

Speaking Difficulties Faced by Twelfth Grade Students at SMK 1 PGRI Kudus

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Abstract: Speaking is an important part of learning a language ability, especially for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, because it is used in both academic and everyday situations. However, mastering speaking skills, particularly challenging for English language learners due to both linguistic factors, such as pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary, and non-linguistic factors, such as anxiety and limited practice opportunities. This study aims to investigate the difficulties students have when learning English, particularly focusing on improving their speaking skills, and the techniques they use to overcome those difficulties. The study uses a case study research design and a mixed methods approach and focuses on twelfth-grade Beauty and Spa major students at SMK PGRI 1 Kudus during the 2024/2025 academic year. The participants consist of 27 students from the XII KS 1, with data collected through questionnaires and interviews to explore students' speaking difficulties and strategies. The findings indicate that students' motivation to learn English speaking improves when they receive positive support from peers, teachers, and family. Common struggles include fluency issues, difficulties in expressing thoughts, using correct tenses, and communicating clearly in English. To address these difficulties, students employ various strategies, such as using language-learning apps, participating in English clubs, watching English media with subtitles, and practicing independent speaking through self-narration and recordings. To further enhance their speaking skills, students can engage in activities like taking courses, joining extracurricular activities, using both school-provided and online English learning apps, and actively practicing speaking.

Keywords: Speaking, Learning Speaking, Speaking Difficulties

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is an essential mode of communication that allows people to convey their thoughts, ideas, and feelings clearly. It acts as a bridge between people from various cultures, backgrounds, and perspectives, promoting better understanding and lasting connections. According to Putri et al., (2020) speaking is the intentional conveyance of events, ideas, thoughts, and emotions through clear, structured, and purposeful oral communication with the objective of comprehending others' intentions. In this era, speaking has become the most important skill that English learners need to learn since it allows for direct communication in a variety of social and academic contexts. English is widely studied as a foreign language in Indonesia, especially among students, highlighting its significance in today's world. In vocational schools such as SMK PGRI 1 Kudus, in the Beauty and Spa major, students study English as an international language to prepare for their future careers as professionals in their field. Additionally, learning English helps them communicate with clients from diverse backgrounds, expand their

knowledge of the beauty industry, and stay updated on the latest trends and techniques in the global beauty sector.

Naturally, students will face problems when learning English, particularly when speaking. Two factors influence difficulties in speaking English. Linguistic factors and non-linguistic factors. Linguistic factors are aspects of language usage and structure that can make speaking English more difficult. Maji et al., (2022) state that the following primary linguistic features may affect speaking difficulties, such as a Lack of Vocabulary. This difficulty is evident in various situations, such as struggling to recall English words, switching to their native language, difficulty grasping abstract concepts, and confusion caused by word meanings differing from their native language. Poor pronunciation: This difficulty often arises from nervousness and differences between English and their native language, such as varying vowel sounds, issues with English spelling, stress, and intonation further contribute to pronunciation difficulties. Grammar: Many students struggle with English grammar, largely due to the differences between English and Indonesian grammar. One significant difficulty is the varying placement of adjective modifiers in both languages, which complicates sentence construction for students.

Meanwhile, Non-linguistic factors are elements that do not directly relate to language structure but still greatly affect one's ability to speak English. As stated by Ork et al. (2024), several key non-linguistic aspects can contribute to the difficulties in speaking English. These include psychological factors, such as anxiety, fear of making mistakes, shyness, and lack of confidence, which are key barriers to effective English speaking. Anxiety causes tension and nervousness, reducing fluency, while fear of making mistakes arises from concerns about negative feedback and ridicule, leading students to avoid speaking. Shyness further causes this by making students fearful of judgment and hindering participation. A lack of confidence, often linked to poor language skills, results in silence or hesitation. A lack of motivation hinders students' success in learning English, affecting their communication and engagement with the language. Factors like uninspiring teaching, boredom, irrelevant materials, and unclear course goals contribute to low motivation. A lack of practice greatly impacts students' confidence in speaking English. Regular practice is essential for improving language skills, but many students experience insufficient practice, which leads to difficulties like limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation, and ungrammatical sentences. Mother tongue interference is a major difficulty for English learners, affecting their fluency. Outside the classroom, students often rely on their native language, limiting their English practice and proficiency. Students are unable to advance their speaking abilities because of these difficulties..

This study is based on two complementary theoretical frameworks Karsen, (1982) which holds that emotional factors like motivation, anxiety, and self-confidence have a significant impact on learners' ability to acquire and produce spoken language; and Communicative Competence Theory Canale & Swain, (1980), which frames speaking as a multi-component communicative ability involving grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competences.

