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# FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENTS' SPEAKING PASSIVITY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

**Novi Aghata Nur Khamalia & Fahmy Imaniar**
UIN Sunan Ampel Surabaya, Indonesia
noviaghata47@gmail.com; fahmy.imaniar@uinsby.ac.id

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**Abstract**

Speaking is one of the essential skills that every individual, especially students, must possess to support their other abilities. In this highly modern era, social media needs to be explored, particularly concerning students' speaking skills. Many students remain passive when speaking through social media. This case is intriguing to explore and investigate. This research aims to investigate the factors that can influence students' speaking passivity on social media, using a qualitative approach. Data were obtained by interviewing the English subject teachers of the 10th grade in a private high school in Surabaya. The researcher found that several factors influencing the speaking passivity of 10th-grade students include fear of making mistakes, bad pronounciation, and a lack of vocabulary. The results of this research can serve as a reference for both students and teachers to study solutions for these factors.

**Keywords**: Speaking Passivity Factors, Social Media


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## INTRODUCTION

In the landscape of language education, the advent of social media has ushered in new dimensions and challenges for students seeking to develop their speaking skills. Proficiency in spoken communication is a crucial aspect of language acquisition, yet various factors contribute to students' passivity in speaking, particularly within the dynamic realm of social media. This article delves into the intricacies of these factors, exploring both linguistic and external elements that shape students' reticence in engaging verbally on digital platforms.

As highlighted by (Hendriati et al., 2019), linguistic factors such as grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and sentence formation skills are paramount in determining students' proficiency in speaking. When transposed onto the digital stage of social media, these linguistic elements take on a nuanced role, influencing the quality and frequency of students' spoken interactions.

External factors, particularly teaching methods, assume a pivotal role in shaping students' speaking behaviors not only in traditional classrooms but also on social media platforms (Houn & Em, 2022). The manner in which educators facilitate language learning, whether in physical classrooms or virtual spaces, can significantly impact students' confidence and willingness to express themselves verbally.

The digital age presents a unique set of challenges and opportunities for language learners, and (Fauziyah et al., 2023) draw attention to the inhibiting effects of fear and anxiety experienced by students when engaging in speaking activities on social media. The fear of making mistakes and the potential embarrassment associated with them can deter students from actively participating in online discussions, thereby contributing to their passivity.

Moreover, educators' role extends beyond the physical classroom, as highlighted by (Shalihah et al., 2022). The impact of educators' endorsement, or lack thereof, of factors such as self-confidence and motivation plays a crucial role in shaping students' readiness to engage in spoken communication on social media platforms.

This article aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the interconnected web of linguistic and external factors that contribute to students' passivity in speaking on social media. By dissecting the dynamics of these elements, educators, researchers, and language learners can glean valuable insights into crafting effective strategies that not only address linguistic proficiency but also foster a supportive and encouraging environment for students to actively participate in spoken discourse within the digital realm.

## METHODS

This research employed a descriptive qualitative method, utilizing interview techniques for data collection. Qualitative research is suitable for exploring problems (Creswell, 2012). ). In this case, to gather analyzable data, the researcher conducted interviews with the mentor teacher or instructor of the 10th-grade English class. The researcher conducted an interview outside of the class on October, 28 2023. The interviews were conducted via Zoom, lasting approximately 1 hour. The interview results will be transcribed and interpreted to obtain relevant and accurate findings.

## RESULTS

In this section, the researcher will present the results obtained from interviews with the English subject teachers of the 10th grade in a private high school in Surabaya. During the interviews, the researcher posed several questions related to the factors influencing students' speaking passivity on social media. The respondents provided answers to the research issues. The researcher found that the factors influencing students' speaking passivity on social media include the fear of making mistakes, bad pronounciation, and a lack of vocabulary.

Throughout the interviews, the researcher explored various facets related to the phenomenon at hand. The questions were strategically designed to elicit detailed responses, shedding light on the multifaceted nature of students' speaking passivity on social media platforms. The participants, comprising the English subject teachers, offered valuable perspectives and responses to the research inquiries.

