

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Speaking is a crucial skill, as are listening, reading, and writing. Speaking is an essential ability for humans, especially in social situations. Because most of the day human socialize with speaking skill in using language. This notion is supported by the fact that prior to the discovery of writing, humans communicated mostly through speech. From this witness, speaking has a really important role for human especially for communicating in the daily life. This cause human must mastering speaking skill as the general ability to support good communication between human. Thornbury (2005) said that speaking are a part of daily life, that make lot of people underestimate about it. Its mean that speaking is an essential of activity that people do in their daily life. Mastering speaking skill allows someone to communicate effectively with others.

Hereinafter, speaking really help a person to express a lot of things in a real life. Harmer (2001) By mastering speaking skills, individuals can effectively communicate ideas, opinions, and information with a greater clarity and confession. People can ask and answer question from the other to exchanges information. This make the people unwittingly learn or practice a language.by mastering speaking skill people are easier to switching information in the communication. Based on Bagus (2022) The art of speaking allows individuals to express their inner thoughts and emotions through verbal communication. This makes speaking skill essential to give or get information from the other people. Mastering mother tongue sometimes unconsciously for some people, but it also needs a few times to master

it. This also influenced by the environment where the people live.

According to Richards (2008) use a speaking style that is suitable for a given situation is a crucial aspect of discussion. Exceedingly, speaking skill explains the spoken language for the social and situation interaction. By using speaking, people are easily to communicate, share ideas, knowledge and also experience through a conversation. According to the explanation above, speech plays an extremely important role in helping many people acquire a language in their daily lives. On this matter, someone can give information directly and the other people get the information that being discussed. Also, when students learn about English language, the students requested to express ideas, desires and also feeling to the others using English as the second language. Students are expected to learn and practice the speaking skill continuously with the friends and the teacher as the interlocutors and facilitators.

Aside from that, Harmer (2001) suggest that the teacher should use a variety of teaching technique or strategy based on the learning style and preferences. The right technique can influence learning outcomes and improve students' learning abilities, especially in speaking English. Therefore, teachers must choose the right teaching techniques to teach speaking skill. Teaching and learning activities can make more enjoyable, fascinating, and engaging for students by employing the appropriate strategies. Effective techniques also help students understand the material more easily and participate actively in the learning process. In this way, teachers can create a conducive and dynamic learning atmosphere. This ultimately improve overall student learning outcomes. Therefore, choosing the right technique is very important to achieve the desired learning objectives.

Students at SMPN 2 Ubud face significant challenges in developing speaking skills which are crucial for both academic performance and everyday social interactions. Students are struggle with fluency, often hesitating or pausing excessively during the speech. Mispronunciation also makes their speaking not being an effective communication, for examples lot of the students pronounce there as a three and other wise. Also, grammatical mistakes that could impact the clarity and comprehension of their speaking, one of the sample is “My friends is coming over for dinner” Friends is plural, so the verb should be (are). Additionally, traditional teaching methods often lack of engagement and fun activities, which can hinder students’ motivation and confidence. Based on Joni & Wirastuti (2018) students' English speaking ability is significantly affected by their level of self-efficacy. To address this challenge, the researcher decided to implement ESA as teaching technique, which Is believed to enhance students’ speaking skills. Moreover, the lack of speaking skills impacts the students, confidence in using English.

According to Harmer (2007), the ESA (Engage, Study, Activate) technique could be a very effective tool in teaching speaking skill. Adopting the ESA technique, the researcher at SMPN 2 Ubud can create more engaging and supportive learning environment. By starting lessons from the Engage phase, teachers can attract students' attention and motivate them to learn. The Study phase then gives students the opportunity to study and understand the language structure and vocabulary required. Finally, the Activate phase allows students to apply what they have learned in a practical and communicative context. Using this strategy, teachers can create a flexible and interactive learning environment for students in

SMPN 2 Ubud that not only enhances students' speaking skill but also makes learning more fascinating and pleasurable.

By applying ESA to teach speaking skill it can make the teaching activities easier. ESA is a teaching technique that uses three main elements which engage, study, and activate. Harmer (2007) asserts that the three basic aspects constitute the foundation for success in teaching and learning a language. This three steps method assists teacher in instructing students by boosting the students interest and encouraging students to participate more actively in teaching and learning activities. Using the ESA technique to teach languages, particularly English. The researcher proposes this strategy to help students overcome difficulties in learning a new language, such as English, particularly while acquiring or improving the students' speaking skills.

