CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Speaking skills are concerned with our ability to communicate effectively through conversation. It is not just about having a collection of words that we can use, but more about carefully organizing them to deliver our message clearly. Speaking involves the capacity to organize thoughts and articulate them clearly, allowing the speaker to communicate effectively and minimize misunderstandings with audience (Fadilla & Mutiarani, 2024). This is relevant to paying attention to various elements, such as tone of voice and facial expressions, which can significantly affect how our message is received by others.

Essentially, speaking skills are similar to engaging in a dialog where we try to ensure that our communication is not only understandable but also interesting and comprehensible to our audience. Effective communication is the cornerstone of strong relationships, whether in personal friendships, familial ties, or professional collaborations(Islomjonovna, 2025). Whether we are having a casual conversation with a friend or delivering a formal presentation, the ability to communicate clearly and confidently enhances our relationships and allows us to express ourselves authentically. In essence, speaking skills serve as an important tool for building relationships and sharing information in an appropriate manner with others.

In order to comprehend speech, listeners need to be familiar with the sound system (Wahyu, 2025). It involves not only saying the words but also listening to

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what the other person is saying and thinking about it. So, speaking is interactive process where we share ideas, listen, and understand each other, creating relationship through our words. Besides, Thornbury(2005) states that speaking exercise that help students generate language on their own should incorporate the following elements: authenticity, safety, challenge, productivity, purposefulness, and interactivity. These elements ensure that language practice provides a supportive environment where students feel motivated to engage, face meaningful challenges, and interact with language actively. By incorporating these components into speaking activities, educators can facilitate effective language and fluency development among students,

Richards (2009) States that speaking serves various purposes in human interaction. One of these purposes is to help people connect and stay connected in society. Additionally, speaking acts as a way to share information between individuals, like passing along messengers or exchanging ideas. To help students develop good speaking skills, teachers should encourage them to speak in class discussions where they can share their thoughts and listen to others. For example, teachers can organize group activities where students discuss topics they are interested in or talk about things happening in the world. This kind of activity not only improves speaking skills but also builds relationships, understanding among students, and fostering a collaborative learning.

Based on the results of interviews with the eighth-grade English teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Kuta Utara, that their speaking is currently lacking because they have grown used to speaking Indonesian and are not paying enough attention to the English language learning process. They also remain embarrassed and concerned

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when speaking English. The researcher used the talking chips technique in conjunction with a picture to address this. This approach motivated students to discuss the assigned subject, collaborate in groups where they can also correct one another's pronunciation, and value impromptu communication above accurate grammar standards. Enhancing students' speaking abilities was therefore be consistent with the researcher's objective of developing excellent oral communication skills, which highlighted the significance of suitable tactics to include and empower students in their language learning process.

Speaking skills involve effectively organizing and expressing thoughts clearly to communicate and minimize misunderstandings, with attention to tone and facial expressions. Whether in casual or formal settings, clear and confident speaking helps build relationships and share information authentically. In addition, listening to native speakers and participating in discussions can enhance students' comprehension while encouraging adaptation to various speech patterns and accents (Zega, 2025). Listening is equally important, requiring familiarity with sounds and active understanding. Effective speaking practice should include authenticity, safety, challenge, productivity, purpose, and interaction to motivate learners. Speaking connects people socially and shares information, and teachers can develop these skills through group discussions that promote collaboration and confidence. In some contexts, students struggle with speaking English due to reliance on their native language and lack of confidence. To address this, techniques like talking chips combined with picture can encourage group communication, focus on fluency over perfect grammar, and improve oral skills by engaging and empowering students in their language learning process.

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According to both studies, the Talking Chips method has limitations in enhancing students' speaking abilities. The first study according to Pradnyanita, (2025) at SMPN 1 Kuta Utara found that students' opportunities to participate actively and creatively were diminished by the lack of supporting media and the study's limited focus on everyday activities, which hindered the collection of overall speaking skill progress. The research assumed that students' misunderstandings were entirely resolved without careful verification in the second trial based on Mangkar et al (2021) at SMAN 1 Gianyar, and the consistency of instructional delivery was unclear, perhaps leading to variability. Based on these drawbacks, Talking Chips can increase engagement, but its efficacy would be increased by more extensive speaking exercises, a wider range of media, and more methodical teaching techniques with obvious comprehension assessments.

