

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Language is a divine gift of the God. It is a language that distinguishes man from animals. Through language we can communicate with others. Communication is a daily activity, aware or not, we always talk when we get up. We use language to let others know how we feel, what we need, and to ask questions. English is one of the languages used by most people in the world, in learning English learners should learn all skills such as listening, speaking, reading, writing.

From the four language skills, speaking is seemingly the one that many English learners find it the most difficult. The writer saw that the problem appeared in the desire of the students in practicing to speak in English. They did not have any willingness to speak. If they were asked by the teacher to speak up, they just kept quiet and said nothing.

The fact shows that when the students' try to speak English they are afraid of making mistakes. They do not have enough vocabulary and good grammar to speak English. It is therefore good to apply the techniques to make students interested in English. There are some techniques to improve students' ability in teaching speaking by Harmer (1991: 122), they are discussion, simulation, communicative games, problem solving activities, and role play.

The writer found that when the students were asked by the teacher to perform their speaking in front of the class, they were not active to do it. There were even students who made some excuses to run away from their duty. Only few of the students who always got the high scores and the achievers are always active to present their duty. To overcome this problem, English teacher should have some strategies or techniques in teaching and learning especially teaching speaking.

Small group discussion is one of the techniques in teaching speaking. This technique will make the students active and motivate them to speak English. Ornstein (2000: 311) states that small group discussion seems to provide an opportunity for students to become more actively engaged in learning and for teachers to monitor students progress better. It can also enhance students cooperation and social skill.

For all of the explanation above, the writer would like to make a study under the title **“The Use of Small Group Discussion to Improve Students Speaking Skill : A Classroom Action Research to the Eighth Grade Students of SMPK Santa Theresia Kupang in the School Year 2016/2017”**.

1.2. Problem Statement

Based on the background discussed before, this study is conducted to answer the following questions:

1. Can the use of group discussion be effective to increase speaking skill of the eighth grade students of SMPK Santa Theresia Kupang in the school year 2016/2017?
2. To what extent is the improvement of speaking skill of the eighth grade students after being taught using small group discussion?
3. What are the problems found when small group discussion is being conducted as classroom activity of eighth grade students of SMPK Santa Theresia Kupang?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Based on the questions in the statement of the problems, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find out whether or not the implementation of small group discussion can be effective to increase speaking skill of the eighth grade students of SMPK Santa Theresia Kupang in the school year 2016/2017.
2. To know extent the improvement of speaking skill of the eighth grade students after being taught using small group discussion.
3. To find out problems found when small group discussion is being conducted in classroom activity of the eighth grade students of SMPK Santa Theresia kupang.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is hoped to bring significance for all the readers in general. It offers them sufficient information about small group discussion and it is applied in a classroom situation, specifically in speaking. And it is also very important for the English teacher and students of SMPK Santa Theresia Kupang and for the writer herself.

1. English Teacher

The result of this study can be an input and reference to the English teachers in teaching speaking. They can get an appropriate technique in delivering teaching in group discussion so that they can enhance their students' speaking skill and make the students' speaking achievement be better than before.

2. Students

The study will get motivation, awareness to speak the language. They will also understand that there is nothing wrong with making mistakes in learning language, especially in speaking it out.

3. The writer

Through this study the writer can improve her speaking and as one of the English program students, who will be an English teacher, the study helps her learning more through several techniques in teaching speaking especially small group discussion.

1.5 Scope and limitation of the study

There are some activities to promote speaking, they are: acting from script, communication games, discussion, prepared talks, questionnaires, simulation and role play. This study will only focus on how well the discussion in small groups to help students speaking English. The aspects that will be analyzed are pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and fluency.

1.6 Definition of the Terms

There are some terms that should be defined dealing with the study to make everything clear for the readers.

1. Speaking

Speaking is a language art, which involves the selection and organization of ideas and the ability to communicate the ideas orally (Grolier: 1981 in Hebi: 2014). In this study, speaking is organization of ideas orally done by the eighth grade students of SMPK Santa Theresia Kupang through small group discussion technique about the topic chosen.

2. Discussion

Discussion is one of the method that can help students and also practice to delivering ideas (Cannon, 2000). The term “discussion” in this study indicates the students’ ability to practice their speaking with giving opinion about the topic.

3. Small group discussion

According to Kidsvatter (1962:242) a small-group discussion dividing the large classroom into small groups of students to achieve specific objectives permits

students to assume more responsibility for their own learning, develop social and leadership skills and become involved in an alternative instructional approach. In this study, small group discussion technique is a one variety of teaching techniques in small group that is used by the writer to improve their comprehension in speaking.

4. SMPK Santa Theresia Kupang

SMPK Santa Theresia is a Catholic Junior High School, located in Kupang city of East Nusa Tenggara Province.