



# Students Difficulties in Participating Orally During English Classes at IX Grade of SMPN 1 Praya Barat Daya

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**Abstract:** This research aims to describe and identify the types of student difficulties in students face when participating orally in English classes among ninth-grade students at SMPN 1 Praya Barat Daya. This research uses a qualitative approach and descriptive analysis technique. The population in this study were 22 students in the ninth grade, the sample of the population in this research was taken by a simple random sampling technique therefore teacher and four students answered the interviews, and 22 students (ninth grade students) answered the questionnaires. In collecting data, the instruments used in this study include close-ended and open-ended questions. To analyze the data, qualitative data analysis procedures were administered through data display, data reduction, and conclusion drawing. The results showed that causes students' difficulties in participating orally during English classes include a lack of vocabulary, difficulty in pronunciation, affective factors (low motivation & anxiety), and social environment. Teacher strategies to overcome students' difficulties using interesting teaching media and provide encouragement to students not to be lazy about memorizing and practicing.

**Keywords:** students difficulties, participating, orally, SMPN 1 Praya Barat Daya

## INTRODUCTION

Education in Indonesia is regulated through Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. Referring to Law Number 20 of 2003, it is stated that education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and skills needed by himself, society, nation, and state. Education as a conscious and planned effort shows that education is an intentional process and carefully thought out (intellectual work process), therefore, at any level, educational activities must be realized and planned, both at the national, regional/provincial and district levels. city, institutional, or school and operational namely the learning process guided by the teacher.

Learning English which as foreign language, especially in a formal education environment, it is carried out based on philosophical-theoretical and psychological considerations. Philosophical-theoretical considerations are carried out on the assumption that English as a communication tool must be taught to non-native language learners by following the applicable language rules where English is used by native speakers. Students must be educated and trained to know and go through the stages of structured speech according to the culture of native English speakers. Psychological considerations depart from the assumption that language must be taught to students according to certain methods and strategies so that learning language becomes an activity that is fun and interesting for students. This can be done optimally if the teacher understands a lot of the psychological aspects of students so that the teacher also can understand students' learning difficulties (Syamsuddin, 2003).

According to Widyawati (2012), students go through three stages in the learning process, namely the stage of receiving material, the stage of changing material, and the stage of assessment. At the stage of receiving the material, not all students get all the material well, some students experience difficulties in receiving lessons. English lessons are foreign language learning that requires more intensive attention for

students because language is a habit so even in learning students must be trained in the ability to read, listen, write, and speak. One of the student's abilities that is very important to note is the ability to speak. Students' ability in speaking is one of the skills or abilities in English to express opinions, comment, and reject other people's opinions if they do not match our opinion, as well as the ability to ask and answer these questions.

Learning English accompanied by grammar is taught from junior high school, so it requires an intensive introduction to students. Speaking in English requires practice and students must get used to it so they can remember and easily pronounce memorized the words. Related to this learning English in class IX grade students of SMPN 1 Praya Barat Daya also experienced several obstacles in speaking material, especially the ability to express opinions and ask questions. Based on the results of preliminary observations it was found that the ability to ask questions and give opinions in learning English was quite low in class IX students of SMPN 1 PRAYA BARAT DAYA, this can be seen from the students' average daily scores on these indicators under the completeness criteria.

Learning difficulties referred to in this study are students' difficulties in expressing questions and giving opinions of a particular statement or phenomenon. Factors that can cause students to experience difficulties in making and expressing a question and giving an opinion include originating from the students themselves and can also be from outside, thus it is necessary to carry out more in-depth observations to obtain information related to these difficulties. Based on the description above, the researcher is interested in taking the research title "Student Difficulties in Participating Orally During English Classes IX Grade Students of SMPN 1 Praya Barat Daya".

Participation in oral activities is a fundamental aspect of the learning process, allowing students to develop communication skills, express their thoughts, and engage in meaningful discourse. However, many students encounter challenges that hinder their ability to participate effectively in oral discussions, presentations, and other speaking activities.

This article aims to explore the various factors influencing students' difficulties in oral participation and to provide insights into potential strategies for addressing these challenges.

Research has shown that students' oral participation can be impacted by a range of factors, including anxiety, language proficiency, cultural background, and classroom environment (Smith, 2019; Johnson & Lee, 2020; Chen & Brown, 2018; Garcia & Nguyen, 2021). For instance, language learners may experience heightened anxiety when speaking in a second language, which can significantly impede their willingness to engage in oral activities (Wu & Brown, 2018). Additionally, cultural differences and socioeconomic factors have been found to influence students' communication patterns and participation levels in diverse classroom settings (Garcia & Nguyen, 2021; Martinez & Kim, 2017).

