

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the discussion on background of the study, formulation of research questions, purpose of the study, significant of the study, scope and limitation, and definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

In everyday communication, speaking skills play a very important role in conveying information, ideas, and feelings. This skill is essential in various aspects of life, such as work, relationships, and education. Speaking is the ability of individuals to communicate fluently and express their feelings to others.¹ This skill not only involves knowledge of language features but also the capacity to process language and information effectively. Every aspect of life will not be separated from speaking, therefore good speaking skills help individuals to build social relationships. However, mastering a foreign language will be more difficult than mastering the ability to speak a native language. Therefore, developing speaking skills should be the main focus in language learning.

English language skills are divided into four main parts, namely reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. Among these, speaking is closely connected to the other skills. To communicate effectively, students need good

¹ Jeremy Harmer, *The Practice of English Language Teaching*, *ELT Journal*, 3rd edn (Longman, 2003), LVII, doi:10.1093/elt/57.4.401.

listening skills to understand what others are saying and respond appropriately. Reading and writing also support speaking by improving vocabulary and grammar. Therefore, speaking skills should be developed together with other language skills to improve overall language proficiency. The most difficult aspect in language learning for students is speaking skills. This is because speaking requires not only knowledge of language rules but also the ability to use them fluently in real-time communication. In an educational environment, speaking skills play an important role in helping students engage in discussions, express opinions, and give them a sense of confidence in using English.²

Although speaking is a vital component of language learning, students often encounter persistent difficulties in developing this skill. These difficulties generally arise from two main sources: psychological and linguistic factors. Psychological challenges include lack of confidence and high anxiety, while linguistic problems are related to limited vocabulary, grammatical errors, and pronunciation issues.³ These factors can hinder students' participation in speaking activities and slow down their progress. Given these obstacles, it becomes important to examine whether certain teaching strategies grounded in second language acquisition theory can effectively improve students' speaking performance by addressing both psychological and linguistic barriers.

² A Bueno, D Madrid, and N McLaren, 'TEFL in Secondary Education', 2005, p. 15.

³ Dea Aries Fitriani, Rahayu Apriliawati, and Wardah, 'A Study on Student'S English Speaking Problems in Speaking Performance', JPPK: Journal of Equatorial Education and Learning, 4.9 (2015), pp. 1–13.

In response to the challenges students face in developing their speaking skills, language teaching has increasingly emphasized communicative and interactive approaches that promote meaningful use of the language. These approaches are based on the idea that students learn a language better by using it actively than by just memorizing rules. However, the implementation of such approaches is not without challenges. One of the main difficulties in teaching lies in teachers' limited knowledge of diverse instructional methods.⁴ Furthermore, the English teachers often struggle to select suitable teaching techniques due to several constraints, such as students' limited vocabulary, lack of interest, time constraints, and insufficient teaching materials. Given these realities, it becomes important to examine which methods can be theoretically and practically effective in fostering students' speaking development.

One such strategy that can be used in English language teaching is the English-Only Policies, which could encourage students to use English as the sole language of communication in the classroom. English-Only Policy (EOP) is described as the attempt of institutions to establish English as the only mediator of facilitating classroom interaction and delivering instructions.⁵ By implementing EOP, students are expected to be able to improve their speaking skills faster, because students will be exposed to English more often. They will

⁴ Aisyah Mumary Songbatumis, 'Challenges in Teaching English Faced by English Teachers at MTsN Taliwang, Indonesia', *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Learning*, 2.2 (2017), doi:10.18196/ftl.2223.

⁵ Elsa Roberts Auerbach, 'Reexamining English Only in the ESL Classroom', 27.1 (2014), pp. 9–32.

internalize it and start thinking in English, because they will be forced to use it.

The implementation of English-Only Policy offers many benefits in improving students' speaking skills, but it is also accompanied by challenges that need to be overcome. The learning approach that uses English-Only Policy that exposes students to the target language in class orally and continuously can improve students' speaking fluency.⁶ Through the implementation of EOP, a language-rich environment will be created that can encourage students to practice English consistently, and help them build fluency and confidence. However, on the other hand, there are quite a few students who may have difficulty with this policy, especially those who have limited vocabulary or lack confidence, which makes them reluctant to participate in class activities.

Several studies have been conducted related to the English-Only Policy in language learning. First, a study conducted by Liwanag, et al. (2022) entitled “The Effects of the Implementation of English-Only Policy in the Classroom to the BSE English Students’ Language Learning”. This study revealed that the implementation of EOP had a positive effect on students' language learning, particularly in enhancing their fluency, self-confidence, grammar, pronunciation, and social interactions. The study suggests that requiring students to use only English in the classroom provides them with greater

⁶ Revathi Gopal Iliana Putri Azar, ‘Effects of “English-Only Policy” on Students’ Fluency and Motivation Level in Speaking English’, *The Malaysian English Language Teaching Association*, 50.2021 (2021), pp. 157–72, doi:<https://doi.org/10.52696/EGJQ3860>.

exposure to the language, allowing them to internalize it more effectively and improve their speaking skills.⁷

Second, a study conducted by Kani & Igsen (2022) entitled “Bilingual English Teachers’ Perspective on ‘English-Only’ Policies in an EFL Setting”. This research explored the perspective of bilingual EFL teachers working in private schools where strict EOP was implemented. Their research found that while kindergarten teachers generally supported EOP for increased language exposure, primary school teachers raised concerns about its negative impact on student engagement and classroom management. The study highlights that while EOP can enhance language immersion, its effectiveness depends on flexible implementation that considers students’ needs and proficiency levels.⁸