Several studies indicate that students encounter various difficulties when learning to speak. Astuti et al., (2020) discovered many factors that influence students' speaking skills. These include performance conditions, psychological factors, and intellectual knowledge. Students frequently struggled to explain themselves properly during

presentations due to a lack of information, limiting their capacity to talk effectively. Performance anxiety, fear of making mistakes, and a lack of confidence caused their difficulty speaking English. According to Houn & Em, (2022) found that the speaking fluency of 12th-grade students in Cambodian high schools is significantly influenced by teaching methods and anxiety related to speaking. Students' English-speaking abilities are limited by the usage of their native language in class, insufficient support for deductive learning, excessive error correction, passive teaching methodologies, and a lack of speaking experience. Candraloka & Rosdiana, (2019) stated that the difficulties that English language learners encounter include individual characteristics such as shyness, fear, bewilderment, low self-confidence, lack of trust, and anxiety over making mistakes. Based on the study of Franscy & Ramli, (2022), found that both linguistic and non-linguistic aspects make it difficult for Indonesian EFL learners to achieve speaking abilities. However, linguistic problems predominate, making up 77% of the challenges, whereas non-linguistic factors only account for 23%. The last study is from Khasinah et al., (2024), the study examines the linguistic and non-linguistic difficulties that EFL students encounter when presenting in English. Grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and anxiety are among the main problems. To get past these obstacles, students employed preparatory strategies like practice sessions and multimedia resources. The study emphasizes the necessity of supportive learning environments and individualized language instruction.

This study differs from earlier studies in that it focuses on students majoring in beauty and spa, emphasizing the vital requirement for English-speaking proficiency in this sector. Unlike regular EFL students, Beauty and Spa majors require English speaking skills that are adapted to specific vocational situations, such as dealing with customers, product explanation, and service presentation. Their future professional activities will require the capacity to communicate with clients from various languages and cultural backgrounds, particularly in spa tourism and the worldwide beauty industry. This study emphasizes the vocational significance of speaking abilities for this distinct learner population, thus contributing to the growth of English for Occupational Purposes (EOP) in vocational education. Thus, this new study is innovative since it focuses specifically on this student population and their particular academic and professional requirements related to English language proficiency in the beauty industry.

. Based on the study background mentioned above, the problem statements can be stated as follows: What are the difficulties faced by twelfth-grade of Beauty and Spa major students in the academic year 2024 / 2025 in speaking English? How do twelfth-grade of Beauty and Spa major students in the academic year 2024 / 2025 overcome the difficulties in speaking English?

Through this research, the researcher aims to provide the researcher aims to provide both theoretical and practical benefits. To develop the speaking skills of Beauty and Spa major students, the teacher must create a supportive classroom climate that lowers anxiety and increases confidence. Activities such as role plays and peer-led presentations can help to create a safe environment in which students feel comfortable making mistakes. Pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar issues should be addressed through task-based learning and organized speaking exercises, including presentations

about the beauty industry or consultations. The usage of multimedia resources, such as pronunciation applications or PowerPoint presentations, can greatly improve students' learning experiences by allowing them to practice their speaking abilities both inside and outside of class.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research design employed in this study is a case study. According to Rahayu (2021), a case study is a research method that focuses on current phenomena, which are either ongoing or have had a significant and lasting impact at the time the study was conducted. According to the goals of the study, case study research is an adaptable approach that enables researchers to investigate a phenomenon in-depth using qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods approaches. Saraswati & Devi, (2023), define mixed methods research as the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches to achieve a more thorough and detailed understanding of a research issue. Furthermore, Johnson et al., (2007), define mixed methods research as combining qualitative (descriptive) and quantitative (numerical) methodologies.

In this study, the data consists of responses to questionnaires and interview transcripts from twelfth-grade students at SMK PGRI 1 Kudus, focusing on the difficulties they face when speaking English. The data source for this research is twelfth-grade students majoring in Beauty and Spa at SMK PGRI 1 Kudus during the 2024/2025 academic year. Students in the twelfth grade, more specifically the class of XII KS 1 majoring in Beauty and Spa at SMK PGRI 1 Kudus during the academic year 2024 / 2025, with 27 students, are participating in the course of analysis in this study. This group was chosen due to their particular work environment, which specifies English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), supporting the need for a thorough examination of their language learning experiences.

The researcher used a closed-ended questionnaire using a Likert scale. According to Roopa & Rani, (2012) the Likert scale is a psychometric tool commonly used in research with questionnaires to assess social attitudes. The questionnaire was adapted from previous research by Azizah, (2020), which aimed to identify the difficulties faced by eleventh-grade students in speaking English, as well as to determine the most dominant problem. The questionnaire consisted of 20 statements, each with four response options: SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), D (Disagree), and SD (Strongly Disagree).

