# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on explaining and introducing this research. It discusses the background of the study, the research problem, the objectives, and its significance.

## 1.1 Background of the Study

Speaking is vital to our everyday existence since it is integral to human communication. (Thornbury, 2005). Individuals typically generate a substantial number of words daily, with estimates suggesting that the average person produces over one thousand words. Moreover, confident individuals like politicians and auctioneers may surpass this average by speaking even more extensively. The ability to communicate is a significant and fundamental aspect of human communication. However, due to its innate nature, we often need to pay more attention to the challenges and efforts required to acquire this skill. It is imperative to engage in continual learning of a foreign language. (Haryani et al., 2021).

Mastering the English language is imperative for pupils to acquire (Oktavia, 2023). The pedagogical approach to instructing oral communication skills, as outlined in Sagala (2012), English Subject Competency Standards for Senior High School, involves the communication of diverse meanings (interpersonal, conceptual, and textual) through a range of interactive spoken texts and monologues. However, the absence of a self-assurance drive and consistency in instructional methods pose challenges for students in expressing their thoughts verbally. Additionally, there needs to be more clarity between written and spoken language to impede the fluency of speaking activities. It is important to note that speaking

proficiency encompasses more than mere articulation. However, this implies the dissemination of information through oral communication.

The research of spoken language ought to be pleasurable in the educational setting; moreover, more meaningful interaction between educators and learners leads to a disconnect between the two parties (Singh & Chan, 2022). The experience elicits a sense of inconvenience among the student population. Several recurring issues are commonly encountered in the context of teaching speaking skills. To begin with, there is a need for more self-confidence in speaking English. In contrast to the passive nature of reading, writing, and listening, speaking requires a certain level of immediate participation. Rahma et al. (2021), it is common for students to experience embarrassment when expressing themselves in English inside the classroom setting. These emotions may stem from concerns around the potential for making errors, fear of facing criticism or social repercussions, or general discomfort with the attention drawn to their speech (Tran, 2022).

Furthermore, pupils display a reluctance to engage in verbal communication. Despite not being limited, students often express their inability to generate ideas or thoughts. Many students lack the intrinsic urge to express themselves, constantly feeling compelled due to external pressures. In summary, the students need more incentive or motivation to interact or converse.

Furthermore, there exists a notable need for more engagement and involvement. Erdiana et al. (2020), to ensure audibility, only a single participant must engage in speaking at any one moment. Unfortunately, each participant will have limited time allocated for their speech. Azmi Randu Farhani (2020), during English practice sessions in the classroom, the

teacher and other students predominantly employ the Indonesian language due to its perceived simplicity, resulting in discomfort while conversing in English with one another.

According to Lawtie (2004), there are multiple justifications for educators to incorporate the teaching of speaking skills inside the classroom setting. Initially, it is common for several students to conflate the ability to converse in a language with a comprehensive understanding of it. Consequently, they tend to perceive language acquisition as solely acquiring conversational skills. Language acquisition proficiency is evaluated based on the individual's ability to engage in meaningful conversations in the desired language. Consequently, if students fail to acquire oral communication skills or lack opportunities for linguistic interaction within the educational setting, they may experience a decline in motivation and a waning interest in the learning process.

Furthermore, the act of speaking holds paramount importance in the realm of human communication (Owen et al., 2019). Suppose language instruction aims to enable students to communicate in English effectively. In that case, it is imperative to prioritize the teaching and cultivation of speaking abilities inside the language classroom.

Suharnita (2021) Stated that speaking difficulties might arise due to affective variables, encompassing students' concern about the potential consequences of expressing themselves incorrectly, foolishly, or incomprehensibly. Teachers must establish a conducive and enjoyable classroom environment to mitigate these challenges (Khamraeva, 2022).

Harmer (1991) states that the primary objective of teaching speaking skills is to equip students with the necessary abilities for effective communication. Consequently, language activities in speaking classes must prioritize the development of individual language proficiency. This requires the instructor to establish a nurturing and humane classroom

atmosphere wherein students can communicate, enhancing their oral proficiency. Educators must engage with all students inside their classrooms. Specifically, as an English teacher, it is crucial to establish a classroom setting that fosters genuine conversation, incorporates authentic activities, and presents meaningful assignments that facilitate spoken language development (Wijayanti, 2018). In this context, the instructor formulates strategies to enhance students' oral proficiency, such as implementing tasks that necessitate peer interaction through pair or group work.

