

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The first chapter of this dissertation provides context for the research by outlining some of the fundamental concerns surrounding the use of dialogic teaching in language instruction. Following the background of the study, two research questions are proposed. Then, the objectives of the study and the scope of the study are described. The dissertation then continues to clarify the study's significances and define some of the dissertation's key terms so it can be understood better. Lastly, the organization of the dissertation proposal and concluding remark are explained.

1.1 Background of the Study

In the context of Indonesia, where English is considered a foreign language (EFL), the acquisition of extensive input and output of the language can prove to be a challenging task due to the limited number of individuals who possess proficiency in English (Inayati et al., 2022). It can be observed that individuals primarily acquire and employ the English language within educational settings, whereas in non-academic settings, the utilization of said language for authentic communication is infrequent. It implies that speaking class in Indonesia may still have issues to solve. This problem is evidently detrimental to the fundamental objective of acquiring language proficiency. A number of challenges were encountered by students in their oral communication, stemming from a range of factors such as insufficient English lexicon, orthographic and phonetic difficulties (Hajar & Rahman, 2022). Many students exhibit a deficiency in their understanding of grammar. The study revealed various factors that contribute to the challenges faced by students, including their paradigms, levels of motivation, inadequate support from language environments, and limited opportunities to engage in speaking practice during the learning process.

Indonesian EFL learners have linguistic and non-linguistic issues (Franscy & Ramli, 2022). Linguistic issues include understanding, pronunciation, vocabulary,

grammar, and fluency while non-linguistic factors included being shy, unmotivated, frightened of making mistakes, and underperforming in class. A study indicated sixth-semester students of tertiary education struggled with English (Sampelolo et al., 2021). Psychological obstacles (anxiety, shyness, nervousness, lack of confidence, fear of errors) and linguistic barriers (lack of vocabulary, grammar). Kurniawana et al., (2018) found that the primary challenges faced by the students in developing their English-speaking skill are related to grammar, vocabulary, and fluency. Furthermore, it is widely believed that the root causes of these issues are a deficiency in both practical experience and self-assurance. Several studies have examined students' English anxiety in class in the context of Indonesian EFL. Several studies have found that many students are anxious during classroom speaking exercises (Sirait, 2015; Mukminin & Arif, 2015; Indrianty, 2016; Irawan & Warni, 2018; Tian & Mahmud, 2018; Ariyanti, 2017; Abrar et al., 2018). Pressure from such an action causes this uneasiness. The studies also showed that public speaking pressure causes uncontrolled anxiousness, limb movements, and speech difficulties. Because they do not know enough words, are not ready, are frightened of making errors, and do not want their peers to laugh, students become anxious while speaking English in class.

Several problems in EFL at tertiary level have also been found. Typically, the duration designated for the development of oral communication abilities within English language curricula at Indonesian institutions of higher learning is restricted (Parudani, 2021). Approximately 90 minutes are allocated on a weekly basis throughout a 16-week period, resulting in a cumulative total of 21 hours. Two sessions within the semester are designated for mid-term and final assessments. In addition, the classrooms in Indonesian universities are commonly characterized by their considerable size and diversity, which presents further difficulties. This scenario highlights the necessity of offering further opportunities and promoting increased independence to students in order to enhance their oral communication abilities. A study indicated three main reasons of English oral communication issues for preservice teachers (PSTs): linguistic competency, socio-culture, and English language engagement possibilities (Abid, 2018). These obstacles were connected to past English language tutoring and exposure to English usage in high

school, self-reported lecturers' competency, instructional strategies and resources, and PSTs' English confidence. Interrelated concerns. A one-size-fits-all approach to enhancing PSTs' oral competence may not be possible for professors. The results recommended that the English Education Program should evaluate its teacher education program, particularly in oral communication abilities. Despite being accepted into the English Education Program, many PSTs from nearby high schools struggled with spoken English communication for numerous reasons. To help PSTs learn English, the program should target their cognitive and affective domains from the start of their four-year education (Abrar, 2017). Another study revealed that the speaking difficulties encountered by English education students in their second semester were attributed to inadequate vocabulary proficiency, low self-assurance, difficulties in pronunciation, emotional factors such as embarrassment and fear of committing errors, anxiety, and a tendency to use their native language while speaking (Munawir et al., 2022). A majority of students encounter challenges in verbal communication in English language due to their tendency to avoid making mistakes and errors (Latifa, 2021). The inclination to embrace errors in speech may be attributed to the societal expectations surrounding the accurate enunciation of one's accent when speaking English. An additional observation indicates that a considerable number of students exhibit unfavorable attitudes that are often impacted by their native language when enunciating English vocabulary.

