

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a brief introduction to the study including the background of the study, the research question, the aim of the study, the scope of the study, the significance of the study, the clarification of key terms, and the organization of the paper.

1.1 Background of the Study

Speaking has always been a significant skill for humans of all ages to develop. Humans, as social beings, constantly interact and communicate with each other by means of speaking as it refers to a process of conveying and sharing ideas and feelings (Harmer, 2007). A person's speaking ability is one of the important indicators of language mastery. In language learning, this skill is connected to other language skills, for instance, listening, writing, and reading. Additionally, speaking is at the center of the National Literacy Strategy: Framework for Teaching's notion of literacy, which states that effective good oral work enhances humans' understanding of language in both oral and written forms as well as the ways in which language can be used to communicate (Grugeon et al., 2005). This is in line with Richards & Renandya (2002), speaking is a basic element that measures language proficiency and how well students listen, write and read. In developing speaking skills, students communicate orally and build the components of the language, such as vocabulary, pronunciation, comprehension, grammar, and fluency. Therefore, developing one's speaking skills in language learning is essential.

In connection with that, learning English speaking in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) countries, including Indonesia, is very significant in the present century in which globalization can no longer be avoided. Indisputably, English has been extensively used and deep-seated as a dominant global language of thousands of different languages and its supremacy is just too hard to deny (Crystal, 2003; Setyarini et al., 2020). As English is widely used throughout the world, mastering English as an

international language is something that matters at this time (Richards, 2008; Shobikah, 2017) in order to easily adapt to people worldwide both in the present and future. Moreover, in the context of a non-native English speaker, a person is firstly recognized to have the capability of good English from his/her speaking ability (Khaerana & Nurdin, 2018). For this reason, it is necessary for students, as future generations, to master English speaking well.

The aforementioned phenomenon increases public interest in learning EFL in order to be able to communicate in English well. In accordance with that, the importance of developing English in this era has brought about the need to learn it (Anh, et al. 2013; Apriliana, 2018; Musthafa, 2010; Thituyetanh, 2015) even from an early age (Nurzaman et al., 2020). The practice of teaching English to young learners remains a fascinating topic of discussion as a research area within the field of education (Astutik & Munir, 2022). The main goal of teaching English to young learners is to motivate them to be ready and to have self-confidence in learning English at higher levels of education and to prepare them in terms of communication (Hashemi & Azizinezhad, 2011). Out of the four skills, speaking seems to be the most related skill in terms of communication as people use language more in utterance. Additionally, in Indonesia's educational field, it has been set in the Decree of Indonesia's Ministry of Education and Culture (Permendikbud) No. 146 year 2014 concerning the Curriculum for Early Childhood Education [1], speaking has been one of the expressive language skills that young learners should master (Nurzaman et al., 2020). However, English subject for primary schools in Indonesia is unconsidered a compulsory subject as it is taught as a local content subject, additional subject, or extracurricular (Apriliana, 2018, Astutik & Munir, 2022), which makes it harder for Indonesian young learners to acquire English-speaking skills earlier.

On the other hand, speaking seems to be the most challenging skill to master. The majority of English learners find it difficult to master speaking skills since it expects students a complex process to present meaning (Zhang, 2009; Gumartifa & Syahri, 2021). Furthermore, it is also influenced by many factors such as lack of motivation, existence of anxiety, lack of confidence, less attractive teaching

techniques, lack of vocabulary acquisition, and many other factors (Hosni, 2014; As, 2016; Murcia & Olshtain, 2000, as cited in Wei et al., 2018; Gumartifa & Syahri, 2021; Sudrajat & Apriliani, 2022). Due to these problems, the appropriate teaching technique is really necessary to be implemented in order to solve the problems. Studies have shown that there are several techniques to enhance students speaking skills namely songs, oral reporting, games, speech, poetry reading, news reading, and storytelling (As, 2016; Khaerana & Nurdin, 2018). Out of many techniques for enhancing students' speaking skills, storytelling is considered the most reliable language teaching technique (Zare-Behtash et al, 2016). Telling a story is a part of human life and is an activity that many people apply in their daily lives. Furthermore, storytelling can be a fundamental tool used to enhance students in expressing their ideas, feelings, and expressions orally (Mokhtar et al., 2011).