The findings gleaned from these interactions unveiled a triad of significant factors influencing students' reticence in speaking on social media. Foremost among these factors is the pervasive fear of making mistakes, which emerged as a common theme in the teachers' responses. Students, it was revealed, harbor apprehensions about committing errors in their spoken communication on digital platforms, consequently impacting their willingness to engage actively.

## DISCUSSION

One factor influencing students' speech passivity on social media is the fear of making mistakes. Based on conducted interviews, the sources revealed that 'students during online English language learning or assignments that require them to upload content to social media tend to be more passive, less active, and less creative compared to speaking directly. When asked why they behave this way, students responded that

*"They are afraid of making mistakes in speaking, which could lead to embarrassment, especially if their errors are seen by many people through their social media platforms."'*

Students tend to be more open and active when speaking face to face rather than face to screen. They feel that speaking face to face reduces their fear of making mistakes, as the scope of direct communication is narrower compared to speaking through social media (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009).

The fear of making mistakes is a fundamental driver of speaking passivity, as individuals worry about potential errors leading to judgment, embarrassment, and a perceived threat to their competence in verbal communication (Ahmed Maher Mahmoud Al Nakhalah, 2016). The phenomenon of student speaking passivity on social media, attributed to the fear of making mistakes, sheds light on a significant challenge in contemporary education. This realization might instill a fear of making pronunciation errors, leading to speaking anxiety. Consequently, language educators should emphasize to their students that mispronouncing vocabulary is a common and expected mistake in the learning journey. Rather than causing speaking anxiety, these mistakes should be viewed as integral steps toward improving speaking skills (Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014). In today's digitally connected world, where online platforms play a pivotal role in language learning, students often exhibit a reluctance to actively engage in spoken communication. The fear of making mistakes emerges as a central factor, hindering their willingness to participate in discussions, contribute ideas, or showcase their linguistic abilities.

These factors are also endorsed by educators, where a significant portion of the factors influencing students' passivity are their lack of self-confidence and motivation, which make them unaccustomed to engaging in speaking through digital platforms (Shalihah et al., 2022). Insights from interviews underscore that students, particularly in the context of learning English online or when tasked with assignments involving social media uploads, tend to adopt a more passive stance. The apprehension stems from the potential

consequences of errors, with students expressing concerns about the embarrassment that may follow if their mistakes are visible to a wider audience on social media. This fear creates a palpable barrier to their communication, impacting not only their linguistic development but also their confidence in expressing themselves in a digital realm where the fear of public scrutiny looms large. Addressing this issue requires a nuanced approach that acknowledges and mitigates the fear of making mistakes, fostering an environment where students feel empowered to actively participate in language learning on social media platforms.

In addition to the fear of making mistakes, the teacher asserted during the interview that another factor influencing students' speaking passivity on social media is the issue of poor pronunciation. Pronunciation stands out as a crucial element that must be mastered in speaking, as it significantly determines the level of comprehension regarding the spoken content (Pourhosein Gilakjani, 2011). The teacher stated that,

*"Students feel that their pronunciation is far from satisfactory; the pronunciation of English words does not adhere to the original norms. This uncertainty becomes a hindrance to their active participation in social media discussions. Poor pronunciation is influenced by their mother tongue and daily accent. They believe that rather than embarrassing themselves by pronouncing words that are difficult to understand, it is better to adopt a passive stance when speaking on social media."*

Pronunciation significantly influences students' speaking abilities, especially in the context of social media. Poor or inappropriate pronunciation can diminish confidence, discouraging active and articulate participation in spoken communication (Nugroho et al., 2021). The impact of bad pronunciation on speaking passivity in social media is significant. Pronunciation plays a crucial role in effective communication, and when individuals feel their pronunciation is subpar, it creates self-doubt and hesitancy. This fear of mispronunciation often leads to a passive approach in social media interactions, driven by concerns about being misunderstood or judged. Addressing the issue of bad pronunciation is essential not only for improving language skills but also for fostering a more inclusive and engaging social media environment. Recognizing this link and working collaboratively can help mitigate these challenges and promote a culture of confident verbal expression online.

