



# Analysis of Factors Affecting Students' Low Speaking Skills in Indonesian Language Learning at Elementary School

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the speaking skills of grade V students at one of the State Elementary Schools in Banda Aceh City. The method used is descriptive qualitative with data analysis based on the Miles and Huberman model, which includes three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data collection techniques were conducted through observation and interviews. The observation results showed that students' speaking skills obtained a score of 64.15%, which was categorized in a low level. The findings were reinforced by the results of the interview which revealed that the main factor causing the low speaking skills was the students' lack of confidence and fear in speaking in front of the class. In addition, monotonous and less interactive learning methods from teachers also contribute, as well as limited facilities and learning media at school. The theoretical discussion provides an in-depth understanding of students' speaking skills. In conclusion, improving speaking skills can be achieved through synergy between students, teachers, and schools in overcoming various obstacles.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesian has a position as the national language as well as the state language. As the state language, Indonesian serves as the language of instruction in educational institutions and learning forums, is used to develop culture and technology, and becomes a means of communication in government and state affairs. Indonesian language learning is directed at improving the ability of learners to interact using good and correct Indonesian, both orally and in writing. In addition, learners are also expected to be able to appreciate Indonesian literature as part of the nation's cultural development (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, 2023).

In the Merdeka Curriculum, Indonesian language learning at the primary school level aims to improve students' ability to understand and produce various types of text. This text-based learning plays an important role in training students' communication skills, especially through story texts. Indonesian subjects emphasize four aspects of language skills, namely writing, reading, speaking, and listening (Ummah et al., 2020). Of the four aspects, speaking skills have a very important role and are not inferior to other aspects. However, speaking skills are not easy to learn independently, so proper practice and learning as well as consistent assistance are needed so that students can master it well.

Speaking skills are one of the basic aspects of language acquisition. According to Mashuri, Pitaloka, & Wachid (2025), speaking is the ability to communicate orally with others using language as the main medium. This skill involves the production of sounds produced by the speech organs and is supported by facial expressions and gestures to convey messages effectively. This is in line with the statement conveyed by Agung in Aufa, Purbasari, Widiyanto (2020), which defines speaking as a normal human life activity that is very important because through speaking we are able to communicate both using oral, expressing opinions, conveying ideas and messages, and expressing feelings in all emotional conditions, etc.. A more specific definition is put forward by Tarigan in Magdalena, Safitri, Adinda (2021), which states that speaking is the ability to utter articulated sounds or terms to express something, express opinions and give thoughts, ideas, and feelings.

Speaking is the ability to make sounds, articulate sounds, or words as a way of expressing ideas, expressing opinions, and communicating one's ideas, thoughts, and feelings to others orally. Speaking is a form of verbal communication that involves several important components, such as the communicating parties, the information conveyed, and the communication media used. Through speaking activities, social relationships can be established between communication actors, where there is a process of sending messages from the sender to the receiver. In the context of learning, speaking skills have a very important role as it helps students in conveying ideas and interacting effectively.

Speaking skills play an important role in various aspects of life, especially in the learning process. Effective communication is highly dependent on one's speaking ability. If students' speaking skills are low, then the communication process, both with teachers and fellow students, will experience obstacles. Recent research shows that students' speaking skills in learning are still relatively low; only about 28.67% of students are able and proficient in telling stories (Putri, 2023). This condition is in line with the reality in the field, where many students have not dared to speak actively during the learning process of Indonesian Language and other subjects. Therefore, the development of speaking skills should be the main focus in learning so that students can communicate confidently and effectively (Putri, 2023).

In various speaking activities such as asking, answering, expressing opinions, or telling stories in front of the class, many students still show hesitation, fear, and embarrassment when given the opportunity to come forward to the front of the class. This causes some students to be reluctant to try to perform, ask questions, or express their opinions regarding the stories they read and retell using their own language (Muna et al., 2019).

