CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. **Background of Study**

Speaking is the primary way to engage socially within a community. Success in learning a language is not just about understanding its structure but also about the ability to speak fluently. According to Harmer, as quoted by Putra (2017), fluent speaking requires the skill to process information and language. One's ability to communicate also determines how well they can interact in social environments. Language, as the primary tool of communication, fulfills various human needs in interaction (Holmes, 2001).

In the context of learning English, Towards speaking skills offers substantial benefits. However, English is often considered challenging for beginners. Several factors contribute to students' difficulties in speaking, including unengaging teaching methods, a lack of ideas to express, limited vocabulary to explain ideas, and minimal speaking opportunities. In Indonesia, English usage is mostly confined to English language classes, restricting proficiency in speaking.

Mastering fluent English poses a significant challenge in Indonesia, reflected in Indonesia's ranking of 34 out of 44 countries in English proficiency according to the EF (English First) global education institution. These countries use English as a foreign language (Mulyadi, 2011). In this

context, efforts to enhance English speaking skills become essential to widen access and opportunities in an increasingly interconnected global environment.

The research findings shed light on several unsatisfactory conditions concerning students' speaking skills. Throughout the learning process, a considerable number of learners lack the motivation to present their speeches during classroom events, exhibiting hesitancy when called upon to articulate their thoughts (Faulin & Sofendi, 2014). Addressing these challenges becomes paramount, necessitating the implementation of suitable methods to actively involve students in speaking exercises and foster discussions on assigned topics.

Storytelling emerges as a theoretically significant classroom strategy for acquiring a foreign language, offering a gateway to prepare students for speaking activities, a crucial aspect highlighted by Somdee and Suppasetseree (2012). It not only serves as excellent verbal practice to enhance speaking abilities but also aids students in harnessing their imagination and constructing narratives, as emphasized by Reinders (2011). Moreover, Akhyak & Indramawan (2013) substantiate this claim by providing evidence that storytelling significantly motivates language learners to engage in speaking tasks.

Furthermore, the integration of specific language skills with storytelling techniques, as noted by Atta-Alla (2012), presents an innovative approach. This integration not only fosters language development but also teaches storytellers to creatively employ language to captivate their audience's

imagination, skillfully linking narratives to imaginative experiences. In essence, utilizing storytelling techniques in language learning not only enhances speaking proficiency but also nurtures creativity and imaginative expression among learners.

Storytelling has always held a captivating allure for young children, fostering imagination and engagement. However, when merged with technology, storytelling becomes an incredibly potent educational tool, especially within the younger generations, reshaping the landscape of learning. This study delves into the realm of "Digital Storytelling," a chosen instrument believed to wield a profoundly positive impact on both the learning process and the enhancement of students' speaking abilities. Digital Storytelling is often depicted as an ancient art form that seamlessly amalgamates various multimedia elements—images, music, narration, and sound—crafting them into a compelling and cohesive creation (Bernajean, 2004). Brown (2005) fervently emphasizes the transformative role of Digital Storytelling, asserting its pivotal status within classrooms, serving as a significant resource for educators and learners alike.

Further substantiating the significance of Digital Storytelling, Ohler (2007) presents evidence that highlights its burgeoning influence as a novel educational medium, gaining substantial traction within educational settings. Ellis (2005) elucidates how the advent of technology has not only reshaped the dynamics of student interactions but also significantly altered the landscape of learning opportunities within classroom environments. The burgeoning

advancements in technology ought to be judiciously harnessed within the educational sphere, and Digital Storytelling stands as a prime exemplar of leveraging technology for educational purposes. Its proven ability to stimulate motivation, foster engagement, and kindle learners' interest in the learning process is well-documented (Davis, 2004). This effectiveness stems from the findings of Burmark (2004), who illustrates that integrating visual graphics alongside textual materials substantially augments and expedites students' comprehension and retention.

Within the academic sphere, several research studies, such as Studies conducted by Atta-Alla (2012), Agustina (2015), and Ono (2014) have delved into the diverse functions of storytelling in education, specifically focusing on improving students' speaking abilities and language proficiency in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. While these research endeavors aimed to harness the potential of storytelling, some primarily focused on storytelling itself as the ultimate goal rather than considering it as a versatile tool within the educational repertoire. This research initiative seeks to transcend previous boundaries by integrating storytelling not as an end but as a means to fortify and refine language competencies among English language learners. Despite prior studies' use of storytelling solely as a medium for speaking exercises, this endeavor aspires to delve deeper, recognizing storytelling's multifunctional role within language acquisition and proficiency enhancement.

The selection of SMPN 14 Kota Bengkulu as the research subject is motivated by several profound reasons. Previously, the researcher observed

the English language teaching methods employed by the school's teachers. The observation results indicated a lecture-based approach, which might pose challenges in improving students' speaking skills.

Moreover, The analyst closely observed the students to identify the underlying reasons for difficulties in learning English, particularly in speaking skills. The examination of students' grades within the 8th-grade English subject uncovered an normal score of around 70.15, falling brief of the least passing criteria (KKM) set by the school. This finding got to be the starting premise for choosing a unused instructing strategy based on "learning whereas playing," to be specific Advanced Narrating.

According to Karakoyun (2014), digital storytelling can enhance student collaboration over time through technology use, enabling students to become active learners and creating group communities with others. Digital Storytelling, as explained by Wang and Zhan (2010), involves the integration of photos, videos, music, voice narration, and written narratives using various simple tools and software.

