

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **A. Background of Study**

Good communication skills are needed in everyday life, in study at college or university, and in any career based on such studies. Yet, after more than twelve years at school, many students entering higher education are unable to express their thoughts clearly and effectively in their own language. Meanwhile, they need to improve their speaking and to develop their ability to converse, to discuss, to argue persuasively, and to speak in public. Indeed, employers complain that after a further three years in college or university, many students applying for employment still have poor communication skills.

Recognising that many school leavers need to improve their communication skills (and to develop other interpersonal skills needed for success in study and in any profession), all courses in further and higher education are intended to facilitate both

learning and personal development. As a student, therefore, they will have opportunities to discuss their work and to give short talks or presentations. That is to say, they will be encouraged to develop their ability and to express their thoughts effectively. Most people probably take for granted their ability to speak, not thinking much about it until they have to address an audience or attend an important interview. But just as the first impressions of other people are based on how they look and how they speak – so are their impressions of us is very important. Every time we speak, not just when giving a talk or being interviewed, we are both conveying information relevant to the subject being discussed and presenting. When we meet people for the first time our immediate feelings about them, based on their appearance and behaviour, are important both at the time and later – because they are not easily forgotten or revised. We never have a second opportunity to make a good first impression; and those people whom we meet only once may never have further evidence of our character

and ability. Considering these reasons, the students' ability to speak English fluently becomes one of primary goals in many higher institutions.

Regardless the demands, it also needs to bear in our minds that encouraging students to speak English regularly is always a challenging task for English teachers, especially in EFL Context. It is hard because EFL environment only requires students to use the target language in the classroom. When the students are outside the class, the language will not be used anymore. They will talk and interact with others using their first language or mother tongue. To cope with this problem, implementing a routine conversation can be an alternative for eradicating such problem. Small talk as one of routine activities can be used as strategy to make students more active and provide a more non-threatening environment for them to speak since the students practice their speaking with their friends using common topics for them.

Small talk is an aspect of conversation that one may encounter with nearly in every culture, but not

every culture is probably fond of making small talk. In the greatest part of the English-speaking world, it is normal and even necessary to make small talk in various situations, especially when people meet for the first time and barely know each other. To understand the importance of small talk it is necessary to understand its notion as well as its role in English culture. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English (1974) and Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture (2002) define small talk as light and polite conversation on ordinary, unimportant or non serious subject that occurs at a social occasion. Another definition of small talk describes this idiomatic expression as an "informal discourse not covering any functional topics of conversation or any transactions that need to be addressed". Although it might seem that small talk is something not very important and superficial, it serves two primary functions: it helps to avoid awkward pauses during the conversation and helps engage the

other party in a deeper level of conversation as in many cultures silent moments between two people.

There are many techniques offered to build undergraduate students' speaking ability. Luk (2004) told about *The Dynamics of Classroom Small Talk*. This research illustrated how classroom small talk between a teacher and students constitutes a distinct interaction pattern which varies significantly from pedagogical discourse of an institutional nature such as the initiation/response/feedback (IRF) pattern described in previous literature. By presenting a piece of extended small talk in an ESL secondary classroom in Hong Kong and contrasting it with a piece of typical teacher-orchestrated institutional classroom talk, she showed how the teacher and students demonstrated more dynamic and less asymmetrical roles during small talk with clear evidence of active contributions to the exchange by the students in terms of topic setting, turn initiation, turn development, and negotiation of meaning. Features of the small talk resemble everyday social discourse.

James Hunter (2011) did the research about ‘Small Talk’: developing fluency, accuracy, and complexity in speaking. A major issue that continues to challenge language teachers is how to ensure that learners develop accuracy and complexity in their speaking, as well as fluency. Teachers know that too much corrective feedback (CF) can make learners reluctant to speak, while not enough may allow their errors to become entrenched. Furthermore, there is controversy over the effectiveness of recasts (the most common form of CF) in promoting acquisition. This article explores a methodology, ‘Small Talk’, which aims to resolve some of the tensions between the need to encourage truly communicative language use and the need to develop complexity and to bring focus on forms into the syllabus in ways that can be recognized as valid and relevant by both teachers and learners. It presents some preliminary research on the viability of this CF methodology premised on attention to, and arising from the needs of, the individual learner.

