

## Students' Problems in Learning Speaking by Using Zoom During Covid-19 Pandemic

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### Abstract

This article presents research results on the students' problems in learning speaking skill using Zoom during Covid-19 pandemic at Senior High School I in Sawahlunto, West Sumatera, Indonesia. The focus of this research is the students' problems in expressing ideas (content), vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and using Zoom in learning speaking. The sample was chosen by using a total sampling technique, and it comprises 30 eleventh-grade students, majoring in Exact Science. The data were collected by using a questionnaire; its reliability was checked by using the Alpha formula and its content validity was maintained by expert judgment. The collected data were then analyzed by using descriptive statistics. Based on data analysis, 21 (70%) students had problems in learning speaking using Zoom, while the other 9 (30%) students did not. The three biggest problems lie on pronunciation, using Zoom, and using vocabulary. In fact, 24 (80%) students had problems in pronunciation, 23 (77%) students had problems in using Zoom, and 18 (60%) students had problems in using vocabulary.

**Keywords:** Speaking problems, Vocabulary, Pronunciation, Grammar, Fluency, Zoom

### INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English is adopted as a foreign language, and it is included in the curriculum of each educational level, except the elementary level. In teaching English, there are four skills to be covered, i.e. listening, speaking, reading, and writing. "Speaking is one of the four macro skills necessary for effective communication in any language, particularly when speakers are not using their mother tongue" (Boonkit, 2010, p. 1305), and recently it has played an increasingly important role in second/foreign language settings.

Mastering speaking is not as easy as someone imagines since there are some components involved, such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, comprehension, and task completion (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2010) as well as ideas to express. Besides, during

the Covid-19 pandemic, the students are not only trained to master language components in learning speaking skill, but also expected to be able to use online learning media/tools because most of the learning processes are conducted online. All of these complexities might be the causes of students' problems in learning speaking skill.

Many researchers studied students' problems in learning speaking through face-to-face learning systems. AlNakhalah(2016),for example, found that some difficulties in the speaking are due to some reasons such as fear of mistake, shyness, anxiety, and lack of confidence. Moreover, ElNaggar (2019) found that the students have problems in speaking practice, especially in expressing ideas (content), in using grammar, in using vocabulary, in pronunciation, and in fluency. Ratnasari (2020) found four challenges in speaking, i.e. lack of vocabulary, nervousness, unsupportive environment, and lack of grammar knowledge. Wahyuningsih and Afandi (2020) found that the problems encountered by the students in the English language education department in speaking English cover the lack of appropriate vocabulary, the lack of grammar mastery, the lack of correct pronunciation, the lack of input of English outside the class, the lack of confidence, and the lack of English speaking curriculum development. Ali, Khizar, Yaqub, Afzaal, and Shahid (2020)found that ESL learners in Pakistan do face a lot of psychological, linguistic, and social problems while speaking English. Jaelani and Zabidi (2020) found that most students have some difficulties in speaking due to a lack of confidence and skills such as pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar.

A few researchers studied the utilization of Zoom application in teaching English in Indonesian context (Laili&Nasir, 2020; Palupi&Raharjo, 2020; Komsiyah, 2021; Mu'awanah, Sumardi, &Suparno, 2021). More studies on students' problems in learning using Zoom are still fruitful to conduct; therefore, this study tries to explore students' problems in learning speaking by using Zoom. The objectives of this study are to find out whether the students have problems in expressing their ideas (content), in using grammar,in using vocabulary, in pronunciation, in fluency, and in usingZ oom when learning to speak English.

## **METHOD**

The researchers used a descriptive method because the research aims at answering questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009). The subject of this research is a group of eleventh-grade students who majored in Exact Sciencein Senior High School 1Sawahlunto, West Sumatera, Indonesia. They were chosen by using the total sampling technique and they comprised30students.

