

## STUDENTS' DIFFICULTIES IN DESCRIBING PLACE AT SPEAKING CLASS: EXPLORING THE INFLUENCING FACTORS

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**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi kesulitan siswa dalam mendeskripsikan tempat berdasarkan faktor internal dan eksternal. Subjek penelitian ini berjumlah 24 siswa. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah Analisis Deskriptif. Data penelitian ini dikumpulkan melalui kuis dan pertanyaan wawancara. Teknik analisis data yang digunakan adalah analisis kuantitatif dan kualitatif. Peneliti memperoleh skor hasil kuis sebesar 66,5%. Itu dikategorikan cukup baik. Dan faktor yang mempengaruhi kesulitan siswa berdasarkan indikator berbicara dalam daftar periksa observasi adalah siswa masih malu, kurangnya kosakata dan tata bahasa, kesulitan dalam mengucapkan kata dan kesulitan dalam mengembangkan ide saat berbicara. Faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi kesulitan siswa berasal dari faktor internal dan faktor eksternal. Dari faktor internal adalah Kesiapan belajar sebesar 40%, minat dan bakat sebesar 73%, fisiologis sebesar 46% dan kecerdasan sebesar 88. Dari faktor eksternal yaitu metode pengajaran dan kurikulum. Metode pengajaran adalah 26% dan kurikulum adalah 31%.

**Kata kunci:** Menggambarkan Tempat, Keterampilan Berbicara, Kesulitan Siswa

**Abstract:** The objective of this research is to know the factors that influence the students' difficulties in describing places based on internal and external factors. The subject of this research consists 24 students. The method used in this study was Descriptive Analysis. The data of this research were gathered through quiz and interview questions. The techniques of data analysis used quantitative and qualitative analysis. The researcher obtained the score of the quiz result were 66,5%. It was categorized fair good. And the factor that influence the students' difficulties based on indicator of speaking in observation checklist were students still embarrassed, lack of vocabulary and grammar, difficulties in pronouncing word and difficulties in developing ideas while speaking. The factors that influence the students' difficulties comes from the internal factors and external factors. From internal factors were Readiness to learn which is 40%, interest and talent is 73%, physiological is 46% and intelligence is 88. From the external factors are teaching methods and curriculum. Teaching methods is 26% and curriculum is 31%.

**Keywords:** Describing Place, Speaking Skill, Students' Difficulties

### A. Introduction

Education is an activity to provide knowledge which is carried out by teachers or educators to guide learners in improving their knowledge. Education has a target, namely humans, education contains aspects and characteristics that are very complex. Education is not only carried out by teachers but also parents take in part as an important role in their children's education (Tirtarahardja & Sulo., 2005). Parents play a role in encouraging and guiding children at home. Every child is obliged to get education, both normal children and children with special needs. Based on Law number 20 of 2003 concerning the national education system, namely education is a conscious and planned effort to create an atmosphere of learning and the learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have religious spiritual activities, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character and skills. which is needed by himself, society, nation and state (Hasbulloh, 2005).

There are two kinds of education, namely formal and non-formal education. The formal education includes elementary schools (SD), junior high schools (SMP), senior high schools (SMA) and universities. In college, there are a lot of learning subjects. One of them is foreign language subject or English lesson. In pandemic condition, it is very difficult to learn at

home. Especially in learning English. Learning can be defined as a process of effort made by a person to obtain a whole new change in behavior as a result of his own experience in interaction with his environment. Learning process activities occur because of the interaction of teaching and learning activities (Slameto, 2013). Learning is the process of changing behavior thanks to experience and practice. Teaching and learning is an activity that has educational value (Djamarah & Aswan Zain, 2010).