Furthermore, the role of teacher-student relationships, parental involvement, and peer feedback has been identified as significant determinants of students' oral participation (Thompson & White, 2017; Kim & Chen, 2021; Rodriguez & Park, 2018). Effective support from teachers and parents can positively impact students' confidence and willingness to speak up in class, while peer interactions and feedback mechanisms can also play a crucial role in fostering a supportive speaking environment (Rodriguez & Park, 2018; Kim & Chen, 2021).

Moreover, the influence of individual characteristics such as shyness, neurodiversity, and gender differences has been recognized as important factors affecting students' oral participation (Brown & Garcia, 2019; Clark & Wilson, 2021; Patel & Jones, 2019). Understanding the unique needs of diverse learners and implementing inclusive practices are essential for creating an environment where all students feel empowered to contribute orally (Brown & Garcia, 2019; Patel & Jones, 2019).

In addition to these individual and interpersonal factors, technological tools and instructional strategies have been explored as potential means of promoting students' oral participation in the classroom (Wang & Kim, 2017; Liu & Smith, 2020; Yang & Thomas, 2019). Integrating technology-assisted activities and providing opportunities for structured speaking practice can help alleviate some of the barriers that students face when participating orally (Wang & Kim, 2017; Liu & Smith, 2020; Yang & Thomas, 2019).

In light of these multifaceted influences on students' oral participation, it is evident that a comprehensive approach is needed to support learners in overcoming their challenges and engaging more effectively in speaking activities. By considering the diverse array of factors at play and drawing on evidence-based strategies, educators can work towards creating an inclusive and supportive environment that fosters all students' oral communication skills.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The research employs qualitative methods to describe and understand the factors contributing to students' difficulties in participating orally during English classes, as well as strategies to address these challenges (Sudjana, 2011:63). It involves observations of classroom dynamics, along with the use of questionnaires and interviews to gather data comprehensively and in-depth.

The populations in this study were activities the difficulties in participating orally during English classes. The

populations in this study were the students of nine grade class. This study was held at SMPN 1 Praya Barat Daya. There are 22 students taken as the population and samples in this study only one class. To obtain data from the population, the researchers observed the activities of the sample students and teachers, interviewed with random sampling techniques, and gave questionnaires.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings of the research, focusing on the types of difficulties encountered by ninth-grade students at SMPN 1 Praya Barat Daya during oral participation in English classes.

### Types of Oral Participation Difficulties Among Ninth-Grade Students at SMPN 1 Praya Barat Daya

The researcher observed ninth-grade students at SMPN 1 Praya Barat Daya during English classes and noted low confidence in asking questions, difficulty in answering in English, hesitation in speaking, and trouble understanding English. These challenges underscore the need to enhance students' oral communication skills in English. The investigation unveiled various oral participation difficulties categorized by frequency among the students.

1. Lack of Vocabulary: 17 out of 22 students faced challenges due to limited vocabulary, hindering comprehension and expression. Building vocabulary through repetition and context-based learning is crucial for improving oral participation.
2. Difficulty in Pronunciation: 14 students encountered obstacles in pronunciation, affecting oral fluency and comprehension. Targeted practice in accurate pronunciation enhances students' confidence and competence.
3. Difficulty in Understanding/Translating: 11 students struggled with understanding and translating English content, necessitating explicit teaching of listening strategies and meaningful translation.
4. Difficulty in Distinguishing Words: 15 students found it hard to distinguish between similar words, causing confusion. Contextual vocabulary instruction and analysis skills are essential for overcoming this challenge.
5. Difficulty in Asking Questions: 16 students faced barriers in initiating discussions due to various factors. Teachers play a vital role in fostering a safe and collaborative environment to encourage student-led communication.
6. Difficulty in Giving Answers: Students encountered difficulties in expressing opinions and responses due to various reasons. Teachers can employ strategies to boost confidence and linguistic skills, enabling students to express themselves orally effectively.

In conclusion, ninth-grade students at SMPN 1 Praya Barat Daya encounter numerous challenges that hinder their oral participation in English classes. These challenges include linguistic factors such as limited vocabulary, pronunciation issues, comprehension difficulties, and an inability to distinguish between similar words. Addressing these challenges is crucial for improving students' oral expression and comprehension abilities.

During interviews with the English teacher, students' oral participation difficulties in English classes were highlighted:

1. **Pronunciation:** Students struggle to pronounce English words correctly and fluently, impacting their overall speaking abilities.
2. **Learning New Words:** Students find it challenging to learn and understand new English vocabulary, hindering their comprehension and ability to respond in English.

Overall, the interviews underscore common issues of limited English proficiency, vocabulary deficits, and difficulty articulating responses orally in English among ninth-grade students at SMPN 1 Praya Barat Daya. The teacher confirms these challenges, noting students' struggles with vocabulary, pronunciation, understanding, and translating English, as well as distinguishing similar words. These obstacles hinder students from asking questions or expressing opinions, highlighting the need for targeted intervention to enhance their learning experiences and confidence in English class.

