

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This part presents (A) background of the study, (B) focus of the study, (C) formulation of the problems, (D) the objectives of the study, and (E) the benefit of the study.

#### **1.1 Background of the Study**

In today's technological age, English has become crucial for communication (Y. I. Purnama & Nurdianingsih, 2019). It plays a significant role in information technology for numerous reasons and is the global language of commerce. English enables us to maintain connections with various countries and facilitates effective communication among people from different linguistic backgrounds. This is especially noticeable in international organizations, conferences, and diplomatic dialogues. Additionally, many prestigious universities and academic institutions around the world use English as their primary language of instruction. Many educational resources, including textbooks and online courses, are available in English. Proficiency in English is a prerequisite for accessing a broad range of educational opportunities and online resources. Because English is widely used as a global language for communication (Davis & Tahrin, 2022), being fluent in English allows individuals to interact with people from different linguistic backgrounds, facilitating effective communication in various international settings, both personally and professionally. Based on that reason, fluency in English improves connections, collaborations, and knowledge sharing in technology teams.

To be fluent in English, we need methods and strategies to help us (Wallwork, 2014). Learning strategies are actions taken to improve the learning process. These strategies are crucial for active, self-directed engagement in learning. A variety of methods and strategies can be utilized to enhance language acquisition and increase fluency (Brown, 2000). They can help develop communicative competence. Learning strategies are organized as essential learning skills, including learning-to-learn skills, and problem-solving skills. These strategies are how students learn a wide array of subjects, from reading in their native language reading and troubleshooting electronics to acquiring a new language. To comprehend learning strategies, we must first understand what strategies are. (Hoffman, n.d.). According to O'Malley, as cited in (Gerami & Baighlou, 2011), language learning strategies fall into three primary subcategories: Metacognitive Strategies, Cognitive Strategies, and Socioaffective Strategies (Wallwork, 2014). Metacognitive Strategies involve executive functions such as planning for learning, reflecting on the learning process as it happens, monitoring one's production or comprehension, and evaluating learning after completing an activity. Cognitive Strategies are more task-specific and involve directly manipulating the learning material. Important cognitive strategies include repetition, resourcing, translation, grouping, note-taking, deduction, recombination, imagery, auditory representation, keyword usage, contextualization, elaboration, transfer, and inferencing.

A teaching strategy is a generalized plan for a lesson that includes structure, instructional objectives, and an outline of planned tactics, necessary to implement the strategies (Hoffman, n.d.). Conducting a teaching strategy play important role. It can helps teacher to facilitate students' learning activities also it

can be one of the ways used by teachers to make the teaching and learning process more effective and interesting so that it will have a significant effect on students because they are learning by doing process will be successful (Hayati et al., 2021). The strategy employed in learning and thinking serves to achieve a goal. Language acquisition, learning, and communication strategies refer to conscious or unconscious processes language learners use to learn and utilize a language, as Oxford and Sutarto (2020) stated. Selecting an effective strategy should precede the learning process, as a good strategy is expected to help achieve the desired goals. In the process, a curriculum model evolved that applies to many types of curricula and that can be used in many different kinds of school settings and school levels: elementary school, middle school, and high school. The model includes an organization of, and relationships among, five mutually interactive elements: objectives, content, learning experiences, teaching strategies, and evaluative measures so that a system of teaching and learning is represented.

The effectiveness of learning strategies significantly shapes the approach to learning and impacts the success of English language acquisition. As Malley (2020) stated (Hertiki et al., 2019) learning strategies are techniques, approaches, or deliberate actions that students use to understand and retain linguistic information and content. Essentially, these strategies involve the methods or actions students take to prepare for learning. Strategies promote flexible thinking and teach students the importance of adapting their approaches to different tasks, encouraging independent learning. Effective use of strategies helps students to become more efficient and effective learners and enables

teachers to enhance students' skills. The writer considered this an important issue to discuss (Eysenck, 2018).

In both teaching and learning processes, teachers are required to teach students to understand and use the target language (Vol, 2024). Based on (Et.al, 2021) there are four skills students should master namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Speaking is one of four skills that is productive ability (Ria Rezeki et al., 2022). Speaking is very essential in school or foreign language learning. Speaking English is particularly challenging for many students, even those who excel academically, especially in Indonesia where English is considered a foreign language (Chaerunnisa, 2019). Mastering speaking skills is essential for students enrolled in English Education programs in Indonesia (Septian et al., 2023).

