dan instrumen yang digunakan adalah kuesioner dan wawancara. Sampel penelitian ini adalah 51 siswa Madrasah Ibtidaiyah di Kabupaten Puding Besar Provinsi Bangka Belitung. Hasil kuesioner dianalisis dengan rata-rata. Ditemukan bahwa siswa mempunyai masalah dalam berbicara, terutama masalah linguistik dan non-linguistik. Pada permasalahan kebahasaan berada pada kriteria tinggi, dan pada permasalahan nonlinguistik berada pada kriteria sedang. Artinya permasalahan ini harus ditanggapi dengan serius. Oleh karena itu, guru hendaknya lebih memperhatikan apa yang dibutuhkan siswa. Selain itu ditemukan pula beberapa faktor penyebab permasalahan yaitu kurang percaya diri dan rendahnya motivasi. Oleh karena itu, guru hendaknya membuat proses pembelajaran lebih menyenangkan dan menarik agar siswa termotivasi.
Keywords: *Students' Problems English Learning Speaking*	***ABSTRACT*** *This study set out to determine the nature of the difficulties students have when learning to speak and the contributing variables to these difficulties. In this study, descriptive qualitative method was employed, and questionnaire as well as interview were used as the instruments. The sample of this study were 51 students of Islamic middle school in Puding Besar District, Bangka Belitung Province. The result of questionnaire was analyzed by means of average. It was found that the students had problems in speaking, especially linguistic and non-linguistic problems. In linguistic problems, they were in high criteria, and in non-linguistic problems they were medium. It means these problems had to be taken seriously. Therefore, the teacher should pay more attention to what the students need. In addition, it was also found that there were some factors causing the problems: they lacked self-confidence and had low motivation. Thus, the teacher should make the learning process more fun and interesting in order to make the students motivated.*

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INTRODUCTION

Of the four skills—speaking, listening, reading, and writing—speaking appears to be the most crucial because those who are literate in a language are typically referred to be speakers of that language.[1] Numerous studies have shown that spoken language development has received little attention in the classroom, and that teachers typically utilize spoken language more than students do.[2]

However, even when it comes to instruction, oral language seldom serves as a tool for students to learn and think through concepts.[3] Encouraging students to use English correctly and effectively in communication should be the primary objective of all English language instruction. Even after years of studying English, some language learners are still unable to speak effectively and fluently due to a lack of knowledge. Speaking is regarded as the most crucial language ability.

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[1] Spolsky and Moon, *Primary School English-Language Education in Asia: From Policy to Practice*.

[2] Suchona and Shorna, "Speaking Problems in English and Solutions: Scrutinizing Students' Perspective."

[3] Bailey and Nunan, "Practical English Language Teaching: Speaking."

The majority of language learners worldwide acquire English in order to become proficient speakers. Words can be used to explain something, express dissatisfaction with someone's actions, ask nicely, or lighten someone's mood with a joke. The majority of speaking language learners' assessments will take place in authentic settings. Listening is a language skill that comes before speaking in childhood. In other words, speaking is a fundamental language acquisition ability.[4]

Speaking English is an aspect that must be mastered by foreign language learners, especially students at school. This is important for everyday life, for example to explain something, complain to other people, introduce Indonesia to foreigners using English, etc. Speaking English fluently is also important for debate competition, making conversations with foreigners as a tool of commerce. So, students at school should prepare everything by getting used to speaking English.

Students of the sample school have trouble speaking English. For most English language learners, speaking is still the hardest skill to acquire, and they still struggle with oral English communication. In most cases, students struggle when asked to talk in English.[5] Students may have challenges when speaking English for a variety of reasons. They lack confidence when speaking in English. When they talk in English, they are terrified of making mistakes. Students also feel as though they have nothing to say since they are not proficient in vocabulary. Students find it challenging to speak English fluently due to a lack of motivation to study the language and a teacher who does not model speaking. According to the English teacher, the students lacked English knowledge because in Elementary school they did not get the English material deeply. Therefore, students get into trouble when they are asked to speak English fluently, and students also say that speaking is a difficult subject to learn. In addition, the students' speaking test scores were the lowest among the other skills. Based on the results of the interviews, it also showed that the students' ability to speak English were still below average. In addition, it was also found that most of the students could not use English in their English class.

