

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Speaking is a complex combinatorial skill, integrating cognitive, affective, and social interactions simultaneously to achieve fluency, accuracy, and complexity (Ericsson, 2024). In the context of learning English in schools, speaking is a key element of an interactive and collaborative process, allowing students to exchange ideas, ask for clarification, and convey new perspectives (Khurliman, 2024). These skills also help students express their ideas, thoughts, and feelings effectively (Benlaghrissi, 2024). Low speaking ability inhibits active participation, reduces confidence, and limits access to better academic and professional opportunities (Westrup & Baker, 2003; Alghmadi, 2024). In a competitive global world, speaking plays an important role in multilingual interaction, accelerates cross-cultural communication, and supports student success in the 21st century (Agcaoili, 2024; Oliiyink, 2024).

There have been many previous studies that have discussed the topic of speaking skills. However, previous research has largely discussed strategies for teaching speaking skills in English. Research generally aims to explore the potential of specific methods or strategies in overcoming the challenges of learning to speak. The results showed that the experimental group that used innovative strategies experienced significant improvements in speaking skills compared to the

control group. This strategy has been shown to improve the practical use of language and address the lack of oral communication development in traditional learning (Shi, Kassim, & Radzuan, 2024). Shin et.al(2024) also reported a significant improvement in the fluency and accuracy of English-language communication as well as positive attitudes towards language learning. These findings underscore the importance of Innovative approaches to improve speaking skills effectively.

In addition to strategies, the research also highlights the importance of speaking skills in the context of English language education. The research aims to improve access to language learning through relevant design and content for educators, practitioners, and course designers (Köse et al., 2024). Nsengiyaremye (2024) identifies challenges such as limited quality learning resources, lack of access to teaching materials, and lack of extracurricular activities to practice speaking. This research emphasizes the need for curriculum reform, effective classroom management, and targeted teacher training. Alvarez (2024) underlines that learning to speak in EFL requires special attention to improve students' fluency and accuracy, which also has global implications in the context of language education.

Other research focuses on factors that affect students' speaking ability. The main goal is to understand the barriers to oral language mastery and propose relevant solutions. Yong (2024) mentioned that speech barriers are often a big challenge

in learning a foreign language. EFL students have difficulty speaking despite understanding the language material theoretically, while the use of spoken language in the classroom is often teacher-centric. Mora (2023) added that the complexity of assignments affects students' anxiety, which negatively impacts their fluency, pronunciation, and accent. This research confirms the need for a holistic pedagogical approach to create a learning environment that supports the development of speaking skills.

Although research on speaking skills has made significant progress, some gaps remain unaddressed. Previous research has mostly focused on strategies for improve speaking skills, which demonstrate the effectiveness of innovative methods in encouraging practical use of language and improving communication accuracy (Shi, Kassim, & Radzuan, 2024; Shin, 2024). Although these studies emphasize the importance of strategy-based teaching, they have not addressed the integration of diverse learning models, such as VAK (Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic) models, which can provide a more holistic approach in accommodating diverse learning styles and improving speaking skills in classroom contexts.

Additionally, previous research has highlighted the importance of accessible and contextually relevant learning designs to improve speaking skills in educational settings (Köse et al., 2024). However, challenges such as limited quality

learning resources, lack of extracurricular activities for speaking exercises, and teacher-centered classroom dynamics remain ongoing issues (Nsengiyaremye, 2024; Alvarez, 2024). Although these studies identified important barriers, they lacked to explore practical solutions that fit the diverse needs of students, particularly for grade VIII students in non-native English-speaking areas such as Bengkulu.

This research aims to answer these gaps by developing speaking worksheets based on the VAK learning model that are tailored to the needs of high schools in Bengkulu City. The VAK model's emphasis on accommodating visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles provides a promising framework for improving student engagement and speaking ability. By addressing the challenges identified in previous research and offering practical tools for implementation, this research aims to contribute to the development of more effective and inclusive pedagogical practices in English language education.

Based on the results of the analysis of speaking learning at MAN 2 Bengkulu City, it can be seen that the main need of students is teaching materials that are able to support speaking skills in a real, interactive, and contextual manner. So far, the dominant media used is only textbooks with the occasional audio or video addition, while activities such as language games, role plays, and interactive discussions are still rarely applied. This condition makes learning feel monotonous and

does not provide space for students to express themselves. Therefore, students need learning media that is varied, fun, and relevant to the context of daily life.

