

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of the background of the study, purposes of the study, research questions, scope of the study, significance of the study, definitions of key terms, organization of the thesis, and concluding remarks.

1.1 Background of the Study

Speaking is one of the important skills in language learning. By having a good speaking skill, people can express ideas and maintain social relationship with others. Based on British Council's report (1998) in Syakir (2009), more than two billion people use English to communicate. This report also adds that it is such a large percentage of the world's language people who use English in their communication. Many language learners consider speaking ability as the most important skill that they can acquire and evaluate their progress in terms of their accomplishments in oral communication.

However, many students, especially at one vocational high school in Cimahi, are still unable to speak English fluently even though they have learned it for several years. It can be seen from the low result of their speaking tests given by the English teacher. Since there are commonly thirty two students in each class, the students only have little chance to practice speaking. They are not active in the classrooms. This situation yields the result that speaking skill of most students is comparatively lower than other skills, such as listening, reading, writing, and grammar. Moreover, according to the result of interview with several English teachers in this school, there are two main factors that might lead to the lower competence of the students' speaking skill. They were nervous and afraid of making mistakes and lacked of vocabulary.

To overcome this problem, it is very important for English teachers to create and employ a certain method and technique in order to assist students in improving their speaking ability because the teacher plays an important role in

deciding what method and technique which is able to motivate students to speak English in learning process (Celce-murcia, 1995). In this regard, one way to help students improve their speaking ability is implementing Task-Based Language Teaching.

Task-Based Language Teaching can be described as a language course whose syllabus or teaching and learning activities are organized around tasks (Nunan, 1989; Markee, 1997). It is unlike conventional syllabuses that are oriented towards language as the primary subject-matter, a task-based language syllabus is oriented towards the process of language learning in the classroom (Crooks and Gass, 1993).

A number of studies have examined the effectiveness of applying Task-Based Language Teaching in teaching speaking (e.g., Kasap, 2005; Yooyong, 2008; Murad, 2009; Sae-Ong, 2010; Pongsawang, 2012; Thanghun, 2012). However, to the researcher's knowledge, research on applying TBLT in teaching speaking in Indonesian context has been conducted by a few researchers (Malihah, 2010; Siburian and Prawati, 2011). None of these studies has been conducted in vocational high school setting.

Thus, this study aims to fill this gap by examining the use of Task-Based Language Teaching in teaching speaking at one vocational high school in Cimahi, West Java, Indonesia. Specifically, this study attempts to find out whether TBLT is effective in improving the students' speaking ability. Moreover, this study aims to identify the students' responses to the implementation of TBLT in teaching speaking.

The results of this study are expected to be significant theoretically, practically, and professionally. Theoretically, the results will contribute to the enrichment of theories on Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in teaching speaking. Practically, the results will encourage teachers to apply this method to develop students' speaking skill. Professionally, the results will provide EFL teachers with some information on the use of TBLT to develop the students' speaking skill.

1.2 Purposes of the Study

The aim of this research is to investigate the effectiveness of using task-based language teaching on speaking ability of students at Eleventh Grade of One State Vocational High School. It also includes the students' perception of task-based language teaching.

1.3 Research Questions

This study attempts to address the following questions:

1. Is Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) effective in improving the students' speaking ability
2. What are the students' perceptions to the implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in teaching speaking?

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study aims to investigate the use of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in teaching speaking at one of the vocational high school in Cimahi. The study focused on the effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) to improve the students' speaking ability that can be seen from four aspects. These include accuracy, fluency, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Moreover, this study focused on the students' responses to the implementation of TBL that can be seen from the principles of TBL developed by experts.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The results of this study are considered to be significant theoretically, practically, and professionally.

Theoretically, the results will contribute to the enrichment of theories on Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in teaching speaking. Practically, the results will encourage teachers to apply this method to develop students' speaking skill. In other words, students are assisted in practicing speaking English confidently.

1.6 Hypothesis

There are two hypotheses that proposed in this thesis:

Ho (null hypothesis): There is no different effect in the use of Task-Based Language Teaching in the experimental group on the students' speaking ability

H₁ (alternative hypothesis): There is a different effect in the use of Task-Based Language Teaching the experimental group on the students' speaking ability

1.7 Definitions of Key Terms

Avoiding some incorrect interpretation of this research title, the writer wants to clarify and explain the term used.

1) Effectiveness.

According to Hornby, the effectiveness is having an effect; able to bring about the result intended (Hornby, 1974: 277).

2) Speaking Skills

Speaking in a second language (L2) involves the development of a particular type of communication skills. Because of its circumstances of production, oral language tends to differ from written language in its typical grammar, lexical and discourse patterns. In addition, some of the processing skills needed in speaking differ from those involved in reading and writing (Bygate, 2002). In the present study this is measured by the students' scores on the speaking test.

3) **TBLT** is a teaching approach in which communication is involved in the pedagogical task brought to the class (Nunan, 2004). In this study, TBLT refers to teaching a foreign language that seeks to engage learners in

interactional authentic language use by having them perform a series of tasks.

4) Task

The researcher has adopted Ellis' (2003:16) definition:

A work plan that requires learners to process language pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome that can be evaluated in terms of whether the correct or appropriate propositional content has been conveyed. To this end, it requires them to give primary attention to meaning and to make use of their own linguistic resources, although the design of the task may dispose them to choose particular forms. A task is intended to result in language use that bears resemblance, direct or indirect, to the language is used in the real world. Like other language activities, a task can engage productive or receptive, and oral or written skills and also various cognitive processes. In this study, task is defined as activities that will be completed while using the target language communicatively by focusing on meaning to reach an intended outcome.

1.8 Organization of the Thesis

Chapter 1 consists of the background of the study, purposes of the study, research questions, scope of the study, significance of the study, definitions of the key terms, and organization of the thesis.

Chapter 2 will focus on the literature related to teaching speaking. It includes the nature of speaking, aspects in teaching speaking, principles in teaching speaking, techniques in teaching speaking, Task-Based Language Teaching, and previous research related to the implementation of TBLT in teaching speaking as well as the concluding remarks.

Chapter 3 will discuss the research methodology used in this study. It consists of five sections, including research design, site and participants, research instruments, data collection techniques, data analysis technique, and concluding

remarks.

Chapter 4 will present the data obtained from the data collection techniques: the tests and questionnaire. The findings are based on the measurement of the test scores from the experimental group. It aims to answer the research questions regarding the effects of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in teaching speaking and the students' responses to the teaching program. The group of the students is only categorized into one experimental control class. Experimental class was taught by applying Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT).

Chapter 5 concludes the findings of the research and implications of the Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) in teaching speaking. Some recommendations are provided that might be useful for further related research.

1.9 Concluding Remarks

This chapter has discussed the introduction part of the study. It has provided the background of the study, research questions, purposes, scope of the study, significance of the study, definitions of the key terms and organization of the thesis. Finally, the details of the literature review will be discussed in the next chapter.