

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This section presents a brief description of the whole content of the research. This section includes the background of the study, research questions, aims of the study, scope of the study, significance of the study, clarification of related terms and organizations of the paper.

1.1 Background of the Study

In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language and it has been given a high status as compulsory subject in educational system by the Government due to its status as international language. In foreign language teaching and learning, ability to speak is the most essential skill since the ultimate goal of language use is to achieve communicative purposes (Oradee, 2012). Therefore, speaking is one of the skill that have to be mastered by students in order to use English effectively and accurately in communication (Bahadorfar & Omidvar, 2014). In spite of the ultimate importance of the speaking skills, researchers observe that speaking is considered as the most difficult skill to be acquired by students who learn it as a second or foreign language due to their low proficiency (Alonso 2014; Alharbi 2015; Al-Hosni, 2014; Zhang 2009). Similar observation indicates that majority of students and high school graduates cannot speak English language properly, they were shy and preferred to remain quiet in class because they were unable to express themselves in spoken English (Alonzo, 2014; Sarwar, Alam, Hussain, Shah, & Jabeen, 2014; Alharbi, 2015). The researchers discovered that communication difficulties could happen because language learners are reluctant to develop their speaking skills due to lack of authentic language learning situations outside and inside classroom.

For many years, teaching speaking has been undervalued and English language teachers have continued to teach speaking just as a repetition of drills or memorization of dialogues (Bahadorfar & Omidvar, 2014). English teachers still

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spend too much of class time in reading and writing practice almost ignoringspeaking skill. The teachers still use the conventional methods such as repetition of drills or memorization of dialogues to deal with the speaking tasks and rarely use effective teaching techniques to develop them. Due to the overuse of the conventional methods of instruction, students are unmotivated to develop their speaking skills. Indeed it is teachers' responsibility to make students able to speak English by employing suitable teaching strategies of speaking. Therefore, teachers have to choose the appropriate method and strategy for students with different quality and quantity that prove its usefulness in developing speaking skills (Brown, 2001; Harmer, 2001; Harmer, 2002). As cited in Gudu (2015), Talley and Hui-ling (2014) observe that curriculum for teaching speaking skill should endeavour to expose learners to authentic, practical settings for speaking English and encourage active learner involvement in the lesson.

Above all, Multiple Intelligence Theory offers multi-modal teaching strategies in which students are given more chances and options while they are learning since it addresses various types of intelligences. There are many evidence proved that the implementation of Multiple Intelligences Theory has important impact on English language teaching and learning, and can be considered valuable for both teachers and students as well as for the curriculum, instructional strategies, materials, and activities (Adityas, 2016). In addition, according to English language scholars, Multiple Intelligences Theory (MIT) has significant implications for educational performance and has been reported to be effective in developing individual capacity. At present, the theory of Multiple Intelligences has captured the attention of many educators around the country, many language educators start to use the new approach to maximize learners' strengths (Armstrong, 2009) and hundreds of schools in USA and Australia are currently using its philosophy to redesign the way it educates the student. Some teachers, whether they realize it or not, have applied the theory of MI proposed by Howard Gardner in their teaching study (Currie, 2003), especially in teaching English as a foreign language.

Some researchers suggested that having a Multiple Intelligences-based classroom can be an appropriate way for students to do their best and develop their own ways of learning. To find empirical evidence for this claim, a number of studies have been conducted to investigate the application of the theory in English classes. A study implemented by Baş (2016) investigated the effectiveness of using Multiple Intelligences theory (MIT) based on students' academic achievement. In his study, the meta-analytic method was adopted in order to calculate the effect size of MIT-based instruction on students' academic achievement. In order to determine the effect of MIT-based instruction on students' academic achievement, quantitative studies (master's theses and doctoral dissertations) carried out on MIT between 1998 and 2014 were examined. Seventy five studies as research samples were included in the analysis, and the pretest and posttest mean scores and standard deviation values for the experimental and control groups were gathered in a data pool formed in Microsoft Excel 2007. At the end of the study, it was found that MIT-based was determined to have a large effect size ($d = 1.077$) on students' academic achievement levels, which means that the implementation of a program based on Multiple Intelligences Theory proved its usefulness on developing students' academic achievement.

Then, another study conducted by Don (2016) also showed similar results. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of using multiple intelligences classroom activities in developing students' English speaking skills. The participants in this study were taken from the second year English major students at Phu Yen University with total of 30 students who were involved in one experimental group. They were instructed and trained in order to develop their English speaking skills through Multiple Intelligences-based instruction training program. The results of the study proved that the program had a great effect in enhancing the students' English speaking skills as there were statistically significant differences between each of the pre and post administration of the tests.

