

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter consists of six sections: the background of the study, the research question, the purpose of the study, the delimitation of the study, the significance of the study, and the last definition of the key terms.

A. Background of the study

In English education, four essential skills, namely: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, are crucial for students to master for academic and professional development. These skills form the foundation for effective communication and are interdependent, enhancing overall language proficiency when developed together. Integrating these skills in a balanced manner promotes better language acquisition and performance (Priyana, 2019). Developing these skills is essential for their academic success, enabling them to comprehend complex tasks, articulate ideas clearly, and engage in scholarly discourse. Therefore, proficiency in each skill is vital, as it equips students with the ability to navigate and succeed in global workplaces where English is often the medium of communication.

Speaking is reckoning as one of the most difficult skills in the context of communication, especially for students. Many students still experience difficulties in mastering English speaking skills (Kulsum et al., 2025). Based on the pre-survey conducted at SMK Negeri 2 Jiwan, students try to follow speaking lessons but have difficulty understanding and capturing the material. Students attend English classes but are often under-trained to use English

spontaneously and creatively in everyday situations. In short, speaking skill difficulty is still a serious problem many students face in English classes.

One of the persistent challenges in learning speaking skills in English classes is students' low mastery of speaking skills, which is usually caused by various internal and external factors. Many students still experience difficulty speaking English because of a lack of vocabulary, fear of poor pronunciation, and fear of incorrect grammar. This causes students to be reluctant to practice speaking or participate in speaking English. Instead, they tend to continue speaking in L1 even in English classes (Kasap & Emamvirdi, 2022). Another factor is that students lack exposure to speaking practice in an authentic English environment. This causes the English lesson to seem just as an obligation, so students view language as a collection of rules to be memorized rather than a tool for interaction and communication (Amalia & Gumiandari, 2023). As a result, the low mastery of speaking skills makes students tend to struggle in English and rely on memorization rather than communicating spontaneously and naturally.

Teachers also contribute to students' difficulties in English speaking skills, especially in classroom learning practices that are less supportive of developing speaking skills. Classroom learning activities generally focus only on grammar and reading comprehension, leading to students lacking opportunities to actively speak English. Students often understand the theory without enough exercises that connect it to real-life situations (Ali, 2019). In conclusion, the

lack of a supportive learning environment from teachers in the classroom hinders students' overall improvement in speaking skills.

The use of interactive methods and appropriate speaking learning media is essential to creating a learning environment that supports students' mastery of speaking skills. The use of real-situation-based learning methods and technology-based media can improve their speaking skills. Students will find it easier to learn English, especially speaking, if the methods and media used are appropriate and interesting (Milania et al., 2022). To sum up, it is essential to apply innovative and interactive learning methods and media to create a learning environment that supports active and sustainable student speaking practices.

A method that can be used to teach speaking is the Guided Conversation Method. The Guided Conversation Method involves structured conversations where students practice speaking through interactions guided by instructors or learning aids (Romadhon & Qurohman, 2019). In this method, students are given a specific scenario or topic and given the opportunity to discuss in a conversation to improve their speaking skills, with the teacher acting as a guide. This method can help students to master speaking skills and increase student intention to be more active in learning. In short, this method helps students to systematically develop their speaking skills by structured conversation and teacher guidance to build the confidence for using the target language.

The use of technology-based media such as AI Talk is very much in line with today's digital era. The AI Talk app uses AI technology to provide real-

time feedback and a personalized learning experience (Wu et al., 2024). It provides fast and accurate response to input data of pronunciation, letters, and sounds. The use of AI Talk in speaking class can improve students' speaking skills and they are more actively involved in the learning activities. To sum up, the utilization of AI Talk media can help students learning success in the classroom.

This research adapts a previous research that used the same method. The similar research by (Romadhon & Qurohman, 2019), utilized the Guided Conversation Method as a teaching approach. The similarity between the previous study and this study lies in the Guided Conversation method used to improve speaking skills. The difference lies in the population and research design used; in the previous study, the researchers used mechanical engineering students and a classroom action research design, while in this study, the researcher used accounting students and an experimental design. In the previous study, the researchers also suggested that future researchers try different learning media. Departing from this suggestion, in this study, the researcher added a variable, namely AI Talk media. Based on this explanation, the researcher is motivated to conduct a research by teaching speaking to tenth grade students of SMK Negeri 2 Jiwan in the second semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. This study is entitled “The Effect of Guided Conversation Method Integrated with AI Talk on Students Speaking Skills of SMK Negeri 2 Jiwan”.

B. Research Question

From the explanation above, the researcher formulates the research problem in this study as “Do the students who are taught by using Guided Conversation Method Integrated with AI Talk have better speaking skills than the students who are taught by using conventional method?”.

C. The purpose of the study

This study is intended to determine whether the students who were taught by using Guided Conversation Method integrated with AI Talk have better speaking performance than the students who were taught by using conventional method.

D. Delimitation of the study

The researcher has limited this research to be more focused. This research focuses on the effect of the Guided Conversation Method Integrated with AI Talk on the learning of speaking skills of tenth-grade accounting 3 and 4 students of SMK Negeri 2 Jiwan.

E. Significance of the study

This research is expected to provide practical benefits. Practically, the research will become new information for the teacher, students, readers, and researchers as follows:

1. Provide references for teachers and educational practitioners who are implementing the Guided Conversation Method and AI Talk to improve

speaking skills learning. Teachers can adopt this method to increase student engagement and speaking fluency.

2. Helping vocational students overcome English speaking difficulties more effectively and efficiently.
3. The results of this study can be used as information and also a reference for readers regarding the effect of using a combination of the Guided Conversation Method and AI Talk technology in learning the speaking skills of Vocational High School students.
4. This research can be used as information for the next researcher about the effect of using the Guided Conversation Method and AI Talk technology in learning the speaking skills of Vocational High School students.

F. Definition of the key term

To avoid misunderstanding, some terms in this study are defined as follows:

1. Speaking Skills: The ability to use English effectively and fluently in oral communication.
2. Guided Conversation Method: A teaching approach that involves structured conversations where students practice speaking through guided interactions.
3. AI Talk: Artificial Intelligence technology that designed to assist in speaking learning by providing real-time feedback, evaluating speaking ability, and facilitating conversation simulation.