In addition, students revealed that their learning style greatly influenced the success of speaking learning. The majority of students show kinesthetic preferences combined with visuals, meaning they are more likely to understand and remember material if they can practice it directly through role play, group play, or real-life conversation simulations, and supported by pictures or videos. Text-based or audio-based media alone is felt to be less effective because it does not suit their learning needs who are more active, participatory, and creative. Thus, speaking learning media should be designed by considering multimodal learning styles that involve visual, auditory, and kinesthetic in a balanced manner.

Another prominent need is the availability of sufficient and varied speaking practice spaces. Students feel that the opportunity to speak in class is still limited, so their confidence in using English spontaneously is not optimal. They expect more interactive exercises such as presentations, small debates, dramas, or storytelling that facilitate improvisation as well as train courage. In addition to improving fluency, this strategy also strengthens social skills, critical thinking, and collaboration. In other words, students need a learning media that not only supports the mastery of language structure, but

also serves as a means of developing soft skills that are essential for their future.

B. Identification of the Problem

Based on this analysis, the identification of the problem in learning speaking at MAN 2 Bengkulu City can be formulated as follows:

1. Speaking learning is still monotonous and limited to text
2. Students' needs for media that suit their learning style have not been met
3. The lack of opportunities to practice speaking leads to low confidence.

C. Limitation of the Problem

This study is limited to investigating speaking skills learning activities modeled by VAK through interviews and filling out questionnaires by English teachers and grade XI students at MAN 2 Bengkulu City. This research also investigates the difficulties faced by teachers, problem solving carried out by teachers, and students' perceptions of the implementation of speaking learning and the teaching materials used for speaking learning

The research data was collected through interviews with English teachers at MAN 2 Bengkulu City, especially those who handled previous English subjects. In addition to the interviews, research data was also collected from open-ended questionnaires filled out by Grade 11 students and student

interviews conducted by grade 11 students as well, who had undertaken English learning activities.

D. Research Questions

Based on this background, this research is formulated in two main research questions to explore the need and development of a prototype of speaking teaching materials.

1. What are the needs of grade XI students at MAN 2 Bengkulu City related to effective speaking teaching materials that are in accordance with their learning style?
2. How to design a prototype of speaking teaching materials based on the VAK learning model that can improve students' speaking skills?

E. The Purposes of the Research

Based on this background, this study aims to identify the needs of students and develop a prototype of effective VAK learning model-based speaking teaching materials. The objectives of this study are:

1. Identifying the needs of grade XI students at MAN 2 Bengkulu City related to effective speaking teaching materials that are in accordance with their learning style.
2. Develop a prototype of speaking teaching materials based on the VAK learning model designed to optimally improve students' speaking skills.

F. The Significances of the Research

This research has theoretical and practical significance in developing talking teaching materials based on the VAK model to improve students' speaking skills effectively and adaptively.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of theories related to the learning of speech skills, especially in the context of using the VAK (Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic) learning model. By integrating learning style theory into the design of speaking teaching materials, this research is expected to enrich the academic literature on learning approaches that are adaptive to the needs of students. In addition, the results of this study can be a reference for other researchers who are interested in developing innovative speech teaching materials that are in accordance with the characteristics of students.

Practically, practically, this research is useful for English teachers, especially at the high school level, in providing speaking teaching materials that are more effective and relevant to students' learning styles. The prototype of teaching materials based on the VAK model developed can be a learning tool that optimally improves students' speaking skills. In addition, this study also provides practical recommendations to curriculum developers and education policymakers in

designing learning strategies that support the development of comprehensive speaking skills.

G. Operational Definitions of Key Terms

This section will explain the operational definitions of the three keywords used in this study, namely:

1. ***Speaking*** is the process of verbal communication that involves the ability to produce words, convey messages, and interact verbally in a social or academic context.
2. ***Worksheet*** is a learning tool in the form of worksheets that contain exercises, assignments, or activities to help students understand and master learning materials in a structured manner.
3. ***The VAK Learning Model*** is a learning model that adapts to three main learning styles: visual (seeing), auditory (hearing), and kinesthetic (moving), to improve students' understanding and skills.