

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents a broad overview of the research. It contains the background of the study, the formulation of the problem, the operational definitions, the aim of the study, and the significance of the study.

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Speaking is one of the crucial skills to be able to communicate with other people to build relationships with each other. Mantra et al. (2019) stated that speaking is essential in a person's life and it allows someone to interact with another person. Then, one of the benefits of speaking is to communicate someone's opinions and emotions. Akhter (2021) stated that speaking is necessary to express ideas and people also can share their problems with others. Moreover, someone utilizes these crucial skills during their work or when they are having fun, and so on. Someone also get to understand one another better when they communicate well. So, the function of speaking skills is to express ideas, feelings, and problems spontaneously orally.

However, students often have difficulty conveying ideas or opinions when carrying out speaking activities because they are confused about what to talk about. So, they need interesting ways to get better at learning English, especially in speaking. One of the interesting techniques for learning English, especially speaking, is chain stories that involve visual media. This is in line with Lestari and Sholichah's opinions. They said that teachers can use visual media in any approach or activity to accomplish the aim of speaking (Lestari & Sholichah, 2022). Teachers and students can occasionally use their illustrations as a way to express themselves imaginatively. As a result, it was hypothesized that visual media may be used to assist students in overcoming obstacles and improving their speaking skills.

One of the English Language Courses named English Learning Club (ELC) was chosen as the focus of this research because during the teaching and learning process, the instructor of ELC used chain stories with visual media in speaking activities during four meetings and that is appropriate to the topic of this research. Chain story is the activity to create stories using pictures spontaneously which are carried out in groups and the story continues from one person to another. For another reason, chain story also is one of the English learning techniques that can be applied to oral and writing skills (Rohmah et al., 2023). Thus, this technique is appropriate for this research, especially in unveiling the advantages and disadvantages of chain stories with visual media in speaking activities based on students' experiences.

The participants selected in this research were four female members or students of the English Learning Club (ELC) aged around 20-22 years who had experience practicing chain stories with visual media in the first four meetings. They took this English course in grades 10 and 11 at one of the vocational high schools in Tasikmalaya, to be precise from 2017 to 2019. They participated well in various activities during this course, one of which was the speaking activity using chain stories with visual media. Furthermore, the implementation of chain stories with visual media was carried out every two weeks for two months when they first became members of ELC (English Learning Club). Then, the aim of using this technique is to increase the self-confidence of new members before entering a higher stage of speaking activities. Initially, the instructor divided the members into ten groups, where each group consisted of four people. After getting their respective groups, at the next meeting, the first 2 groups, namely groups A and B, sequentially practiced chain stories with visual media before going to the main material, then for the other 8 groups, they listened to the group that was performing, and so on until the last group.

The use of chain stories and their effectiveness has been studied by numerous previous researchers in their attempts to improve speaking and writing skills. To illustrate, Rohmah et al. (2023) conducted research on the chain stories technique

without visual media. The researchers revealed that chain stories provided both caring and beneficial effects on students. Before speaking, students might thoroughly prepare, which would be beneficial for teaching. The use of chain stories also significantly enhanced their ability to communicate in English. Uktolseja and Gaspersz (2019) also conducted research in one of the vocational high schools in Sorong City. The findings of this research indicate that the chain stories technique supports group learning for students in a proactive way. Every student is encouraged to participate in the learning process by making connections between a story and the assigned topic. Then, as one of the vocational schools in Sorong City managed by the Christian Education Foundation in Papua, Imanuel YPK Vocational High School, Sorong City, obviously keeps up its efforts to enhance students' English proficiency because vocational schools continually try to generate graduates who are prepared to enter the workforce. Another research conducted by Nirmalasari (2022) also investigated the use of the chain story technique. Based on the results, the use of chain story games is at large. This is consistent with the use of chain stories, which is to improve students' self-confidence when speaking English. In addition, the researcher concluded that the chain stories technique may improve students' involvement and enjoyment in speaking English by encouraging greater interaction among them during the teaching and learning process. Lastly, Novitasari (2019) also researched the effectiveness of chain stories. The findings show that there are some advantages of the chain stories technique, namely: students who have high intelligence are students who are active, creative, and have good participation in learning to gain competencies and skills. Then, this activity is more enjoyable for students who have high intelligence. Meanwhile, the disadvantages of chain stories are: that there is not enough time available and accuracy is very necessary in assessment.

Nevertheless, unveiling the advantages and disadvantages of chain stories with visual media in speaking activities based on students' experiences remains poorly studied. Thus, the current study aims to fill this investigative gap by utilizing data from the experiences of four participants who engaged well in various kinds of course

activities, one of which was the speaking activity using chain stories with visual media during four meetings.

## **1.2 Formulation of the Problem**

What are the advantages and disadvantages of chain stories with visual media in speaking activities based on students' experiences?

## **1.3 Operational Definition**

The researcher provides four definitions related to this study to avoid misinterpretation about the terms set out in this study, namely:

- 1.3.1 Chain Stories** : The activity of creating stories spontaneously is carried out in groups and the story continues from one person to another.
- 1.3.2 Visual Media** : One of the media that can provide a real picture of an object is easy to access and is often used as a learning medium.
- 1.3.3 Students Experiences** : An incident or occurrence that has been experienced by students in the context of speaking activities in an English course by using chain stories with visual media.
- 1.3.4 Tsybulsky's Concept** : A concept proposed by Tsybulsky (2019), stated that two domains in the conceptual framework were suggested for analyzing the meaningful experiences of the participants, namely the domain of the quality of the experience and the domain of the content of the experience.

- 1.3.5 Speaking Activities** : Verbal communication is used as a way of presenting information and expressing ideas and thoughts that are in the head.
- 1.3.6 English Courses** : Informal education provides additional classes to improve students' motivation and focus to realize their goals while allowing them to study however they find suitable.

#### **1.4 Aim of the Research**

This research aims to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of chain stories with visual media in speaking activities based on students' experiences.

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The findings (results) of this research are expected for two parties, namely:

- 1.5.1 Practical Significance** Practically, this study serves as an overview of the advantages and disadvantages of chain stories as a learning technique in English classes, especially speaking activities.
- 1.5.2 Empirical Significance** Empirically, this study provides empirical insight to the researcher regarding the advantages and disadvantages of chain stories with visual media as a learning technique in English classes, especially speaking activities.