CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter outlines the introduction to the study. It firstly delineates the background of the study, describing the importance of the research and rationales behind the research. This chapter also presents the aims of the study, research questions, scope of the study, significance of the study, and definition of the key terms. This chapter is ended with the explanation on the thesis organization.

1.1   Background

The teaching of speaking skills has become increasingly important in English as a second or foreign language (ESL/EFL) context. The teaching of speaking skill is also important since many students want to be able to use English for communicative purposes. This aim is supported by Richards and Renandyas (2002) who state that "a large percentage of the world's language learners study English in order to develop proficiency in speaking" (p. 201).

Despite the fact, achieving English speaking proficiency in classroom conditions is not an easy task. In a survey of EFL teachers, Nunan (1993) as cited in Lazaraton (2001) found that lack of motivation, getting students to speak, and use of first language are the biggest challenges in EFL classroom. In the context of the present study, these problems are also found in a vocational school in Cimahi. Based on the interview with the English teacher in this school, there are three main factors that may lead to the lower competence of the students' speaking skill including their nervous feeling, their thought of making mistakes and their lack of confidence to share ideas due to limitation in vocabulary.

Many EFL speaking teaching methods, strategies and techniques have been studied and applied in order to anticipate the problems. One alternative way of teaching for promoting speaking and social interactions among students can be found in cooperative learning (Al-Tamimi & Attamimi, 2014; Ning, 2010). It is defined in different ways and implies several related methods or techniques of organizing and

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conducting classroom instruction (Dornyei, 1997). Cooperative learning techniques allow teachers and students to learn and adopt various social interaction sequences. Each of the techniques in cooperative learning has different function and domains of usefulness and help both teacher and students to reach the learning objectives (Lin, 2015). It also involves much direct verbal exchange among peers who are organized into small task-oriented groups (Sharan & Shachar, 1988).

In line with it, cooperative learning is also in line with 2013 curriculum in Indonesia. In *Permendikbud No. 69 tahun 2013 tentang kurikulum SMA/MA*, it is stated that the 2013 curriculum is developed through the completion of thinking system, including: (1) one way learning system (teacher-students interaction) becomes interactive learning (teacher-students-society-nature-other resources interaction); (2) individual learning system becomes team-based learning; (3) passive learning becomes inquiry learning. These statements are reflected in cooperative learning since students interact with their peers cooperatively. By structuring situations cooperatively, individuals work together to complete assignments, they interact (improving social skills and competencies), promote each other's success, and form personal as well as professional relationships which result in creating the basis for healthy social development (Johnson & Johnson, 1999).

Studies on the use of cooperative learning, particularly in the teaching of speaking have been conducted in many different contexts, for example, Ning (2010) conducted a research which focused on adapting cooperative learning methods for ELT with 52 first-year tertiary students in China. The adapted method, with the integration of all six key elements, was likely to facilitate the development of students' communicative competence through fostering a supportive learning atmosphere, providing more opportunities for authentic peer interaction and generating more meaningful language input and output. The effect of cooperative learning to enhance students' speaking skills was also found in a research conducted by Pattanpichet (2011) in Thailand. The study used a pre-test and post-test design which was conducted with 35 undergraduate students enrolled in a fundamental English course at Bangkok University. The findings revealed the improvement of the

students' speaking performance and positive feedback from the students on the use of collaborative learning activities. In Indonesia context, a study has also been conducted by Syafryadin (2013) with 36 students in Senior High School in Bandung. This study aimed to investigate how the talking chips technique-as one of cooperative learning method- can help students to improve their speaking by using quasi experimental design. The result of this study showed the improvement of students' speaking achievement from treatment until post test by using talking chips technique.

Most studies aforementioned have been conducted in tertiary level and by focusing on the improvement of speaking performance using quantitative design. Little attention has been paid to conduct cooperative learning in secondary level especially in Indonesian context by using both quantitative and qualitative data analysis. Thus, this present study attempts to fill the gap of the limited studies on cooperative learning in developing students' speaking skills of secondary level by using mixed method design. This study aims to investigate how to investigate how techniques of cooperative learning develop students' speaking skills, and to find out benefits and challenges encountered by students during the implementation of cooperative learning in one vocational school in Cimahi.

1.2. Research Aims

As indicated in the background, this study attempts to do the following:

(1) to investigate how techniques of cooperative learning develop students' speaking skills, and
(2) to find out benefits and challenges encountered by students during the implementation of cooperative learning in one vocational school in Cimahi.

1.3. Research Problems

In line with the purpose of the study above, this study attempts to address the following questions:

1. How do cooperative learning techniques develop students' speaking skills?
2. What benefits and challenges encountered by students during the implementation of cooperative learning techniques in one vocational school in Cimahi?

1.4.   Significance of the study

The results of the study are expected to give positive contributions to the theory and practice of English as Foreign language. Thus, the following explanation will elaborate the significance of the present study from three main perspectives.

Theoretically, the finding of this study is able to fill the gap of the limited studies on the implementation of cooperative learning in EFL context especially in Indonesia. Since most of the studies of cooperative learning are conducted in tertiary level (Al-Tamimi & Attamimi, 2014; Ning, 2010; Pattanpichet, 2011; Er & Aksu, 2014; Talebi & Sobhani, 2012). However, little attention has been paid to conduct cooperative learning in secondary level especially in Indonesian context. Thus, this study will enrich literature about cooperative learning in secondary level especially in developing students' speaking skills.

Practically, the results of the research are expected to be beneficially useful for teachers, and also for readers who are interested in teaching English especially in an EFL context in Indonesia. For teachers, the findings provide information about kinds of cooperative learning techniques, the benefits and the basic principles which can be applied in the classroom to improve EFL teaching and learning quality of the eleventh grader of senior high school in particular and other context in general. Additionally, the result of the study is expected to offer a new strategy in improving students' speaking skills especially in EFL context in Indonesia.

1.5.   Operational Definition

A term will be frequently mentioned in this study. In order to avoid misunderstanding, an operational definition is provided as follow.

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Cooperative learning : a set of instructional methods which requires students to work together on academic task rather than work alone or in pairs to maximize their own and each other's learning (Johnson,1992; Slavin, 1995; Faust & Paulson, 1998; Jolliffe, 2007)

Speaking : a way to express meanings of language in order to make other people understand about what being told that is done by one or more participants (Harmer, 2007). In this study, the function of speaking can be interactional, transactional or performance which also covers important components such as fluency and accuracy (Richard, 2006)

1.6. Organization of the thesis

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter one clarifies the introductions. Chapter two presents review of related literature or theoretical foundation. Chapter three elaborates the procedures of the research or methodology. Chapter four illustrates data presentation and discussion. Chapter five is the conclusion of the study.