

## AN ANALYSIS OF THE FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENTS' ENGLISH SPEAKING PROFICIENCY

Muhammad Muklas<sup>\*1</sup>, Revina Yuliana<sup>\*2</sup>, Evi Nurkhasanah<sup>\*3</sup>  
Lilis Nur Fahriza<sup>\*4</sup>, and Sefti Zhintia Yulianda<sup>\*5</sup>

[muklas@unuha.ac.id](mailto:muklas@unuha.ac.id)<sup>\*1</sup>, [revinabt022@gmail.com](mailto:revinabt022@gmail.com)<sup>\*2</sup>, [evinurkhasnah01@gmail.com](mailto:evinurkhasnah01@gmail.com)<sup>\*3</sup>,  
[lilisnurfahriza3@gmail.com](mailto:lilisnurfahriza3@gmail.com)<sup>\*4</sup>, [Seftizhintiayulianda@gmail.com](mailto:Seftizhintiayulianda@gmail.com)<sup>\*5</sup>

Faculty of Education<sup>\*1,2,3,4,5</sup>.

Nurul Huda University, Palembang, Indonesia<sup>\*1,2,3,4,5</sup>

Received: December 9, 2024

Accepted: February 28, 2024

Published: March 15, 2025

### ABSTRACT

English includes common skills such as listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Many students focus on speaking skills and complain that English is a difficult language to use or pronounce. This is not easy when we are born with students whose everyday language is not English, which can make it difficult for these students. There are quite a few students today whose ability to speak English is still not good. Of course, there must be a solution to the problem. Therefore, this research aimed to find out what factors affect students English speaking proficiency. This research uses qualitative methods. Among them, in this research the process of identifying, classifying, and analyzing data according to the data analysis procedures in this study. There were 24 students sampled in this research. The results of this research are; the factors affecting students English speaking proficiency. These two factors are affective factors (risk-taking and motivation) and linguistic factors (grammar and vocabulary); (2) the oral performance test results of 24 students currently explain that their oral performance results are at the 5th-grade level or higher with a total average of 5.0.

**Keywords:** *Affective, Linguistic, Factors, Speaking Ability.*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31943/wej.v8i1.275>

### INTRODUCTION

English is designated as an international language. This is because English is considered an easier language to understand than other languages (Aziza, 2020). English is also the language of the world that is usually gotten by people when they interact with others who are not their family, like when they interact with their teacher or peer and with extensive society. Therefore, Indonesians especially students need to learn English so that can show their existence in front of the world. English is very important to learn. This is because English can help students solve problems in a foreign language and retrieve existing information. In a global sense, English is an international language, whose main function is to communicate sharing ideas and cultures between two different countries (Amankulova & Seisembieva, 2020). Therefore, not only the students but everyone in this world including Indonesia

should also learn it, because we have famous and modern, healthy international science, knowledge, and business books in English and we also have to pronounce our ideas and culture into it. So, Indonesians must master English to improve the quality of education so that Indonesia can become a developed country (Zein et al., 2020).

The writer sees, that there are some problems with the factors affecting students' English proficiency. One of them is students' motivation to learn English is very low. This may be because they receive less support and advice from those around them. Some negative factors affect students' speaking ability they agree: that using their mother tongue in the classroom affects students' abilities, the fear of using English in public, the lack of English in discussion activities, the lack of curriculum containing speech exercises, the teacher gives no support and time for the students, and the talking part is less than listening (Ruben, 2019).

In the Indonesian educational context, there is also an emphasis on speaking while learning. It becomes a daily activity for students. Unfortunately, most students experience anxiety when speaking English for oral communication (Souisa & Gaité, 2020). Most of them, difficult to speak English, that happens because, when it produces words they can't think of something that's so dizzy to say something. The most common activity is used to promote oral fluency and is frequently referred to in research and has been proven to promote fluency (Guevara & Albuja, 2020). This study inspired the authors to conduct research about the materi the factors affecting students' English speaking proficiency.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Speaking ability is the most important skill when teaching and learning a language because it forms the basis of communication and is also the most difficult skill (Oradee, 2019). Thus, in the students' increased ability to speak English, teachers should have a flower strategy and enjoy an activity to encourage students to practice the language. Then, the students must habituate themselves to practice speaking English so that their speaking can be proficient.

