
Investigating English-Speaking Problems of Senior High School Students in Indonesia

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Abstract

The study investigated the difficulties senior high school students encounter when speaking English, focusing on vocabulary and fluency. Data were collected from twelve 12th-grade students through observations, semi-structured interviews, and performance documentation. The findings revealed that students' lack of vocabulary impacted sentence construction and fluency. Students also needed help with grammar and pronunciation as they struggled to structure sentences and pronounce words correctly. Confidence issues caused by fear of mistakes and inadequate vocabulary further hampered their speaking abilities. Students used methods like engaging with English media and digital tools and practicing with proficient speakers to overcome these challenges. The study highlighted the importance of immersive learning and targeted practice in enhancing English-speaking proficiency and confidence.

Keywords: English proficiency, speaking problems, vocabulary

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1. Introduction

Globalization has brought significant changes, with those striving for success experiencing profound shifts. English has become essential for education, networking, and international communication in this interconnected world. As trade and commerce expand globally, English is the universal language, facilitating interactions between companies and regions. It is the global lingua franca, widely used in diplomacy, international trade, telecommunications, entertainment, and scientific publications.

To reach their aims, desires, and goals, students must master communication skills Chakraborty (2024). The language used to communicate with individuals worldwide is English. The importance of English-speaking ability is assessed. Students must have strong English communication skills to prepare for future careers and lifestyles because improving their speaking abilities in the classroom is the only way for pupils to enhance their foreign language skills. However, many still need to take advantage of this opportunity Suparlan (2021). Humans use language to express their thoughts, ideas, and feelings, whether they speak or write. Translation is required to fully comprehend one language in another because everyone has unique linguistic characteristics Usmonova & Qiz (2022). Speaking is a language ability that is a process of meaning construction that is interactive and involves creating, receiving, and processing Yentürk & Dağdeviren-Kırmızı (2020).

Understanding English vocabulary is crucial because it lets us use words we want to convey quickly. According to Farhani et al. (2020), experts have proposed several vocabulary terms. Verbal or nonverbal means can convey information differently; the speech's outcome depends on the participants' presence, shared experiences, physical surroundings, and the speech's objective Candraloka & Rosdiana (2019). Communication is a skill that everyone should have at least once. Minimizing anxiety when attempting to speak in front of an audience is now unacceptable Akram et al. (2019). Indonesian students are not all able their daily interactions should involve speaking English as their first language. This phenomenon may harm students' speaking skills. A study conducted in Indonesia found that students' productivity as English speakers could be higher regarding their capacity to communicate proficiently in the language Suciati (2020).

The use of different vocabulary enhances the speakers' fluency. Pronunciation is another aspect that needs to be considered. This aspect is significant because it can influence communication between the listener and the speaker and prevent language barriers. Fluent and accurate speech are the following criteria, which involve how speakers produce utterances or convey oral meaning without pauses. The statement delivered by Rusdin and Purwati (2023) also pertains to the speakers' self-assurance when speaking out.

Growth is necessary for the development of humans. In a communication environment, speakers must use language that is understandable to other participants, using common sense,

the same language, assumptions, and points. With distinctions between various aspects, it would be easier for those familiar with them to understand and for those interrogating them to comprehend. Speaking resolves conflicts between two individuals or groups, regardless of whether it involves sharing knowledge, such as public information, definitions, and personal opinions Jupri (2022). Then fluency is the ability to answer coherently by connecting the words and phrases, pronouncing the sound clearly, and using stress and intonation in the statement delivered Annisa & Wariyanti (2023).

Students who speak with accuracy and fluency can interpret the characteristics of good and productive conversations in English. To speak accurately, one must make a few serious mistakes so that the educator can make a few corrections during speaking activities that have been carried out. Imitating native speakers is a way to use natural language. Franscy & Ramli (2022) state that fluency is a natural way to communicate performance in a native-like manner using language.

Indonesian students learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) face several challenges in developing spoken English skills, with limited vocabulary being a primary obstacle. This restricts their ability to form coherent sentences and hinders real-time comprehension. Fluency issues, such as pauses and fragmented speech, further disrupt communication and diminish confidence. Additionally, grammar and pronunciation difficulties lead to awkward sentence structures and unclear speech, often resulting from direct translations and unfamiliarity with English phonetics. These combined barriers create insecurity and a fear of making mistakes, reducing students' willingness to practice and improve their communication skills.