Based on my personal experience as a senior high school student at that particular juncture, it became evident that speaking posed challenges during practical exercises. Frequently, I had unease during speaking practice sessions, as I perceived a significant amount of pressure exerted by the instructor. This pressure stemmed from the instructor's insistence on requiring us to speak without adequately assessing our abilities. Furthermore, the instructor persisted in utilizing outdated teaching techniques, resulting in students feeling disinterested and lacking enthusiasm for learning (Irona & Ratmanida, 2018). Ultimately, a lack of significant advancements in approach or teaching methodology about oral communication has resulted in students frequently experiencing a sense of insecurity when speaking. Individuals experience a sense of apprehension when committing errors, resulting in a lack of engagement in speaking exercises and a limited development of speaking proficiency. During my teaching practicum in a senior high school setting, I encountered challenges that mirrored those I faced during my own time as an old high school student. The students needed more motivation to engage in speaking activities and expressed a lack of enjoyment in improving their speaking skills. Additionally, they demonstrated a sense of self-assurance in their ability to talk while simultaneously expressing apprehension about the possibility of making errors.

Consequently, I endeavored to stimulate their verbal communication skills. Still, I deem motivation alone, devoid of a deliberate instructional approach or implementation, particularly in oral expression, ineffectual. As a student and a prospective teacher, I needed to work on making significant contributions since English educators must actively seek out and cultivate an abundant language environment to enhance learners' immersion and exposure to the desired language (Triana & Anita, 2022). Consequently, I engaged in self-reflection and sought opportunities to enhance my learning. I recognized the importance of creating an engaging learning environment, particularly in the context of teaching speaking skills. As a result, I concluded that the Information Gap Technique is a suitable approach for teaching speaking.

The researcher chose the information gap technique as a strategy to teach speaking because the activity contained in IGT refers to a learning task in which learners encounter a lack of necessary information, prompting them to engage in conversation to obtain it; it also provides a real communication practice (Rafsanjani et al., 2020). The information gap technique is beneficial for many reasons (Harmer, 2007). These activities facilitate extended speaking practice, offering a platform for genuine communication and fostering high motivation levels. Additionally, these activities necessitate the utilization of sub-skills such as clarifying meaning and re-phrasing. Harmer (2004) points out that the Information gap technique is beneficial in helping students alleviate their anxiety and develop a sense of ease when expressing their thoughts in the target language. Implementing the Information gap strategy in English language acquisition positively impacts learner motivation; this pedagogical approach facilitates enhancing oral communication abilities and cognitive abilities such as critical thinking and other language proficiencies like reading and listening (Mulyani

et al., 2023). Thus, the researcher was challenged to conduct research entitled; TEACHING SPEAKING USING THE INFORMATION GAP TECHNIQUE IN THE TENTH GRADE OF SINT CAROLUS CATHOLIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL KUPANG

## 1.2 Research problem

Based on the background of the study above, the problems of the study are as follows:

1.  How is the Information Gap Technique used in teaching speaking to the tenth-grade students of Sint Carolus Catholic Senior High School Kupang?
2.  What challenges are faced by the tenth-grade students of Sint Carolus Catholic Senior High School Kupang during implementing the Information Gap Technique in teaching speaking?

## 1.3 The objective of the study

1.  To find out how to effectively use the Information Gap Technique in teaching speaking to the tenth-grade students of Sint Carolus Catholic Senior High School Kupang
2.  To find out the challenges of implementing the Information Gap Technique in teaching speaking faced by the tenth-grade students of Sint Carolus Catholic Senior High School Kupang.

## 1.4 Significance of the study

The significance of the study can be described as the following:

1.  **For Students**

    This research is meant to create a conducive and enjoyable classroom environment so they can obtain information to improve their speaking ability as efficiently as possible. Moreover, they are more interested in learning to speak English.

2. **For Teachers**

   This research informs teachers, especially English teachers, about using the Information Gap Technique to teach speaking to students. In addition, teachers can identify the challenges and improve their skills to effectively implement the information gap technique in teaching English.

3. **For Future Researchers**

   Hopefully, the results of this study can be used as information material for other researchers and as knowledge contributions to research studies in the future, especially concerning the use of the information gap technique in teaching English.