

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the research. It contains the background of the study, formulation of the problem, operational definition, aims of the study, and significance of the study.

1.1. Background of the Study

Speaking is one of the most significant activities in our lives as it is done to communicate with other people. As stated by Richards and Renandya (2002) speaking is one of the key components of communication. When communicating or speaking, language cannot be separated from the use of language. Aulia, et al (2021) argue that language is a bridge that is used as a communication tool or as a medium of communication. Each human in the world continuously utilizes language to communicate, deliver data and information, and express their thought and thoughts. Walija (1996) in Wibowo (2014) stated that language is the foremost effective of communication to communicate a thought, message, eagerly, sentiments and conclusion to others.

English is the most imperative outside language to exchange and get information, science, innovation, craftsmanship, and culture and build up universal relationships. Susanto (2007) contends that English is prevalent and the one of most vital languages within the entire viewpoints of life to understand literature. In English, there are four skills that must be mastered, namely: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Ur (1999) states that the four speaking skills are considered the most important skill. Therefore, learning to speak is one thing of interest to foreign language learners. Apart from that, Richards (2002) stated that a large percentage of world languages regarding the skills of learners studying English is speaking skills.

Islamic boarding school is instructive education, where the understudies more often than not remain within the hold-up (quarters). There, they learn Islamic educational materials and common logical information. Agista (2022) said that in

the meantime, it has purposes to ace the Islamic knowledge and hone together with common information such as dominance of outside language and other aptitudes. In a modern Islamic boarding school, students use English as one of the languages that must be used in daily conversations. This aims to enable students to develop in the use of English. As mentioned by Agista (2022), Students can be developed in educational institutions that facilitate speaking practice, which is useful for training them to know everyday conversational English. In using English, students are familiarized with the term Language Week. As in Miftakhurrohmah's research (2012), she mentions the term Language Week at the Jawakhirul Hikmah Besuki Tulungagung Islamic Boarding School. The term Language Week is also found in the Islamic boarding schools that I have researched. This language week became a benchmark for the use of foreign languages at certain times. For the first and second weeks, students are required to speak Arabic. Then, for the third and fourth weeks students are required to speak English. Every day, they made an effort to communicate in Arabic and English, and Islamic boarding schools naturally offered English language development programs as well (Muchsonny et al., 2021). Other daily activities support students' learning in this modern Islamic boarding school, such as providing vocabulary along with example sentences that students must memorize every day. This is done so that students get used to it and can develop their vocabulary knowledge. Monthly or semester activities held include speech competitions, writing articles in foreign languages (Arabic and English), and even debates which are participated in by MTs and MA students in the Islamic boarding school environment. This activity is carried out so that students can hone and practice foreign language skills, especially Arabic and English.

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction at modern Islamic boarding schools—an Islamic educational establishment that combines academic and religious instruction—is the subject of this study. Given this, English plays a significant role in the curriculum, which attempts to equip students to handle issues from around the world. Speaking English is one of the primary skills taught, however it can be a significant obstacle for many pupils. These obstacles

might hinder students' progress in developing their speaking abilities and range from language hurdles to psychological obstacles.

However, many students experience difficulties in speaking foreign languages, especially English. Based on the results of preliminary observations in a modern boarding school, there is a policy in this modern boarding school, the students are required to use English and Arabic in daily conversation. The use of English and Arabic is usually scheduled regularly every week. However, it was found that the students found it difficult to understand English rather than Arabic. However, when English Week comes, students often speak English that does not comply with the rules. Like when students speak English which is directly translated from their mother tongue. If the conversation can be described as a student saying "Jangan ikut-ikutan", the student translates it into English as "Don't follow follow", and many other examples are the same as translating directly from Indonesian without understanding the rules in English. In the end, students can overcome a little of a time the challenges they experience, such as confirming or asking the teacher or someone who knows better and trying to learn from their mistakes so they can become better at the language.

Based on a prior study by Muhammad Holandyah (2022) and associates that examined the difficulties of addressing pupils enrolled in the Al Fahd Islamic boarding school's life skills curriculum in South Sumatra. According to the study's findings, students encounter a number of issues that hinder their ability to speak English. Students at Al Fahd Islamic Boarding School are required to participate in a life skills curriculum that involves language instruction outside of the classroom, including speaking and everyday English conversation. Enhancing students' spoken English skills, particularly in oral presentations, is the primary objective of the Life Skills curriculum. The other study was carried out by Syaiful Ma'arif (2015). With the description of the activity, the facility, and the evaluation of the program, this study provided descriptive information about the program several times regarding the boarding school's rules. The study included detailed information about the program several times regarding the boarding school's rules, along with an explanation of the activities, facilities, and program evaluation.