Ivona Baranovskaja and Pavel Skorupa (2011) talked about some aspects of culture teaching in foreign language and ESP classes: cultural scripts and small talk. They presented the problem of teaching culture in the foreign language classes at all levels of education. The result showed cultural studies should not be separated from the language syllabus and foreign language learning should not be limited to formal learning of systems of sounds, words, and syntactic structures, but should also include learning the culture of the target language. Success in intercultural communication depends greatly on the understanding of a number of cultural features. The article emphasizes the importance of teaching and learning target culture, as well as introduces the analysis of cultural scripts and small talk in English.

All research above discussed the observation toward the use of small talk. There is no specific research, which investigates the effect of small talk on students' speaking ability. There is also no statistical data to clarify the impact of this technique if it is

deliberately designed for teaching purpose. Most of previous research focuses the discussion on analysis of small talk, which naturally occurs among teacher and students. Therefore, research on this topic is still in a critical area and need a further research.

Based on the above consideration, the present study tried to investigate the implementation of Small Talk strategy in speaking at Languages Development Center Class. It is because the using of Small talk for teaching speaking skill to the students are the main discussion and goal in this research. It is different with the previous study on speaking in terms of the method used and the level of the learners. It uses Small Talk to develop Undergraduate Students' Speaking ability. The subjects of the study were Students of Languages Development Center of IAIN Antasari Banjarmasin. They were chosen based on their ability in Speaking because they are in Acceleration Class and the researchers want to know the use of small talk strategy and the improvement of students' speaking ability in by using that strategy. The small talk, then, was



implemented into the classroom together with conventional teaching of speaking to see whether or not the small talk significantly helps learners to improve their speaking ability. If the data gathered show that small talk can increase students' speaking ability, it will provide statistical evidence that this approach positively affects students' speaking ability. In contrast, if the data shows that this approach does not significantly help students to be more fluent speakers, it strengthens that conventional teaching of speaking is sufficient to train students' speaking skill.

## **B.Problem Statements**

Based on the background of study above, the main research question in this study is *“How does the lecturer use the Small Talk Strategy in Speaking at Languages Development Center Class to help students have better speaking ability?”*

Related to the research problem, the objective of this study is to know the implementation of Small Talk Strategy in Speaking at Languages Development

Center Class to help students have better speaking ability.

### **C. Significance of Research**

The result of the research is expected to contribute to the development of knowledge, especially the teaching of speaking. It is expected to be useful for both teachers and researchers. Because there are only few studies on the effect of small talk on students' speaking ability on English as Foreign Language Context (EFL), this study is expected to be able to systematically examine and provide the information about implementation of the small activity promoting Indonesian undergraduate speaking ability. Since Indonesia has different learning and teaching environment for the teaching of English as a foreign language, this study will give valuable data whether or not the activity is effective to be implemented in our classroom as those were reported in the previous studies.

## **D. Definition of Key Terms**

The following key terms are defined to clearly describe important variables measured in this study.

Small Talk refers a strategy used to promote students speaking abilities by asking them to speak for about ten minutes with their partners. During the ten minutes, students are asked to change their partner every three minutes. After that, some pairs will be chosen randomly to retell in front of the class about what they have talked.

Speaking ability refers to students' ability to speak English with good fluency, accuracy, and comprehensibility.

## **E. Theoretical Framework**

### **1. The Teaching of Speaking**

Speaking is "the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts" (Chaney, 1998, p. 13) Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing and

receiving and processing information (Brown, 1994; Burns & Joyce, 1997). Speaking is a crucial part of second language learning and teaching. Despite its importance, for many years, teaching speaking has been undervalued and English language teachers have continued to teach speaking just as a repetition of drills or memorization of dialogues. However, today's world requires that the goal of teaching speaking should improve students' communicative skills, because, only in that way, students can express themselves and learn how to follow the social and cultural rules appropriate in each communicative circumstance. Therefore, recent pedagogical research on teaching students conversation has provided some parameters for developing objectives and techniques.

