

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter gives a brief description of the entire research process. It includes the background of the study, research questions, research purposes, research significance, conceptual framework, and previous studies.

A. Background

This study aimed to investigate EFL students' ongoing motivation in speaking during a small group discussion activity in the classroom and determine the factors that affect their motivational dynamics in speaking.

The majority of foreign language learners are primarily interested in speaking and prefer to improve their speaking skills over other skills (Ur, 1996). Indeed, speaking is a vital element of learning a second or foreign language. However, the fact that speaking is still seen as the most challenging aspect for language learners to master cannot be ignored. According to Heriansyah (2012), Speaking in the target language is difficult for most foreign language learners. Since learning to speak a foreign language needs more than comprehending its grammatical and semantic principles. There are techniques or approaches that language learners may employ to overcome their concerns about speaking, that is through raising motivation in learning speaking.

Students' motivation has been a significant factor in their ability to become proficient at speaking. According to Mayer, "when students are motivated to learn, they try harder to comprehend the material and thus learn more deeply, resulting in a better ability to transfer what they have learned to a new situation" (Mayer, 2003: p.459). Based on ikhsanudin's (2020) pre-observation and interview in several subjects, students were experiencing speaking motivation issues. The issues are lack of motivation, lack of self-confidence, and fear of making mistakes. Furthermore, some students avoid speaking in English, while others may speak only a few words in a conversation. The facts above show that motivation to speak is essential and has been a key factor in the field of learning English.

This research focuses on understanding the process development of motivation. More recently, such interest takes into account a complexity-informed frame, as motivation is no longer seen as a static, isolated individual difference, but as a construct that evolves on different timescales and in response to internal and external influences to the learner (Dörnyei, MacIntyre, & Henry, 2015; Waninge, Dörnyei, & De Bot, 2014). Walker et al. (2019) stated that recently motivation had been considered as a dynamic system from a new theoretical perspective, Dynamic System Theory (DST). Moreover, the fundamental concept of DST is that a dynamic system fluctuates between states of change and stability over time, being pushed and pulled from one state to the next by both the internal and external context simultaneously.

Moreover, to hone EFL students' motivation in speaking, teachers usually use activities that require students to keep talking in English. One of activities is small group discussion, because students will have more opportunities to speak when collaborating in a group. Likewise, based on the preliminary observation and short interview with the English teachers at MTs Negeri 2 Garut on November 2021, group discussions are often used as a method of teaching speaking because this activity is believed to improve students' speaking skills. However, in practice, not all students want to speak English all the time in the discussion. At the beginning of the small group discussion activity, most students are eager to discuss in the group and try to speak English as best as possible. Even so, the desire to speak did not last all the time. The next time, their motivation to speak seems to decrease by being reluctant to talk and sometimes hesitant to say something and choosing to be silent. Moreover, the writer occasionally observed and tried this small group discussion activity while doing teaching practicum program at this school and found that this activity could be explored more. One of them is by finding out how their ongoing motivational dynamics in speaking time by time.

In the discussion, students with no desire to speak at a particular time are often found. EFL teachers frequently faced awkward silence in the language classroom. One reason could be the dynamic of motivation that can be up and down, considering motivation as a variable in EFL development that is no longer seen as

a stable factor (Waninge et al., 2014). Recognizing students' English-speaking ongoing motivation from time to time and creating a conducive atmosphere in the classroom also will keep students' motivation to speak English during a small group discussion. According to Menggo (2018), English speaking motivation might encourage the students to do more practice in English, which will support them in acquiring good ability for their speaking proficiency.

The dynamic of motivation over time, speaking motivation, and small group discussion has been reported in several studies. First, Yan Guo, Jinfen Xu, and Xuefen Xu (2020) investigate EFL learners' motivational dynamics during a group communicative task activity. Second, Alutomi (2021) examines the Yemeni EFL college junior and senior students' level of self-regulated motivation for improving speaking EFL and it varies in their academic level and gender. Third, Fauzi (2017) investigates how small group discussion can be implemented to improve vocational high school students' speaking skills.

Furthermore, this research is different from the previous research. The previous research focused on improving students' speaking skill through various motivational activities and students' motivational dynamics in such learning activities. Therefore, this research centers on finding out students' motivational dynamics in speaking during a small group discussion activity in MTs Negeri 2 Garut and what factors affect their motivational dynamics in speaking. Clearly, in this school, students' motivation to speak English is not always at a high level when doing the discussion in a small group. Therefore, it is essential to know how the dynamics pattern of students' motivation in speaking and what caused the dynamics. The present research will investigate the EFL students' motivational dynamics pattern in speaking during a small group discussion and what factors affect students' motivational dynamic in speaking during small group discussion.