Another research put forward by Aulia et. al (2021) regarding English daily conversation at Islamic boarding schools in improving the speaking skills of EFL students was carried out at Nurul Ilmi Darunnajah 14 Islamic Boarding School, Serang-Banten. With the results, it can be concluded that the English daily conversation program improved students' speaking skills. However, from all the previous studies above, no focus was found on challenges and solutions, so this research will focus on finding problems and solutions and will certainly be different from previous research.

In the previous research mentioned above, researchers concentrated on aspects that discussed speaking difficulties. A preliminary study was conducted to find out several problems managed by students regarding their speaking performance in modern Islamic boarding schools. Difficulty in expressing ideas in spoken English is the main problem faced by students because they understand better using their native language than English to communicate. This is consistent with research by Songbatumis (2017), cited in Marzulina et al. (2021), which indicated that children have difficulty learning English because they lack vocabulary mastery, have trouble focusing, are unruly, are bored, and have speech issues.

Students from modern Islamic boarding schools who fulfill a number of qualifying requirements will be included in this study to guarantee the authenticity and relevance of the data collected. This requirement comprises having six years of experience attending a contemporary Islamic boarding school and being a student learning English as a foreign language. Additionally, from a linguistic and psychological standpoint, the chosen respondents must have specific difficulties or barriers in their ability to speak English. The data gathered from this study will be pertinent to the context of English language instruction in contemporary Islamic boarding schools thanks to the selection of respondents who satisfy the aforementioned requirements. By choosing students who struggle with English, this study may focus more intently on examining the issues they encounter and potential solutions that the Islamic boarding school can use to enhance their educational experience.

Although earlier research has examined a number of facets of English language instruction at Islamic boarding schools, little of it has examined the whole range of issues and solutions pertaining to students' speaking abilities. While Ma'arif (2015) only offered descriptive data regarding boarding school programs, Holandyah (2022) only looked at the problems with the life skills program without looking at remedies. Despite studying everyday conversation programs, Aulia et al. (2021) did not directly address the problems and remedies. Thus, by thoroughly examining the linguistic and psychological difficulties that students encounter and investigating practical solutions used in Modern Islamic boarding schools, this study seeks to close this gap.

1.2. Formulation of the Problems

The current study addresses two research questions, as follows:

1. What challenges do modern Islamic boarding school students face when speaking English?
2. What are the solutions for modern Islamic boarding school students to overcome the challenges of speaking English?

1.3. Operational Definitions

The researcher offers the following definitions of terminology used in this study to prevent misunderstandings:

1.3.1 English Speaking

Is the activity of communicating using English. In this research, English speaking is contextualized on the necessity of students speaking or communicating using English in their daily conversation.

1.3.2 Modern Islamic Boarding School

Islamic educational institutions integrate traditional education systems with more contemporary educational approaches and methods, using technology and a more developed curriculum in accordance with the needs of the times. The context of modern Islamic boarding schools in this research is that Islamic boarding schools do not only study religion but also some general knowledge and there is a demand to speak Arabic and English in daily communication.

1.3.3 EFL students

Students who refer to studying in one of the countries are actively involved in the process of learning English as a foreign language.

1.4. Aim of the Study

This Research aim is to determine the challenges and solutions for students in speaking English at Modern Islamic Boarding Schools. Researchers hope that this research can help students improve speaking English better than the solutions that will be provided.

1.5. Significances of the Study

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

This research contributes to a theoretical understanding regarding the use of English in modern Islamic boarding schools as a daily language by providing insight into the perceptions of students and service teachers regarding the use of English in daily conversations as a means of getting students used to speaking English in every activity.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

The findings of this research can provide information to students attending modern Islamic boarding schools about solutions to problems in speaking English in modern Islamic boarding schools so that they can improve their English speaking skills according to the rules.

1.5.3 Empirical Significance

Empirical data collected from students at modern Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia can be compared with research conducted in other contexts, making it possible to carry out a comparative analysis of students' motivation to speak English at modern Islamic boarding schools as a comparison.