Certain words were difficult for some children to pronounce correctly due to poor pronunciation. They probably make specific English word sounds in their native accent or how certain vowels or consonants sound in their language, based on Andriani Putri et al. (2020). Many learners need more time to maintain the interaction due to their lack of necessary vocabulary to convey meaning. Not keeping the interaction can be caused by inadequate strategic and communication competence.

Students' vocabulary affects their confidence. According to the previous study, speaking abilities are linked to language proficiency and self-assurance Cruz (2023). Public speaking anxiety can be caused by fear of low instructor evaluations, unfavorable listener comments, and dread of past failures Ibrahim et al. (2022). Emirza & Sahril (2021) assert that the likelihood of a student acquiring a language is greatly influenced by psychological and personality traits such as motivation, anxiety, and self-worth.

This study is of significant importance as proficiency in spoken English has become increasingly essential for students' academic success and future career opportunities in today's globalized society. English is the primary language for communication in

international trade, diplomacy, education, and entertainment, making fluency crucial for students to compete locally and globally. By identifying and understanding the specific challenges Indonesian EFL students face, educators can develop more effective teaching strategies and provide tailored support to address these difficulties. Implementing immersive learning environments and focused practice opportunities will help students enhance their communication skills and confidence in English. Overcoming these proficiency barriers improves language capabilities and contributes to personal growth and professional development, enabling students to engage more effectively in a global context. The findings aim to enhance understanding and serve as a valuable resource for educators and learners facing speaking challenges in English. The study will utilize semi-structured interviews, observational methods, and documentation of student speaking assignments through a descriptive qualitative approach. Future research should focus on the effectiveness of immersive learning techniques, such as incorporating movies and songs, and evaluate the impact of consistent practice and feedback from proficient speakers on language confidence and skills.

The previous study by Silaban & Damanik (2022) indicates that students struggle with self-confidence, fear of making mistakes, and lack of motivation to practice speaking. Additional obstacles include uninspiring teaching materials, limited practice opportunities, and a dependence on their native language, all of which impede their ability to articulate ideas in English. Issues with pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency further exacerbate these speaking difficulties. While this study employs a qualitative research method, it does not offer insights into potential solutions for enhancing teaching strategies or addressing students' motivational challenges. Another previous study was conducted by Farhani et al. (2020), the study identified five primary barriers to English speaking: limited vocabulary knowledge, grammatical difficulties, fear of negative feedback, low public speaking confidence, and general speaking anxiety. The findings indicate that teachers must be more aware of these issues to foster students' confidence and fluency. However, the research is limited by its reliance on existing studies rather than direct interactions with students, as data were collected from secondary sources instead of firsthand observations or interviews.

1.1. Theoretical framework

1.1.1. English speaking problems

Some professionals provide clarification on the meaning of speaking. Using English as a foreign language can lead to theories on barriers to communication and a more comprehensive understanding. These were the main academic works consulted for the research. Zein et al. (2020) state that the 2013 Curriculum requires teachers to implement

character-building. The study indicates that secular morality has emerged due to the efforts of teachers to align character development and teaching materials.

On the other hand, teachers' priorities and practices led to the development of religious morality. Moral education was implemented by teachers in their classes with the influence of their school communities and their spiritual values. Despite this, other beliefs related to speech are also brought up. The following article will briefly overview the ideas, including the significance of speaking and its qualities. Crisianita & Mandasari (2022) state that speaking competency is directly assessable. However, the reliability and validity of oral production tests can be affected by test-takers listening skills, influenced by their speaking experiences. Speaking allows students to convey information and emotions, serving as a fundamental form of communication despite differing expert opinions. In contrast with Alimjanova (2021), communicative competencies are the skills that shape how we interact with others differently. They are learnable skills that influence the language used in interactions in various settings.