Bad pronunciation influences student speaking passivity in social media by creating a sense of self-doubt and hesitancy, leading to a reluctance to actively engage in verbal

communication for fear of being misunderstood or judged (Anggraeny et al., 2020). Bad pronunciation significantly impacts speaking passivity in social media, fostering self-consciousness and reluctance to actively participate in verbal communication. This fear of potential misunderstandings or judgment hinders individuals from expressing themselves confidently in the dynamic online environment. Addressing this issue is vital for creating a more inclusive and empowered space for verbal expression on social media platforms.

Among the numerous factors influencing students' speaking passivity on social media, the teacher highlighted that the lack of vocabulary is one of the most significant and impactful reasons. Vocabulary is a fundamental element in an individual's speaking proficiency, and a strong command of a rich vocabulary can reduce the difficulty level in one's spoken communication. This is because vocabulary constitutes the content of what an individual will discuss. The teacher emphasized that addressing and enhancing students' vocabulary is crucial for diminishing speaking passivity and facilitating more fluent and effective verbal expression on social media platforms (Susanto, 2017). During the interview, the teacher made a statement that,

*"The students' vocabulary collection tends to be limited; they are not very familiar with rarely used words or those commonly employed in academic contexts. This lack of familiarity renders them more reserved and passive as they grapple with uncertainty about what to express. In online learning settings, they exhibit significant passivity, responding only when prompted and, upon observation, I have noted that a lack of vocabulary is one of the contributors to their passivity."*

The lack of vocabulary correlates with speaking anxiety, as a limited word repertoire can heighten unease and hinder effective verbal expression, fostering self-doubt and fear of linguistic mistakes (Taslim et al., 2019). A limited vocabulary may lead individuals to struggle in articulating their thoughts coherently, fostering a sense of self-doubt and fear of making linguistic mistakes. The fear of being unable to express oneself adequately due to a restricted vocabulary can escalate speaking anxiety, hindering active participation in conversations. Moreover, individuals with a limited lexicon may fear being misunderstood or judged negatively, further exacerbating their speaking anxiety. Therefore, a strong correlation exists between the inadequacy of vocabulary and the heightened levels of anxiety experienced in verbal communication contexts.

The lack of vocabulary influences student speaking passivity in social media by limiting their ability to articulate thoughts coherently, fostering uncertainty and inhibiting active

participation due to a fear of being misunderstood or judged negatively (Uzer, 2017). The influence of a lack of vocabulary on student speaking passivity in social media is marked by its impact on effective communication. Students grappling with a limited repertoire of words find themselves hesitant to actively engage in discussions on social media platforms. The scarcity of words hampers their ability to express thoughts and opinions coherently, creating a barrier to confident and articulate participation. This linguistic constraint often leads to a fear of being misunderstood or judged negatively by peers, fostering a sense of inadequacy. Consequently, students become more inclined to adopt a passive stance in online conversations, preferring to observe rather than risk expressing themselves inadequately. Addressing this lack of vocabulary is pivotal in empowering students to overcome speaking passivity and contribute more confidently to the dynamic discourse of social media.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this research delves into the factors influencing speaking passivity on social media among tenth-grade students in a private high school in Surabaya. The study identified three key factors—fear of making mistakes, bad pronunciation, and a lack of vocabulary—that contribute significantly to students' passive engagement in spoken communication through digital platforms. The fear of making mistakes emerged as a fundamental driver, with students expressing anxiety about potential errors leading to embarrassment and judgment. Bad pronunciation played a crucial role, as students felt uncertain about their pronunciation skills and opted for a passive stance to avoid embarrassment. The lack of vocabulary also proved to be a substantial barrier, limiting students' ability to articulate thoughts coherently and fostering a sense of uncertainty and inadequacy.

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