

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter discusses certain points: introduction deals with background of the problem, problem of the research, objective of the research, uses of the research, scope of the research, and definition of term clarified like the following :

### **A. Background of the Problem**

Theoretically, speaking skill is considered as the most complex language skill to master. This because this skill involves many elements of the target language, such as, pronunciation, fluency, and comprehensibility.

According to English School-Based Curriculum of Junior High School, the students at the 1<sup>st</sup> grade of Junior High School are expected to be able to express simple instruction and information in school context. It means that students should be able to do oral communication by using simple expression in English, like introducing themselves, giving information, giving examples, giving instructions, asking for help, etc.

In accordance with my experience as the English teacher of class 1 E of SMPN 11 Bandar Lampung, the students' speaking ability in this class is still far from the target of the curriculum, because the students' pronunciation, fluency, and

comprehensibility in English are still not yet achieved. Besides that, the inappropriateness of teaching method implemented by the teacher also influenced the low speaking ability of the students.

The fact above is also supported by the result of the speaking test done by the teacher when the students were in 1<sup>st</sup> semester of the 1<sup>st</sup> grade. At that time, the teacher asked her students to introduce themselves like telling their names and addresses. At first, she assumed that her students must be able to do that because this material has been learnt since they were at the 6<sup>th</sup> grade of Primary School. Unfortunately, Elementary School students are not able to speak English well. It is a miserable condition since according to English curriculum for Junior High School, the students should be able to do self- introduction since they were at the 1<sup>st</sup> semester, so at the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester they just need to accelerate that ability.

Due to the problem above, the researcher who is also the English teacher of the class identified problems in relation to the problem in speaking ability of the students in the class. From the observation, the researcher considered that, it is the inappropriateness of teaching method used by her and also the students' teachers in Primary School, which caused the students have low ability in speaking.

During the teaching and learning process, the teacher only focused on explaining the pattern of sentences to the students while occasionally asked them to retell the formula of the sentence and the meaning of some words they found. In other words, the teacher just taught the students about the language like tenses and English words and ignored teaching the students how to use the language. Since the teacher focused on teaching tenses, she did not give much time for the students

to speak by using the target language, whereas, what the teacher wants her students to learn to speak English, each of them must have many opportunities to speak during the lessons (Paul, 2003:71). For that reason, the students were only good at mentioning the pattern of the sentences but not at using the sentences for oral communication and the result is that they have low ability in speaking.

Besides that, because of the inappropriateness of teaching method used by the teacher, the students were not involved in the teaching learning process actively. When the teacher was explaining the lesson, they did not concentrate on the lesson. Those who kept concentrating were only the students who sat near the teacher; meanwhile the other students were busy with their activities which were not relevant to the learning material, like drawing, chatting, day-dreaming etc. In addition, when the teacher asked the students for example, asking them to tell the formula of a certain tense, the students who answered it only the clever ones. Others only kept silent and became good viewers without participating at all. By seeing that fact, the teacher thinks that she must provide an activity that makes all students involve in teaching and learning process, especially the activity that can stimulate the students to speak English.

In order to solve the problem happened to class 1 E students of SMPN 11 Bandar Lampung which is caused by the inappropriateness of teaching method used by the teacher, the teacher as researcher together with the other English teacher of this school conducted a classroom action research in which the imagination activity was implemented to improve the students' speaking ability. A classroom action research that was done is a way for the instructor in this case the researcher

to discover the best way in her own classroom situation, thus allowing informed decisions about teaching (Mettetal, 2003). It means that the researcher knew whether imagination activity worked well in her classroom or not. Besides, the researcher also knew what should be improved on her teaching performance.

The decision to implement imagination activity was a joined decision between the researcher and the English teacher. The researcher intended to use imagination activity since some students in that class like day dreaming, drawing and even chatting about their favorite characters in films when they were learning in the classroom. The other reasons which made the researcher decide to implement imagination activity were the theories and the previous studies concerning the important role of imagination in teaching speaking to students.

According to Halliwell (1992:7), if we accept the role of imagination in children's lives we can see that it provides another very powerful stimulus for real language use. We need to find ways of building on this factor in the language classroom too. We want to stimulate the children's creative imagination so that they want to use the language to share their ideas. It means through imagining the students will use the language they have to describe what they have imagined in the mind.

In addition, Halliwell (1992:7) adds that children delight in imagination and fantasy. It is more than simply a matter of enjoyment. In the Junior High School, children are very busy making sense of the world about them. They are identifying pattern and also deviation from that pattern. They test out their versions of the world through fantasy and confirm how the world actually is by

imagining how it might be different. In the language classroom this capacity for fantasy and imagination has a very constructive part to play.

In line with the theories stated by Halliwell, in her study of imagination, Warnock (1976) asserts that “the cultivation of imagination should be the chief aim of education” (1976:9) and that “we have a duty to educate the imagination above all else” (1976:10). From this study, it shows that imagination is very important in education, so it is our obligation to activate students’ imagination in learning.