Speaking is prominently used in social, academic, and professional settings. The present study focuses on speaking skills in the workplace since the skill is of utmost importance in the professional arena. Arputhamalar & Prema (2022) have examined the vocabulary development of Japanese EFL students as influenced by motivation and the positive impact of peers. Students require motivation to learn the language, while unmotivated classmates can hinder their progress. And then the acceptance of students in an environment that requires more significant incentives to learn the language is being hindered by their similarly uninterested friends, as represented by Purwati et al. (2023); according to Rahman & Kaniadewi (2023), students encountered challenges in comprehending the skill of English speaking. A limited vocabulary, apprehension towards grammatical errors, and challenges with pronunciation mark the phenomenon of language acquisition difficulties in students. The previously mentioned challenges can trigger feelings of anxiety during speaking, as stated by Amoah & Yeboah (2021). Their speaking performance is influenced by linguistic factors, including vocabulary knowledge, pronunciation, and grammar, or psychological factors; this is characterized by anxiety, shyness, fear of mistakes, and a lack of motivation.

1.1.2. Factors related to lack of vocabulary

Vocabulary knowledge and development are crucial to attaining high levels of language proficiency, with particular importance in speaking skills. A well-developed vocabulary enables learners to communicate precisely, engage in nuanced conversations, and build communicative competence. This foundation can hinder learners' ability to express ideas and comprehend others effectively. Thus, vocabulary growth is essential for comprehensive language learning and achieving fluency and proficiency in spoken interactions, state by Akbarian (2018). The lack of vocabulary and grammar skills hurts students' ability to express themselves effectively Alrasheedi (2020). Students' ability to express themselves effectively

is hindered by their lack of vocabulary and grammar skills, as described by Saputra (2020). Learners struggle to communicate in English due to limited vocabulary, making it challenging to engage in routine conversations in the classroom. Consequently, they often refrain from using a second language. Kashinathan & Abdul Aziz (2021).

1.1.3. Factors related to fluency

According to Ngoc & Dung (2020), communication without hesitation and interruptions that would create barriers or events in conversation can be characterized as fluency. It is common for students to delay and speak in fragments due to their inability to gather lexical words, encode their message's grammatical form, and combine their own words. Effective communication is challenging for many learners due to the need for appropriate language. The inability to maintain contact may be due to an inadequate strategy and communication competency, as represented by Emirza & Sahril (2021). Language skills and a preference for using their mother tongue lead students to need help communicating by Saputra (2020). Mispronouncing a single sound or incorrect stress and intonation are examples of the previous difficulties by Ho et al. (2020). Misunderstandings between speakers and listeners are caused by a lack of fluency and accuracy state by Syafriyadin, (2020).

2. Method

2.1. Research methods and design

The qualitative research aims to explore social phenomena from the participants' perspective, as presented by Riadil (2020). The current study used a qualitative method, employing a case study to gather detailed information about the phenomenon of issue speaking within an Indonesian tertiary context. Semi-structured interviews have a more significant potential. In contrast to other interview methods, the researcher can obtain detailed information and evidence from respondents while carefully examining the study's topic Mashuri et al. (2022). Coding is used to analyze the systematic identification, organization, and interpretation of patterns or themes within the data in thematic qualitative data analysis. By categorizing text based on recurring themes, this process turns raw data into meaningful insights, allowing researchers to understand underlying patterns, relationships, and trends.

2.2. Research participants

The participants were recruited from Indonesian senior high school students selected for this study. The researcher chose class 12-4 as a sample because it meets the criteria for participants who are suitable for both those who want to learn English and those who are uninterested in the limitations of learning English. They have agreed to participate in this study. Six men and six women are part of the study, with twelve participants.

2.3. Research instrument

During the interviews, students were encouraged to share their problems and issues when speaking English. The researcher crafted questions that delved into the selection of speaking problems, lack of vocabulary, how to improve their vocabulary, not fluency, and how to improve their fluency. The observation questions probed into the effect of lack of vocabulary and not fluency in providing interaction between students and teachers in the class. Through this methodological approach, the researcher aimed to know the speaking of senior high school students, and documentation of their performance on speaking assignments is evidence of the impact of lack of vocabulary and not fluency in their academics.