Speaking is a productive skill when learning a language. This includes communication skills and other important factors such as pronunciation, intonation, grammar, and vocabulary (Andi Intang, Hasnawati Latief, 2023). Instruction should be in any language so that learners can communicate in the target language. We can conclude that speaking is the ability to interact or communicate orally with others and convey one's goals in the form of ideas, thoughts, and emotions.

### **The Purpose of Speaking**

There are three important purposes for speaking namely (Theodoridis & Kraemer, 2018):

*a. To Inform*

Informing means that the speaker wants to convey his ideas, information, thoughts, and feelings to the listener and impart knowledge for a specific purpose. This means that the speaker simply wants to convey a fact.

*b. To Entertain*

Entertainment refers to the speaker's desire to satisfy the audience through material selected primarily for entertainment value. For example, when teachers tell stories to students, parents tell interesting stories to their children." As a result, speaking is a more interesting activity for the audience.

c. *To Persuade*

"To Persuade is when a speaker attempts to persuade the audience to take action through some activity." Teachers must convey the topic by setting an example for students so that students can teach well. For example, students can understand teaching ideas and actively participate in class. Activities should be provided to engage the audience in the actions the speaker wishes to take.

d. *To Discuss*

"To Discuss means that the speaker wants to discuss something because the purpose of speaking is to make decisions and plans." It is believed that discussion activities can attract students' attention more because they raise problems that need to be solved by the teacher.

According to (Brown, 2019), "Six categories of speaking skill Area". They are as follows:

a. *Imitative*

This is a method of using the speaker's speech to produce good pronunciation and intonation, emphasizing higher-stressed words, and focusing on certain features of a particular language.

b. *Intensive*

The performance of the talking performance the students practice the aspects of phonological and grammatical language. Usually, teachers place their students in group work, such as reading a lesson understanding. They will read together, read information, read articles, and so forth.

c. *Responsive*

These talks are part of the answer to teachers' or student-questions or comments that are initiated, providing instruction and direction in the teaching and learning process.

a. *Transactional (dialogue)*

The purpose is to present and present important information. For example, in a work couple conversation, two speakers exchange new information.

b. *Interactive (dialogue)*

The purpose of interactive speaking is to build social relationships between speakers and others while explaining ideas and opinions. It includes interviews, role plays, discussions, debates, and so forth.

c. *Extensive (monologue)*

Teachers provide students with detailed monologues in the form of oral reports, summaries, storytelling, and short speeches.

### **Concept of Speaking Proficiency**

Communication skills are at the heart of the communicative language teaching and learning process. Students who learn English as a foreign language always attach great importance to speaking. They should be able to communicate with others in

real-world situations and conditions. Therefore, they must master the skills of speaking, which is an important goal of speaking classes. Oral language proficiency refers to the characteristics that give language natural and normal qualities, including pauses, rhythm, intonation, stress, speed, and the use of interjections and interruptions (Richards & Renandya, 2020). Proficiency refers to the ability to speak at a normal speed without interruption (Toms et al., 2021).

Presentation skills are considered to be conveying information at a normal speed, without offensive words, exchanging ideas clearly and understandably, and using simple words to convey understanding to the audience (Zhang, 2018). Proficiency in the understanding and consistency of messaging (Jonathan M. Newton, 2020). From this, the author can conclude that ability refers to the speaker's ability to convey information naturally and normally and obtain the listener's understanding, and it is also the ability to speak without interruption when speaking.

### **Classroom Speaking Activities**

To make teaching more engaging, it is important to incorporate interactive and captivating activities into the classroom. Within these activities, there are five specific methods of promoting conversation. These include utilizing scripts, engaging in communication games, fostering discussions, encouraging problem-solving, and incorporating role-playing (Harmer, 2018).

#### *a. Acting from a Script*

Teachers invite students to perform plays based on textbooks or dialogues written by themselves. In other words, teachers need to be like theater directors helping students complete scripts.

#### *b. Communication Games*

One of the activities that can help students learn a language is games. Games are a great way to teach young students. Games are also conversational activities that have many benefits and can provide students with valuable practice opportunities. Game-based activities can include verbal strategies such as explaining, predicting, and asking for feedback.

#### *c. Discussion*

Discussion is one of the most commonly used classroom activities in oral education. Conversations can happen for a variety of reasons. A student's goal might be to conclude, share thoughts about an event, or find a solution in a discussion group. To facilitate meaningful discussions, teachers need to set goals and objectives for activities. This ensures that the topic of discussion is aligned with the intended purpose, preventing students from engaging in conversations that are unrelated and irrelevant to each other.