ESA as a teaching technique has an easy steps to manage and affordable to applied. To make the students more interested and more motivated is the main purpose of this technique in teaching English language especially speaking skill. Students also expected to not become boring during the learning exercises. Implicate the students in the learning process can increase the interest and also the confidence of the students in the learning process. Cameron (2001) said that providing chance to students to practice speaking in meaningful contexts is crucial. By using ESA as a tool in learning activities, students can develop curiosity, interest, and emotions about the content think by the teacher. ESA can make the learning process not monotonous and the students also feels happier.

Based on the challenges encountered by the students at SMPN 2 Ubud, the researcher is very interested in using ESA as a teaching technique. The researcher

applies this technique especially to engage the attention of the students to the topic or the material, and also make the students perform the results in the spoken form. Accessory, the students might be improving the speaking skill and get better in speaking with this well implemented technique. Harmer (2007) states that these components are the fundamental building blocks of effective language teaching and learning. This makes the researcher interested to make a research entitled “Improving Speaking Skill of The Seventh-Grade Students Of SMP N 2 Ubud Through ESA In The Academic Year 2024/2025”

This study builds upon the finding of the previous study conducted by Yohanes Susanto Darman and Putu Sukma Asih. These two studies are similar with this current study, they applied the same technique to improve students speaking skills which is ESA as teaching technique. However, these studies utilized the *Kurikulum* 13. Studies from Yohanes Susanto Darman done on the different grade level of the students (SMK). Putu Sukma Asih study incorporated video as a supplementary tool, enhancing engagement but limiting its applicability to schools with adequate resources. While this current study don't need digital tool so it can be applied easier. In contrast, the current study employs the newer *Kurikulum* Merdeka and targets the SMP grade level. By adopting a more practical approach that does not necessitate additional tools, this study aims to be more widely applicable across various school settings.

1.2 Research Problem

According the background of the study, students in SMPN 2 Ubud still having problems in developing their speaking skill, especially in describing something. The students mostly less enthusiast in speaking, even when the teaching

and learning process not encouraging them to speak and their speaking skill not increased. Choose an appropriate teaching technique can increase the students speaking skills. ESA is a good technique that was used by the researcher to help the students in SMPN 2 Ubud to be good at speaking. Based on the background of the study, the research question can be framed as follows: Can the speaking skill of seventh-grade students of SMPN 2 Ubud in academic year 2024/2025 be improved through ESA ?

1.3 Objective of the Study

Every scientific research needs an objective to be an roadmap to get the data that needed. The purpose of scientific research is to find a solution for the specified problems that found in the research problems. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to provide a response to the previously stated research problems. the current research objective is undoubtedly addressed to find a solution to the research problems that has been developed, based on the research problems above. The objective of this study is to determine whether or not speaking skill of the seventh-grade students of SMP N 2 Ubud in academic year 2024/2025 can be improved through ESA.

1.4 Limitation of the Study

To effectively address the complexity of speaking skill, this study focuses on improving speaking skills through the ESA technique among seventh-grade students in the 2024/2025 academic year. By concentrating on a specific grade level and employing a structured teaching approach, the research aims to provide a detailed analysis of the ESA technique's impact on students' oral proficiency. To align with the Kurikulum Merdeka, the study was anchored on relevant learning

objectives, ensuring that the intervention is directly connected to the curriculum's goals.

Based on the (learning outcome 9.8) that taken from the seventh-grade ATP states that producing a wide variety of simple written and spoken texts presented in multimodal form on a global scale. This research is delimited to enhancing speaking skill through the ESA technique for seventh-grade students at SMP N 2 Ubud during the 2024/2025 academic year. By focusing on descriptive monologue about place, animal, person and things as the primary learning material, the study aims to develop students' ability to convey information clearly and effectively about that topic. To align with the Kurikulum Merdeka, the researcher anchored in the fourth main competency, which encompasses daily conversation, oral presentations, and active class participation. By concentrating on these specific aspects of speaking, the study seeks to provide actionable insights into improving students' oral communication skills.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Improving Speaking skill Trough Engage, Study, Activate For Seventh-Grade Students In The Academic Year 2024/2025 is the main focus of this research. The employment of ESA as a teaching strategy can improve students' speaking skill, leading to increase activity and correct use of simple present tense in everyday situations. A positive response from the students is expected, and the outcome can be useful for the teacher to improve the speaking skill, as well as a preparation for the researcher when the researcher becomes a teacher, the teacher can apply a better learning technique for students, particularly in teaching speaking, especially in English. This research is designed to yield impactful results that significantly