Although earlier research has demonstrated that the Talking Chips method is successful in enhancing students' speaking abilities, several research gaps remain. Pradnyanita (2025) under the title" Improving Speaking Skill of The Seventh-Grade Students of SMPN 1 Kuta Utara in The Academic Year 2024/2025 Through Talking Chips" primarily on everyday activity topics and did not incorporate supporting media, which may have limited students' opportunities to engage creatively and develop more varied speaking skills. Mangkar & Murtini, (2021) "Improving Speaking Skill of Tenth Grade Student of SMAN 1 Gianyar Academic Year 2020/2021 Through Talking Chips combined with Pictures". integrated Talking Chips with pictures, however the instructional procedures were not described in detail, and students' comprehension was not systematically verified. These aspects suggest that further refinement in instructional consistency and

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assessment practice is still needed. Additionally, neither study provided a clear explanation of how to apply the strategy step-by-step, which could lead to confusion in the classroom.

The study "Improving Speaking Skill of the Eighth-Grade Students of SMP Negeri 2 Kuta Utara in the Academic Year 2025/2026 Through Talking Chips combined with Pictures" includes several advantageous aspects. The purpose of this study was to use the Talking Chips technique in conjunction with visuals to improve the speaking abilities of eighth-grade students. Students were able to engage more fully in the learning process due to the strategy. Compared to other research, this study offered a greater range of speaking tasks that were not restricted to daily tasks. Students were also inspired to be more imaginative and inspired by the supporting media. Consistency in using the approach was ensured by established educational procedures. thorough verification was also included into the study to ensure that students understood. This addressed the weakness of previous studies, which presumed understanding without conducting thorough checks.

1.2 Research Problem

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Based on the interview with the eighth-grade English teacher at SMP Negeri 2 Kuta Utara in the academic year 2025/2026 have trouble speaking well. The students faced problems with speaking, fluency, comprehension, and grammar knowledge. This occurs as an effect of students being made to feel shy, receiving insufficient practice during class, and being a worried about making mistakes. As a result, students did not enjoy the lesson the lessons and frequently avoid participating, even when the teacher ask them to speak. Thus, all these errors can

happen if the students are lacking in fluency, grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, and pronunciation. Therefore, the researcher formulated the research problem as follows: Can the speaking skills of eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Kuta Utara in the academic year 2025/2026 be improved through Talking Chips combined with Pictures?

1.3 Objective of the Study

In this study, the aim was to address a previously identified problem through scientific investigation. The purpose of this study was to find solutions to the challenges faced by eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Kuta Utara in the academic year 2025/2026. Specifically, the focus was to improve the students' speaking skills. As such, this study is trying to explore potential solutions to the concerns mentioned above. In addition, this study aims to investigate whether the use of a method Talking Chips combined with picture can effectively improve the speaking ability is crucial. Furthermore, the objective of this present study is to find out whether or not the speaking skill of the eighth-grade student of SMP Negeri 2 Kuta Utara in the academic year 2025/2026 can be improved through Talking chips combined with picture.

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1.4 Limitation of the Study

The purpose of research limitations is to make the discussion easier and prevent it from becoming too broad. Because the issues mentioned earlier are very complex and wide raging, researchers decided to set limitations. These limitations are crucial for addressing research problems in more detail and avoiding overly broad discussions. Since speaking is a broad topic, the researcher needs to narrow

down the focus of this study. Moreover, the researcher is concentrating on using Talking Chips combined with picture to improved speaking skills of eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Kuta Utara in the academic year 2025/2026. This school follows the *Merdeka* Curriculum, so the learning process is based on learning curriculum.