In addition, there are several factors that cause this condition, including teachers who still use monotonous teaching methods when delivering learning materials. Less innovative and creative learning, as well as less interesting material delivery, are also obstacles. Lack of variety in learning media, low student understanding, and ineffective interaction between teachers and students also affect learning outcomes. In addition, learning materials that are still teacher-centered make students feel bored during the learning process. Teachers tend to rely on the lecture method, so students become more passive in participating in learning (Sari, 2022).

The low level of students' speaking skills is caused by the lack of effective interaction between students and their peers and teachers. Many students are not fluent in communicating, either directly or in situations that involve active interaction. Students often speak with a stammer so that the content of the conversation becomes less clear. In addition, when the teacher asks questions, most students take a long time to answer, and some are reluctant to answer for fear of being wrong. Moreover, when it comes to speaking in front of the class, many students do not have the courage to perform.

Low speaking skills make it difficult for students to convey ideas, thoughts and opinions. They experience obstacles in communicating, asking, expressing, telling, and interpreting the meaning of speech. The use of local language or mother tongue when learning also affects students' speaking skills, because the Indonesian language used is not always in accordance with the correct linguistic rules. This makes students less accustomed to using Indonesian appropriately and standardized in daily communication (Dwi Lestari, 2020). Therefore, strengthening the use of Indonesian language according to the norm is very important to improve students' speaking skills.

Internal factors in learning, such as methods, media, and resources used by teachers, have a significant influence on students' speaking skills in elementary schools. Speaking activities need to be supported by good interactions between teachers and students. If the communication between the two is less effective, speaking learning goals are difficult to achieve. Students' low speaking skills are often caused by uninteresting learning processes and inappropriate methods and examples, thus affecting students' ability to speak (Magdalena, Handayani, & Putri, 2021). Therefore, teachers need to apply innovative and interactive learning approaches to improve students' speaking skills.

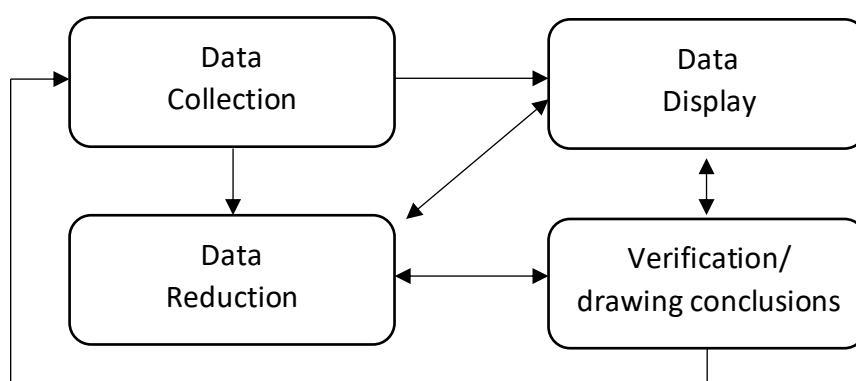
Based on the findings in class V Indonesian language learning in one of the public elementary schools in Banda Aceh city, the researcher intends to analyze the factors that influence students' low speaking skills in general according to Indonesian language learning materials and the achievement of expected competencies, and identify appropriate solutions to improve their speaking skills.

## 2. METHODS

The research method used in this research is qualitative because the data collected is descriptive data, such as writings and words that come from reliable sources. According to Sugiyono (2016), qualitative research methods are based on the philosophy of

postpositivism, used to examine phenomena in natural conditions, where researchers are the main instruments, and research results focus more on meaning than generalization.

The qualitative data analysis method according to Miles and Huberman includes three main stages that are mutually sustainable, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification. In the reduction stage, the data collected is simplified and focused to make it easier to analyze. Furthermore, the data is presented systematically in the form of narratives, tables, or graphs to facilitate understanding. The last stage was conclusion drawing and verification, where researchers double-checked to ensure the validity of the data. This process takes place systematically and continuously so that the research results can be accounted for (Rahmawati, 2021). The interactive analysis pattern according to Miles and Huberman can be explained through **Figure 1** below.