To solve problems in English Language Teaching in the context of Indonesia, some studies have been conducted and the results have been found. A study by Setiyadi, et al. (2016) found substantial correlations between linguistic abilities and learning methodologies. This study's skill-based categories of language learning strategies, which include cognitive, metacognitive, and social strategies in each category, can be used to describe learners' strategies when learning the four language skills of English as a foreign language in Indonesia. The results show that language instructors must condition the teaching-learning process to help students adopt appropriate learning techniques for the language skills they are acquiring. Another study revealed that the implementation of communicative activities is a favorable approach in language education that aims to enhance the communicative proficiency of learners (Milal & Laily, 2019). When implementing a strategy,

educators must consider not only whether learners engage in activities that prioritize meaning, but also whether these activities, including the tasks and texts used, are applicable to real-life communicative events outside of the classroom. Furthermore, within the context of language instruction, it is imperative that instructional activities are thoughtfully crafted and executed in a manner that promotes learner engagement, participation, and agency in the learning process. Similarly, the English Education Program, as an entity that trains individuals to become English teachers for ELT practice, may derive advantages from cultivating a cognizance of psychological obstacles that may impede the attainment of effective English language acquisition (Abrar, 2017). It may be necessary to conduct a thorough analysis of additional dimensions, including the proficiency of instructors, the availability of educational resources, and the existing English language curriculum, in order to identify potential deficiencies that could impede the attainment of the program's objectives.

Further, the implementation of the direct method in language instruction ought to be complemented by in-class exercises that simulate genuine conversational scenarios, such as dialogues, exchanges, and role-playing activities (Abas & Zainurrahman, 2022). In addition, it is imperative to furnish visual aids to facilitate the students' ability to establish a direct correlation between the expressions and their corresponding meanings. Another study validates that peer scaffolding has a positive impact on the development of speaking skills (Azir, 2019). The findings indicate that peer scaffolding fosters a supportive learning environment, enabling students to provide reciprocal assistance in enhancing their speaking proficiency. Therefore, peer scaffolding is suggested as a viable approach for enhancing students' speaking abilities. A study by Hudriati (2023) proposes that instructors should prioritize the development of students' psychological variables, specifically their motivation, anxiety levels, and self-assurance, as a means of enhancing their oral communication abilities in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) setting. Inayati et al. (2022) suggests that autonomous learning is a viable approach to enhance language acquisition by providing a more enriched exposure. Task cycles, interesting topics of discussion, and task-based language teaching methods significantly improved students' speaking skills (Sugianto et al., 2020).

Chand (2021) proposed implementing a conducive setting, optimizing learner independence, modifying pedagogical approaches, revising curricula, and repeatedly engaging in oral communication exercises.

Studies have shown that Dialogic Teaching yields advantages in both content-based classrooms and foreign language schools, since it allows students to enhance their language abilities via collaborative discussions and group work (Adler et al., 2003; Choi et al., 2014; Lee, 2016; Mercer et al., 2009; Sewell, 2011; Teo, 2013). In the context of the current study, the current study focuses on teaching English as a foreign language, i.e. English, through the use of Dialogic Teaching. Nevertheless, English Language Teaching (ELT) has not devoted significant attention to it, although it has garnered increased interest in broader educational studies (Alexander, 2020). Dialogic Teaching provides teachers with a potent pedagogical tool to actively involve students, and its efficacy has been seen in connection with interactive classroom technology such as interactive whiteboards (Haneda et al., 2017). Several studies have shown variations in student achievement, specifically in relation to the quality of educational discourse, including variances across different disciplines taught in the classroom (Muhonen et al., 2018).