The research instrument is a questionnaire that was used to collect the data on students' speaking problems. The questionnaire used the Likert scale and the indicators of the questionnaire deal with the aspects of speaking problems, i.e., content (idea), vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, fluency, and instructional media (Zoom). The questionnaire consists of 35 items; five for each of the first five aspects and 10 for the last aspect. For each item, the subjects were asked to choose one of the five alternatives (Always, Often, Sometimes, Seldom, and Never) and assigned scores. For an item stating a problem,

Always was scored five, Often was scored 4, Sometimes was scored 3, Seldom was scored 2, and Never was scored 1. For an item stating no problems, Always was scored one, Often was scored two, Sometimes was scored 3, Seldom was scored 4, and Never was scored 5. The researchers used expert judgment to maintain the content validity of the instrument, and its reliability was calculated by using the Alpha formula (Arikunto, 2010).

The data were collected by distributing the questionnaire to the students through Google form, and the students completed it in 60 minutes. After that, the researchers put the scores gained from the questionnaire into a table of scores. Based on the scores, the students were classified into those who had problems and those who did not have problems by referring to criteria as follows: If the score was less than 66.7% of the total score, the student was categorized into having no problems. On the other hand, if the score was equal to or more than 66.7% of the total score, the student was categorized into having a problem.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As mentioned in the Introduction, there are six research objectives: 1) to find out whether the students have problems in expressing their ideas (content) in learning speaking by using Zoom, 2) to find out whether the students have problems in using grammar in learning speaking by using Zoom, 3) to find out whether the students have problems in using vocabulary in learning speaking by using Zoom, 4) to find out whether the students have problems in pronunciation in learning speaking by using Zoom, 5) to find out whether the students have problems in fluency in learning speaking by using Zoom, and 6) to find out whether the students have problem in using Zoom. The results of data analyses and related discussions are presented below.

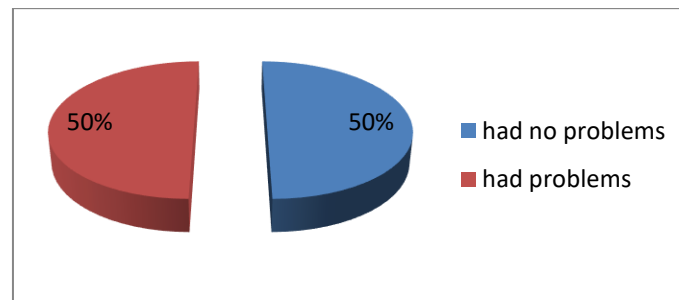
An analysis of students' responses to the first five items of the questionnaire dealing with the first research question shows that 12% of students chose Always, 27% chose Often, 38% chose Sometimes, 18% chose Seldom, and 5% chose Never had problems to express their ideas in learning speaking. A complete distribution of students' responses is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Students' Responses about the Problems in Expressing Ideas

Item Number	Responses				
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
1	1	8	16	4	1
2	9	12	5	3	1
3	0	8	14	8	0
4	5	2	8	10	5
5	3	11	14	2	0
Total	18	41	57	27	7
%	12	27	38	18	5

The result of data analysis dealing with the students' problems in expressing their ideas shows that 15 students (50%) had no problems and the other 15 students (50%) had problems. This classification was based on the data that 15 students had the scores less

than 16.68 (66.7% of 25) while the other 15 students had the scores equal to or more than 16.68. This finding can be depicted in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** The Proportion of Students in Terms of Expressing Ideas

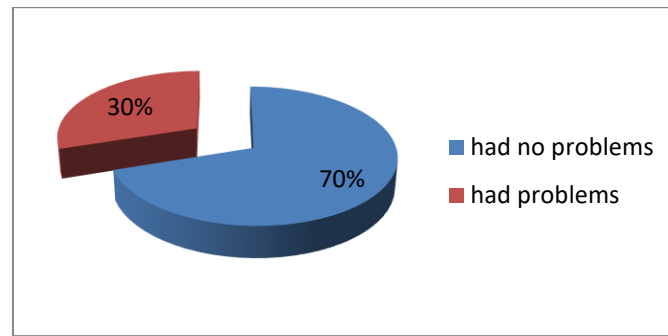
Figure 1 shows that half of the students did not have problems and the other half had problems in expressing their ideas. The students who had problems in expressing their ideas felt afraid of making mistakes and not confident to speak. They also lacked ideas to share. This finding affirms what Wati and Rozimela (2019) state in their article and supports the result of research by Syamsia and Sidik (2019).