2.4. Collecting data procedure

Developing the instruments for the interview questions was the first step in the data collection process. The interview question guide aims to understand the participants' perspectives. Developing interview questions was the first step in the data collection process. The interview question guide aims to understand the participants' perspectives. The researchers organized four visits to the school, with the first day devoted to conducting observations to verify the actual conditions and study background. Immediately after the teaching-learning process and on the second day, it was observed that the teacher and students interacted in the classroom, and interview questions were distributed using the WhatsApp application. Using voice recordings during interviews will make it easier and more comfortable for students to answer, and the researcher will be able to organize the audio data more effectively on the third and fourth days from March 15, 2024 - March 20, 2024.

2.5 Data analysis procedure

The researcher typically determines the object of observation and the study's primary objective. After that, the researcher will conduct direct observations of the classroom subject. Moreover, the researchers investigate the problems when a teacher speaks to the class in English. The researchers correctly recorded and analyzed the data. They can narrate their experiences and perceptions during the interview. To pursue the study's objectives, the researchers can determine the implications from the data and context.

The researcher gathered and categorized the interview data into a report that contained each construct and sub-construct. The researcher can interpret, respond, and contribute to data analysis. Before concluding, the researcher usually gives a summary of each investigative response. The researcher created a document file in this study by transcribing all the recordings. All data and transcripts, although only include part of the findings selected and presented statement.

After receiving it, the researchers analyze the data using transcription, reduction, and interpretation. The validity of it can be verified through triangulation data as well. The researchers employ a structured approach to analyze interview data and derive meaningful insights. The first step is to thoroughly review transcripts of interviews to detect any recurring

themes, concepts, or patterns in the responses. The categorization of data segments related to similar ideas or topics is achieved by systematically coding these elements using specific labels or codes. The coding process organizes these segments into broader categories or themes, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the data. Consistency in comparison and cross-referencing establishes connections between themes or categories, enhancing the analysis. By constantly comparing and cross-referencing, it is possible to establish connections between different themes or categories, which enhances the analysis. Interpreting and contextualizing the data enables the researcher to draw conclusions and generate valuable insights that effectively address the research questions. The interview data is examined rigorously and comprehensively through systematic analysis, which allows for a nuanced understanding of the participants' investigating English-speaking problems of senior high school students.

3. Results and Discussion

Affective and cognitive factors are the primary barriers preventing students from speaking. The study first highlights the affective factor, noting that classroom experiences can lead to adverse outcomes for students learning English. The second factor focuses on cognitive aspects, particularly students' understanding of English, which can exacerbate anxiety and nervousness. Pratiwi et al. (2020) discuss cognitive challenges that hinder speaking ability.

3.1. Factors related to lack of vocabulary

Six out of twelve respondents emphasized the importance of vocabulary for smooth conversations and preventing misunderstandings. Mastering English vocabulary significantly enhances communication skills, as a lack of vocabulary can lead to confusion when constructing sentences. They noted that gender differences in English require precise word usage, in contrast to the more straightforward nature of Indonesian. Limited vocabulary restricts individuals to basic expressions, hindering their speaking abilities. By improving vocabulary mastery, individuals can engage in more meaningful conversations. As Respondent 11 stated, memorizing vocabulary boosts confidence and enables effective message delivery, enhancing fluency and mutual understanding Afna (2018) emphasizes that sufficient vocabulary acquisition is essential for effective language learning, as inadequate vocabulary development can indicate learning challenges and deficiencies in communication skills. Furthermore, vocabulary proficiency is a strong predictor of advanced speaking performance, which is crucial for success in spoken language proficiency.

Three respondents emphasized the significant impact of vocabulary mastery on fluent English speaking, noting that a broad vocabulary enhances language proficiency. As Respondent 5 stated, memorizing vocabulary influences fluency because knowing vocabulary enables us to speak English fluently. Recognizing speaking as a fundamental aspect of language learning is essential, as it allows for effective communication and expression of thoughts. In this context, vocabulary is crucial for foreign language acquisition,

which is critical for achieving fluency and effective communication, as highlighted by Jambari et al. (2021).

