

The Interference of the Mother Tongue on the English Speaking Skill Development

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Abstract

Language functions as a primary tool for communication to express intentions, ideas, and thoughts. A first language or mother tongue is naturally acquired through early interactions with family and the surrounding environment. As learners grow older, they often acquire a second language, such as English, either naturally or through formal instruction. However, during second language acquisition, mother tongue interference frequently occurs, particularly in speaking skills. This study aims to identify the common speaking difficulties experienced by students as a result of mother tongue interference and to explore the strategies they use to overcome these challenges. Employing a qualitative approach with a phenomenological method, the study involved students from three classes: Class X, XI C, and XI D. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and documentation. The data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis model and open coding techniques proposed by Strauss and Corbin. Data validity was ensured through source and technique triangulation. The findings reveal that mother tongue interference consistently appears in three major aspects: grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Students tend to directly translate sentence structures from their native language, produce pronunciations influenced by local sounds, and mix languages when encountering vocabulary limitations. To address these difficulties, students apply independent learning strategies such as watching English films, reading, listening to English songs, and engaging in informal conversations. The study concludes that although mother tongue interference poses challenges in speaking proficiency, it can be minimized through autonomous learning and supportive English language exposure.

Keywords: Language Acquisition, Language Errors, Learning Strategies, Mother Tongue Interference, Speaking Skills.

1. Introduction

English is recognized as a lingua franca (ELF) in communication situations worldwide, alongside the acceleration of globalization (Murata, 2019). Like other languages, it has significant benefits in the modern world, particularly in the field of education. Among the four language skills, speaking competence is considered the most essential as it reflects an individual's ability to communicate and interact effectively. This skill also functions as a primary indicator of language proficiency, encompassing grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Furthermore, the development of effective speaking skills not only enhances academic achievement but also provides wider professional opportunities in today's interconnected era. In this regard, educational institutions emphasize the importance of speaking skills to prepare students for global communication challenges. Ultimately,

strengthening students' speaking proficiency is not only vital for academic purposes but also for fostering cross-cultural understanding and collaboration in diverse communication settings.

This makes speaking skills one of the most important aspects of learning English, as it plays a crucial role in daily communication. Rao (2019) asserts that among the four existing language skills, speaking is regarded as the most significant in foreign or second language learning. The ability to speak not only reflects mastery of the language but also enhances learners' confidence in interacting with others. In the context of globalization, where intercultural communication is increasingly frequent, speaking proficiency becomes even more essential. Through speaking, students can express ideas, share opinions, and interact effectively, which contributes to their overall language development. Moreover, speaking skills are closely connected to students' critical and creative thinking abilities, as they must construct arguments and articulate their viewpoints clearly. Thus, mastering speaking skills in English is fundamental not only for academic success but also for building interpersonal relationships and preparing for future professional endeavors.

The importance of learning English cannot be separated from the challenges that learners face, particularly the influence of their mother tongue. Mother tongue interference occurs when students transfer patterns, vocabulary, or structures from their first language into English, resulting in errors in pronunciation, grammar, and word choice. Noviyenty and Irene Putri (2021) emphasize that such interference often leads learners to use incorrect grammatical forms that mirror the rules of their native language. Direct translation also contributes to the misuse of vocabulary, which may cause misunderstanding in communication. In many cases, the mother tongue becomes an immediate fallback when learners struggle to find appropriate words or sentence structures in English. Consequently, mother tongue interference becomes one of the primary barriers that hinder students from achieving fluency and accuracy in their English-speaking competence.

