

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Background of The Study

In this era of globalization, the English language is important to our lives. Not only because it is the second most spoken language in the world but also because almost every institution requires their workers to be able to speak and write English properly as a benchmark. English is taught as a foreign language in Indonesia from elementary school to higher education.

Argawati (2014) Emphasises that speaking is an activity that someone uses to communicate with other people. It's everywhere and has become part of our everyday activities. Mart (2012: p.91) defines oral language as speaking ability, revealing or sharing ideas through language use. He interacts and uses vocabulary to express his mind and feelings when someone tells them. He also shares information with other people through communication.

Speaking language is one of the main objectives of language learning because it conveys an idea to others clearly and correctly. According to Gani (2015), speaking skills are the ability to verbally express opinions, thoughts, facts, and feelings to others. This partly reflects whether someone has mastered the language. In other words, he can communicate his ideas well to others.

Therefore, speaking skills are one of the essential skills to learn. Many students still have not mastered it, especially in speaking skills. Students are still lacking in speaking. The researcher was observed

During the teaching and learning process in class VIII students of SMP 14 Bintan. Some students said that speaking is the most challenging skill to master because it requires four aspects of speaking in terms of vocabulary mastery, fluency, comprehension, and pronunciation. Therefore, the researcher tried to research by developing speaking skills using Small Group Discussion (SGD) in grade 8.

Some factors can cause the problem, such as motivation, interests, intelligence, or learning material. However, the teaching strategy seems to be an important reason why the issue of oral language remains. The researcher identified several contingent factors relating to class strategies that affect student speaking skills. First, students are bored and not active during teaching because of the same technique. Second is the dominant teacher in the classroom (Teacher-Centered), meaning students are less motivated in the learning process. Finally, students still experience difficulties in some essential aspects of speaking, such as students feeling less fluent in pronunciation, understanding, and student vocabulary abilities.

Another method that can be used to learn to speak is in group discussions. SGD is a technique for learning to speak foreign languages. This can help students improve their speaking skills. In small groups, students could use English with each other and practice with their friends. Conversations with friends or group exercises

increase mastery of vocabulary, understanding, fluency, and comprehension. In addition, group learning also increases confidence and student leadership skills.

There are some studies there have investigated SGD. First, Fauzi (2017) on exploring how to improve Students' Speaking Ability through Small-Group discussions. It was found that small group discussions could effectively improve students' speaking skills. It was done by actively involving the students in group work discussions, giving them the freedom to expose themselves to learning activities, making them feel more relaxed in learning, and providing them with more opportunities to improve their speaking skills. Second, La'biran's (2017) study showed that the SGD strategy effectively increases student activity and learning outcomes in speaking subjects, especially in learning English. Students' post-test proved higher than students' pre-test after involving SGD in teaching and learning communication research.

The previous study above strengthens Orlich that Small group discussions can improve students' speaking skills. Moreover, three reasons why we can use small group discussions to improve speaking skills. The first discussion is used to improve teacher-student and students' verbal interaction. Second, the discussion is used to promote personal interaction and meaningful learning. Third, it is used to help students adopt a more responsible attitude. Learning can be in the form of content, skills, attitudes, processes, attitudes, and ways of independent learning. And also, the reason the researcher used this SGD is to increase the students' confidence in speaking English from small groups to self-confidence to a wider scope.

## 1.2 The Identification of the Problem

According to the background, several problems that can be identified are:

- Students have difficulty speaking due to a lack of vocabulary.
- Many students also do not comprehend speaking English
- Students feel less fluent in pronunciation and understanding of speaking.
- The participation and motivation of students in learning to speak are low.

## 1.3 The Limitation of the Problem

Problems related to the title are very broad. Therefore it is necessary to limit the problem. Problem restrictions include:

1. The subjects of this study were class VIII semester 2. The researcher took one class from 3 existing classes. The class is VIIC. Class C consists of 11 males and 17 females with 28 students.
2. Researcher takes speaking skills in this study. This study uses small group learning techniques.
3. Existing learning problems are limited to group study to improve student achievement, especially speaking.

## 1.4 The Research questions

Based on the limitation of the problem, the research question could be formulated as; "How can students' speaking skills be improved using small group discussions in grade 8 SMP N 14 Bintan ?".

## 1.5 The Research Objectives

Regarding the research question, this study aims to describe how to improve students' speaking skills by conducting small group discussions in grade 8 of SMPN

14 Bintan. To achieve this goal, the researcher entered the classroom and implemented the strategy in the teaching and learning process. This decision facilitated collecting data from students as the main source.

## **1.6 The Significances of the Research**

### **1.6.1 Theoretically**

This research contributed to students, teachers, schools, and researchers. This research provided benefits for the teacher as a reference for using the right technique for students, namely speaking skills by conducting SGD. In addition, students can use this research as a reference to use the right technique to learn English on their own, and also for schools to develop the use of teaching and learning technique with SGD so that students are interested in studying at SMPN 14 Bintan.

### **1.6.2 Practically**

#### **a. Student**

The results of this study are expected to provide new experiences in learning English, especially in speaking skills, by conducting SGD to be more creative and enthusiastic so that they can be more motivated to develop their abilities and students interested and enthusiastic in learning English;

#### **b. English teacher**

The results of this study are expected to provide an alternative technique for attracting students' interest, especially in speaking skills using SGD. It is also expected to motivate teachers to be more creative; so that students are more enthusiastic about learning English in class;

c. researcher

The results of this study can develop knowledge-related experiences in research and teaching English language education;

d. School

The results of this study: 1) can improve the quality of learning, both process and results; 2) With the completion of the research conducted by this researcher, it can be used as input for the school regarding the use of the SGD technique so that students interested in studying at SMPN 14 Bintan.

### **1.7 The Definition of Key terms**

To avoid some keywords are defined as follows:

#### **a. Small-Group Discussion**

Small group discussion is a learning process by discussing in small groups. Consists of 2-4 members to enable students to have problem-solving skills encountered in teaching and learning.

#### **b. Speaking**

Speaking is one of the skills to communicate with other people through language media. Speaking is a speech act in the form of sounds produced by the speech apparatus accompanied by body movements and facial expressions.