One respondent highlighted the importance of confidence, noting that improved vocabulary significantly enhances speaking fluency and ease. They emphasized that accurately translating words boosts confidence in English communication, and their language skills have improved through watching movies or listening to English songs with Indonesian subtitles. Respondent 1 stated, "It has a positive impact and makes speaking easier and more fluid. My ability to think of words has become easier, and I am more confident speaking English." According to Wardiman et al. (2022), students often expand their vocabulary and improve pronunciation by listening to songs. Overlooking unfamiliar words encourages them to search for meanings and correct spellings, helping them understand vocabulary in context and reinforcing accurate pronunciation. This method effectively enhances language learning through music, allowing learners to discover and retain new vocabulary while refining their listening and speaking skills.

Two respondents emphasized that mastering vocabulary is essential for participating in conversations. A lack of vocabulary comprehension hinders speaking ability and makes it challenging to produce fluent sentences. Limited vocabulary can complicate communication with those unfamiliar with the language, as noted by Respondent 7: "A limited vocabulary can impact us, especially when communicating with someone who does not understand." According to Rahmaniah (2018) argues that external factors, such as limited use of English in the classroom and a lack of exposure to the language in their environment, lead students to rely on their native language, reducing opportunities for practising and improving their English skills.

3.2. Speaking problems

Eight of the twelve survey respondents identified a lack of vocabulary as their primary difficulty speaking English. Common challenges include limited vocabulary and poor grammar, undermining self-confidence and complicating sentence construction. Respondents often mentally translate from Indonesian to English, leading to difficulty in expressing themselves despite understanding their conversation partners. This struggle is particularly evident in organizing words and sentences, resulting in slow and less fluent speech. Respondent 7 noted, "I struggled with vocabulary, making arranging words difficult. I often had to think about how to express myself due to my limited vocabulary." AS & Apoko (2023) state that a broad vocabulary is crucial for fluency, yet many students need help to choose the right words to convey their ideas. The perception of English as a complex language contributes to their passivity in class, as they often find the meanings of words unclear and fear making significant errors, further hindering active participation in language activities.

Two participants identified grammar as the primary challenge in learning English. The difficulty is compounded by the need to remember sentence structure and translate thoughts from English to Indonesian. One respondent noted, "The English language is challenging for me because I have to translate it before arranging the words." Afebri et al. (2024) emphasize that performance conditions—such as time constraints, planning requirements, performance standards, and the degree of available support—play a critical role in shaping students' speaking effectiveness.

Pronunciation emerged as a significant challenge for two respondents, who noted that their unfamiliarity with certain words and sentences made accurate pronunciation and grammar more difficult. This issue was exacerbated by a need for phonetics instruction in their curriculum, leading to uncertainty about correct pronunciation. As Respondent 12 explained, "The phonetic chart is not included in our curriculum, which contributes to pronunciation difficulties in certain areas." Furthermore, as described by Mamang et al. (2023), learners with heightened speaking anxiety tend to make more errors in pronouncing target second language (L2) words compared to those with lower anxiety levels. However, research on this topic remains limited, highlighting the need for further investigation into how speaking anxiety affects pronunciation accuracy in L2 learners.

In a survey of twelve participants, five reported that a lack of vocabulary hindered their ability to speak English. They identified insufficient vocabulary and grammar knowledge as the primary issues, stemming from either forgetfulness or uncertainty about when to use specific words or structures. Additionally, their unfamiliarity with English synonyms complicates their ability to convey intentions effectively. A limited vocabulary can make conversations less manageable and cohesive. While gradually building confidence can help overcome initial nervousness, mastering vocabulary remains the main challenge. Respondent 12 noted, "Limited vocabulary can hinder comprehension when speaking with fluent English speakers, as they use terms I do not understand." As emphasized by Mamaraimovna (2023) synonymous relationships should exist within the language system and in texts produced using diverse linguistic units. These units enhance the methodological diversity of language elements and serve specific functions in communication, improving our understanding of language in practical contexts.

