

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This part presents 1) Background of study, 2) Identification of problem, 3) Limitation of study, 4) Formulation of problem, 5) Objectives of study, and 6) Significance of study

1.1 Background of Study

English is a common language that is spoken in anywhere. According to Aziza (2020), nowadays, English has been appearing as a major role in many fields namely Education and more. In the language learning and teaching process, there are four skills to gain, namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing. All the skills are important to be learned. But, speaking skills are a productive skill that needs to be mastered due to its purpose in learning a foreign language. In accordance with Bahruddin & Mochammad Sahid (2020), stated that by being fluent in speaking skills, it will allow people to use the language to its function in communicating and interacting with others. Addition to this, Anggraini (2021) stated that speaking skills is one of the skills that people need to practice continuously. Also, Purnama & Nurdianingsih (2019) stated that the far people can speak and communicate, the more success people learning foreign language.

In teaching and learning process, teachers are required to teach students to understand the target language and students can link it to their needs or life experiences. Based on the statement of Bahruddin & Mochammad Sahid, (2020), the students are required to be mastered not

only for the four skills but also implement the four skills to the needs of them thinking critically and creatively as the demands for people in this modern era. Not only getting the low order thinking skills (LOTS) but also the high order thinking skills (HOTS) that students nowadays need to achieve.

All of age levels in all proficiency levels are required to learn foreign language as its function and the needs. People get the process in their school or informal language institution, such as English course. Adding to this, in 21st century skills, there are four skills people need to gain, namely, critical thinking, creativity, communication, and collaboration. Those skills are needed to connect to the modern environment and students need to adapt. They need to talk and work with others, find solutions for problems and thinking outside the box. In line with the revised bloom taxonomy Anderson et al., (2001), that there are 6Cs in helping teachers to set a framework in the teaching and learning process therefore they can get the clear steps to teach students, there will be targets and skills they can reach for the students. it starts from the understanding of the students towards the lessons, the way they remember and they can apply the ideas of the lesson (the low order thinking skills), to the way of analyzing, evaluating, and creating their original work with the ideas/lessons learned (the high order thinking skills). As it is 21st century skills, and people tend to not only understand information/ideas/thoughts, they need to implement it to their life needs, creating it with their own needs critically and creatively. But,

unfortunately, not all students reach the HOTS, they sometimes understand but they cannot reach the levels of HOTS.

It happened in the class that the researcher teaches in LB LIA Palembang. The class is called by General English for Pre-Intermediate (GEP). There are 18 students, ten male students and eight female students. There are from Senior High School students and College students. After observing the Pre-Intermediate students, the researcher concluded that most of the Pre-Intermediate students (in between band 1 and 2 based on speaking rubric) were in LOTS levels. In addition to it, the average of speaking score that the students got (based on LIA band description for the rating scale of speaking skills) is about 3.2 to 3.3 out of 5.0. The Pre-Intermediate students understand the target objectives learnt but often they cannot go beyond to the HOTS levels. The Pre-Intermediate students were lack of coherence and cohesion, they had difficulty in organizing their ideas logically and struggle to connect their ideas together. The Pre-Intermediate students were overreliance on memorization, they stucked to the text and cannot go smoothly with the theme. The Pre-Intermediate students were difficult with fluency, they had difficulty in keeping pace of a discussion and conversation. Oviedo Guado & Mena Mayorga (2021) stated that a fluency can be achieved if there is comprehensible communication happens in between people without any interruption despite the limitations. And the Pre-Intermediate students had limited ability to express opinion, they often gave straight short answer, like Yes or No. Also, gave the simple and short reason

to the open-ended questions, for example, when the researcher asked about which things they prefer, they chose one and gave short reason “because it is cool.” According to Anderson et al., (2001), there are three levels of LOTS that can be identified in teaching and learning process. The students can remember the information needed, understand the information needed and use the information in another situation. Most of the Pre-Intermediate students achieved the level of remember and understand also apply but did not go beyond the level of HOTS. From the description above, it can be stated that the Pre-Intermediate students used more LOTS than HOTS. In line with 21st century skills that people need to think critically and creatively, therefore, teachers are required to accustom the students to not only understand the ideas they learn, but also to implement the ideas.

According to the problems that mentioned above, it is necessary to modify the way in the teaching and learning process that had been used before. There is a way that the researcher conducts to the class to increase the Pre-Intermediate students’ HOTS, thus, they can think critically and creatively. The researcher employed communicative learning strategies therefore students can reach the HOTS levels. This learning strategies are focused on implementing several methods and activities that are communicative therefore students practiced more to communicate. In accordance with Oviedo Guado & Mena Mayorga (2021), an approach that is focused on communication and the convenient learning strategies are the effective tools in developing speaking skills.

