An Analysis of Hospitality Students' Speaking Difficulties in the Hotel Front Office at SMKN 1 Sintuk Toboh Gadang

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Abstract

This study analyzes hospitality students' speaking difficulties in hotel front office and the causes of the speaking difficulties in grade eleven at SMKN 1 Sintuk Toboh Gadang. The purposes of this research are to find out hospitality students' speaking difficulties in front office grade eleven at SMKN 1 Sintuk Toboh Gadang and the causes of hospitality students' difficulties in speaking. This research used descriptive qualitative method in order to analyze hospitality students speaking difficulties and the causes in hotel front office. The instrumentation of this research is questionnaire sheets. Based on the findings of the study it was found that hospitality students 'speaking difficulties namely (1) lack of vocabulary 50.00%, 15 students, (2) difficult to understand 47.58%, 15 students, (3) poor in grammar 54.03%, 17 students, (4) poor in pronunciation 51.61%, 16 students, and (5) fluency 65.32%, 20 students. The researcher also found the causes of hospitality students' speaking difficulties: (1) lack of confident 40.32%, 12 students, (2) anxiety 62.90%, 19 students, (3) inhibition 45.15%, 14 students, (4) nothing to say 46.23%, 14 students, (5) mother tongue use 37.63%, 12 students. The results of this research indicate that hospitality students grade eleven faced difficulties in speaking at hotel front office.

INTRODUCTION

Hospitality and tourism are part of the economic sectors which have grown rapidly. Based on Forum (2019), Indonesia belongs to top 40 countries which visited the most by people around the world. The development creates more jobs in this sector. According to the World Economic Forum (2017), the report of the travel and tourism competitive index 2017 shows that US$7.6 trillion of the global economy was contributed by travel and tourism industry. It creates 292 million jobs and supposes to increase every year.

The development of this industry will affect language needs. Yuan, Houston, and Cai (2006) say that effectivecommunication between a customer and staff is very significant for hotel activities especially at front office. Moreover, English can build an effective communication between staffs and guests at front office. It means there

are many activities related to guests at hotel front office. Since speaking English become a crucial part for staffs in a hotel many international and national hospitality companies obligate their staffs to speak English in order to provide good service. Blue and Harun, (2003) as the English proficiency to fulfil job responsibilities in the tourism sector, all the activities that guests and staffs involve interactive communication, and tourism employees are required to follow and use specific professional conversations, language, vocabularies and speech matter when serving guests.

Regarding English skill is one of the main requirements to apply job in the hospitality and tourism industry, so the hospitality students must be good at English skill. In order to get the goals it needs to concern about relevant material, learning process, and teaching guideline. In fact, speaking material is not focus on the purpose needed. According to Prabandari (2010) speaking learning material and time of English class for vocational high school are very limited it causes the students do not have time to practice in the class. Due to the speaking material, learning guidelines, and time of learning for vocational high school is not appropriate with the students need, the students cannot fulfil the demand of the hospitality and tourism demand to mastery speaking English because they face difficulties in speaking. Thus, the study will conduct a research about hospitality students' speaking difficulties.

There are some definitions of speaking. Cameron, (2001, p.40) speaking is the using of language actively to express meaning so the other people get the point of the speakers. Harmer, (2007, p.269) "speaking is the ability to speak fluently and presupposes not only knowledge of language features but also the ability to process information and language 'on the spot." McDonough, Jo et al., (2013, p.157) say speaking is a skill that produces utterances to complete the goal in communication. Bailey and Nunan, (2005, p.2) define that the language that produced by the speaker is considered productive. Louma, (2004, p.10) says that speaking is speakers' activity to make their own image to the others. According to Brown, (2004) speaking is the ability to use normal communication, stress, intonation, grammatical structure, and vocabulary of a language to express meanings.

According to Richard, (2008), Bygate in Long and Doughty, (2009, p.413),and Brown, (2001) there are some speaking difficulties; they are lack of vocabulary, difficulty in getting meaning or understanding the conversation, poor in grammar, poor in pronunciation and fluency. Ur (as cited in Heriansyah, 2012) says that there are four factors that make speaking difficult: is inhibition, nothing to say, mother-tongue use, and low or uneven participation. Al Hosni (2015), and Tuan and Mai (2015) say there are two psychological factors influence students in speaking: lack of confidence and anxiety.