#### *d. Problem-Solving*

This is achieved through students working in pairs or small groups. They share their questions, opinions, and feelings. So it can be said that the teacher is the bridge of communication between participants. Students then ask questions and answer each other in the answer portion of the question. This communication will help students practice and express their ideas orally.

#### *e. Simulation and Role Play*

They can be used to improve public speaking fluency or to train students for specific situations. This is a popular activity in talk or lecture groups, where the group should practice and try running simulations while taking on completely different roles and expressing thoughts and feelings as they would in the real world. Role plays are a great way to encourage authentic communication related to out-of-class experiences.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study used qualitative methods where the writers collected data using interviews and questionnaires. The population of this study was the eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri I Belitang Mulya. The eighth grade consists of five classes with a total of 128 students. The writer used a purposive sampling technique to choose the students and the teachers to be sampled. The sample was used in class VIII-3 with a total of 24 students chosen by her as a sample of this study.

### Technique for Collecting the Data

#### a. Interview

When collecting data, the writers used interviews with five interviewees as the primary data. They are English teachers. The writers asked four questions to the interviewees during the interview. Interview data are critical in finding factors that influence English language students' abilities.

In this study, the writers used the interview instrument created for this study (Abda, 2018), and the interview included a total of four questions.

**Table 1**  
**Test Specification of Interview**

Objective	Indicators	Num ber of Items	Total of Items
To know the factors affecting students' English speaking proficiency	1. The factors affecting students' wish to speak English (cognitive, linguistic, or affective factors)	2	4
	2. Students' reasons have confidence and participate or do not have confidence and do not participate in speaking English	1	
	3. The most affecting factors have the impact or effect on the student's oral performance (cognitive, linguistic, or affective factors)	3	

#### b. Questionnaire

In addition to interviews, the authors also used questionnaires as qualitative data. This questionnaire is used to determine what factors affect students' English skills. It consists of eleven questions. A questionnaire is a data collection technique that uses several questions in a form that respondents are asked to answer (Sugiyono, 2020). The answers to this questionnaire in abbreviated form are:

**Table 2: Scales of Responses of Questionnaire**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Scales</b>
Almost Always	4
Sometimes	3
Rarely	2
Not at all	1

However, in this study, the writers used an interview instrument prepared for the study (Abda, 2018) and the questionnaire contained a total of eleven questions. Therefore, since the instrument is valid, the writers do not need to conduct any further testing.

### **Technique for Analyzing the Data**

The data were collected through various sources and instruments. First, the writer analyzed the qualitative data obtained by interview and questionnaire. "Presentation of the data is directed so that the resulting reduction data is organized, arranged in a relationship pattern so that it is more easily understood and plans for further research work" (Mathew B Miles, 2019). The data was analyzed in some steps, they were:

1. Editing
2. Coding
3. Tabulating

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

### **Finding**

In this chapter, the findings were presented in some points: (1) the results of the interview, (2) the results of the questionnaire, and (3) the results of the criteria of English speaking proficiency students.

#### *1. The Result of the Interview*

In this study, the writer used coding to present the results of the interview was shown as follows:

Coding of interview :

R : respondents

CF : cognitive factor

LF : linguistic factor

AF : affective factor

From the results of the interview done by the writers, she has gotten some answers from the respondents. The following results of the interview were:

The writer found that some students had different reasons confident and participative or not confident and not participative in speaking English.

**Table 1**

**The Reasons Why Students Have Self-Confidence and Participate or Didn't Have Self-Confidence and Didn't Participate in Speaking English**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Respondents' answers</b>	<b>Factors</b>
R1	“Students are confident and participate because they get support from their teachers and parents, and students become less confident and do not participate when they do not get support from the people”.	AF (support/ motivation)
R2	“They have confidence and participate because they have a lot of vocabulary and understand tenses, and they lack confidence and do not participate when they have little grammar vocabulary and don't know about tenses”.	LF (vocabulary, grammar)
R3	“They become confident and participate because they get support from teachers and parents, and they become less confident and do not participate when they do not get support from the people around them”.	AF (support/ motivation)
R4	“They have self-confidence and participate because they have the motivation and ambition to be able to speak English and they lack self-confidence and do not participate when they have no desire to learn English”.	AF (motivation, risk-taking)
R5	“They have self-confidence and participate because they have fairly good grammar knowledge, and they become less confident and do not participate when they have poor grammar knowledge”.	LF (grammar)

Table 1 shows that the respondents said that the students' reasons have confidence in participating or not participating in speaking English were because got the motivation or support from people around them and because they would not risk-taking in speaking English. The second and fifth respondents said that the students' reasons have confidence and participation not were affected by the linguistic factors that were on the point of vocabulary and grammar.