The selection of SMPN 14 is also based on the positive support from the school for exploring more innovative teaching methods. The below-average grades of students provide an opportunity to improve learning outcomes through the interactive approach of Digital Storytelling. Additionally, the researcher is confident that the use of Digital Storytelling can be effectively adapted to the local context and the needs of students at SMPN 14 Kota Bengkulu.

Beyond just Towards speaking skills, this research is expected to contribute to the development of the curriculum at SMPN 14. The research findings can offer valuable recommendations for integrating Digital Storytelling into the English curriculum, becoming a model for more effective language learning strategies.

The selection of SMPN 14 Kota Bengkulu as the research location is supported by direct interviews with English teachers at the school. In these interviews, English teachers stated that students face difficulties in developing speaking skills in English. Teachers highlighted that the current lecture-based teaching methods do not optimally encourage students to actively speak and participate in class discussions.

Furthermore, interview results revealed that the average grades of 8th-grade students in the English subject at SMPN 14 Kota Bengkulu are around 70.15. English teachers confirmed that these grades do not meet the minimum passing standards (KKM) set by the school. They assessed that the challenge in speaking skills needs to be addressed with a more interactive and motivating approach, which could be realized through the use of Digital Storytelling.

Considering these interview results, this research becomes even more relevant as it receives support from key stakeholders, namely English subject teachers at SMPN 14. The implementation of Digital Storytelling is expected to provide an effective solution to the acknowledged difficulties by teachers and contribute to improving students' speaking skills in line with the

established KKM standards. Overall, the selection of SMPN 14 Kota Bengkulu as the research location is strengthened by an in-depth understanding of the challenges in English learning at the school obtained through direct interviews with teachers.

The choice of 8th-grade students as the research subject is based on the recognition that this stage is pivotal for developing students' English-speaking skills. The 8th-grade level is crucial in English language learning, as students are at a key learning phase. Consequently, this research focuses on 8th-grade students as the primary target to improve English speaking abilities.

The selection of classes 8.1 and 8.2 as the research samples is aimed at encompassing the possible variations among these classes. Both classes were chosen to represent the entire 8th-grade level (from class 8.1 to 8.9) by considering several factors. Firstly, the range of academic progress among students is expected to reflect reasonable variations among 8th-grade classes. Secondly, student diversity, both in terms of abilities and individual characteristics, is considered crucial to capture potentially different responses to applied teaching methods. Thirdly, the assessment of the physical conditions and learning facilities in classes 8.1 and 8.2 was conducted to ensure that the learning environment supports the optimal implementation of Digital Storytelling. Finally, the availability of resources and support from the school authorities in both classes was also a crucial consideration.

Based on the above, the researcher conducted a study titled " The Effect of Digital Storytelling in Towards Student's Speaking Ability (A Quasi-Experimental Study At 8th Grade Students of Smpn 14 Kota Bengkulu Academic Year 2023/2024)".

B. **Identification of The problems**

Based on the background of the problem, there are several problems, namely:

1. Students' lack of courage to speak English because they are embarrassed by other students,

2. The teacher's strategy is considered boring by students so that students are less interested in the material presented by the teacher,

3. Students find it very difficult to speak due to their lack of mastery of vocabulary and they do not know how to use grammar accurately.

C. **Limitation of the Problem**

This research is limited to find out the effectiveness of Digital Storytelling on students' speaking skills at SMP 14 Kota Bengkulu.

D. **Research questions**

Based on the background above, the question can be concluded that: is there any significant different on student's speaking skill between the students who were taught by using Digital Storytelling and the students who were not, towards student's speaking skills on the second grade students in SMPN 14 academic year 2023-2024.

E. **The Objectives of the Research**

Regarding the problem formulation, the aim of this research is as follows: The main aim of this research is to ascertain whether or not the application of Digital Storytelling has a significant effect on students' speaking skills at SMPN 14 Kota Bengkulu.

F. **The Significant of the Study**

It is hoped that the findings of this research will provide the following benefits and information:

Speaking is very important for communicating, especially in learning English. Researchers are interested in using a game called Digital Storytelling, it is hoped that students will be successful because of their speaking skills by learning to use this media. This research is useful:

a. For Researchers

This research was written to fulfill the requirements for a bachelor's degree.

b. For Students

It is anticipated that the utilization of Digital Storytelling media will enhance students' speaking abilities.

c. For Teachers

This research is expected to offer a different perspective to teachers, especially English teachers, in teaching speaking skills. Considering the results of this research, teachers can choose various types of stories from storytelling websites. Additionally, this research also has the potential to contribute to the government regarding the underutilized technology in teacher education.

d. For Institutions

It is anticipated that this research will serve as a valuable resource for universities, encouraging them to prioritize and enhance the quality of

teaching provided to their students who are preparing to become future educators.

G. **Operational definitions**

1. Digital Storytelling

The Digital Storytelling method requires students to find a lot of vocabulary to explain things such as objects, animals, plants and humans. The aim of this research is to find out whether the Digital Storytelling method influences the speaking skills learning outcomes of first grade students at SMP 14 Kota Bengkulu

2. Speaking skills

Speaking skills are one aspect of English that people use to practice. According to Parmawati & Inayah (2019), speaking seems to be the most important thing because people who know a language are called 'speakers' of that language, as if speaking includes all other types of language knowledge