Results from the previous studies (Zare-Behtash et al., 2016; Nguyen & Nguyen, 2018; Hidayati, 2019) revealed that EFL students' speaking skills had improved through the utilization of storytelling in English teaching and learning. However, these studies tended to focus on indicating the improvement through the comparison of scores in general. The clear view of what students experience during the intervention and the in-depth explanation of the process during the implementation of storytelling needs to be further explored. Furthermore, research about implementing storytelling using stories that raise topics related to climate change, especially for young learners aged 12 years old, is still hard to discover.

The above issue raised the researcher's interest to fill the gap and to contribute in giving new insights into the process of the development of young learners' speaking skill, specifically in terms of comprehension, through the implementation of storytelling. Therefore, this study investigates the way storytelling contributes to Indonesian young learners' speaking development, specifically in terms of comprehension, relating to students' interpretation of a story.

1.2 Research Question

According to the research background discussed in the previous section, the research question is “How does storytelling contribute to the development of young learners’ speaking skill, specifically in terms of comprehension?”.

1.3 Aim of the Study

Based on the research question, the aim of this study is to explore the way storytelling technique contributes to young learners’ comprehension in speaking.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is in relation to how storytelling contributes to the development of EFL young learners’ speaking skill, specifically in terms of comprehension. In order to gain an in-depth elaboration of speaking skill acquirement through storytelling, three young learners aged 12 years old were recruited as the participants of this study. During the intervention, this study utilized an oral story-sharing cycle. The topic of stories that were chosen is the one that is related to the climate change issue.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to greatly impact the EFL young learners teaching and learning practice, especially in enhancing speaking skills. Some of the significances which are expected to be beneficial will be discussed below:

1. Theoretical Significance

The theoretical significance of this study is expected to give some new insights into the examination of how storytelling contributes to the development of speaking skill, specifically in terms of comprehension development.

2. Practical Significance

On the practical significance, this study aims to give new and further knowledge about the theory and practice of teaching English to young learners, especially in teaching speaking.

3. Professional Significance

The results of this study are expected to be useful in developing novel teaching speaking strategies in future research.

1.6 Clarification of the Key Terms

The definition of key terms used in this study are as follows:

1. Speaking is a productive skill that functions as a way to produce ideas, thoughts, and suggestions (Chastain, 1998). It is an ability that allows human beings to communicate with each other.
2. EFL young learner is a young learner who learns English as a foreign language. Indonesian young learners are categorized as EFL young learners. Young learners themselves cover a large chronological age span from around three years to 15 years old (Nunan, 2011).
3. Storytelling refers to an activity whose aim is to entertain as it is beyond reading a story but telling a story in an active, energetic, and attractive way in order to engage the listeners' attention (Hà & Bellot, 2020).

1.7 Organization of the Paper

This research paper is divided into five chapters. Each chapter presents different detailed information regarding the present study. Chapters in this research paper are organized as follows:

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This research paper begins with chapter one which presents the introduction to the study including the background of the research, the research question, the aim of the research, the scope of the research, the significance of the research, the clarification of key terms, and the organization of the paper.

CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides the theoretical foundation of this research. Theories that are covered in this research are young learners and their language development,

teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) to young learners, teaching speaking to young EFL learners with storytelling, and previous related studies.

CHAPTER III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This part presents the methodology used in this research comprising the research design and the research site and participants. This chapter also covers how the data were collected, the instruments and procedures used, and how the data were analyzed.

CHAPTER IV FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter serves the findings of the research from the data that was collected and analyzed. The data are presented in the tables, figures, and description. The findings are further elaborated in the discussion section.

CHAPTER V CONCLUSION

This chapter provides the conclusion from all of the results discussed in the previous chapter. This chapter also serves the suggestions for the next study regarding the implementation of storytelling to develop young EFL learners' speaking skill.