Participants in this study were selected using purposive sampling based on the following criteria: (1) They are twelfth-grade students majoring in Beauty and Spa, (2) Currently enrolled at SMK PGRI 1 Kudus, (3) Actively involved in English language learning at school, and (4) Have sufficient free time and willingness to participate in the research process. (5) They are girls. Based on these factors, the researcher determined that class XII KS 1 was the best group to participate in this study. The researcher used Google Forms as the medium for data collection, and the questionnaire was sent online to 27 students from the XII KS 1. The second technique the researcher used to gather data was an interview. The purpose of the interview was to gain deeper insight into the difficulties faced by XII KS 1 students and the ways they address these difficulties. A semi-structured interview format was used, and the data gathered from the interviews complemented the information obtained from the questionnaire results. Five students out of 27 from the twelfth-grade class XII KS 1 participated in the interview; they were

chosen using a basic random sampling technique, with all students in class XII KS 1 given equal chances via a lottery. Before the research began, the researcher got permission from many parties, including the school, the teacher, and the students who participated. The researcher explained the study's goal, procedures, and participant rights. The researcher also notified the participants that the obtained data would be kept confidential and used only for research purposes. All participants' personal information will be securely saved and not publicized.

For data collection, the researcher used different methods to analyze the data. In the case of the questionnaire, the researcher first acknowledged the participants' responses and sorted the answers. Then, using the formula provided by Zahara et al., (2023) the researcher calculated the percentage of each response, applying the formula: $P = (F/N) \times 100\%$, where P represents the percentage, N is the number of students, F is the frequency, and 100 is a constant. After performing the calculations, the researcher made conclusions based on the findings. As for the interviews, after following the data collection, the researcher conducted an analysis guided by O'Connor & Gibson, (2003), after the interviews, the researcher organized and transcribed the data, identifying key thoughts and categorizing them into main themes. To assure dependability, the statistics were cross-checked and compared from several sources. The researcher then interpreted patterns and presented the results in a clear narrative supported by data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To gain insight into the difficulties faced by the 27 students in the XII KS 1 class during English-speaking lessons, the researcher distributed questionnaires to each student. The survey contained twenty questions, with the first two addressing pronunciation difficulties, questions 3 and 4 focusing on grammar problems, and questions 5 and 6 examining vocabulary difficulty. Questions 7 and 8 assessed issues with fluency, while questions 9 and 10 evaluated comprehension skills. Questions 11 to 14 explored psychological factors affecting the students, and questions 15 and 16 focused on their motivation. Questions 17 and 18 investigated the lack of practice, and the final two, questions 19 and 20, pertained to the use of their native language. The researcher also conducted interviews as a secondary method of data collection. This allowed for a deeper understanding of the student's difficulties. Five students from the XII KS 1 class at SMK PGRI 1 Kudus were interviewed. The data collection took place over two days, September 2nd and 3rd, 2024, during which both the questionnaires were distributed, and the interviews were conducted. The researcher was able to identify the specific speaking difficulties experienced by the students and determine the percentage of students facing these issues through the questionnaires. Additionally, the interviews provided insights into the strategies the students employ to address them.

Table 1
Questionnaire Result

NO	Statements	SA	A	D	SD	Score
1.	I often have difficulty pronouncing words in English.	1 3,9%	20 73,1%	5 19,2%	1 3,8%	75
2.	I frequently have trouble pronouncing vowel and consonant sounds correctly, pronouncing words with stress patterns, and maintaining proper intonation patterns in English.	5 15,4%	20 76,9%	2 7,7%	0 0%	84
3.	I frequently struggle to compose proper English sentences.	3 11,5%	17 65,4%	7 23,1%	0 0%	77
4.	I frequently feel confused about applying the correct tenses when speaking.	2 7,7%	24 88,5%	1 3,8%	0 0%	82
5.	I frequently find it challenging to select the correct vocabulary when speaking in English.	3 11,5%	17 65,4%	7 23,1%	0 0%	77
6.	I feel that a lack of vocabulary affects my capacity to speak fluently in English.	3 11,5%	18 69,2%	5 15,5%	1 3,8%	77
7.	I find it difficult to convey ideas or information in an organized and clear manner when speaking in English.	4 15,4%	21 77%	2 7,7%	0 0%	86
8.	I often find myself hesitating or stopping for a moment when speaking English.	3 11,5%	20 73,1%	2 7,7%	2 7,7%	78
9.	I find it difficult to understand questions or statements in English when talking to other people	1 3,8%	16 61,5%	10 34,7%	0 0%	56