Mother tongue interference is also evident in the English learning environment of SMAS Putri Al-Iman Sidrap, where students are encouraged to use foreign languages, both Arabic and English, in daily interactions. In this context, students often encounter difficulties when they do not fully master the vocabulary or sentence structures of the target language. As a result, they tend to mix their mother tongue with English, which sometimes leads to misunderstandings and reduces the effectiveness of communication. For instance, when students attempt to express opinions in English, they may unconsciously adopt grammatical structures or vocabulary from their first language, altering the intended meaning. The boarding school environment, which strongly emphasizes the use of foreign languages, creates a unique situation where students feel pressured to maintain fluency, yet still rely on their mother tongue as a support system. This phenomenon highlights the need to examine more deeply how mother tongue interference shapes students' speaking practices in bilingual educational settings.

The bilingual environment in boarding school not only requires students to practice English and Arabic consistently but also creates linguistic pressure that influences their communication patterns. In such settings, students are often compelled to combine English with their mother tongue as a way to sustain fluency in daily interactions. While this strategy helps them to continue communication, it also slows down their mastery of the target language and forms language habits that do not align with the expected standards of fluency. These linguistic dynamics are unique to boarding school contexts, where the coexistence of multiple languages shapes both learning and social practices. Consequently, examining the phenomenon of mother tongue interference in bilingual environments becomes crucial for understanding the challenges that students face in developing their speaking skills.

The phenomenon of mother tongue interference in bilingual contexts has been widely discussed in previous studies. However, research that specifically explores students' experiences in boarding school, particularly in relation to speaking skills, remains relatively limited. The active use of two foreign languages, such as English and Arabic, in boarding school environments creates unique linguistic dynamics that differ from other educational contexts. Moreover, most previous studies employed quantitative or mixed methods to identify errors in students' English speaking caused by mother tongue interference. In contrast, this study applies a qualitative approach with phenomenology to gain deeper insights into students' real experiences. The focus is placed on exploring the specific difficulties students encounter when speaking English and the strategies they develop to overcome those challenges, which distinguishes this study from the existing literature.

This study highlights both its novelty and practical value. The novelty lies in examining mother tongue interference in a boarding school context where students actively use more than one foreign language, particularly English and Arabic, in addition to their mother tongue. This multilingual environment creates different speaking challenges compared to regular schools. Unlike previous studies that mainly focused on identifying linguistic errors, this research explores students' real experiences in speaking English and how they deal with these difficulties in daily communication. Using a phenomenological qualitative approach allows the study to capture students' perspectives more deeply. In terms of practical value, the findings provide useful insights for English teachers and boarding school educators to develop more effective speaking activities, language habituation programs, and supportive learning environments. The strategies identified in this study can help teachers reduce negative mother tongue interference and support students' confidence and fluency in English speaking.

Therefore, this research aims to investigate the most common difficulties faced by students in speaking English that make them fall back on their mother tongue and to identify the strategies they employ to address these difficulties. By focusing on the lived experiences of students in a bilingual boarding school, this study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how mother tongue interference affects the development of speaking skills in such contexts. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically by enriching the discussion on language interference in foreign language acquisition and practically by offering valuable insights for teachers and students in dealing with speaking challenges. Ultimately, this study highlights the significance of exploring students' strategies in overcoming interference as part of their efforts to improve their English-speaking competence.

2. Method

The participants of this study consisted of six students of SMA Al-Iman Ulu-ale Sidrap, South Sulawesi, who were selected through purposive sampling. The criteria for selecting participants were determined to ensure that they could provide relevant and rich information related to the research objectives. The specific criteria included:

- a. Students who had been staying in the boarding school environment for at least one year, so that they were already familiar with the language rules and daily practices in the institution.
- b. Students who were actively involved in the use of English in both classroom and dormitory activities.
- c. Students who had experienced noticeable difficulties in speaking English, particularly those related to mother tongue interference.
- d. Students who were willing to participate and share their experiences openly during the interview process.

These criteria were set to ensure that the selected participants could represent the phenomenon under study and provide valuable insights into the difficulties and strategies in speaking English within a bilingual boarding school environment.

