

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents some points related to this study. These include background of the study, research question, objective the study, significance of the study, scope and limitations of the study, definition of key terms.

A. Background of the Study

In language learning, speaking is considered one of the most important skills to be mastered. Speaking reflects students' ability to use English for communication and allows them to engage in real interaction. Among the four language skills, speaking plays a crucial role as it provides learners with opportunities to use the language meaningfully in various contexts.¹ Therefore, speaking is regarded as a fundamental skill that learners need to master not only for academic success but also for social interaction and future career opportunities. Students who can communicate effectively in English are better equipped to participate in group discussions, present ideas confidently, and interact with people from diverse backgrounds.

Speaking is a complex skill that requires learners to master several components simultaneously including fluency, accuracy, vocabulary, pronunciation, and interactional competence. These components are closely related to one another and strongly influence the success of oral

¹ Rao Srinivas Parupalli, "The Importance of Speaking Skills in English Classrooms," *Alford Council of International English & Literature Journal (ACIELJ)* 2, no. 2 (2019): 18.

communication.² Fluency helps students speak smoothly, accuracy ensures their sentences are correct, vocabulary enables clear expression, pronunciation makes their speech easier to understand, and interactional competence allows them to respond appropriately in conversations.³ Classroom activities like roleplays, group discussions, and question and answer sessions can strengthen these skills. This means that speaking is not merely about producing sentences, but also about using language smoothly, accurately, and appropriately to participate in class activities, interact with peers, and build confidence.

Furthermore, speaking can be categorized into two main types based on its purpose: interactional and transactional speaking.⁴ Interactional speaking is used to build and maintain social relationships, such as greeting friends or engaging in small talk.⁵ Although it may seem simple, it plays an important role in helping students become confident and fluent in using English. Based on the researcher's preliminary observation, interactional speaking commonly appears in junior high school contexts, where students greet their friends, make small talk, exchange simple opinions, and interact with teachers in daily classroom situations. These everyday interactions provide students with opportunities to practice using English in a supportive environment. In contrast, transactional

² Cha Li and Lawrence Jun Zhang, "The Development of Accuracy and Fluency in Second Language (L2) Speaking Related to Self-Efficacy through Online Scaffolding: A Latent Growth Curve Modeling Analysis," *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research* 52, no. 5 (2023): 1371–95, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10936-023-09950-7>.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Gillian; Brown and George Yule, "Teaching Spoken Language," *Cambridge University Press* 53, no. 9 (1983): 1–24.

⁵ Nguyen Thanh Nha and Phuong Hoang Yen, "The Effects of Teacher's Use of Interactional Strategies on EFL Students' Speaking Performance," *International Journal of Science and Management Studies (IJSMS)*, no. August (2021): 152–66, <https://doi.org/10.51386/25815946/ijms-v4i4p115>.

speaking is message-oriented and focuses on exchanging information effectively. It commonly occurs in classroom activities such as asking and answering questions, giving directions, and expressing opinions.⁶ Based on the researcher's preliminary observation, students in junior high school often engage in transactional speaking through tasks such as group discussions, problem-solving activities, role-plays, and information-gap exercises. This type of speaking is essential because it trains students to communicate ideas clearly, respond appropriately, and participate actively in learning interactions.

However, in the context of junior high school students, many students still face difficulties in transactional speaking. Based on the researcher's preliminary observation, a considerable number of students are not able to express their ideas clearly, respond to questions appropriately, or participate actively in classroom discussions. Most students tend to be passive and hesitant to speak. In addition, preliminary classroom data indicate that many students have not achieved the minimum mastery criterion (KKM) in speaking performance, which reflects a gap between the expected competence and the actual condition of students' speaking ability.