According to Sulastiono (2011, p.63) front office is a department of a hotel which has an important function and role in the hotel activities. The role of this department is to sell or rent the rooms to the customers. Then, the function is to give information needed by the customer, provides all the customers demand, and also handle the customers' problem. Due to the amount of business activities that occur in this unit, the front desk is often referred to as the command post of a hotel. In addition, Bagyono (as cited in Desy, (2019) says that front office is a department which is located in front of the hotel in order to find it easier. It is the busiest department of a

hotel. It means that in the front office have responsibilities to monitoring and organizing activities in the hotel.

The employees in this department are the first and sometimes only representative of the establishment with whom guest interacts. According to Desy (2019) front office staffs are the most workers which are facing the guests, they have important role that is to knowing the purposes of the guest when they are asking or questioning. Therefore, speak in English crucial in front office because in the hotel not only local guest but also an international guest. Relation between guest service agent and speaking English cannot be separated because without English language, the guest service agent will not know the purposes of the guests. The conversation between the guest service agent and the guest will be confusing because the guest service agent doesn't know the meanings and purposes of the guests. Therefore, the staffs in front office is need to speak English when communicating with the guests for the continuity the Hotel business.

METHOD

This research used descriptive qualitative method. The method is useful in this research because the researcher wants to describe the students' difficulties in speaking and the factors that cause students' difficulties in speaking. According to Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009, p.7) qualitative methods is the way to collect data, analyze, and interpret of comprehensive non-numerical data to get the knowledge to get knowledge into particular phenomenon of interest.

The sample of this study is 31 hospitality students grade eleven in SMKN 1 Sintuk Toboh Gadang. The instrumentation of the data is questionnaire sheets to collect the data about hospitality students' speaking difficulties at hotel front office and the causes. The mean percentage of the data used to find out their difficulties in speaking and the causes in speaking.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
1. **Research Finding**

Based on this indicator there are fives difficulties in speaking English. Each of them had several sub-indicators that used as statements in the questionnaire. The researcher analyzed the data from mean percentage of five options (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree). The answers 'strongly agree' and' agree' were categorized as having difficulty while 'neutral, 'disagree, and 'strongly disagree are categorized as having less problem.

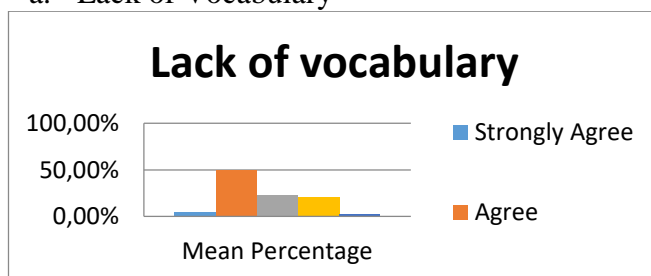   a.   Students' Difficulties in speaking English
   a.   Lack of Vocabulary

Figure 1. Lack of Vocabulary

The mean percentage of 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree', and 'strongly disagree' are 4.84% (2 students), 50.00% (15 students), 22.58% (7 students), 20.16% (6 students), and 2% (1 student). In conclusion the mean percentage 'agree' 50.00% (15 students) higher than' neutral' 22.58% (7 students). It indicates that students have a significant problem in lack of vocabulary.
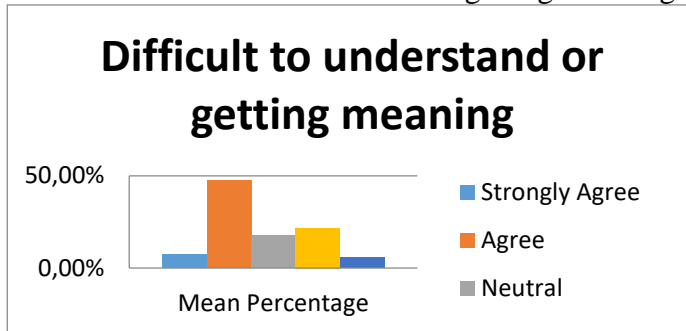
a. Difficult to Understand or getting Meaning

