



An Analysis of Students' Speaking Performance Difficulties in Video Task at 8th Grade of SMPN 3 Ampek Angkek

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Received: 11 Jan 2026	Student video-based tasks have become an essential medium in language learning, particularly in improving students' speaking performance, as they provide opportunities to practice pronunciation, fluency, and confidence through recording, reviewing, and refining speech. Despite these benefits, preliminary research at SMPN 3 Ampek Angkek revealed that many students experienced difficulties when completing video-based speaking tasks, including pronunciation errors, low confidence, nervousness, and lack of fluency. Some students appeared hesitant, avoided eye contact, spoke in a low tone, and struggled with articulation and clarity. This study employed a qualitative research design to explore these problems in depth, using observations and structured interviews as data collection methods. The data were obtained from students' video assignments and interviews with students who experienced speaking difficulties. The findings indicated that three main factors contributed to students' speaking problems: inhibition, nothing to say, and mother tongue interference. Inhibition was reflected in students' anxiety, fear of making mistakes, and lack of self-confidence, which caused them to limit their speech and hesitate while speaking. The "nothing to say" factor was evident in students' limited vocabulary mastery and insufficient understanding of the given topics, resulting in frequent pauses and disrupted fluency. Meanwhile, mother tongue interference negatively affected students' pronunciation and sentence patterns and led to frequent code-switching between English and their first language. These findings suggest that teachers need to provide more structured speaking practice, strengthen students' vocabulary and topic comprehension, apply confidence-building strategies, and offer focused
Accepted: 02 Mar 2026	
Published: 08 Apr 2026	
Keywords: Speaking difficulties, Speaking performance, Video task	

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pronunciation training to improve students' speaking performance in video-based speaking tasks.

Doi: <https://doi.org/10.59011/austronesian.5.1.2026.152-164>

1. Introduction

Speaking skill is a fundamental component of language learning, particularly in English as a foreign language (EFL) contexts, as it enables learners to convey thoughts, opinions, and emotions effectively (McDonough & Shaw, 2012). However, among the four language skills, speaking is often regarded as the most difficult to master due to its demand for real-time language production and interaction (Khan & Ali, 2010). Brown (2004) emphasizes that speaking is a productive skill that can be directly observed and assessed, involving meaningful verbal expression that elicits responses from listeners. Recent research also supports this view: a study by Kulsum et al. (2025) found that EFL students struggle with fluency, pronunciation, limited vocabulary, and anxiety, which impede their ability to communicate effectively in English. Additionally, Abrar et al. (2024) identified technological, linguistic, and psychological challenges—such as limited vocabulary, pronunciation problems, and low confidence—that hinder EFL learners' speaking performance in online learning environments. Furthermore, Parawangsa and Ferdianto (2024) reported that causes of speaking problems include lack of vocabulary, self-confidence, grammar issues, and anxiety among eighth-grade students. Together, these recent studies highlight that speaking difficulties remain a central challenge in EFL learning, reinforcing the need for effective instructional strategies and targeted practice to improve students' communicative competence.

Despite its significance, many students still struggle with speaking performance due to psychological and linguistic barriers. Ur (2013) outlines three major factors contributing to speaking difficulties: inhibition, nothing to say, and mother tongue use. Inhibition refers to the fear of making mistakes and feeling embarrassed while speaking. Nothing to say occurs when students lack ideas or sufficient vocabulary to express themselves. Meanwhile, reliance on the mother tongue inhibits fluency as students revert to their native language instead of practicing English. Recent studies support similar findings: research by Astuti (2019) found that language anxiety, lack of self-confidence, and fear of mistakes significantly inhibit EFL learners' oral proficiency in classroom speaking activities. A study analyzing speaking difficulties among university EFL students reported that psychological factors—such as speaking anxiety—and linguistic limitations like restricted vocabulary and pronunciation issues were major obstacles to oral performance. Ambawani et al. (2025) also showed that psychological and linguistic barriers, including anxiety, linguistic gaps, and traditional teaching methods, significantly impede EFL students' speaking proficiency. Furthermore, research on first language interference demonstrated that grammatical and phonological transfer from the mother tongue adversely affects EFL learners' accuracy and fluency in speaking, reinforcing the negative impact of L1 reliance. These empirical realities reveal the complexity of speaking instruction and the necessity for effective strategies to overcome such obstacles.

