

**CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS  
AT GRADE 7 OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN RURAL AREAS**

**SKRIPSI**



Present to

IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of Sarjana in English Language Education

**By:**

**Dina Susanti**

**NIM 21120010**

**ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND ARTS EDUCATION  
IKIP PGRI BOJONEGORO  
2024/2025**

**CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS  
AT GRADE 7 OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN RURAL AREAS**

**SKRIPSI**

Present to

IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of Sarjana in English Language Education

**By:**

**Dina Susanti**

**NIM 21120010**

**ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT  
FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND ARTS EDUCATION  
IKIP PGRI BOJONEGORO  
2024/2025**

## APPROVAL SHEETS

The skripsi entitled “**CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS AT GRADE 7 OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN RURAL AREAS**” is compiled by:

Name : Dina Susanti  
NIM : 21120010  
Department : English Education

Has been approved by the advisors.

Bojonegoro, 10 July 2025

Advisor I,



Meiga Ratih Tirtanawati, M.Pd.

NIDN 0725058403

Advisor II,



Chyntia Heru W.P., M.Pd.

NIDN 0728017903

## LEGITIMATION

The skripsi entitled "CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS AT GRADE 7 OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN RURAL AREAS" is compiled by:

Name : Dina Susanti

NIM : 21120010

Department : English Education

This is to certify that this skripsi has been approved by the Board of Examiners as the requirement for the degree of Sarjana in English Education Department, Faculty of Languages and Arts Education, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro on 10 July 2025

Bojonegoro, 28 July 2025

Chairman,



Dr. Cahyo Hasanudin, M.Pd.

NIDN 0706058801

Secretary,



Ayu Fitrianiingsih, M.Pd.

NIDN 0720049101

Examiner I,



Oktha Ika Rahmawati, S.Pd., M.Pd.

NIDN 0701108602

Examiner II,



Dr. Moh. Fuadul Matin, S.S., M.Pd.

NIDN 0727028703

Rector,

Dr. Dra. Junarti, M. Pd.

NIDN 0014016501

## **MOTTO**

"When you feel tired, remember your purpose. Do not stop in the middle of the journey just because of exhaustion. Stop only when you have reached the finish line and proven that you are capable of overcoming it."

***(Dina Susanti)***

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First of all, the writer would like to express the highest gratitude to Allah SWT, the Almighty, for His blessings, guidance, and strength throughout the process of completing this thesis entitled **“Challenges in Teaching English Speaking Skills at Grade 7 of Junior High Schools in Rural Areas.”**

The writer would like to sincerely thank:

1. Meiga Ratih Tirtanawati, M.Pd., as the first supervisor, for the guidance, advice, support, and encouragement given during the thesis writing.
2. Chyntia Heru Woro Prastiwi, M.Pd., as the second supervisor, for the suggestions, guidance, and motivation throughout the thesis completion.
3. All lecturers and staff of the English Education Study Program for their knowledge, assistance, and dedication during the writer's study.
4. The headmasters, English teachers, and all seventh-grade students of SMP Negeri 1 Sekar and SMP Negeri 2 Gondang for the cooperation.
5. The writer's beloved parents who always give endless prayers, support, and motivation in every step of the writer's journey.
6. Fellow students of the English Education Study Program, class of 2021, who have provided motivation, support, and shared unforgettable moments.
7. All parties who cannot be mentioned one by one, but who have provided support, assistance, and encouragement, either directly or indirectly.
8. The writer realizes that this thesis is far from perfect. Therefore, constructive criticism and suggestions are highly expected for the improvement.

Bojonegoro, 10 July 2025

The Writer

## STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY

I, the undersigned below:

Name : Dina Susanti  
NIM : 21120010  
Department : English Education  
Faculty : Languages and Arts Education

In order to uphold academic integrity, sincerely and without coercion from any parties, I hereby declare that the thesis entitled:

### CHALLENGES IN TEACHING ENGLISH SPEAKING SKILLS AT GRADE 7 OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS IN RURAL AREAS

Is the result of my own original work, and all sources of information used have been clearly cited in the reference list according to the scientific and academic code of ethics. I am aware that if any violations of scholarly ethics regarding to the authenticity of this work are found, I personally accept the consequences in accordance with the applicable regulations and am prepared to bear legal sanctions.