advance our understanding in this field. The findings are intended to be valuable on both a theoretical and practical level, contributing to both the foundation of knowledge and the development of real world applications.

Theoretically, the things that find in this study which talk about the use of ESA hoped to be helpful and have contribution and can support to developing the theory of speaking skill. It also envisaged that this research serves as a reference or guide for the future studies involving classroom action research, speaking skill, and ESA approach. Furthermore, the study's findings are intended to be valuable in determining the most appropriate strategy or method for teaching English, particularly speaking skill. It is intended that the outcomes of this study can serve as confirmation that ESA can be one of the most successful techniques in Improving Speaking Skill of The Seventh-Grade Students Of SMP N 2 Ubud Through ESA In The Academic Year 2024/2025.

Actually, the findings of this study are expected to offer practical guidance to teacher, students, and other researchers. The teacher can use the ESA technique to teach the students speaking skill more effective, it can enhance students learning outcomes. Furthermore, this technique can make English learning more engaging for the seventh-grade students, boosting their interest and proficiency in speaking, and it can help the students to overcome their obstacle in speak in English. Additionally, the study's results can utilize as a valuable reference for future research and educational practices.

1.6 Definition of Key Term

This study aims to enhance seventh-grade students' speaking skills at SMP N 2 Ubud through the implementation of the ESA technique during the 2024/2025

academic year. To provide a clear understanding of the research, operational definitions for both "speaking skill " and "ESA technique" are presented. These definitions clarify the key concepts and prevent potential misunderstandings among readers. By establishing these foundational terms, the study lays the groundwork for a comprehensive exploration of the relationship between the ESA technique and students' speaking proficiency. So, there are multiple operational definitions of the important concepts, which are explained as follows:

1.6.1 Speaking Skill

Speaking skill in this study is defined as the skill of seventh-grade students at SMP N 2 Ubud in academic year 2024/2025 in performing a descriptive monologue of a place and animal in spoken form in front of the class. The text and the speech should include a standard format for descriptive monologue, which Identification, Description and conclusion. Finally, the students was did the task based on the scoring rubric format such as fluency, comprehension and grammar.

1.6.2 ESA Technique

The ESA technique is a three-phase approach to language teaching: Engage Study, Activate. In Engage phase, teachers choose some activities to get the students interest and prepare them for the lesson. The Study focused on studying the language used and the language features like Grammar, Fluency, Comprehension that the students need to learn. Finally, in the Activate, students applied their knowledge through descriptive monologue, ensuring active learning and meaningful practice.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

Theoretical review refers to theories that are relevant to this inquiry. For the researcher, it is critical to consider the research of these theories because they may serve as the foundation for future scientific research. It is hoped that the related theoretical review can have contribution in practical significance, that based on some empirical evidence and also relevant theoretical constructs. Ancillary, the reader of this research hoped can be easier to understand the construction and evidence of the result of the study. The theoretical review also enables the researcher to use this work as a guide. This chapter examines three linked theoretical reviews: speaking, skill, ESA, and assessment of speaking skill.

2.1.1 Speaking Skill

Speaking is one of the most critical skills in promoting better communication. Thornbury (2005) said that speaking is an unconscious part of everyone's daily routine, but it's extremely vital for students. At school, speaking is a key tool for sharing ideas and fostering discussions. According to Luoma (2004) to speak in foreign language the students have to master the sound system of the language and also have almost instant access to appropriate and being able to put word together intelligibly with minimal hesitation. People use spoken language when the people want to speaks about expressing the idea, felling and thoughts and also sharing information by communication. It is also can be used as a instructions or getting something done like describe people or things, ask and answer with the

interlocutors, and also to ask and give service to the others. It means that speaking is when there is interactive giving and receiving information from the others.