An analysis of students' responses to the second five items of the questionnaire dealing with the second research question shows that 2% of students chose Always, 29% chose Often, 38% chose Sometimes, 30% chose Seldom, and 1% chose Never had problems to use grammar in speaking. A complete distribution of students' responses is shown in Table 2.

**Table 2.** Students' Responses about the Problems in Using Grammar

Item Number	Responses				
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
6	1	11	9	7	2
7	0	6	15	9	0
8	0	10	13	7	0
9	0	13	10	7	0
10	2	3	10	15	0
Total	3	43	57	45	2
%	2	29	38	30	1

The result of data analysis dealing with the students' problems in using grammar shows that 21 students (70%) had no problems and the other 9 students (30%) had problems. This classification was based on the data that 21 students had the scores less than 16.68 (66.7% of 25) while the other 9 students had the scores equal to or more than 16.68. This finding can be depicted in Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** The Proportion of Students in Terms of Using Grammar

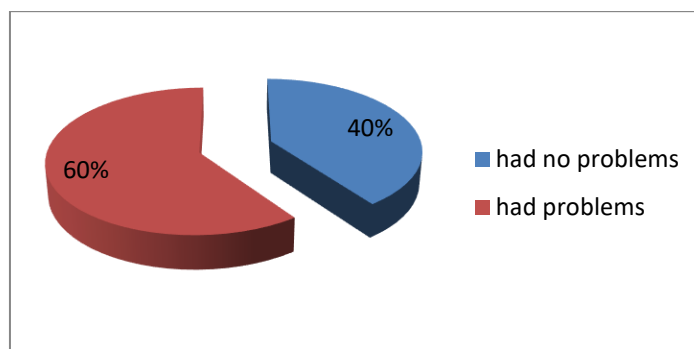
Figure 2 shows that majority of the students did not have problems in using grammar. This finding is not in line with the research findings found by Mukammal, Priyono, and Amrullah (2018), Putri, Amri, and Ahmad (2020), Suryani, Suarnajaya, and Pratiwi (2020). The last three studies found that students had problems or difficulties with grammar when (learning) speaking English.

An analysis of students' responses to the third five items of the questionnaire dealing with the third research question shows that 19% of students chose Always, 34% chose Often, 30% chose Sometimes, 17% chose Seldom, and 0% chose Never had problems to use vocabulary in speaking. A complete distribution of students' responses is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Students' Responses about the Problems in Using Vocabulary

Item Number	Responses				
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
11	5	9	9	7	0
12	2	12	10	6	0
13	7	9	8	6	0
14	8	11	7	4	0
15	6	10	11	3	0
Total	28	51	45	26	0
%	19	34	30	17	0

The result of data analysis dealing with the students' problems in using vocabulary shows that 12 students (40%) had no problems and 18 students (60%) had problems. This classification was based on the data that 12 students had the scores less than 16.68 (66.7% of 25) while the other 18 students had the scores equal to or more than 16.68. This finding can be depicted in Figure 3.