Bojonegoro, 10 July 2025



Dina Susanti

NIM 21120010

## ABSTRACT

Susanti, Dina. 2025. Strategies in Teaching English Speaking Skills in Grade 7 of Junior High Schools in Rural Areas. Thesis. English Education Study Program, Faculty of Language and Arts Education, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. Advisor I: Meiga Ratih Tirtanawati, M.Pd., Advisor II: Chyntia Heru Woro Prastiwi, M.Pd.

**Keywords:** : Teaching Challenges, Speaking Skills, English, Rural Schools.

Teaching English speaking skills to seventh-grade students in rural junior high schools presents several significant challenges. This study aims to describe the obstacles encountered by English teachers in the process of teaching speaking in rural educational settings. A descriptive qualitative approach was used, and data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. The results show that teachers face challenges such as students' lack of confidence, limited vocabulary, low motivation, and environmental factors such as minimal access to supporting materials and limited exposure to English outside the classroom. The teacher at SMP Negeri 1 Sekar struggled with students' shyness and passive classroom participation, while the teacher at SMP Negeri 2 Gondang faced difficulties due to students' limited vocabulary and reliance on translation. These challenges were influenced by the rural context, where English is rarely used in daily life. The conclusion of this study highlights the need for more contextualized, engaging, and motivational teaching approaches to address these challenges effectively.



## ABSTRAK

Susanti, Dina. 2025. Strategi dalam Mengajarkan Keterampilan Berbicara Bahasa Inggris pada Siswa Kelas 7 SMP di Daerah Pedesaan. Skripsi. Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris, Fakultas Pendidikan Bahasa dan Seni, IKIP PGRI Bojonegoro. Dosen Pembimbing I: Meiga Ratih Tirtanawati, M.Pd. Dosen Pembimbing II: Chyntia Heru Woro Prastiwi, M.Pd.

**Kata Kunci:** Tantangan Mengajar, Keterampilan Berbicara, Bahasa Inggris, Sekolah Pedesaan.

Pengajaran keterampilan berbicara dalam bahasa Inggris kepada siswa kelas VII di sekolah menengah pertama yang terletak di daerah pedesaan menghadapi berbagai tantangan yang signifikan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan hambatan-hambatan yang dihadapi oleh guru Bahasa Inggris dalam proses pembelajaran speaking di lingkungan pendidikan pedesaan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif, dengan teknik pengumpulan data melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru menghadapi tantangan seperti kurangnya rasa percaya diri siswa, keterbatasan kosakata, rendahnya motivasi belajar, serta faktor lingkungan seperti minimnya akses terhadap media pendukung dan terbatasnya penggunaan bahasa Inggris dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Guru di SMP Negeri 1 Sekar mengalami kesulitan dengan siswa yang pemalu dan kurang aktif dalam kelas, sedangkan guru di SMP Negeri 2 Gondang menghadapi kendala berupa kosakata yang terbatas dan ketergantungan siswa terhadap terjemahan. Tantangan-tantangan ini dipengaruhi oleh kondisi daerah pedesaan yang kurang mendukung penggunaan bahasa Inggris secara kontekstual. Simpulan dari penelitian ini menunjukkan perlunya pendekatan pembelajaran yang lebih kontekstual, menarik, dan memotivasi untuk mengatasi hambatan-hambatan tersebut secara efektif.

## PREFACE

All praise is due to Allah SWT for His endless grace, guidance, and blessings, which have enabled the writer to complete this thesis entitled “**Challenges in Teaching English Speaking Skills in Grade 7 of Junior High Schools in Rural Areas**” This thesis is submitted as one of the requirements for obtaining a Bachelor's Degree in English Education. The writer would like to express her deepest appreciation to her thesis advisors, Mrs. Meiga Ratih Tirtanawati, M.Pd., and Mrs. Chyntia Heru Woro Prastiwi, M.Pd., for their guidance, valuable input, and encouragement throughout the entire process of writing this thesis. The writer also wishes to sincerely thank her beloved parents, supportive friends, and the schools involved in the research for their assistance and cooperation. The writer realizes that this thesis is far from perfect; therefore, constructive suggestions and criticisms are highly welcomed for future improvement.