Speaking practice provide students with opportunities for practicing specific speaking skills. Students improve their formal speech when teachers provide insights on how to organize their ideas for presentation. Students can give better speeches when they can organize their presentation in a variety of

different ways, including sequentially, chronologically and thematically. They need practice in organizing their speech around problems and solutions, causes and results, and similarities and differences. After deciding about the best means of organization, they can practice speeches with another student or with the whole class. Teachers can also help students adapt their speeches and informal talks so as to correspond to the intended audience, the information to be communicated, and the circumstances of the occasion at which they will speak. The teachers can illustrate how well-known speakers have adapted their presentations in ways to suit these different circumstances. Teachers can enable learners to present ideas to individual peers, peer groups and entire classes of students. They can learn to speak on a subject of their own choosing or on teacher assigned topics. Preparing for debates and participating in them help students to see both sides of various issues. Students also benefit from interviewing others and from participation in dramatic presentations. Students

may enjoy speaking about their personal experiences. When given this opportunity, they can benefit from instruction in the elements of good story-telling. Both teachers and students can provide suggestions for students' speeches. In constructively criticizing others, learners can learn to apply criteria for good speech and employ tactful social skills. In doing so, they can increase and improve their own speaking skills. Students can also learn speaking and social skills by suggesting possible improvements to one another's practice speeches. Positive experiences in speaking can lead to greater skills and confidence in speaking in front of larger groups.

Learners need to know how speakers differ from one another and how particular circumstances call for different forms of speech. They can learn how speaking styles affect listeners. Thus, the rate at which they speak, the volume and the precision of pronunciation may differ substantially from one situation to another. It is useful for students to know that speech should differ in formality, such as when

speaking to a judge, a teacher, a parent or a playmate. They may also benefit from learning about the differences among various dialects. The subjects in the curriculum and examples from the media may provide occasions for different forms of speech. Oral presentations can be derived from poems, stories, newspaper and magazine articles, as well as scientific reports. Dramatic acting and watching skits and plays may provide the richest opportunity to see how character and circumstance affect speech.

Speaking English is the main goal of many adult learners. Their personalities play a large role in determining how quickly and how correctly they will accomplish this goal. Those who are risk-takers unafraid of making mistakes will generally be more talkative, but with many errors that could become hard to break habits. Conservative, shy students may take a long time to speak confidently, but when they do, their English often contains fewer errors and they will be proud of their English ability. It's a matter of quantity vs. quality, and neither approach is wrong so how

shall we prioritize the two clearly important speaker goals of accurate (clear, articulate, grammatically and phonologically correct) language and fluent (flowing, natural) language? However, if the aim of speaking is communication and that does not require perfect English, then it makes sense to encourage quantity in your classroom. Break the silence and get students communicating with whatever English they can use correct or not and selectively address errors.

## **B. Activities for Teaching Speaking in EFL Context**

Children, adolescents and adults sometimes fear the challenge of sustained, formal speaking before large groups. Teachers can help reduce unrealistic fears by pointing out how common they are among people and what to do about them. They can also help to reduce such fears by maintaining a friendly atmosphere in the class and providing opportunities for students to practice alone or with one other student and then before increasingly larger groups. Thus,



students can practice speaking in front of their peers who face the same situation. Students can practice presenting information, answering questions and holding group discussions. Frequent classroom presentations and discussions enable teachers to diagnose and remedy problems. Students can benefit from learning by setting themselves presentation goals and assessing their own progress. Observing proficient speakers can help students to set such goals. Practicing oral presentation in these ways can lessen students' anxieties while, at the same time, helping them to learn the subject matter of the lesson. Students are less likely to be fearful and anxious and more likely to do well if they are well prepared. Preparedness can be enhanced by in-depth mastery of the subject matter, appropriate organization and rehearsing the presentation.

As in adult life, students can share with one another knowledge and ideas that help solve problems. Small groups working together within a class can help students communicate meaningful ideas to each other.

It is sometimes helpful to allow students within a group to conduct individual research, but require the group to make use of all the individually collected elements to write or present a report that depends on each individual's contribution. In this way, students can simultaneously be taught subject matter, research and presentation skills, and how to work well with others. They may also discover unexpected but valuable connections between various aspects of a topic. Working together in twos, threes or larger groups can facilitate more frequent and insightful communications. In a class of thirty, for example, a student might be expected to speak only one-thirtieth of the time. In a group of two students, a student might speak for half of the time and listen for half of the time and both the speaking and the listening can be concentrated on what the students need to know or desire to investigate. None of this is to say that teachers should play a passive role. Rather, they can explain what is expected and show correct and

incorrect examples. With practice, students can correct one another and themselves.