This study was designed using a qualitative research approach with a phenomenological method to explore students' experiences in dealing with mother tongue interference in English speaking. Creswell and Creswell (2018) explain that qualitative research is intended to understand the meaning individuals ascribe to social or human problems, making it suitable for investigating students' real experiences in learning English. The use of phenomenology was considered appropriate because it allows the researcher to capture participants lived experiences and the meanings they attach to the challenges of speaking. Unlike quantitative research, which emphasizes numerical data and hypothesis testing, phenomenology focuses on describing and interpreting participants' perspectives in depth. Through this method, the researcher aimed to obtain authentic insights into how students perceived, experienced, and responded to the influence of their mother tongue in speaking English. This approach also enabled a deeper understanding of both the difficulties encountered and the strategies developed by the students in overcoming language interference.

The phenomenological approach was selected because this study aims to understand students' lived experiences in dealing with mother tongue interference when speaking English, rather than merely identifying linguistic errors. In the boarding school context, students experience continuous exposure to multiple languages in both academic and non-academic settings. Phenomenology allows the researcher to explore how students perceive, experience, and make meaning of these speaking challenges in their daily lives. This approach is particularly suitable because mother tongue interference is not only a linguistic phenomenon but also a subjective experience influenced by habits, confidence, and language environment. By focusing on participants' perspectives, phenomenology enables a deeper understanding of how interference occurs and how students develop strategies to cope with it.

After determining the research design and method, the next important step was to establish the procedure for analyzing the collected data. In qualitative research, data analysis plays a crucial role in organizing and interpreting large amounts of information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. Therefore, this study employed the interactive model of data analysis proposed by Miles and Huberman (2014) to systematically process the data. This model was considered appropriate because it allows the researcher to continuously move between data collection and analysis, ensuring that findings remain grounded in the participants' real experiences. The analysis of the data in this study consists of three main stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. In the reduction stage, the raw data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation were carefully selected, simplified, and organized to focus on aspects relevant to the research objectives, particularly the influence of the mother tongue on students' English-speaking skills. The reduced data were then presented in a systematic form through data display, allowing the researcher to identify patterns, themes, and relationships that emerged across participants' responses. Finally, conclusions were drawn and verified continuously throughout the research process to ensure accuracy and validity. This iterative cycle of reduction, display, and verification not only made the analysis more manageable but also enabled the researcher to maintain a strong connection between the data and the interpretation of students lived experiences.

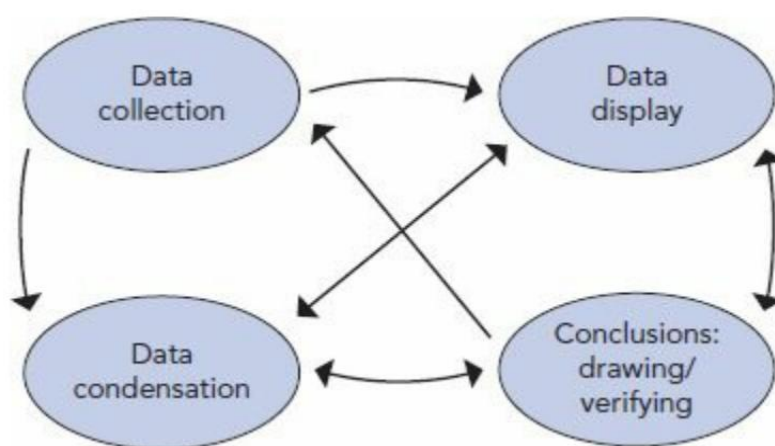


Figure 1 *Component of Data Analysis*

As an initial part of Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis, data reduction becomes an important stage to simplify and focus the data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. At this stage, researchers perform a coding process to group the data based on themes and sub-themes relevant to the research focus. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990), coding is a fundamental step in qualitative research that allows researchers to organize raw data into meaningful categories. With this approach, participants' responses regarding their difficulties and strategies in speaking English due to mother tongue interference are elaborated upon and then grouped according to patterns that emerge repeatedly. This grouping process not only helps reduce the overwhelming amount of data but also ensures that the analysis remains rooted in the participants' real experiences.