10.	I frequently have difficulty understanding the meaning or context of words, terminologies, or idiomatic expressions used in English conversations.	1 3,8%	20 77%	6 19,2%	0 0%	76
11.	I often feel uncomfortable or frightened before speaking in front of others in English.	4 15,4%	19 69,2%	2 7,7%	2 7,7%	70
12.	I'm always concerned about other people's opinions about my English speaking skills.	8 27%	17 65,4%	1 3,8%	1 3,8%	86
13.	I feel that mistakes in speaking English make me feel embarrassed.	3 11,5%	20 73,1%	3 11,5%	1 3,9%	85
14.	I tend to avoid speaking English with other people because I am embarrassed by my speaking ability in English.	1 3,8%	16 61,5%	6 23,1%	4 11,6%	68
15.	I feel that my personal interests (e.g., hobbies, culture) and the influence of long-term goals (e.g., career, studies) have a great influence on my motivation to speak English.	11 42,3%	13 46,2%	2 7,7%	1 3,8%	88
16.	I feel more motivated to speak English after getting positive feedback from others.	14 50%	12 46,2%	0 0%	1 3,8%	93
17.	I find it difficult to speak English due to a lack of opportunities to practice.	2 7,7%	18 69,2%	7 23,1%	0 0%	65
18.	I try to find new ways to practice speaking English, for example, by joining clubs and using applications.	11 42,3%	16 57,7%	0 0%	0 0%	92
19.	I often find it difficult to speak English compared to speaking my mother tongue or Indonesian.	6 23,1%	15 57,7%	5 15,4%	1 3,8%	80

20.	I often translate from my mother tongue or Indonesian, to English when speaking.	2	20	3	2	76
		7,7%	73,1%	11,5%	7,7%	

The difficulties faced by twelfth-grade Beauty and Spa major students in speaking English

1.1. Linguistic Factors

Linguistic difficulties are aspects of language structure and use that can cause difficulty in speaking English. Students often faced these difficulties, especially in pronunciation, grammar, and also vocabulary. The findings presented below are based on the experiences shared by the students during the research process.

a. Pronunciation

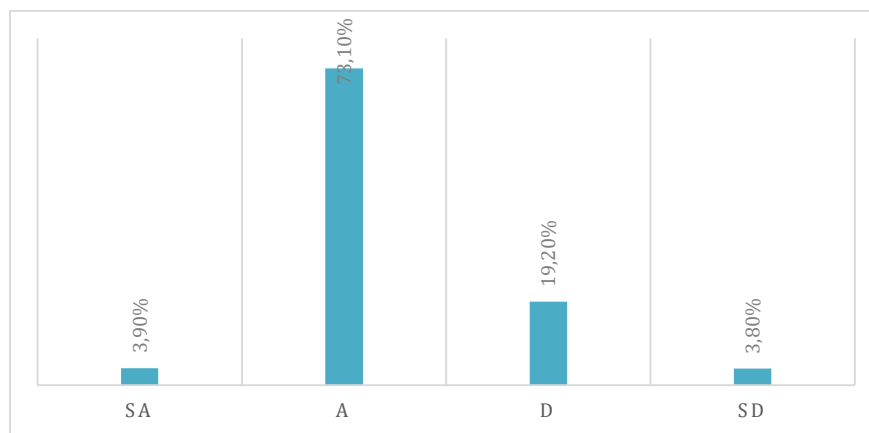


Figure 1. Result of linguistic difficulties (pronunciation)

From the chart, 73.1% of students agree with the statement, demonstrating that pronunciation is a common issue. Furthermore, 3.9% strongly agree, implying that for a smaller number of students, this challenge is more severe, perhaps affecting their confidence and clarity when speaking. On the other hand, students have difficulty pronouncing vowel and consonant sounds correctly, applying stress patterns, and using appropriate intonation in English, with a percentage of 74%. These pronunciation issues, caused by unfamiliar sounds, can hinder communication and reduce confidence. As a result, students may avoid practicing.

b. Grammar

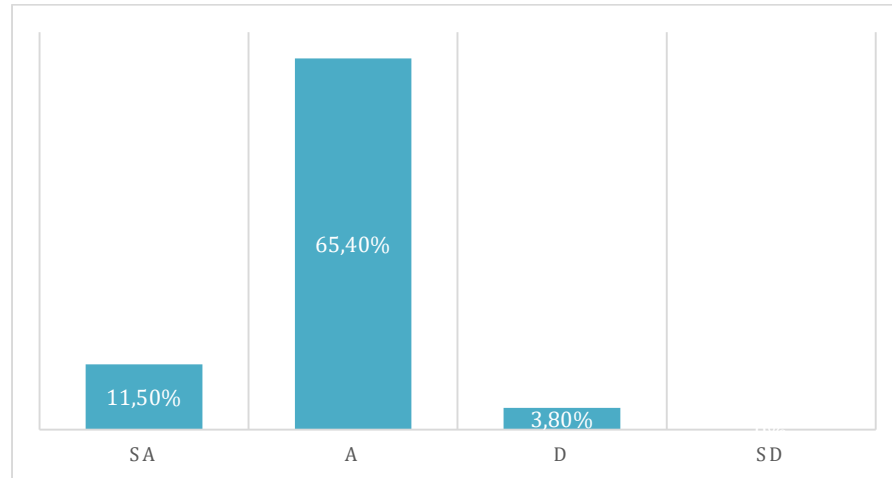


Figure 2. Result of linguistic difficulties (grammar)

