CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Research

Speaking is a useful oral/aural ability that entails generating coherent verbal utterances to communicate ideas. Speaking is a productive ability that entails using language to communicate verbally in many circumstances using either nonverbal or verbal signals[1]. It is crucial for efficient communication and is one of the four language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening). Gaining proficiency in speaking is the ultimate aim of learning a foreign or second language because it is essential for commerce, social standing, and unity[2]. Creating and communicating meaning via the use of both spoken and non-spoken symbols is the process of speaking. Creating and communicating meaning via the use of both spoken and non-spoken symbols is the process of speaking. In order to teach and learn a language, students must go through this process since they must learn how to communicate in a variety of situations[3]. Speaking is a process, but speaking talent is a valuable ability that may be developed via language study and instruction[4].

So that, speaking is a fundamental language skill for students as it demonstrates their ability to integrate language knowledge, express ideas, and engage in real-time communication effectively. In addition, speaking is a crucial skill that reflects how effectively a learner can utilize other language competencies

[1] Oviana Puspitasari, "Improving the Second Grade Students' Speaking Skills through Information Gap Activities at SMP N 2 Sleman in the Academic Year of 2010/2011" Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta

[2] Kathleen M. Bailey, "Practical English Language Teaching: Speaking" (2005)

[3] Ramin Rahimy, Samaneh Safarpour, "The Effect of Using Role-Play on Iranian EFL Learners' Speaking Ability" (2012)

[4] Ann L Chaney, "Teaching Oral Communication in grades K-8" (1998)

in real-time communication. The importance of speaking is evident in how it integrates with other language skills, such as writing. For instance, engaging in conversation helps students expand their vocabulary, refine their grammar, and ultimately enhances their writing abilities.

The researcher chose information gap activities as a learning method in teaching speaking because these tasks naturally create opportunities for meaningful communication, which is essential for developing fluency. Unlike traditional drills, information gap activities require students to exchange specific information in order to complete a task, thereby encouraging interaction, negotiation of meaning, and real-time language use. Information gap tasks are communicative in nature and help students develop both fluency and accuracy by engaging them in purposeful language use[5]. This method aligns with the communicative approach to language teaching and is particularly effective in promoting student engagement, reducing speaking anxiety, and fostering collaborative learningall of which are crucial for improving speaking skills in a classroom setting.

Several studies have been conducted to see the effectiveness of Informstion Gap Activity in the teaching and learning process of English. One of them was carried out by M. Afrizal (2015) in his research titled "Improving Students' Speaking Ability through the Use of Information Gap Technique (IGT)," the researcher selected the Information Gap Technique because it facilitates purposeful communication by engaging students in the exchange of specific information to accomplish a task. This method promotes active interaction, collaboration, and

[5] Jack, C Richards. "Communicative Language Teaching Today" (2006), Cambridge University

spontaneous language use, which are essential for developing speaking skills. Within the context of his study, IGT aligned with the principles of communicative language teaching and proved effective in enhancing students' fluency, confidence, and motivation in speaking. So that can be the reason to choose Information Gap Activity to enhance student's speaking skill is effective. Second, Andri Defrioka, (2009) in his research titled "Improving Students' Interaction in Speaking Class through Information Gap Activities," the researcher chose Information Gap Activities because they effectively addressed the issue of passive student behavior in the speaking classroom. These activities require students to exchange missing information through communication, encouraging a more student-centered and interactive learning environment. By incorporating pairwork and groupwork, the technique promoted greater student participation, collaboration, and engagement in speaking tasks. Furthermore, the use of classroom action research proceduresplanning, acting, observing, and reflectingallowed for continuous improvement throughout the study. Conducted in two cycles, the research was carefully adjusted based on observations and reflections, which strengthened the effectiveness of the method and ensured the overall quality of the research process.

Furthermore, This research study focus on the effectiveness of Information Gap Activity (IGA) in towards the speaking skills of 11th-grade students at SMKN 1 Boyolangu, a vocational high school where English communication skills are essential for future career opportunities. While previous studies have examined IGA in general high school or university settings, this research applies it in a vocational education context, emphasizing practical and workplace communication. Additionally, past research often used qualitative methods or general observations,

whereas this study employs a pre-experimental one-group pretest-posttest design with IBM SPSS statistical analysis, ensuring measurable and data-driven results.

A review of existing literature confirms that Information Gap Activities (IGA) are a well-established and effective method for improving students' English speaking proficiency. Studies indicate that IGA leads to measurable gains in test scores, fosters greater student participation and interaction, and aids in developing specific language areas like pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. This effectiveness has been demonstrated across multiple research frameworks, such as Classroom Action Research, True Experimental, and Quasi Experimental designs.

Nevertheless, the current body of research presents two primary limitations. Contextually, prior investigations have largely involved university students, vocational high school students in other regions, and junior high school learners, leaving a gap concerning 11th grade students at SMKN 1 Boyolangu. Methodologically, while many studies assess IGA on its own or against a basic control, there is insufficient research that directly contrasts IGA with the conventional teaching practices specifically employed at SMKN 1 Boyolangu.