Actually, that was reasonable because generally, teachers used Indonesian more dominantly than English. It could be that the teacher only wanted to make the students understand what the material was conveyed, so he used Indonesian as the best way to deliver material to his students. Even though the teacher has tried to guide and challenge them to speak English, students always used Indonesian.

Usually, students' problems in learning speaking come from the difficulties in speaking activities faced by students. This is supported by Thornbury who stated that the difficulties faced by student speakers are divided into two main areas, namely linguistic factors and non-linguistic factors.[6] The students also had low mastery in aspects of speaking, such as grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary. In addition, they lack confidence which can hinder fluency.

Successfully conquering the speaking stutter will set you on the way to good communication. However, issues can be resolved if your teacher is aware of your students' past struggles and the root causes of those struggles. Most of students still got under average score because English is a foreign language for them. It is not common for them to use English for communication, so they felt difficult to speak in English language. One possible solution for such challenges that the teacher should apply was minimizing their problems because it needs attention. If we know about students' problem, we will hopefully understand the situations and difficulties faced by them, then it will enable us to solve the problems.

The school is located in a village in Bangka Island, and it is the only middle school in there. The students had low motivation to learn a foreign language, especially English because they live in a village, so they rarely speak English. Therefore, this study was focused on finding out the problems the students faced when learning speaking in their school and the factors contributing to those problems.

Studies regarding students' speaking problems have been conducted by many. A study by Hartanti et.al was focused on analyzing students' speaking skill by testing them using paired dialogue.[7] This way was expected to encourage the students to speak English, not only with their classmates, but also to other speakers. Another study by Zannah et.al describes the contributing factors and solutions to students' difficulties in speaking English of the seventh grade.[8] The study's conclusion is that linguistic and psychological elements both have an impact on students' challenges speaking English. Lack of vocabulary, poor pronunciation, and poor grammar are examples of linguistic problems; lack of confidence, shyness, and fear of making mistakes are examples of psychological ones. The teacher employs a number of tactics

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[4] Goh and Burns, *Teaching Speaking: A Holistic Approach*.

[5] Lawtie, "Teaching Speaking Skills 2-Overcoming Classroom Problems."

[6] Thornbury, *How to Teach Speaking*.

[7] Hartanti, Fitri, and Silfia, "Analysis of Students' Speaking Skill at Ninth Grade in Junior High School 2 Jambi City."

[8] Zannah et al., "Analysis of Indonesian Junior High School Students' Problem in Learning English."

to help the children who struggle with speaking English: group work, simple language-based tasks, directions, and maintaining target language usage.

Meanwhile, a study by Fitriani and Apriliaswati suggested that the students have problems in speaking English, especially psychological problems, such as fear of making mistakes, lack of self-confidence, lack of motivation, and anxiety. Therefore, there are several solutions provided by teachers and students to overcome those problems.[9]

Speaking is a means for people to express their thoughts, opinions, knowledge, and other objectives. This implies that speech is an expressive act with meaningful purposes. People are free to express their thoughts, beliefs, knowledge, and facts. Speaking fluently therefore serves a variety of purposes in daily life, including conveying thoughts and opinions as well as providing oral information. If people use English in everyday situations, they will be able to comprehend what it means to speak the language. For instance, they could attempt to engage in basic dialogue and speak during everyday activities.[10]

Formal or informal speech is possible. Formal language is employed in official settings, such as meetings at work and first meetings. It appears in books, official documents, new reports, and other formal expressions. In everyday conversations with friends, family, and those closest to us, we employ informal expressions.[11]

The acquisition of speaking is a linguistic skill that occurs in childhood and is only preceded by the development of listening comprehension. Put differently, an individual seeks to express their thoughts as a means of social interaction and organic communication. Speaking involves thinking and reasoning in order for one's words to be understood and favorably appreciated by others. Speaking and listening are intertwined; they function as one cohesive unit.[12]

