CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a comprehensive overview that includes the background of the study, formulation of research questions, objectives, significance, scope, conceptual framework, and review of previous research. It serves as a theoretical foundation that guides the formulation of key inquiries and aims of the study. Furthermore, this section emphasizes the relevance of the study by offering a structured conceptual approach. The chapter is concluded by presenting related past studies that support the development of this research.

A. Background

Speaking is one of the core skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning. It reflects not only students' linguistic proficiency but also their confidence and communication ability in real-life contexts. In EFL environments where English is not used in daily life, speaking skill becomes a major indicator of language competence. As emphasized by Goh and Burns (2022), speaking is both a cognitive and social process that requires students to express ideas clearly while interacting with others meaningfully.

In EFL classrooms, teaching speaking involves developing learners' ability to produce language fluently, accurately, and appropriately. Teachers are expected to create interactive and supportive environments where students can practice speaking regularly. Brown (2020) notes that successful speaking instruction in EFL contexts must focus not only on accuracy but also fluency, interactional competence, and learner autonomy. However, achieving this in the classroom remains a challenge due to time constraints, class sizes, and limited opportunities for practice.

Despite its importance, many students struggle with speaking due to anxiety, lack of vocabulary, and fear of making mistakes. These problems are further compounded by limited speaking time during lessons, insufficient feedback, and overemphasis on grammar. Richards (2015) points out that fluency is often

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neglected in favor of structural accuracy, leading to imbalanced speaking development. In Indonesian EFL settings, speaking is often marginalized, and students rarely have the chance to speak English outside the classroom (Yuliana & Nurweni, 2023).

An informal observation at SMPN 2 Cileunyi revealed that most eighth-grade students demonstrated low fluency in spoken English. They tended to pause frequently, repeat words, or speak in short, fragmented sentences. Interviews with teachers also indicated that students lacked confidence and were rarely given consistent opportunities to practice speaking. This condition reflects a need for innovative strategies that can support students' speaking development outside formal lesson hours.

Daily speaking logs offer a promising strategy to enhance speaking fluency. They involve students recording their speaking activities regularly and reflecting on their performance. This self-directed practice encourages learner autonomy and increases oral output. Chen et al. (2021) found that using daily speaking logs enhanced students' self-awareness and speaking performance over time. In EFL contexts, such reflective practices help bridge the gap between limited classroom interaction and students' need for regular oral language use.

Several recent studies support the effectiveness of speaking logs or similar reflective speaking activities. Putri and Wijayanto (2021) showed that daily video logs improved students' fluency and reduced anxiety. Ananda and Sari (2022) reported that self-recorded speaking tasks helped students reduce hesitation and improve continuity in speech. Maulidia and Fadhilah (2020) found that speaking journals boosted students' confidence and fluency. However, most of these studies were conducted at the senior high school or university level, often involving digital tools not always accessible to all students.

Despite the growing body of research on speaking logs and reflective speaking activities, several important gaps remain. Most existing studies have focused on senior high school or university students, leaving junior high school learners underrepresented in empirical research. In addition, previous studies have tended to examine speaking ability in general, rather than focusing specifically on speaking

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fluency as a distinct and measurable sub-skill. Furthermore, many studies employed qualitative or mixed-method approaches, resulting in limited quantitative evidence on the causal effects of daily speaking logs in EFL contexts where students have minimal exposure to English outside the classroom. As a result, there is a clear need for classroom-based quantitative research that investigates the effectiveness of daily speaking logs in improving speaking fluency among junior high school EFL students.

This study aims to examine the effect of using daily speaking logs on the speaking fluency of eighth-grade students at SMPN 2 Cileunyi. It employs a pre-experimental design to quantitatively analyze students' fluency before and after the implementation of daily speaking logs, focusing on indicators such as speech flow, pause reduction, and continuity. This research contributes to practical strategies for enhancing speaking fluency in junior high school EFL settings.