Consequently, this study is designed to bridge these gaps by examining whether there is a significant difference in speaking scores between 11th-grade students at SMKN 1 Boyolangu taught using Information Gap Activities and those taught using conventional methods. The research thereby intends to offer contextualized and comparative evidence regarding the efficacy of IGA in this particular educational environment. Moreover, this study not only evaluates fluency, accuracy, and comprehension but also considers students' confidence and

motivation, providing a more comprehensive analysis of IGA's impact. These factors make this research a valuable contribution to the field of communicative language teaching, offering insights that can help improve speaking instruction in vocational education settings.

B. Formulation of Research Problems

The formulated of research problem is "Is there any significant different score in students' speaking of the 11th grade at SMKN 1 Boyolangu those taught using Information Gap Activity and those taught by using conventional method?"

C. Purpose of the Study

Based on the formulation of the problem above, the purpose of this study is to determine whether there is a significant difference in the speaking scores of 11th-grade students at SMKN 1 Boyolangu between those taught using the Information Gap Activity and those taught using the conventional method.

D. Research Hypothesis

Before determining the hypothetical result, the researcher proposed an interpretation using the following procedure :

1. Formulating null hypothesis (H_0):

The use of Information Gap Activities shows no significant difference in the speaking skills of students who are taught using them and those who are taught using conventional methods.

2. Formulating alternative hypothesis (H_a):

The use of Information Gap Activities shows a significant difference in the speaking skills of students who are taught using them and those who are taught using conventional methods.

E. Significance of the Study

1. Theoretically

Theoretically, the result of this study will answer the research question and will have a positive impact on towards students' achievement by using Information Gap Activities to enhance English-speaking skills.

2. Practically

The research conducted at SMKN 1 Boyolangu towards student speaking achievement by using Information Gap Activities offers numerous benefits for students, teachers, future researchers, and readers:

a) For Teachers: The findings from this study can serve as a valuable reference for teachers at SMKN 1 Boyolangu to enhance their teaching methods, specifically aimed at towards students' speaking achievements. By implementing Information Gap Activities, teachers can employ innovative strategies that make language learning more engaging and effective. This research highlights the importance of adopting interactive speaking activities and encourages teachers to explore new methods that foster language development through communicative tasks.
b) For Students: Students at SMKN 1 Boyolangu stand to benefit significantly from this research. The use of Information Gap Activities can help students become more confident in speaking English during class activities. This increased confidence can lead to better performance in speaking tasks and more active participation in class discussions. Through interactive tasks, students will also improve their language proficiency by using English in real-life contexts, enhancing their communication skills and overall fluency.
c) For Future Researchers: This research provides a foundation for future studies in language education, particularly in the area of speaking skills. It encourages future researchers to explore other language competencies and investigate the effectiveness of Information Gap Activities in different contexts. Furthermore, this study highlights the relevance of communicative approaches in language learning, prompting future research to further explore the impact of interactive tasks on various language skills.

F. Scope and Limitation of the Research

To avoid any misunderstanding about the focus of this research, it is important to clarify that this study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of Information Gap Activities in towrads the speaking skills of 11th-grade students at SMKN 1 Boyolangu. The research centers on speaking tasks aligned with the school curriculum, where students engage in meaningful communication by descripting stuation and exchanging information in pairs or small groups. This study is specifically limited to measuring the impact of Information Gap Activities on students' speaking performance. Other related aspects, such as different teaching techniques or language skills beyond speaking, are not explored in this research.

G. Definition of Key Terms

Important thing for the writer to do is to explain the key terms used in this research. Here are the explanations for some of the key terms used:

1**. Information Gap Activity (IGA)**

Information Gap Activity (IGA) is a communicative language teaching technique where students work in pairs or groups, each possessing different pieces of information needed to complete a task. Since students do not have all the information themselves, they must ask questions, listen carefully, and speak to exchange details. This method encourages genuine communication, promotes fluency, and enhances critical thinking. It shifts the focus from teacher-led instruction to student-centered interaction, making learning more engaging and practical.

Examples of Information Gap Activities include "Find the Difference," where students describe and compare similar images, and "Map Activity," where one student gives directions to another with a blank map. Other activities like role-playing appointments or guessing objects require students to use vocabulary, grammar, and conversational skills in real-life contexts. These activities improve speaking confidence, listening comprehension, and problem-solving abilities, making them an effective way to enhance English-speaking skills.

2. Speaking skills

Speaking skills refer to the ability to communicate verbally in a clear, coherent, and effective manner, encompassing key components such as fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and coherence. Fluency allows for smooth speech, while pronunciation ensures clarity. A rich vocabulary enables effective expression, and correct grammar ensures meaningful communication. Coherence helps organize ideas logically, facilitating understanding. Speaking skills are crucial in various contexts, including interpersonal communication for social interactions, public speaking for presentations, and professional communication in workplace settings. Factors influencing these skills include regular practice, constructive feedback, confidence, and cultural understanding. Overall, strong speaking skills are essential for personal, academic, and professional success, enabling individuals to convey ideas and engage effectively with others.