## **C. Small Talk as an Activity for Teaching Speaking**

### **1. Definition of Small Talk**

Small talk refers to communication that primarily serves the purpose of social interaction. Small talk consists of short exchanges that usually begin with a greeting, move to back and forth exchange on non-controversial topics such as the weekend, the weather, work, school, etc., and then often conclude with a fixed expression such as *See you later*. Such interactions are at times almost formulaic and often do not result in a real conversation. They serve to create a positive atmosphere and to create a comfort zone between people who might be total strangers. While seemingly a trivial aspect of speaking, small talk plays a very important role in social interaction.

Skills involved in mastering small talk include:

- a. Acquiring fixed expressions and routines used in small talk

- b. Using formal or casual speech depending on the situation
- c. Developing fluency is making small talk around predictable topics
- d. Using opening and closing strategies
- e. Using back-channeling

**Back-channeling** involves the use of expressions such as *Really?*, *Mmm*, *Is that right?*, *Yeah*, etc., and very commonly short rhetorical questions such as *Do you?* *Are you?* *Did you?*. The use of expressions that show exaggeration such as *Way out*, *Awesome*, *Fantastic* is usually a sign that the two participants are friends.

**Echo responses** are another type of back-channeling and involve echoing something the speaker said.

Ways of teaching small talk include:

**Modeling and creating:** students study examples of small talk exchanges and create similar exchanges on the same topic.

For example a lesson can start by giving students a model of a small-talk exchange,

Like many interactions of this kind, the exchange opens with a friendly greeting, moves towards small talk, and then closes with an exchange of greetings. The teacher provides worksheets in which the students identify the different sections of the conversation and the discourse functions and practice writing their own dialogs using the same discourse features. They later enact role-plays to further practice the appropriate sequence in a small talk exchange.

Other activities to practice small talk are:

- a. **Class mingles:** each student has one or two topics on a card. The class mingle, students greet, introduce their topic, make small talk for one or two exchanges, close the conversation, and move on to a different student.
- b. **Question sheets:** students have a worksheet with 10 different small talk questions. They move around the class and take turns asking and responding to their exchange in small talk format.

## **E. Research Method**

The present research attempts to know the implementation of small talk strategy in speaking at Languages Development Center class. A descriptive study design is employed. The variable measured in this research was speaking ability which encompasses students' fluency, accuracy, and comprehensibility. The result of the posttest, then, was computed to see the implementation of that strategy.

This research is also conducted by collecting the data through the use of questionnaires to describe various aspects of population in which participants are asked to answer certain questions.

The writer used descriptive method because they want to count the score of every student which is gotten from the implementation of small talk strategy, which the scale of the number is one to five. The data then interpret based on the mean score and percentage by the writer words. This method is used to describe students' responses on the use of strategy.

Babbie (2010) argues that Quantitative methods emphasize on objective measurements and numerical analysis of data collected through polls, questionnaires or surveys. Quantitative research focuses on gathering numerical data and generalizing it across groups of people.

He also states that Quantitative research designs are either descriptive (subjects usually measured once) or experimental (subjects measured before and after a treatment). A descriptive study establishes only associations between variables. An experiment establishes causality.

While the use of qualitative method because the writers will analyze and infer the data narratively with the writers' words. This method used to describe lecturers' ways in implementing the small talk strategy which is analyzed from students' comments and result of students' responses in the questionnaire, and also interview to ensure students comment.

Students got a chance to practice their speaking using small talk strategy in every first fifteen

minutes of each meeting. The topic for small talk was determined by teacher. The topic could be about previous lesson or what they were going to learn.

The small talk implemented by using line up or onion ring technique. By using them, every student got a peer to talk. Every 3 minutes, the teacher would say change and the students needed to move and looked for another partner to talk about the same topic. During nine minutes, students talked to 3 partners. After that the teacher would stop the small talk and then chose in random four to five students to present in front of the class the result of their conversation.

### 1. Subject

The subjects of the study are the lecturer and the students at Languages Development Center IAIN Antasari which is located at Jl. A. Yani, KM. 4.5, Banjarmasin. The Languages Development Center has responsibility to develop students' language ability both English and Arabic. Every freshman needs to



take two semesters English and Arabic course at that institution. Students take English course for three days in the morning for an hour and a half. There are sixty classes nowadays and it is ranked based on the result of placement test.

