



**Amanda Sela**  
**Nathania Marbun<sup>1</sup>**  
**Rina Octavia**  
**Simarmata<sup>2</sup>**  
**Nenni Triana Sinaga<sup>3</sup>**

## **AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' PROBLEMS IN SPEAKING ENGLISH OF THE THIRD SEMESTER STUDENTS OF THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT AT NOMMENSEN HKBP UNIVERSITY, MEDAN**

### **Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui permasalahan berbicara bahasa Inggris apa saja yang dialami oleh mahasiswa bahasa Inggris semester 3 Universitas HKBP Nommensen Medan dan mengetahui apa yang menyebabkan permasalahan berbicara bahasa Inggris tersebut terjadi. Peneliti melakukan penelitian ini pada mahasiswa semester tiga jurusan Bahasa Inggris Universitas HKBP Nommensen Medan. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif. Objek penelitian ini adalah 20 mahasiswa semester tiga kelompok A dan kelompok B Jurusan Bahasa Inggris Universitas HKBP Nommensen Medan. Dalam pengumpulan data, peneliti menggunakan observasi, wawancara dan juga mengirimkan kuesioner kepada partisipan. Setelah mengumpulkan data, tahap selanjutnya yang dilakukan peneliti adalah menganalisis data. Yang mana dalam menganalisis data menggunakan teori Miles dan Huberman (2014). Setelah menganalisis data, peneliti menemukan bahwa siswa jurusan Bahasa Inggris memang memiliki masalah dalam berbicara Bahasa Inggris. Dari data yang ditemukan, terdapat sekitar 85% siswa yang mempunyai kendala dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris dan mengalami kendala. Dan ada juga sekitar 80% siswa yang mengalami keterbatasan kosa kata dan karena terbatasnya penguasaan kosa kata, 50% siswa mengalami ketidaklancaran ketika ingin membentuk kalimat yang dibahas. Hal ini disebabkan karena siswa mempunyai kendala, kurangnya pengetahuan, kurangnya latihan dengan peserta lain dan karena masih menggunakan bahasa ibu dalam kehidupan dan aktivitasnya, selain itu juga merasa minder dan kurang latihan. Dari data yang diperoleh, peneliti menyimpulkan bahwa memang ada masalah dalam berbicara bahasa Inggris di kalangan mahasiswa semester tiga.

**Kata Kunci:** Masalah, Berbicara Bahasa Inggris, Kosakata, Ketidakfasihan

### **Abstract**

This research aims to find out what English speaking problems are experienced by 3rd semester English students at HKBP Nommensen University in Medan and find out what causes these English speaking problems to occur. Researcher conducted this research for third semester students majoring in English at HKBP Nommensen University, Medan. This research has been carried out using qualitative methods. The objects of this research were 20 third semester students from group A and Group B, English Department at HKBP Nommensen University, Medan. In collecting data, researcher used observation, interviews and also sent questionnaires to participants. After collecting data, the next stage carried out by the researcher was analyzing the data. Which in analyzing data uses the theory of Miles and Huberman (2014). After analyzing the data, researcher found that students majoring in English did have problems in speaking English. From the data found, there are around 85% of students who have problems in speaking English and experience obstacles. And there are also around 80% of students who experience limited vocabulary and because of limited vocabulary mastery, 50% of students

<sup>1,2,3</sup> English Education Study Program, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, University of HKBP Nommensen Medan  
 email: amanda.marbun@student.uhn.ac.id<sup>1</sup>, rinasimarmata@uhn.ac.id<sup>2</sup>, nenni.sinaga@uhn.ac.id<sup>3</sup>

experience disfluency when they want to form the sentences discussed. This is because students have obstacles, lack of knowledge, lack of practice with other participants and because they still use their mother's tongue in their lives and activities, apart from that they feel insecure and lack of practice. From the data obtained, the researcher concluded that there were indeed problems in English speaking among third semester students.

**Keywords:** Problems, Speaking English, Vocabulary, Disfluency

## INTRODUCTION

Learning English is crucial because it's used in many products and information formats. For instance, you can communicate with people worldwide by knowing English in politics, technology, health, education, and ordinary language. English is taught and learned as a foreign language in Indonesia. Speaking is one of the core abilities in teaching and learning English. Speaking is a complex skill since it involves elements of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension, at the very least, according to Harmer (2007, p. 343). Since speaking is essential to learning English, students who want to communicate with the outside world must be proficient. This allows them to share their thoughts and opinions with friends and the wider community and express their point of view. The problem is that many students need help speaking English, and numerous issues arise when pupils attempt to use the language. Many students need help learning in class. Most students think learning English is challenging because they must know the meaning of some words and need help to speak fluently (Simarmata, 2023). Students need help expressing their ideas and are afraid to utter words (Sinaga, 2019). Because they need help speaking English, they think it is not necessary. Ur (1996) stated many causes of speaking problems, such as barriers, not speaking, low contribution, and use of the mother tongue (Aguayo Torrez, 2021b). Apart from that, lack of practice and a lack of enthusiasm from yourself. Therefore, not everyone can speak English. For example, they often talk, but there are problems with speaking, such as feeling insecure about what to say because they are afraid of making mistakes, imperfect grammar, and fear of pronunciation errors. They do not speak because they lack vocabulary and do not know what to say. Speaking English is also influenced by the mother tongue because it has been spoken since birth. When students talk, they frequently utilize exact phrases, such as "I don't know anymore" They are simply anxious when the instructor requests an explanation something in front of the class. This anxiety causes pupils to lose their fluency or stammer when speaking English, making them uncomfortable and leading many to believe that learning English is challenging.