This is shown by the fact that 65.4% of students agree with this statement, with an additional 11.5% strongly agreeing, demonstrating that learning sentence form is a common issue. Nearly 89% of students struggle with using the correct tenses when speaking English, particularly in fast-paced conversations. Many students hesitate with sentence structure and face difficulties with tenses, prepositions, and complex sentences. A significant number of students struggle with speaking English fluently compared to their native languages, due to limited daily use. Approximately 62.9% of students experience frequent difficulty in constructing correct English sentences. While they may understand grammar concepts in theory, applying these rules effectively in spoken communication requires more than just theoretical knowledge it demands practical experience and a deeper understanding of the language. Achieving this level of proficiency can be challenging within a limited timeframe. Research by Hosni, (2014) supports these findings, highlighting that insufficient grammar knowledge are key barriers to effective communication. Students' difficulty in articulating their ideas and the fear of making grammar errors can discourage them from engaging in speaking activities, further affecting their speaking proficiency in English.

c. Vocabulary

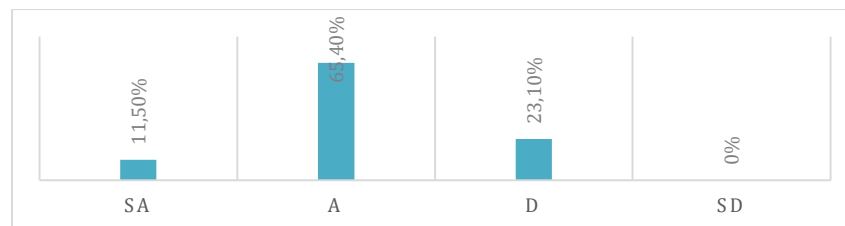
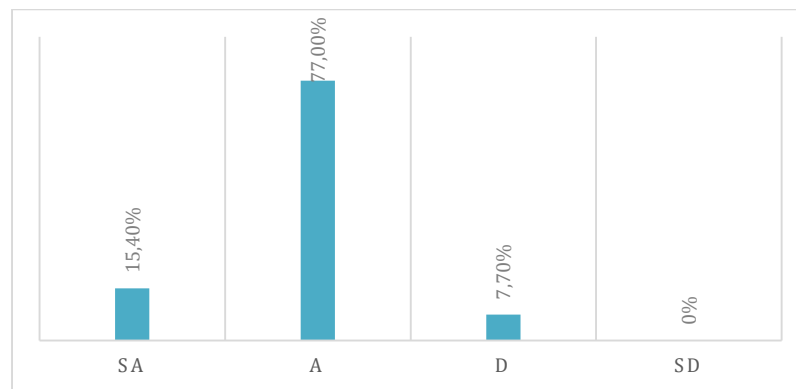


Figure 3. Result of linguistic difficulties (vocabulary)

Students frequently struggle to choose a suitable word when conversing in English. 65.4% agree, and 11.5% strongly agree, emphasizing the difficulty of selecting the proper words in discussion. When communicating in English, a significant percentage of students, 62.9%, had trouble choosing the appropriate vocabulary. This difficulty, brought on by a limited vocabulary, affects their capacity to articulate ideas, feelings, and thoughts effectively. Meanwhile, a total of 66.6% of students report that a lack of vocabulary affects their ability to speak fluently in English. Expanding vocabulary is crucial for improving speaking fluency, as a limited vocabulary hinders the clear expression of thoughts, emotions, and ideas, often causing pauses or unclear communication. Additionally, students may rely on repetitive phrases, making conversations less engaging.

d. Fluency

**Figure 4. Result of linguistic difficulties (fluency)**

From the chart above, 77% of students face difficulties in expressing their ideas clearly and organizing them when speaking English. This struggle with fluency and natural conversation flow is due to hesitation while searching for the right words, which can disrupt speech and reduce confidence. A significant number of students, 74%, hesitate or pause when speaking English, often due to overthinking grammar and vocabulary. This reliance on their native language impairs fluency and leads to delays. A total of 76.9% of students agree with this statement, demonstrating a majority with moderate support, while an additional 15.6% strongly agree, indicating that a large number of students are persuaded by this observation.

