

**ANALYZING THE FACTORS OF STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN SPEAKING
ENGLISH IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL 3 SORONG REGENCY**

Wahyu Siti Fatimah

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Sorong

Email: wahyusitifatimah536@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the linguistic, psychological, and pedagogical factors contributing to 80 students as a sample who experienced difficulties speaking English at SMP Negeri 3 Kabupaten Sorong through a mixed-methods approach. Quantitative data from a speaking test revealed that most students could convey general meaning, but they demonstrated significant inaccuracies in vocabulary and grammar. Specifically, 66.25% of participants produced understandable but structurally flawed sentences, while 73.75% exhibited basic grammatical and lexical errors. These results indicate limited mastery of sentence structure and active vocabulary. Complementing the quantitative analysis, qualitative data obtained through interviews uncovered additional barriers such as low motivation, anxiety, limited vocabulary retention, and lack of speaking practice. Psychological factors, including fear of making mistakes, low self-confidence, and negative perceptions of English, emerged as key inhibitors of oral performance. However, the presence of supportive teachers, peer encouragement, and engaging classroom activities like games positively influenced students' motivation and willingness to participate. Findings also highlight the role of parental support and exposure to English media as informal contributors to language acquisition. This study underscores the importance of integrating communicative, game-based, and contextually relevant approaches to English instruction. It advocates creating safe, motivating environments to reduce anxiety and foster active student engagement. These insights contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of speaking challenges in EFL contexts and inform strategies for enhancing oral proficiency in secondary education settings.

Keyword: Speaking difficulty, Internal Factor, External Factor, Junior High School

INTRODUCTION

Education in today's technological era is an increasingly interconnected world, and communicating effectively in English has become an important skill, especially for Indonesian students, where English is a foreign language. However, many junior high school students in Sorong regency face significant difficulties in speaking English nowadays. This issue becomes

a serious challenge for stakeholders in finding strategies to improve students' speaking skills to avoid these difficulties, especially in the Sorong regency. According to Maji et al., (2022); Hasbullah et al., (2023); and Mahu, (2024) educational institutions encounter distinct linguistic and psychological barriers that impede students' proficiency in spoken English.

Research suggests that the difficulties students experience when speaking English stem from linguistic and psychological factors (Maji et al., 2022). Linguistically, students often struggle with limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation, and a lack of grammar knowledge, all of which are crucial for effective communication (Nie, 2017; and Hasbullah et al., 2021; Theodoridis & Kraemer, 2024). Psychologically, many students grapple with fears of making mistakes, low motivation, shyness, and anxiety (Maji et al., 2022; Sunubi et al., 2023; Yee & Aziz, 2022; and Kartika et al., 2024). These emotional obstacles frequently hinder their opportunities to practice speaking, creating a cycle of underachievement and frustration.

Speaking the target language fluently and learning a foreign or second language are crucial skills in today's global society. Language creates new opportunities and allows people to converse without further issues and viewpoints (Tiara Vinnilarika Sari & Muamaroh, 2024). For this reason, it is recommended that foreign language teaching begin early. It is thought that the earlier a language is learned, the more proficient one will be.

In addition, the educational context in Sorong Regency can exacerbate these challenges due to various factors such as the use or implementation of new curricula that are not necessarily suitable for the school environment in Sorong Regency (Maji et al., 2022). Also, the teaching methods applied are often less supportive of the development of speaking skills (Hasbullah et al., 2023). The effect is that many students rely too much on their mother tongue during English lessons, thus inhibiting their ability to practice and improve their English-speaking skills, which can approach the speaking skills competency standard (Suparman, 2024; and Kaunain, 2025). This highlights the impact of internal factors, like self-confidence, and external factors, such as the classroom environment, on students' willingness to participate in spoken English activities (Maji et al., 2022).

Given these challenges, educators and policymakers need to recognize the specific factors contributing to students' difficulties in speaking English. This addresses the linguistic and psychological barriers through targeted interventions, such as improving vocabulary instruction, refining pronunciation practices, and fostering a supportive classroom environment. Bawor & Ahmad, (2023); Manurung et al., (2023) stated that educators can help students better develop their speaking skills and build their confidence in using English as a mode of communication.