So, the writer can conclude that the affective factors (motivation or support, risk-taking) were the factors that dominated the students' English speaking proficiency.

*2. The Results of the Questionnaire*

In this study, the writer used coding to present the results of the questionnaire shown as follows:

Coding of the questionnaire :

- Q : questionnaire  
 AA : responses almost always  
 S : responses sometimes  
 RL : responses rarely  
 NAA : not at all

To know what are the factors affecting every questionnaire, the writer showed the table consisting of the main words or the points of every questionnaire. So, we can conclude what are the factors affecting students' English speaking proficiency.

**Table 2**  
**Coding of the Factors Affecting of Questionnaire**

No.	Questionnaire	Main words	factors
1.	Q1	Grammar	LF
2.	Q2	Fear	AF
3.	Q3	Practice	LF
4.	Q4	Knowledge	CF
5.	Q5	Approach	CF
6.	Q6	Vocabulary	LF
7.	Q7	Exposure	AF
8.	Q8	Background experience	CF
9.	Q9	Motivation	AF
10.	Q10	Self-confidence	AF
11.	Q11	Risk-taking	AF

To know the most affecting factor students speaking proficiency, the writer presented the table consisting of the highest total of scales in every questionnaire as follows:

**Table 3**  
**The total of scales**

No.	Questionnaire	Total of Scales	Factors
1.	Q1	20%	LF
2.	Q2	42%	AF
3.	Q3	36%	LF
4.	Q4	36%	CF
5.	Q5	33%	CF
6.	Q6	24%	LF
7.	Q7	24%	AF
8.	Q8	27%	CF
9.	Q9	42%	AF
10.	Q10	30%	AF
11.	Q11	45%	AF

From the table above it can be concluded that the highest scale is 45% (Risk-Taking) and is a student affective factor. Meanwhile, g fear and motivation which has a score of 42% is also a student affective factor.



So, we can conclude from the results of the questionnaire that the factors affecting students' English speaking proficiency were affective (risk-taking, anxiety, and motivation).

### **Discussion**

The discussion provided the formulation of the problem in this study that related to the student's English-speaking proficiency of the eighth-grade students. The formulation of the study was "What are the factors affecting students English-speaking proficiency of eighth-grade students?".

Based on the findings of the studies from the interviews and questionnaires, it was found that some factors affected the proficiency of English-speaking students. The factors that affect this are linguistic factors. Where linguistic factors are associated with their vocabulary and grammar. While, mood factors, it is about motivation. Pride, risk, and worry. Thus, we can say that the students needed high motivation to speak fluent English. Motivation is some kind of interval drive that pushes someone to do things to achieve something (Harmer, 2018) cited in (Mattarima & Rahim Hamdan, 2011). The students' motivation here was the action had an impact and benefits for them, usually, motivation was come from people around them, such as family, teacher, and their friends. The students' spirit to speak English proficiently was also affected by their bravery to risk-taking in speaking English, so they were also able to speak English proficiently and without anxiety.

The results also showed that most of the students had high self-confidence because they had good vocabulary and grammar, so they also felt to had high self-esteem in front of the public. Most felt that a strong English vocabulary, good grammar and English skills from their teacher or classmates, active class participation, and written preparation influenced their confidence in speaking English (Muamaroh & Prihartanti, 2018). We can conclude that many vocabularies develop students' self-confidence.

So, we can conclude that factors (cognitive as they wish to speak English because they have articulation in speaking English well and they get the motivation to sing English songs well. Linguistic factors like having confidence because they have a vocabulary and understand tenses, have good enough knowledge about grammar, and affective factors students have confidence and participate because they receive support from their teachers and their parents) that were true can impact their speaking English proficiency.

### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

Based on the study of findings in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that there were some factors affecting students English-speaking proficiency of the eighth-grade students, they are affective factors (motivation, self-esteem, self-confidence, risk-taking, anxiety) and linguistic factors (grammar, vocabulary).