In addition to vocabulary, four respondents identified grammar as a significant challenge in their speaking abilities. They must organize their considerations and respond appropriately during conversations, frequently discovering that their word choices need to convey their intended meanings. This difficulty is particularly pronounced in English, where complex sentence structures and pronunciation issues complicate effective communication. Unfamiliar phrases in written texts or conversations further hinder their comprehension. Respondent 8 noted, "I find the pronunciation and structure of English, along with its additional features, to be more challenging when forming sentences, even though I can

mentally construct them." According to Leonita et al. (2023), many students require support in developing their speaking skills due to insufficient motivation, lack of confidence, and limited exposure to the language, underscoring the importance of effective teaching materials in foreign language instruction.

Three respondents indicated that a lack of confidence is a significant barrier to speaking English in public, stemming from fears of making mistakes and being ridiculed. One respondent noted, "I lack confidence and often struggle to choose the right vocabulary." Uchihara & Clenton (2022) state that learners must develop productive vocabulary knowledge— recalling the forms and meanings of second language (L2) words—to effectively incorporate L2 vocabulary into their speaking and writing. Accurate recall of word forms is crucial for improving written and spoken communication, as it ensures clarity and intelligibility in interactions in the target language.

Among the strategies identified by twelve respondents to improve speaking skills, four emphasized the effectiveness of engaging with English content, such as movies and songs, to overcome language difficulties. They often watch English films with subtitles to grasp meanings and follow instructional videos to enhance their pronunciation and grammar. Additionally, listening to English songs and reading their lyrics helps expand their vocabulary. To further develop their speaking abilities, they regularly engage with foreign films in English and actively memorize new words. They practice speaking more frequently by consuming English content, seeking assistance from proficient friends, and utilizing online resources. As one respondent noted, "I believe my vocabulary improves through memorization. Watching English content and consulting friends who are more proficient encourages me to speak English more often. I also prefer searching online and taking notes." A significant barrier to fluent English speaking is the need to acquire sufficient and relevant vocabulary, which restricts students' ability to express their ideas clearly and effectively, as highlighted by Gaur et al. (2022).

Additionally, psychological factors such as communication flow and individuals lacking extensive social networks and not prioritizing communication with others should not be faulted, as they may lack the information necessary for effective interaction. Ultimately, each person is responsible for assessing and developing their communication skills.

Among the respondents, four noted that using Google or social media to search for vocabulary helps them navigate challenges, and they prefer using English in daily interactions. They frequently look up Indonesian-English translations online and read dictionaries during their respite time at school and in libraries. Listening to English music on platforms like Spotify, often with translations, effectively expands their vocabulary while memorizing common words, which they practice with knowledgeable friends. Their primary strategy for improving their English speaking skills is to broaden their vocabulary. They choose Indonesian subtitles while watching English content for entertainment but prefer

English subtitles for educational purposes. They believe expanding their vocabulary is crucial for overcoming speaking hesitations, allowing for more confident communication. One respondent stated, “My method is memorizing common vocabulary, not complex ones, and practicing with friends who excel in English. The focus is on practice.” Furthermore, Elmiwati & Effend (2023), argue that technology has significantly enhanced students' English-speaking skills during the COVID-19 pandemic by providing innovative platforms for interactive and immersive language practice, facilitating real-time communication and feedback essential for developing speaking proficiency.

The remaining four respondents mentioned speaking with close family members or in front of a mirror to overcome their challenges. Some employ various strategies for English practice: one converses with their sibling, another prefers thoughtful pauses before responding, one practices speaking in front of a mirror and records their voice while watching films for playback, and further practices until fluent. Respondent 5 states that the other person diligently memorizes vocabulary with daily targets, practices in front of a mirror, and converses with friends in English: “To practice, I practice before mirrors, have conversations with English-speaking peers, and set daily vocabulary memorization goals.” according to M. A. Rahman (2024) the phenomenon of bilingual children refraining from speaking a foreign language with their parents is multifaceted and influenced by a range of factors that highlight concerns regarding language comfort and practical expression. A critical element of this issue is the proficiency level of non-native-speaking parents in the foreign language, which can lead to communication difficulties and discomfort for the child. This dynamic may cause children to prefer their dominant language for communication as they seek to avoid potential misunderstandings or challenges in conveying their thoughts and emotions. As a result, the interplay between language proficiency and the child's comfort level significantly shapes their willingness to engage in foreign language conversations with their parents.