Besides Warnock, an exploratory study which was done by Monsalve and Correal (2006) with the title “Children’s Oral Communication in English Class Activities” shows how important imagination is in stimulating the students to speak. In their study, they implemented imagination activity in teaching speaking to 15 children aged 8 to 10. From the study, they concluded that topics and activities used in teaching children must stimulate thought and inspire children’s imagination. This way, the foreign language becomes an easy and meaningful vehicle to communicate inside and outside the classroom. Children need activities which are exciting and stimulate their curiosity. They need to be involved in meaningful situations that emphasize interaction through the use of English as a foreign language so that they are able to express their needs and feelings, to question and explore their surroundings, and to create imaginary worlds.

The study conducted by Monsalve and Correal (2006) above has stated clearly that imagination is closely related to children. Hence teachers should utilize children’s imagination by providing the activity that inspires their imagination so

that they will freely share what they have imagined in their imaginary world by using the language they have.

In addition to the research results above, the research conducted by Ratih (2009) has proved that the imagination activity can improve the students' speaking ability. Based on her research, there are more than 50% students have an improvement in their speaking ability, whether in pronunciation, fluency, and comprehensibility.

Actually before the researcher decided to conduct a CAR on speaking in which imagination activity is used to improve the students' speaking ability, there have been some Classroom Action Researches on speaking which have proved that the techniques such as role play and drama can improve the students' speaking ability. One of the previous CAR on speaking is conducted by Triyana (2008). Her research has proved that the informal drama technique can improve the students' speaking ability. However, though it has proved that the technique can improve the students' speaking ability, the researcher implemented another way to improve the students' speaking ability, it is by using imagination activity. The researcher assumed that implementing imagination activity in teaching speaking can improve the students' speaking ability.

Therefore, this study is intended to improve the speaking ability of class 1E students of SMP N 11 Bandar Lampung through imagination activity. This is chosen because the students have already studied vocabulary, grammar, reading, etc in the previous semester..

## **B. Problem of the Research**

As the concerns of this research, there are two problems formulated as follows :

1. Is Imagination Activity applicable to improve the speaking ability of class 1E students of SMP N 11 Bandar Lampung?
2. Is Imagination Activity applicable to improve the teacher's teaching performance?

## **C. Objective of the Research**

The objectives of this research are as follows:

1. To know whether the Imagination Activity is applicable to improve the students' speaking ability.
2. To know whether the Imagination Activity is applicable to improve the teacher's teaching performance.

## **D. Uses of the Research**

This research will be useful both practically and theoretically.

1. Practically

Hopefully, this research will be useful for the English teacher, students, and also school.

a. The teacher

Through this research, the teacher can apply imagination activity as one of the speaking activities that can increase her students' speaking ability and also improve her performance in teaching.

b. The students

The implementation of imagination activity in this research will make the students get accustomed to using the language in the spoken form so that it can improve the students' speaking ability and also their activities.

c. The school

The result of this research can be used as a consideration whether the school will implement imagination activity for all grades of students so as to improve their speaking ability or not.

2. Theoretically

The result of this Classroom Action Research will support the theory about the implementation of Imagination Activity used to improve the students' speaking ability.

### **E. Scope of the Research**

This Classroom Action Research was conducted in SMPN 11 Bandar Lampung. The class that was the subject of this research was class 1 E since the problem lied in this class, besides that, this was the class in which the researcher did the pre-observation when the students were in the first semester.



In teaching and learning process, the researcher used imagination activity to improve the students' speaking ability. The material for that process was about self-introduction which covered giving the students' personal information in a short simple dialogue. It was taken from the students' text book and other sources which were relevant to English Curriculum of Junior High School 2006 from BSNP. In addition, to know the students' improvement on their speaking ability, there was a speaking test for them. The speaking test was about practicing a short simple dialogue and it was evaluated in terms of pronunciation, fluency, and comprehensibility.

In this research, the researcher held two cycles because it took rather long time to see the improvement of the students' speaking ability since the students had very low speaking ability. The first cycle was done based on the problem of the research then the next cycle was done based on the result of the analysis and reflection from the first cycle.

The focus of this research was on improving students' speaking ability. Though this research focused on the students' speaking ability, the researcher also observed the teaching activities when she implemented imagination activity and the students' activities when the activity was being implemented. The researcher decided to observe those three aspects because the researcher assumed that imagination activity could improve not only the students' ability, but also their activities and the teacher's performance.

## **F. Definition of Terms**

Some terms used in this study are defined in order to avoid miss understanding.

- **Speaking**

Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information, trough the application of correct pronunciation, fluency, and comprehensibility.

- **Improving**

Improving means making something or somebody better. In this research the researcher intends to make the students' speaking ability better.

- **Ability**

Ability is skill or power. This research will focus on the students' skill to speak English.

- **Teacher's performance**

Teacher's performance is the way in which a teacher behaves in the process of teaching consisting of 1. Pre activities, 2. While activities, and 3. Post activities.

- **Imagination Activity**

An activity in which the students use their ability to form pictures or ideas in the mind especially of interesting things or something experienced in the mind not in real life.