Speaking is one of the more complex language abilities out of the four, making it one of the hardest to evaluate accurately. According to Ur (Ur 1999) there are five components generally recognized in speaking activity:

a. Comprehension

The ability to construct mental models of sentences and to listen to and evaluate extended discourse segments is known as comprehension. Understanding understanding in a second language is more difficult to study because it cannot be directly observed; instead, it must be inferred from overt verbal and nonverbal indicators, via artificial instruments, or from the intuition of the researcher or teacher.

b. Grammar

A language's grammar describes how words in that language can take on different forms and be joined to make sentences. One of the most crucial aspects of speaking is grammar since a speaker's use of it can change the meaning of what they say. This is due to the fact that proficient grammar users find it easier to communicate and convey their ideas.

c. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is a list of words and their definitions. Without a large enough vocabulary, people cannot express themselves verbally or in writing, nor can they communicate successfully. One can communicate very little with poor grammar, but nothing at all with poor vocabulary. Effective second language use requires a big vocabulary because without it, we are unable to apply the structure and functions we have acquired to have meaningful discussions..

d. Pronunciation

Students can produce clearer language when speaking by using proper pronunciation. A key component of learning to speak a foreign language is pronunciation. When a pupil mispronounces a word, comprehension can become quite challenging. In English, pronunciation refers to the way words are produced or pronounced, taking into account factors like intonation, rhythm, emphasis, articulation, and more.

e. Fluency

Fluency is the ability to speak easily and clearly. The ultimate goal for many language learners is to speak with fluency. Being able to speak at a reasonable pace with few pauses and "ums" or "ers" is a sign of fluency. These indicators show that finding the linguistic elements required to convey the message doesn't need the speaker to spend a lot of effort. The capacity to speak without pausing too much is known as fluency. It denotes the ability to speak English accurately and eloquently. Those who desire to verbally express their expertise without interruption are generally referred to as fluent.

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[9] Fitriani and Apriliaswati, "A Study on Student's English Speaking Problems in Speaking Performance."

[10] Gebhard, *Teaching English as a Foreign or Second Language: A Teacher Self-Development and Methodology Guide.*

[11] Kayi, "Teaching Speaking: Activities to Promote Speaking in a Second Language."

[12] Richards, *Teaching Listening and Speaking.*

Problems in Learning Speaking

Students' issues with speaking activities typically stem from the challenges they have in speaking, such as their fear of making mistakes, which stems from the skill-related obstacles they face. The speaker's challenges can be divided into two primary categories:[13]

a. Linguistic problems

Linguistic problems are problems that make students' speaking skill worse. In general, linguistics consists of details on vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. There are three kinds of linguistic problems, they are: lack of pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary.

1) Lack of Pronunciation

One of the most crucial skills for students to acquire is pronunciation in order to speak correctly and smoothly. Students often found it difficult to pronounce. The pupils' pronunciation of English is poor. The reason for this is because the pupils are mispronouncing English words. When learning English, a word's meaning may change depending on how it is pronounced. As a result, poor word pronunciation by pupils will cause misunderstandings with others and alter the meaning of the subject being covered.

When learning to talk, pronunciation needs to be given greater consideration. This is due to the fact that pronunciation is crucial for speaking English and has to be taught when learning the language. Students occasionally express a desire to avoid speaking in English due to their inability to pronounce certain words correctly. It will force the students to talk in their mother tongue during speaking practice or to choose quiet instead of speaking. The majority of students still struggle with speaking English. The students' lack of vocabulary, poor pronunciation, fear of making mistakes, and reluctance to talk in English are the causes of this.

2) Lack of Vocabulary

A key component of teaching and learning a language is vocabulary. One of the most crucial aspects of teaching any language is developing a student's vocabulary; this happens as they practice the sound system and acquire structure. The foundation of both language learning and language use is the acquisition of vocabulary. Actually, it is what constitutes a language's essence. Speakers cannot communicate in the target language or express meaning without vocabulary.

Individuals lacking a sufficient vocabulary will find it difficult to effectively converse. Not even they will be able to write or speak their message across. Vocabulary is so crucial for learning English, particularly for speaking. Students will find it challenging to learn English at the following level if they do not have a sufficient vocabulary. Therefore, even if they only learn a few new words each day, students should always expand their vocabulary before beginning to learn English.