Thus, the application of the phenomenological method combined with the interactive analysis model of Miles and Huberman, as well as the coding techniques of Strauss and Corbin, provides a solid foundation for this research. Each stage, from data collection to processing, is designed to maintain the connection between empirical findings and the real experiences of the participants. This approach not only ensures that the research results are based on valid and accountable data but also allows the researcher to delve deeper into the dynamics of mother tongue interference in English-speaking skills. Therefore, the methodological framework used is believed to be capable of producing findings that are rich, profound, and relevant to the research objectives.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Results

The results of this study indicate that the main difficulties faced by students in speaking English lie in the aspects of grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. These three areas consistently appeared in the interviews and observations, showing the strong influence of the mother tongue in shaping students' language production. Such difficulties often forced the students to fall back on their native language during communication, thereby reducing their fluency in English. This condition highlights that mother tongue interference does not only appear occasionally but has become a recurring challenge in the students' speaking development. Furthermore, the persistence of these difficulties suggests that interference plays a central role in shaping the way students construct and use English in their daily interactions.

Besides facing various difficulties, the students also developed several strategies to overcome the influence of their mother tongue in speaking English. These strategies emerged naturally as they attempted to maintain communication despite limited grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation skills. Some students reported practicing English through entertainment media such as movies or music, while others preferred reading English texts to expand their vocabulary. A few also relied on chatting in English with friends to improve their fluency in more informal contexts. These strategies demonstrate that although students struggled with mother tongue interference, they actively sought ways to reduce its impact. To provide a clearer picture, the following section discusses the most common strategies used by students along with their experiences.

The second main finding of this study highlights that, despite experiencing various difficulties in speaking English due to mother tongue interference, students actively develop different strategies to overcome these challenges. These strategies emerge both in formal learning contexts and in informal interactions, showing that students attempt to minimize their dependence on their first language in diverse ways. Interview results reveal that the strategies employed include independent efforts such as watching films, listening to music, and reading English texts, as well as interactional practices like chatting or conversing with peers in English. In addition, external support from teachers and peers through direct corrections also contributes to the improvement of their speaking abilities. These findings reflect students' growing linguistic awareness of their own weaknesses and indicate the presence of both internal and external motivation to improve their English skills.

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Furthermore, environmental pressure and social interaction patterns also contribute to the persistence of mother tongue interference. Several students reported feeling hesitant or anxious when speaking English, particularly in front of peers, due to fear of making mistakes. This social pressure

often leads them to switch back to their native language to maintain smooth communication. In peer interactions, efficiency and solidarity are prioritized, causing students to choose the language that feels most comfortable and socially accepted. Consequently, English speaking practice becomes limited, and interference from the mother tongue remains dominant in spontaneous communication.

Despite these challenges, students actively developed various strategies to cope with mother tongue interference. These strategies are influenced by both individual initiative and the social environment of the boarding school. Independent activities such as watching English movies, listening to English songs, and reading English texts serve not only as language exposure but also as a low-pressure space for learning without fear of judgment. Informal conversations with peers in English further function as a transitional stage, allowing students to gradually build confidence. Additionally, support from teachers and peers through corrective feedback creates a learning environment that encourages improvement rather than punishment. These findings indicate that students' strategies are shaped by the interaction between personal motivation, school culture, and social dynamics, highlighting the importance of creating a supportive and communicative English-speaking environment in boarding schools.

3.2 Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the main difficulties faced by students in speaking English lie in the aspects of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary selection. These difficulties consistently arise and demonstrate a strong influence from the mother tongue in shaping students' language patterns. This finding is relevant to the research by Onah & Marcellus (2023), which identifies that grammar and pronunciation errors among ESL students are a result of the differences between L1 and L2 systems. Similar findings are also observed in the research by Rubab & Zaidi (2022), which cites interference as a dominant cause of errors in both spoken and written English. However, this study goes beyond their focus by exploring the personal experiences of students in a bilingual boarding school environment, a context that has not been extensively discussed in previous research. Additionally, the phenomenological approach used in this study allows the researcher to capture students' awareness and strategies in greater depth. Therefore, this research reinforces previous findings while also expanding the scope of discussion regarding the role of the mother tongue in mastering speaking skills.

