

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

A. Problem Background

English is a language spoken by most people in the world as it is an international language. In Indonesia itself, English is one of the subjects taught in elementary schools to universities. According to the Indonesian Ministry of Education, one of the objectives of learning English is to develop students' competence to be able to use the language to achieve communication purposes both orally and in writing (Kemendikbud 2020). To achieve these competencies, students must be able to understand and produce language. They must learn and master four language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

The importance of mastering English in Indonesia is because English is tested in the national final exam. This aims to make Indonesian students ready to face the era of globalization. So, they can compete with other students who use English as their first or second language. Therefore, teaching and learning English has a social function, in the context of personal, social, and cultural life, academics, and profession (Kemendikbud 2020).

Speaking is one of the skills that must be mastered in order to compete with other students. Speaking skills play a very important role as a communication tool because English is a foreign language commonly used by many people around the world to communicate. As a communication tool, speaking is an essential need for humans to express ideas opinions, wishes, or desires to do something, negotiate or solve problems, build or maintain social relationships and friendships (Porter, McDonough, and Shaw 1995).

English speaking has been seen as the most demanding skill of all (Khan and Ali 2010). Then, speaking becomes an important need for students, and having good speaking ability is a priority for students. As Richard said in his book students often evaluate their success in learning language a language and also they feel that they have improved in their language proficiency ability (Richard 2008) Speaking is a productive and active skill. This skill helps students produce units of meaning in phrases, and clauses, not just word for word. JO McDonough states in her book that the primary function of language is for interaction and communication (Porter, McDonough, and Shaw 1995) When students produce words and sounds, they publicize information, feelings, and opinions. This means that speaking plays an important role in measuring students' language learning.

In preparation for this study, a pre-survey was conducted on July 26, 2022, to gain initial insight into the condition of students' speaking skill learning problems. The pre-survey aimed to collect preliminary data regarding students' experiences with conventional (teacher-centered) speaking skills learning techniques. By analyzing the results of the pre-survey, the study sought to establish a basic understanding of student's speaking skills and to inform the design and implementation of subsequent research. This initial step is crucial to determine the specific needs and conditions of students at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Metro, to ensure that the research addresses the most relevant and pressing issues in their speaking skills.

Table 1.1
Pre-Survey Data of Speaking Score of students in the second grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Metro

No	Range	Classification	Students	Percentage
1	80-100	High	4	13.8%
2	65-79	Average	10	38%
3	00-64	Low	15	48.2%
Total			29	100%

Source: English Teacher of Second-Grade at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Metro

Based on the pre-survey data of speaking scores in the second grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Metro, it can be seen that there are 4 students who score 80-100 which is included in the high category and gets a percentage of 13.8%, then there are 15 students who score 65-79 which is included in the medium category and gets a percentage of 38%, and there are 10 students who score 0-64 which is included in the low category and gets a percentage of 22.2%. included in the low category and gets a percentage of 48.2%. So the total number of students is 29 students and the total percentage is 100%.

During the pre-survey, the researcher also asked the second-grade English teacher why students find it difficult to speak English. According to the teacher, many students think that speaking is a difficult thing to learn. He said that students are sometimes hesitant or afraid to talk to their English teacher in the learning process. This is due to their lack of vocabulary and poor grammar so they lack confidence to interact with their English teacher. Another fact that the researcher found was, that only some of them could interact with the researcher when the researcher tried to communicate using English, other than that the other students just sat quietly and asked their friends about

what the researcher was talking about.

From the above conditions, there could be several reasons why students have some problems. Among them are the limited time and opportunities to practice speaking English, the large number of students in one class, and the techniques used by the teacher.

First, limited time is one of the main problems Indonesian students face. Indonesian students prefer to use Bahasa Indonesia to communicate with others rather than English because when they use English to talk to others, they will be interrupted. So, their mind is distracted which makes them afraid, lazy, and think twice about speaking in English. As Marium Jamila said, learners with high levels of anxiety are not well-equipped to succeed in second language acquisition (Jamila 2014).