Based on Richards (2008) Speaking requires not only how to produce specific points of language such as; grammar, vocabulary, sound, pronunciation, intonation, stress but also includes nonverbal context communication such as; eye contact, gesture, and facial expressions. Doing communicative speaking is better when someone wants to learn about speaking. Therefore, it's being hard to people that want to learn speaking without an oral practice. Use communicative orally is when someone speaks directly to other. The unity of a language can be formed there are a close relation between language and speaking and it also has purpose or meaning to be expressed to the other people through speaking a language. Communication is a part of speaking and it also becomes a process in a speaking language. Further human can interact with other by communication to express thoughts, ideas, exchange information, and feelings as a new perception that gained by speaking a language. The existence of interaction in social life makes the speaking skill is crucial skill to master.

Speaking is one of the most important skills that students must develop, particularly while learning a new language, such as English. According to Isaacs (2016), speaking is the process of using one's voice to express something meaningful. Furthermore, speaking is the process of creating and sharing something utilizing verbal and nonverbal symbols in a variety of circumstances. As a result, speaking can be characterized as a communication process that involves obtaining and providing information from another person. Mastering speaking English can make the students communicate, share and get an information more easily. The

students can use a good speaking skill during the interactions, it means the students clearly delivering and easy to understand information.

Active use of spoken language on language provision of share meaning called speaking. In other word, Cameron (2001) Speaking is defined as the active use of spoken language to transmit meaning in order to link other people and interact or communicate with one another. Furthermore, to get a comprehension of a foreign language, learners can employ existing language resources or generate previous language use experiences. In learn foreign language especially speaking, it is important to share thought to other that used to or learn the same language to adapt a new habituation in a new language that already learned. Thus, mastering speaking skills is a key step in learning a new or foreign language.

Mastering speaking skills is a primary goal for many people when studying a second or foreign language. According to Brown (2001) The goal of speaking is for students to participate and use language in brief discussions, such as asking and answering questions and gathering information fluently in ordinary situations. Students can convey ideas, thoughts for freely and spontaneously through speaking. To measure the success of mastering English most of people do it by measure the skill to have conversation in the second language. Thus, the students hoped to master and understand the basic conversation that use in the daily life in the foreign language.

Based on Harmer (2007) to speak English quickly, students must pronounce the phonemes correctly, apply appropriate pressure and intonation patterns, and communicate in an connected language. Therefore, the students need to increase the English vocabulary that make the students easier to mastering speaking skill

with the appropriate methods and learning technique. In learning foreign language, vocabulary being the basic that are found by the students, By having a large vocabulary collection, kids can better understand and infer the meaning of words that they have read or heard. Similarly, students sought to grasp and use the language they had already acquired in the classroom when learning a second or foreign language.

Moreover, incorporating the Engage, Study, Activate (ESA) technique in teaching speaking skills can significantly enhance students' learning experiences. According to Harmer (2007), the ESA technique involves three stages: engaging students' interest, studying the target language, and activating language use through practice. This structured approach can help students become more confident and proficient in speaking English by providing them with ample opportunities to practice in a supportive environment. By implementing ESA in the classroom, teachers at SMP N 2 Ubud can create interactive and engaging lessons that cater to the diverse needs of seventh-grade students, ultimately improving their speaking skills in the academic year 2024/2025.

Furthermore, the use of descriptive monologue as a learning material aligns well with the goals of the ESA technique. Descriptive monologue require students to use the simple present tense effectively, which is a fundamental aspect of their language development. According to Richards (2008), practicing descriptive language helps students enhance their vocabulary and fluency, making their communication more effective. By focusing on descriptive monologue, teachers can provide students with practical and relatable speaking tasks that encourage them to think critically and express themselves clearly. This approach not only improves

their speaking skills but also boosts their confidence in using English in various real-life situations.

Based on the aforementioned description of speaking skill, the researcher stated that speaking describes an interaction that primarily serves a social role in a conversation. Further speaking skill an important in teaching and learning foreign language. Moreover grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and pronunciation should involve by the language function. Furthermore, speaker can increase the speaking skill by a regular and targeted practices. Furthermore, students must engage in practical active speaking, which allows them to learn more about pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, arrangements, and other aspects of a foreign or second language, particularly English.