Difficult to understand or getting meaning

Figure 2. Difficult to Understand or getting Meaning

The mean percentage of 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree', and 'strongly disagree' are 7.25% (2 students), 47.58% (15 students), 17.74% (5 students), 21.77% (7 students), and 5.64% (2 students). In conclusion the mean percentage 'agree' 47.58% (15 students) higher than 'disagree' 21.77% (7 students). It indicates that students have a significant problem in understand or getting meaning.
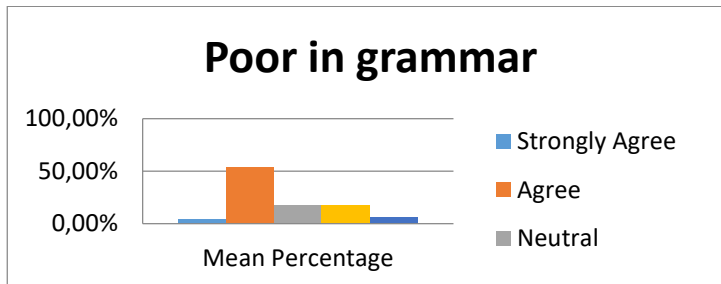
1.3 Poor in Grammar

Poor in grammar

Figure 3. Poor in Grammar

The mean percentage of 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree', and 'strongly disagree' are 4.03% (2 students), 54.03% (17 students), 17.74% (5 students), 17.74% (5 students), and 6% (2 students). In conclusion the mean percentage 'agree' is 54.03% (17 students) higher than 'neutral' and 'disagree' which have similar mean percentage: 17.74% (5 students).
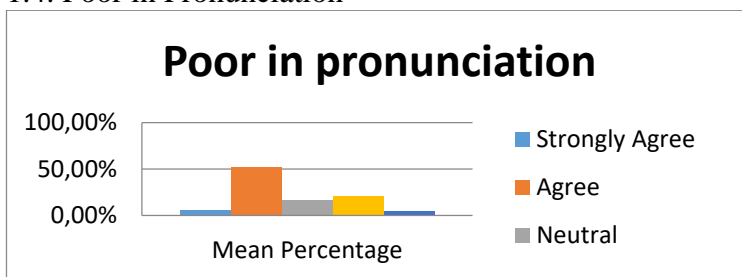
1.4. Poor in Pronunciation

Figure 4. Poor in Pronunciation

The mean percentage of 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree', and 'strongly disagree' are 5.64% (2 students), 51.61% (16 students), 16.93% (5 students), 20.96% (6 students), and 4.83% (2 students). In conclusion the mean percentage 'agree' 51.61% (16 students) higher than 'disagree' 20.96% (6 students). It indicates that students have a significant problem in pronunciation.
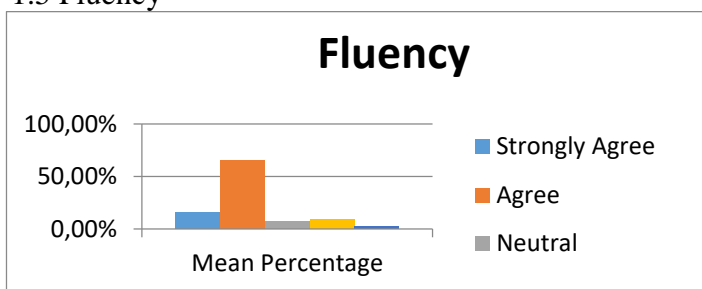
1.5 Fluency

Figure 5. Fluency

The mean percentage of 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree', and 'strongly disagree' are 16.13% (5 students), 65.32% (20 students), 7.26% (2 students), 8.87% (3 students), and 2.42% (1 student). In conclusion the mean percentage 'agree' 62.09% (19 students) higher than' neutral' 12.09% (4 students). It indicates that students have a significant problem in fluency.

    b.   The Causes of Students' Difficulties in speaking English
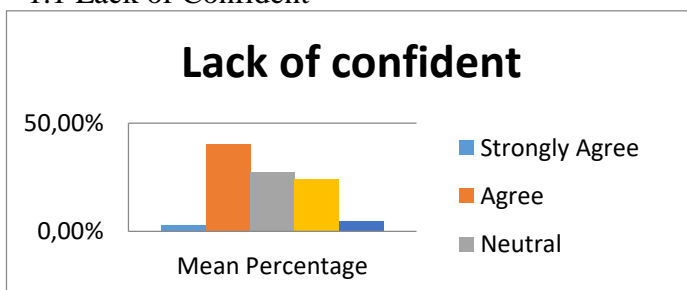
1.1 Lack of Confident

Figure 6. Lack of Confident

The mean percentage of 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree', and 'strongly disagree' are 3.22 % (1 student), 40.32% (12 students), 27.42% (9 students),

