

## **“I’m scared, but I can speak”; speaking problems faced by junior high school students in Sidoarjo, Indonesia**

### **[“Aku takut, tapi aku bisa berbicara”; Masalah Berbicara yang Dihadapi Siswa Sekolah Menengah Pertama di Sidoarjo, Indonesia]**

Gabriela Palomargareta<sup>1)</sup>, Yuli Astutik<sup>2)</sup>

<sup>1)</sup>Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Indonesia

<sup>2)</sup>Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Indonesia

\*Email Penulis Korespondensi: \_\_\_\_\_yuliastutik@umsida.ac.id

**Abstract.** *This research is aimed to investigate the speaking problems faced by students in learning English. By using descriptive qualitative design, six students of private junior high school representing high and low scores were being the participants. The data for this research was gathered from observation and interview related to the speaking problems theory proposed by Ur, which are inhibition, nothing to say, low or uneven participation, and mother-tongue usage. The results of this research indicated that both students who have high scores and students who have low scores were experienced speaking problems, even though the students with low scores were more visible. The observation results showed that students who have low scores showed more speaking problems than students who have high scores. However, after conducting face-to-face interviews, the researchers found that both of them faced the same speaking problems. Of the four speaking problems, three of them were experienced by the students, which are inhibition, nothing to say, and mother tongue use. The results of this study have implications for junior high school students who need to increase their confidence in speaking skills in English classes by consistently practicing it inside and outside the classroom. In addition, by knowing students' speaking problems, English teachers in junior high schools also need to improve their pedagogical knowledge, especially in teaching more varied speaking skills that can help their students learn English.*

**Keywords** – *speaking skill, speaking problems, learning English, junior high school*

**Abstrak.** *Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki masalah berbicara yang dihadapi oleh siswa dalam belajar bahasa Inggris. Dengan menggunakan desain kualitatif deskriptif, enam siswa SMP swasta yang mewakili nilai tinggi dan rendah menjadi partisipan. Data untuk penelitian ini dikumpulkan dari observasi dan wawancara terkait dengan teori masalah berbicara yang dikemukakan oleh Ur, yaitu hambatan, tidak ada yang perlu dikatakan, partisipasi rendah atau tidak merata, dan penggunaan bahasa ibu. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa baik siswa yang memiliki nilai tinggi maupun siswa yang memiliki nilai rendah sama-sama mengalami masalah berbicara, sedangkan siswa yang memiliki nilai rendah lebih terlihat. Hasil observasi menunjukkan bahwa siswa yang memiliki skor rendah menunjukkan lebih banyak masalah berbicara daripada siswa yang memiliki skor tinggi. Namun, setelah melakukan wawancara tatap muka, peneliti menemukan bahwa keduanya menghadapi masalah berbicara yang sama. Dari empat masalah berbicara, tiga di antaranya dialami oleh siswa, yaitu hambatan, tidak ada yang perlu dikatakan, dan penggunaan bahasa ibu. Hasil penelitian ini berimplikasi pada siswa sekolah menengah pertama yang perlu meningkatkan kepercayaan diri mereka dalam keterampilan berbicara di kelas bahasa Inggris dengan secara konsisten mempraktikkannya di dalam dan di luar kelas. Selain itu, dengan mengetahui permasalahan berbicara siswa, guru bahasa Inggris di SMP juga perlu meningkatkan pengetahuan pedagogiknya, terutama dalam mengajarkan keterampilan berbicara yang lebih bervariasi yang dapat membantu siswanya belajar bahasa Inggris.*

**Kata Kunci** – *keterampilan berbicara, masalah berbicara, belajar bahasa Inggris, sekolah menengah pertama*

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The learning of English includes four skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing skill [1]. Each of them has their own goal to be reached as the requirements of mastering English [2]. The learners should be able to master those four language skills as Nan [3] stated that four language skills should be improved at the same time in language learning. Among the four skills, speaking is considered to be the most important [4]. Additionally, Ur [5] also made this claim in her book entitled *A Course In Language Teaching: Practice in Theory*, “Of all the four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), speaking seems intuitively the most important: people who know a language are referred to as ‘speakers’ of that language, as if speaking included all other kinds of knowing: and many if not most foreign language learners are primarily interested in learning to speak”.