B. Research Questions

Based on the explanation above, the problems of the research formulate into the following questions:

1. What are the patterns of motivational dynamics in speaking that can be found among EFL students during a small group discussions?

2. What are the factors affect EFL students' motivational dynamics in speaking during a small group discussions?

C. Research Purposes

This study aimed to:

1. Find out the patterns of motivational dynamics in speaking among EFL students during a small group discussions
2. Find out the factors that affect EFL students' motivational dynamic in speaking during a small group discussions

D. Research Significance

The result of this study are expected to be beneficial both theoretical and practical, elaborated in the following section:

1. Theoretical

Theoretically, the results of this study are expected to give information and support theories dealing with students' English-speaking motivational dynamics during a small group discussion and the factors that affect English-speaking motivational dynamics.

2. Practical

Practically, this study is expected to be beneficial for:

- a. Teacher

The result of this study can guide the English teacher to encourage students' English-speaking motivation in practicing small group discussion techniques and in the learning process through the factors affecting students' English-speaking motivational dynamic.

- b. Students

The result of this study can help students improve their English-speaking motivation, especially during a small group discussion. Moreover, students can analyze the factor that affects their speaking motivation.

- c. The Researcher

This research is expected to help the researcher conduct further research and be an additional reference.

E. Reseach Scope

This study is concerned with analyzing the EFL students' patterns of motivational dynamics in speaking during small group discussion. Furthermore, this study is intended to explore the EFL students' factors that affect the motivational dynamics in speaking. Therefore, it leads to the discussion of the subject, object, and location as the research scope of the study. First, this study's subject is the 9th grade junior high school students. Second, the object of this study is the patterns and factors of motivational dynamics in speaking. Third, this study is conducted at MTsN 2 Garut, Indonesian context.

F. Conceptual Framework

Speaking is regarded as the basic and efficient form of human communication. It is a process of exchanging ideas, viewpoints, opinions, and other information (Rajitha & Alamelu, 2020). Speaking is the most important skill because it is one of the abilities required to participate in a conversation. English speaking is not an easy task because speakers must understand many significant components such as pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Furthermore, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students are expected to be able to express their idea in the classroom and in their daily activities using English. Moreover, according to Abdullah, Hussin and Ismail (2019), motivation has an essential role in stimulating their mastery of speaking English.

Motivation is a factor that can lead students to express their ideas (Abdullah, Hussin & Ismail, 2019). Dornyei (1998) argues the importance of motivation by stating that motivation provides learners with primary stimuli and later becomes the driving force to persevere in the tedious learning process. If learners are sufficiently motivated, they may be able to complete long-term goals. Without sufficient motivation, students may not be able to attend to the teacher's instruction during the lesson, expend effort to finish assignments, regularly check their level of

understanding, or ask for help when needed. Besides, not to sustain energy for the long and frequently tricky language learning process (Liu & Cheng, 2014).

During the educational shift in the 1990s, motivation became a built situation, and it has a prominent temporal dimension that displays ongoing change (Dornyei, 1998). According to Dornyei (2011), the three elements –teacher motivation, student motivation, and context- are viewed as dynamic systems in constant interplay within the English classroom system. In addition, the process-oriented view of motivation is consistent with the principles of dynamic system theory (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008). Introduction of the various processes was used to recognize a dynamic conception of motivation. Yan Guo (2020) stated that students' motivational progression patterns could be classified into four patterns: rollercoaster, flat pattern, generally active, and mostly negative. Dramatic fluctuations with multiple changes characterized the first pattern. The second pattern displayed relatively stable motivation with little variability, the following pattern showed moderate fluctuations, and the last pattern showed ever-decreasing motivation as the discussion went on.