In response to these challenges, the use of video-based learning has emerged as an instructional approach to enhance speaking performance. Harmer (2007) argues that video media can increase learners' motivation, engagement, and willingness to practice (see Andari & Wiguna, 2022; Aura et al., 2021; Fitriani, 2023; Kulsum et al., 2023; Milatia, 2022; Putri & Rustipa, 2023; Sinaga & Tarigan, 2024; Sulis & Mercer, 2026; Tram et al., 2024). Through video recording, students can rehearse, self-assess, and refine their speaking performance, fostering greater confidence over time. This method not only provides opportunities for autonomous learning but also allows repeated practice, making students more comfortable when speaking English, especially in non-face-to-face settings. Recent studies reinforce these claims: a literature review on video recording in EFL classrooms found that video recording helps improve learners' fluency, pronunciation, and self-confidence, demonstrating its effectiveness as a speaking support tool (Phuong, 2024). A study at SMAN 1 Kedondong showed that self-recorded video tasks significantly enhanced students' pronunciation, fluency, coherence, and speaking confidence, indicating measurable improvement (Rohdina & Priyana (2025). Similar to Jola (2026) says that classroom action research involving vlogging as a form of video-based learning revealed increased fluency, reduced speaking anxiety, and greater learner autonomy in speaking tasks. A mixed-method study also reported that video-based activities led to significant gains in speaking ability, motivation, and classroom confidence among secondary students (Sukarno, 2024). Collectively, these empirical findings suggest that video-based learning is an impactful strategy for supporting EFL speaking development.

Several empirical studies have highlighted the positive impact of video-based tasks on speaking development. Kusumawati & Irwanto (2016) demonstrated that video recording activities significantly improve students' pronunciation, fluency, and self-confidence. Ericsson (2008) emphasized the importance of structured and repetitive practice, asserting that learners who frequently record themselves achieve better speaking outcomes. In line with Isma et al. (2025) who found that audiovisual media promotes active participation and improves learning outcomes in speaking tasks. However, these studies mainly focused on performance improvement rather than examining the persistent difficulties students face during video-based speaking tasks.

Although video-based learning has shown promising results, a gap remains in understanding why some students continue to experience speaking difficulties, particularly in real classroom contexts such as SMPN 3 Ampek Angkek. Preliminary observations revealed ongoing issues in pronunciation, confidence, and fluency during video assignments, despite the availability of media tools. This indicates that psychological factors such as inhibition and linguistic limitations persist, aligning with Ur (2013) framework. Therefore, grounded in Richards and Renadya's (2002) theory of productive skill and concept of speaking constraints, this study aims to analyze the specific difficulties students encounter in video tasks (Ur, 2013). The research questions are: (1) What are the students' difficulties in speaking performance in video tasks? and (2) What are the causes of these difficulties? The purpose of this research is to identify

the nature and causes of speaking performance difficulties among 8th-grade students at SMPN 3 Ampek Angkek. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to future researchers as a reference, to English teachers in understanding students' speaking challenges, and to students in improving their speaking and audiovisual competencies. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on analyzing not only the outcomes of video-based speaking tasks but also the underlying psychological and linguistic barriers students face during the process.

2. Research Method

This study employs a qualitative research design to analyze students' speaking performance difficulties in video tasks. According to Creswell (2008), qualitative research is an approach used to explore and understand the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to social problems. This design enables researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of students' challenges in speaking English through video tasks by interpreting their experiences, attitudes, and behaviors. Recent studies further support the use of qualitative approaches in investigating speaking difficulties. Tukan (2024) highlights that qualitative methods are effective in capturing students' perceptions and reflections when engaging in video recording tasks, particularly in identifying psychological and linguistic challenges. Similarly, Khalishah and Islam (2024) emphasize that qualitative inquiry allows researchers to explore learners' emotional experiences and personal obstacles in speaking English. In addition, Shalehah and Rahmawati (2025) argue that qualitative research provides rich insights into internal factors such as lack of confidence, anxiety, and limited vocabulary that influence students' speaking performance. Therefore, a qualitative research design is considered appropriate for this study to comprehensively analyze students' speaking difficulties in video-based tasks.