3.3. Factors related to fluency

Limited vocabulary can negatively impact fluency and confidence in speaking English, as highlighted by five respondents out of twelve. Their vocabulary limitations caused them to feel unsure and need more confidence. They often had trouble finding the right words to respond to or explain things. This causes confusion and anxiety in communication situations. They discussed the difficulty of understanding unfamiliar words when interacting with more proficient English speakers by relying on friends or gradual learning. Respondent 9 stated, for example, “There is a significant impact on me. Compared to people living abroad, my vocabulary is limited, making it tough to talk with someone.” Mahamed (2024) The survey indicates that the primary resources used to allocate support for students learning English as a second language (LEP) and enrolled in special education are achievement and subject-specific tests, utilized by 85.2% of the sampled school districts, and English oral proficiency assessments, used by 79% of districts.

Moreover, two individuals underlined the significance of vocabulary in creating precise sentences. Their observation was that a diverse vocabulary is crucial for assembling words. Grammar was also brought up as a challenge that impacts their communication abilities. They believe mastering both vocabulary and grammar is vital to enhancing English proficiency, as mentioned by Respondent 8: "I struggle to put words together correctly due to vocabulary. Grammar adds another layer, making it harder for me." A comprehensive understanding of grammar and vocabulary is essential for fluency in a foreign language. An individual who can speak a foreign language but needs a solid grasp of its grammatical structures would need help using it accurately. Conversely, when a person possesses fluency alongside a strong command of grammar, they are better equipped to articulate their thoughts and ideas with clarity and precision. This synergy between vocabulary and grammar not only enhances effective communication but also fosters a deeper connection with the language itself, as represented by Tiana et al. (2023)

Two other respondents admitted to mixing Indonesian and English to ensure smoother communication. If they encounter English difficulties, they turn to Indonesian, which reveals a need to comprehend English terms. Respondent 10 mentioned that alternating between both languages during learning helps them improve gradually while affecting their confidence due to language blending. "I mix Indonesian and English because it affects me. I feel more comfortable and improve because of learning this way." (Hameau et al., 2021) described that in certain instances, language mixing may not necessarily be qualitatively distinct; instead, they may be considered typical only because it arises with greater frequency than anticipated within the individual's linguistic community. This suggests that while such mixing may deviate from normative language use, it does not imply a fundamental difference in the individual's language processing or competence. Instead, it reflects the unique linguistic dynamics and practices prevalent within that community, highlighting the complexity of language interaction in bilingual or multilingual contexts.

Furthermore, one respondent highlighted pronunciation challenges as causing disruptions during English communication; misinterpreting 'saving the team' for 'saving time' directed to confusion during the discussion, as they gave an example. Respondent 12 emphasized the importance of clear pronunciation in effective communication, which caused a misunderstanding: "Possibly it is a matter of pronunciation. In a discussion, the 'saving team' confused me, but it was about time and clearness in pronunciation that was crucial." By concentrating on the impact of pronunciation instruction on overarching speech dimensions rather than individual phonemes, the design aligns with contemporary teaching objectives that prioritize communicative effectiveness over adherence to native-like pronunciation. Additionally, the choice to emphasize intelligibility rather than comprehensibility is significant, as intelligibility remains relatively underexplored in the literature despite its close relationship with comprehensibility. This focus underscores the importance of ensuring that

learners can be understood in real-world communication, thereby enhancing their overall speaking proficiency, as represented by Chau et al. (2022).

Furthermore, a single respondent experienced difficulty expressing their thoughts while silent, indicating challenges in clearly articulating ideas, likely due to vocabulary limitations or uncertainty in English sentence structure. Respondent 2 mentioned the need to increase confidence by improving English language understanding and communication skills: "When explaining is difficult, we tend to be silent." According to Riskina et al. (2022), practical vocabulary usage significantly facilitates communication in various contexts, enhancing an individual's ability to engage in meaningful interactions. With a vital vocabulary, conversations, and dialogues become more dynamic as participants can exchange ideas and respond to one another promptly.