**Figure 3.** The Proportion of Students in Terms of Using Vocabulary

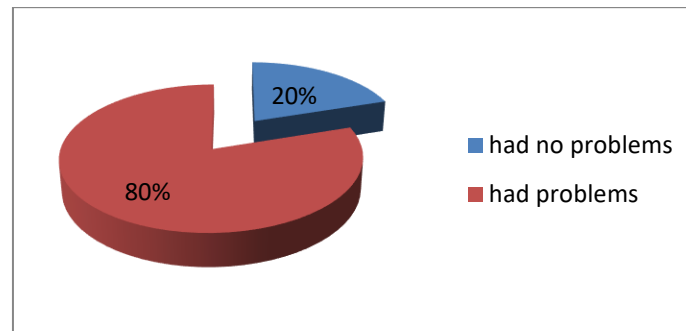
Figure 3 shows that majority of students had problems in using vocabulary. This finding supports other research findings that were found by Mukammal, Priyono, and Amrullah (2018), Putri, Amri, and Ahmad (2020), and Suryani, Suarnajaya, and Pratiwi (2020). It is also in line with the research result done by Haka, Asib, and Supriyadi (2021). These studies found that students had problems with vocabulary when (learning) speaking English.

An analysis of students' responses to the fourth five items of the questionnaire dealing with the fourth research question shows that 19% of students chose Always, 38% chose Often, 31% chose Sometimes, 10% chose Seldom, and 3% chose Never had problems in pronunciation. A complete distribution of students' responses is shown in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Students' Responses about the Problems in Pronunciation

Item Number	Responses				
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
16	6	11	9	2	2
17	6	19	1	3	1
18	15	9	4	2	0
19	1	12	14	3	0
20	0	6	18	5	1
Total	28	57	46	15	4
%	19	38	31	10	3

The result of data analysis dealing with the students' problems in pronunciation shows that 6 students (20%) had no problems and the other 24 students (80%) had problems. This classification was based on the data that 6 students had the scores less than 16.68 (66.7% of 25) while the other 24 students had the scores equal to or more than 16.68. This finding can be depicted in Figure 4.



**Figure 4.** The Proportion of Students in Terms of Pronunciation

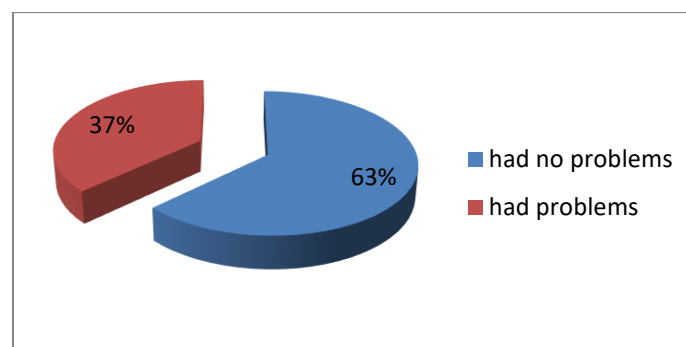
Figure 4 shows that most of the students had problems in pronunciation. This finding is in line with other research findings by Mukammal, Priyono, and Amrullah (2018), Adila and Refnaldi (2019), Putri, Amri, and Ahmad (2020), Suryani, Suarnajaya, and Pratiwi (2020), and Haka, Asib, and Supriyadi (2021).

An analysis of students' responses to the fifth five items of the questionnaire dealing with the fifth research question shows that 8% of students chose Always, 27% chose Often, 29% chose Sometimes, 31% chose Seldom, and 5% chose Never had problems in terms of fluency. A complete distribution of students' responses is shown in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Students' Responses about the Problems in Terms of Fluency

Item Number	Responses				
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
21	3	8	9	10	0
22	0	8	7	14	1
23	6	10	6	7	1
24	2	8	10	7	3
25	1	7	12	8	2
Total	12	41	44	46	7
%	8	27	29	31	5

The result of data analysis dealing with the students' problems in fluency shows that 19 students (63%) had no problems and 11 students (37%) had problems. This classification was based on the data that 19 students had the scores that were less than 16.68 (66.7% of 25) while the other 11 students had the scores equal to or more than 16.68. This finding can be depicted in Figure 5.