Since the school where the research was conducted uses the *Merdeka* Curriculum, this research focused on phase D learning objectives for eighth-grade in junior high school. In phase D learning objectives, students are required to use English to interact in an expanding formulaic language range of predictable social and classroom situations. The researcher limited this study to students speaking abilities in monologue. Students speaking abilities are limited in conveying their thoughts based on the instruction to make monologue. In addition, students speaking abilities must also meet the criteria of the scoring rubric procedure, which focuses on three aspects: fluency, comprehension, and grammar. Therefore, this study focuses on improving the speaking skills of eighth-grade students of SMP Negeri 2 Kuta Utara in the academic year 2025/2026 through Talking Chips combined with Pictures, especially in monologue about language expression.

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1.5 Significance of the Study

The results of this study are expected to provide valuable insights and benefit them in theoretical and practical implementation.

a. Theoretically, the result of this study is expected to strengthen and support the theories used, especially the theory of speaking and the Talking Chips technique combined with pictures. It can be used in the procedures of this research process

to get better guidance and better research results. In addition, some information regarding the theories in this study can be used to enrich the existing references. Furthermore, the results of this study are expected to provide evidence that Talking Chips Combined with Pictures is one of the most effective techniques to improve students' speaking abilities. The results of this study can be used as a reference for further research related to talking chips and speaking improvement, potentially influencing teaching methodologies and educational strategies. In addition, the findings may encourage educators to adopt innovative techniques, which contribute to the overall improvement of language education.

b. Practically, the results of this study can be beneficial for teachers, students, and other researchers. For teachers, this study can provide more information to give better results in speaking ability because teachers can modify this technique with other more creative techniques to give projects to students and improve students' learning performance especially in speaking skill. For students, after each practice session, students can give feedback to each other on their speaking skills and they can reflect on their experience, discussing what aspects they have improved and what areas they still need to work on. Finally, this study is hopefully able to help for other researchers in enrich their knowledge about Talking Chips Combined with Pictures technique which can be used as a reference in carrying out further research, which is related to the teaching of speaking.

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1.6 Definition of Key Term

The researcher used some specialized phrases related to this topic during the research investigation. The terms used in this study may seem complicated to the reader because they are too general and unclear definitions. Therefore, it is important to re-explain these key phrases so that the reader can understand the topic better. The words used in this study should have specific meanings as determine by the researcher. Thus, a clear operational definition of the key terms used in this study is as follows:

a. Speaking Skill

Speaking skill is operationally defined as the ability of the eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Kuta Utara in performing a short recount monologue about an unforgettable experience fluently, comprehensively, and grammatically. The students speaking skill assessed through a speaking skill is assessed through a speaking performance test which evaluates fluency, grammar, and comprehension according to an analytic speaking rubric developed by the researcher.

b. Talking Chips Combined with Pictures

In this study, Talking Chips combined with pictures is operationally defined as a cooperative learning strategy in which students engage in picture-based speaking activities using chips as speaking tokens to ensure equal participation. Students are placed in small groups, each receiving a chip that permits them to speak only when holding it, after speaking the chip is placed in the center of the table and the process continues until all chips are used. A picture provided by the teacher serves as the stimulus for discussion, and after all chips are used,

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students may be regrouped to continue the structured activity before presenting the results of their discussion to the class.

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CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

A scientific study must be based on some theoretical background. The aim of scientific research is to have the necessary theoretical background. For the purpose of this study, some new theoretical points, as well as empirical data, were reviewed. The review of related theories is necessary for the research to be informed and allows the researcher to clarify and define research concepts. The researcher tried to avoid any accidental replication of previous students. There are three ideas that are explained and discussed in this chapter, as follows: (1) Speaking skill; (2) Talking Chips Combined with Pictures; and (3) assessing speaking. These ideas provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the study's objectives and methodologies.