Environmental factors also play a crucial role in reinforcing the dominance of the mother tongue, which affects students' speaking abilities. The research by Darwis & Nur (2021) shows that family and community environments shape linguistic habits that directly impact how students use foreign languages. This aligns with the findings of this study, where students acknowledge that they are more accustomed to speaking with family and peers in regional languages such as Bugis. Limited exposure to English outside the classroom leads students to carry over structures and sounds from L1 when speaking in L2. This not only affects pronunciation but also the sentence structure and vocabulary choices used by students. Therefore, it can be concluded that mother tongue interference does not only stem from a limited knowledge of the target language but is also influenced by socio-linguistic habits. These findings reinforce the study by Darwis and Nur while adding a new perspective from the context of boarding school education.

In the context of phonology, the results of this study are also consistent with the findings of Mariani (2021), who identifies sound interference due to differences in vowel and consonant systems between L1 and L2. Students in this study show a tendency to pronounce English words with sounds that are more familiar from their mother tongue. For example, many students pronounce English words according to the spelling or phonological patterns of Indonesian, such as pronouncing the word "burned" as /bur-nehd/ or "true" as /trru/, with the characteristic rolled /r/ sound of Indonesian. These errors indicate that students lack sufficient phonological awareness of the sound system in English, particularly regarding phonemes that do not exist in their mother tongue. This leads to inaccuracies in pronunciation that can disrupt the understanding of the interlocutor. Although Mariani focused on college students, a similar phenomenon was also found at the intermediate level in this study. Thus, this research reinforces Mariani's findings while also expanding the scope of social context and age of the learners. The addition of data from the boarding school environment contributes new insights into the understanding of phonological interference more broadly.

In addition to speaking English with Indonesian sentence structures, students often mix words from L1 and L2 into a single sentence. Students use code-switching as a strategy to address the linguistic gaps they experience, whether due to Limited Vocabulary, lack of confidence, or situational pressure that demands quick communication. For instance, when students speak in English but do not know certain terms, they immediately insert words or phrases in Indonesian, as seen in expressions like “do you want *es teh*?” or “because *eee... waktu kejadian*.” This form of interference demonstrates that although students strive to use the target language, the dominance of their mother tongue still strongly influences their speech production. According to Fatchul Mu’in et al. (2019), code-switching is a natural form of interference that occurs among bilingual speakers when they struggle to separate the two language systems they command. In the context of learning, code-switching can serve as a communication bridge; however, if not managed properly, it can hinder students' development of the ability to use English purely and consistently.

Overall, the findings of this study can be explained through the interlanguage theory proposed by Selinker (1972). This theory states that L2 learners form a transitional language system called interlanguage as a result of the blending of L1 and L2. In this process, language transfer occurs, leading to systematic errors in students' production of English. This is evident in students' tendencies to use sentence patterns, sounds, and vocabulary derived from their mother tongue. Language transfer occurs when learners unconsciously apply the rules and patterns of their mother tongue to the target language, resulting in systematic errors. For example, students often construct English sentences with grammatical structures resembling their mother tongue, such as “I very like this,” influenced by the Indonesian structure “*Saya sangat suka ini*.” In terms of pronunciation, some students pronounce the word “think” as “ting” or “three” as “tri” because there is no /θ/ sound in their mother tongue. These errors are consistent, reflecting a transitional language system between L1 and L2. Additionally, the phenomenon of overgeneralization of the target language is also found, such as the use of the past form “*buyed*” instead of “bought” because students apply the regular verb rule generally. These findings align with the processes of language transfer and overgeneralization in Interlanguage Theory.