The research was conducted at SMPN 3 Ampek Angkek, focusing on 8th-grade students, specifically class 8.2. This class was chosen based on recommendations from the English teacher, who identified it as representative of students facing speaking difficulties. The study involved collecting data through direct observation of students' video tasks and conducting structured interviews with selected students who exhibited speaking performance difficulties. Out of 25 students, 18 submitted learning videos, and 14 were identified as experiencing speaking difficulties, making them the primary informants for the interview phase.

The study utilized two primary instruments: observation and interviews. An observation checklist was used to systematically assess students' speaking performance in their video tasks, focusing on pronunciation, fluency, and confidence. Structured interviews were conducted after the observation phase to gain deeper insights into the specific challenge students faced while completing their speaking assignments. The data analysis process followed Miles et al. (2014) framework, which includes three key steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data were transcribed, categorized, and presented descriptively to identify patterns and provide meaningful conclusions about students' speaking difficulties in video tasks.

3. Results

This section presents the findings of our research and the subsequent discussion on students' speaking performance in the video assignment. The analysis is based on three key aspects that influence the quality of their communication: inhibition, nothing to say, and mother tongue use. These aspects were examined through observations and interviews to gain insights into the challenges faced by students when speaking on camera. The discussion aims to highlight the impact of these challenges on their English-speaking performance and suggest possible interventions for improvement.

The aspect of inhibition is an important factor that affects students' on-camera speaking performance. In this study, it was identified that six students experienced significant nervousness while speaking, which resulted in decreased confidence and difficulty in expressing their ideas clearly. Thirteen students were observed avoiding eye contact with the camera, indicating discomfort and fear of performing in front of it. Additionally, five students spoke in a low tone, which reduced the clarity of their message and created a lackluster impression.

Observations revealed that students who felt nervous exhibited signs of self-doubt, such as stammering while speaking. When interviewed, MA stated, "Takut salah dalam mengucapkan kata/kalimat, Pak." This response highlighted students' fear of making mistakes, which hindered their confidence and fluency. The nervousness experienced was linked not only to the presence of the camera but also to low self-confidence, necessitating targeted strategies to enhance their speaking performance.

Regarding students' tendency to avoid eye contact with the camera, thirteen students were noted for frequently looking down, as if reading. Interviews supported this finding, with one student admitting, "Saya tidak fokus ke arah kamera karena kurangnya pelafalan kalimat bahasa Inggris, Pak." This statement revealed that a lack of confidence in pronunciation further complicated their engagement with the camera. Since students had to create videos independently, the absence of an audience may have contributed to their discomfort. Next, students who spoke in low tones indicated insecurity. MA expressed, "Saya tidak percaya diri melihat ke kamera, Pak," reflecting how discomfort contributed to weak pronunciation. A low voice hindered effective message delivery, as listeners struggled to comprehend the speech. Strategies such as mirror speaking exercises or simulated presentations could help students improve their speaking clarity and confidence.

