

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background

Speaking English is an essential skill that foreign language learners need to master, especially in today's global era, where effective communication is crucial in education, work, and social life. Therefore, English teaching methods should focus on understanding language structures and emphasize active language use in real-life situations. One key factor influencing the success of speaking instruction is classroom management. Appropriate classroom management techniques can create a comfortable and supportive learning environment, encouraging students to speak confidently.

This becomes particularly important in classes with diverse language abilities, such as those at the Language Center of a State Islamic University. Students in this context come from various academic departments, resulting in different levels of English proficiency. Such diversity presents unique challenges for teachers, as they must ensure that all students can actively participate in speaking activities. Given these conditions, this study aims to explore teachers' perceptions of classroom management techniques at the Language Center and to analyze how these techniques foster a communicative and inclusive speaking environment. By doing so, the research is expected to provide insights into effective classroom management strategies in teaching speaking and to help English teachers create a responsive learning experience that meets students' needs.

Speaking courses are important because they help students improve pronunciation, expand vocabulary, and practice grammar meaningfully. More importantly, they build students' confidence and enhance their communication skills through interactive classroom activities (Yagcioglu, 2022). Besides, Iftakhar, (2013) notes that speaking is one of the primary skills naturally developed. Success in learning a foreign language is often measured by the ability to converse in that

language. Therefore, mastering speaking skills contributes to students' academic achievement and supports their career development and social interactions.

Furthermore, a communicative speaking environment is central to English language teaching. The environment is characterized by meaningful interactions between teachers and students, as well as among students themselves, emphasizing practical language use in real-life contexts (Richards, 2006). Similarly, Maryslessor et al., (2014) highlight that Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) prioritizes interaction and meaningful communication, shifting the focus from language form to language function. This approach enables students to develop communicative competence, allowing them to express ideas, ask questions, respond actively, and negotiate meaning. In line with this, Brown, (2007) emphasizes that teachers in such an environment act as facilitators who provide authentic communication opportunities and constructive feedback on students' oral skills. Thus, creating a communicative speaking environment improves fluency and fosters students' confidence and critical thinking.

Based on preliminary observations at the Language Center, English classes are attended by students from different majors, resulting in diverse language backgrounds, learning styles, and proficiency levels. These differences pose significant challenges for teachers in managing effective and inclusive classroom dynamics. In addition to this diversity, another major problem identified is the inconsistent number of students attending each class. Since English at the Language Center is not a compulsory course, student attendance tends to fluctuate, making it difficult for teachers to plan activities, manage time efficiently, and maintain continuity in speaking practice.

Furthermore, during classroom interactions, students often show a strong preference to work only with peers from the same major. For instance, engineering students tend to form groups exclusively with fellow engineering students, while students from other faculties do the same. This tendency limits cross-disciplinary interaction and reduces opportunities for authentic communication, which is

essential in speaking classes. As Muluk et al. (2021) note, the classroom is a central site of the instructional process, and creating an engaging learning environment requires careful management. In this regard, Brown (2001) emphasizes that classroom management involves regulating interactions, arranging classroom space, managing time, and organizing effective group work, all of which play a crucial role in fostering students' speaking skills, especially in a heterogeneous and non-mandatory learning context such as the Language Center.

Classroom management also involves both physical and behavioral components. According to Brown 2007 (in Ababneh, 2012), management includes the classroom's physical environment such as seating arrangements, lighting, and equipment and teacher-related factors such as voice and body language. In addition the teachers have to use classroom space strategically, manage transitions effectively, and build positive relationships with students to reduce anxiety and increase confidence (Harmer, 2015). Therefore, classroom management is not simply about discipline; it is a foundation for creating a supportive environment that enables students to practice speaking effectively.

Moreover, effective classroom management techniques directly influence students' academic achievement. The teacher's professionalism shown through clear planning, effective facilitation, and ongoing self-evaluation strengthens classroom management (Ibrahim, 2016). When teachers consistently apply such practices, they foster orderly classrooms where interaction, motivation, and learning outcomes are enhanced (Junker et al., 2021). In this way, classroom management maintains order and builds a positive and communicative atmosphere that supports language learning.