Speaking is crucial for students to develop speaking skills for communicative purposes [6]. However, speaking is also one of the difficult English skills to master [7]. In fact, many students have difficulties in speaking English as

Hidayat & Clarita [8] argued that there are still many students who have problems using English in terms of speaking ability. According to Oxford [9], most students have scared to speak English. Generally, the students had problems when they speak in English [10]. Regarding to this, they may find problems speaking English that seems more complicated than their first language [11]. Students might have problems in speaking when learning English due to their varied social and educational backgrounds, lack of language training, and excessive mother tongue influence [12]. Gan [13] revealed the problems that may be often faced by the students are lack of vocabulary, lack of grammar mastery, lack of understanding on pronunciation and intonation, lack of exposure in speaking English, and lack of language curriculum development. Other factor can be about fears of making mistakes and being criticized. Students are worried about speaking English incorrectly and making mistakes, and they are afraid of being criticism or receiving negative feedback from other students [14]. Having the attention of other students that directed at them, made them feel embarrassed. Megawati & Mandarani [15] classified three problems that influence the verbal communication by using English, which are low vocabulary mastery, bad understanding of grammar, and the affective factor namely nervous condition.

Ur [5] proposed a theory consisting of four problems in speaking activities, which are inhibition, nothing to say, low or uneven participation and mother tongue use.

### **Inhibition**

In contrast to reading, listening, and writing activities, speaking requires some level of audience exposure in real time. Inhibition is viewed as a negative feeling that might affect how a person speaks in many context and different situations [16]. The term "inhibition" describes a temperamental tendency to show caution, apprehension, or restraint in response to strange people, things, and situations [17]. In the classroom, students are often inhibited about speaking in a foreign language for various reasons, such as worrying about making mistakes, fearing criticism or losing face, or simply being embarrassed by the attention that their speech attracts. These explain how inhibition has an impact on how well students learn language, especially in speaking skill.

### **Nothing to Say**

During English speaking activities, even when the students are uninhibited, they often claim that they cannot come up with anything to say since they have no motive to express themselves beyond the guilty feeling that they should be speaking. According to Rivers [18], the students have nothing to say because they may not be interested in the topic chosen by teacher or may not know much about it. When asked to respond in a foreign language by the teachers, many students find it challenging because they may lack knowledge of what to say, what vocabulary to use, or how to utilize the grammar correctly [19]. In this situation, it is important that the teachers provide students with enough subject-specific knowledge [20].

### **Low or Uneven Participation**

In a class, especially a large class, each student will have a very limited amount of speaking time because only one person can speak at a time so that the others can hear him or her [21]. Some students have a propensity to dominate while others talk barely or not at all. This situation makes students tend to participate in the speaking activities passively.

### **Mother-Tongue Use**

In learning foreign language, including English, it is difficult to get rid of the influence of the mother tongue as Denizer [22] claims that speaking skill is most influenced by mother-tongue among other skills in learning foreign language. Students have a propensity to transmit everything from their mother tongue to the second language [23]. In English classes there are often some or even all students who share the same mother tongue. It leads them to use it mostly in the English class. There are several reasons for this, including the fact that speaking in their mother tongue makes them feel less "exposed" and is easier than conversing in a foreign language.

The research about analysis student's speaking problem is not the first time. There have been many previous studies that have investigated the problems in English speaking skill that the students face, either at the school or at the university. One of the researches was conducted by Suryani, Suarnajaya, & Pratiwi [24]. The subject of this study were the tenth-grade students and the teacher. The study's findings indicated that there are two main factors that inhibit the students in learning to speak, which are affective and cognitive factors. Affective factor including all of the eleven sub-factors were found to inhibit the students in speaking. Besides, some sub-factors of cognitive factor, including grammar, pronunciation, and knowledge of vocabulary also inhibited the students in speaking. Another research has been conducted by Riadil [25]. The goal of this research was to discover the speaking problems that EFL learners encounter in speaking English. It was carried out at Tidar University in Magelang, Central Java. The result indicated that Tidar University students face problems in speaking when learning English, including inhibition, nothing to say, mother tongue use, and low or uneven participation. Moreover, the result revealed the problem that commonly faced by students is related to the mother tongue use. Students found that mother tongue is easier than English, thus they tend to speak it more in English class. Next research comes from Astutik [26]. This research investigated the use of interactional strategies by low learners in public speaking class. The investigation of this research also intended to identify the most used aspects and the factors that cause this problem. The subject of this research was six students

from a university in East Java who were enrolled in a public speaking program during their fourth semester and were deemed to be low learners on speaking. In this research, six participants were observed and interviewed about how they used interactional strategies, including exemplification, exemplification requests, repetition, repetition requests, clarification requests, comprehension checks, confirmation checks, and assistance appeal. The result showed that the low learners mostly used repetition among eight aspects of interactional strategy. However, it was being used for an improper reason. Further finding revealed some factors contributed to low learners' inability to apply interactional strategies, including grammar, fluency, lack of vocabulary and pronunciation in addition to practicing English merely in the formal situation.

Despite the fact that the previous researches have explained the students' problems in speaking English, the researchers still intend to investigate the speaking problems faced by students in English class at a different level of education, location, and identify the specific factors by using a specific instrument. Therefore, the researchers conducted the research to analyze speaking problems in learning English faced by students at one of private junior high schools in Sidoarjo, East Java, Indonesia. They might face different problems than senior high school and university students. And geographically, with the way the teacher teaches the students, the situations, the result that were gotten in this research might also be different.