24.19% (8 students), and 4.84% (1 student). In conclusion the mean percentage 'agree' 40.32% (12 students) is higher than 'neutral' 27.42% (9 students). It indicates that lack of confidence is significant cause of speaking difficulties.
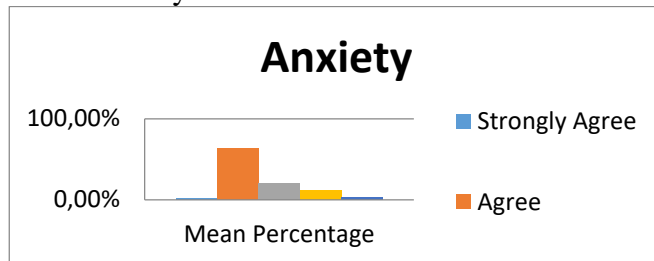
1.2 Anxiety

Figure 7. Anxiety

The mean percentage of 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree', and 'strongly disagree' are 1.61 % (1 student), 62.90% (19 students), 20.96% (7 students), 11.29% (3 students), and 3.22% (0 student). In conclusion the mean percentage 'agree' 62.90% (19 students) higher than' neutral' 20.96% (7 students). It indicates that anxiety is significant cause of speaking difficulties.
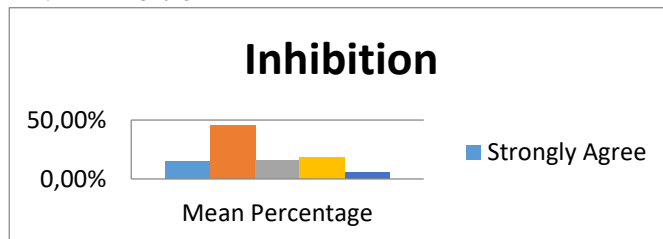
1.2 Inhibition

Figure 8. Anxiety

The mean percentage of 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree', and 'strongly disagree' are 15.05% (4 students), 45.15% (14 students), 16.13% (5 students), 18.27% (6 students), and 5.37% (2 students). In conclusion the mean percentage 'agree' 45.15% (14 students) higher than 'disagree' 18.27% (6 students). It indicates that inhibition is significant cause of speaking difficulties.
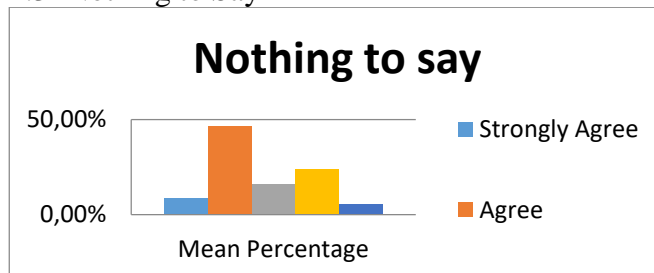
1.3 Nothing to Say

Figure 9. Nothing to Say

The mean percentage of 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree', and 'strongly disagree' are 8.60% (3 students), 46.23% (14 students), 16.12% (5 students), 23.65% (7 students), and 5.37% (2 students). In conclusion, the mean percentage 'agree' 46.23% (14 students) higher than 'disagree' 23.65% (7 students). It indicates that nothing to say is a significant cause of speaking difficulties.
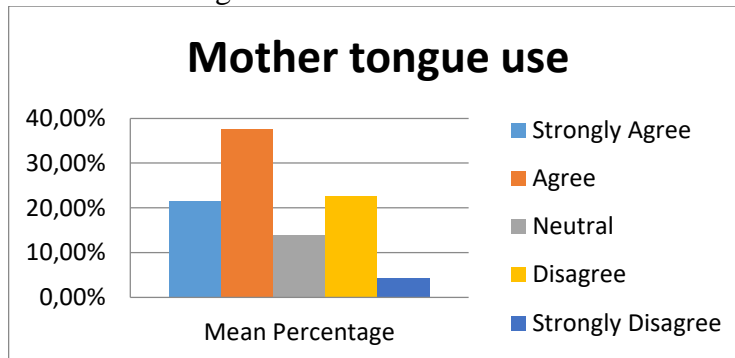
1.4 Mother Tongue Use