In the world conditions, learning is generally carried out from home or online (online). Including English courses. In English, there are four basic skills which should know. These skills are speaking skill, reading skill, listening skill and writing skill. In the second semester in tertiary institutions, students still have difficulties in understanding the speaking subject. We must pay attention toward fluency in speaking, pronunciation of sentences and vocabulary in English speaking. In learning speaking, we must understand about vocabulary, pronunciation and fluency. If the lecturer only explains what speaking is and immediately asks the students to speak in front of the class, the students will be difficult to compose sentences and will lose their vocabulary.

Based on the speaking syllabus, there are several materials in the speaking course such as introducing oneself, expressing likes and dislikes, telling good news and bad news, retelling a movie and describing places and the others. Furthermore, in describing places material, students are asked to describe places. So, students must be able to describe certain places in front of the class. Description is describing a person or thing in particular (Puspita, 2020). In this description learning process, many students get difficult in describing of places, objects around them and describing of people directly.

In speaking class, describing is one of difficult lesson to be mastered. As stated by Smalley and Ruetten in Zetira (2015), to make speaking interesting, you can add controlling idea that states an attitude or impression about the places being describe. And the arrangement of the detail in your description depends on subject and purpose. Based on the researcher's learning experience in speaking class, there are several problems and phenomena that occur. 1) Students have difficulties in pronouncing English words. The students are still confused about pronunciation and often mispronounce words; 2) Lack of students' confidence level in speaking in front of the class. Students are sometimes afraid of being laughed by classmates when they speak in front of the class, this causes a lack of confidence in students and students are lazy to speak in front of the class; 3) Students have limited vocabulary in speaking English; 4) Students are less comfortable and embarrassed to appear in front of the class; 5) Students have difficulties in compiling vocabulary and gets trouble in using grammar when they speak spontaneously in front of the class; and 6) Students lacks ideas in developing monologues.

## **B. Research Methodology**

Research was basically an activity or a systematic process for solving problems carried out by applying the scientific method (Emzir, 2010). Researcher used descriptive analysis methods in this research. The purpose of this research descriptive analysis method was to obtain more in-depth data about factors that influence the students' difficulties in describing place at speaking class. Then, the researcher observed the teaching and learning process in the classroom. After that, the author gave an interview sheet to each student and conclude the results of the interview question.

## **C. Results and Discussion**

The result of the research had been gotten from the data of the research instruments. The researcher has conducted the research through the techniques of collecting data in research method. The data collected were dedicated to answer the research question of how is the ability of the second semester students and what are the factors that influence the students' difficulties in describing place in term of internal and external factors. After observe the quiz

of second semester students' in speaking class, the researcher got the student grade data in describing place from quiz.

Based on the data, it can be concluded that the second semester students in the Academic year 2020/2021 is fair good. From the 24 samples of the research, there were 16 students who are fair good criterion in speaking class quiz about describing place and 8 student got good criterion. From the table above could be seen if no one student got excellent, fair and less criterion. It could be seen in the following table:

*Table 1 The Students' Average Score*

	The Students' Score Quiz in Speaking Describing Places				
	Excellent	Good	Fair Good	Fair	Less
<b>Score</b>	0	76 70 74 70 70 70 70 70	62 62 60 62 66 64 64 66 62 66 66 62 62 64 68 66	0	0
<b>Total Score</b>	0	570	1.026	0	0
<b>Number of Students'</b>	0	8	16	0	0
<b>Mean</b>	0	71,3	64,1	0	0

Based on the table above, the average value students got good criterion was 71,2 and the average value students got fair good was 64,1. And based on the table above, the highest score was 76 and the lowest score was 60.