Based on the pre-observation in one of private junior high schools, researchers found that commonly they were not be able to speak English well. They tend to point out each other when they were asked by the teacher to speak in front of the class. Besides, there was a condition when they speak in front of the class, they seemed uncomfortable and often to make mistakes. Based on the background above, the researchers want to know more detail about speaking problems faced by students in English class in one of private junior high schools in Sidoarjo, Indonesia, based on the theory proposed by Ur [5]. Therefore, the research questions that can be formulated by the researchers is: What are speaking problems faced by students of junior high school in Sidoarjo?

## II. METHOD

This research used descriptive research with qualitative approach. Aiming to comprehend a particular facet of social life, qualitative research is distinguished by its methodologies, which typically produce words rather than numerical data for analysis [27]. The goal of qualitative research is to examine and learn more about a particular aspect of social life [28]. The reason of using this design is because this research deals with the occurrence of speaking problems in a real-life situation that actually happened to students when they were speaking English.

This research was conducted in one of private junior high school in Sidoarjo, Indonesia, East Java. Then the data research was taken in February to March 2023, which the English lesson especially speaking skill was implemented by the teacher. The participant of this research was six students of seventh grade who were divided into two categories. They were students who have high scores and students who have low scores. The researchers decided those two categories by using the students daily scores and final exam scores in semester I academic year 2022 – 2023. A high score is a score upper the standard of minimum completeness of mastery learning, while low score is a score lower the standard of minimum completeness of mastery learning. Each category consists of three learners who join speaking activity in English subject.

The data of this research is speaking problems. Then the source of the data is students' verbal and non-verbal language. Verbal language including words, sentences and phrases uttered by the students. Non-verbal language including gesture, facial expression, eye contact, and body language.

To answer research question, the researchers used observation and interview. According to Bailey [29], through observation, the researchers are able to recognize ongoing behavior and make notes to the essential activities about it. The researchers used non participant observation because researchers did not have interaction in the classroom activity. The researchers were attended in the classroom and gave attention to the students during classroom activities [30]. Covert observation was also used by the researchers because the participants did not aware that they were being observed although they knew the attendance of the researchers. While observing, the researchers recorded the speaking activity during English class. Then, the instrument that was brought by the researchers was observation check list based on the theory proposed by Ur [5] while the inhibition indicator was supported by the ten signs based on Krishnasamy [31], as presented in the table.

**Tabel 1.** Speaking problem adopted by Ur (1991)

No.	Speaking Problem by Ur (1991)		Checklist
1.	Inhibition	Obvious signs of inhibition:	

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Blushing</li> <li>2. Perspiration</li> <li>3. Palm-rubbing</li> <li>4. Staggered voice</li> <li>5. Less eye-contact</li> <li>6. Reluctance</li> <li>7. Poor performance in spoken activities</li> <li>8. Less interpretation of communication used</li> <li>9. Less enthusiasm or willingness to speak</li> <li>10. Reading from the script while giving presentation</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;">Adapted from Krishnasamy (2015)</p>	
2.	Nothing to say		
3.	Low or uneven participation		
4.	Mother-tongue use		

After observation, the next phase of this research was follow-up interview to triangulate the observation data. The researchers used unstructured interview because the researchers want to validate the observation data. While still allowing for spontaneity, the interview's flow can be managed, and the interviewer can press for responses to both complex and in-depth questions as well as for entire answers [32]. While interview, the researchers recorded all of the interview session with six participants of this research.

In analyzing the data, the researchers took several steps: 1) Transcribing all of the recording data from the observation. The researchers transcribed verbal data including words, sentences and phrases uttered by the participants, also non-verbal data including body language, facial expression, and eye contact. 2) Reviewing the transcriptional data. The researchers reviewed the transcriptional data to ensure that no verbal or non-verbal data was overlooked. 3) Classifying the data according to speaking problems. The researchers classified the transcription data into aspects of speaking problems. 4) Verifying the observation data through face-to-face interviews. The researchers conducted the follow-up interviews with the participants to validate the observation data. 5) Combining and describing the data from observation and interview. The researchers described the data by analyzing observation and interview data to explore some speaking problems faced by the students. 6) Concluding the data described. Ur [5] theory of speaking problems was used to classify, analyze, describe and conclude the data.

### III. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

#### A. Finding

Based on the observation that conducted four times, the researchers found that students in one of private junior high school in Sidoarjo encounter some problems in speaking English. These include the four speaking problems based on the theory proposed by Ur [5]: inhibition, nothing to say, low or uneven participation, and mother tongue use. For the detail, the observation results for each week are presented in the table 2 to table 5. As a research code of ethics, the identity of the participants must be disguised. Therefore, the students who have high scores are named H1, H2, and H3, while the students who have low scores are named L1, L2, L3.