The subjects of this research consist of one lecturer and forty-four students, which come from various faculties and departments and it is mixed classes since some students comes from English department and some are not. However, it is ensured that they have homogenous ability in English based on the result of placement test done by the Languages Development Center itself.

## 2. Data

The data is the implementation of small talk and the students' scores in spoken test. It was expected that the result of using small talk strategy in speaking will improve students' speaking ability at Languages Development Center Class.

### 3. Research Location

This research is conducted at Languages Development Center (PPB) IAIN Antasari Banjarmasin.

### 4 .Technique of Data Collection

The primary data is collected by spoken test, and the secondary data is from questionnaire. The test and questionnaire are administered to all students.

The time allotment provides for all students is 100 minutes. The secondary data is questionnaire. Questionnaire is distributed after the posttest time to the students. To obtain the secondary data the writers also use the techniques of data collecting as follows:

#### 1. Observation

The data are collected by observation deeply. The writer comes to the class and directly observes the condition of lecturers and students. And of course, especially to an English lecturer, the writer observes in classroom to get some information about the implementation of small talk

strategy in speaking at Languages Development center class.

## 2. Interview

In this technique, the writer makes communication and interview directly with English lecturer and students to obtain data that are related to the primary or the secondary data.

## 3. Documentary

This technique is intended to look for all written reports which related to this study. It is used to knowing the implementation of small talk strategy in speaking at Languages Development center class.

## 5. Data Analysis

Dealing with the data analysis, there were two different kinds of primary and secondary data that are

analyzed. Therefore, they are treated and analyzed in different ways.

The primary data are gained from the result of the posttest. It is analyzed quantitatively to see the effect of implementation. The scores of the students are recorded and tabulated.

Next, the secondary data are gained from the result of questionnaire. The questionnaire reveals the data about students' opinions toward Small Talk technique. It would be analyze by categorizing the students' answers into positive, negative, and not clear opinions. Then the result will be presented in percentages so that the position of students' answers could be observed.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH LOCATION**

This research is conducted at Languages Development Center IAIN Antasari Banjarmasin. It is located at Jl. A. Yani, KM. 4.5, Banjarmasin. The Languages Development Center has responsibility to develop students' language ability both English and Arabic. Every freshman needs to take two semesters English and Arabic course at that institution. Students take English course for three days in the morning for an hour and a half. There are sixty classes nowadays and it is ranked based on the result of placement test.

The first and the second groups consist of forty-four students, which come from various faculties and departments and some students comes from English department and some are not. Research location is in Banjarmasin which is the capital city of South Kalimantan, it is about 45 minutes by car from air port or 60 minutes from Banjarbaru.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **A. FINDINGS**

This chapter details the research findings and verification of the research. The result of posttest as the primary data was computed by means of statistical procedures. It also reports the result of analysis of minor data to support the major data. In brief, it presents the research findings as a result of analyzing the major and the minor data.

Looking at a glance, training students' speaking ability using small talk activity as a routine gave a better effect on their speaking ability. However, this could not be claimed before the statistical hypothesis was done. For further analysis to answer the research problem, a statistical analysis was conducted.

In conclusion, the students who practiced their speaking through small talk had better speaking ability than those who did not. Complete explanation for the

effectiveness of this technique would be supported by the minor data.

The minor data were used to strengthen the findings in major data. This type of data can give additional information for the factors supporting the effectiveness of the technique used. Below are the minor findings.

### **2.1 The Result Questionnaire of Students' Attitude toward the Small Talk**

The students' opinions were used to check the students' attitude toward the small talk implemented in this study. Six questions were delivered to the students experiencing the activity. The summary of the students' answers were presented in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1 The Summary of Students' Answers and Its Interpretation**

| Variable   | Students' Response |                |                 | Total |
|--|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------|
|  | Positive           | Not Clear      | Negative        |       |
| 1. General Impression towards Small Talk             | 100 %              | 0 %            | 0 %             | 100%  |
| 2. Good things of Small Talk                         | 100 %              | 0 %            | 0 %             | 100%  |
| 3. Benefits of the Small Talk                        | 100 %              | 0 %            | 0 %             | 100%  |
| 4. The Weaknesses of Small Talk                      | 45.45 %            | 9.09 %         | 45.45 %         | 100%  |
| 5. The students' recommendation for using Small Talk | 100 %              | 0 %            | 0 %             | 100%  |
| <b>Total</b>   | 440.9<br>88.18 %   | 13.64<br>2.73% | 45.45<br>9.09 % |       |

The interpretation of students' opinions were conducted by reading all the answers and interpreting the result whether the answers showed positive,



negative, or not clear attitude upon the small talk activity. Answers were presented in percentages, accompanied with the interpretations. By doing so, the positions of students' answers could be observed.