**Figure 1.** Mile & Huberman Model Data Analysis

The subjects of this study were 20 grade V students from one of the public elementary schools in Banda Aceh City and one grade V teacher or homeroom teacher at the school. The data collection techniques used included observation and interviews. The following **Table 1** presents the research data, instruments, and subjects used.

**Table 1.** Research Data, Instruments, and Subjects Used

Research Data	Methods	Instrument	Subject
Students' speaking skills in Indonesian language learning	Observation	Observation Sheet	Students
Factors that influence students' speaking skills in Indonesian language learning	Interview	Interview Guidelines	Teacher

Data collection method is a very important stage in a research, considering that the main purpose of this research is to obtain relevant data. In this study, data collection related to students' speaking skills was carried out through observation and interview methods. Both methods were applied naturally without any special treatment beforehand. Observation method is a data collection technique that has special characteristics compared to other techniques (Sugiyono, 2020). Observation is a complex process and is carried out systematically to observe objects directly. In this study, researchers used observation to observe the learning process that takes place between teachers and students in the classroom, so as to understand in depth the dynamics of interaction and learning activities that occur (Sugiyono, 2020). The following are indicators of speaking skills that will be

observed during the Indonesian language learning process in class V. For a more detailed explanation, the indicators are presented in **Table 2**.

**Table 2.** Speaking Skill Indicators

Assessment Aspect	Description
Memorization	Students convey information with clear pronunciation
Intonation	Students convey information with proper intonation
Smoothness	Students are fluent in conveying information
Expression	Students use expressions in conveying information
Accuracy of speech content	Students convey the content of the conversation with effective sentences

To analyze data regarding students' speaking skills in Indonesian language subjects, data obtained from observation sheets that refer to indicators of speaking skills are used. The assessment standard applied refers to the Benchmark Assessment Guidelines (PAP) with a scale of five, which has the following criteria presented in **Table 3** of the five-scale PAP conventional guidelines on the results of observations of speaking skills:

**Table 3.** Five-Scale PAP Conventional Guidelines on The Results of Observation of Speaking Skills

Percentage (%)	Category
90 - 100	Very high
80 - 89	High
65 - 79	Medium
55 - 64	Low
0 - 54	Very low

In addition to the observation method, this study also conducted interviews with fifth grade teachers to identify factors that influence fifth grade students' speaking skills in learning Indonesian. According to Sugiyono (2020), interviews are chosen as one of the data collection techniques when researchers want to conduct a preliminary study to find the problem to be studied and to get in-depth information from a small number of respondents. Researchers conducted interviews with fifth grade teachers of public elementary schools in Banda Aceh City to find out the learning process in the classroom and the use of media in learning speaking skills in Indonesian subjects. The interviews were structured with pre-prepared guidelines, and the results of the interviews were recorded by the researcher. The interviews aimed to gain an in-depth understanding of the various aspects that contribute to students' speaking skills. To clarify the interview results, the guideline indicators used in the interview with the fifth grade teacher are presented in detail in **Table 4** the teacher interview guideline follows:

**Table 4.** Teacher Interview Guidelines

Indicator	Destination
Definition of speaking skills	To find out the definition of speaking skills understood by teachers
Aspects of skill assessment Student speaking	To find out the linguistic and non-linguistic aspects of students in speaking skills in the learning process

Aspects of students' speaking skills that are improved	To find out what aspects of students' speaking skills are improved in the learning process.
Obstacles and solutions Addressing speaking skills	To find out what factors inhibit students' speaking skills and what solutions are used to overcome these problems in the learning process.
Giving appreciation and Motivation to learning achievement	To find out if there is appreciation towards students' achievement in speaking skills, as well as motivating them to improve their speaking skills. student enthusiasm in learning

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion of this research are presented descriptively based on the data that has been collected. Researchers used qualitative data analysis techniques by following three main stages, namely data collection, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. These stages are interrelated and carried out systematically to produce a valid analysis. The qualitative data analysis process includes data condensation, data presentation in an easy-to-understand form, and conclusion drawing or verification to ensure the accuracy of the research results. The following is the data from the observations and interviews that I have conducted:

#### 3.1 Observation Data

The speaking skill data obtained by each student was then converted into the respective speaking skill score categories, then analyzed descriptively by percentage. The percentage illustrates the level of student success in speaking skills. The following **Table 5** presents the results of the analysis of students' speaking skills in percentage form.

