

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Speaking skill is one of the basic language skills that has to be mastered by English as Foreign Language (EFL) learners due to its significance and use for communication. Learners in EFL contexts typically do not use the language in authentic situations. Learners tend to possess an inability to communicate properly and accurately. This leads to a lack of confidence and avoidance when communicating with native English speakers. Speaking is a skill which deserves attention in both English as first and English as second language (Gate, 2003). Sepahvand (2014) also stated that there are some reasons to put speaking as the first aim of study such as personal satisfaction from being able to speak and reaching other interests or career goals. Additionally, Tahir (2017) says that somebody is considered successful in learning a foreign language when they have the ability to express the ideas orally. There are four elements of speaking skill: pronunciation, vocabulary, accuracy and fluency. The successful communication can be seen when mutual understanding between speaker and listener in exchanging ideas works as what both sides wanted.

One of the junior high schools in Tasikmalaya has an English extracurricular entitled English Club and it is open to all students who are interested in learning English. One of the learning goals in this extracurricular is to improve students' speaking skills. Since they study the language in order to communicate, the learning activities must support them to obtain the language and be able to use it as a means of daily communication. From my personal experience, when I was doing my teaching practice and happened to be given responsibility to teach the English extracurricular, the researcher found that most students avoid speaking in English. It can be influenced by cognitive and affective

factors. According to Goh & Burns (2012), anxiety and lack of motivation are most likely classified as affective factors that may influence students' speaking performance in front of many people because they feel like they are not prepared enough and afraid to make mistakes. From the cognitive point of view, it links into students' ability in speaking and their cognitive knowledge. To cope with the situation, it's a high challenge to create a situation which makes students feel comfortable when they speak and express their ideas in front of the audience. However, among the English Club participants, there are Participant 1 (P1), Participant 2 (P2), and Participant 3 (P3). They always stand out throughout the meetings. They speak with full confidence and have a wide-range of vocabulary. They don't hesitate to ask questions or to answer the question. The researcher was seeking into the underlying reason and it's revealed that the 3 students are all storytelling contestants. The appearance of the students' excellency in speaking as seen from their performance has led the focus on this study to explore the role of storytelling that contributes to this issue. They meet the criteria to be the participants of this case study. It is necessary to have a depth analysis for investigating the students' perception behind this phenomenon.

The previous studies have been conducted regarding the use of storytelling in improving students' speaking skill (Akhyak & Indramawan, 2013; Samantaray, 2014; Zuhriyah, 2017). According to Akhyak and Indramawan (2013) in the study entitled "Improving the students' English-speaking competence through storytelling", storytelling implemented in teaching speaking could improve the students' fluency, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and content. Next, a study entitled "Use of storytelling method to develop spoken English skill", found that storytelling technique has great effects on students' learning of English language (Samantaray, 2014). Moreover, Zuhriyah (2017) mentioned that storytelling is one of the research designs which could improve the students' fluency, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and content. Due

to the several studies mentioned previously which have focuses in how storytelling improves students' speaking skill, the students' perception towards storytelling in EFL young learners context remains undiscovered. To fill the gap, the researcher is interested in conducting a case study focusing on students' perception of storytelling in the speaking task. This study is conducted because the research on students' perception on the case of storytelling in the speaking classroom has not been conducted yet in the context of junior high school in Tasikmalaya.

1.2 Formulation of Problem

Research question in this present study is formulated as, "What is the students' perception of storytelling in the speaking task?"

1.3 Operational Definitions

To avoid misunderstanding about the terms set out in this study, the researcher provides some definitions related to this study, as follow:

1. Storytelling : Storytelling is an integral and consequential part of daily life where people make sense of experiences and interact with each other. It can also be interpreted as a process to deliver the story.
2. Speaking skill : Speaking skill is described as the ability of students to deliver their storytelling.

1.4 Aim of the Study

This research aims to focus on students' perception of a particular speaking task, storytelling.

1.5 Significances of the Research

1. Practical : This research suggests the potential method and broader implication of EFL students' perception of storytelling in the speaking task
2. Empirical : This study provides empirical insights into how storytelling supports EFL students as speaking task