*Table 2 The Percentage of Interview Questions*

NO	FACTORS	INTERVIEW QUESTION	YES	NO	REMARK
1	Readiness to learn	Do you prepare at home before learning English?	5	18	There were 5 students prepare at home before study and there were 18 students does not prepare before study
		Do you like learning English?	18	5	There were 18 students like learning English and there were 5 students not like learning English
		Are you ready to learn inspeaking class ?	13	10	There were 13 students ready to
					learning English and there were 10 of students are not ready
		Are you ready to speak in front of the class?	7	16	There were 7 students ready to speak in front of the class and there were 16 students not ready.
		Are you embarrassed to speak in front of the class?	3	20	There were 3 students still embarrassed to speak in front of the class and there were 20 students not embarrassed

	Total : $P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$		40%	60%	It could be seen that 40% ready to learn English and 60% student still embarrassed and not ready to speak English in front of the class.
2	Interest and talent	Do you like speaking material?	11	12	There were 11 students like English material and there were 12 students not like English material
		Do you like describing places material in speaking?	6	17	There were 6 students like describing places material and there were 17 students not like describing material
		Do you think English lessons are difficult?	4	19	There were 4 students think English lesson difficult and there were 19 students think English not difficult.
		Do you like speak in front of the class?	9	14	There were 9 students like speaking in front of the class and there
		Do you think grammar and vocabulary are difficult?	3	20	were 14 students not like speaking in front of the class There were 3 students think grammar is difficult and there were 20 students think grammar not difficult
	Total : $P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$		27%	73%	It could be seen that 73% students lack in interest and talent in English
3	Physiological	Are you getting sick now?	1	22	1 of student getting sick and there were 22 students in fit Conditions
		Do you feel sleepy now?	19	4	There were 19 students feel sleepy when study English and there were 4 student is not sleepy
		Do you have a problem with the function of the sense organs?	3	20	There were 3 students have problems with function of sense organs and there were 20 students is healthy
		Do you feel lazy to learning English?	8	15	There were 8 students feel lazy to learning English and there were

					15 not feel lazy
		Do you think describing place is difficult?	15	8	There were 15 students think describing places is difficult and there were 8 students think describing places is not difficult
	Total : $P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$		46%	54%	It could be seen that 46% the students have physiologist problem.
4	Intelligence	Do you think English lessons are difficult to understand?	19	4	There were 19 students think English lessons are difficult and there were 4 student think is not difficult
		Are you difficult to speak in front of the class?	21	2	There were 21 students still difficult to speak English in front of the class
		Are describing material difficult to understand?	20	3	There were 20 students think learn describing material is difficult to understand and there were 3 students think not difficult
		Is it difficult to describing places during speaking?	20	3	There were 20 students think Describing places during speaking is difficult and there were 3 students think it easy
		Is it difficult to pronouncing words during speaking?	21	2	There were 21 students think pronouncing word during speaking is difficult and there were 2 students think it is not difficult
	Total : $P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$		88%	12%	It could be seen that 88% students still difficult in describing places and intelligent is most factors that influence the students' difficulties in describing places
5	Teaching methods	Are the materials taught by lecturer difficult to understand?	10	13	There were 10 students think material taught by lecturer is difficult and there were 13 students

					think not difficult
		Do you like the lecturer method in teaching?	20	3	There were 20 students like lecturer method in teaching and there were 3 students not like lecturer methods
		Are the method of the lecturer at the lecturer teaching method makes you interested?	21	2	There were 21 students interest with lecturer method and there were 2 students not interest with lecturer method
		Are the method of the lecturer makes you easier to speaking in front of the class?	18	5	There were 18 students think lecturer method make easier to speaking in front of the class and there were 5 students think lecturer method is not easier to be understood
		Are the method of the lecturer helping you to enriching your vocabulary and grammar?	16	7	There were 16 students think lecturer method help to enrich grammar and vocabulary and there were 7 students think lecturer method not helping to enriching grammar and vocabulary
	Total : $P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$		74%	26%	It could be seen that 74% students like lecturer method in teaching English.
6	curriculum	Does the lecturer explain the basic competencies to be studied?	20	3	There were 20 students said lecturer explain the basic competencies to be studied.
		Are the teaching method of lecturer in the 2013 curriculum makes easier for students to understand learning?	17	6	There were 17 students think lecturer method in the 2013 curriculum is easier to understand and there were 6 students think not.
		Is the material in curriculum difficult to understand?	9	14	There were 9 students think material in curriculum difficult and there were 14 students think material not difficult

		Are the material in second semester difficult?	10	13	there were 10 students think material in second semester difficult and there were 13 think not difficult
		Does the lecturer explain the learning purpose to be studied?	21	0	There was all the student said lecturer explain the learning purpose to be studied.
	Total : $P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$		69%	31%	it could be seen that 69% curriculum in external factors is influence to students' difficulties in describing places.