Due to the significant differences between English and Indonesian language proficiency, students should study and practice English proficiency thoroughly (Leba et al., 2021; Faridah et al., 2022). Then, according to Faruqi Tutukansa & Tuffahati (2022) and Lambert et al. (2025) when speaking English, the vocabulary is much more varied and has more words than when speaking Indonesian. In addition, the complexity of English language learning is very high, thus, students need to learn every single word of English.

RESEARCH METHODS

1. Research Design

In this study, the researchers used an explanatory descriptive study using quantitative and qualitative research methods for collecting data. This study employs a sequential approach in which quantitative data is first gathered and followed by a qualitative approach (Creswell & Clark, 2011). A test of English-speaking ability would first be given to 80 students to identify their vocabulary, confidence, grammar in use, fluency, comprehension, accuracy, and how to express ideas and thoughts through interaction. Then, observations of 80 students and interviews with 5 selected informants were used to see the students' difficulties in English speaking ability at SMP 3 Sorong regency.

2. Quantitative Approach

A percentage analysis technique was used to determine the mean score of 80 students as a sample to investigate their difficulties in speaking English at Junior High School 3, Sorong regency. It was analyzed relating to the score classification (Excellent, Good, and Poor), which was explained in each indicator.

Table 1. Score of Students' Choice

Score of Choice (80 Students)		
<i>Excellent (Score: 4)</i>	<i>Good (Score: 3)</i>	<i>Poor (Score: 2)</i>
appropriate choice, efficiency, and good structure of language	Lack of choice, not accurate, errors, but still understood	Serious error in basic grammatical and lexical confusion

To analyze the data on the factors of students' difficulties in speaking English as a foreign language, this research used the following formula (Muhammad et al., 2019):

$$P = \frac{f}{N} \times 100\%$$

P = Percentage

f = Frequency

N = Number of Samples

Then, the analysis data was interpreted by using the following criteria.

Table 2. Criteria of value range

Value Range	Criteria
81% - 100%	Very high
61% - 80%	High
41% - 60%	Enough
21% - 40%	Low
0% - 20%	Very low

3. Qualitative Approach

This study also utilized a qualitative approach to explore what happens to students' difficulty speaking English (Creswell, 2009). This method is usually used by someone who is doing related research on social and cultural problems (Mazuflah et al., 2021). Some previous researchers reveal that qualitative research methods are often called naturalistic research methods because the research is carried out in natural conditions or natural settings (Sunubi et al., 2023;

Alhamid; Ipa Salma; Indria Nur; Hasbullah, 2024). The data collected in this study was not in the form of numbers but sourced from observations and interviews with five (5) selected students as a representative sample. So, this research was intended to present data based on the reality in the field in detail.

This research observed students' difficulty with English communication in class and during the school's activities. The observations: 1) looking directly at what causes difficulty speaking English; 2) taking notes selectively on students' obstacles; and writing the observed conclusion. 3) The observation would focus on students' grammar in use, vocabulary, self-confidence, fluency, accuracy, comprehension of the topic discussed, the way of expressing ideas and thoughts in their interaction, and the speaking class situation.

The rules for research interviews are stricter, although all conversations have transitional rules or are controlled by one or more participants. The asymmetrical relationship must be seen because research interviews, unlike ordinary conversations, aim to obtain information from one side. The participants' feelings, perceptions, and thoughts are usually the focus of interviews conducted by researchers. This research focused on participants' feelings and perceptions.

The steps for interviewing five (5) selected students: 1) Preparation of a list of questions for respondents during the interview, and researchers added questions to find unexpected things happened during the interview; 2) selected and appointed five students and an English teacher to be interviewee; 3) Interviews were conducted in offline with a one-to-one pattern; 4) Interviews were recorded and written on notes; and 5) Researchers and respondents were allowed to speak English and Indonesian to avoid misunderstandings.

RESULTS

This research described the findings on the causes of the students' difficulty and factors influencing their obstacles to English speaking, which were based on the results of a test, observation, and interviews.