Lastly, a participant expressed anxiety about speaking English because of the limitations that affect confidence during tasks like presentations. Communicating their ideas to peers is challenging due to their fear of misunderstandings or errors. Uncertainty in word choice or sentence structure greatly hinders academic or professional communication. Respondent 5 pointed out that improving English proficiency is necessary to boost confidence in formal communication. "Our confidence can be affected by our limited English proficiency during presentations. Communicating ideas clearly to colleagues is a struggle due to fear of mistakes." The effective use of vocabulary significantly facilitates communication in various contexts, enhancing an individual's ability to engage in meaningful interactions. With a robust vocabulary, conversations, and dialogues become more dynamic as participants can exchange ideas and respond to one another promptly. This fluency not only aids in casual conversations but also proves advantageous in formal settings, such as job interviews, where a well-developed vocabulary can boost confidence and improve the likelihood of securing employment. A rich vocabulary ultimately enhances an individual's ability to articulate thoughts and ideas clearly, contributing to greater communicative competence, as represented by Riskina et al. (2022).

4. Conclusion

The survey gathered insights from twelve respondents regarding their challenges in speaking English. The analysis highlights key themes, including vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and confidence, while suggesting strategies to address these issues. The findings underscore the complexities of learning English as a second language and the varied experiences learners encounter in their language acquisition journey.

4.1. Vocabulary limitations

Eight of the twelve respondents indicated a vocabulary deficiency significantly impairing their ability to construct sentences and convey their thoughts clearly. Many respondents noted that mentally translating from Indonesian to English disrupts their fluency and leads to

hesitation. Respondent 7 emphasized that difficulties with vocabulary often hinder the ability to organize thoughts and formulate coherent responses, further compounding their challenges in speaking.

4.2. Grammar difficulties

Two respondents highlighted grammar as a significant challenge, noting the need for support in constructing grammatically correct sentences and accurately translating their thoughts into English. The complexity of English grammar, compared to their native language, presents significant difficulties for learners. This intricacy affects their overall proficiency and hampers their ability to communicate effectively, making it harder to comprehend and apply the grammatical rules required for clear and precise expression in English.

4.3. Pronunciation issues

Two additional respondents identified pronunciation as a significant obstacle, noting that their difficulty in articulating words often leads to misunderstandings in communication. The lack of formal phonetic instruction compounds learners' uncertainty about accurate word formation in various contexts. With a firm grounding in phonetics, students can apply correct pronunciation and intonation, which hampers their ability to produce words confidently and communicate clearly in the target language.

4.4. Confidence concerns

Five respondents highlighted confidence as a considerable concern, particularly expressing anxiety about making mistakes and feeling inadequate in formal settings like presentations. This insecurity often stems from uncertainty about proper vocabulary usage and a fear of being misunderstood. Respondent 5 specifically attributed their lack of confidence to difficulties with vocabulary and general communication skills, underscoring the connection between linguistic competence and self-assurance in public speaking.

4.5. Immersive learning

Four individuals highlighted engaging with English through movies, songs, and online resources. This exposure improves vocabulary and pronunciation skills, making language learning more enjoyable. This approach enhances vocabulary, pronunciation, and overall language comprehension by allowing learners to absorb linguistic nuances, colloquial expressions, and cultural references. Immersive learning fosters a more enjoyable and effective language acquisition process, as it integrates language practice into daily life, reinforcing listening and speaking skills naturally and engagingly.

4.6. Active practice

It was emphasized that it is crucial to practice English regularly and seek assistance from proficient speakers. Engaging in conversations and receiving feedback over time can increase confidence and improve language skills. This method enhances fluency and builds

confidence as learners become more comfortable with real-world language use. Receiving input from skilled speakers is crucial in refining pronunciation, grammar, and sentence structure. Over time, these interactive exchanges foster a deeper understanding of the language and enhance communication skills, making active practice an essential component of effective language learning.

4.7. Utilizing digital tools

Another group of four respondents mentioned using digital tools and bilingual resources to overcome vocabulary gaps. Incorporating these resources into daily interactions and leisure activities can achieve consistent language practice and reinforcement. These resources provide immediate support and enable consistent language practice through interactive exercises, real-time translations, or vocabulary-building activities. Incorporating digital tools into everyday interactions and leisure activities reinforces learning and ensures continuous exposure to the target language, promoting steady improvement in comprehension and communication skills.

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