From the table of interview questions about internal and external factors above, the researcher found there were some other factors that influence the students' difficulties in describing places at speaking class second semester based on students' answer the interview questions. In internal factors that were readiness to learn, interest and talent, physiological and intelligence. Readiness to learn got 40%, interest and talent got 73%, physiological got 46% and intelligence got 88%. The most factors that influence in describing places at second semester was intelligence. There were 88% students at second semester less in intelligence.

#### a. *The Ability of the Students in Describing Places*

The first research questions, how was the ability of the second semester students in describing places based on observation, data of the test from lecturer and indicators of speaking. This result was based on observation checklist and data from lecturer. Based on the table above the researcher found some problems occur at the second semester students in describing places. The first was the students were not focus when lecturer explain the material in front of the class. some of students talk with friends and some play smartphone. Because students did not focus when lecture explain the material, students still got difficulties to speak in front of the class.

The second problem was students' performance. The students were still shy or embarrassed to speak in front of the class because students did not dare to appear in front of the class alone and students was difficulties to understand the material. It could make student not confidence to speak in front of the class. some of students were not confidence to speak in front of the class because students still nervous and embarrassed. And the biggest problem made students not confidence was lack of ideas in developing monologues.

The third problem was the students could not use many vocabularies while speaking about describing places. There were still many students second semester who had difficult to speak in front of the class because of lack of vocabulary. Many students did not understand what were the meaning of vocabulary and students had limited vocabulary when speaking, some of students understand what were the material but still difficult in ideas building because had limited vocabulary. Many students' difficulty in building speaking ideas and lack ideas in develop a monocoque due to the lack of vocabulary and difficulty in arranging vocabulary into a sentence. Students had limited vocabulary when speaking, it made students confused and difficult to spoken on front of the class. The mistake was: (1) *using wrong vocabulary*. (2) *apa bahasa inggrisnya and etc*. The students had limit of vocabularies. So, when the students were speaking in front of the class, students difficult to speaking fluently and students had difficulty in arrange the vocabulary.

The fourth problems where students were difficult in pronouncing words. The students missed the pronunciation. The vocabulary that was spoken was not quite right and there were still many mistakes in pronouncing word. But not just mistake, many students still error in

pronouncing difficult words. The mistake was: (1) *future*. (2) *her*. (3) *hopeless and etc*. Actually, in speaking, there many materials. In describing places, there were many vocabularies must to know. So, the pronunciation, sometimes was note based a rule. And the students had limit of vocabulary it made students confused to pronouncing words.

The fifth problems where the students could not use grammar when they spoke about describing places. The vocabulary that was spoken was not quite right and there were still many mistakes in pronouncing word. But not just mistake, many students still error in pronouncing difficult words and based on my observation, students have many errors in the used of to be. The mistake was: (1) *my father.her live at house*. (2) *she have beautiful house*. (3) *they is my family and etc*. In this section, the students still difficult to using grammar and the students still confused to use grammar in describing places material.

The sixth problem was some of students understand because lecturer explanation was clearly, but some of students not understand because not focus when lecturer explained and students talked with friends and played smartphone. The seventh problem was some of student embarrassed to speak English, it made student silent and just whispered with their friends. And some of students felt afraid to speak in front of the class, it could be seen students just whispered with their friend and not dare to speak in front of the class alone. Students want to speak in front of the class but with their friends.