**Table 2.** Speaking problems faced by students in English class on February 16, 2023

No.	Aspects of Speaking Problem	H1	H2	H3	L1	L2	L3	
1.	Inhibition	1. Blushing				√	√	√
		2. Perspiration						
		3. Palm-rubbing						
		4. Staggered voice					√	
		5. Less eye-contact			√	√	√	√
		6. Reluctance						
		7. Poor performance in spoken activities				√		√
		8. Less interpretation of communication used						
		9. Less enthusiasm or willingness to speak				√		√

		10. Reading script						
2.	Nothing to say					√	√	√
3.	Low or uneven participation							
4.	Mother-tongue use					√	√	√

Table 2 above showed the results of the observation for the first week. During the first week of observation on February 16, 2023, six students who became participant showed some speaking problems. Among the high score students, there was almost no problem showed. Two of them did not show any problems. The other one, H3, showed only one inhibition sign, which is less eye-contact. For the other problems, H3 did not show anything. The low score students showed more speaking problems. The L1 and L3 showed same inhibition signs, which are blushing, less eye-contact, poor performance in spoken activities, and less enthusiasm or willingness to speak. Nothing to say and mother tongue use were also showed on the L1's and L3's speaking performance. Several times, L1 and L3 had nothing to say and used the first language, Bahasa, during the speaking performance. The L2 showed the fewest problems among the low learners. L2 only showed three inhibition signs, which are blushing, less eye-contact, and staggered voice. Nothing to say and mother tongue use were also showed on the L2's speaking performance but not as much as L1 and L3.

**Table 3.** Speaking problems faced by students in English class on February 23, 2023

No.	Aspects of Speaking Problem		H1	H2	H3	L1	L2	L3
1.	Inhibition	1. Blushing				√		√
		2. Perspiration						
		3. Palm-rubbing			√	√	√	√
		4. Staggered voice			√		√	
		5. Less eye-contact		√	√		√	√
		6. Reluctance						√
		7. Poor performance in spoken activities					√	√
		8. Less interpretation of communication used						
		9. Less enthusiasm or willingness to speak						√
		10. Reading script						
2.	Nothing to say				√	√	√	
3.	Low or uneven participation							
4.	Mother-tongue use	√			√		√	

Table 3 above showed the results of the observation for the second week. The results of the second observation which was carried out on February 23, 2023 were quite different from the first observation. H1 did not show any inhibition signs, but H1 showed the mother tongue use problem. During the speaking performance, H1 asked to the teacher about how to say something in English. H2 only showed one inhibition sign, which is less eye-contact, and showed nothing for other problems. H3 showed three inhibition signs, which are palm-rubbing, staggered voice, and less eye-contact, and showed nothing for other problems. Same with the previous week, low score students showed more speaking problems. L1 showed only two inhibition signs, which are blushing and palm-rubbing. L1 also experienced nothing to say and mother tongue use. L1 asked to the teacher how to start the presentation. Several times, L1 did not know some word in English so L1 also used Bahasa or even Javanese during the presentation. L2 showed more inhibition signs than L1, which are palm-rubbing, staggered voice, less eye-contact, and poor performance in spoken activities. Nothing to say also showed in L2's performance. Several times, L2 kept silent and looked at one friend who always helped to deliver some words, and then L2 repeated it. Last, L3 showed more inhibition signs than L1 and L2, such as: blushing, palm-rubbing, less eye-contact, poor performance in spoken activities, less enthusiasm or willingness to speak, and even reluctance. When called by the teacher to give a presentation, L3 had refused and was reluctant. L3 looked unenthusiastic to give presentation in front of the class. Moreover, nothing to say and mother tongue use also showed during L3's performance.

**Table 4.** Speaking problems faced by students in English class on March 2, 2023

No.	Aspects of Speaking Problem		H1	H2	H3	L1	L2	L3
1.	Inhibition	1. Blushing				√		√
		2. Perspiration						

		3. Palm-rubbing				√	√	
		4. Staggered voice						
		5. Less eye-contact	√	√	√	√	√	√
		6. Reluctance						
		7. Poor performance in spoken activities				√		√
		8. Less interpretation of communication used						
		9. Less enthusiasm or willingness to speak						
		10. Reading script				√		
2.	Nothing to say					√		√
3.	Low or uneven participation							
4.	Mother-tongue use					√		√

Table 4 above showed the results of the observation for the third week. During the third week of observation on March 2, 2023, the high score students almost did not show any problems. All of them showed only one inhibition sign, which is less eye-contact. For the other problems, they did not show anything. All of them spoke fluently, even the H1 finished the “describing friend” presentation quickly, and when asked by the teacher, H1 answered and redescribed easily. The low score students showed more speaking problems. The L1 showed some inhibition signs, which are blushing, palm-rubbing, less eye-contact, poor performance in spoken activities, and reading script. Nothing to say and mother tongue use were also showed on the L1’s speaking performance. Several times, L1 had nothing to say and used the first language, Bahasa, during the speaking performance. The L3 showed almost the same problems with the L1. The difference is only in inhibition signs that L3 did not rub his/her palm and did not read script. The L2 showed the fewest problems among the low learners. L2 only showed two inhibition signs, which are palm-rubbing and less eye-contact. For the other problems, L2 did not show anything.