Bojonegoro, 10 July 2025

The Writer

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>TITLE PAGE .....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>APPROVAL SHEETS.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>LEGITIMATION.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENT .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICITY .....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>LIST OF TABLES .....</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>LIST OF FIGURES .....</b>	<b>xii</b>
<b>LIST OF APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>CHAPTER I.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
A. Background of the Study.....	1
B. Research Problem.....	4
C. Objectives of the Research.....	4
D. Significances of the Study.....	4
E. Definition of Key Terms .....	4
<b>CHAPTER II .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>LITERATURE REVIEW.....</b>	<b>8</b>
A. Theoretical Review .....	9
1. Speaking Skills in English Language Learning .....	9
2. Teacher Strategies in Teaching Speaking Skills.....	19
3. Challenges in Teaching English in Rural Areas .....	24
B. Relevant Previous Studies .....	26
C. Conceptual Framework.....	27
<b>CHAPTER III .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>RESEARCH METHODS .....</b>	<b>29</b>
A. Research Design .....	30
B. Research Setting .....	31
C. Research Subjects .....	32
D. Data Source .....	33
E. Data Collection Techniques .....	34
F. Data Analysis Technique .....	35

<b>CHAPTER IV .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION .....</b>	<b>36</b>
A. Research Findings .....	37
1. The Challenges Faced by the Teachers in Teaching Speaking.....	37
2. The Strategies Used by the Teachers to Overcome the Challenges .....	41
B. Discussion.....	49
1. Challenges in Teaching Speaking Skills.....	50
2. Strategies Implemented by the Teachers to Overcome the Challenges.....	51
<b>CHAPTER V .....</b>	<b>55</b>
<b>CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION .....</b>	<b>55</b>
A. Conclusion.....	56
B. Suggestions .....	58
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>59</b>
Appendix 1 Observation Sheet for Teaching Speaking Aktivites .....	61
Appendix 2 Interview Guide for English Teachers.....	63
Appendix 3 Observation Answers at SMP Negeri 1 Sekar and SMP Negeri 2 Gondang .....	65
Appendix 4 Interview Answers at SMP Negeri 1 Sekar and SMP Negeri 2 Gondang .....	69
Appendix 5 Documentation of Teaching Activities at SMP Negeri 1 Sekar and SMP Negeri 2 Gondang .....	71
Appendix 6 Research Permission Letter From SMP Negeri 1 Sekar and SMP Negeri 2 Gondang .....	76

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1 Teaching Strategies Used by the Teachers Based on Observation .....	46
Table 2 Students' Preferences Toward the Speaking Strategies .....	48
Table 3 Challenges in Teaching Speaking Skills .....	50

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework.....	28
Figure 2 Student's Preferences for Speaking Strategies .....	52
Figure 3 The teacher asks students to open their worksheets and then slowly provides examples of how to pronounce the dialogue so they understand how to read it.....	72
Figure 4 Students take turns reading the dialogue in groups to practice their speaking skills. ....	72
Figure 5 The teacher writes examples of vocabulary pronunciation on the board and then guides students to read the dialogue together to practice their speaking skills. ....	73
Figure 6 The teacher calls students to the front to practice speaking directly, demonstrating their courage in speaking English in front of their peers. ....	73
Figure 7 The teacher explains that students will learn to speak English through songs and understand the meaning of each word.....	74
Figure 8 Students discuss in groups to translate the lyrics of the song that has been played. ....	74
Figure 9 The teacher helps students who are having difficulty understanding the meaning of the words in the lyrics. ....	75
Figure 10 Each group comes to the front to present their translation and practice pronunciation together. ....	75

## LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendices 1 Observation Sheet for Teaching Speaking Aktivites .....	62
Appendices 2 Interview Guide for English Teachers .....	64
Appendices 3 Observation Answers at SMP Negeri 1 Sekar and SMP Negeri 2 Gondang .....	66
Appendices 4 Interview Answers at SMP Negeri 1 Sekar and SMP Negeri 2 Gondang. ....	70
Appendices 5 Documentation of Teaching Activities at SMP Negeri 1 Sekar and SMP Negeri 2 Gondang .....	72
Appendices 1 Research Permission Letter From SMP Negeri 1 Sekar and SMP Negeri 2 Gondang .....	76

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter introduces the research topic, which focuses on strategies used by teachers to develop English language skills among Grade 7 students in rural areas. This chapter outlines the rationale behind this research, the challenges faced in teaching English in rural schools, and the importance of speaking skills in English language learning. This chapter also identifies the research problem, objectives, and significance of the research. In addition, this section also defines key terms to ensure clarity and alignment with the research objectives.