The last problem was students had difficulties in developing ideas. Some of students got difficulties to speak in front of the class because did not had ideas to speaking. Student got difficulties in developing ideas in monocoque and lack of insight in speaking. Students were confused when speak in front of the class because lack vocabulary and did not understand about ideas in describing places. The students just focused on the material had given. Some of students had difficulties in developing ideas, only talk about topics that were obtained and lack of ideas in developing monologues.

**b. *The factors that Influence the Students' Difficulties in Describing Place***

**Readiness to Learn.** Before doing our learning as a student, we must have readiness to accept the learning material provided by the lecturer. Readiness is a prerequisite for subsequent learning. Students who are ready to learn will be able to learn easily and successfully. This readiness factor is closely related to issues of maturity, interests, needs and developmental tasks. In this research, readiness to learn was influence the students' difficulties. 40% ready to learn and 60% students still embarrassed. It could be proven that readiness to learn was important in improving students speaking skill of describing places. It could be seen in the following interview result:

*The Researcher: Are you ready to speak in front of the class?*

*Student 1 : No, sometimes i am not ready to speak in front of the class*

*Student 4 : No, but i still get nervous.*

*Student 7 : No, i still in doubt, when i was in front of the class, all my thoughts went blank*

*Student 12 : Yes, i am ready to speak in front of the class.*

**Interest and Talent.** *Interest in learning is the most important thing before starting learning. Learning with interest will make students learn better than learning without interest. This interest arises when students are interested in something because it is in accordance with their needs or feel that something they are learning is useful for them. If interest is without good effort, then learning is also difficult to succeed. Interest and talent factor was influence in speaking difficulties. It could be seen in interview result:*

*The Researcher : Do you think english lesson are difficult?*

*Student 2 : Yes difficult, because you have to be able to memorize vocabulary.*

*Student 3 : Yes quite difficult. Especially in the grammar section.*



*Student 5 : Yes, actually easy if you know many vocabulary.*

*Physiological. The condition of the student body when studying is very influential in the learning process. weak body, will cause difficulty in understanding the learning material. Therefore, physiological factors determine the success of students in learning. These physiological factors can also be called physical health factors. Healthy means that the whole body and its parts are in good condition free from disease. Physiological was important in learning success, if students in bad condition, students difficult to focus and did not understand the material taught. It could be seen in interview result:*

*The Researcher : Are you getting sick now?*

*Student 1 : Yes, i have a headache now.*

*Student 6 : No, i am healthy.*

*Student 8 : No, i am so great.*

*Intelligence. Intelligence is intelligence or cleverness. This intelligence is quite influential for the success of learning. Intelligence is the ability to meet and adapt quickly and effectively. Intelligent students will be more successful in learning activities, because it is easier for him to grasp and understand lessons and easier to remember. Intelligent children will find it easier to think creatively and make decisions faster. The intelligence factor was important factor that influence the students' difficulties. 88% students difficulties was influence by intelligence factor. It could be seen in interview result:*

*The Researcher : Is it difficult to describe place during speaking?*

*Student 3 : Yes difficult, because i do not understand.*

*Student 4 : Yes, because my vocabulary is still small.*

*Student 5 : Yes, sometime i think describing place during speaking make me confused.*

*Teaching methods. The teaching method is a way or method that must be passed in teaching. the teaching method is to present learning material by one person to another so that other people can accept, master and develop it. A good teacher teaching method will have a good impact on students, and vice versa. This poor learning method can be caused by a lack of teacher preparation and teachers not mastering the learning material. Teaching method factor was very important to improve students speaking skill. It could be seen on percentage of interview question, 74% students like lecturer method. It means lecturer method was influence the students' difficulties in teaching. It could be seen in interview result:*

*The Researcher : Are the materials taught by lecturer difficult to understand?*

*Student 3 : Yes, if lecturer explain to quickly.*

*Student 4 : No, because material taught by lecturer is not difficult to understand.*