These previous studies have shown that applications of Multiple Intelligence theory have had a positive influence on learning English in class and enhanced students' speaking skill in language learning. However, related research about this topic is still limited, especially in the Indonesian context. Thus, this study attempts to investigate whether Multiple Intelligences theory influence students' speaking skill in EFL classroom. The results of the study are expected to encourage the teachers to conduct a teaching-learning process which emphasizes on students' strengths and provide opportunities to learn with different unique intelligences.

1.2 Research Questions

The problems to be discussed in this research will be summarize in the following research questions:

1. Is the implementation of Multiple Intelligences Theory effective in improving students' speaking skills?
2. What are the students' responses towards the implementation of the theory in classroom learning processes?

1.3 Aims of the Study

According to the research questions mentioned above, the purposes of this research are focused on the followings:

1. To investigate whether the implementation of Multiple Intelligences Theory is effective in improving students' speaking skills.
2. To discover the students' responses towards the implementation of Multiple Intelligences Theory in classroom learning processes.

1.4 Scope of the Study

Considering the research questions and the aims of the study stated before, this study is concentrated to investigate the implementation of Multiple Intelligence theory to increase students' speaking skill. And this study also focuses on finding

the students' responses towards the implementation of MIT activities given by the teacher. The sample of the study was twenty four eighth grade students. Instruments of the study include pre-posttest of speaking skills and questionnaires. The students were taught speaking skills using the Multiple Intelligences Theory after the pretest. Then, the subjects were post tested after the treatment was conducted. This study was conducted in one of junior high schools in Bandung.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study contributes to several significances, which are the theoretical, practical, and professional benefits. Theoretically, the finding of the research can give theoretical information regarding the application of MIT in increasing students' speaking skills in Indonesian context in particular. This study is also intended to support the recent theories from the previous studies. In addition, the findings of this study may be able to enlighten future research of the same topic (or even to create new theories) and studies to develop better teaching method and technique to teach English especially in speaking skills. Practically, it is expected that the findings of this study will be beneficial for not only teachers and students, but also other researchers. Hopefully this study will be able to help teachers in arranging the strategy to improve students' speaking skills, especially through the implementation of MIT. It is expected that this study give some inputs in choosing the activities which are appropriate and effective for the students that lead to the students' improvement in speaking skill. Furthermore, professionally, the result of this study will present a real picture on how MIT are applied in classroom. Teachers can both adopt and adapt the teaching strategies for their teaching-learning process in the class that can improve their students' speaking skills.

1.6 Clarification of Key Terms

This research may generate some terms requiring clarification which can cause misunderstanding and ambiguity. To avoid such circumstances, the terms will be elaborated in accordance with the research as follows.

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Intelligence in this research refers to the ability to acquire and apply knowledge and skills. Students are better defined by saying that they possess a series of relatively independent intelligences than by saying they have just a single intelligence defined by IQ (Intelligence Quotient). Therefore, Multiple Intelligences is a wide range of abilities or intelligences those students poses by grouping their capabilities into: linguistic, spatial/visual, musical, kinesthetic, logical, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalist.

Moreover, speaking skills in this research refers to students' ability and skill in expressing ideas and opinions. It is the interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving and processing information. Lastly, teaching speaking means teaching how to use language for communication, for transferring ideas, thought or even feeling to other people.

1.7 Organization of the Paper

This study consists of five chapters. Each chapter of this study explained as the following:

Chapter I Introduction; this chapter of this study describes the nature of the study. In detail, this chapter consists of the background of the study, research questions, aims of the research, scope of the study, significances of the research, clarification of related terms, and organizations of the paper.

Chapter II Theoretical Foundation; this chapter consists of the explanation of multiple intelligences including the definition and types of multiple intelligences that are related to language learning. It also presents the definition of speaking and the aspect of speaking. Moreover, it also displays relevant studies on the correlation between multiple intelligences and students' speaking skills.

Chapter III Research Methodology; this chapter of this study presents research methodology which deals with the research design, research participants and site, data collection, research procedure and data analysis.

Chapter IV Findings and Discussion; this chapter is about the findings and the discussions on data gathered in the previous chapter. The data from pretest and posttest and interviews will be elaborated and discussed in this chapter.

Chapter V Conclusions and Recommendations; this chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations of this research. In addition to the conclusions and recommendations, there are also some suggestions for further research.