### **A. Background of the Study**

Speaking skill is one of the main components of English learning. This skill is crucial because it enables students to communicate actively, express their ideas, and build confidence in using English. However, students in rural areas often face difficulties in developing their speaking skills. These difficulties are often caused by several factors, such as the lack of access to adequate learning resources, limited opportunities to practice speaking in real-life environments, and low student motivation (Rahman & Pandian, 2016).

In addition to student-related factors, teachers also play a significant role in English language teaching. Teachers are often the primary source of English learning for students in rural areas. Unfortunately, many teachers in rural areas face limitations, such as a lack of professional training, insufficient educational facilities, and a lack of support from schools or the government.



According to Wahyuni (2020), teachers in rural areas often struggle to access modern teaching technologies or relevant teaching materials, which impacts the teaching methods they employ.

On the other hand, Grade 7 students are at a critical stage in their educational development. At this stage, they begin to adapt to the junior high school environment, which demands greater independence and active participation in learning. According to Putri & Yusuf (2021), Grade 7 students have significant potential to develop English-speaking skills if supported by innovative and contextual teaching strategies.

Several teaching strategies have been proven effective in improving students' speaking skills, including group discussions, role-playing, simulations, and task-based learning. These strategies not only help students develop their speaking skills but also boost their confidence and motivation (Fauzan, 2016). In addition, teaching approaches involving simple technology, such as educational videos or English-learning apps, can help create a more interactive and engaging learning experience for students in rural areas (Wahyuni, 2020).

Implementing these strategies in rural areas, such as SMPN 1 Sekar and SMPN 2 Gondang, faces numerous challenges. One of the main issues is the lack of infrastructure, such as uneven internet access and inadequate classroom facilities. For example, in SMPN 1 Sekar, limited internet coverage often disrupts online-based learning activities, making it difficult for students to access digital learning resources (Mustafa, 2018). Similarly, in SMPN 2

Gondang, the lack of multimedia tools in classrooms has hindered teachers from integrating technology effectively into their lessons (Wahyuni, 2020).

However, infrastructure is not the only challenge. Many students in these schools have limited exposure to English outside the classroom, which makes it difficult for them to practice their speaking skills regularly. Additionally, teachers must balance English instruction with other subjects, which sometimes reduces the time allocated for speaking activities (Putri & Yusuf, 2021). As a result, students often lack the confidence to express their ideas in English, especially in formal settings (Rahman & Pandian, 2016).

Despite these challenges, teachers at SMPN 1 Sekar and SMPN 2 Gondang have developed creative strategies to improve students' speaking skills. For instance, they incorporate role-playing activities to help students practice conversational English in realistic scenarios (Fauzan, 2016). Furthermore, some teachers use peer discussions and storytelling exercises to encourage students to speak more naturally (Wahyuni, 2020). By implementing these approaches, teachers aim to foster a more engaging and supportive learning environment that enhances students' speaking confidence.

Therefore, addressing these challenges requires not only improving physical infrastructure but also providing targeted training programs to enhance both teachers' pedagogical skills and students' speaking confidence (Fauzan, 2016). For instance, teachers need more support in applying interactive speaking activities effectively, even in classrooms with limited resources (Mustafa, 2018). Additionally, students can benefit from structured speaking practice that helps them gradually build fluency (Putri & Yusuf,

2021). As Mustafa (2018) highlights, these obstacles underline the urgent need for more contextualized and sustainable efforts to support English language education in rural schools.

## **B. Research Problem**

1. What challenges are faced by English teachers in teaching speaking skills to Grade 7 students in rural junior high schools?
2. What strategies do teachers use to overcome those challenges in developing students' English-speaking skills?

## **C. Objectives of the Research**

1. To identify the challenges faced by English teachers in teaching speaking skills to Grade 7 students in rural areas?
2. To describe and analyze the strategies used by teachers to overcome those challenges and improve students' English-speaking skills.

## **D. Significances of the Study**

There are several benefits that can be gained from this research. Among them:

1. Theoretical Significance:  
Adding to the literature regarding strategies for developing English speaking skills in remote areas.
2. Practical Significance:
  - a) Provide insight to teachers about effective strategies to improve students' speaking skills.
  - b) Helping schools overcome challenges related to limited resources with relevant learning strategies.