Students and English majors often have difficulty and problem speaking the language; some cannot talk about it quickly and clearly, or worse, they have never even practiced speaking it. Students are instructed to describe something, but they often stop talking because they lack the vocabulary to know how to continue. Moreover, because they cannot continue, their fluency in the language decreases, causing their comfort to be disturbed, and they end up being lazy and afraid to try. Moreover, because they fear that it will be considered useless as a major in English education, they will need help to speak it well. The researcher chose the English Education Study Program starting from a social phenomenon discovered by the researcher while serving as chairman of an official study program organization. In fact, many third semester students refused when invited to a meeting using English. From this phenomenon, the researcher tried to formulate the problem and see whether there was indeed a speaking problem that occurred. Because in essence students in the department must master English as their main subject, this is because speaking English well is essential for my future work as a teacher. The researcher chose HKBP Nommensen University Medan from the list of English language challenges above because it is a private university that offers an English major. This element makes it difficult for researchers to study speech problems among students at HKBP Nommensen University, Medan. This became the basis for research examining English education majors in their third semester at HKBP Nommensen University, Medan, because third-semester students are at the level where they have to learn several aspects of English and prepare for teaching practice in the seventh semester. To support the social phenomena that occur, the author carries out pre-observation activities and also preliminary interviews, where the results of these activities show that there are still many speaking problems among students, especially students who are English majors.

Table 1. Pre-Observation Description

NUMBER	STUDENT	STATEMENT	DATA	RESULT
1.	Student A	One teacher in a class must use a technique for learning to be fun. "Uhhhh" is a method teachers must use "ehh" in class.	The statements "uhhh" and "ehhh" appear in the student's sentence. The words "Uhhh" and "ehhh" indicate that one type of problem of speaking English is disfluency, namely filler words. There are a lot more proverbs and idioms used when speaking.	The problem of Speaking English : <i>Disfluency (Filler Words)</i>
2.	Student C	And now, I want you to answer my question, "eeehh," my simple question. The simple question that I want to ask your group, my simple question is...	The statement "ehhh" and my simple question appear in the sentence in the student' sentence. The word "ehhh" and my simple question indicates one type of problem of speaking English is disfluency, namely repetition	The problem of Speaking English : <i>Disfluency (Repetition)</i>

Apart from that, the researcher also conducted preliminary interviews to support the problems discussed. The researcher asked five students to give their opinions regarding their views on speaking English. Some of the students' answers were related to feelings of insecurity and comfort when using English, nervousness, and internal obstacles that resulted in a lack of fluency. From the problems above, researchers formulate problems such as: 1) What are the students' problems in speaking English as semester students in the English department at Nommensen HKBP University, Medan? 2) What causes problems in speaking English for the third-semester students in the English department at Nommensen HKBP University, Medan?

The aim of this research is to find out and be able to describe the speaking problems experienced by third-semester students majoring in English and find out what the causes are so that researchers and all parties involved are able to overcome English speaking problems.

## METHOD

A qualitative descriptive approach was used in this research because it is similar to collecting data from students. (Sugiyono, 2016:8) states that the qualitative research method is also known as the naturalistic research approach since the investigation is carried out in a natural environment. The data source is students from HKBP Nommensen University, Medan, third semester, majoring in English education. And the data are statements from students that contain problems or errors in English speaking. The data collection technique used in this research was observation, interviews, and giving questionnaires to students. Researchers employ Miles, Huberman, and Saldana's interactive data analysis model (2014: 12–14). Which consists of conclusion data, display data, and conclusion. In this research, the tools that were used by the researcher in analyzing students' English-speaking problems were laptops, cellphones, pens, paper, assessment sheets, Google Forms, and the internet.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main aim of this research is to find out what English speaking problems are experienced by third semester students majoring in English and to understand what causes students majoring in English to experience problems in speaking English. The results obtained from observation activities are the types of disfluencies found in students due to lack of

vocabulary. Then from interview activities it was found that students experienced obstacles such as inhibition, lack of topical knowledge, low participation and still using mother's tongue. So, to prove the correctness of the data from observation and interview activities, a questionnaire was also given which directly looked at the percentages through the statements Strongly Disagree (SD), Disagree (D), Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A) and Undecided (U).