2.1.1 Speaking Skill

The primary ability that students must develop in order to improve their fundamental communication skills is speaking (Elbes & Oktaviani, 2022). It is not just about saying words but also about understanding each other's thoughts and ideas. When we speak, we actively participate in building a bridge between our minds of others. So, speaking is not just about making sound with our mouth but also connecting with other through language. It is a process through which we exchange ideas and information to create shared meaning. Ultimately, speaking fosters human connection and increases mutual understanding.

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Speaking allows students to develop concepts, expand their vocabulary, and communicate their thoughts clearly (Guebba, 2021). In addition, speaking poses considerable challenges compared to other skills, as student must be articulate their ideas clearly to engage their audience effectively. Moreover, proficiency in speaking demands clarity, fluency, and accuracy to ensure effective communication in English discourse.

Speaking is an essential ability that allows speakers and listeners to communicate verbally for the purposes of sharing, establishing connections, and transferring information. (Ork et al., 2024). Speaking is a crucial component of communicative skills and a tool for interaction in the context of language learning. Fluency, correctness, pronunciation, and the capacity to create cohesive discourse are just a few of the sub-skills that are included in this broad category. Additionally, speaking ability has a major impact on students' academic achievement and social integration, especially in settings where oral communication is crucial. Speaking development deserves special attention in language training because of its crucial significance in both educational and real-world contexts. As a result, it is crucial to use teaching strategies that not only improve language skills but also encourage students' self-assurance and communication readiness.

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2.1.2 Talking Chips Combined with Pictures

One of the learning strategies used by the teacher throughout the learning process is cooperative learning. Students in schools where cooperative learning had been widely adopted by the end of the second year of the intervention demonstrated notable improvements in reading vocabulary, reading comprehension, language

expression, and mathematical computation that their counterparts in the comparison schools had not made Gillies, (2007). To put it another way, the cooperative learning approach enables all students to collaborate in small groups. Within their small group, the students can experience the roles of both teacher and student. Instead of encouraging individualism, it encourages students to support one another in their group. The student could learn and respect a wide range of talents and learning styles in this way. Furthermore, cooperative learning helps to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as students are often required to work together to navigate complex tasks and challenges. This process not only enhances their academic skills but also promotes essential social interactions and respect for differing perspectives. Additionally, as they learn to talk, the students feel more confident expressing their opinions and expanding on their understanding of the subjects being covered.

Talking Chips is one of the teaching strategies in cooperative learning. (Kagan and Kagan 2009) In talking chips, students participate in a group discussion, giving a chips where they speak. This technique ensures equitable participations by regulating how often each group member is allowed to speak. Since this technique emphasizes full and even participations from all the members, this encourages passive students to speak out confidently. Talking chips help students discuss controversial issues, and it helps solve communication or processing problem such as dominating or clashing group members. Furthermore, because it gives different viewpoints a chance to be heard and taken into consideration, this method works especially well when talking about contentious topics. Talking chips reduce common communication issues, including dominating or conflicting group

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members, by offering an organized platform for conversation. This format promotes a polite and welcoming environment in addition to improving the quality of conversations. Finally, through allowing students to participate in meaningful conversations, the talking chips technique improves their ability to work with others and grows their comprehension of the material.

Students receive advantages from the talking chips technique through getting more engaged and enjoying the teaching and learning environment (Wirastuti et al., 2023). Talking chips, one of the cooperative learning structures, also fulfils at least two principles. The first component is personal responsibility. Each group member is responsible for contributing to the conversation during the activity. They are accountable to their teammates and must participate in group discussions throughout class activities. But before proceeding to the next round, each group member needs to use their chip. It implies that they are unable to advance to the following round, even if they are down to just one chip. As a result, each student has an equal opportunity to practice speaking while also improving their active listening skills. Equitable participation is the second component. Guidelines for equal participation are established by the regulations during the talking chips technique's implementation.