Dialogic Teaching in EFL classes has shown positive results, as seen by reports from Hong Kong (Lin & Luk (2005). In this context, students from working-class Cantonese-speaking backgrounds have demonstrated a perception of English as a "foreign language." Teachers who fostered collaborative conversations among students effectively promoted creativity and encouraged active English language use, resulting in enhanced vocabulary comprehension and reduced language barriers for the students. Interactive conversations and realistic inquiries in a Korean university classroom bolstered students' communication abilities and alleviated their anxieties over their language proficiency (Choi et al. (2014). Dialogic Teaching was used in an advanced EFL academic class in Japan, showcasing both its benefits and limitations (Shea, 2018). Positively, the teacher successfully encouraged students to express their thoughts and fostered high-quality discussions in the classroom. The limitations highlighted in Shea's (2018) dialogic classroom were associated with the intricacy of structuring the

conversation. Several students had difficulties in verbal communication, and the teacher occasionally faced challenges in properly facilitating their participation in discussions. Nevertheless, this research emphasizes the possibility of using Dialogic Teaching in English language courses.

Dialogic Teaching is essential in language classes because it facilitates the emergence of many viewpoints and perspectives, enabling students to autonomously challenge and develop new information (Lampert, 2001; Morson, 2004). Effective conversation facilitates knowledge exchange between students and allows teachers to get insights from their students. Knowledge may be generated by any student in the class, and collaborative discourse refers to a kind of conversation where students actively participate in problem-solving and the construction of knowledge (Swain, 2000). Engaging in problem-solving exercises may foster the development of spontaneous reactions that extend beyond the confines of the classroom. The language-based problems that students encounter in foreign language schools are related to collaborative discussion (Savignon & Sysoyev, 2002). Nevertheless, it enables students to concurrently tackle challenges and acquire language skills from their classmates. By engaging in real-life situations where English is used, students acquire the skills of generating and using their language, which may be transferred to unfamiliar situations outside the confines of the classroom (Wong, 2005).

In Indonesia, where English is not consistently integrated into students' daily routines but remains crucial for their future professional endeavors, the language classroom should serve as a platform for students to refine and expand their language skills. In support of this statement, Farjriah et al. (2019) identified a significant disconnect between the educational materials used and the students' daily activities. This misalignment suggests that the materials may not be relevant or engaging for the students, potentially impacting their motivation and overall learning experience. When educational content does not reflect the real-life contexts and experiences of students, it can lead to a lack of interest and difficulty in understanding and applying the material. Dialogic Teaching is an effective method to achieve that goal for Indonesian students. Upon reviewing literature, the current researcher concluded that research on Dialogic Teaching in Indonesia's

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms is currently still limited. In support of this statement, Ping (2017) stated that Dialogic Teaching is still a rarity in the Indonesian education system, in particular at tertiary education, due to the domination of task-based teaching; this teaching strategy is still a widely utilized method for generating classroom discussions.

Little has been paid attention to the use of Dialogic Teaching for improving speaking skills in English Language Teaching for adult learners in Indonesia. Thus, the researcher attempted to contribute to solving the problems of teaching speaking skills to adult learners by experimenting Dialogic Teaching to a group of tertiary students in a university in West Java, Indonesia. It is expected that the use of Dialogic Teaching will help solve speaking problems and give some insight into the knowledge of Dialogic Teaching, especially from an Indonesian context.

Alexander's (2018) update of dialogic teaching has indicated that dialogic teaching can enable students improve their speaking skills along with communication soft skills such as being tolerant to others' opinions, being opinionated and collaborative, and being cooperative in solving problems through a dialogue. In his research, Alexander (2018) performed a randomized control experiment to examine the effects of dialogic teaching on students' engagement and learning. The intervention attempted to maximize the advantages of classroom talk. The extensive study revealed that students in the intervention group, whose teachers underwent dialogic training, demonstrated a significant advancement of 2 months in English, Mathematics, and Science tests after 20 weeks, in comparison to the control group whose teachers employed traditional methods (Alexander, 2018). In addition, dialogic teaching is a technique that aims to change classroom discourse away from memorization and toward fruitful dialogue between instructors and students. Alexander (2005) stated that the implementation of dialogic teaching in nine British schools in 2003 had a beneficial effect on planning practice, classroom discourse, children's motivation, and learning results. Alexander (2008) suggested that dialogic education does not contain traditional techniques of learning such as memorization, recitation, and instructor instruction. It does, however, entail debate, knowledge exchange, and interaction in order to create a shared understanding through planned and cumulative inquiry.

