

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the researcher provides an introduction that includes several key components consists of: (1) Background of the Research; (2) Research of the Questions; (3) The Purpose of the Research; (4) The Limitation of the Research; (5) The Significance of the Research; (6) The Definition of Key Terms.

1.1 Background of the Research

English is taught to students in Indonesia as a foreign language and plays an important role in various aspects of Indonesian society. Rao (2019) emphasizes that speaking is the most important skill among the other four skills, so it is crucial for students to master this skill to communicate effectively. Furthermore, it not only helps students in following lessons taught in English but also opens doors to access global educational resources. Moreover, English speaking skills facilitate students' participation in international academic forums, student exchanges, and collaborations with educational institutions from various countries. Therefore, the development of English speaking skills among students is not only important for their academic progress but also for preparing them to face global challenges and compete in the international education arena.

Even though students show interest in pursuing English education as their major in college, they often hesitate to start speaking English, despite having been learned the English language for many years. Learning English is quite challenging for some Indonesians, especially to learn speaking skills. Putri, Amri, and Ahmad in Purwasari

and Nugraha (2023) stated that the factors caused by the difficulty and lack of desire to speak with students are personal factors students, learning strategies, curriculum, and students' environment. This makes students less able to explore their abilities in vocabulary, grammar and knowledge the pronunciation is in English, so they have difficulty speaking.

Mastering a language requires practical use, not just theoretical study (Pale, 2021). It means that to truly become proficient in a language, it's essential to use it in real-life situations rather than just learning about it in a theoretical or academic manner. In other words, practical application, such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing in the language, is crucial for effective language learning and fluency. Simply studying the rules and structure of a language without applying them in real communication may not lead to mastery or proficiency. Dilfuza (2021) stated that storytelling is a method for studying language, which uses short stories with various topics. The use of storytelling in this learning process also helps students gain knowledge in many contexts, which aims to improve students' comprehension and speaking skills (Purwasari and Nugraha, 2023).

The researcher is interested in this theme because storytelling enhances students' English skills, especially in speaking. Additionally, the researcher was inspired by personal experiences in high school storytelling contests, which led to this study. Participating in these contests could motivate and provide opportunities for other students to engage in similar activities. Furthermore, storytelling entertains and enriches students' experiences outside the classroom. This study involved students from the English Education program, focusing on their experiences with high school

storytelling contests. Participants were selected due to their shared background with the researcher, who also participated in storytelling contests during high school. By examining the experiences of these two participants, the research aimed to understand how high school storytelling contest participation influenced and motivated their current academic pursuits in college from their point of view. Specifically, the study explored how involvement in storytelling contests could inspire participants to enhance their speaking skills, mastering various aspects of speaking more effectively. The research gathered insights from the perspectives of participants who had actively engaged in these storytelling contests.

Through the participants' experience in contributing to the storytelling activity, particularly during their participation in the contest, there are some problems, namely lack of vocabulary, anxiety, and developing techniques. Meanwhile, the strategies carried out by the participants to deal with these problems by using direct learning strategies and indirect learning strategies. Based on this background, the researcher developed research with the title of “Identifying EFL Learners' Experiences: Problems, Strategies, and Enhancement of Speaking Skills in The English Storytelling Contests.”

1.2 Research of the Questions

Based on the background, the following questions can be identified:

1. What problems do participants face when taking part in a storytelling contest?
2. How do the participants employ strategies to overcome the problems?
3. What kind of aspects of speaking skills are enhanced after participating in a storytelling contest?

1.3 Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study is to find out the problems experienced by the participants in the storytelling competition, to examine the strategies used by the participants to overcome these problems, and to evaluate the effectiveness of storytelling contests in enhancing the aspects of speaking skills.

1.4 Limitation of the Research

Based on this background, researchers using purposive sampling in taking participants. The selected participants are two of the fourth-semester students of the 2023-2024 academic year at the English Education Department, Universitas Jambi. The participants included two students, with one student from R003 and another from Room 004 who had engaged in English storytelling contest.

1.5 Significance of the Research

The result of this study is expected to be beneficial to the educational institution and other researchers.

1. For students

The result of this study is to invite students to be more active in participating in contests to develop their speaking skills.

2. For other researchers

The result of this study is a recommendation for other researchers who will conduct further studies in the same field.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

1. Speaking

Speaking is a complex ability that requires comprehension of vocabulary, phonetics, grammar, syntax, and subsystems of culture (Ilham, Bafadal, and Muslimin, 2019). In this study, the relationship between speaking skills and storytelling is very close because storytellers need to understand vocabulary, the knowledge of language sounds, the structure of the stories, and cultural aspects of language to build stories that are interesting, coherent and captivate their listeners, enrich their communicative experience, and create a stronger connection with the audience.

2. Storytelling

Storytelling is a medium for conveying information that has been heard or read based on the storyteller's comprehension in their own words (Purwasari and Nugraha, 2023). In this study, storytelling helps students enhance their speaking skills by understanding and retelling the story in their own words in public.