Although students face difficulties in speaking English due to the influence of their mother tongue, they demonstrate various self-directed strategies to overcome these obstacles. One of the most frequently mentioned strategies is watching movies and listening to English music, which they find effective in improving their pronunciation. Through films, students become accustomed to hearing the correct pronunciation from native speakers, which gradually reduces their tendency to pronounce words with regional accents or sounds. Some students also admit to often mimicking the speech of characters in films as a pronunciation practice. This strategy reflects the natural language acquisition process, which aligns with the interlanguage concept in Selinker's theory (1972). Additionally, this strategy expands the findings of Rubab & Zaidi (2022), which emphasize the role of teachers and the education system, by adding a dimension of personal initiative from students. Therefore, exposure to English through entertainment media becomes one form of positive habituation that effectively reduces interference.

In addition to increasing input through films and music, some students also use reading English texts as a way to strengthen their understanding of sentence structures and expand their vocabulary. They mention that reading short stories or light articles helps them understand how to form correct sentences in English. One student stated that they are accustomed to repeating sentences from readings that they find easy and trying to use them when speaking. This helps students avoid the habit of directly translating from their mother tongue, which often leads to sentence structure errors. This strategy supports the principle of interlanguage as a developing system influenced by students' exposure and learning experiences. This research also complements the findings of Sholah (2021), which examined the influence of the mother tongue in writing, by showing that reading strategies also contribute to improving speaking skills. Thus, reading becomes one form of literacy strategy that impacts oral skills.

Another strategy frequently used by students is chatting in English with peers through social media or messaging apps. This activity helps students use English in real and informal contexts, while also training their ability to construct sentences spontaneously. Some students say that chatting makes them more comfortable using new vocabulary without the fear of making mistakes, as there is no pressure like in classroom situations. Although it is written, this practice helps students internalize

English structures and vocabulary more appropriately. This strategy aligns with the idea of L2 communication strategies in Selinker's theory, where learners use creative ways to maintain communication in L2 despite their limitations. Furthermore, these results expand the scope of Mariani (2021) findings, which focused solely on pronunciation, by showing that digital media also play an important role in the development of students' oral language. Thus, chatting becomes a relevant indirect speaking practice tool that resonates with current adolescent habits.

Another interesting finding is that most of the strategies used by students are not the result of teacher instruction but rather personal initiatives based on their needs and experiences. Students realize that the language errors they make stem from habits in L1, prompting them to choose specific ways to correct them. This linguistic awareness is an important aspect of the interlanguage process, where students actively refine their language systems through experience and reflection. The phenomenological approach in this study allows for a deeper understanding of the reasons and motivations behind students' choice of learning strategies. These findings enrich the study by Irene et al. (2023), which primarily highlights interference phenomena, by adding aspects of solutions that originate from individual learners. Therefore, the strategies employed by students in this study demonstrate awareness and self-regulation in the process of learning a second language.

All the strategies identified in this study align with the views of Sri Rahayu & Ramadhan (2021), who state that mother tongue interference can be reduced through habituation to correct structures in L2. The author explains that effective language acquisition occurs when students become accustomed to using correct sentences and do not validate incorrect forms, both orally and in writing. In this context, students' strategies such as watching films, reading, and chatting can be understood as part of this habituation process. Furthermore, the concept of natural acquisition described in that journal also corresponds with students' practices in this study, where many of them learn outside the classroom through natural interactions with English. This approach reinforces the interlanguage theory that students will refine their language systems as their input and experiences increase. Thus, the self-directed strategies employed by students are not only forms of adaptation but also integral parts of an effective language acquisition process in a bilingual context.