By considering the advantages of Dialogic Teaching as described above, the current study aims to replicate the Dialogic Teaching strategy and implement it in an Indonesian tertiary education context. The current study aims to both investigate whether the Dialogic Teaching can improve students' speaking skills shown by their scores and see how students react to such a teaching strategy through asking their perceptions of the implementation of dialogic teaching that is aimed to improve students' speaking skills.

A number of studies related to Dialogic Teaching on various English skills have been conducted by some researchers (see Mustary, 2020; Ping, 2017; Oktavia and Syafei, 2016; Suryati et al., 2017; Amalia, & Arditiya, 2021; Herdanti & Saefullah, 2021; Cohen et al., 2012; McCabe et al., 2010; Brannon & Dauksas; 2014; Edwards-Groves & Davidson, 2020; Huang, 2020; Ozcelik, Van den Branden, & Van Steendam, 2019). However, the focus of all these previous studies is based primary on improving vocabulary, listening, reading, and writing skills rather than on improving speaking skills. The teaching material taught in English classroom was largely taken from the books and no modifications were made in previous studies. Arguably, there remains a need to use a mixed method design with an explanatory data collection method to examine dialogic teaching strategy for improving speaking skills at a tertiary level education, in order to verify the efficacy of negotiated topics in speaking classroom instruction. This present study differs from these to the extent that it used negotiated topics for the teaching materials for all classroom meetings. Additionally, this study provides more comprehensive evidence covering both quantitative data taken from student scores and qualitative data from an FGD. The results of this study may therefore be of benefit in teaching English as a foreign language at a tertiary level education.

1.2 Hypothesis and Research Questions

The main hypothesis of the study is that Dialogic Teaching strategy improves students' speaking skills. If the expected outcome is correct, there will be significant differences in the average pre-test scores with those of a post-test based on the research sample. The research design has been derived to accommodate the

hypothesis. Three research questions have been derived to achieve the objectives of this study and fill the gaps of this study, as described below.

1. Does Dialogic Teaching strategy enhance speaking skills?
2. How do students perceive the effectiveness of Dialogic Teaching in improving their speaking skills?
3. What specific aspects of Dialogic Teaching do students find most helpful in enhancing their speaking abilities?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to:

- 1) describe the use of Dialogic Teaching strategy to enhance students' speaking skills
- 2) investigate how students perceive the effectiveness of Dialogic Teaching in improving their speaking skills
- 3) identify specific aspects of Dialogic Teaching students find most helpful in enhancing their speaking abilities

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study investigated the implementation of Dialogic Teaching for speaking skills in English Letters program at a university in Sumedang, West Java. The participating class was one class that studied compulsory Public Speaking during the 2023 academic year. This study only included 5th semester students who were learning compulsory Public Speaking course. The teaching strategy used by the researcher was dialogic teaching. This study was undertaken to investigate the use of Dialogic Teaching to teach English speaking skills to measure students' improvement in this area. The Dialogic Teaching by Alexander (2006) that has the value of collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative, purposeful was employed in this study, aiming at developing speaking skills. In addition, other skills may also develop, such as collaboration, tolerance, creativity, and critical thinking.

The dialogic teaching was administered over the course of one semester of academic year. Students were encouraged to keep speaking in English in a dialogic manner. The observation findings were utilized to establish instructional techniques

in which it is expected that an effective good pedagogical practice would boost students' speaking skills.

As instruments for observing classroom activity, a speaking rubric was employed to take scores of pre-test and post-test sessions. To capture the students' perceptions of the implementation of dialogic teaching, a list of semi-structured open-ended questions was employed within an FGD. It was done after the semester was completed. Overall, the pre- and post-test scores were compared, analyzed and interpreted using an SPSS and the FGD results were used to justify and corroborate the quantitative data interpretation.

1.5 Significances of the Study

The current study might give contributions in two major categories – in theory and in practice. In theory, this study contributes to enriching insight and knowledge in the realm of teaching reading through dialogic reading activities. Since this study was conducted in Indonesia, where the education system and setting are different from the contexts in other countries, it is hoped that the results of this study bring new insights into the practice of teaching English with dialogic reading in different settings and contexts. Furthermore, this study potentially provides inspiration for future researchers to develop a similar study.

