

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter provides introduction that discuss about research background, research question, research purpose, research significance, limitation of the research and terminology.

A. Research Background

Language is a fundamental means of communication that plays a vital role in human interaction. Without language, people would not be able to express their ideas, opinions, thoughts, and feelings effectively. Language enables individuals to communicate with one another, both explicitly through spoken and written forms and implicitly through social interaction and cultural practices. As a primary medium of communication, language allows people to convey messages, share information, and build relationships within society.

Through language, individuals are also able to adapt to the customs, behaviors, and manners of a particular community, which facilitates social integration and mutual understanding among its members. In daily life, language functions not only as a tool for communication but also as a medium for learning, cultural exchange, and social development. It helps individuals understand their environment and participate actively in social life. Among the many languages used worldwide, English has become one of the most widely used languages.

English is recognized as an international language that is used by people across different countries for various purposes, such as education, business, tourism, and technology. For many people, English is not only a foreign

language but also a means of daily communication, especially in international and professional contexts. Therefore, English plays a significant role in connecting people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

In the modern era, it cannot be denied that English is increasingly important to learn and master. As an international language, English enables individuals to adapt to the demands of globalization in various fields, including education, employment, and the advancement of science and technology. In the educational context, English has a crucial role, particularly for students who are expected to compete in a globalized world. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language at various levels of education, starting from elementary school, junior high school, senior high school, and continuing into higher education.

This indicates the importance of English as a basic skill that students need to develop from an early stage. English is especially important for students in vocational high schools, particularly those majoring in hospitality. In the hospitality industry, effective communication skills in English are essential because hotel services often involve interaction with international guests. Most guest service activities, such as greeting guests, handling reservations, providing information, and responding to guests' needs or complaints, are conducted in English, either face to face or through telephone communication.

As a result, hospitality students are required to master English speaking skills to support their professional competence. One of the key speaking competencies that hospitality students must acquire is the ability to communicate effectively in the context of taking reservations. This skill requires students to

convey information clearly, politely, and professionally, while also using appropriate vocabulary and expressions commonly used in hotel services.

English is categorized as a productive subject that aims to equip students with contextual language skills relevant to workplace needs especially at SMK Kartini Sintang. In Class XI Hospitality, one of the main topics taught is Taking Reservation, which is a fundamental aspect of guest service in the hospitality industry. Through this learning activity, students are expected to be able to simulate conversations between hotel staff and guests, either in direct interactions or through telephone reservations.

However, based on preliminary observations conducted by the researcher and interviews with the English teacher of Class XI Hospitality at SMK Kartini Sintang, several problems were identified in students' speaking performance. Many students experienced difficulties when conducting English conversations, particularly in simulating the process of taking reservations. Common problems included incorrect pronunciation, limited vocabulary, inappropriate sentence structure or grammatical errors, and low self confidence when speaking in front of others. In some cases, students relied heavily on memorizing dialogues without fully understanding their meaning.

As a result, when they were required to improvise or respond spontaneously, they became confused and were unable to continue the conversation effectively. These issues indicate a gap between the expected speaking competencies and the students' actual abilities. This gap is a serious

concern because mastery of speaking skills in the context of taking reservations is essential for students' future careers in the hospitality industry.

Professional communication is a key requirement in hospitality services, and students who lack confidence and competence in speaking English may face difficulties in the workplace. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research that analyzes students' speaking performance in greater depth, particularly focusing on important aspects such as fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary usage, grammatical, the ability to understand also use polite and contextually appropriate language in communication. This research is important because it provides a clear and concrete description of students' speaking performance in the context of taking reservations and identifies the main difficulties they face.

By understanding these challenges, teachers can design more effective teaching strategies that are tailored to students' needs and learning conditions. Furthermore, the findings of this research are expected to contribute to the development of appropriate teaching materials, learning media, and assessment methods to improve students' speaking skills in vocational schools. Ultimately, through this research, it is hoped that practical solutions can be implemented in the English learning process for Class XI Hospitality at SMK Kartini Sintang, enabling students to enhance their speaking abilities and be better prepared to face the demands of the real working world.

B. Research Questions

Based on the background above, the research question from this research is about as follows:

1. How is the students' speaking performance especially in taking reservation at Class XI Hospitality of SMK Kartini Sintang?
2. What are the students' difficulties in learning speaking at class XI Hospitality of SMK Kartini Sintang?