### **2.1.1 The Students' General Impression toward the Small Talk Activity**

Looking at Table 3.1, it showed that 100 % of the students liked the small talk activity as a strategy to train their speaking ability. No one said they did not like the activity since all of them said that this activity was fun and interesting to improve their speaking ability. FS said that this activity was very fruitful to improve students' speaking skill. Another student, NW, said "It's good since it provides non-threatening environment when we speak English." Meanwhile, MF said that sometimes she felt nervous because of her weaknesses in term of vocabulary and grammar, but she still loved this activity. In other words, all students agreed that this activity was fun, interesting, even challenging.

### **2.1.2 Good Things from the Small Talk**

When the students were asked about the positive things of small talk, all of them (100 %) agreed that this strategy help them to have better speaking ability. They said that this activity helped them to enlarge their vocabulary, improve their pronunciation, develop a better relationship with classmates, build their self-confidence, and, of course, train them to speak English in every meeting.

MA, for example, answered “Yes, I think this activity has benefits for us. It develops our confidence to speak. At the first time, I felt shy to speak with classmates. Then, this activity helps me to get closer with them.” Next, TNA said that it helped me to enrich my vocabulary and to trigger my speaking ability.

### **2.1.3 Benefits of Small Talk Activity for Training Students' Speaking Ability**

Answering the third questions, 100 % of the students showed positive attitude. DWL wrote “This activity helps me to retain and to use new vocabulary.” Another opinion from NRI “Yeah...because this activity requires us to speak spontaneously or face to face, without reading a text, so it forces them to speak English.” These two opinions show that small talk brings positive effects on the students' speaking ability.

### **2.1.4 Weaknesses of the Small Talk Activity for Training Students' Speaking Ability**

The fourth question was intended to better understand the weaknesses of the strategy and to get the solutions from the students. There were 45.45% of the students mentioned the weaknesses of the activity, such as their lacks of vocabulary and grammar, the space were too close, and the students' personal problem.

KA said that the weaknesses were the lacks of grammar in vocabulary. This problem possibly made her difficult to express her opinion while speaking. Thus, setting the topic that has been discussed in the previous meeting possibly would be helpful to fix this problem. Then, NRI said that the weaknesses were the position (space) among students was too close. It disturbed the students' concentration. They cannot focus on what their partners were talking about because the voices of the students next to him/ her were too loud. She suggests setting the space before starting the activity. Next, PMCD commented that the weaknesses were on every student's speaking ability. Some of them have different ability so some possibly were too slow while other was too fast. The rest, MA, represented the unclear attitude (9.09%). He said possibly there were some weaknesses, but I did not know. He only gave a suggestion that it was better if the teacher standing in the center of the students or went around while the students talked.

### **2.1.5 The Appropriateness of using Small Talk for Training Students' Speaking Ability**

The next question related to the purpose of the small talk, whether this approach appropriate to be used for training students' speaking ability. It was showed that 100 % of the students agreed to use this activity as a strategy for promoting speaking ability. J said that this activity was recommended because it made students to get familiar with the use of English. He said that Small Talk provoked students to activate the storage of vocabulary in their minds. KNA added "While doing the small talk, it is impossible that we just keep silent. We need to talk, look for appropriate vocabulary, and of course, we need to be confident.

## **B. DISCUSSION**

This chapter presents the discussion of the result of data analysis. It covers the discussion of the interpretation of the research findings and factors caused the ineffectiveness.

### **3.1.1 The Effect of small talk on Students' Speaking Ability**

The result of final data analysis showed that the implementation of small talk promoted students to become more fluent in speaking. It showed by their speaking scores which was higher than those who were taught without using that strategy.