**Table 5.** Speaking problems faced by students in English class on March 9, 2023

No.	Aspects of Speaking Problem		H1	H2	H3	L1	L2	L3
1.	Inhibition	1. Blushing				√		√
		2. Perspiration						
		3. Palm-rubbing				√	√	
		4. Staggered voice						
		5. Less eye-contact	√	√	√	√	√	√
		6. Reluctance						
		7. Poor performance in spoken activities				√		√
		8. Less interpretation of communication used						
		9. Less enthusiasm or willingness to speak						√
		10. Reading script						
2.	Nothing to say				√		√	
3.	Low or uneven participation							
4.	Mother-tongue use				√		√	

Table 5 above showed the results of the observation for the fourth week. The results of the fourth observation which was carried out on March 9, 2023 were almost the same as the third observation. The high score students only showed one inhibition sign, which is less eye-contact, and showed nothing for the other problems. All of them did the “describing house” fluently. Same as before, the low score students showed more speaking problems except L2. L2 only showed two inhibition signs, which are palm-rubbing and less eye-contact and showed nothing for other speaking problems. L1 showed some inhibition signs, such as blushing, palm-rubbing, less eye-contact, and poor performance in spoken activities. L3 also showed some inhibition signs such as blushing, less eye-contact, poor performance in spoken activities, and less enthusiasm or willingness to speak. Nothing to say and mother tongue use also showed in L1’s and L3’s speaking performance. Several times, they asked to their friends how to start the presentation and how to say something in English.

Based on the whole observation, six students who became participants showed some signs of inhibition. The high score students showed few signs of inhibition such as: less eye contact and palm-rubbing. While the low score students showed more signs of inhibition such as: less eye contact, palm-rubbing, blushing, reluctance, poor performance, less enthusiasm or willingness, and even reading script. It came out that the common sign that was often shown by the

students is less eye contact. It was shown by all of the participants of the two categories, high and low scores students. Nothing to say and mother tongue use were also shown by the students especially the low learners. They often did not know how to start the presentation, had no idea to deliver some words in English, and mixed their speaking with Bahasa and Javanese. However, from the four observations, there was one problem that did not come out, which is low or uneven participation. Based on the observations, all students had a turn to present or speak.

Further, the researchers also did the face-to-face interview to validate the observation data. Based on the interview session, the students encountered four speaking problems, including inhibition, nothing to say, low or uneven participation, and mother tongue use. The first problem was inhibition. There were three major factors that influenced this problem, such as worry of making mistake, worry about getting criticism, and shyness. The two of them, which are worry of making mistake and worry about getting criticism, were related. The students confessed that they were worried about making mistake in term of grammar and pronunciation, or even the tongue slips for speaking too fast.

*“Sering takut gitu kalau dijudge gitu terus kayak emm emm kayak dijudge dikritik kalau grammarnya salah, pronunciationnya salah, terus kalau belibet itu sering” [I am often afraid of being judged and criticized if the grammar is wrong, the pronunciation is wrong, and if my tongue slips] (H1)*

When it was happened, they were also worried about what the audience would think of them and that they would be criticized for the mistakes they made.

*“Takut salah, takut apa mungkin penontonnya ini gimana mikirnya gitu, terus nanti kayak keluaranya apa gitu” [I am afraid of being wrong, afraid of what the audience might think, and what will come out from my mouth] (H2)*

The last one was shyness. In this case, the students admitted that they felt shy to speak English because every eye in the classroom stared at them when they started to speak in front of the class. Lack of knowledge and the possibility of being laughed by their classmates also made them feel shy to speak in the class.

*“Malu karena gak bisa aja” [I feel shy because I can not (lack of knowledge)] (L1)*

*“Emm malu. Soalnya diliatin banyak orang” [I feel shy because many people stared at me] (L2)*

*“Karena dilihatin banyak teman juga kalau salah diketawain jadi agak malu” [Because many friends stare at me. If I am wrong, they laugh at me. So, I am a bit embarrassed] (L3)*

Next, nothing to say occurred when students did not have idea about the topic or did not have enough vocabulary and good grammar in English to deliver the idea in their mind. The students claimed that one of challenges in speaking English was when they struggled to find sufficient vocabulary to take part on the topic discussed. However, the students with a lot vocabularies, at some time, they forgot certain vocabularies or had no idea about certain grammar to use, which made them using the wrong ones.