Figure 10. Mother Tongue Use

The mean percentage of 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree', and 'strongly disagree' are 21.50% (7 students), 37.63% (12 students), 17.20% (5 students), 22.58% (7 students), and 4% (1 student). In conclusion the mean percentage 'agree' 37.63% (12 students) higher than 'disagree' 22.58% (7 students). It indicates that mother tongue is significant cause of speaking difficulties.
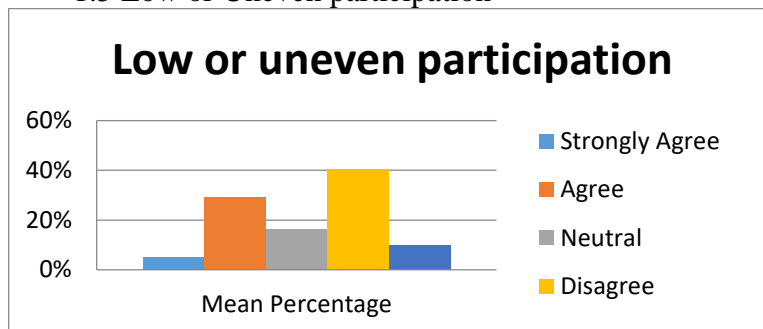
1.5 Low or Uneven participation

Figure 11. Low or Uneven participation

The mean percentage of 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'neutral', 'disagree', and 'strongly disagree' are 215% (2 students), 29.03% (9 students), 16.12% (6 students), 40.32% (12 students), and 10% (3 students). In conclusion the mean percentage 'disagree' 40.32% (12 students) higher than 'agree' percentage is 29.03% (9 students). It indicates that low or uneven participation less significant factor of causing speaking difficulties.

Based on the result of interview about students' difficulties in speaking there are five difficulties: lack of vocabulary, difficult to understand or getting meaning, poor in grammar, poor in pronunciation, and fluency. Then the result of interview about

causes of students' difficulties in speaking are anxiety, lack of confident, nothing to say, inhibition, and mother tongue use.

1   Discussion

Most of the students do not know the words in English also the meaning of its words. They were also difficult to use the appropriate word when speak English. Liu and Jackson (2008) said that lack of vocabulary was regarded as a the main obstacle for spoken.

According the result, the students difficult to comprehend what the foreign guests said so they do not understand the intent of the guests. Most of the students faced difficulty in grammar. They cannot form the sentences well when they want to speak English. They also do not know the rule of the sentences for example the tenses of the sentences.

The students faced difficulty to say sentences in English and do not know how to pronounce correctly in English. According to Shtejwi (2016) poor in pronunciation means students cannot produce the sound of the words and do not know how to use the proper word stress or intonation of the sentences in conversation.

The result shows that most of the students cannot speak fluently. They hesitate and speak with an unusual pause. Then when communicate with the guests the students have to respond the guests quickly or to think what should they said. Then for long sentences, they need time to understand and most of them said that if the guests speak slowly they can get the intent of the guests. Then, for long sentences, they need time to understand and most of them said that if the guests speak slowly they can got the intent of the guests.

The finding of the second research question indicated the students' causes of difficulties in speaking at front office. Many students do not confident and shy when speak English. They cannot speak fluently, so they do not believe with their ability in speaking English. According to Nakhalah (2016) It is commonly understood that students' lack of confidence usually occurs when students realize that their conversation partners have not understood them or when they do not understand other speakers.

Many students are nervous and anxious when talking English. According to Sylvia and Tiono (2004) anxiety about speaking a certain language can affect students' performance. It can influence the quality of oral language production and make individuals appear less fluent than they really are.

Most of the students faced difficulties to speak English because of Inhibition. According to, He and Chen (2010) explain that students feel afraid of the idea of making mistakes as they are worried that their friends will laugh at them. Based on the questionnaire and interview the students feel afraid about making mistakes when speak English.

Many students have no words when speak with the guest. They do not know how to say their opinion, and how to give respond to the guests. Many of them cannot speak because they do not know how to express their opinions.

The mother tongue becames the cause of the students speaking difficulties. It can be occurred because they do not use English in daily activity. Thus, there are many students who translate phrase or sentence from Indonesia to English directly, without

recognizing the grammatical. They often use their mother tongue to express themselves because they feel that mother tongue is easier than the target English

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The purpose of this research is to find out students' difficulties in speaking at front office and factors which cause the students' difficulties in speaking. Based on the findings and discussion above, There are some difficulties that the students faced in speaking at front office: lack of vocabulary, difficult to understand or getting meaning, poor in grammar, poor in pronunciation, and fluency.

There are several factors which cause the students' difficulties in speaking at hotel front office: anxiety, lack of confidence, nothing to say, inhibition, nothing to say, and mother tongue use.

The students suggested knowing their difficulties in speaking and its causes. Then, they hope to reduce their difficulties in speaking by understanding the causes of speaking difficulties. In addition to improve speaking ability students are suggested to practice English and learn grammar in the class. Then, at home they can learn and practice English from movies, podcast English, and songs.

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