According to the theory, small talk refers to communication that primarily serves the purpose of social interaction. Small talk consists of short exchanges that usually begin with a greeting, move to back and forth exchange on non-controversial topics such as the weekend, the weather, work, school, etc., and then often conclude with a fixed expression such as *See you later*. These patterned and formulaic chunks, then, help students to become more fluent because those chunks become familiar with them and finally it can be spoken out automatically. Since the small talk activity in this research had been applied for a semester (42 meetings) so it can be said that the

students acquired many formulaic chunks that help them to be a more fluent speaker.

By asking students to do this activity in every meeting, they became familiar with speaking. They also built such as good social relationship with their friends. This condition then makes them feel confidence to speak and to express their opinion while talking. This finding in line with what Luk (2003) found that small talk can develop students' interactional competence.

Small Talk began as an experiment in learner-centered, reflective teaching of oral communication over 20 years ago and has developed into a comprehensive approach to developing accuracy, fluency, and complexity in oral production. In a 'Small Talk' session, students use their communicative ability in conversation without intervention by the teacher, and then receive feedback. Therefore, most students feel more comfortable to speak. Small talk creates a nonthreatening environment for them to express their thoughts. In the

present research, teacher did not interference students talk. He just went around the class to make sure that every student talked.

Small Talk is effective in increasing the students' pragmatic competence since it gives them an opportunity to practice speaking in a relatively low-stress environment, the kinds of speech acts they would need in higher stress interactions outside the classroom. It also puts students in the position, as leaders, to practice a variety of speech acts and discourse management strategies that are usually restricted to the teacher. Small Talk is very popular with students, in addition, at least from teachers' untested observations; it is very effective in raising the level of fluency of the students in general. The teacher also noticed that small talk encouraged not only extrovert students to talk but also the introvert ones.

However, from the minor findings, it also noted that teachers need to give space among students while they are talking. In the present research, because the space among pairs was too close, some students



criticized that it was so noisy so they could not hear what his/ her partners talk. They also recommended that it is better to talk about topic they have learnt in the previous meeting rather than talking about the present topic for that day meeting since they had limited vocabulary.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **CLOSURE**

This chapter consists of conclusion of the finding of the present research and suggestions made on the basis of the findings.

#### **4.1 Conclusion**

Based on the result it was found that the students liked the small talk activity as a strategy to train their speaking ability and all of them agreed that this strategy help them to have better speaking ability and it brings positive effects on the students' speaking ability and they agreed to use this activity as a strategy for promoting speaking ability. The students also mentioned the weaknesses of the activity, such as their lacks of vocabulary and grammar, the space were too close, and the students' personal problem.

## **4.2 Suggestions**

Regarding the results of this research, some suggestions are proposed. First, the suggestion goes to a comprehensive program in small talk instruction, the researcher recommends using a variety of methods in teaching speaking by using small talk.

Second, the suggestions go to the teachers/lecturers who want to use Small Talk in the teaching and learning process of speaking class. English teachers in different local settings can take this research as their starting point and engage in classroom about the effectiveness of technique on students' performance. By reflecting upon their teaching experiences, they can even develop their own techniques that suitable for their local context. The teachers can promote students' speaking ability. Teachers may need to introduce the concept of small talk to students and make students familiar with the small talk.

Last, the suggestions go to the future researchers who can also explore the techniques of

teaching speaking beside small talk and its effect on students' test performance. It will be also interesting to examine the relationship between students' proficiency in English and their level of education in speaking because it might be the case that learners with various proficiency levels may have different preferences for teachers' technique in teaching speaking. They can also use this research as a starting point.