As the problem occurred in Pre-Intermediate classroom and the researcher increased the students' HOTS on speaking skills, thus, Communicative Learning Strategy is the convenient learning strategy to let the students practicing to communicate and interact more. And, in accordance with the learning strategy, Communicative Language Teaching is the approach that the researcher plans to use therefore the researcher can use methods and activities in GEP classroom to let students communicate and improve their HOTS. There are many methods of communicative learning strategies can be used for speaking skills, such as, discussions, debates, language games, role-plays and simulations, feedback and reflections, presentations and more. In this study, the researcher used some of the methods by enjoining them into pair works or group works. The researcher implemented some activities in the levels of HOTS based on the methods chosen.

With regard of this important matters, there are relevant previous studies that focused on the way of improving speaking skills that implemented CLT as the approach Ahmed (2022), implemented Action Learning Strategies Kasmainsi et al., (2021), and implemented one media Anggraini (2021), also there is relevant previous study that focused on improving students' HOTS using one method Bahruddin & Mochammad Sahid (2020). In those studies, they did the research to improve their students' HOTS and speaking skills, therefore, the students can communicate critically and creatively.

Based on the solutions above to handle the problems and several relevant previous studies, the researcher considered to use Communicative Learning Strategy and Communicative Language Teaching as the approach and Pair/Group works as the method to conduct in Pre-Intermediate classroom, therefore, with these considerations, the researcher applied some activities to improve students' HOTS, thus students think critically and creatively. They need to analyze the ideas, to evaluate the ideas, and they need to formulate the ideas with their original work. These are the skills that students can gain as HOTS. The students can organize and connect their ideas logically, they can go smoothly with the theme without overlooking the script, they can join equally in discussions and conversations, and they can express their opinion deeply. Following the trail of implementing the plans of method and activities, the researcher explored the tests on their speaking skills with the five aspects to be focused on such as Comprehension, Fluency, Pronunciation, Vocabulary, and Grammar, with also the additional sources of data to develop comprehensive understanding of phenomena such as the aspects to be observed, the interviews to get more insights from their opinion, and documents needed.

According to the conditions of the classroom that the researcher improved to GEP students, this research is conducted with the title **“Increasing Pre-Intermediate Students’ HOTS in Speaking Skills by Employing Communicative Learning Strategies at LB LIA Palembang”**

1.2 Identification of Problem

Based on the background of study that already mentioned above and the first observation that has conducted at LB LIA Palembang for Pre-Intermediate students, most of the students had the scores 3.2 to 3.2 that are in LOTS levels than HOTS levels. Thus, there are some points that can be discussed. In the teaching and learning process, the students in the classroom reach the target learning but the stage of the thinking skills that students have are still in low. The students cannot organize their ideas and connect their ideas together smoothly, cannot leave the prompt and go with their own ideas with the theme, they did not have enough fluency to keep the pace in discussion and they did not really have the ability to express their opinion, they often gave their short answers like Yes or No even gave simple reason for open-ended questions given to them. The teacher had prepared the activities to reach the target learning but did not be more focused on drilling the students to HOTS levels. This way sometimes makes the students cannot go beyond the target. After identifying the problems above, the researcher is focused on increasing Pre-intermediate students' HOTS in speaking skills by employing communicative learning strategies namely, pair or group works with various activities that are communicative at LB LIA Palembang.

1.3 Limitation of Study

Based on the identification of the problem above, the the researcher limited and focused on increasing Pre-Intermediate students' HOTS by employing communicative learning strategies that will be used, namely pair or group works with various activities that are communicative, and the researcher limited the research only for speaking skills. This research was conducted at LB LIA Palembang.

1.4 Formulation of Problem

In accordance with the background of the study and identification of problem, formulation of problem can be formulated as follows:

How could communicative learning strategies increase Pre-Intermediate students' HOTS in speaking skills at LB LIA Palembang?

1.5 Objective of Study

The objective of the study is that to examine the improvement of communicative learning strategies increasing Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) in speaking skills among Pre-Intermediate students at LB LIA Palembang.

1.6 Significance of Study

The benefit of this study will be expected as follows:

1. Communicative learning strategies, namely pair or group works with various activities that are communicative, can be used in increasing Pre-Intermediate students' HOTS in speaking skills
2. Teachers will get more sights to increase Pre-Intermediate students' HOTS by employing communicative learning strategies in classroom
3. It is hoped that by doing this study, the researcher will get more knowledge about how to increase students' HOTS in speaking skills using communicative learning strategies