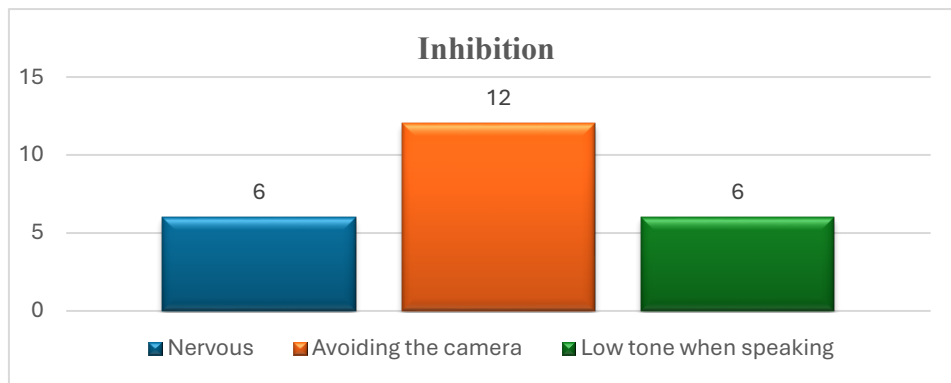


Figure 1. Frequency of Student Inhibition related to Speaking Performance

The analysis of the “nothing to say” phenomenon among students revealed significant challenges affecting their communication. Firstly, six students frequently paused while speaking due to difficulty generating ideas. Secondly, eight students reported struggles with pronunciation, disrupting fluency and causing presentation anxiety. Lastly, five students identified comprehension issues with the given topic, further limiting their ability to communicate effectively.

Students who frequently paused while speaking showed difficulty recalling words, contributing to confusion. SGP stated, “Saya sering berhenti karena tidak bisa mengingat kata yang mau saya ucapkan, Pak.” This highlighted how memory retrieval issues impeded fluency. Limited vocabulary exposure and inconsistent practice likely exacerbated these difficulties, underscoring the need for strategies focused on vocabulary reinforcement.

Students facing pronunciation difficulties demonstrated a close relationship between their everyday language use and their ability to articulate English words correctly. The researcher’s observations showed frequent mispronunciation of “crying.” MR explained, “Saya susah dalam melafalkan kata itu karena tidak terlalu sering mengucapkannya, Pak.” This statement emphasized the importance of regular pronunciation practice to develop fluency.

Lastly, students who struggled with topic comprehension often hesitated, reflecting their lack of confidence. They revealed, “Saya sering berhenti saat berbicara karena salah mengucapkan kata, Pak,” illustrating how pronunciation anxiety disrupted their thought process. This finding suggests that fear of making mistakes further inhibited their fluency. Addressing these challenges requires a combination of language reinforcement and psychological support to build students’ confidence.

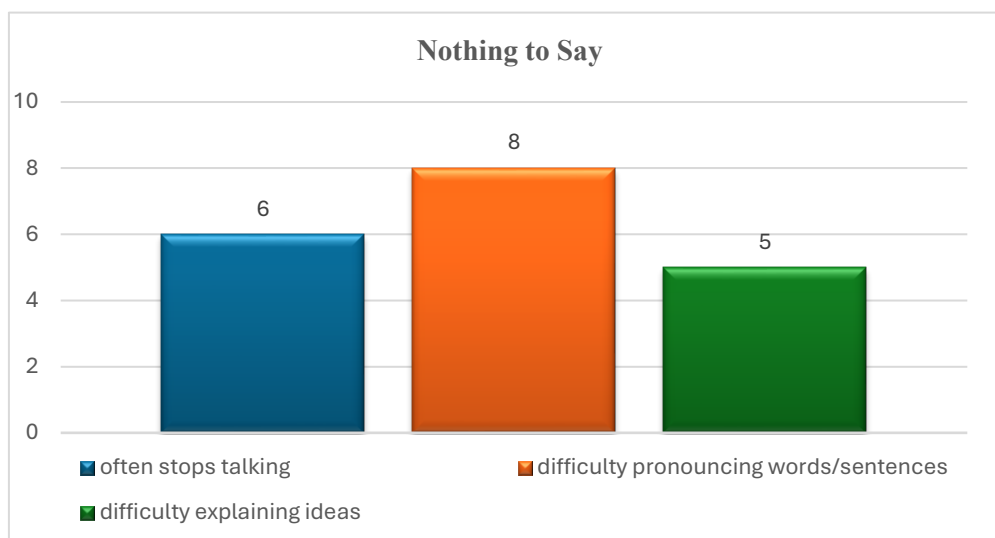


Figure 2. Frequency of nothing to say students regarding speaking performance

The analysis of students' use of their mother tongue identified two main factors affecting their English proficiency. Firstly, six students noted the influence of their native accent, which hindered pronunciation clarity. Secondly, five students reported difficulty maintaining fluency, frequently switching between English and their mother tongue, which disrupted their ability to communicate effectively.