### **Causes of students' difficulties in participating orally during English classes**

Students face multiple challenges in oral participation during English classes, arising from both objective factors like academic achievement and subjective experiences within the learning process. Questionnaire analysis reveals significant insights into the root causes of these challenges, offering valuable understanding of students' learning obstacles and their impact on effective oral communication in English lessons.

#### **Internal Factors**

1. **Lack of confidence:** Students feel embarrassed and unconfident expressing themselves in English.
2. **Fear of making mistakes:** Students are afraid of making mistakes, leading to silence during discussions.
3. **Limited vocabulary and pronunciation:** Students struggle to express themselves due to insufficient vocabulary and pronunciation skills.

#### **External Factors**

1. **Classroom Atmosphere:** A non-conducive classroom environment hinders active participation and confidence.
2. **Environment:** Lack of support outside the classroom can negatively impact English learning experiences.

### **Teacher's Strategy to Overcome Student Difficulties in Participating Orally During English Classes IX Students at SMPN 1 Praya Barat Daya**

1. **Using Interesting Teaching Media:** Engaging materials like pictures and reading materials are employed to make learning enjoyable and increase participation.
2. **Giving Students Opportunities to Speak:** Students lead activities, fostering speaking practice and discussion participation.

The student's perspective reveals support from family for English learning, contrasting with limited community support due to low English proficiency. The teacher's strategies include:

1. Changing learning strategies to innovative methods.
2. Tailoring assignments to students' specific difficulties.
3. Pairing proficient students with less proficient ones for practice.
4. Motivating students, especially those with English aversion.
5. Providing ongoing training to overcome difficulties.

These efforts underscore a multifaceted approach to enhancing oral participation and English proficiency.

### **DISCUSSION**

The findings from this study provide valuable insights into the difficulties students face in participating orally during English classes. The analysis of the types of challenges encountered, their underlying causes, and the teacher's strategies to address them enables a deeper understanding of this issue.

#### **Types of Oral Participation Difficulties**

The questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations revealed that students struggled with several key aspects of oral English proficiency. Lack of adequate vocabulary was the most prevalent difficulty. This aligns with research indicating vocabulary as a common obstacle for EFL learners (Rahman, 2019). Limited vocabulary impacts students' ability to comprehend questions and articulate responses.

Pronunciation also posed a major hurdle, with 14 of students highlighting English language sounds and intonation patterns as an area of difficulty. This corresponds to findings from Megawati (2016) that pronunciation problems frequently hinder EFL students' oral proficiency. Distinguishing between similar words and translating from Indonesian to English were other notable challenges.

Additionally, 16 of students faced difficulty initiating discussions and expressing opinions. Their hesitancy to ask questions and share viewpoints was influenced by factors like lack of confidence, fear of judgment, and cultural norms. This reticence deprives students of practice critical for improving oral skills. According to Cawood in Karnadi (2009), the ability to express opinions is a picture of expressing one's thoughts, feelings, needs, and rights in a direct, honest, and appropriate manner without any unwarranted anxiety but accompanied by the ability to accept feelings or opinions of others and by not denying them the right to express their thoughts and feelings.

#### **Underlying Causes**

Analysis of the questionnaires offers insights into the root causes of these oral participation difficulties. Internally, students' cognitive abilities, particularly limited vocabulary, impact their proficiency. Additionally, 10 of students lack confidence, while 6 fear mistakes. These affective factors align with Juhana's (2012) identification of shyness, anxiety, and low motivation as barriers.

Externally, 10 of students are affected by classroom atmosphere. A supportive environment is essential for active participation. Family support and exposure to English in students' communities were also influential external factors.

#### **Teacher's Strategies**

To address these challenges, the teacher employs interactive media to engage students and provides opportunities for them to practice speaking. This aligns with Lee and Sarah's (2009) emphasis on fostering student participation through teacher strategies. By identifying student difficulties and implementing targeted solutions, the teacher aims to boost confidence and create an encouraging classroom culture.

Additional recommendations based on this study include differentiated instruction tailored to students' specific

needs, a greater emphasis on vocabulary and pronunciation skills, and collaboration between teachers, families, and communities to support English language development.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research and discussion, the following can be concluded:

1. Types of difficulties for IX grade students at SMPN 1 Praya Barat Daya in participating orally include lack of vocabulary, difficulty in pronunciation, difficulty translating/giving meaning and difficulty distinguishing words so that students find it difficult to express questions and opinions.
2. The cause of difficulties in participating orally during English classes is internal factors, namely students' lack of self-confidence, fear making mistakes and students' cognitive abilities in learning, while external factors are the classroom atmosphere and learning environment which is less supportive.
3. The way to overcome the problem of difficulties in participating orally during English classes students IX grade SMPN 1 Praya Barat Daya is to change the learning method, change the learning atmosphere, and provide encouragement to students not to be lazy about memorizing and practicing.

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