1. Results of Quantitative Analysis

This study analyzed the students' difficulties in English speaking ability, focusing on mastery of vocabulary, confidence, grammar in use, fluency, comprehension of the topic, accuracy, and expression of ideas and thoughts. The results of speaking tests were described in the score classification below.

Table 3. The score of classification

Criteria of Speaking Mastery	Score Classification of Choice (80 Students)		
	<i>Excellent (4)</i>	<i>Good (3)</i>	<i>Poor (2)</i>
	appropriate choice, efficiency, and good structure of language	Lack of choice, not accurate, errors, but still understood	Serious error in basic grammatical and lexical confusion
Vocabulary	17 (21.25%)	53 (66.25%)	10 (12.50%)
Confidence	8 (10.00%)	14 (17.50%)	58 (72.50%)
Grammar in use	7 (8.75%)	14 (17.50%)	59 (73.75%)
Fluency	8 (10.00%)	14 (17.50%)	58 (72.50%)

Comprehension of the topic	20 (25.00%)	53 (66.25%)	7 (8.75%)
Accuracy	7 (8.75%)	14 (17.50%)	59 (73.75%)
Expression Idea & Thoughts	8 (10.00%)	12 (15.00%)	60 (75.00%)

The data in Table three above describe the students' difficulties in their English-speaking ability. Out of 80 students, only 17 (21.25%) scored a high choice on vocabulary related to the topic. Most students were not good choices, not accurate, had errors in expressing ideas and thoughts, but still understood, and had serious errors in comprehending the topic discussed, with the lowest basic grammatical and lexical confusion. These findings were supported by the students' percentage in the value range of speaking abilities below.

Table 4. Value range of students' English-speaking difficulty

Value Range	Criteria	Students' Range	Percentage
81% - 100%	Very high	4	5 %
61% - 80%	High	6	7.5%
41% - 60%	Enough	9	11.25%
21% - 40%	Low	41	51.25%
0% - 20%	Very low	20	25.00%
Total		80	100

The results of the percentage in the criteria of students' English-speaking difficulty showed that most students have low and very low competence in English-speaking ability. Out of 80 students, 61 (76.25 %) had a low and very low position of English-speaking ability. This data can inform about the lowest standard of students, and it describes that most students found obstacles and difficulties in speaking English as a foreign language.

2. Results of Qualitative Analysis

The qualitative analysis in this study utilized two instruments: observation and interview. The observations were conducted when the learning process of English speaking was conducted with 80 students as a sample for this study. At the end of this research, the researchers interviewed 5 selected students to explore their English-speaking difficulties.

3. Results of Observation

This study would explore the findings of observation, which consist of: lack of vocabulary, self-confidence, students' grammar in use, fluency, comprehension of the topic discussed, accuracy, the way of expressing ideas and thoughts in students' interaction, and the speaking class situation. These results can be seen in the table below.

Table 5. Results of observation: Factors of students' difficulties in speaking English

No.	Factors of Students' Difficulties	Statements
1.	Lack of vocabulary	Not all students have enough vocabulary to use on the topic of study.
2.	Lack of confidence	Students lack confidence when speaking English with friends or their English teachers.

3.	Grammar in use	Students still need to master more grammar and accurate structure to use in speaking skills, and less to practice in speaking class activities.
4.	Fluency	Few students can speak English, even though their pronunciation is not quite right.
5.	Comprehension of the topic to be discussed	Students' understanding of English learning materials still needs to be improved.
6.	Accuracy	Students' accuracy in speaking English still needs to be improved so that communication is smoother and more confident.
7.	The way of expressing ideas and thoughts through interaction	Every student has a unique way of expressing their ideas, especially in English learning. So, students' creativity and confidence in their speaking skills must be supported in practice by everyone.
8.	Speaking class situation	The teacher has created a pleasant classroom atmosphere, but there are still some students who are less enthusiastic and passive in English speaking lessons.

4. Interview

These findings are based on the results of an interview with five students and an English teacher of SMP 3 Kabupaten Sorong regarding the difficulties when speaking English. This study analyzed and reviewed the interview data from the five students and one English teacher as interviewees. Findings showed various responses but ended with the same conclusion regarding the students' difficulties in speaking English.