3) Lack of Grammar

The principles governing language structure, or grammar, specify how words are grouped together to produce coherent sentences. Grammar also refers to the set of rules that describe how words are joined, grouped, or altered to convey particular meanings. Grammar is sometimes defined as the arrangement of words to form coherent sentences. This is due to the fact that grammar is essential for learning how to communicate effectively; meaning, expression, sentence structure, vocabulary, and functions are all part of grammar.

Moreover, grammar controls word order to create coherent linguistic units. Actually, when students express themselves, they almost always employ incorrect grammar, which is followed by poor word choice and pronunciation. As a result, they consistently make mistakes in their speaking abilities.

Based on the aforementioned definitions, we can infer that mastering the language's structure is crucial for learning any language—not only English—especially if we wish to become proficient writers. Grammar is a subject that requires specialized study. Speaking in English with proper grammar pronunciation makes a greater impression on the listener.

b. Non-Linguistic Problems

Non-linguistic difficulties are ones that frequently affect a person's mental or physical well-being. The main issues that have an impact on pupils' learning are psychological issues. These mental health issues

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[13] Thornbury, *How to Teach Speaking.*

could have a detrimental impact on students' public speaking abilities. Students encounter four primary non-linguistic issues when communicating:[14]

1) Inhibition
When attempting to communicate in a foreign language in the classroom, students frequently feel restricted. Concerned about making mistakes, afraid of being judged or losing face, or just bashful of the attention their speech may draw. The most frequent issue that students have when learning a foreign language is inhibition. They fear that if they make a mistake when speaking the language, the speaker would criticize them. As a result, they exhibit significant inhibition in this situation, which makes them mute. As a result, inhibition must be lowered by accepting that everyone makes mistakes and that learning from them helps one become a better person.

2) Nothing to say
Many students lament that they are speechless and that they have no other reason to communicate than the sense of shame that they ought to be talking, even when they are not restricted.

3) Low or uneven participation
When there are many people in a group, this means that each person will speak less because only one person can speak at a time and yet be heard. This issue is made worse by the tendency of some students to dominate while others speak very little or not at all.

4) Mother tongue use
Since speaking in a foreign language to someone else feels awkward and easier, students who attend classes with a large number of classmates who speak the same mother tongue may find themselves using it more frequently. It can be challenging to encourage certain students, especially the less motivated or disciplined ones, to stick to the second language if they converse in small groups.

There are several reasons why students utilize their mother tongue in the classroom. First of all, pupils will speak in their mother tongue if asked to take part in a discussion on a topic they are unfamiliar with. Another factor is that speaking in one's mother tongue is natural. Furthermore, if teachers do not support it, utilizing one's first language to convey something to another. Eventually, pupils will feel at ease using their own language if teachers do so on a regular basis.[15]

Factors Causing Problems in Speaking
Praveen explains factors in learning English as follows:[16]
1. Motivation
Motivation has an impact on the effectiveness of a speaking performance. The degree of motivation will also affect the speaking performance score. Whatever the form of motivation, it will heighten their interest in studying during the learning process. Thus, for the kids' speaking performance to be successful, they need to be motivated. Teachers and students can both be sources of motivation. The success of communication anxiety is primarily handled by the teacher in an English language school.
Teachers need to be aware of this issue since a key component of effective teaching and learning is motivation. It is important to give students the chance to speak in class because without it, they risk becoming disinterested and unmotivated in their studies. Instructors must employ a variety of strategies to inspire their pupils to participate fully in class and to be active participants in the learning process. Motivation is an innate urge that propels an individual to do actions in order to accomplish a goal.

2. Self-Confidence
One approach to solving this issue is to identify its source and begin working on it there. Lack of confidence in students is a major barrier to language learning. In many classes, students would rather keep their thoughts to themselves because they fear making mistakes when speaking in front of the class or during oral participation. It is imperative for educators to adopt a motivational attitude in order to address the situations in which all students find themselves. Since the learning task deserves to strive to change these negatives that endanger the learning process, all students should face their concerns. Students who

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[14] McKay, "Assessing Young Language Learners."