2.1.2 ESA (Engage, Study, Activate)

The teaching style should ensure that the learning activities go smoothly. Furthermore, it plays an important function in helping students understand the subject more easily. Choose a good teaching strategy that help the students enhance their speaking skills. In this study, the researcher selected ESA as the technique for teaching and learning activities. ESA has three main elements in in the technique, Engage, Study and Activate that used by the teacher to improve the students' interest and also engaging the emotion of the students. This technique already applied in SMPN 2 Ubud, especially in seventh-grade students. ESA is a simple technique that can use to escalate student's activeness in speaking especially English language.

Based on Harmer (2007) ESA is one of the basic lesson procedures that allows teacher to teach in sequential process. In ESA the teacher want to increase

the interest of the students and also to engage the emotions. Further engage phase can be done by making the students interest and engage the students' emotions. In addition, it can be realized through picture, video, game, card, audio, or story. During the study phase, the teacher focuses on the desired learning topic. Students can use and complete the text design to employ the target features during the activation phase.

ESA can be applied by not sequential like the pattern of the ESA. The important thing is there are a learning activity in each element that can make the students directed to every learning activity. Those elements also can be applied in every learning activity. The teacher takes a full control when applying teaching technique in directing the students to partake in better learning. Harmer (2007) thinking about what to do in the lesson, means the teacher must make a decision that expected about what the students achieve in the end of the lesson. Because of this, the teacher has to make the application of the ESA clearly for the learning activities that can make the students comprehend easily.

According to Harmer (2007), one of the main advantages of the ESA technique is its flexibility in application. Teachers do not have to rigidly follow the order of Engage, Study, and Activate. On the other hand, the teacher can adjust this sequence according to the needs and situation of the class. For example, in some cases, teachers can start with the Activate phase to assess the extent of students' initial understanding, then continue to the Study phase to reinforce concepts that are still poorly understood, and end with the Engage phase to keep students' interest high. This flexibility allows teachers to create a learning environment that is

dynamic and responsive to student needs, so that the learning process becomes more effective.

In addition, the application of the ESA technique at SMPN 2 Ubud, especially for seventh-grade students, is expected to have a long-term positive impact on students' English-Speaking Skills. By frequently engaging students in interesting and relevant activities, students not only improve their language skills but also develop confidence in communicating. Consistent use of this technique can also help students to be more open and participate actively in English lessons, reducing the fear and anxiety that often hinder speaking skill. Thus, ESA is not just a teaching technique, but also a tool for building a strong foundation in students' language skills.

2.1.2.1 Engage

It is crucial for teachers to engage students actively in the learning process. According to Robertson and Acklam (2000), the Engage stage increases students' interest in the subject and helps them enjoy learning. During this phase, teachers can use pictures, videos, games, audio, stories, and anecdotes to spark curiosity and engage emotions. Harmer (2001) The first stage of a lesson should be designed to capture students' attention and motivate them to learn. Brainstorming is an effective way to capture students' attention, engage their interest, and help them imagine what to do next. Therefore, brainstorming is an excellent strategy to engage students in the teaching and learning process.

2.1.2.2 Study

The students focus on subjects that help language development and the information they gain during this period. The study emphasizes pronunciation and

techniques that make learning enjoyable. According to Mammadova (2021), students can approach the material in various ways, such as through grammar explanations, group work on reading texts, or vocabulary studies. The primary concern is language construction. Teachers can ensure students understand and use the simple present tense in daily English by showing examples and practicing with real-world illustrations. The researcher should guide students to learn attentively, especially the simple present tense as it relates to daily activities.

2.1.2.3 Activate

This stage focuses on exercise and activities. The teacher can encourage students to communicate as effectively as feasible. The purpose of this stage is to give a chance or to make the students use the language that already learn in realistic context or daily use. Controlled language use is not the main focus on this phase. The goal is to give information to the students about the learning process and understanding the problem that encountered by the students. According to Harmer (2007) activate phase is when the students encourage to use the language to describe objects. This phase also makes the students practice the students second language and applying in simple present tense. Furthermore, guiding the students to use the second language is the role for the teacher in this phase. In addition, the researcher gives the students a chance to practice speaking skill with guidance from the teacher correctly.