*“Iya gak tahu topiknya” [I do not know the topic] (L2)*

*“Kadang suka apa ya, lupa sama vocab-vocab yang tertentu. Misalkan bahasa Inggrisnya apa gitu, tapi malah jadinya apa gitu kan” [Sometimes I forget certain vocabs. For example, I want to say a word in English but the wrong word comes out] (H2)*

*“Iya sering (kesulitan di grammar) ... Karena di kelas selalu pakai bahasa Indonesia. Kalau pakai bahasa Inggris mungkin pas pelajaran bahasa Inggris aja” [Yes, I often have difficulty with grammar ... Because I always use Indonesian in class. I use English maybe just for English lessons] (L3)*

Then, low or uneven participation was not being a problem here. It only happened when one student had more speaking portions than the others. The students said that for some activities, they had a different amount of speaking. Some of them had a large portion of speaking, while others were small. More than that, there was no problem in terms of participation. All students had a turn to speak. Although priority was given to those who were considered to be low, all students still got their turn to speak.

*“Jadi misalkan ada apa kalau misalkan story telling gitu kan ada yang jadi narrator, ada yang jadi tokohnya. Tokohnya kan pasti dialognya macem-macem, ada yang pendek, ada yang panjang. Ya pembagiannya mungkin cocoknya di tokoh mana tokoh mana” [So for example storytelling activity, there is someone who is the narrator,*

*someone who is the character. The characters must have various dialogues, some are short, some are long. So, the division may be based on which character matches] (H2)*

*“Semuanya eee kayak presentasi gitu. Tapi diutamakan anak-anak yang belum bisa yang masih grogi-groggi itu diutamakan dulu” [Everyone has a turn, just like the presentation. But priority is given to those who are still lacking in speaking. Those who are still nervous are prioritized first] (H1)*

The last was mother tongue use. This problem arose when students' first language influenced their English in speaking activity. The students stated that during speaking activity, they kept switching and mixing the language between English and Bahasa or even Javanese.

*“Itu aku kan pakai bahasa Inggris terus habis itu kecampur sama bahasa Indonesia soalnya lupa bahasa Inggrisnya apa gitu” [When I use English, sometimes I mix it with Indonesian because I forget the English vocabulary] (H2)*

*“Tapi ya juga ngeswitch bahasa Indonesia lagi habis itu bahasa Inggris lagi gitu” [I also switch to Indonesian, then back to English] (H3)*

## B. Discussion

This research is aimed to investigate the speaking problems faced by students in learning English based on the theory by Ur [5]. By explaining this aim, the researchers can provide the necessary context to understand further discussion of the findings. In this research, the researchers found that students experienced three out of four speaking problems according to Ur [5], which are inhibition, nothing to say, and mother tongue use.

Inhibition is a psychological factor that commonly experienced by the learner in speaking activity [33]. In this research, the students experienced inhibition which influenced by three factors, such as worry of making mistake, worry about getting criticism, and shyness. This research discovered that the students were anxious about making grammatical and pronunciation errors, and if they did, they were also anxious about what the audience would think of them and whether they would receive criticism for them. This is in line with Afifah, Darsih, & Thamrin [34], stating that the students felt shy and anxious to speak English due to their fear of mispronouncing words, and the audience's attentive eyes toward them.

Nothing to say occurred when the students have no idea to say or share with others. In this research, the students experienced nothing to say during the speaking activity. This is in line with Normawati & Muna [35], stating that the students actually know what they want to say but they don't know how to say it. This research also found that the students have nothing to say because of a lack of understanding of the topic as well as a lack of vocabulary and grammar. It was supported by Andas & Rutniatyanti [2] that students choose to remain silent because they lack the vocabulary and grammar to discuss topics with one another.

Mother tongue use happened when students prefer to use first language then target language in speaking activity. According to Khati [36] commonly mother tongue use is as a language learnt before any other language has learnt, people learn mother tongue since a child naturally, he/she picked this language in social environment around her/him. In this research, the researchers found that the students frequently mixed and switched between English, Bahasa, and even Javanese during speaking activities. Andas & Rutniatyanti [2] in their research discovered that most students think that mother tongue was easier to use, because they did not need to worry trying to comprehend every word spoken in English or coming up with proper English sentences.

The results of this research are comparable to relevant previous researches. The research conducted by Andas & Rutniatyanti [2] and Riadil [25] also indicated that students face problems in speaking when learning English, including four speaking problems by Ur [5] which are inhibition, nothing to say, low or uneven participation, and mother tongue use. However, the researchers found slight differences in the data generated from this research. This research found that low or uneven participation was less of a problem here. It only happened for some activities when they had a different amount of speaking. Some of them had a large portion of speaking, while others were small. More than that, there was no problem in terms of participation. This difference indicates the need for further research to understand the factors that might influence this difference.