[15] Zhang, "The Role of Input, Interaction and Output in the Development of Oral Fluency."

[16] Praveen, "New ESL Teacher for the New Education Policy: A SWOT Analysis."

are self-conscious and unconfident in their English inevitably experience communication anxiety. According to the justification above, teachers ought to focus more on helping students become more comfortable speaking in front of an audience.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative[17] method because this study was aimed to describe and analyze students' problems in learning speaking. The number of students used as the sample in this study were 51, taken from all of the three classes by using total sampling technique.

There were two kinds of instruments employed in this study: questionnaire and interview. Questionnaire consisting of 21 statements regarding students' problems in learning speaking was used in this study. Score for each response was given to the respondents by using Likert-scales as described below:

Table 1. Likert-Scale

Option	Positive Score	Negative Score
Strongly Agree	5	1
Agree	4	2
Uncertain	3	3
Disagree	2	4
Strongly Disagree	1	5

Source: (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison 2002)

Table 2. Specification of Questionnaire

Indicator of Items	Items number
Pronunciation	1,2,3,4
Vocabulary	5,6,7
Grammar	8,9,10,11
Inhibition	12,13,14,15
Nothing to say	16,17,18
Low or uneven participation	19,20
Mother tongue use	21
Total	**21**

Source: (Ur 1999)

Table 3. The Criteria of Students' Problems

No.	Score	Criteria
1.	1 - 1,8	Very Low
2.	1,8 - 2,6	Low
3.	2,6 - 3,4	Medium
4.	3,4 – 4,2	High
5.	4,2 – 5	Very High

Source: (Wilson and McClean 2003)

The criteria table above describes which criteria each score represents. If the criteria is *low* and *very low*, it means the student has no problems in learning, while medium shows that the problems are not very serious. However, high criteria suggests that the students have serious problems in learning speaking.

Besides distributing questionnaire, interviewing the teacher and students were also conducted in order to find out further information regarding students' learning speaking problems. The result of the questionnaire was then analyzed by using this formula:

P = f/N x 100%
In which:
P: Number of average
F: Total students' response
N: Total respondent

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[17] Rahman, "Teacher's Strategy for Teaching Students' Akhlakul Karimah."

A five-point scale was used to measure the level of students' problems and the factors in learning speaking. The students' response scored by the given values; 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Uncertain, 4=Agree, and 5=Strongly Agree.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

1. The Students' Problems

It was discovered that while some students had a good command of the English language, they struggled and felt uneasy when it came to speaking it. They weren't sure how to communicate their thoughts in English. The students' difficulty speaking was caused by a variety of reasons, including speech processing issues, language barriers, academic and conversational English proficiency, unfavorable effects, and limited speaking opportunities.

Table 4. The Recapitulation of Linguistic Problems Response

Types of problem		Alverage	Criteria
Linguistic Problems	Lack of Pronunciation	3.53	High
	Lack of Vocabulary	3.24	Medium
	Lack of Grammar	3.51	High
Total		**3.43**	**High**

Table 5. The Recapitulation of Non-Linguistic Problems Response

Types of Problems		Average	Criteria
Non-Linguistic Problems	Inhibition	3.26	Medium
	Nothing to say	3.08	Medium
	Low/uneven participation	2.85	Medium
	Mother tongue used	3.26	Medium
Total		**3.11**	**Medium**

2. The Factors

Based on the result of interview with the students and the teacher, it was found that most of the students who were in medium to high criteria of speaking problems had low motivation and low self-confidence to learn English in general, not to mention to learn to speak in English, since it is considered a foreign language that they are not familiar with most of the rules. In addition, speaking is also a productive skill besides writing that demands a higher skill to master than the receptive ones (i.e. listening and reading).

Besides having low master of vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammar (linguistic problems), as well as the non-linguistic problems, the students have some factors influencing all of these, those are internal and the external ones. The external factor came from the people around them, who they always interacted with. In term of low motivation, they did not have people surrounding who supported them to learn English, especially speaking. They did not have friends or people to practice their English as well.

