

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, the reason for choosing the topic, the scope and limitation, the research question, significance of the study, the research purpose, the research methodology, and definition of terminology.

1.1 Background of Study

Speaking is one of the four skills of English learning. It also becomes the most important skill because it is always used in daily conversation. Leong (2017) also it explains that speaking is the most important skill because it is one of the abilities that is needed to perform a conversation. Speaking is a crucial part of second language learning and teaching; it is an art of communication and one of the four productive skills that must be mastered in learning a foreign language (Bahadorfar, 2009).

English speaking skills are crucially essential for EFL learners. This is because English-speaking skills are a medium for delivering ideas, following lexical and grammatical rules, and practicing pronunciation. In addition, if we do not learn to speak, we can not tell stories, have discussions, and feel personal experiences in our lives and education. Speaking is the use of language to communicate with others. It means that speaking involves two or more people in which the participants are both hearers and speakers. Speaking is also an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information. (Brown, 2001)

According to Kotler (2009), perception is the process by which we select, organise, and translate input information to create a meaningful picture of the world. Furthermore, according to Slameto (2003), perception is a biological process that takes place in the human brain. It is a process that concerns the entry

by the information from a person who can respond either positively or negatively to the information. Asserted that English language teaching in English immersion settings foreign language acquisition and subject content learning (Qiang, 2012). This principle makes English immersion different from other foreign language approaches. In an immersion system, the target of language acquisition is achieved by making the language a medium for teaching subject content.

In English immersion programs, English learning is taught as much as possible by paying attention to students' daily lives and engaging them to use English in daily activities. Teachers must be able to encourage students to be actively involved in the learning experience by facilitating them to express what they have learned and share or collaborate with their partners. Involvement must be designed to foster curiosity, creativity, hard work, and responsibility to build better self-confidence, independent learning, self-discipline, and goal orientation. (Huang, 2006)

Pathways to Multilingualism: Evolving Perspectives on Immersion Education (2008), edited by Tara W. Fortune and Diane J. Tedick, is a collection of academic writings that detail the immersion approach to language education. The book is divided into three main parts. The first part, *Immersion Pedagogy*, discusses the role of teachers in integrating language instruction and academic content. The second part, *Language Development in Immersion Contexts*, examines how students develop their language skills in immersion environments, and the third part, *Social Contexts and Impact on Immersion Programs*, examines how social and cultural factors influence the success of immersion programs. Immersion itself is an approach to learning in which students are "immersed" in the target language. In practice, all or most of the coursework is delivered in the second language, so that students become accustomed to using the language functionally in a variety of academic contexts. There are several immersion models, such as one-way immersion where one group of students learns in the target language, and two-way immersion where two groups of students with different mother tongues learn together and learn each other's languages.

The journal entitled *Driving to Communicative Approach: The Innovative Teaching Speaking Methods in Indonesian English Immersion Program* written by Widya Rizky Pratiwi, Heri Kuswoyo, Maya Puspitasari, Juhana, and Bachtiar. This journal was published in 2024 in the *International Journal of Evaluation and Research in Education* (Vol. 13, No. 1, February 2024). This study aims to assess students' motivation in participating in the English immersion program and the innovative methods used in teaching speaking skills in Kampung Inggris Pare, Kediri. The study was conducted using a qualitative method using a micro-ethnographic approach. Data were obtained through initial interviews and direct observation of learning activities.

The Indonesian English Immersion Program (IEIP) implemented in Kampung Inggris Pare uses English as the main language in teaching and daily communication. Teaching speaking skills with an integrative approach that combines reading, writing, listening skills, and utilizing visual media. Three innovative methods used in teaching speaking are TSWP (Teaching Speaking through Writing Practice), where students are asked to write based on a certain topic which is then presented orally to improve speaking and critical thinking skills. For example, students write personal experiences and then deliver them in front of the class in turns, TSLP (Teaching Speaking through Listening Practice) which relies on audio materials such as songs and podcasts. For example, students listen to songs while filling in the empty lyrics, then convey the meaning of the song and sing it together and TSVM (Teaching Speaking through Visual Media) which involves the use of images or videos as speaking stimuli. For example, students take turns describing random images for 15 minutes non-stop, with game rules such as light punishments if they use Indonesian.

The results of the study showed that most students had negative experiences in learning English in formal schools, which tended to be boring and uncommunicative. However, after participating in the immersion program, their motivation and speaking skills increased significantly. This study confirms that the immersion approach based on communicative methods is very effective in

improving students' self-confidence and speaking skills in the context of foreign language learning.

The Foreign Language Immersion Journal as a Representation of Bilingual Education at SD MBF Al Adzkiya Wonosobo by Atinia Hidayah (2018) discusses the application of the partial immersion model in bilingual education. This qualitative research was conducted for three months through observation, interviews, and questionnaires. The three main programs are English Morning Menu, English Day, and English Week. This program is used to develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. For example, in English Morning Menu students name the picture and write the word they hear in English Day all school residents are required to speak English and English Week is filled with competitions such as storytelling which trains writing, reading, and speaking. As a result, this immersion program has proven effective in supporting students' gradual mastery of English in an elementary school environment.