Students whose mother tongue accent affected their pronunciation struggled with linguistic interference. Observations showed that the phrase "long time ago" was often pronounced with a noticeable native accent. MA admitted, "Karena saya susah untuk melafalkan kata itu, Pak, karena tidak terbiasa Pak," indicating a lack of practice. Teaching interventions that focus on phonetic drills and real-life usage could help reduce these pronunciation challenges.

Students who struggled with fluency frequently hesitated or switched to their mother tongue while speaking. AF explained, "Itu karena ada keraguan dan kesalahan dalam pengucapan kalimat bahasa Inggris, Pak." This indicated that pronunciation uncertainty led to communication breakdowns. Doubts about linguistic abilities further exacerbated their hesitation. Teaching strategies emphasizing continuous speaking practice, along with emotional support, could improve students' fluency.

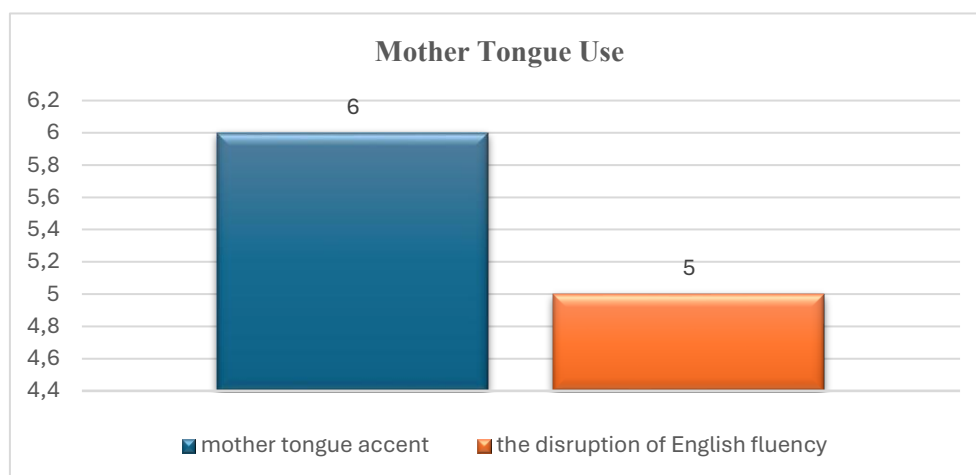


Figure 3. Frequency of mother tongue use students regarding speaking performance

Based on the findings of this study, it is evident that psychological barriers, vocabulary limitations, and linguistic interference play a crucial role in students' speaking performance. Addressing these issues requires a holistic approach that not only focuses on linguistic proficiency but also builds students' confidence and motivation to speak English fluently.

Next, providing students with a supportive and interactive learning environment can help them overcome their fear of making mistakes. Activities such as role-playing, peer discussions, and interactive speaking exercises can encourage students to practice English in a low-pressure setting, ultimately enhancing their speaking performance.

Lastly, consistent feedback and targeted language interventions should be implemented to improve pronunciation and fluency. Incorporating pronunciation drills, vocabulary-building exercises, and guided speaking practice into the curriculum will help students develop stronger communication performance, ensuring they are better prepared for real-world English-speaking situations.

4. Discussion

This discussion aims to analyze the research results regarding the speaking performance of grade VIII students of SMPN 3 Ampek Angkek in the video task. By integrating the findings from Chapter 3 and the theories that have been outlined in Chapter 2, this subchapter will discuss in depth the challenges students faced, as well as the potential of using video media in improving their speaking skills. Through this approach, a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence students' speaking performance is expected, as well as recommendations that can be applied in the learning process. Emphasis will be placed on the relationship between theory and practice and how effective teaching strategies can help students overcome speaking difficulties.

This research has several limitations, both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, the study relies primarily on established speaking theories proposed by H. Douglas

Brown, Jeremy Harmer, Sari Luoma, and Penny Ur, which focus on general aspects of speaking performance, motivation, and inhibition. However, the study does not explore more recent theories related to digital literacy or multimodal learning, which could have provided a broader theoretical perspective on video-based speaking tasks. In addition, the research emphasizes qualitative data without incorporating quantitative measurements of speaking performance improvement; therefore, the extent of students' progress cannot be statistically generalized. Practically, the study is limited to one school and one grade level, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to other educational contexts. The observation period was also relatively short, so the long-term effects of video tasks on students' speaking development could not be thoroughly examined. Furthermore, technical factors such as video quality, students' access to recording devices, and environmental noise were not analyzed in depth, even though these factors may significantly influence students' speaking performance and confidence.