## IV. CONCLUSION

Referring to the results of the research, it can be concluded that both high scores students and low scores students were experienced the same speaking problems. Of the four speaking problems, three of them were experienced by the students, which are inhibition, nothing to say, and mother tongue use. Low or uneven participation was less of a



problem. It only happened in certain activities when they had a different amount of speaking. More than that, there was no problem in terms of participation because all students had a turn to speak. Based on the research that has been carried out, there are a number of issues that need attention: 1) The result of this research describes the speaking problems experienced by the students. It is expected to be a valuable information to all students at junior high schools especially in Indonesia about the way to be more confidence in English speaking class. 2) Teachers of English class in junior high school are expected to have the best ways to teach speaking skill to their students in order to minimize the speaking problems faced by the students. 3) The data collection of this research was done in a limited time following the English lesson schedule especially when speaking skill was implemented by the teacher, so that the researchers did not have enough time to investigate the speaking problems more deeply. Therefore, it is expected that other researchers will be able to allocate more time to gain a better result.

## REFERENCES

- [1] S. Sayuri, "Problems in Speaking Faced By EFL Students of Mulawarman University," *Indones. J. EFL Linguist.*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 47–61, 2016, doi: 10.21462/ijefll.v1i1.4.
- [2] N. H. Andas and Y. Rutniatyanti, "Students' Speaking Problem at the Fourth Semester of English Study Program in Sembilanbelas November Kolaka," *ELT Worldw. J. English Lang. Teach.*, vol. 7, no. 1, p. 1, 2020, doi: 10.26858/eltww.v7i1.12359.
- [3] C. Nan, "Implications of Interrelationship among Four Language Skills for High School English Teaching," *J. Lang. Teach. Res.*, vol. 9, no. 2, p. 418, 2018, doi: 10.17507/jltr.0902.26.
- [4] P. S. Rao, "The Importance of Speaking Skills in English Classrooms," *Alford Counc. Int. English Lit. J.*, vol. 401, no. 2, pp. 6–18, 2019.
- [5] P. Ur, *A Course in Language Teaching: Practice and Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- [6] J. N. Iman, "Debate instruction in EFL classroom: Impacts on the critical thinking and speaking skill," *Int. J. Instr.*, vol. 10, no. 4, pp. 87–108, 2017, doi: 10.12973/iji.2017.1046a.
- [7] D. G. Siahaan and D. Siahaan, "The Speaking Ability of The English Club's Second Year Students of The State SMA 1 Kefamenanu," *Int. Conf. Educ. Teach. Training, Prof. Dev.*, no. August, pp. 211–214, 2021.
- [8] N. Hidayat and Z. M. Clarita, "An Analysis Of Students' Speaking Difficulties at Eighth Grade Smpit At-Taqwa Surabaya," *IJET (Indonesian J. English Teaching)*, vol. 9, no. 1, pp. 108–117, 2020, doi: 10.15642/ijet2.2020.9.1.108-117.
- [9] R. L. Oxford, *Language Learning Strategies: What every teacher should know*. Boston : Heinle Publisher, 1990.
- [10] D. R. Santoso, W. Taufiq, and V. Liansari, "Implementing Organize Your Speech Posted in Social Media To Improve the Students' Ability in Public Speaking," *Int. Semin. English Lang. Teach. Res. 2018*, pp. 1015–1027, 2018.
- [11] S. Wahyuningsih and M. Afandi, "Investigating English speaking problems: Implications for speaking curriculum development in Indonesia," *Eur. J. Educ. Res.*, vol. 9, no. 3, pp. 967–977, 2020, doi: 10.12973/EU-JER.9.3.967.
- [12] S. Asif, R. Bashir, and S. Zafar, "What Are the Factors Affecting the Use of English Language in English-only Classrooms: Student's Perspectives in Pakistan," *English Lang. Teach.*, vol. 11, no. 6, p. 67, 2018, doi: 10.5539/elt.v11n6p67.
- [13] Z. Gan, "Understanding L2 speaking problems: Implications for ESL curriculum development in a teacher training institution in Hong Kong," *Aust. J. Teach. Educ.*, vol. 37, no. 1, pp. 43–59, 2012, doi: 10.14221/ajte.2012v37n1.4.
- [14] L. Leong and S. M. Ahmadi, "An Analysis of Factors Influencing Learners' English Speaking Skill," *Int. J. Res. English Educ.*, 2017.
- [15] F. Megawati and V. Mandarani, "Speaking problems in English communication," *1st English Lang. Teach. Learn. Conf. Its Trends Curric. Challenges to Face ASEAN Econ. Community*, pp. 32–37, 2016.
- [16] F. Abedini and A. Chalak, "Investigating the Inhibitive Factors in the Speaking of Iranian EFL Learners," *J. Appl. Linguist. Lang. Res.*, vol. 4, no. 6, pp. 82–97, 2017.
- [17] I. Humaera, "Inhibition In Speaking Performance," *J. Assoc. Arab. English*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 31–50, 2015, [Online]. Available: <https://media.neliti.com/media/publications/223638-inhibition-in-speaking-performance.pdf>
- [18] W. M. Rivers, *Teaching Foreign-Language Skills*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1981.
- [19] J. Baker and H. Westrup, *Essential Speaking Skills: A Handbook for English Language Teachers*. London: Continuum International Publishing, 2003.
- [20] P. V. P. Ho, T. T. Long, and T. M. Hoa, "Vietnamese High School Students' Appraisal of Speaking Problems and Influential Factors," *Int. J. English Lang. Stud.*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 33–44, 2020, doi: 10.32996/ijels.2020.2.3.4.
- [21] H. Heriansyah, "Speaking Problems Faced by the English Department Students of Syiah Kuala University," *Ling. Didakt. J. Bhs. dan Pembelajaran Bhs.*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 37–44, 2012.
- [22] E. N. Denizer, "Does Mother Tongue Interfere in Second Language Learning?," *J. Foreign Lang. Educ. Technol.*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 39–54, 2017.
- [23] D. G. Siahaan, L. M. Wattu, E. Bouk, and U. Emanuel, "Analyzing the Influence of Mother Tongues to English Speaking at the Eight Grade Students of Neonbat Junior High School," in *Seminar Nasional LPMM UMMAT*, 2022, vol. 1, pp. 686–692. [Online]. Available: <http://repository.unimor.ac.id/id/eprint/79>
- [24] I. Suryani, I. W. Suarnajaya, and N. P. A. Pratiwi, "Investigating the inhibiting factors in speaking English faced by senior high school students in Singaraja," *Int. J. Lang. Educ.*, vol. 4, no. 1, pp. 48–58, 2020, doi: 10.26858/ijole.v4i2.10054.
- [25] I. G. Riadil, "A Study of Students' Perception: Identifying EFL Learners' Problems in Speaking Skill," *Int. J. Educ. Lang. Relig.*, vol. 2, no. 1, p. 31, 2020, doi: 10.35308/ijelr.v2i1.2256.
- [26] Y. Astutik, "Interactional Strategies Used by Low Level Learners in Public Speaking Class," *JEES (Journal English Educ. Soc.)*, vol. 2, no. 2, pp. 65–74, 2017, doi: 10.21070/jees.v2i2.964.
- [27] K. McCusker and S. Gunaydin, "Research Using Qualitative, Quantitative or Mixed Methods and Choice Based on the Research," *Perfus. (United Kingdom)*, vol. 30, no. 7, pp. 537–542, 2015, doi: 10.1177/0267659114559116.
- [28] F. Ezer and S. Aksüt, "Opinions of Graduate Students of Social Studies Education About Qualitative Research Method," vol. 14, no. 3, pp. 15–32, 2021, doi: 10.5539/ies.v14n3p15.
- [29] K. D. Bailey, *Methods of social research*. New York : Free Press, 1994.
- [30] J. W. Creswell and J. D. Creswell, *Research Design; Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 5th ed. SAGE Publications, 2018.
- [31] J. Krishnasamy, "ESL Students' Anxiety in Learning and Communicating in the English Language," *Int. J. English Lang. Lit. Transl.*