5. Causes of Speaking English Difficulty

a. Motivation

The interview indicated that, in the first question, some students said that they studied English because it is one of the compulsory subjects in school. Students said:

"I learn English because of lessons at school."

In the second question, 4 of the 5 students revealed that they do not have a dream job or goal that requires English speaking.

"I do not know any dream job that uses English."

Five students said that the only ones who support them in learning English are their teachers at school. One of the students stated:

"The person who supports me in learning English is my English teacher."

Many students learn English primarily because it is a requirement in school. Lacking specific goals or dream careers that necessitate English proficiency, their motivation tends to be low, and they often rely solely on their teachers for support. This indicates a limited drive and insufficient resources for their language learning journey.

b. Lack of vocabulary

The following are the results of the interview with the students. The first question was that students said they often struggle when speaking English because they do not have enough vocabulary, as stated below.

"I often have difficulty remembering the right words when speaking English."

In the second question, 5 students have the same answer, they would ask their friends or their teacher when they don't know the meaning of a word in English. The student said:

"I will ask my teacher or friend when I don't know the words."

Third question, students said that they memorize new vocabulary that is given or that they find by repeating the vocabulary as stated below.

"I memorize vocabulary by repeating new vocabulary."

Fourth question, students said that they were taught their vocabulary was not enough for daily conversations.

"My vocabulary is not enough for daily conversations."

Many students find it challenging to speak English due to limited vocabulary. While encountering unfamiliar words, they ask their teachers or friends for clarification. They attempt to expand their vocabulary by memorizing new words through repetition. Nevertheless, they always feel that their vocabulary is insufficient for everyday conversations.

c. Lack of Confidence

In the results with the students, the first question was that students said they did not feel confident when speaking English in front of the class. Students said that:

"I do not feel confident speaking English in front of the class."

Second question, students normally said they felt shy to speak English because they felt embarrassed. Students said that:

"I'm embarrassed to speak English."

Third question, 4 of 5 students said they were shy and afraid when they made mistakes in pronunciation when speaking English.

"I'm afraid that I speak English incorrectly."

Fourth question, students said that they would feel confident when speaking English and get support from their friends or teachers.

"I would feel confident when my friends support me and my teacher supports and helps me".

The interview findings reveal that many students feel anxious when speaking English. This anxiety largely stems from their fear of mispronouncing words or making grammatical errors, and worries about being judged or ridiculed by their peers. Furthermore, their lack of confidence—often caused by a limited vocabulary—exacerbates their reluctance to speak. This ongoing fear creates a considerable obstacle to their willingness to practice, ultimately hindering their language development and overall learning progress.

d. Being Afraid

In the interview results with the students, in the first question about being afraid, students had ever felt afraid when speaking English. Students said that:

"I had been afraid when speaking English."

In the second question, students would feel embarrassed when they mispronounced a word in English. They would also get embarrassed if their friends laughed at them. Students said that:

"I felt embarrassed when I mispronounced a word, because my friends would laugh at me when I mispronounced a word."

In the third question, students said they worried when their friends might laugh at them when they make mistakes. Students said that:

"I know my friends will laugh at me when I make mistakes when speaking English."

Fourth question, students said that their friends and teacher help them by giving support and encouragement, not blaming them when they say the wrong words. Students said that:

"They helped me by supporting me and not blaming me when I said the wrong word, even while laughing."

The findings from the interviews indicate that students often feel anxious when speaking English, largely stemming from worries about making pronunciation or grammatical errors and the fear of being laughed at by their classmates. One student shared his feelings of nervousness and a lack of confidence, which were primarily linked to a limited vocabulary. This anxiety posed a substantial obstacle to their eagerness to practice speaking, ultimately impeding their language development.

e. Perception

Dealing with the interview results about the students' perception, the first question showed that the students thought English lessons were difficult because it is a foreign language for them. Students said that:

"In my opinion, English is a difficult subject because we are learning a foreign language."