## **E. Definition of Key Terms**

## **1. Teacher Strategy**

Teacher strategy refers to a set of systematically planned methods, techniques, and approaches applied by educators to achieve optimal learning outcomes. Richards and Rodgers (2015) explain that teaching strategies are structured decisions made by teachers to meet instructional objectives while addressing students' individual needs and capabilities. As such, teaching strategies are flexible and should be adapted according to classroom conditions, students' learning styles, and the subject matter being taught. Commonly used strategies include group discussions, role-playing, simulations, presentations, and task-based learning. Each of these methods contributes in different ways to enhancing students' confidence, vocabulary mastery, and fluency (Thornbury, 2017). Harmer (2015) emphasizes that effective teaching requires a balance between direct instruction and opportunities for students to explore and use the language independently.

## **2. English Speaking Skills**

English speaking skills refer to the ability to communicate ideas, thoughts, and information orally using the English language. According to Thornbury (2017), speaking is a productive skill that demands the integration of linguistic knowledge, social awareness, and strategic competence in order to convey messages appropriately and successfully. This means that speaking is not merely about knowing words and grammar but also about being able to use language naturally and interactively in real communication. In the writer's opinion, English speaking skills are not just about linguistic accuracy, but more importantly about the ability to

communicate meaningfully and confidently in a variety of situations. Whether in formal discussions or informal conversations, students need to be equipped with the ability to express their opinions, share ideas, and respond appropriately to others. Cultivating these skills enables students to engage more fully in the learning process and prepares them for real-world communication in English. As such, teachers play a vital role in creating learning environments that support the regular practice of speaking through meaningful, interactive, and motivating activities.

### **3. Rural Areas**

Rural areas refer to regions located outside urban centers, often characterized by smaller populations, close-knit communities, and natural surroundings. In the context of education, rural settings offer unique dynamics where strong relationships between schools and communities play a significant role in the learning process. According to UNESCO (2021), rural areas are generally regions with more limited access to public services, including education, compared to urban areas. However, this does not necessarily reflect a lower quality of education, but rather highlights the importance of context-sensitive strategies and approaches in rural schools. Despite certain limitations in infrastructure or access to learning technologies, many rural schools demonstrate resilience, creativity, and strong community engagement. Teachers in these areas often take on multiple roles not only as educators but also as mentors, motivators, and leaders within their communities. The supportive environment, smaller class sizes, and strong parental involvement are among the strengths that can

positively influence students' learning experiences. From the writer's point of view, rural areas are not merely defined by what they lack, but by the potential they hold. With the right strategies, education in rural areas can be just as effective and enriching as in urban settings. Emphasizing creativity, community support, and local wisdom allows rural teachers to create a learning environment where students can grow confidently and improve their communication skills. Rural education, when empowered with thoughtful teaching practices, has the capacity to nurture capable and motivated learners who are ready to face the challenges of the future.

#### **4. Challenges in Rural Education**

Education in rural areas has its own distinctive characteristics that make it both unique and challenging. Several common challenges include limited learning facilities, a lack of educational resources, and restricted opportunities for teacher development. Singh and Sarkar (2015) argue that to ensure equal access to education for students in rural settings, creative and context-appropriate strategies are essential. One of the major challenges is the limited exposure to English in daily life. Students in rural areas usually rely solely on classroom instruction to learn English, unlike their urban peers who have broader access to media, private courses, and more supportive language environments. Rural students tend to lack confidence and fluency in speaking English, as they rarely use the language beyond the classroom. In addition, the facilities and learning materials available in rural schools are often limited. Textbooks may be outdated, interactive learning media may be unavailable, and access to technology is often minimal.

Teachers, therefore, must often innovate by using simple and available materials to deliver lessons that remain engaging and easy for students to understand. According to Azano and Stewart (2016), such circumstances require teachers to be more creative in designing learning activities that are both relevant and enjoyable. Another challenge is the limited access to professional development. Not all teachers in rural areas have the same opportunities to attend training or seminars that can enhance their knowledge and teaching strategies. In my opinion, the challenges faced in rural education should not be seen solely as obstacles, but also as opportunities for growth and innovation. With appropriate approaches and sufficient support, rural education holds great potential to thrive. It is often within these limitations that creative solutions and more human-centered, contextual learning approaches emerge. Teachers who understand their students' needs and the local context can create meaningful and effective English learning experiences, particularly in helping students develop their speaking skills.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**