When trying to practice speaking English in front of the class, they were afraid of making mistakes, because they were afraid their classmates would laugh at them. Moreover, their family did not think that English is important for them to learn. In other words, they do not have support from not only their family, but also their own classmates. This might affect their internal factor, in this case their self-confidence.

Discusssions

1. Lingusitic Problems

The criteria of linguistic problems is high. This means serious problems were found and needed to be everyone's concern, especially the teacher and their parents. The teacher should pay more attention to students' in linguistic problems. The students found it difficult to speak in English because they had lack of vocabulary mastery, pronunciation and also grammar. They rarely practiced speaking English. Moreover, they had a lack of vocabulary because they did not like to look up dictionary in order to find word meanings.

The teacher must also give appreciation when students speak English. This will increase the level of confidence in students. The teacher should understand the difficulties the students deal with when it comes to practicing English, a foreign language they may be familiar with but not easy at all to learn. Besides,

students also found it difficult to memorize English vocabulary which makes them not have good vocabulary mastery that leads to the students' low ability to speak. This occurred as a result of the teacher's infrequent supervision of vocabulary memorization. As a result, teachers should not feel pressured to have their students memorize as much language as they can.

Since most of students in Indonesia are not exposed well to English language, they definitely have a huge problem when learning speaking English. For instance, they always use Indonesian for communications ion a daily basis, and it will affect their speaking skill because they do not practice English regularly. As a result, how well they communicate will have an impact on their ability.

2. Non-linguistic Problems

The non-linguistic problems of students in learning speaking were in medium category. This can be not a huge problem, but the teacher still needs to pay attention because it can be serious if no action taken to overcome this. Therefore, paying attention to this problem is very important for the teacher because it can be traumatizing for students who experience it. The students are not active in speaking English because of a lack of self-confidence when they speak English in front of class. The fact that the teacher more often interacts with students using Indonesian language could make the students less motivated to use English.

The students feel worried about making mistakes, they are afraid of being laughed at by their friends when they say incorrect words in English when speaking in front of the class. They feel shy when getting attention while speaking. They frequently lament that they are at a loss for words and lack the drive to articulate their thoughts. Since only one person can speak at a time so that the others can hear them, each student will have very little talking time. The pupils' opportunities to speak English are not equal. The kids believe learning one's mother tongue is simpler than learning a foreign one. When speaking a foreign language—in this case, English—students frequently refer to it in their mother tongue. The kids will feel more at ease solving this challenge.

Moreover, a number of reasons that deter students from speaking English during class could be the reason why so many of them do not. In the meantime, motivation plays a crucial role in education. High-motivation students will do their best to communicate their thoughts. They will therefore be more comfortable speaking English in front of others and in daily situations. The majority of schoolchildren want no part of practicing their English, either inside or outside of the classroom. The only reason they study English is to achieve high grades in the language. They don't consider the advantages of developing their English speaking abilities.

The results of this study, in some ways, are in line with some studies, such as the ones by Sayuri (Sayuri 2016), Krismanti and Siregar (Krismanti and Siregar 2017), Jaya (Jaya, Petrus, and Pitaloka 2022), Soreh et.al (Soreh, Pelenkahu, and Muntuuntu 2022), Candraloka (Candraloka and Rosdiana 2019), to few to mention. All were focused on analyzing students' speaking problems and they found that the students had all of the two types of problems with their own characteristics.

CONCLUSIONS

The students had both linguistics and non-linguistic problems in speaking English. In linguistic problems, they found it difficult to speak especially in front of class because they had lack of vocabulary mastery, grammar and pronunciation. English was very difficult for them since it has different style and rules of writing and speaking and different meanings from their mother tongue. Furthermore, they did not like to memorize English vocabulary because they think they practically just speak Indonesian on a daily basis, so, according to them, English is not of importance to use. Passing tests in English subject is enough for them.

In non-linguistic problems, they found it difficult to speak because they had low self-confidence and low motivation to learn English, especially speaking, and it could be affected by the external factors, which is the fact that they were not fully supported by people at school as well outside school, in this case their own family.

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