Previous studies have examined classroom management strategies in speaking classes with different focuses and contexts. For example, Aziza et al., (2024) found that seating arrangements, rule enforcement, and approaches to student behavior increased engagement in secondary schools. However, their study did not extend to the university context. Similarly, Faqiri et al., (2020) highlighted the importance

of classroom management in supporting speaking skills at Herat University, but did not explore specific techniques for building communicative environments. At the university level, Rokhaniyah et al., (2024) showed that enforcing discipline, arranging physical space, and using engaging topics improved student participation. However, these studies have not addressed teachers' perceptions of how classroom management techniques contribute to fostering communicative speaking environments. Therefore, this study seeks to fill that gap by examining teachers' perceptions of classroom management techniques in multidisciplinary speaking classes at the Language Center.

B. Research Question

The following questions are derived from the research concern:

1. What classroom management techniques do the teachers at the Language center of a State Islamic university use to foster a communicative speaking environment?
2. How are the teachers' perception of the classroom management techniques used to foster a communicative speaking environment?

C. Purpose of Study

Based on the research questions the purpose of the study are:

1. To identify the classroom management techniques employed by the teachers at Language Center of a State Islamic university to create a communicative speaking environment.
2. To analyze the teachers' perceptions of classroom management techniques used to foster a communicative speaking environment in the classroom.

D. Research Significances

The research significane are divided into two parts above:

1. Theortically

The findings of this study can serve as a reference for researchers studying similar cases and a source of knowledge for anyone who reads it about how to manage a classroom to improve a communicative speaking environment in situations where students have different ability levels.

2. Practically

The findings of this study are intended for the teachers at Language Center of a State islamic university as reflection material and teachers in genereal to get ideas on how to manage English language classes that focus on fostering a communicative speaking environment for students at the university level.

E. Research Scope

This study uses the case study method as a qualitative research design to explore teachers' perspectives on the classroom management techniques they use to foster a communicative speaking environment. Video analysis and interviews are the main research instruments to collect the data. The participants in this study consisted of three English teachers who were selected purposively based on their experience and involvement in English classes. This study focuses solely on the teachers' perceptions and does not include students' perspectives regarding classroom management techniques that used.

F. Conceptual Framework

The framework illustrates the relationship between classroom management and the creation of a communicative speaking environment. Classroom management in this framework plays a crucial role in shaping a learning atmosphere that supports students' speaking skills. This environment, in turn, influences two key aspects, namely teachers' perceptions and classroom teaching practices. These two

aspects contribute to the understanding of classroom management components, the characteristics of a communicative classroom, elements of oral communication, and types of speaking activities. Therefore, classroom management functions not only as a means of maintaining order but also as a foundation for fostering a learning setting that encourages students to interact actively.

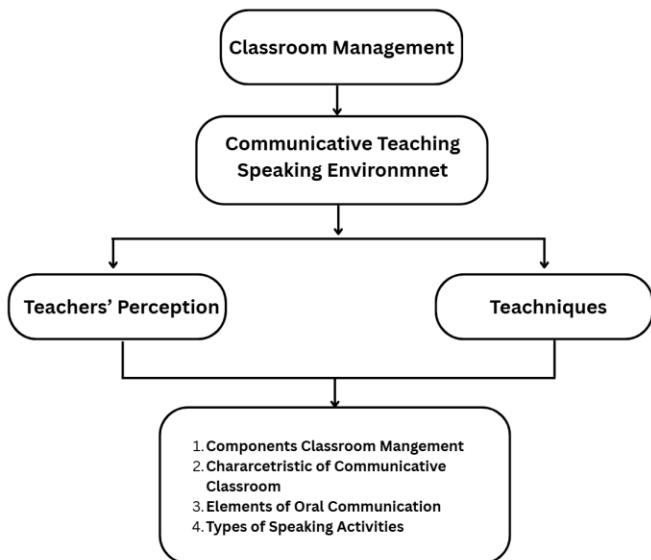


Figure 1.1

In the context of teaching speaking, *Communicative Language Teaching* (CLT) emphasizes using English as a tool for real communication rather than focusing only on grammatical rules. The teacher acts as a facilitator who creates communicative speaking activities and encourages students to actively interact through pair work and group work (Thornbury, 2011). The main goal of speaking instruction in CLT is to help students express ideas and exchange meaning effectively, with fluency receiving more attention during practice.

In addition, Richards (2008) also states that CLT integrates fluency and accuracy in teaching speaking. While students are encouraged to speak freely in authentic and meaningful tasks such as discussions, role plays, and problem-solving activities, the teacher provides feedback after the activity to improve grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Through this approach, CLT supports the

development of students' confidence and ability to use English effectively in real-life communication.