**Table 5.** Observation Test Results of Speaking Skills of Grade V Students

Category	Score Range (%)	Number of Students	Total Score
Very High	90 - 100	2	187
High	80 - 89	1	85
Medium	65 - 79	4	285
Low	55 - 64	10	591
Very Low	0 - 54	3	135
<b>Total</b>		<b>20</b>	<b>1283</b>
<b>Average</b>			<b>64,15</b>

Based on the percentage of assessment standards that refer to the PAP guidelines with a scale of five, the observation results of students' speaking skills show a value of 64.15%, which is classified in the low category. The low level of students' speaking skills is influenced by various factors. From the results of observations, several causes were found that affected the speaking skills of grade V students in one of the public elementary schools in Banda Aceh City. The following presents some of the main factors that hinder the improvement of students' speaking skills.

#### a) Student Factors

Based on observations made by researchers during the Indonesian language learning process, the majority of students seemed to have difficulty when asked to speak in front of



the class. There are still many students who do not have the courage to speak, both in Indonesian language learning and other subjects. This can be seen when they are asked to ask questions, answer teacher questions, express opinions, or tell stories in front of friends and teachers. In line with the opinion of Muna et al. (2019), the way students express themselves in front of the class still shows hesitation, fear, and embarrassment when given the opportunity to perform in front of the class. In addition, there are still many students who are reluctant to try to go to the front of the class, ask questions to the teacher, or express opinions related to the story in the student book that they have retold in their own language.

#### b) Teacher Factors

During the learning process, teachers seem to lack creativity and variety in applying speaking learning methods, resulting in low motivation and enthusiasm for learning. Teachers often use the lecture method, which tends to make students bored quickly because only about 20% of the material can be remembered. The lecture method is a form of conventional learning that causes students to be passive and less enthusiastic about the lesson. This is in line with the opinion of Rahman & Sari (2018), who state that the lecture method can reduce student interest in learning due to the lack of interaction and variety in the learning process, thus having a negative impact on student engagement and motivation.

This is also in line with the opinion of Yiu & Chou (2021), who state that in practice, the learning process by teachers is still mostly done conventionally. In teaching activities, teachers tend not to activate the role of students, especially in developing speaking skills. The teaching-learning process is more centered on the use of textbooks, and the methods used are generally limited to lectures, questions and answers, and assignments. In this kind of learning model, students only act as listeners to the teacher's explanation, follow what is delivered, and tend to feel bored in the learning process.

#### c) School Factors

Learning facilities and infrastructure available at the school are still relatively limited. One example is the lack of adequate learning media. This lack of learning media greatly affects the improvement of students' speaking skills. Many teachers still use makeshift media in the speaking learning process, so students become less interested in learning and tend to feel bored and bored because the media used is not suitable. This is in line with the opinion of Wahyuni & Sulistiyono (2020), who stated that the media used in learning speaking skills is generally only in the form of theme books from the government and the material presented is text-based, so that students become less interested in learning and tend to feel bored due to learning media that is less varied.

According to Usman in Maufur (2017), media is a means that can channel messages and is able to stimulate the thoughts, feelings, and desires of students so that it can encourage the learning process. The use of learning media can basically improve the quality of the teaching and learning process and ultimately improve the quality of student learning. In addition, the use of media is also very important to help clarify learning messages. Often, information conveyed verbally is not fully understood by students, especially if the teacher is less skilled in delivering the material. In this case, the media acts as a tool to clarify the learning message.