Research by Putri et al., (2020) highlights that internal factors like low self-confidence and inadequate language mastery contribute to these struggles.

e. Comprehension

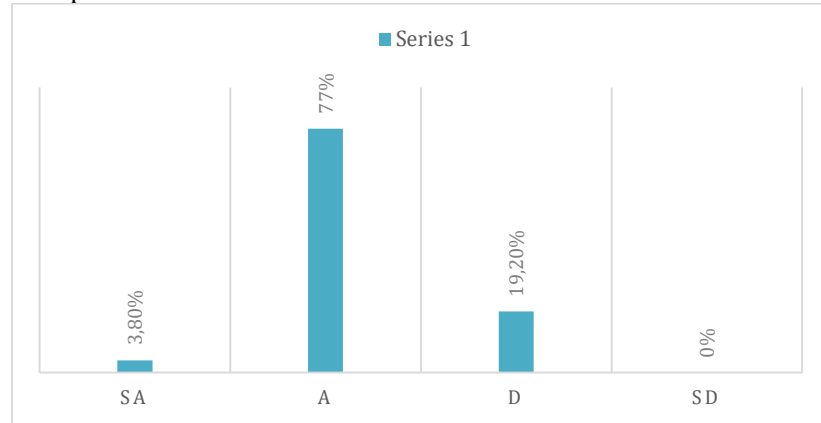


Figure 5. Result of linguistic difficulties (comprehension)

A score of 74% indicates that students struggle with English comprehension, frequently having difficulty understanding terms, terminologies, and idiomatic expressions due to a restricted vocabulary. Interpreting varied dialects, intonations, and quick speaking presents additional difficulties that might overwhelm students. A lack of active listening skills also has an impact on comprehension, as effective listening is required for absorbing crucial concepts and nuances in talks, indicating that 77% of students agree, with only 3.8% strongly agreeing.

1.2. Non-linguistic Factors

f. Psychological Factors

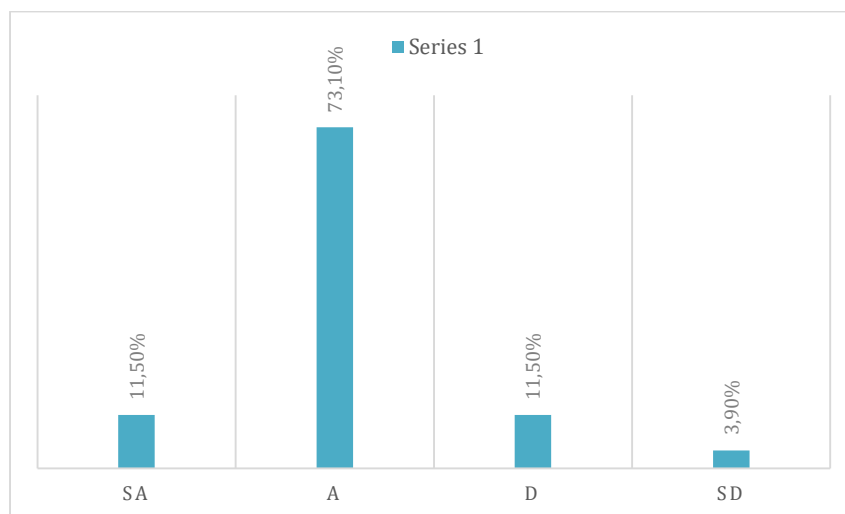


Figure 6. Result of Non- linguistic difficulties (psychological factors)

Approximately 62.9% of students are consistently anxious about how others perceive their English speaking abilities. They fear that mistakes in grammar, pronunciation, or word choice might make them seem unintelligent or incompetent. As a result, many students become overly self-conscious and avoid engaging in English conversations. About 74% of students feel embarrassed when they make mistakes in English, fearing criticism from others. This anxiety is fueled by concerns over appearing incompetent due to errors in grammar, vocabulary, or pronunciation. When speaking English in front of people, around 70% of students regularly experience discomfort or anxiety. Their difficulties are largely psychological in nature since they suffer from an extreme fear of public speaking, especially in front of friends or an audience. Speaking becomes much more difficult for them because of the pressure to do well and the fear of making mistakes. Because they are embarrassed by their speaking skills, 59.2% of students tend to avoid speaking in English. Shy people tend to avoid speaking situations because they feel uncomfortable being the center of attention, especially when speaking a foreign language. They may also be hesitant due to self-doubt about their pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary. Additionally, a lot of people worry about being misinterpreted, criticized, or made fun of for making mistakes.