From the perspective of Interlanguage Theory, students' strategies to overcome the mother tongue interference can be linked to second language learning strategies and second language communication strategies. In this study, students employed various self-learning techniques such as watching English-language films, listening to English songs, and chatting with friends in English. These strategies help students expand their vocabulary, improve their pronunciation, and become accustomed to English sentence structures. In communication, students use paraphrasing, for example, substituting the word "purchase," which they cannot recall, with "buy," or engaging in code-switching when they cannot find the intended vocabulary. These strategies allow students to continue conversations despite their linguistic shortcomings. This aligns with Selinker's view that communication strategies are part of the natural process of interlanguage formation.

Based on the explanation above, the findings of this research indicate that students experience difficulties in speaking English, which are largely influenced by their mother tongue, particularly in aspects of grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary choice. These errors appear consistently and systematically, indicating that they are not random mistakes but rather part of the natural process of second language acquisition. This suggests that students are in the interlanguage stage, where they are trying to build an English language system based on their previous linguistic experiences. Selinker also mentions that during this process, language transfer occurs, both positively and negatively. The results of this study demonstrate instances of negative transfer, such as the pronunciation of the word "three" as "tri," or the use of sentence structures like "I very like it," which directly result from L1 structure. Furthermore, the interlanguage theory also explains that learners actively develop strategies to overcome their limitations in the target language.

4. Conclusion

The findings of this study reveal that the most common speaking difficulties faced by students are caused by the influence of their mother tongue. These difficulties are evident in three main aspects: grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. In terms of grammar, students often transfer Indonesian

sentence structures into English, resulting in errors such as the mixing of tenses and incorrect word order. Pronunciation errors also occur, with students substituting unfamiliar English sounds with sounds from their native language, such as the rolled /r/ from Indonesian. Limited vocabulary further contributes to interference, as students often insert Indonesian words into their English sentences when they cannot recall the equivalent term. These errors occur systematically rather than randomly, which indicates that they are products of negative language transfer rather than accidental mistakes. This phenomenon aligns with interlanguage theory, where learners develop a transitional linguistic system influenced by both L1 and L2.

In addition to linguistic aspects, the learning environment also plays a crucial role in shaping these difficulties. Although the boarding school enforces the use of English and Arabic, the strong influence of the students' mother tongue persists, especially in informal contexts. Students often revert to using their native language in spontaneous interactions with peers, which reinforces their reliance on L1 structures and vocabulary. This indicates that interference is not only cognitive but also social, as daily communication habits strongly affect language use. Even with bilingual regulations in place, the dominance of the mother tongue outside the classroom continues to influence the persistence of grammatical, pronunciation, and vocabulary errors. Therefore, addressing mother tongue interference requires not only improving linguistic competence but also creating supportive social environments that encourage consistent target language use.

Despite these challenges, the study reveals that students are not passive learners but rather demonstrate awareness and initiative in overcoming their speaking difficulties. The strategies they employ include independent efforts, such as watching English films, listening to songs, and taking notes on new vocabulary, which help to reinforce exposure to the target language. They also use interactional strategies by chatting with peers in English and engaging in group discussions, which provide authentic practice opportunities. In addition, social support strategies play an important role, as teachers and peers offer corrective feedback and reminders to use English consistently. These strategies indicate that mother tongue interference is not a permanent barrier but part of a transitional stage in second language development. Therefore, combining student initiative with environmental support and appropriate pedagogical approaches can significantly enhance students' fluency and accuracy. Consistent corrective feedback, a language-rich environment, and fostering learner autonomy are key to gradually reducing the influence of the mother tongue on English-speaking skills.

This study suggests expanding the exploration of mother tongue interference to broader contexts and specific linguistic aspects. Since this research focuses only on speaking skills in a bilingual boarding school environment, further studies could involve more participants, adopt a longitudinal design, or focus on phonological and syntactic elements in greater detail. Investigating the role of technology, digital media, or institutional language policies would also provide valuable insights. Overall, this study emphasizes that while mother tongue interference is a challenge, it can be addressed with appropriate strategies and supportive environments. The recommendations provided are expected to contribute to more effective and contextual English learning practices, particularly in bilingual and multilingual educational settings.

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