B. Research Questions

In order to investigate the effectiveness of daily speaking logs in improving students' speaking fluency, this research is guided by the following questions:

1. What are the students' speaking scores before the implementation of Daily Speaking Log?
2. What are the students' speaking scores after the implementation of Daily Speaking Log?
3. Is there a significant difference between the students' speaking scores before and after the implementation of Daily Speaking Log?

C. Research Purposes

The objectives of this research are formulated to align with the identified problems and research questions. Specifically, this study aims to:

1. To identify the students' speaking scores before the implementation of Daily Speaking Log.
2. To identify the students' speaking scores after the implementation of Daily Speaking Log.
3. To examine whether there is a significant difference between the students'

speaking scores before and after the implementation of Daily Speaking Log

D. Research Significances

This research is expected to offer both theoretical and practical contributions to the field of English language teaching, particularly in the area of speaking fluency in EFL contexts.

Theoretically, the study supports the development of fluency-oriented pedagogical strategies in line with Swain's Output Hypothesis and reflective learning theory. These theories highlight the importance of producing language output and engaging in self-evaluation as essential processes for language development. By investigating the use of daily speaking logs, this study contributes to current discussions on how self-monitored, consistent speaking practice can enhance fluency among EFL learners. It also adds to the growing body of literature focused on learner autonomy and metacognitive involvement in oral language practice.

Practically, the study provides several benefits for different stakeholders:

1. For Students: This study offers students a practical and low-pressure tool to improve their speaking fluency. Through daily speaking logs, students are encouraged to speak regularly and reflect on their performance. This practice helps reduce speaking anxiety, increase confidence, and improve fluency indicators such as speech flow, reduced hesitation, and better continuity. It also promotes learner autonomy and responsibility in their language learning process.

2. For Teachers: This research gives teachers a simple yet effective classroom strategy to support speaking development beyond conventional speaking drills. Daily speaking logs can be implemented as part of homework, reflective journaling, or independent practice. By reviewing students' speaking logs, teachers can gain insights into students' fluency progress, difficulties, and speaking habits, allowing them to provide more personalized and targeted feedback. Furthermore, it can be used as an assessment tool to monitor speaking improvement over time, especially when class time is limited for individual

speaking practice.

3. For Schools and Institutions: The findings of this research can inform curriculum designers and policymakers on the importance of integrating reflective and output-based speaking activities into language programs. This aligns with the goals of 21st-century learning, which emphasizes communication skills, self-regulated learning, and student-centered instruction.
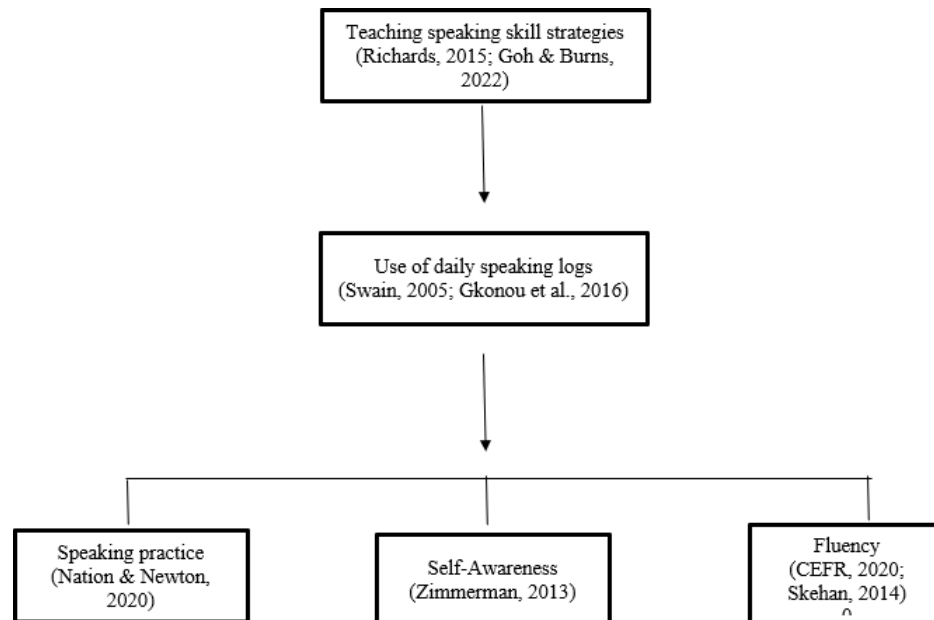
E. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