- Stud.*, vol. 2, no. 1, pp. 266–278, 2015.
- [32] L. Cohen, L. Manion, and K. Morrison, *Research Methods in Education*, 8th ed. London, New York: Routledge, 2018.
- [33] Juhana, “Psychological factors that hinder students from speaking in English class ( A case study in a senior High school in South Tangerang, Banten, Indonesia),” *J. Educ. Pract.*, vol. 3, no. 12, pp. 100–110, 2012, [Online]. Available: <https://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/JEP/article/view/2887>
- [34] D. Afifah, N. R. Thamrin, and E. Darsih, “Analysis of Students’ Inhibitions in Speaking Skill,” *Indones. J. Learn. Instr.*, vol. 3, no. 2, pp. 91–99, 2020, [Online]. Available: <https://journal.uniku.ac.id/index.php/IJLI/article/view/3679/2248>
- [35] Normawati and W. Muna, “The Correlation Between Self-Confidence and The Students’ Speaking Performance Of Amik Global Kendari,” *J. Assoc. Arab. English*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 51–68, 2015.
- [36] A. R. Khati, “When and Why of Mother Tongue Use in English Classrooms,” *J. NELTA*, vol. 16, no. 1–2, pp. 42–51, 2011, doi: 10.3126/nelta.v16i1-2.6128.

**Conflict of Interest Statement:**

*The author declares that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.*