C. Research Purposes

Focusing on the statement of research question above, the purpose of the research below:

1. To describe the result of students' speaking performance especially in taking reservation at class XI Hospitality of SMK Kartini Sintang.
2. To find out what are the difficulties that face by student in speaking performance especially in taking reservation at class XI Hospitality of SMK Kartini Sintang.

D. Research Significance

After completing all the research activities, this research is expected to give the significance as follow:

1. Theoretical Benefits

The result of this research is expected to add the reference of professional development for teachers, which can be accessed by some educational practices. It can be contribution in developing the education quality especially for English.

2. Practical Benefits

a. For Teacher

This study provides a clear picture of students' speaking skills in the context of taking reservations, so that teachers can design learning strategies that are more effective and in accordance with the needs of students, especially in vocational practice based speaking teaching.

b. For students

The results of this study can help students in Class XI majoring in hospitality at SMK Kartini Sintang to determine the extent of their speaking skills in making reservation conversations. That way, they can correct weaknesses and improve self confidence and speaking skills in the context of the real world of work, especially in the field of hospitality.

c. For Researcher or Writer

This research allows the researcher to gain direct experience in analyzing students' English speaking performance in a vocational context. It helps develop skills in applying qualitative methods, interpreting data, and understanding students' speaking difficulties. The experience also enhances the researcher's competence in academic writing and educational research, which is valuable for future professional development.

d. For Readers or STKIP Persada Khatulistiwa Sintang

This research expected to give a contribution to readers, particularly the student of English Department of STKIP Persada Khatulistiwa Sintang, in enriching reference and also this research can add to the library of STKIP Persada Khatulistiwa to give a contribution about thought and suggestion in the field of research as well as donation for other student who will conduct the same research.

E. Limitation of the Research

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research focuses specifically on students' speaking performance in Taking Reservation at Class XI Hospitality of SMK Kartini Sintang. Therefore, the findings of this study are limited to this particular context and may not fully represent students' speaking abilities in other English topics or vocational majors. Second, the participants involved in this research were limited to one class, namely Class XI Hospitality, with a relatively small number of students.

As a result, the findings cannot be generalized to all vocational high school students or to other hospitality programs with different learning environments and student characteristics. Third, this study primarily examined students' speaking performance based on documentation in the form of speaking performance videos and interview data. Other factors that may influence students' speaking ability, such as students' learning

motivation, teaching methods, learning styles, and classroom interaction patterns, were not explored in depth.

Finally, the research was conducted within a limited period of time. Due to time constraints, the researcher was unable to observe students' speaking development over a longer duration. Consequently, this study provides a snapshot of students' speaking performance at a particular time rather than a longitudinal analysis of their speaking progress. Despite these limitations, this research is expected to provide meaningful insights into students' speaking performance in Taking Reservation and serve as a reference for future studies related to English speaking skills in vocational education.

F. Terminology

To avoid the misunderstanding the researcher provides the definition that used in research as follows:

a. Speaking

Speaking is the process of conveying thoughts, ideas, or feelings verbally using language. It involves the ability to produce meaningful sounds and sentences in a fluent, accurate, and appropriate manner in order to communicate effectively with others. Speaking is considered one of the key skills in language learning, as it reflects a person's ability to use the language in real-time interactions.

b. Reservation

Reservation is an arrangement made in advance to secure a service, place, or product for a specific time. In the hospitality industry, a reservation refers to the process of booking accommodations, such as a hotel room, restaurant table, or travel service, to ensure availability upon arrival. It typically involves providing personal details, selecting a date and time, and sometimes making a payment or deposit.

c. SMK Kartini Sintang

SMK Kartini Sintang is one of the vocational senior high schools in West Kalimantan, specifically located in Sintang Regency. The school provides vocational education programs that emphasize the development of practical skills and professional competencies to prepare students for employment or further education. SMK Kartini Sintang offers three main study programs, namely Fashion Design, Culinary Arts, and Hospitality. Each program is designed to focus on hands on learning and skill based training in accordance with industry demands. Through these vocational programs, the school aims to equip students with relevant knowledge, practical experience, and work readiness to support their future careers or higher education pathways.