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Meanwhile, a picture is an ideal medium for teaching and learning. Ngan and Lan (2024) states that a common strategy in English-speaking schools to improve learning and engagement is the use of visual aids, especially pictures and illustrations. They also provide the teacher with a flexible and convenient tool to test many different things in exam. The use of picture is to arouse student interest to be more motivated in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, using a

picture in teaching and assessing may be most appropriate for introductory courses, introducing complex topics in any course, lower achieving students, and visual/spatial learners. Bright colors and relevance to the students' surroundings make pictures appealing to them, which encourages them to participate in learning activities especially when in focus is used in the classroom (Sarmila et al., 2023). Brightly colored images that illustrate students' daily life encourage curiosity and give abstract ideas a tangible form, which improves student engagement in class activities. Therefore, students' motivation and learning results can be greatly improved by the thoughtful use of inspiring and pertinent pictures.

This approach works especially well for beginner classes, where pictures can help make difficult concepts easier to understand. It also helps students that perform poorly since they could discover that picture fill in the gaps in their comprehension of difficult ideas. Additionally, because it fits with their cognitive preferences, material delivered in a pictorial manner tends to be more effective for visual/spatial learners. In conclusion, using picture in instruction and evaluation enhances the learning process and fosters a more pleasant and encouraging learning environment that meets the various needs of each student.

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Before using talking chips and pictures as learning techniques in the teaching and learning process of speaking, the teacher should prepare. The first was determining a question or topic that would be discussed in a group discussion. The second is bringing any available items to serve as a chip. Each student used this chip when they take turns talking. The chips include different strategies to use in conversation, including answering the question, asking a question, giving an idea, responding to the idea, summarizing, and encouraging participation. The students

place one of these chips on their desks before speaking. The students should not speak unless they use one of the talking chips. The goal is for all students to use their chips, avoiding the risk that only some group members participate in the task. Therefore, this technique can minimize the class problem dominated by some students. Adapted from (Kagan and Kagan 2009), the procedures of Talking Chips Combined with Pictures could be explained as follows:

1) The teacher will ask the students from groups. The teacher can also help them to create groups to minimize the time.
2) The teacher gives them a picture of the material.
3) The teacher gives each student one to two tokens that will be permitted to share, contribute, or debate in conversations.
4) The teacher asks the students to participate equally in the group discussion, specifying that as they contribute comments, they should give a chip and place it because of the other group members.
5) Finally, when all the students have contributed to the discussion and all chips are down, ask the students to retrieve and redistribute the chips. So that the procedure repeats for the next round or discussions, or end of the discussion if they activity complete.

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2.1.3 Assessment of Speaking Skills

Assessment is an important thing in the teaching and learning process. Speaking is a productive skill that can be directly and empirically observed. Those observations variated by the accuracy and effectiveness of a test-taker's listening skills. In this case the test taker is teacher. The score of the students may different

from one teacher to the other. One solution to overcome this problem is that the teacher needs to assign several scores for each response, representing one of several traits such as pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary use, grammar, comprehension, and so many more (Brown,2004:140). By assessing the students, the teacher can measure how far the students understand the material given by teaching learning process. The assessment result can be used to reflect the teacher on whether the technique is effective. In addition, the assessment serves as guidance for reinforcing teachers' priorities and helps students identify what activity, knowledge, and understanding are important to their progress during the teaching and learning process.

According to Brown (2004:144) there are five types of speaking performance assessments such as: imitative, interactive, extensive, and responsive. Imitative speaking is a type of speaking performance which is the ability to simply parrot back (imitate) a word or phrase or maybe a sentence. Second type of speaking frequently employed in assessment context is the pronunciation of short stretches of oral language design to demonstrate competence in a narrow band of grammatical, phrasal, lexical, or phonological relationship interactive oral production between interactive and extensive speaking includes tasks that also relatively long stretches of interactive discourse (interview, role plays, games, discussions) and task of equally long direction but that involves less interaction (speech and telling longer stories).