Teaching speaking in an EFL classroom requires the integration of strategic, meaningful, and consistent activities that engage students in oral production. According to Richards (2015), successful speaking instruction should emphasize not only grammatical accuracy but also fluency, interaction, and meaning negotiation. Likewise, Goh and Burns (2022) argue that teaching speaking must involve three stages: cognitive preparation, performance, and reflection, which help learners develop their oral skills in a systematic and supportive way.

This study adopts those principles by emphasizing the use of output-based and reflection-based strategies, where students are provided with opportunities to speak regularly and reflect on their performance. These theories form the foundational basis for the use of speaking logs.

Based on the above teaching strategy, daily speaking logs are used as the core technique in this study. A daily speaking log is a structured tool that requires students to record (or write) their spoken English daily and reflect on their performance. This practice is rooted in:

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a. Swain's Output Hypothesis (2005), which highlights the importance of language output for internalizing linguistic knowledge.

b. Reflective Learning Theory (Gkonou, Tatzl, & Mercer, 2016), which promotes student autonomy through self-assessment and metacognitive awareness.

By consistently using daily speaking logs, students are not only practicing their speaking but also monitoring and evaluating their progress, making this strategy both productive and reflective. The use of daily speaking logs is expected to produce three interrelated learning outcomes:

a. Speaking Practice: Students engage in regular, structured speaking activities, which increase their oral production frequency. According to Nation and Newton (2020), frequent and meaningful speaking practice is essential for improving fluency and reducing anxiety.

b. Self-Awareness: Through daily reflection, students develop an understanding of their speaking strengths and weaknesses. This process aligns with Zimmerman's Self-Regulated Learning Theory (2013), which emphasizes the role of reflection in improving student performance and motivation.

c. Fluency: With consistent practice and reflection, students are expected to demonstrate improved fluency. Fluency here refers to the ability to speak smoothly, with fewer pauses, hesitations, or breakdowns in communication. This is consistent with the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR, 2020), which defines fluency as speech continuity and automaticity. Skehan (2014) also supports the view that fluency results from practice and reduced processing demands.

This conceptual framework demonstrates how teaching strategies that incorporate reflective and output-based activities such as daily speaking logs can effectively enhance speaking fluency in EFL students. It provides both a theoretical and practical foundation for the current research by linking established learning theories with specific pedagogical tools.

By tracing the pathway from strategy (teaching speaking) → method (daily logs) → outcomes (practice, awareness, fluency), the framework guides the study's hypothesis and measurement, ensuring that the intervention is grounded in both

theory and classroom reality.

F. Research Scope

This research is limited in scope to ensure focus, clarity, and feasibility in data collection and analysis. The following are the specific delimitations of the study:

1. Skill Focus : This study specifically focuses on speaking fluency, not on other components of speaking such as accuracy, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, or interactional competence. Fluency in this research is defined as the ability to speak smoothly, continuously, and with minimal hesitation, as indicated by flow of speech and reduced pauses.

2. Strategy Used : The research examines the implementation of daily speaking logs as a strategy to improve speaking fluency. Other speaking strategies or methods, such as role-play, debates, or drama, are not included in this study. The speaking logs consist of both written reflection and oral recording.

3. Target Participants : The participants of this study are eighth-grade students of SMPN 2 Cileunyi during the academic year 2024/2025. The study does not include students from other grades or schools.

4. Research Design : This research uses a pre-experimental design with one group pre-test and post-test. There is no control group used for comparison. The primary goal is to measure the difference in speaking fluency before and after the implementation of daily speaking logs.