The writer observed that seventh and eighth-grade students especially in the second-semester students had difficulty in speaking. The first problem is the students' limited exposure to English. Limited exposure to English can hinder students' ability to comprehend texts, express themselves clearly, and engage effectively in various academic tasks. Several factors may contribute to this issue, they are limited exposure to language, lack of reading habits, and insufficient practice. Second, lack of confidence only some students want to practice speaking English. The rest of them feel not confident. Some reasons why they lack of confidence are because they feel funny and shy to speak in front of their friend and teachers, less of internal motivation. Third, pronouncing and articulating new words are challenging for the students, moreover, they don't have an English background from their previous school. It seems hard to make them understand if the teachers have to speak in English fully. The teachers will

be frustrated if they have to force the students to follow the instructions by using the English language. The students may rely heavily on their native language, leading to interference when trying to learn and use new vocabulary in English. Fourth, lack of reading habits can significantly impact speaking development, comprehension skills, and overall academic performance (Lapitan et al., 2021). Fifth students may face peer pressure to conform to social norms, including the use of their native language instead of English. This peer pressure can discourage them from actively engaging in English-speaking activities. Students may fear making mistakes when speaking English, which can inhibit their willingness to practice and engage in conversation. Lastly, lack of opportunities to speak English in some classrooms, the focus may be primarily on reading and writing skills.

Those difficulties inspired the writer to focus her research on. By addressing these challenges with thoughtful strategies, English teachers can create a more effective and engaging learning environment that promotes speaking mastery among their students. Based on these ideas, the writer would like to discuss this issue. Because speaking is very challenging for the students of SMP Bethesda Palembang. They said that English is a hard lesson, especially in speaking. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting research entitled Exploring Teaching Strategies Employed By English Teachers and Students' Learning Strategies At SMP Bethesda Palembang.

## **1.2 Focus and Sub Focus of the Study**

The study focuses on investigating the students' learning strategies in speaking. Students in seventh-grade and eighth-grade students at SMP

Bethesda Palembang, as well as two English teachers, are the subjects of the study.

The subs focus is divided into three as follows:

1. Identifying learning strategies used by seventh-grade and eighth-grade students of SMP Bethesda Palembang
2. Identifying strategies used by English teachers of SMP Bethesda Palembang
3. Interpreting the perception of seventh-grade and eighth-grade students of SMP Bethesda Palembang about teachers' strategies in teaching speaking.

### **1.3 Formulations of the Problems**

The problems of the study are limited to teaching strategies used by English teachers to elevate speaking mastery. The subjects of the research are only seventh and eighth-grade students. The expected strategies could elevate students' speaking mastery at SMP Bethesda Palembang.

Derived from the problem's background and identification, the research problem can be formulated as follows:

1. What strategies are used by students in learning English?
2. What are strategies used by the English teachers in teaching speaking for seventh-grade and eighth-grade students at SMP Bethesda Palembang?
3. How do seventh-grade and eighth-grade students perceive the strategies used by the teachers?

#### **1.4 The Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this research are to know and describe:

1. The learning strategies used by seventh-grade and eighth-grade students at SMP Bethesda Palembang
2. The strategies used by English teachers in teaching speaking for seventh-grade and eighth-grade students at SMP Bethesda Palembang.
3. How seventh-grade and eighth-grade students at SMP Bethesda Palembang perceive the strategies used by the teachers.

#### **1.5 The Benefit of the Study**

The importance of this research is expected to yield benefits for the teaching and learning process of English. The significance of this study is outlined as follows:

1. For English teachers

This study provides English teachers at SMP Bethesda Palembang with insights and strategies aimed at improving students' English proficiency. Moreover, this study might give useful resources and inspiration to be more innovative in teaching speaking.

2. For Students

The results of this research are expected to benefit students at SMP Bethesda with useful knowledge as a different approach to learning English, especially in speaking. Additionally, this study might serve students in junior/ senior high school to motivate them to speak English.

3. For the writer

By conducting this research, the expectation is to acquire a deeper knowledge and portrait of strategies employed by teachers and students' learning strategies in SMP Bethesda Palembang and find new tactics of teaching speaking in the future.