In line with that, limited time gives students opportunities to practice English. Students find it difficult to find an environment to practice their speaking skills. Some students live in neighborhoods that do not require them to speak English. Therefore, they only practice in class for only 40-45 minutes per meeting. As a result, some students only learn English as a requirement to complete their studies (Gebhard 2013).

The next issue is the number of students in the class. In general, the number of students in Indonesia consists of 20-30 students or even more in one class. class. As a result, it is difficult for teachers to focus on those students at one time. Also, it is possible that not all students have the same opportunity to use their English. As Hall said in his book a structural approach in the classroom can affect the quantity and quality of the quantity and quality of student's learning process (Hall 2017). So, this approach is not suitable for language teaching.

The last problem is that teachers have a monotonous way of teaching speaking. Teachers still use the lecture method which is centered on the teacher only in teaching English speaking. This is called the teacher-centered method. Therefore, there is no more practice for students to speak using English. As Elvis said in his article teachers must apply the teaching method that best suits the objectives and levels that best suit the objectives and levels of student learning outcomes (Munyaradzi 2016)

Referring to the problems above, the researcher uses information gap as a teaching technique to be applied in developing students' speaking skills in the classroom. The information gap technique is one of the learning activities designed to encourage students to communicate with each other in English to obtain information they do not have. In the information gap activity, students have to communicate with each other in the target language to get the information they need to know to complete the task given by the teacher. In information gap activities, students are given the

opportunity to work independently in sharing information. Therefore, information-gap activities help learners appreciate their ability to use the target language to communicate without the teacher's intervention the target language to communicate without direct teacher intervention (Legutke and Thomas 2014).

In addition, information-gap activities are considered appropriate in teaching speaking because with this technique students are forced to speak (M, Asrobi, Seken K, and Suarnajaya W 2013). By using information gap activities in class, all students will have the opportunity to practice speaking English in class. Therefore, not only students who have self-confidence will speak in class, but also students who have low self-confidence, thus this activity is seen as effective by the researcher.

Based on the background of the study, the researcher decided to conduct the research entitled "***The Effect of Information Gap Technique Toward Students' Speaking Skills at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Metro***".

B. Problem Identification

According to the study's historical background, these problems can be found in this research :

1. Most students are not confident to speak English in class.
2. Most students are not motivated to speak English in class.
3. The conventional technique (teacher-centered) used by the teacher is not effective in developing students' speaking skills.

C. Problem Limitation

Based on the identification of the background of the problem that the researcher wrote above, the researcher examines "The Effect of Information Gap Technique Toward Students' Speaking Skills at SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Metro". This research focused on techniques for learning speaking skills for second grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Metro.

D. Problem Formulation

Based on the mentioned problem's limitations, the researcher created the following study question :

1. Is there an effect of using the information gap technique toward students' speaking skills at second grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Metro?

2. Is there significant differences before and after the use of the information gap technique toward students' speaking skills at second grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Metro?

E. Research Objectives

Based on the research question, the research objective is :

1. To examine the effect of the information gap technique toward students' speaking skills at second grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Metro.
2. To examine significant differences in students' speaking skills before and after using the information gap technique toward students' speaking skills at second grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Metro

F. Research Scope

The scope of this research is :

1. The research subject is second-grade of SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Metro
2. The research object is an Information Gap Technique
3. The place of research is SMP Muhammadiyah 1 Metro

G. Research Benefits

The benefits of this research are :

1. The researcher: It is hoped that this research can add new knowledge about the effect of using the information gap technique on mastery of speaking skills and can be a motivation and information for those who want to do similar research.
2. The English teacher: The results of this study are expected to help teachers in finding new learning techniques to help arouse students' enthusiasm and motivation in students' speaking skills.
3. The students: Students become more active, and participate in learning with the use of the information gap technique