5. Time Frame : The duration of the treatment (use of daily speaking logs) is approximately four to six weeks, depending on school schedule availability and student participation.

By setting these boundaries, the research aims to maintain a clear focus on evaluating the specific impact of daily speaking logs on students' speaking fluency within a manageable and contextually relevant setting.

G. Hypothesis

In quantitative research, a hypothesis is a predictive statement that explains the expected relationship between variables and can be tested empirically. Ary, Jacobs, Irvine, and Walker (2019) define a hypothesis as a testable prediction regarding the relationship between two or more variables, which can be examined using statistical analysis. McMillan (2020) adds that a hypothesis is a tentative statement based on theoretical frameworks and previous findings, used to determine whether a specific relationship or effect exists. Similarly, Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtle (2020) emphasize that a hypothesis in quantitative research is formed prior to data collection and serves to predict the outcomes of relationships among variables. Thus, a hypothesis not only functions as a preliminary assumption but also guides the research process in terms of data collection, analysis, and interpretation of results.

Based on the problem formulation and research objectives in your thesis entitled "The Effect of Daily Speaking Logs to Enhance Students' Speaking Fluency in Eighth Grade", the hypotheses that can be formulated are as follows:

1. Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no significant effect of using daily speaking logs on the speaking fluency of eighth-grade students at SMPN 2 Cileunyi.

2. Alternative Hypothesis (H_1): There is a significant effect of using daily speaking logs on the speaking fluency of eighth-grade students at SMPN 2 Cileunyi.

This hypothesis is constructed to be tested statistically using a pre-experimental design with pre-test and post-test instruments. The hypothesis aims to verify whether the implementation of daily speaking logs can significantly improve students' speaking fluency, particularly in terms of speech flow, reduced pauses, and overall fluency performance. The result of the hypothesis testing will help determine the effectiveness of daily speaking logs as a pedagogical strategy in EFL speaking instruction.

H. Previous Studies

Several recent studies have investigated the relationship between structured speaking strategies particularly daily speaking logs—and students' speaking fluency. These studies provide valuable insights that support the rationale of this research.

Putri and Wijayanto (2021) conducted a quasi-experimental study at a senior high school in Central Java to examine the effect of using daily video logs on students' speaking fluency. Their findings showed a significant improvement in students' speech continuity, reduced hesitation, and increased confidence after regularly using video logs over a four-week period. This study emphasized the importance of consistent oral practice outside classroom time.

Ananda and Sari (2022) investigated the use of self-recorded speaking tasks in a university setting. They found that the use of structured self-recordings allowed learners to track their speaking development, which significantly reduced their tendency to pause and repeat words. The study concluded that speaking fluency could be effectively developed through repetitive self-monitoring.

Maulidia and Fadhilah (2020) examined the impact of speaking journals on students' fluency and self-confidence. This classroom action research showed that students became more fluent and expressive in their speech after being engaged in weekly speaking journals, which combined reflection with oral output.

Chen, Liu, and Huang (2021) conducted a study in Taiwan involving EFL learners who maintained daily speaking logs through a mobile app. The results indicated that students who engaged in daily spoken reflections over six weeks showed greater improvements in speech rate and fluency markers compared to those who practiced speaking only during class. The study also highlighted enhanced self-awareness and learner autonomy among the participants.

Hernández and Rankin (2020) conducted research in Mexico focusing on the use of speaking portfolios among secondary school students learning English. Their mixed-methods approach found that consistent speaking activities, including recorded daily reflections, significantly increased students' fluency and reduced speaking anxiety. The portfolio practice served not only as speaking rehearsal but

also a self-assessment tool.

These studies collectively demonstrate that structured, reflective speaking activities such as daily speaking logs are effective in developing students' speaking fluency. However, most of them were conducted at the senior high school or university level and often involved digital tools. In contrast, the current research aims to fill a gap by applying this strategy at the junior high school level using both written and oral logs, in a pre-experimental design to examine fluency improvement based on measurable indicators such as speech continuity and reduced pauses.