

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This introductory chapter outlines the fundamental framework of the study, beginning with the background and the specific problem statement. It further details the research objectives, the theoretical and practical significance of the work, and the defined scope that limits the boundaries of this investigation.

1.1 Background of The Study

In an era of globalization characterized by intense competition and complex challenges, academic qualifications alone are no longer sufficient; proficiency in English has become a vital necessity. As highlighted by Fitriati and Jannah (2016), English maintains its status as the primary medium of international communication. Recognizing its role as a global lingua franca used for diverse professional and social interactions, the Indonesian government has integrated English as a compulsory subject within the secondary education curriculum. Consequently, English instruction now spans the entire educational spectrum, from primary schools to higher education institutions (Gunantar, 2016).

Despite over six years of formal English instruction, the overall language proficiency among Indonesian students continues to lag significantly behind global standards. The English Proficiency Index (EPI, 2018) shows that Indonesia's English Proficiency Index is ranked 15th out of 88 countries in the world, placing Indonesia 13th out of 21 countries in Asia and is below the average English Proficiency in Asia region. According to Nurcahyo et al. (2015), Indonesian should consider this data from EPI as feedback for English teaching since now we are moving to the integration of the ASEAN Economic Competition (AEC), the emergence of English as a

global language has made English a social desirable language in Indonesia and elsewhere in the world.

The English curriculum in Indonesian schools is built upon the mastery of four fundamental competencies: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Speaking is considered a more difficult skill than other skills to be covered by students (Noor, 2017). According to Hodijah (2014), students face problems with speaking skills in terms of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

Furthermore, empirical evidence from Fitriani et al. (2015) indicates that speaking remains a particularly challenging domain for students. This difficulty stems not only from a foundational deficit in linguistic components but also from psychological barriers, specifically a profound lack of self-confidence during oral performance.

Facilitating oral proficiency presents a significant pedagogical challenge for educators. During the researcher's internship observations, several practitioners highlighted critical obstacles in teaching speaking, most notably regarding time management. Within a ninety-minute session, teachers often find it difficult to deliver a comprehensive curriculum while ensuring sufficient student engagement. Furthermore, classroom management emerges as a recurring difficulty, particularly for novice teachers who may lack the nuanced strategies required to facilitate interactive speaking activities effectively.

Drawing from the collective experiences of the researcher and fellow educators during the internship program, various pedagogical approaches were implemented to enhance students' oral communication skills. The selection of these strategies was highly intentional, contingent upon the developmental age and the existing proficiency levels of the learners. While educators employ diverse instructional strategies to facilitate oral communication, eliciting active

participation remains a formidable task. A common obstacle observed is students' persistent silence and apparent lack of enthusiasm during speaking practice. This reluctance often manifests as a lack of responsiveness to teacher instructions, suggesting a disconnect between the teaching methods and student engagement.

Structurally, a strategy serves as a blueprint designed to achieve specific objectives. Within an educational context, it represents a collaborative framework of actions undertaken by both educators and learners to optimize instructional efficiency and efficacy. While the responsibility for designing this conceptual approach rests with the instructor, its execution depends heavily on active student participation. This is mirrored in the definition provided by Stones and Morris (as cited in Gill, 2017), who conceptualize a teaching strategy as an overarching lesson blueprint that integrates structural components, expected learning outcomes aligned with instructional goals, and a selection of pedagogical methods necessary for implementation.

Teaching serves as the systematic transmission of information regarding a specific subject matter destined for student acquisition. Ultimately, the objective of the instructional process is to facilitate both the comprehension and retention of this knowledge among learners. To achieve these pedagogical milestones, the educator functions as a pivotal figure who must demonstrate creativity when selecting instructional materials and methodologies. Furthermore, the teacher plays a critical role in orchestrating the classroom environment to ensure that the learning process proceeds seamlessly and productively.

Teachers must have a strategy for teaching to help students understand. If the teacher does not use strategies, the students may have difficulty in understanding. Consequently, a lack of instructional variety often leads to increased student disengagement. This boredom further

hinders their ability to integrate English into their daily routines, as they lack the necessary familiarity with the language. Conversely, students tend to demonstrate higher levels of comprehension and engagement when educators employ targeted teaching strategies.

Drawing upon the aforementioned context, the researcher aims to examine the specific instructional strategies employed at the target school that facilitate student empowerment and active oral communication. By providing a platform for consistent English practice, these methodologies are expected to significantly bolster students' communicative competence. Consequently, this study is titled "Teachers' Strategy in Teaching Speaking Skill of The Students at SMPK St. Joseph Kupang," with the goal of providing a detailed analysis of these pedagogical interventions.

1.2 Research problem

Based on the background described above, the research problems of this study are formulated as follows:

1. What strategies do the English teachers apply in teaching speaking to the students at SMPK St. Joseph Kupang?
2. How did the teachers implement the strategies?

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

In alignment with the research questions, the specific objectives of this study are:

1. To know the strategies that English teachers apply in teaching speaking skills to the students at SMPK St. Joseph Kupang.
2. To know how the teachers implemented the strategies to the students at SMPK St. Joseph Kupang.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

1. For the teacher

The result of this research can be useful for teachers in improving the quality of the strategy used in teaching speaking skills to students.

2. The students

This result can help the students to improve speaking skills and make the students active in the learning process. Students should have any alternative means to improving their speaking and can apply the strategies given by teacher to improve their English speaking skills.

3. For further research

The findings of this study may serve as a foundational reference for future researchers interested in exploring the broader landscape of instructional strategies in English language education. Subsequent studies could expand upon this work by critically evaluating the specific strengths and limitations of the strategies identified, thereby providing a more nuanced understanding of their efficacy in diverse classroom settings.

1.5 Definition of the term

To ensure conceptual clarity and prevent potential misinterpretations regarding the focus of this study,

1. Teacher Strategy

According to Charlot (2005, as cited in Brown, 2007), strategies are quite broadly defined as procedures that facilitate a learning task. Within a pedagogical framework, strategies are fundamentally characterized by their intentional and goal-oriented nature, representing a deliberate choice made by the educator to facilitate specific learning outcomes. Another statement from another researcher about strategy, Diaz and Rico (2004) state that strategy is a conscious plan for achieving learning.

Moreover, Hamalik (2009) describes teaching and learning strategies as a whole of procedures that are required by both the teacher and students in educational activity to achieve a certain goal. Synthesizing these perspectives, it can be inferred that a teaching strategy serves a multi-dimensional purpose: it acts as a catalyst for learning, a primary driver of student motivation, and a framework for sustained engagement. Ultimately, these strategic interventions are designed to sharpen student focus and optimize the overall instructional experience.

2. Speaking Ability

According to Nunan (2002), speaking is conceptualized as a productive oral competency characterized by the generation of structured verbal expressions to communicate explicit meaning. This communicative act serves as an interactive process through which information, affective states, necessities, perspectives, and concepts are dynamically exchanged between the interlocutors specifically, the speaker and the listener. Similarly, Kathleen (2005) emphasizes that speaking is a process of interaction where speakers intend to build meaning through producing, receiving, and processing information. Synthesizing these theoretical perspectives, it is evident that oral communication serves as a vital conduit for human interaction, functioning as a primary medium through which individuals project their cognitive ideas, perspectives, and emotional states. Consequently, the researcher conceptualizes speaking as the active articulation of acoustic streams designed to transmit information, convey intent, and facilitate meaningful dialogue between interlocutors.