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According to Karpovich et al., (2021)A monologue is an individual recognized assignment that students complete to practice every aspect of the language system, improving their confidence and language proficiency. Extensive

(monologue) speaking assessment task involves complex, restively length of discourse. The task includes speeches, oral presentation and storytelling with minimal verbal interaction. Responsive assessment task includes interaction and text comprehension but at somewhat limited level of very short conversations, standard greetings and small talks, simply request and comment. First, pronunciation is a basic quality of language learning which is about stress and intonation that has been mastered by the students. Second, fluency which is probably best achieves by allowing the speech to flow. Third, vocabulary is the bank of words in the mind of the speaker. Fourth, grammar is generally thought to be sets of rules which are the correct order of words at the sentence level. Fifth, comprehension in oral communication in which the students have to understand about what they want to say to the listener in order to make the easily catch the purpose of the performance.

In this study, the researcher focuses on three criteria. There are comprehension, fluency, and grammar. Furthermore, the researcher test students speaking skill related to the topic directly. The researcher expects that the students speaking skill increased significantly after sessions are conducted and the test gives the objectives feedback for both students and also the researcher. Offering feedback is an integral part of the assessment process and should follow as soon as possible after the assessment carried out. Speaking skill achievement of the students scored by using scoring rubric that adapted from Brown (2004).

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2.2. Empirical Review

The empirical review serves as a thorough analysis of past research that is related to the current topic in order to explain existing theories and findings. The findings of the empirical review as follows findings

Pradnyanita (2025) conducted the first similar study under the title" Improving Speaking Skill of The Seventh-Grade Students of SMPN 1 Kuta Utara in The Academic Year 2024/2025 Through Talking Chips" This study aimed to ascertain whether the talking chips technique could enhance the speaking skills of seventh grade students at SMPN 1 Kuta Utara school year. The results of this study showed that students speaking skills improved after the application of talking chips. This study employed two instruments: test (pre-test and post-test) and a questionnaire. The results of this study indicate that during the academic year 2024/2025, class VII students at SMPN 1 Kuta Utara can successfully enhance their speaking skills by utilizing the talking chips technique. Some difficulties were identified by the study on using the Talking Chips technique to improve the speaking abilities of seventh-grade students at SMPN 1 Kuta Utara in the academic year 2024/2025. Students' total speaking skill growth was not adequately captured by the limited focus on expressing daily activities, especially in more complex communicative circumstances. Additionally, students' chances to participate more actively and creatively in the learning process were diminished by lack of uses of supporting material. These weaknesses imply that although Talking Chips can encourage involvement, more extensive speaking exercises and the incorporation of diverse media sources would increase its efficacy.

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Mangkar et al (2021) conducted a second similar study “Improving Speaking Skill of Tenth Grade Student of SMAN 1 Gianyar Academic Year 2020/2021 Through Talking Chips Combined with Pictures”. Talking Chips combined with Pictures were used in two cycles to conduct the study, and the data collected from the pretest, post-test one and two, and the questionnaire were then quantitatively analyzed. Based through the study, there was a lack of clarity on the consistency of the modified Talking Chips technique's instructional delivery, which might have led to implementation variability. Additionally, the study tended to presume that students' misunderstanding had been completely cleared up without offering thorough verification techniques to guarantee comprehension and clarity. These restrictions imply that in order to increase the validity of the results, more methodical teaching practices and comprehensive assessments of student understanding are required. The findings demonstrated that the subjects' ability to deliver recount monologues had significantly improved. Additionally, the survey demonstrated that the participants supported the use of Talking Chips Combined with Pictures in the teaching and learning process. Based on the investigation's findings, it can be said that talking chips with pictures can help SMAN 1 Gianyar tenth-grade students' speaking abilities in the 2020/2021 school year.

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Based on their pre- and post-test results, the researcher finds that students' speaking abilities increase when they use the talking chips technique. However, neither study covered the Talking Chips' specific implementation procedures. The findings show that students become confused when using these processes, which consequently impacts their ability to talk fluently. Thus, the researcher used the talking chips technique in this study, which she modified from Kagan and Kagan

(2009). The researcher provided clear instructions on how to implement the technique, ensuring students could use it effectively. The assessment incorporates three aspects, adapted from brown (2004): fluency, comprehension, and grammar, with the aim of entrancing students' speaking abilities to the fullest extent possible.

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