This condition is supported by several previous studies. According to Quvanch et al., found that students were reluctant to speak English in class due to fear of making mistakes.⁷ This anxiety often causes them to remain silent in

⁶ Hanna Nabila, *The Effect Of Using Transactional Conversation To Students Speaking Skill Of The Second Grade In SMAN 1 Pasir Peny, 2021.*

⁷ Ziauddin Quvanch, Ahmad Shah Qasemi, and Kew Si Na, "Analyzing Levels, Factors and Coping Strategies of Speaking Anxiety among EFL Undergraduates in Afghanistan," *Cogent Education* 11, no. 1 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186X.2024.2413225>.

class or avoid speaking activities, even when they already know the answer. Another study S. Hangad and Clarin reported that limited vocabulary and grammatical knowledge significantly hindered students' ability to express their ideas clearly. These results indicate that students' speaking difficulties are influenced not only by linguistic factors but also by psychological factors such as anxiety, lack of confidence, and fear of being judged by peers.⁸

Furthermore, students often have limited opportunities to practice speaking both inside and outside the classroom, which reduces their confidence in using English communicatively. These problems highlight the need for an effective teaching approach that can encourage active participation and provide meaningful opportunities for students to practice speaking. In addition, the implementation of English learning in Islamic Junior High School (MTs) presents a distinctive challenge. Students in MTs are required to manage a dual curriculum that integrates general academic subjects with intensive religious studies.

According to Dardiri and Su'aidi this relatively heavy academic load can limit students' time and cognitive resources for learning English, especially for practicing speaking skills.⁹ Consequently, as noted by Qadri et al., students may experience higher levels of speaking anxiety, limited opportunities for oral

⁸ Jeshler Vohn S. Hangad and Analyn S. Clarin, "Grammar and Vocabulary Skills in Relation to the Maritime Students' Speaking Abilities," *International Journal of Social Science and Human Research* 6, no. 09 (2023): 5652–60, <https://doi.org/10.47191/ijsshr/v6-i9-41>.

⁹ Muhammad Amiruddin Dardiri and Mohamad Zaki Su'aidi, "Integrated Curriculum in Islamic School: Integration of Knowledge and Parental Involvement," *Jurnal Intelektual: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Studi Keislaman* 14, no. 3 (December 2024): 307–20, <https://doi.org/10.33367/ji.v14i3.6322>.

interaction, and lower confidence in using English.¹⁰ To optimize the learning process and enhance active student engagement under these academic conditions, the implementation of structured instructional methods is highly essential.

One of the approaches that can be applied is Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). TBLT focuses on the use of meaningful tasks that require students to use English in real communication. Through tasks such as role-plays, group discussions, and problem-solving activities, students are encouraged to practice speaking in a more interactive and contextual way. Several previous studies have shown that TBLT is effective in improving students' speaking ability.

Hisbullah found that TBLT improved students' speaking performance, particularly in terms of fluency and accuracy.¹¹ Similarly, Mulyadi et al., reported that the integration of TBLT enhanced students' speaking and listening skills.¹² In addition, Gortaire Díaz et al., revealed that TBLT had a positive impact on students' speaking proficiency and motivation at the university

¹⁰ Nurmuslimah Qadri, Nurdevi Bte Abdul, and Maharida Maharida, "Analysis Of Students' Anxiety In Speaking Performance In Muhammadiyah University Of Makassar," *Indonesian Journal of Psycholinguistics* 2, no. 1 (March 2023): 9–18, <https://doi.org/10.56983/ijp.v2i1.470>.

¹¹ Muh Hisbullah, "The Effectiveness of Task-Based Language Teaching," *Journal of Languages and Language Teaching* 10, no. 1 (2022): 85–93.

¹² Dodi Mulyadi et al., "Effects of Technology Enhanced Task-Based Language Teaching on Learners' Listening Comprehension and Speaking Performance," *International Journal of Instruction* 14, no. 3 (2021): 717–36, <https://doi.org/10.29333/iji.2021.14342a>.

level.¹³ These results indicate that TBLT can be an effective approach to improve students' speaking ability in different contexts.

