CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the following points: background of the problem, research problem, objectives of the research, uses of the research, scope of the research, and definition of term.

1.1 Background of the Problems

In Indonesia, English as a foreign language has become a compulsory subject that is taught and learnt at elementary schools up to university level. According to School-based Curriculum (KTSP), the students are expected to master four skills in English subject, i.e., listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Speaking is one of the important skills that the students have to master. By speaking, one can convey information and ideas, and maintain social realtionship by communicating with others. The ability to communicate is the primary goal of foreign language instruction, speaking is put ahead on the other language skills. In addition, a large percentage of the world's language learners study English in order to be able to communicate fluently. Therefore, it is important to increase the students' skills of communicating ideas and it is also conceal to improve the way this skill is taught in the class.

Many language learners regard speaking ability as the measure of how far one masters the language. That is why one of the main purpose of language learning is to develop proficiency in speaking and communicating efficiently. They also regard speaking as the most important skill so that they are able to communicate for varietes of communicative purposes.

On the contrary, for most students, speaking is the most difficult part when they learn a foreign language. The common problems foreign language teacher is facing: (1) students are passive and unresponsive. (2) Students avoid interacting with the teacher and other students. (3) Students tend to have difficulties to speak in English in a simple form of dialogue or even to tell their ideas and utterances in English.

Moreover, based on the observation at SMA Negeri 3 Metro, it was found that when the teacher asked the students to practice speaking in front of the class, many of them became very nervous and embarrassed. They did not have self-confidence to speak. They were afraid of making mistakes to speak even though they understood what the teacher instructed them to do. Then, if the teacher asked them to discuss about certain topic in their group, some of them used Bahasa Indonesia.

In teaching speaking, the teacher should be able to choose interesting topic and apply suitable technique. This can motivate them to speak more because speaking skill emphasizes students' ability to speak as much as possible. Interesting topic can relate the students' knowledge with their environment and life. In addition, teacher has to instruct them but he does not give correction to their speaking directly. It fosters them to be confident to explore their ideas so that the students are not afraid of making mistake in speaking classroom.

In speaking classroom, interaction should be encouraged. In other words, it is the teacher's responsibility to promote an interactive teaching learning in the class. In the interaction, however, teacher should not dominate the class; instead facilitating students to practice speaking activities as much as they possibly can.

There are many activities to promote speaking. One of them is Information Gap activity which can be an alternative technique to make the students easy in using spoken English. Kayi (2006) points out that oral fluency activity increases the opportunity for meaningful individual students practice.

Information Gap is the activity in which the students are divided into pairs. One student has the complete information while the other partner does not. One student will be the describer and the other will be the information seeker. The information seeker will ask some questions to the describer in order to complete the task and the describer will give the information needed. This kind of activity will stimulate the interaction among students.

Information Gap tasks serve many purposes such as solving a problem or collecting information. Also, each partner plays an important role in completing the task because it cannot be completed if a partner does not provide information that the other partner needs. They can be given a set of pictures, for example living room. In this task one student is given a complete picture of a living room containing items such as *a set of sofa, table, a set of television, a radio, painting, clock, lamp, glasses, vase of flowers, ashtray and magazine.* The other student is given an incomplete picture of the living room. The only items available are *the sofa, table, mantelpiece and bookcase.* The student with the complete picture is expected to identify other items available to the student with the incomplete picture.

By using Information Gap task, it is hoped that the students will be encouraged to have confidence and they will become comfortable to speak. Teacher only gives simple explanation about the task and reviews the vocabulary needed for the activity.

According to the explanation above, the researcher assumed that Information Gap can overcome the difficulty in speaking skill because it teaches students to activate their ability to develop the information effectively during speaking activity. It can also enhance accuracy, fluency, and comprehensibility. Information Gap is useful to help the students to comprehend the specific information. The reason for selecting SMAN 3 Metro was that there is no research using Information Gap that has been carried out there. Hopefully, by presenting Information Gap of in class, the students' speaking skill in will increase.

1.2 Research Problem

Based on the background above, the research problems formulated as follows:

1. Is there any difference of the students'speaking achievement before and after being taught through Information Gap technique?

2. Is there significant increase of the students'speaking achievement after being taught through Information Gap technique at the second grade of SMA Negeri 3 Metro?

1.3 Objective of the Research

In line with the research problem, the objectives of this researchare:

1. To find out whether there is a difference of the students'speaking achievement before and after being taught through Information Gap technique.

2. To find out whether there is significant increase of the students'speaking achievement after being taught through Information Gap technique at the second grade of SMA Negeri 3 Metro.

1.4 Uses of the Reasearch

The uses of this research are:

1. Theoretically, the result of this research is expected to confirm the previous theory about Information Gap technique in teaching speaking.

2. Practically, as additional information for English teacher to increase the teachers' knowledge of English and share experiences in increasing the students' speaking achievement using Information Gap technique.

1.5 Scope of the Research

This research was a quantitative research and was conducted at SMA Negeri 3 Metro in the first semester of 2011/2012 academic year. This research was intended to find out whether there is a difference of the students'speaking achievement before and after being taught through Information Gap technique. It was also intended to find out whether there is significant increase of the students'speaking achievement after being taught through Information Gap technique at the second grade of SMA Negeri 3 Metro

The materials were used in this research are communicative crossword, complete the picture, and the same or different. Communicative crossword, two students have the same crossword in which some of the boxes are blank. Student A should ask student B and student B should ask student A in order to fill the blank boxes. When student A or student B wants to give the words, he/she should explain them. It was forbidden to say the answers directly. In this activity the students used their own sentences in explaining the words. Complete the picture, each student had the same picture but had different incomplete part. Both of them asked each other to complete their picture. The same or different, the students were distributed pictures which look the same but actually they had differences. The students had to find differences by ask and answer each other to complete the task. The researcher conducted this research in 5 meetings for 3 weeks.

1.6 Defenition of Terms

Speaking

It refers to the two-ways process between speaker and listener in transferring information, ideas, and emotion by using oral language.

Information Gap

It refers to the activity which has transfer gap between two person in order to exchange the information.

Increasing

It refers to the means of making something or somebody better than before.

Teaching speaking

It refers to the process of exercises and activities which allow the students to develop their speaking skill.

Pronunciation

It refers to the ability to use the correct stress, rhythm and intonation of a word in a spoken language.

Fluency

It refers to the smoothness or flow with which sounds, syllables, words and phrases are joined together when speaking quickly.

Comprehensibility

It refers to the ability of understanding the speakers' information, ideas, and emotion.