In practice, the results of this study provide another option for teachers in English learning activities. In addition, the results of this study also add references for stakeholders in developing English learning activities and making teaching materials books. Specifically, this study offers four benefits to the development of the researcher's country (Indonesia). First, it helps prepare human resources to face Industrial Revolution 4. Through dialogic reading, the young generations will be equipped with critical thinking and trained to be creative, tolerant, and collaborative.

1.6 Clarifications of Key Terms

The study was developed based upon four key terms: dialogic teaching, speaking skills, students' perceptions. All these are clarified below.

- a) Dialogic Teaching is a pedagogical strategy that capitalizes on the power of talk to further students' thinking, learning, and problem solving (Alexander, 2004). The construct is often invoked when describing various pedagogies of classroom talk. Dialogic Teaching in this study refers to a strategy of teaching that makes use of the power of conversation that is expected to foster critical thinking, enhanced learning, and increased ability to solve problems in students. Students will be asked to collaborate and take turns in maintaining a conversation or dialogue to dissect a topic given by their lecturer.
- b) This study attempts to investigate whether there could be an improvement in students' speaking skills by experimenting Dialogic Teaching. Improvement in this study is defined as the progress and betterment of students' English speaking skills that may be identified after treatments.
- c) By referring to Brown (2004), speaking skills in this study are defined as the abilities that enable students to properly communicate with others. He further explains that speaking is expressing thought, ideas, and feeling which use the ability to pronounce the words to organize the words into phrases or sentence to choose the words related to the topic. The abilities make it possible for students to vocally communicate information in a manner that is comprehensible to the person listening to them. In this study, speaking refers to the students' ability to communicate in a two-way communication style after being given the treatment of dialogic teaching.
- d) By referring to Thalib (2010), students' perception in this study refers to an experience concerning an item, an event that has already occurred, or even what is occurring; it can also be a relationship that is established in order to be able to derive information or understand a message that is included within. In this study, the perception refers to how students see the whole process of the implementation of Dialogic Teaching within a speaking class for one semester. Their likes, dislikes, suggestions and aspirations regarding the teaching activities will be revealed through their perceptions.
- e) By referring to Ur (1996), enhancement or improvement in speaking skills is shown when one has gained higher motivation, participation and

confidence to talk with better language acceptability. The word enhance in this study refers to improving the quality of speaking skills in English of tertiary level students, particularly upon Dialogic Teaching treatment.

1.7 Organization of the Dissertation

This study is divided into five chapters that will be described below.

- 1) The purpose of the first chapter is to provide a summary of the whole body of work presented in this study. It provides an overview of the introduction to the subject matter that is the focus of the investigation. This section provides an introduction to the background of the study, the research questions, the objectives of the investigation, the significances of the study, the scope of the study, the explanation of the important terminology, and the structure of the study.
- 2) The second chapter outlines the ideas that underpin the study, focusing on those pertinent to the study's objectives. It elaborates the selective literature review covering Dialogic Teaching theory, speaking skills, the use of dialogic teaching to improve students' speaking skills, and the implications for future studies.
- 3) The third chapter discusses the research method used and the logic behind different research designs. This chapter describes the methodology specified by the study's objectives. Consequently, this chapter starts with a discussion of the study design, followed by descriptions of the research location and participants, data collection, and data analysis. The research design explains the methodology followed in this study, as well as its features and guiding concepts. The site and participants section describes the location where the study was done and the individuals that participated. The data collection describes the devices and techniques used to gather data. The data analysis clarifies the data analysis technique.
- 4) The fourth chapter discusses findings and discussion. In this chapter, the researcher converts the raw data into a format that is not only visually visible but also simple to comprehend at this point. Concurrently, the process of discussing data involves assessing the data, determining the linkages

between the data, and developing conclusions that have significance. Through the integration of both components, the researcher gives context, insights, and suggestions that may be put into action based on their results.

- 5) The fifth chapter discusses advice and practical insights for stakeholders who may be in need of Dialogic Teaching insights. The evaluation of the constraints imposed by the study is then followed by a discussion of the implications that may be derived from the results of the investigation. Furthermore, the researcher provides suggestions for investigations that should be conducted in the future, highlighting areas that need further investigation.

1.8 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has presented the introduction covering the background of the study, research questions, purposes of the study, significances of the study, scope of the study, clarification of the key terms, and the outline of the dissertation. The next chapter discusses the literature review of the study.