An impressive 73.1% of students agree with this statement, demonstrating broad anxiety about how their mistakes would be seen. Additionally, 11.5% strongly agree, indicating that they are more uncomfortable or anxious about speaking English improperly. This demonstrates that for a large number of students, the fear of shame influences their willingness to engage in spoken English.

g. Motivation

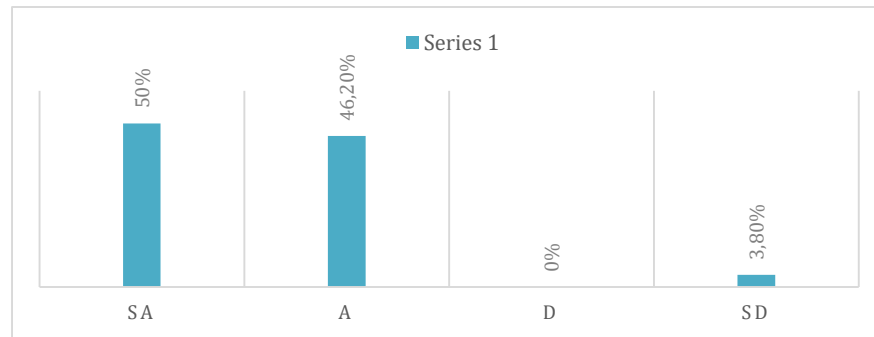


Figure 7. Result of Non- linguistic difficulties (Motivation)

From the chart above the study found that 51.8% of students face difficulties in staying motivated to speak English without positive feedback. Parental and educational support is key to boosting students' self-esteem and motivation, particularly in speaking. Some 48.1% of students believe their motivation to speak English is influenced by their personal interests (such as hobbies and culture) and long-term goals (like career and education). Learning becomes more engaging and meaningful when it ties into interests like music, travel, or movies, while exposure to various cultures encourages global conversations. Additionally, career and educational aspirations motivate students to improve their English for international opportunities. It can be seen that 50% of students strongly agree with the statement that they feel more motivated to speak English after receiving positive feedback from others, indicating a deep conviction or strong belief in it, while 46.2% agree, implying that the majority of students generally believe the statement to be valid, yet with less intensity of support.

h. Lack of Practice

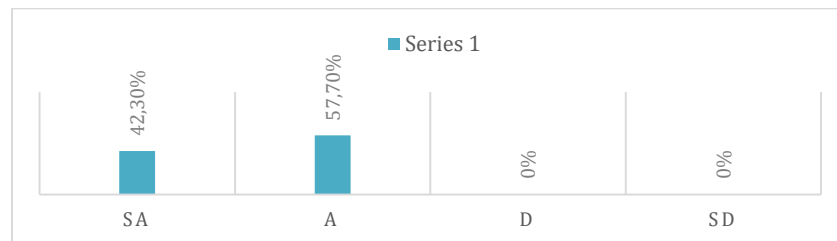


Figure 7. Result of Non- Non-Linguistic Difficulties (Lack of Practice)

The study found that 59.2% of students look for ways to improve their speaking skills, such as joining English clubs and using apps. Speaking clubs offer a relaxed environment for real conversations, boosting fluency, exposing students to various accents, and increasing cultural awareness. Technology, including apps, helps facilitate regular practice. Approximately 66.6% of students struggle to speak English due to a lack of

practice opportunities. Around 59.2% of students find it difficult to comprehend English-language comments or questions during talks. Their capacity to understand topics, react correctly, and engage in class is impacted by this difficulty. Effective contact and communication are hampered by a lack of contextual meaning or spoken English comprehension. A significant 57.7% of students agree with this statement, indicating a broad level of support, while an even greater segment, 42.3%, strongly agrees, indicating a strong belief in the statement's truth.

i. Mother Tongue Use

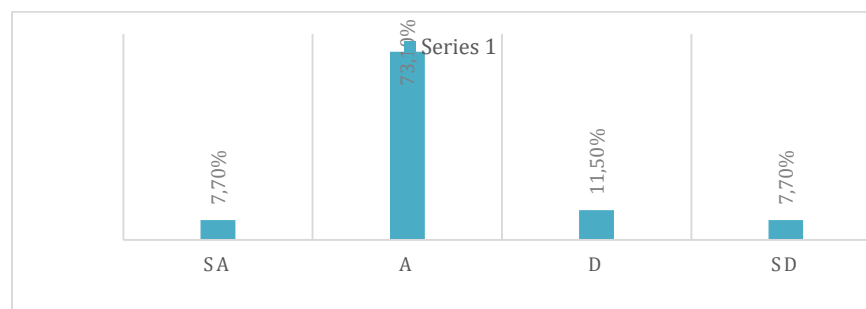


Figure 8. Result of Non- Non-Linguistic Difficulties (Mother Tongue Use)

Around 74% of students frequently translate from their mother tongue or Indonesian to English when speaking. As a result, they transfer sentence structures and vocabulary from their mother tongue, which may not align with English grammar rules. This reliance on translation can hinder fluency, making spoken English less natural and spontaneous. A 74% score indicates that students frequently struggle with English pronunciation due to variances between English and their mother tongue. Poor pronunciation can impair speaking ability, making it difficult for listeners to understand and resulting in potential misunderstandings. Furthermore, 73.1% of students agree that when speaking, they frequently translate from their mother tongue or Indonesian to English, with 7.7% strongly agreeing that this is because they have not fully internalized English as a separate language system.