Therefore, applying effective teaching techniques is very important to improve students' speaking Skill. The Engage, Study, Activate (ESA) method used by class VII students at SMPN 2 Ubud, involves three stages: Engage, Study, and Activate. In the Engage phase, teachers capture interest with materials such as

pictures, videos, or stories. The Learn Phase focuses on activities such as vocabulary practice and grammar practice. The Activate phase allows students to practice speaking in real-life contexts, thereby improving accuracy and fluency. ESA's flexibility allows teachers to adapt learning sequences to class needs, making them effective and dynamic. Consistent use of ESA not only improves language abilities but also builds students' self-confidence and motivation. By engaging students in meaningful activities, ESA encourages participation and reduces anxiety, as well as strengthening their English-speaking skills.

2.1.3 Assessment of Speaking Skill

Assessment is a crucial tool in teaching and learning, acting as a continuous process where data is collected and analyzed to measure student achievement. These activities systematically track student progress throughout the learning journey. As (Brown 2004) suggests, even everyday interactions provide opportunities for assessment: a student's response, a comment, or an attempt at new vocabulary all offer insights into their understanding. By assessing students, teachers can gauge their grasp of the material and determine the effectiveness of the teaching techniques employed.

(Brown 2004) emphasizes that assessment is an important aspect of the learning process; assessment is a continuous activity that covers a much larger domain. As a cornerstone of education, assessment extends beyond one-time assessments. It's a continuous process that guides both teachers and students. On the other hand, McCulloch (2007) claims that evaluation is one of the most crucial aspects of an educational system. Teachers use objective criteria to ensure fairness, while sharing these criteria beforehand allows students to prepare effectively.

Finally, assessment reinforces teaching priorities and assists students in identifying the knowledge and activities that are most important to their development.

Based on Nunan (2004) assessment is used to obtain data from the students. While testing, a formal method involving collecting data on student performance through exams, is a common assessment tool measuring ability or knowledge level, effective assessment goes beyond that. Teachers, as the primary agents of assessment, continuously evaluate students through both classroom tests and daily activities, using objective criteria and evidence to make judgements. This ongoing process ensures high-quality assessment practices that directly support student learning by identifying areas of strength and weakness based on the taught material.

Language learning assessment goes beyond a single method and adapts to the topic being taught. Speaking assessment, for instance, utilizes spoken tests like live or recorded monologues, short conversations, and collaborative discussions. Short conversations, a common classroom activity, often translate directly to testing formats, making them particularly relevant to gauge student needs, especially when assessing collaborative abilities and discussion abilities. Furthermore, Brindley Carter and Nunan (2001) defines assessment as a variety of processes used to collect information about a language learner's capacity or achievement. Regular data collection on student speaking skills is crucial for assessment. This accurate data empowers teachers to tailor learning processes, ultimately boosting student performance.

According to Harmer (2007) The teacher assesses the students' performance, whether it is during a drill or a prolonged language production activity. The goal of teaching spoken language encompasses both skill and production. Speaking

assessment goes beyond the final product; it's a process-oriented evaluation. Since fluency takes time to develop, assessment should consider both a student's progress and their final speaking skill. Teacher should also provide constructive feedback throughout the learning process to guide students toward improvement. Common assessments focus on how well a student can speak the language, including aspects like fluency and clarity.

Assessment goes beyond measuring spoken language abilities; it also gauges a student's comprehension of the practiced material. As McCulloch (2007) highlights, effective assessment offers a multi-faceted benefit. It provides feedback, promotes learning, identifies strengths and weaknesses throughout the learning process, motivates students, and ultimately creates a profile of their acquired knowledge. Since learning objectives guide the learning process, they naturally influence the type of assessments used. Effective classroom instruction centers on achieving specific learning goals, encompassing intellectual, emotional, and physical development. Assessment, then, becomes a vital tool woven into the teaching and learning process, ensuring students reach their full potential.

Language learning assessments, particularly for speaking activities, should be tailored to the learning process and encourage active student participation. This aligns with Fulcher and Davidson's (2007) view of assessment as a continuous process that analyzes evidence from learning activities, focusing on students' practice as both learners and active contributors. By promoting student engagement, assessment can inform improvements in teaching methods, motivate students, and guide them towards active participation. Ultimately, this benefits both teachers and students, with students gaining valuable insights into their developing abilities.