Table 2. Inhibition

No	Statement	Results				
		SA	A	U	SD	D
1.	Students still have problem and difficulty in speaking english	15 %	70 %	15 %	0	0
2.	Vocabulary is still lacking so it is difficult to speak English	15 %	65 %	15 %	0	5 %
3.	Students feel difficult when you want to make sentences in English	15 %	50 %	15 %	5 %	15 %
4.	Students experience disfluency because they are unable to remember and understand certain vocabulary, so students are embarrassed to speak English	10 %	40 %	20 %	5 %	25 %

Table 3. Lack of Topical Knowledge

No	Statement	Results				
		SA	A	U	SD	D
1.	Incorrect grammar does not affect correct speaking And students had incorrect grammar	5 %	45 %	25 %	0	25 %
2.	Students don't control tenses of grammar, so it is hard for students to speaking english	10 %	55 %	15 %	10 %	10 %
3.	Students still have difficulty in pronouncing english sentence	15 %	40 %	20 %	10 %	15 %
4.	Students always feel nervous, because sometimes students don't remember the continuation of sentence in speaking english	15 %	65 %	10 %	5 %	5 %

Table 4. Low Participation

No	Statement	Results				
		SA	A	U	SD	D
1.	In class' environment and students English classmates did not apply everyday English conversation, so students did'nt practice English language skills	15 %	70 %	15 %	0	0
2.	Students often corrected by lecturers and my	15 %	30 %	15 %	0	40 %

	friends when my English sentence is wrong.					
3.	Speaking English doesn't require a partner as long as you understand the meaning of the sentence	10 %	40 %	20 %	5 %	25 %
4.	Students feel insecure because they have friends who are superior, so they are embarrassed to appear wrong in front of the participants	15 %	65 %	10 %	5 %	5 %

Table 5. Use Mother Tongue

No	Statement	Results				
		SA	A	U	SD	D
1.	Students still use mother tongue when learning in class.	10 %	60 %	15 %	5 %	10 %
2.	Students are afraid of being considered arrogant if they always use a foreign language in class	10 %	50 %	15 %	10 %	15 %
3.	Students are not comfortable of using foreign languages in public because from childhood students have been accustomed to using mother tongue or regional language	5 %	55 %	10 %	5 %	25 %
4.	Students consider English to be just a foreign language that you don't have to master	10 %	25 %	5 %	35 %	25 %

**English Speaking Problems for English Department Students**

From the data found through classroom observation activities, interviews and questionnaires, it was found that students experienced problems in speaking English. Participants who were students majoring in English experienced many difficulties in communicating. As in observation activities, many students were still found to be stuttering, unable to continue, mispronounced, the meaning conveyed was unclear and did not even understand what was conveyed. Another problem found from interview activities and from questionnaire answers is feeling insecure, there is a lack of vocabulary, which causes disfluency or stammering when answering or continuing existing sentences. Lack of vocabulary makes students unable to continue sentences. Lack of vocabulary is caused by students lacking practice or because they experience obstacles in continuing the sentences they should use. Students have problems with lack of vocabulary, so that when they answer, disfluency problems occur such as being immediately nervous, there are lots of filler words, false starts, repetition and hesitation. This shows that the researcher's question regarding the phenomenon that occurs is that the problem that commonly occurs among students is disfluency due to a lack of vocabulary.

**Reasons Behind Students' Speech Issues**

There are many things that cause a student or someone to have problems in speaking English. As the data found by the author, that inhibition, lack of topical knowledge, low

participation, and still using mother's tongue are causes too. Lack of practice and lack of self-confidence are the things that make students have problems in speaking English.

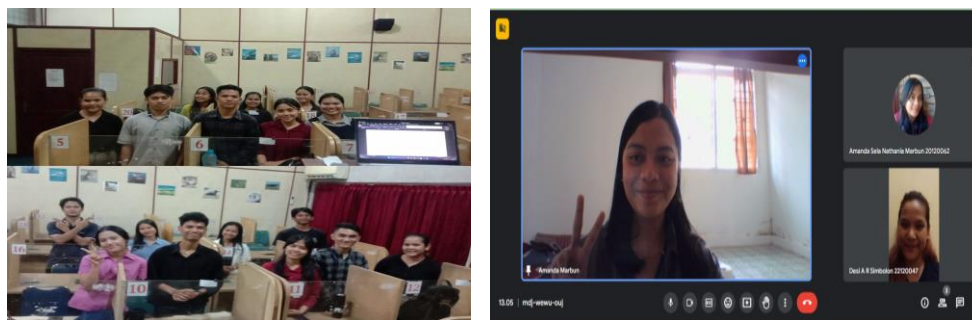


Figure 1. Observation activities in class dan Online interview activities via zoom

## CONCLUSION

Researcher found that students majoring in English did have problems in speaking English. From the data found, there are around 85% of students who have problems in speaking English and experience obstacles. And there are also around 80% of students who experience limited vocabulary and because of limited vocabulary mastery, 50% of students experience disfluency when they want to form the sentences discussed. This is because students have obstacles, lack of knowledge, lack of practice with other participants and because they still use their mother tongue in their lives and activities, apart from that they feel insecure and lack of practice. From the explanation obtained, answers were found to the questions of what are the English speaking problems among students majoring in English and the causes of English speaking problems among students majoring in English.

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