On the other hand, classroom management holds a central position in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Waluyo & Amalia, (2024) argue that planning classroom management strategies requires consideration of the desired learning atmosphere, along with guidelines and procedures to ensure functionality. This aligns with Muluk et al., (2021), who asserts that the physical classroom environment directly affects the health, comfort, and motivation of both students and teachers. Moreover, Brown, (2007) highlights that the teacher's role as a classroom manager is influenced by teaching style, the quality of teacher student relationships, and the ability to balance praise with constructive criticism. In practice, teachers may apply specific techniques such as arranging seating to facilitate group discussions, using body language effectively, distributing speaking turns relatively equally, and establishing flexible class rules to support interaction. Consequently, these techniques enable teachers to create a communicative, conducive, and well-structured classroom environment.

Moreover, teachers' perceptions of speaking instruction play a decisive role in shaping effective pedagogical strategies. From the cognitive aspect, teachers' perceptions are closely related to their beliefs, knowledge, and understanding of the language learning process and their ability to address students' difficulties. Teachers with strong pedagogical knowledge tend to interpret classroom situations more positively and are more capable of selecting methods appropriate to students' needs (Evriani & Kumalasari, 2019; Sardy et al., 2023). From the affective aspect, teachers' perceptions are influenced by emotions and attitudes toward their students and the teaching process. Positive feelings such as enthusiasm, care, and empathy foster motivation and supportive relationships, whereas negative emotions such as stress or fatigue may weaken professional commitment (Candrawati, 2022; Hermayawati, 2004). From the conative aspect, teachers' perceptions are manifested in their behavioral tendencies, reflected in their

willingness to adopt new methods, adapt materials, or implement classroom innovations (Candrawati, 2022; Evriani & Kumalasari, 2019). Hence, the cognitive, affective, and conative dimensions of perception are interrelated and form the basis for how teachers evaluate challenges, manage the classroom, and implement communicative speaking strategies.

In conclusion, the integration of classroom management, CLT principles, and teachers' perceptions constitutes a key factor in fostering effective speaking instruction. These three elements are deeply interconnected: classroom management provides the foundation for a supportive environment, CLT offers a learner-centered and interactive approach, and teachers' perceptions shape how these strategies are put into practice. Taken together, they contribute to the creation of meaningful, dynamic, and contextually relevant speaking classrooms in EFL settings.

G. Research Gap

A number of studies have highlighted the importance of classroom management in teaching English-speaking skills. Aziza, Ashadi, and Umar (2024) conducted a qualitative phenomenological study to explore the classroom management strategies used by English teachers in managing speaking classes in secondary schools. The study involved four teachers through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. The results showed that teachers employed strategies such as seating arrangements, enforcing rules, building relationships with students, and providing engaging materials to enhance student participation. These strategies proved effective in creating a conducive learning environment and increasing student motivation. However, this study was limited to the secondary school context and did not specifically examine the contribution of classroom management techniques to the creation of a communicative speaking environment at the university level.

Another study was conducted by Faqiri et al. (2020) using an experimental method on 90 students from the Faculty of Education at Herat University. This study measured the influence of classroom management on students' speaking abilities. The results showed that well-managed classes enabled students to be more focused, actively speak, and understand each other in discussions. However, this study only used questionnaires and did not explore teachers' perspectives or classroom management techniques in depth, thus failing to capture the dynamics of classroom interactions and the diversity of teaching contexts.

Furthermore, Rokhaniyah et al. (2024) investigated classroom management strategies and challenges faced by lecturers in EFL speaking classes at universities. This qualitative study used case studies and involved three lecturers through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. They identified various strategies such as enforcing discipline, arranging the physical environment, providing interesting topics, using media, and speaking correction techniques. This research provides a detailed picture of how instructors create a classroom atmosphere that supports active student engagement. However, the focus of this study is more on challenges and general strategies without explicitly examining the contribution of these strategies in creating a communicative speaking environment.

Based on these three studies, it is evident that although various classroom management strategies have been identified and proven beneficial in speaking instruction, there remains a research gap that has not been extensively discussed: an in-depth exploration of teachers' perceptions of the contribution of the classroom management techniques they apply in creating a communicative speaking environment in English language classes at the university level with diverse student backgrounds. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by exploring the classroom management techniques used by teachers at the Language Center of State Islamic university and their perceptions of the contribution of these techniques in creating a communicative speaking environment.