In this study, the speaking performance of students at SMPN 3 Ampek Angkek through video tasks is analyzed based on several important aspects. Based on the background that has been described, speaking ability is a very important communicative skill, especially in the context of English language learning. Brown (2004) explains that "speaking performance is a productive skill that can be observed directly and empirically." This indicates that speaking performance can be measured through direct interaction between the speaker and the listener.

The results showed that some students had difficulties in their speaking performance, especially in terms of pronunciation and confidence. As stated by Harmer (2007), learning motivation increases when students use videos, because "doing repeated exercises alone is not enough." This shows that the use of video media in learning can increase students' motivation and help them to be more confident in speaking. Furthermore, (Luoma, 2004) emphasizes the importance of linguistic competence and social interaction in speaking performance. He states that "speaking performance is not just about the performance to speak, but also includes the performance to understand and respond well in various communication situations." This is relevant to our findings that students who lack confidence tend to have difficulties in understanding and responding to questions when performing video tasks. This is in line with (Ur, 2013) statement explaining that one of the main barriers in speaking is inhibition, where students feel pressured to speak in front of the camera.

5. Conclusion

The students' speaking performance difficulties in video tasks is significantly influenced by three major factors: inhibition, nothing to say, and mother tongue use. Inhibition, which includes nervousness, lack of confidence, and fear of making mistakes, was a dominant issue observed among students. Many students exhibited signs of anxiety, such as avoiding eye contact, stammering, and speaking in a low tone, all of which hindered their ability to communicate effectively in English. The psychological barriers they faced while speaking in front of the camera not only reduced their fluency but also

impacted on their ability to articulate ideas clearly. These challenges suggest that confidence-building exercises, such as role-playing, guided practice, and encouraging positive reinforcement, should be integrated into the learning process to help students overcome their hesitation and fear. Next, the phenomenon of “nothing to say” was another critical issue that affected students’ speaking performance difficulties. The inability to generate ideas, limited vocabulary, and difficulties in pronunciation significantly hindered their fluency in expressing thoughts. Many students struggled to recall appropriate words while speaking, which resulted in frequent pauses and hesitation. Additionally, pronunciation challenges created anxiety, leading to further disruptions in their communication. These findings highlight the importance of enhancing students’ vocabulary mastery through exposure to various English language resources, including reading materials, interactive speaking exercises, and peer discussions. Structured speaking practice, pronunciation drills, and real-life conversation simulations could be beneficial in helping students develop confidence and fluency in English speaking tasks.

Lastly, the influence of the mother tongue was found to be a contributing factor in students’ speaking difficulties. Students frequently switched between their native language and English due to a lack of fluency, resulting in communication breakdowns. Pronunciation was also affected by linguistic interference, where students struggled with English phonetics due to their familiarity with their mother tongue’s sound system. To address this issue, teachers should emphasize phonetic training and encourage students to practice speaking English consistently. Providing students with a supportive and interactive learning environment, such as group discussions, storytelling activities, and pronunciation workshops, could help mitigate the negative impact of mother tongue interference. Overall, this study underscores the need for a comprehensive approach that integrates both linguistic and psychological support to enhance students’ speaking performance difficulties in video tasks.

Conflict of Interest

None.

Authors’ Contribution

The author contributed significantly to the conceptualization and design of the study. The author was fully responsible for data collection, analysis, interpretation, and discussion of the findings, as well as for preparing and approving the final version of the manuscript.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to express sincere appreciation to all parties who support this research. The authors also acknowledge the use of generative artificial intelligence tools solely for enhancing grammatical accuracy, clarity, and readability of the manuscript. All AI-generated suggestions were carefully reviewed and validated by the author. The research data, analysis, and findings are entirely original and were neither generated nor modified by artificial intelligence.

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