However, despite these positive results, several research gaps remain. First, most previous studies focus on general speaking ability without specifically addressing transactional speaking, which is essential for classroom communication such as asking and answering questions, giving responses, and exchanging information. Second, many studies were conducted at the senior high school or university level, while research in Islamic junior high school (MTs) context is still limited. Third, previous studies tend to emphasize general speaking performance rather than focusing on specific communicative functions required in classroom interaction.

Based on these gaps, this study focuses on investigating the effect of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on students' transactional speaking ability in the context of MTs. This study is expected to provide a more specific contribution by emphasizing practical communication skills that are directly relevant to students' classroom interaction. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on transactional speaking ability, which has not been widely explored in previous studies, particularly in the context of Islamic junior high schools. In addition, this study applies TBLT specifically to support students' ability to perform communicative tasks such as asking questions, giving responses, and exchanging information effectively in classroom settings.

¹³ David Gortaire Díaz et al., "The Impact of Task-Based Language Teaching on English as a EFL Learners' Speaking Proficiency and Motivation," *Ciencia Latina Revista Científica Multidisciplinar* 7, no. 3 (2023): 3796–810.

The researcher chose this study because students still face difficulties in speaking English, especially in expressing their ideas confidently during classroom interaction. Based on the preliminary observation conducted on December 10th, 2025 at MTsN 1 Tulungagung, the researcher found that a considerable number of students were hesitant to speak English during classroom activities. Most of them lacked confidence in expressing their ideas, had limited vocabulary, and were afraid of making grammatical or pronunciation mistakes. In addition, classroom interaction was still dominated by the teacher, resulting in limited opportunities for students to practice speaking.

These findings indicate the need for an effective teaching approach that encourages students to actively use English in meaningful communication. Therefore, this study aims to provide practical guidance for teachers in selecting effective teaching strategies and to support students in improving their speaking ability, confidence, and classroom participation.

B. Research Question

Based on the background and problems identified, this study aims to answer the following research question: “Is there any significant effect of using Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) on students’ transactional speaking ability at MTsN 1 Tulungagung?”

C. Objective of the Study

This study aims to achieve the following objective: “To find out whether there is a significant effect of using TBLT on students’ transactional speaking ability at MTsN 1 Tulungagung”

D. Significance of the Study

The researcher hopes this study can contribute practically:

a. For Teachers

To give an alternative approach in teaching English, especially in teaching speaking through Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT).

b. For Students

This study provides more opportunities to practice English and helps them build confidence in speaking after applying TBLT.

c. For Future Researchers

To provide references and insights for future researchers who are interested in investigating the use of TBLT in students’ transactional speaking ability.

E. Scope and Limitations of the Study

The scope of this study is limited to investigating the effect of using Task-Based Language teaching (TBLT) on students’ speaking ability at MTsN 1 Tulungagung. The study focuses only on transactional speaking skills, such as asking questions, giving responses, and exchanging information, which are frequently used in classroom communication. The participants of this study is the eighth-grade students of MTsN 1 Tulungagung in the academic year 2025/2026.

F. Definition of Key Terms

To avoid misunderstanding in terms and contents of the topic in this research, the researcher must find the key terms in this research:

1. Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT)

Task-Based Language Teaching is an approach to language teaching that uses communicative tasks as the central unit of planning and instruction. In this study, TBLT refers to the method of teaching English in which students are required to complete meaningful tasks in order to use the target language for real communication.

2. Speaking Ability

Speaking ability is the skill of producing oral language to express ideas, feelings, and opinions in communication. In this study, speaking ability is limited to students' ability to use English in classroom communication, with attention to aspects such as fluency, accuracy, vocabulary, and interaction.

3. Transactional Speaking

Transactional speaking refers to communication that aims at conveying or exchanging information. It is different from interactional speaking, which focuses on building social relationships. In this study, transactional speaking includes activities such as asking and answering questions, giving directions, and exchanging information