**Figure 5.** The Proportion of Students in Terms of Fluency

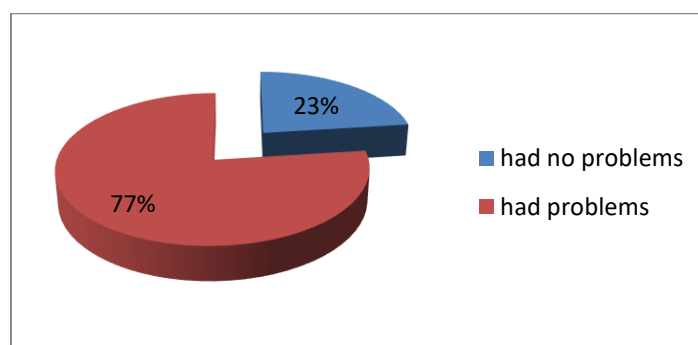
Figure 5 shows that majority of students did not have problems in terms of fluency. This finding supports the finding of research done by Khairani (2021) but is not in line with the result of research by Suhana (2020), who found that students' fluency was low.

An analysis of students' responses to the last ten items of the questionnaire dealing with the sixth research question shows that 44% of students chose Always, 27% chose Often, 21% chose Sometimes, 7% chose Seldom, and 2% chose Never had problems in using Zoom application. A complete distribution of students' responses is shown in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Students' Responses about the Problems in Using Zoom

Item Number	Responses				
	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
26	3	11	10	5	1
27	16	8	3	2	1
28	7	12	8	2	1
29	4	8	15	3	0
30	11	9	9	1	0
31	16	8	5	1	0
32	12	13	3	1	1
33	11	6	8	5	0
34	24	4	1	0	1
35	27	1	2	0	0
Total	131	80	64	20	5
%	44	27	21	7	2

The result of data analysis dealing with the students' problems in using Zoom shows that 7 students (23%) had no problems and the other 23 students (77%) had problems. This classification was based on the data that 7 students had the scores less than 33.35 (66.7% of 50) while the other 23 students had the scores equal to or more than 33.35. This finding can be depicted in Figure 6.



**Figure 6.** The Proportion of Students in Terms of Using Zoom

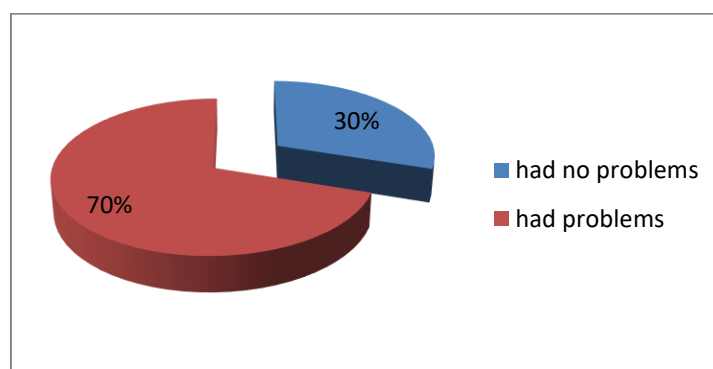
Figure 6 shows that most of the students had problems in using Zoom in learning speaking. The biggest problem of using Zoom lies on less supporting gadgets and bad internet connections. This finding is in accordance with other findings of research by



Palupi and Raharjo (2020), Laili and Nasir (2020), Komsiyah (2021), and Mu'awanah, Sumardi, and Suparno (2021).

Related to all research findings above, as the answers to the six research questions, it can be concluded that the biggest problems lies on pronunciation, the second one on using Zoom, the third one on using vocabulary, and the fourth one on expressing ideas, but the students did not have problems in terms of fluency and grammar.

A comprehensive analysis of the data results in the finding that 9 (30%) students had no problems and the other 21 (70%) students had problems in learning speaking. This classification was based on the data that 9 students had the scores less than 116.73 (66.7% of 175) while the other 21 students had the scores equal to or more than 116.73. This finding can be depicted in Figure 7.



**Figure 7.** The Proportion of Students in Learning Speaking

Figure 7 shows that most of the students had problems in learning speaking by using Zoom application. This general finding is in line with the results of research done by Palupi and Raharjo (2020), Komsiyah (2021), and Mu'awanah, Sumardi, and Suparno (2021).

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