Four of five students responded that the most challenging part of learning English is when learning while playing games. Students said that:

"The most exciting thing about learning English is when the teacher gives us games that make us compete to answer while studying."

In the third item of the interview question about students' perception, all students said that English is important for their future because in the future, there will be many jobs that require English language skills. Students said that:

"I think English is important for the future because one day there will be many jobs that require English."

The fourth question of perception indicated that students thought that the most fun way to learn English is by learning while playing games. Students said that:

"I like it when the teacher gives games while learning."

Many students express that they find English challenging as it is a foreign language. However, they particularly enjoy learning it through games, which add an element of fun and competition to their lessons. They recognize the significance of English for their future, especially regarding job opportunities. Generally, they favor engaging and enjoyable methods, such as playing games, to enhance their English learning experience.

f. Ability to Remember

In the interview results with the students, in the first question, students said that they often forget the vocabulary they have learned. Students said that:

"I often forget the vocabulary the teacher gave me."

In the second question, students said they usually make notes inside their books to remember the vocabulary. Students said that:

"I usually make notes containing new vocabulary that I have learned, and then repeat them. So, I can remember the vocabulary."

The third question students said they rarely repeat their English lessons, or some rarely repeat what they have learned at school. Students said that:

"I rarely study English anymore at home. I rarely do it."

The fourth question is that students are usually given tasks every week in written or oral form, so they can remember the lessons that have been learnt well. Students said that:

"The teacher usually gives assignments at every meeting, sometimes to make a short video or do questions."

The findings revealed that memory is challenging for students' faces when speaking English. In interviews, four out of five students mentioned that they could typically remember only 100 to 200 vocabulary words. Most of them expressed frustration at frequently forgetting basic essential terms for learning English. One student stated that they often struggle to find the right words while speaking in front of classmates, which leads them to depend on friends or teachers for assistance. This issue underscores how limited vocabulary retention can undermine students' confidence and fluency, making it increasingly difficult for them to express their thoughts naturally in English.

DISCUSSIONS

1. Quantitative Analysis

Based on the findings of the quantitative analysis, several factors contribute to students' difficulties and obstacles in speaking English. The data on a speaking test described students' obstacles and potential competence to improve their English-speaking skills.

Based on the results of the analysis of participants' ability to use English structure and vocabulary, it can be seen that most respondents showed inaccuracy in word choice and errors in sentence structure, but were still generally understandable. This is reflected in the high percentage in the category "Lack of choice, not accurate, errors, but still understood", with 66.25% (53 respondents) included in this category in one of the assessment indicators.

On the other hand, the proportion of participants who showed "Serious error in basic grammatical and lexical confusion" was also quite significant, especially in several indicators, such as 73.75% (59 respondents) who experienced basic errors in grammar and vocabulary. This shows that most participants cannot yet consistently use English structure.

A lack of exposure to authentic English use or practice in real communication contexts can cause frequent inaccuracies. This finding indicated that limited active vocabulary and

grammatical understanding are the main obstacles to students' language production abilities at the intermediate level. Thus, it can be concluded that although most participants can convey general meaning, there is still a need for improvement in grammatical accuracy and vocabulary selection so that communication becomes more effective and minimizes ambiguity. The implications of this finding emphasize the importance of strengthening aspects of language structure and vocabulary in the learning process through a context-based approach and continuous practice.

2. Qualitative Analysis

Some of the insights that researchers gained during the interview included motivation, a lack of vocabulary, a lack of confidence, fear, perception, memory ability, the situation outside and before school, and the situation within the school.

Motivation plays an important role in enhancing student outcomes, especially in second language acquisition. Since the motivation comes from English learning, it directly affects students' speaking abilities by encouraging their willingness to engage, practice, and build confidence in oral communication. Research highlights that motivation is instrumental in shaping students' commitment and perseverance in language learning.

At SMP Negeri 3 Kabupaten Sorong, motivation is a critical determinant of students' success in speaking English. Highly motivated students tend to overcome anxiety, embrace communication challenges, and actively seek out practice opportunities. In contrast, those with lower motivation may feel hesitant to speak, shy away from participation, and struggle with developing fluency. Therefore, creating a supportive learning environment that nurtures student motivation through engaging teaching methods, positive reinforcement, and meaningful communication tasks is essential for enhancing their speaking proficiency and overall language competence.

