

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

The importance of speaking skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom has garnered significant attention in recent years. According to Rao (2019), speaking is regarded as the most important skill for learning a foreign or second language. Crisianita and Mandasari (2022) confirm this argument, emphasizing the significance of strong speaking abilities for successful communication and interaction in English. Indicated that effective speaking skills are crucial for successful communication and interaction in English. Students have to learn to speak, a fundamental language skill, in order to express themselves clearly both within and outside of the classroom. EFL students must develop good speaking skills, as this has a direct impact on their academic achievement and social relations.

Despite its importance, many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students face significant challenges in developing their speaking skills due to a variety of circumstances. According to Ahmad (2024) The main problems in speaking skills are categorized in two areas: knowledge factors and skills factors. The knowledge factors related to students' understanding of language components that are necessary to produce correct spoken sentences. The skills factors related to students' ability to use their language knowledge in real-time communication. According to Ariyanty (2016) as cited in Elisathusilawani (2023), when students speak English, they frequently confront psychological difficulties such as anxiety, fear of making mistakes, embarrassment, a lack of ambition, and low self-esteem. These emotional barriers can severely hinder their willingness to participate in speaking activities. Furthermore, Wahyuningsih and Afandi (2020) identified specific issues among students in Kudus, Indonesia, including insufficient vocabulary, grammar mastery, and correct pronunciation. They also noted that limited English input outside the

classroom contributes to these challenges, alongside a general lack of confidence and inadequate curriculum development. Educators can better support EFL students in developing their speaking skills by understanding and addressing these multifaceted challenges.

Similar problem was found in an eleventh-grade class at an Islamic private high school in Tasikmalaya, which was used as the research site for a MBKM research program. Based on preliminary observation, it was found that students experienced considerable difficulties in speaking English during classroom activities. They often hesitated, spoke with frequent pauses, and showed limited fluency when communicating. In addition, many students struggled with limited vocabulary and frequent grammatical errors, which affected the clarity and comprehensibility of their speech. Furthermore, classroom participation was dominated by only a few active students, while most of the students remained passive and disengaged during speaking tasks. Furthermore, the result of pre-test supported these findings, showing that only four students (20%) achieve the Criteria of Minimum Completion (KKM) of 85, with an average score of 77.5. This finding shows the majority of students remained below the achievement of speaking skills. 80% of students need significant improvement in their speaking skills. The researcher also found that most students in the classroom have difficulty in English speaking skills. Many students struggle particularly with pronunciation for example when pronounce a word 'confused' instead of said /kən'fju:zd/ the students said /konfusd/ and lack of vocabulary that students faced be the cause of students speaking skills this urgency also affect students' fluency, which are essential components of effective communication. It can be concluded that students have several difficulties in improving their speaking skills, including difficulties in pronunciation and lack of vocabulary, which cause students to be less fluent in speaking.

To address these problems, an effective instructional strategy is needed. Cooperative learning is considered a suitable approach to improve students' speaking skills because it encourages active participation, peer interaction, and

collaborative learning. Meena (2020) explains that cooperative learning helps students develop shared understanding and socially acceptable communication skills through group interaction. Adugna Gonfa (2023) also states that cooperative learning enables students to construct and express their ideas more confidently in speaking activities. Several studies have shown that cooperative learning significantly improves students' speaking performance, including pronunciation, fluency, and interaction (Ilmi, 2023). One cooperative learning technique that has been widely applied is Think-Pair-Share (TPS), which provides students with opportunities to think individually, discuss with peers, and share ideas with the class. Bilqis and Suharjito (2022) found that the implementation of TPS effectively enhanced students' speaking skills, particularly in pronunciation and vocabulary mastery. Research shows that the Think-Pair-Share technique helps students improve pronunciation and vocabulary mastery by giving them more practice opportunities in pairs before speaking in front of the class.

Therefore, the researcher used the Think-Pair-Share technique to overcome students' speaking skills problem in the class. Although many researchers have examined the Think-Pair-Share technique to improve students' speaking skills, most of the research uses quantitative methods as the research method. Meanwhile, to fill the gap in previous studies, this present study entitled "Improving EFL Students' Speaking Skills Through Cooperative Learning: The Think-Pair-Share Technique" investigated how the implementation of the Think-Pair-Share technique improve students' speaking skills in eleventh grade high school students using mixed method.

B. Formulation of the Problems

The question of this research is formulated as follow:

How does the implementation of the Think-Pair-Share technique improve students' speaking skills?

C. Operational Definitions

1. Speaking Skills

Speaking skills refers to the skills necessary to confidently, clearly, and coherently communicate thoughts, ideas, and information orally. Speaking abilities in this research particularly relate to 11th graders' ability to communicate successfully in English, with an emphasis on coherence, vocabulary utilization, pronunciation, and fluency in their responses.

2. Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning refers to the teaching strategy in which students collaborate in small groups to accomplish learning objectives, assisting on another's education while enhancing their communication in interpersonal abilities. According to this study, cooperative learning entails planned group activities that motivate students to work together and actively engage in conversations in order to improve their speaking skills.

3. Think-Pair-Share Technique

Think-Pair-Share Technique refers to a cooperative approach in which students consider a topic on their own first, then discuss it with a partner before presenting their ideas to the class as a whole. Through facilitated peer talks, the Think-Pair-Share strategy is employed in this study to promote student connection and enhance English-speaking abilities.

D. Aims of the Study

Based on the research question to solve the research problem, this research aims to improve students' speaking skills by implementing the Think-Pair-Share Technique.

E. Significance of the Study

1. Theoretical use

This study provided light on how cooperative learning helped with language development by investigating its use in improving speaking abilities among EFL students. It will also help to further theories about collaborative learning and communicative competence by demonstrating how structured peer interactions can create a helpful environment for language practice.

2. Practical use

The practical uses of this research are the implementation of the Think-Pair-Share technique offers a structured approach that teachers can easily integrate into their lesson plans to enhance students' speaking skills. This technique encourages active participation, peer collaboration, and immediate feedback, which are essential for language development.

3. Empirical use

This research presents empirical understanding that demonstrates the impact of implementing Cooperative Learning: Think-Pair-Share Technique to support EFL students improve their speaking skills.