The third study, conducted by Gregorio, et al. (2023) entitled “The Role of English-Only Policy towards the Oral Communication Skills of English Major Students at Good Samaritan Colleges”. This study found that EOP had a positive impact on students’ fluency, communicative competence, confidence, and knowledge of the English language. Additionally, the study highlighted that students developed better speaking habits and were more engaged in classroom discussions due to the consistent use of English. However, the research also noted that some students faced difficulties in

⁷ Faye C Liwanag and others, ‘The Effects of The Implementation of English Only Policy in the Classroom to the BSE English Students’ Language Learning’, 7.1 (2022), pp. 31–38 <www.sajst.orgwww.sajst.org>.

⁸ Zeynep Gulsah Kani and Hatice Igsen, ‘Bilingual English Teachers’ Perspectives on “English-Only” Policies in an EFL Setting’, *Educational Policy Analysis and Strategic Research*, 17.1 (2022), pp. 127–41, doi:10.29329/epasr.2022.248.7.

expressing their ideas fluently, particularly for those with lower proficiency levels.⁹

Considering the theoretical perspectives and practical challenges in speaking instruction, further investigation is needed to identify effective methods for language development. Although numerous studies have explored the English-Only Policy (EOP), most have been conducted at the tertiary education level, focusing on university students or bilingual teachers, and emphasizing learners' perceptions or general attitudes rather than measurable learning outcomes. There is a lack of empirical research that specifically examines the effectiveness of EOP in improving students' speaking fluency, particularly at the junior high school level in the Indonesian EFL context. Given that younger learners have different cognitive, emotional, and linguistic characteristics compared to adults, it is important to explore how EOP affects actual speaking performance, not just motivation or perception. This study aims to fill that gap by providing experimental evidence on the impact of EOP on junior high school students' speaking fluency in recount text.

Therefore, this research is needed to determine whether EOP effectively enhances speaking skills among Indonesian junior high school students and to identify the best strategies for its implementation. Thus, the writer would like to do research with title **“The Effectiveness of English-Only Policy in**

⁹ Neil Alyson Gregorio and Good Samaritan Colleges, ‘The Role of English-Only Policy Towards the Oral Communication Skills of English Major Students at Good Samaritan Colleges’, no. July (2023), doi:10.13140/RG.2.2.18183.16800.

Enhancing Students' Speaking Skills among 8th Grade Students at MTsN 5 Tulungagung”.

B. Research Questions

Based on the identification of the research above, the research problems are formulated as follow:

“Is there any significant different score on students' speaking achievement who are taught by using the English-Only Policy strategy and those who are not?”

C. Purpose of the study

Concerning with the research question above, the purpose of this study is formulated as follows:

“To find out the significant different score on students' speaking achievement who are taught under the English-Only Policy strategy and those who are not.”

D. Formulation of Hypothesis

Hypothesis can be interpreted as a research problem or prediction of the relationship between two or more variables. The writer proposed two hypotheses as follows:

1. Null hypothesis (Ho)

There was no significant difference score on students' speaking skill who were taught under the English-Only Policy and those who were not.

2. Alternative hypothesis (Ha)

There was a significant difference score on students' speaking skill who were taught under the English-Only policy and those who were not.

E. Significant of the Study

The findings of this research are expected to provide valuable insight and contributions for various stakeholders, including:

1. The students

This study can help students understand how EOP influences their speaking skills and confidence in using English. By identifying effective strategies, students may feel more motivated to engage in English communication and overcome challenges in speaking.

2. The teachers

The results of this research can serve as a reference for English teachers in selecting and implementing effective teaching strategies that support students' speaking development. It can also provide insights into overcoming common challenges students face in an EOP classroom.

3. The future researchers

This research can serve as a foundation for future studies on the implementation of EOP in junior high school settings. It may highlight areas that need further exploration, such as the long-term effects of EOP on language acquisition or its impact on students with different proficiency levels.

F. Scope and Limitation of the Study

To avoid any possible misunderstandings, it is important to make the scope and limitation of the research to clarify the details of the research. The scope of this research is to examine the effectiveness of using English-Only Policy in enhancing speaking skills at 8th grade of MTsN 5 Tulungagung. It focuses on aspects such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension within a classroom. In addition, this research is limited to short-term effects and does not assess other language skills like listening, reading, or writing.

G. Definition of Key Terms

There are several explanations of the components mentioned by the writer in this part to avoid ambiguity or confusion for the readers. Thus, the writer will define the key terms as follows:

1. Effectiveness

Effectiveness defined an action or the result of the effects carried out on certain activities. The activities discussed here are techniques, strategies, or procedures in the context of learning. Therefore, if an approach significantly affects predefined targets, it might be considered effective.

2. English-Only Policy

English-Only Policy (EOP) described as the attempt of institutions to establish English as the only mediator of facilitating classroom interaction and delivering instructions. In this research, EOP refers to a classroom language policy that requires students to use only English for communication during lesson.

3. Speaking skills

Speaking skills refers to a students' ability in expressing their thoughts, ideas and information orally in clear, fluent, and coherent manner. In speaking skills involve some essential elements, including pronunciation, vocabulary utilization, grammatical accuracy, fluency, and confidence.