Many students experience feelings of anxiety and nervousness, which can severely hinder their confidence when it comes to speaking English. This discomfort often stems from fears of making mistakes, worrying about being ridiculed by peers, or lacking opportunities to practice in a supportive environment. Research has highlighted the significant impact of anxiety on students' ability to communicate effectively in English.

The results of this qualitative study indicate that students' difficulties in speaking English are not only linguistic, but also psychological and pedagogical. Through observation and interviews, some main factors were identified that hindered students' speaking ability, including a) limited vocabulary and grammar mastery, which impacted fluency and accuracy of speaking; b) low self-confidence and internal motivation of students, mostly learning because of school obligations, not because of personal needs or ideals; c) anxiety and fear of being ridiculed when making mistakes, especially in terms of pronunciation; d) low frequency of repetition or independent practice outside the classroom, which hinders language retention and automation; and e) the perception that English is difficult, but is offset by students' interest in fun learning approaches such as through games.

These findings strengthen the theory in foreign language learning that affective factors such as anxiety, motivation, and self-confidence play an important role in mastering speaking skills. In addition, the results also show that positive learning environment support, including the

role of teachers in building a fun and supportive classroom atmosphere, is very influential in increasing student participation.

The implications of these findings emphasize the need for a learning approach that: increases student engagement through communicative and game-based techniques; provides contextual and applicable vocabulary and grammar exercises; creates a safe environment from teasing so that students dare to try speaking; and provides psychological and motivational support, especially for students with low self-confidence.

Thus, the English learning approach needs to reflect a comprehensive understanding of the obstacles experienced by students, both from linguistic and non-linguistic aspects.

Despite these obstacles, students recognized the crucial role of a supportive learning environment. Some noted that their teachers and friends play a vital role by offering encouragement and refraining from placing blame when mistakes occur. Such supportive feedback and a non-judgmental atmosphere are essential for alleviating anxiety and building confidence. According to Wachid (2021), and Atmowardoyo et al., (2021) cultivating a safe and positive learning environment motivates students to take risks in speaking, an essential component for language development.

To help students overcome their fear of speaking English, teachers can adopt strategies such as establishing peer support systems, fostering error-friendly learning environments, and gradually introducing speaking tasks. Encouraging a focus on communication rather than perfection can reduce anxiety and increase students' willingness to participate in speaking activities. By nurturing a more positive and supportive classroom atmosphere, students can gradually conquer their fears and gain greater confidence in using English.

The findings from the interviews reveal that students generally perceive English as a challenging subject, primarily due to its nature as a foreign language. Many participants expressed that mastering English is difficult, which aligns with Cognitive Load Theory. This theory posits that learning a second language places a heightened cognitive burden on students, particularly when they have limited exposure to English outside the classroom. The challenges stem from stark differences in grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary compared to their native languages.

Interestingly, students pointed out that one of the toughest aspects of learning English is engaging with games. However, they also recognized that these games make the learning process more enjoyable and engaging. This dual reaction indicates that while students may struggle with the competitive and problem-solving elements of educational games, they nonetheless appreciate the interactive and dynamic qualities that such activities offer. This resonates with Constructivist Learning Theory (Indrilla & Ciptaningrum, 2018), which emphasizes that effective learning occurs through engaging, hands-on experiences that allow students to construct their understanding.

Moreover, students acknowledged the significance of English for their future career prospects. Many pointed out that some job opportunities will increasingly require proficiency in English. This awareness reflects the impact of globalization and the role of English as a global lingua franca across various domains, including business, technology, and international relations. Additionally, students expressed that learning English through games is their preferred method. This aligns with Game-Based Learning Theory, which posits that interactive and competitive elements of educational games significantly enhance motivation and engagement. Games create

a fun, low-pressure environment that fosters participation and alleviates language anxiety, making it easier for students to acquire new vocabulary and practice speaking skills.