Motivation fluctuates over time, and this fluctuations is called motivational dynamic. Similarly, in speaking, a student may have high and strong motivation at one time but low motivation at another. Students' motivational dynamics in speaking are ongoing changes (increasing and decreasing) motivation on students to actively engage in their speaking (Dornyei, 1998; Agnes & Marlina, 2021). According to Pawlak (2012), learners' motives, efforts, and engagement are constantly changing in response to a various internal and external influences. As a result, in the case of speaking, students' motivation is not always high. However, sometimes students also experience a decrease in motivation or demotivation that reduce motivational intensity, considering motivational changes over time. It caused students lose their interest in speaking (Zhang, Dai & Ardasheva, 2020). Students who are highly motivated will speak as well as they possibly can. Students' fluctuation of their motivation in speaking are affected by some factors. Dornyei (1994) discovered five factors rendered motivation in speaking a foreign language. Those factors were integrative motivational subsystem, self-confidence,

course-specific motivational components, teacher-specific motivational components, and group-specific motivational components.

To practice English-Speaking, teachers frequently use the small group discussion method because students are required to talk with each other in this method. Small group discussion is the discussion that takes place when students work together (Rizal & Indra, 2019). Furthermore, during interaction in small group discussions, students encounter motivational dynamics. Mischel and Sholda (1995) investigated the dynamics of motivation by looking at behaviors or person-situation interactions. Liu (2001) elaborated on student behaviors and interactions during classroom discussions. Students participate actively in class discussions at this time, knowing what they want to say and what they should not say. Sometimes students' participation and interaction with other students and instructors decreases, and they speak only when necessary. In contrast, students act more as listeners and less as speakers in the classroom, preferring to listen and take notes rather than participate in classroom discussions. The shift in group discussion interactions caused by students' changing motivational dynamics in speaking.

G. Previous Study

Some previous studies are related to this present study. The first previous study was written by Guo et al. in 2020. The research is about *Investigating EFL learners' motivational dynamics during a group communicative task*. This study aimed to investigate a group of Chinese EFL learners' task motivation progressed during a group communicative task in a classroom context and the variables that affected the students' ongoing motivational dynamics during a task. This research uses mixed methods and interviews to gather a broad range of data. The participants of this research were an entire class of 39 college students. The result revealed the fluctuations in motivation on a minute-by-minute basis during task performance and variations in motivational change patterns across learners, suggesting that task motivation is dynamic even in the short term.

The second was written by Waninge et al. in 2014 in *The Modern Language Journal*. The study is about *Motivational dynamics in language learning: Change, stability and context*. This research focuses on increasing the dynamic and

changeable nature of the motivational process. This research uses a novel instrument, the Motometer (an instrument that can track motivational changes over time), combined with classroom observation and a questionnaire on motivation and attitude. The participants of this research were four students (two males and two females) selected from a class of 28 students in their first year of the highest level of Dutch secondary education. The result demonstrates how motivation changes over time on an individual level while also characterized by predictable and stable phases. It is also inseparable from the learners' particular learning context.

The third was written by Alotumi, A. (2021) from *Heliyon*. The research is about *EFL college junior and senior students' self-regulated motivation for improving English speaking: a survey study*. This study examines the EFL college junior and senior students' level of self-regulated motivation for improving speaking EFL and varies in their academic level and gender. This research is a quantitative, descriptive non-experimental survey study using an online self-reported questionnaire to gather data. The participants were 300 EFL college junior and senior students from an English Department of a Yemeni University. The result showed that students used a range of motivation on self-regulation strategies to improve their EFL speaking competence.

The fourth was written by Imam Fauzi in 2017 from the *Journal of ELT Research*. The research is about *Improving Students' Speaking Ability through Small-Group Discussion*. The study investigates how small group discussion can be implemented to improve vocational high school students' speaking ability and identify the role of small group discussion in improving students' speaking skills. This research was conducted by using action research with 35 students in the second grade participating in this research. This research showed that small group discussion could effectively improve students' speaking skills, engage them in the group work discussion actively, encourage them to be independent learners, feel more relaxed at learning, and give them more opportunities to improve their speaking skills.

The last was written by Walker, T. et al. (2019) from *HRD JOURNAL*. The research is about *In-Class Motivation of Individual Language Learners in*

Thailand: An Exploration to Change, Stability, and Context in a Dynamic System.

The research aims to investigate the in-class motivation of language learners' as a dynamic system in terms of change, stability, and context—the research used a mixed-method to conduct the study. Motometer (an instrument that can track motivational changes over time), classroom observation, and questionnaire were used to collect the data. The participants were 197 university students who studied French as an L2 in Thailand. The result indicated that in-class motivation is a dynamic system and motivational development was individualistic.

From the explanation above, it can be said that the previous study is different from this present study. This present study aims to find out the patterns of English-speaking motivational dynamics found among the participants during small group discussions and the factors that affect students' English-speaking motivational dynamics during small group discussions.