The research results through interviews and questionnaires found that many factors affect students' English proficiency. The strongest influencing factors are emotional and linguistic factors. Linguistic factors are related to their vocabulary and grammar. On the other hand, are related to motivation. Self-esteem, willingness to

take risks, and fear. So we can say that students need high motivation to speak English proficiently.

## REFERENCES

- Abda, K. (2018). *Assessing the Factors That Affect Teaching Speaking Skills : The Case of Robe Teachers ' College , English Department Second Year Students*. 6959(285).
- Amankulova, Z. I., & Seisembieva, S. K. (2020). Teaching English as a foreign language. *Analele Universitatii Din Craiova, Seria Filozofie*, 33(1–2), 271–279. <https://doi.org/10.47408/jldhe.v0i1.14>
- Andi Intang, Hasnawati Latief, E. P. R. (2023). *Improving Students' Speaking Skills Through Social Interaction In The Classroom*.
- Aziza, N. (2020). *The Importance of English Language*. [www.researchparks.org](http://www.researchparks.org)
- Brown, H. D. (2019). Language assessment : principles and classroom practices. *Brown*, 251.
- Guevara, S., & Albuja, F. (2020). English majors' perceptions on factors influencing the development of their oral fluency. *Revista Electónica Cooperación Universidad Sociedad*, 5(1), 11–18.
- Harmer, J. (2018). Learning the Language of Practice. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 17(3), 293–318. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03626784.1987.11075294>
- Jack R Fraenkel, Norman E. Wallen, H. H. H. (2018). *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education* (eight eddi). McGraw-Hill,.
- Jonathan M. Newton, I. S. P. N. (2020). *Teaching ESL/EFL Listening and Speaking*.
- Mathew B Miles, A. M. H. (2019). *Analisis Data Kualitatif: Buku Sumber Tentang Metode-metode Baru*.
- Mattarima, K., & Rahim Hamdan, A. (2011). Learners' Motivation And Learning Strategies In English Foreign Language (EFI) In Indonesian Context. *Journal of Edupres*, 1(September), 100–108.
- Muamaroh, & Prihartanti, N. (2018). Willingness To Communicate in English: a Case Study of Indonesian University Students. *Kajian Linguistik Dan Sastra*, 25(1), 71–81.
- Oradee, T. (2019). Developing Speaking Skills Using Three Communicative Activities (Discussion, Problem-Solving, and Role-Playing). *International Journal of Social Science and Humanity*, 2(6), 533–535. <https://doi.org/10.7763/ijssh.2012.v2.164>
- Richards, J. C., & Renandya, W. A. (2020). *Methodology in Language Teaching An Anthology of Current Practice Chapter 1 ~ English Language Teaching in the "Post-Method" Era: Toward Better Diagnosis, Treatment, and Assessment*. May. <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.36344.72962>
- Ruben, B. D. (2019). *Communication AND Human Behavior*.
- Souisa, T. R., & Gaite, C. (2020). Study on Speaking Problems and Psychological Factors Encountered by Students in Developing Their Speaking Skill at SMA Kristen Dobo, Aru District. *MATAI: International Journal of Language Education*, 1(1), 10–22. <https://doi.org/10.30598/matail.v1i1.2769>

- Sudaryono, Rahardja, U., Aini, Q., Isma Graha, Y., & Lutfiani, N. (2019). Validity of Test Instruments. *Journal of Physics: Conference Series*, 1364(1). <https://doi.org/10.1088/1742-6596/1364/1/012050>
- Sugiyono, Prof. (2020). *METODE PENELITIAN KUANTITATIF, KUALITATIF DAN R & D* (Issue July).
- Theodoridis, T., & Kraemer, J. (2018). *BERBICARA SEBAGAI SUATU KETERAMPILAN BERBAHASA*.
- Toms, E. G., Freund, L., Kopak, R., & Bartlett, J. C. (2021). *The Effect of Task Domain on Search*. 4(1), 1–21.
- Zein, S., Sukyadi, D., Hamied, F. A., & Lengkanawati, N. S. (2020). English language education in Indonesia: A review of research (2011-2019). In *Language Teaching* (Vol. 53, Issue 4, pp. 491–523). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261444820000208>
- Zhang, Y. (2018). Reading to Speak: Integrating Oral Communication Skills. *English Teaching Forum*, 47(1), 32–34.