This study draws attention to a significant obstacle in students' development of their English-speaking skills: their dependence on their mother tongue, such as Indonesian or Javanese, in interactions. This study offers a thorough examination of elements, including grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, performance circumstances, affective aspects, and thematic knowledge, in contrast to Astuti et al., (2020) which covered speaking difficulties in students more broadly. It provides a more thorough knowledge of how students' mother tongue affects their English-speaking proficiency.

How do twelfth-grade Beauty and Spa major students overcome the difficulties in speaking English

Five XII KS 1 students from SMK 1 PGRI Kudus served as the interview participants in this study. The purpose of the researcher's interview is to have a better understanding of how they overcome the difficulties faced by the students. The interviews show that the

presence of international clients in the beauty and spa industry encourages experts to improve their English skills. As the sector grows globally, excellent communication in English is critical for understanding client needs, providing quality service, and remaining competitive. Proficiency in English is essential for everyday interactions, business transactions, and industry networking. For vocational high school students, acquiring English-speaking abilities is especially vital for on-the-job training (OJT), which allows them to interact with worldwide clients, collaborate with various colleagues, and adapt to global market needs. Prioritizing language abilities improves their employability and professional achievement. A student also mentioned that having a middle school friend who occasionally speaks English helps establish a calm and informal language-learning environment. The informal use of English in regular discussions helps students to practice without the pressure of formal schooling. Many students effortlessly include simple English words and phrases in their conversations, which builds confidence and encourages constant practice. These relationships among classmates make studying more enjoyable and encourage students to incorporate English into their daily routines, such as social media or group discussions. This practice gradually establishes a solid foundation, allowing students to feel more at ease while using English in formal or professional settings.

Improving speaking abilities requires consistent practice using media apps and other immersive methods. The school's app, Elsa Speak, helps enhance pronunciation and fluency through interactive exercises, while Duolingo supports vocabulary and sentence structure practice. Watching English-language content with subtitles aids pronunciation and intonation by linking spoken and written words. Students can further develop fluency by actively listening, imitating dialogues, and speaking independently, such as narrating daily events or recording themselves. Enrolling in English courses provides structured guidance, feedback, and real-life practice through discussions and role-playing. Regular engagement in these methods builds confidence, natural speech patterns, and overall speaking proficiency.

Unlike Hamimah, (2021) who did not thoroughly investigate the impact of the classroom environment and interactions with classmates on speaking skills, this study finds effective techniques for increasing English speaking skills. One method is to join an English club or participate in extracurricular activities at school, allowing more opportunities to practice speaking in a relaxed environment. Engaging with fellow students who have the same objective of improving their English abilities boosts confidence, motivation, and general speaking skills over time.

CONCLUSION

Students struggle with fluency, often finding it difficult to express their thoughts, use correct tenses, and communicate effectively in English. Pronunciation poses major difficulties, particularly with vowel and consonant sounds, stress patterns, and intonation. Many students hesitate while speaking and feel self-conscious about making mistakes, which discourages them from engaging in English conversations. Additionally, limited exposure to English outside the classroom and a reliance on their native language for translation hinder their fluency. Choosing the right vocabulary is also challenging, making it difficult for students to express their thoughts, emotions, and ideas. To address

these difficulties, students use various strategies, such as using language-learning apps, participating in English clubs, watching English content with subtitles, and practicing independent speaking through self-narration and recording. Support and encouragement from friends and peers also help boost confidence and motivate consistent practice. By integrating these methods, students work toward improving their speaking skills and gaining confidence in English communication, particularly to prepare for future career opportunities in the expanding global beauty and spa industry. Despite these positive efforts and strategies, the small sample size of this study might not accurately represent the different viewpoints of Beauty and Spa students learning English at various vocational schools throughout Indonesia. Furthermore, individuals may exaggerate or minimize their challenges and coping mechanisms when self-reported data is used in questionnaires and interviews, which might introduce bias. To increase the validity and precision of the findings, future research is urged to involve a larger and more varied sample size and consider using other data collection techniques, like teacher evaluations or classroom observations.

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