The ability to effectively retain information is vital for students, especially in subjects that require memorization. Research has shown that many students find it difficult to remember new vocabulary, often forgetting it soon after they've learned it. This frequent loss of memory can often be traced back to insufficient repetition and practice during the learning process. Ebbinghaus's forgetting curve illustrates that without efforts to retain information, it diminishes over time, underscoring the importance of spaced repetition in the learning journey.

The findings suggest that memory plays a crucial role in the challenges students face when speaking English. In interviews, five out of fifteen students mentioned that they could typically remember only 100 to 200 vocabulary words. Many expressed frustrations at frequently forgetting basic terms essential for learning English. One student revealed that they often struggle to find the right words while speaking in front of classmates, which leads them to depend on friends or teachers for assistance. This issue underscores how limited vocabulary retention can undermine students' confidence and fluency, making it increasingly difficult for them to express their thoughts naturally in English.

Moreover, although students do not typically make a concerted effort to study English at home, many take pleasure in engaging with English-language media such as songs and videos. This enjoyment reflects the principles of Multimodal Learning Theory, which suggests that language acquisition is enriched through audiovisual materials. By listening to English music and watching films, students can improve their pronunciation, vocabulary, and comprehension skills, even without actively studying. Research indicates that exposure to English through entertainment media can enhance listening skills and aid learners in picking up new words and phrases within context.

In terms of parental support, some students acknowledged that their parents assist by providing resources like dictionaries and internet access for their assignments. This underscores the significance of parental involvement in language learning. In addition, a child's learning environment, including support from family, plays a vital role in their academic success. Even if most parents do not directly help with English learning, their provision of resources fosters independent study.

CONCLUSION

Based on the insights gathered from interviews and observations at SMP Negeri 3, it is evident that students face a range of challenges in speaking English, influenced by a variety of interrelated factors.

1. Causes of Students' Difficulties in Speaking English

The primary obstacles students encounter when speaking English stem from a lack of motivation, limited vocabulary, low self-confidence, fear of making mistakes, anxiety, and poor memory retention. Many students hesitate to speak due to apprehension about being judged or ridiculed by their peers, which significantly dampens their willingness to practice. The lack of consistent opportunities for English conversation at home and in their daily lives further exacerbates these challenges. As a result, students struggle to achieve fluency and often refrain from participating in English discussions.

2. Factors Influencing Students' Speaking Difficulties

Internal and external factors contribute to these speaking difficulties. Internal factors encompass motivation—both intrinsic and extrinsic—self-confidence, anxiety, fear, and the ability to retain vocabulary. Students who are intrinsically motivated often perform better, while those who lack confidence tend to shy away from speaking activities.

External factors include the learning environment, the level of support from teachers and peers, home background, exposure to the English language, and the availability of learning resources. Many students do not use English at home, as there are often no family members who speak the language. However, incidental exposure to English through songs, movies, and games can have a positive impact on their learning, even if it is not a deliberate part of their study routine. The school environment is also crucial. A supportive classroom where students feel safe to make mistakes can significantly alleviate anxiety and foster confidence. Moreover, parental support, such as providing access to dictionaries or the internet, can assist students in independent learning, even if it is not a direct form of assistance. In conclusion, the students' difficulties in speaking English at SMP Negeri 3 are multifaceted. To address these challenges effectively, teachers and stakeholders must cultivate a supportive, student-centered environment that encourages communication, employs engaging materials, and facilitates vocabulary acquisition through practical, real-life applications. Enhancing student motivation, alleviating fear, and ensuring consistent exposure to the English language—both within and outside the classroom are essential steps to improve students' speaking skills.

SUGGESTIONS

The findings indicate that English teachers should adopt more engaging and interactive teaching methods, including games, group discussions, and role-playing, to enhance students' motivation and confidence in speaking. Students are encouraged to actively practice their speaking skills through various media, such as songs, films, and learning apps. Additionally, parents can play a vital role by creating a supportive home environment and offering positive reinforcement. Schools should consider implementing programs like English Clubs and providing professional development opportunities for teachers. Future researchers are urged to expand their studies by involving a greater number of schools and participants, as well as utilizing mixed methods to achieve more comprehensive insights.

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