English Language Immersion Journal Based on Local Wisdom for Elementary School Students by Yusup Supriyono and Nita Sari Narulita Dewi (2017) explains the application of the English Language Immersion method combined with local wisdom values in two elementary schools in Ciamis Regency. Using a qualitative descriptive method. The application of immersion is carried out by making English the main language during learning, using a second language acquisition approach. Examples of its application include storytelling activities, educational games such as information gap and coloring, and local culture training in English such as singing and discussing Indonesian culture. The results of the study showed that students experienced a significant increase in their mastery of basic grammar (such as a/an, is/am/are, and Wh-questions), thematic vocabulary (professions, animals, days), reading aloud skills, speaking through stories, and understanding local culture. In conclusion, local wisdom-based immersion is effective in improving language skills while strengthening students' cultural identity and social readiness in a global context.

1.2 The Reason for Choosing the Topic

There are several reasons why this topic is chosen :

1. Speaking skill is an essential component of English proficiency, yet many students struggle to develop fluency and confidence
2. The immersion method provides an environment where students are consistently exposed to English, allowing them to practice and improve their speaking skills naturally.

1.3 The Scope and Limitation

The study focuses on students' perception of the immersion learning method's effectiveness in enhancing their speaking skills. It explores how students experience and respond to immersion as a learning strategy in an English-speaking environment, specifically at one of the Female Student's Dormitory in Garut. The study does not cover another aspect of language learning, such as writing or reading, nor does it compare immersion with other aspects of teaching methods in detail.

1.4 The Research Question

Considering the issues mentioned above, this study aims to answer the following research question: "How do students perceive the immersion method in enhancing their speaking skills?"

1.5 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study contribute to understanding students' perspectives on the immersion method as a learning strategy for speaking skills. They help educators and language instructors refine their teaching approaches to better support students in developing fluency. Additionally, the results provide insight into how immersion impacts students' confidence and willingness to communicate in English.

1.6 The Research Purpose

Based on the research question above, this study aims to explore students' perceptions of the immersion method in enhancing their speaking skills. It seeks to understand their experiences, challenges, and progress while using immersion as a learning strategy. Furthermore, this study will examine how immersion influences students' confidence, fluency, and overall speaking proficiency.

1.7 Research Methodology

This study applies a descriptive qualitative approach that aims to describe in detail students' perceptions of the application of the immersion method in improving English speaking skills. Data collection through questionnaires and interviews involving students from one of the Dormitory in Garut who participated in this learning program. Interview participants were selected purposively, students who were considered the most active and had in-depth experience in the program. This approach allows researchers to explore in more detail students' experiences and views on the immersion method in improving speaking skill and confidence.

1.8 Definition of Terminology

This chapter presents the definitions of terminologies used in this study which include the definition of speaking, the definition of perception, and the definition of immersion. These terms are fundamental in understanding the concepts discussed in the research.

1.8.1 The Definition of Speaking

There are several definitions of speaking according to experts. One expert states that speaking is the use of language to communicate with others. This means that speaking involves two or more people in which the participants are both speakers and listeners. Speaking is also an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information (Brown, 2001).

According to McDonough (2013), “Speaking is desire and purpose driven; in other words, we genuinely want to communicate something to achieve a particular end.” This may involve expressing ideas and opinions, expressing a wish or a desire to do something, negotiating and solving a particular problem, or establishing and maintaining social relationships and friendships.

Speaking is one of the four skills of English learning. It also becomes the most critical skill because it is always used in daily conversation. According to Leong (2017), speaking is the most essential skill because it is one of the abilities that is needed to perform a conversation. Speaking is a crucial part of second language learning and teaching it is a part of communication and one of the four productive skills that must be mastered in learning a foreign language (Bahadorfar, 2009).

1.8.2 The Definition of Perception

According to Slameto (2003), perception is a biological process that takes place in the human brain. It is a process that concerns the entry of messages of information through five senses, namely the sense of sight, sense of hearing, sense of smell, sense of taste, and sense of touch. Perception is obtained by summarising the information from a person who can respond either positively or negatively to the information. Chee (2009) stated that the perceptions of stimuli can be influenced by an individual’s mental awareness, past experience, knowledge, motivations, and social interaction.

The process of acceptance or reabsorption is an indicator of perception at the physiological stages. It is about the function of the five senses in capturing external stimuli. This means that information conveyed by individuals to other will be absorbed or accepted by the five senses, both sight, hearing, smell, and taste, individually or together (Robbin, 2003).

1.8.3 The Definition of Immersion

Immersion is a concept that is often used in a variety of fields, including education, psychology, and technology. In general, immersion refers to a state in which a person is fully involved and immersed in an experience or activity and the

environment around them. In the context of education, for example, immersion can refer to a teaching method in which students are directly involved in the use of a particular language or culture so that they can learn more effectively (H.D, 2007)

According to Fortune (2008), immersion in language learning is defined as an approach that aims to improve students' language skills by integrating the use of the target language in academic and social contexts. Immersion in language learning is an approach in which the target language is used intensively as the primary medium of communication in the teaching and learning process. This method aims to create an environment that allows students to interact directly with the target language, either through formal teaching or daily activities. In an immersion program, students not only learn the language theoretically but also use it in various academic and social contexts.