While speaking skills are a crucial aspect of language learning and assessment Isaacs (2016), evaluating them can be challenging due to various influencing factors. The teaching process heavily impacts assessment outcomes. Well-designed lessons aligned with learning objectives lead to stronger assessment results Brown (2004). Consistent practice and exposure to real live speaking situations also enhance the assessment effectiveness. To effectively assess speaking, key components like grammar, comprehension, and fluency must be considered when creating scoring rubrics. It can be quickly clarified in the sections below;

1. Fluency

In language acquisition, fluency refers to a speaker's skill to conduct a conversation easily, with little hesitation or faltering caused by language challenges. This uninterrupted flow is especially crucial for foreign language learners, like those studying English, as it demonstrates their overall speaking proficiency.

2. Comprehension

Comprehension, in language learning assessment, focuses on a student's skill to grasp the conversation's content and express themselves clearly. While a beginner's scope might be limited to understanding basic questions and statements, effective comprehension is key to successful communication.

3. Grammar

Grammar plays a vital role in speaking assessment, as it ensures students use the language accurately and appropriately. By paying close attention to grammatical structures, students can communicate more effectively and be understood clearly.

2.2 Empirical Review

To lay a strong foundation for the current research, an empirical review was conducted. This review process examined relevant existing research, providing a wealth of information and theories while also identifying any previous studies with similar findings. By avoiding unintentional replication, the review strengthens the position of this research and its potential for success. This specific study aims to enhance students' speaking skill through the application of the ESA technique, a method believed to be effective in developing oral communication skills. The following section summarizes the most relevant reviewed studies, providing a context for the current research and highlighting knowledge gaps to be addressed.

The first similar research was conducted by Yohanes Susanto Darman (2021) entitled "Improving Speaking Skill of the Tenth Grade Students of SMK Saraswati I Denpasar through ESA In Academic Year 2021/2022". The objective of this study was to find out whether the speaking skill of tenth grade students in SMK Saraswati I Denpasar in Academic Year 2021/2022 could be improved through ESA. Based on the observation the results show that there are increase in achievement in the subject speaking skill. It can be seen that the value of the subject has increased with each learning cycle. As a result, ESA can help the subjects improve their speaking skill.

The study's strength included the good explanation of the technique that already used in the teaching and learning process. This study also utilized the ESA technique quite well. Regardless the weakness of this study was still using the old curriculum which is K13, so it needs to be updated. The difference with present study is, the present study used the new curriculum, which Kurikulum Merdeka.

The present study is focusing in grade SMP and the previous study focus in grade SMK. This different age and educational level can significantly impact language proficiency and learning needs.

The second similar research was conducted by Putu Sukma Asih in 2020, titled “The Use of ESA Technique with Video to Improve Speaking Skill of the Eighth Grade Students of SMP Sapta Andika Denpasar in Academic Year 2020/2021.” This study aimed to determine whether ESA could improve the speaking skill of eighth-grade students at SMP Sapta Andika Denpasar. The results showed that ESA positively impacted students' speaking skills.

The strength of the second study Incorporates the use of video as a supplementary tool, potentially enhanced student engagement and motivation. Focused on a specific grade level and school, allowing for in-depth analysis. However, this is also a weakness of this study, because using video as a medium requires teachers to prepare various tools, while not all schools provide tools to display videos. So, this study cannot be applied in every school at this time. In this way, the difference with recent study is that recent study can be applied in every school because it does not need to use tools, so it is more practical. This difference allows students to avoid things that cause them to become attached to videos and cause them difficulties if there is no video media for learning.

The studies reviewed provided valuable theoretical underpinnings for the ESA technique, although practical applications exhibited shortcomings. Notably, the 'Engage' phase often proved underdeveloped, leading to student confusion and misalignment between intended and implemented learning methods. This study distinguishes itself through the adoption of the Kurikulum Merdeka curriculum and

a focus on SMP grade level, differentiating it from previous research targeting SMK students. These factors significantly influence language proficiency and learning requirements. Furthermore, unlike recent studies reliant on tools, this research employs a more practical approach applicable across various school settings. By eliminating the need for external resources, it mitigates potential issues associated with technology dependence and accessibility.