### 3.2 Interview Data

Based on the results of interviews conducted for fifth grade teachers in one of the public elementary schools in Banda Aceh City, there are several things that are considered very important that affect students' speaking skills, including:

- a. Students still feel afraid of the teacher in asking questions during learning, even though they do not understand what the teacher is teaching.
- b. Students are not confident and lack the courage to convey ideas, opinions and ideas in the Indonesian language learning process.
- c. There are students who feel shy and confused if appointed by the teacher to deliver a story orally.
- d. Students also still have difficulties when applying aspects of speaking skills appropriately and correctly.
- e. The lack of learning media available in the learning process of speaking skills.

Based on the results of interviews, the speaking skills of fifth grade students at one of the public elementary schools in Banda Aceh City are still relatively inadequate. This is caused by several factors, such as students' lack of confidence, the use of inappropriate learning methods, and learning environment conditions that are less supportive of the learning process. Therefore, the role of teachers is very important to provide opportunities for students to practice public speaking by increasing their confidence. The use of appropriate learning methods and creating a creative and fun learning atmosphere are also very necessary to support the improvement of students' speaking skills (Anjelina & Tarmini, 2022).

Based on the results of interviews and observations that have been conducted, it can be concluded that the speaking ability of grade V students in one of the public elementary schools in Banda Aceh City is still relatively low. This condition is caused by several factors, including factors from the students themselves, teachers, and also the school environment. These problems can be overcome through various efforts, including the following:

1. One way that can be done to improve speaking skills is through the application of the practice method. By using the practice method consistently in learning Indonesian speaking skills, students' speaking skills can develop better. Teachers can also involve students to practice speaking in front of their friends, so that they get the opportunity to hone their speaking skills. According to Abidin (2015), some other factors that can support the improvement of students' speaking skills are good language mastery and courage in expressing ideas fluently.
2. Providing motivation from the teacher is also very important so that students have enthusiasm during the learning process. Susanto (2016), states that interest is a high interest in something. This interest can be related to students' interest in learning. Therefore, students need to be given encouragement or motivation so that they can develop a high interest in practicing speaking skills optimally in accordance with the direction of the teacher.
3. Teachers can create a fun learning atmosphere for speaking by applying the right learning methods. One method that researchers consider effective in improving students' speaking skills is the storytelling method. Prasiwi & Winarni (2017), explain that the storytelling method is an approach that aims to train a person's speaking ability, as well as provide opportunities for self-actualization and convey moral messages from the content of the story being told.
4. The use of adequate facilities and infrastructure is very important in the learning process at school, one of which is the use of learning media. The right learning media can help students understand the material more easily. In learning Indonesian, especially in the material of speaking skills, media is needed that can facilitate students in developing their speaking skills. One of the media that is often used by teachers is picture media, which serves to provide illustrations to students in conveying messages orally. According



to [Marianti, Nurmalina, & Sari \(2020\)](#), picture media is one of the media that can be used to help students in speaking skills. By showing pictures, students can understand and express the meaning of the picture, as well as tell the contents of the picture displayed by the teacher.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of interviews and observations, the speaking skills of fifth grade students at one of the public elementary schools in Banda Aceh City are still relatively low. This is caused by several factors, such as students' lack of confidence and courage, less varied learning methods from teachers, and limited learning facilities and media at school. Teachers tend to use the lecture method so that students become passive and less motivated. In addition, the lack of interesting learning media makes students bored quickly. To overcome these problems, it is necessary to apply speaking practice methods consistently, provide motivation from teachers, use fun learning methods such as storytelling, and utilize relevant image media. These efforts are expected to increase students' interest, courage, and speaking skills optimally.

To improve and overcome the problems in learning speaking skills, it requires perseverance and serious attention from various parties, especially teachers. Therefore, it is recommended that teachers increase their attention and efforts in motivating students and providing solutions so that they actively express their opinions with good language and full of confidence during the learning process. Efforts to overcome obstacles to speaking skills can be carried out by students, teachers and schools together. Synergistic collaboration between the three parties is believed to be able to improve the quality of learning, especially in the speaking learning process, so that learning objectives can be achieved optimally.

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