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# APPENDICES

## Scoring Rubric for Speaking Test

RUBRIC FOR SPOKEN TEST

| Category Component   | POOR<br>Score: 50 - 59   | FAIR<br>Score: 60-69   | GOOD<br>Score: 70-79   | VERY GOOD<br>Score: 80 - 89   | EXCELLENT<br>Score: 90 - 100   |
|----------------------|--|--|--|---|--|
| <b>PRONUNCIATION</b> | Frequent problems with pronunciation and intonation, unclear, difficult to understand, quiet in speaking   | Intonation and pronunciation errors sometimes make it difficult to understand ; slightly unclear with pronunciation at times, but generally is fair.               | Pronunciation and intonation are quite clear with a few problem areas but did not interfere with communication   | Pronunciation and intonation are almost always very clear and accurate  | Pronunciation and intonation are very clear, accurate, and easy to understand, native-like pronunciation   |
| <b>VOCABULARY</b>    | Inadequate vocabulary to express ideas properly, which hindered the student in responding  | uses limited vocabulary and expressions, making the student repetitive and cannot expand on his/her ideas.   | uses a variety of vocabulary and expressions, but makes some errors in word choice   | uses a variety of vocabulary and expressions learned in class, in an accurate manner for the situation given                            | rich, precise and impressive usage of vocabulary and expressions learned in and beyond of class  |
| <b>COMPREHENSION</b> | has difficulty understanding the questions and topics being discussed, needs a lot of help in communicating; does not respond appropriately or clearly   | Fairly grasp some of the questions and topics being discussed; tries to communicate, but sometimes does not respond appropriately or clearly                       | able to comprehend and respond to most of the questions and topics being discussed; generally responds appropriately   | stays on task most of the time and almost always responds appropriately, and keeps trying to develop the interaction                    | able to comprehend and respond to all of the questions and topics being discussed with ease, communicates effectively, and always tries to develop the interaction |
| <b>FLUENCY</b>       | Speech is very slow, stumbling, nervous, and lacks fluency, responses, except for short or memorized expressions. Difficult for a listener to understand | Speech is slow and often hesitant and irregular, which often interferes with communication. Sentences may be left uncompleted, but the student is able to continue | Speech is mostly smooth but with some hesitation and nervousness and primarily by rephrasing and groping for words, but it does not usually interfere with communication | Speaks smoothly, with little hesitation that does not interfere with communication  | Speech is effortless and smooth in a way that makes clear that of a native speaker   |
| <b>GRAMMAR</b>       | uses basic structures, makes frequent errors, difficult to understand and has a hard time communicating ideas and responses because of grammar mistakes  | uses basic structures with occasional errors, often displayed inconsistencies with sentence structure and tenses.  | uses a variety of grammar structures, able to express ideas and responses fairly well, but makes some errors   | uses a variety of structures with minor grammatical errors, able to correct themselves, able to express ideas and responses fairly well | able to express ideas and responses with ease in proper sentence structure and tenses  |

Adapted from: Speaking Rubric for Fluency Activities, Pearson Education, Inc. 2005



## Interview Guide for the Speaking Test

### List of interview questions!

1. **Please tell me about yourself.** What's your name?  
How do you spell that? Where are you from?  
Where do you live? What's your email address or phone number? What's your birthday? How old are you? What's your hobby? What's your favorite music or movie? Etc.
2. **Please tell me about your future goal.** What do you want to be in the future? Where do you want to work? Where do you want to live? What will you do or have three years later? What will you do after graduating from this college? Etc.
3. **Please tell me about your wonderful or unusual experiences.** Have you ever gone camping? Have you ever told a lie? Have you ever tried strange food? Have you ever been to other countries? Have you ever seen a ghost? Have you ever met famous people? Etc.
4. **Please tell me about your childhood memory.** What was your favorite childhood memory? What sports or games did you use to play? Did you use to

have a nickname? Where did you use to spend your vacations or free time? Etc.

5. **Please tell me about your favorite gadget?** What is it? What is it used for? Please tell me how to use it?

## The Result of Posttest

| <b>Students'<br/>No.</b> | <b>Experimental Class</b> | <b>Control Class</b> |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| 1                        | 91                        | 90                   |
| 2                        | 91                        | 95                   |
| 3                        | 91                        | 88                   |
| 4                        | 93                        | 87                   |
| 5                        | 91                        | 85                   |
| 6                        | 92                        | 87                   |
| 7                        | 90                        | 88                   |
| 8                        | 88                        | 90                   |
| 9                        | 91                        | 92                   |
| 10                       | 91                        | 90                   |
| 11                       | 92                        | 87                   |
| 12                       | 92                        | 92                   |
| 13                       | 93                        | 90                   |
| 14                       | 91                        | 88                   |
| 15                       | 91                        | 84                   |
| 16                       | 87                        | 87                   |
| 17                       | 90                        | 85                   |

|    |    |    |
|----|----|----|
| 18 | 90 | 91 |
| 19 | 91 | 90 |
| 20 | 89 | 80 |
| 21 | 93 | 88 |
| 22 | 87 | 87 |

### **Picture of Small Talk Activity**