*Student 7 : No, because the lecturers have done the best.*

*Curriculum. The curriculum is the material that the teacher will use to teach in class. This curriculum mostly presents learning materials so that students receive, master and develop learning materials. A poor curriculum has a negative effect on learning. This poor curriculum is for example a curriculum that is too dense, above the students' abilities, not according to students' talents, interests and concerns. Curriculum factor was influence in speaking class. it could be seen on percentage of in interview question. 69% students got difficult in 2013 curriculum. It could be seen in interview result:*

*The Researcher : Are the teaching method of lecturer in the 2013 curriculum make easier for students to understand learning?*

*Student 14 : No, because the curriculum 2013 so not makes easier for students to understand learning.*

*Student 17 : No, because the students must study by self.*

*Student 20: Yes, i am little understand.*

### ***c. The Presentation of Data Analysis***

The data analysis technique was analyzed with descriptive analysis techniques could be presented in conclusion with formula: Assemble the Data, Data Encoding, Compare the Data, Built the Interpretation and Report the Result. And then the data obtained from observation, score of tests from lecturer and gave interview question. So, based on test from lecturer. The second semester English study program students were lack to describing places. They got fair good criterion is 66,5%. It was mean that the second semester students were difficult to describing places. And then based on the students' condition and answer the interview question. The factors that influence the students' difficulties in describing places based on score of tests about describing places, students less background educational for describing places and students less speaking practice in describing place. And then based on internal factors were readiness to learn, interest and talent, physiological and intelligence.

The most factors that influence the students' difficulties in describing places at second semester is intelligence. There were 88% students difficult to understand the material and difficult to pronoun word in speaking about describing place, and some of students had limited vocabulary. And then, based on external factors were teaching of methods and curriculum. The most external factors that influence the students' difficulties in describing places was curriculum. Many students' difficult to understand this curriculum because students must be active than the lecturer. In this curriculum, students must to active in speaking, students always spoke English in front of the class.

### **D. Conclusion**

After finishing and conducting this research, the researcher can finally conclude the result of this research the following: The ability of the students in describing places at speaking class was analyzed based on observation and score of tests of speaking in describing places. By analyzing the students' speaking quiz and answer the interview questions. The researcher obtains the score of the quiz result were 66,5%. It was categorized fair good. Based on observation checklist, the ability of the students was the first, students were not focus when lecturer explain the material in front of the class. some of students talked with friends and some played smartphone. Because students were not focus when lecture explain the material, some of students did not understand the material described, some of students still got embarrassed to speak in front of the class and some of students did not confidence to speak in front of the class. The second problem was the students could not use many vocabularies while speaking about describing places. Student had limited vocabulary and made students difficult to speak in front of the class. So, when the students were speaking in front of the class, students difficult to speaking fluently and students had difficulties in arrange the vocabulary. The third problems where students were difficult to pronouncing words. The students using wrong pronunciation when spoke about describing places. And the students had limit of vocabulary it made students confused to pronouncing words. The four problems where the students could not use grammar when speaking about describing places. The students still difficult to use grammar and the students still got confused to use grammar in describing places material. The factors that influence the students' difficulties in describing places at speaking class was analyzed based on interview question. In internal factors, the researcher found that there were five factors: readiness to learn, interest and talent, physiological and intelligence. Readiness to learn got 40%, interest and talent got 73%, physiological got 46% and intelligence got 88%. The most factors that influence in describing places at second semester was intelligence. There were 88% students at second semester less in intelligence. The students always through that speaking was so difficult. They were got shy to speak in front of the class and they were not understanding the material already. Some of students were difficult to build monologue and they did not have any ideas to speak in front of the class. And some of students were difficulties in pronouncing word and they had limited vocabulary. The external factors were teaching methods and curriculum. Teaching methods was 26% and curriculum was 31%. The most external factors in describing places were

curriculum, because some of student felt difficulties to understand material in this curriculum. The students were difficult to practice and speak English every day. Especially in this curriculum, students must be active than lecturer. It made student anxious in teaching learning process.

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