

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains the research background, the research problem or research questions, the research purpose, the significance of the research, and the definition of essential words.

A. Background of the Research

Among the four language skills, speaking is often considered the most challenging for EFL learners because it requires real-time language processing, confidence, and fluency (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). Indonesian students, including those at the junior high school level, frequently struggle with speaking due to limited vocabulary, fear of making mistakes, and insufficient opportunities to use English in meaningful communication (Hidayati, 2016).

Classroom instruction still relies heavily on drilling and textbook-based activities, which was provided limited opportunities for meaningful communication in the context of EFL learners. As a result, the learning environment becomes less engaging and does not encourage students to participate actively in speaking tasks. Traditional teacher centered instruction, which still dominates many classrooms, intend to limit students' engagement and participation also sometimes leads to passive learning behaviours. These conditions are in line with findings that reported by Sadiku (2015), who states that traditional teacher centered methods tend to limit students' opportunities to practice speaking meaningfully, and by Harmer (2007), who emphasizes that limited exposure to communicative activities often tend to lead low participation and reduced motivation in EFL classrooms. To address the

students' difficulties in face speaking activities, teachers have to use interactive learning strategies that make classroom instruction more engaging and student centered.

In this context, exploring students' perceptions of the strategies employed in class becomes important because their perceptions might be influence their motivation, participation, and willingness to communicate. Information obtained from the English teacher at MTsN 3 Kediri shows that many students still hesitate to speak English during lessons. MTsN 3 Kediri was selected as the research site because the English teacher demonstrates a strong commitment to improving students' speaking skills and is open to implementing innovative and interactive learning strategies. The school also supports student centered learning in line with the principles of Kurikulum Merdeka, which encourages active participation and meaningful learning experiences. The teacher explains that students often feel anxious about making mistakes, stay quiet, and commonly depend on memorized sentences rather than expressing ideas spontaneously.

However, the teaching and learning process is still restricted by limited facilities. For instance, the use of technological tools such as projectors in classroom requires permission and additional preparation time, which might reduce the effectiveness of classroom instruction. Therefore, learning strategies that are practical, flexible, and do not heavily depend on technology are considered more suitable. In MTsN 3 Kediri, there is one class that conducting Spin Wheel and Role Play as media especially in speaking activity. These are

used to create more interactive and engaging learning atmosphere and to motivate students to participate actively especially in speaking practice. Through these activities and the use of strategies here, students are expected to express their ideas more freely, build their confidence, and experience meaningful communication in the classroom.

From a qualitative perspective, it is important to understand how students perceive and experience the use of these media/strategies in their speaking learning process. By exploring students' perceptions, the researcher can develop insights into their feelings, responses, and their learning experiences during the activities/during the strategies performed. Therefore, MTsN 3 Kediri is considered an appropriate setting to investigate students' perceptions toward the use of Spin Wheel and Role Play in developing speaking skills.

Unlike traditional drilling methods, Flores & Guevara (2021) state that Game-based learning has been shown to increase enjoyment, interest, and involvement through elements of challenge, reward, and unpredictability. In line with this, Yaccob et al. (2022) state that game-based learning is a pedagogical approach that support meaningful interaction, reduces student anxiety, and it can stimulate active participation in the language classroom. In this context, Spin Wheel as a gamified activity and Role Play as a communicative speaking activity can be particularly beneficial, especially for their speaking activities.

Theoretically, this research relies on Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) and Gamification Learning Theory. CLT emphasizes meaningful communication as the main aims of language learning and encourages learner-centered activities in which students actively use English in real contexts (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). This perspective helps explaining how students interpret and involve with the learning strategies that need to require active verbal interaction. Gamification Learning Theory highlights the implementation of game elements such as challenge, curiosity, and reward to enhance learners' motivation and participation during the activities (Deterding et al., 2011). This theory provides a framework to understanding how students react emotionally and cognitively to the use of game-based tools such as the Spin Wheel in the classroom activities.

Within these theoretical foundations, Role Play stand for an application of CLT because it allows students to practice speaking in simulated real-life scenarios that it can encourage creativity, confidence, and interaction. In line with this, Huang (2008) states that Role Play also gives students opportunities to practice their speaking in meaningful and realistic scenarios/real-life scenario, which helps to reduce their anxiety and increase their confidence instead. Roleplay activities here in this research simulate real-life communicative situations, allowing students to practice expressing ideas naturally within a meaningful context.

The Spin Wheel functions as a gamified tool that creates variability and excitement and also helps maintaining students' interest and participation in the

activities during the implementation. This is in line with Flores and Guevara (2021) gamified features such as randomness, challenge, and curiosity have been shown to increase the student's motivation and engagement in learning. Anggraini and Jaya, (2025) state that incorporating educational games with spinning wheels helps boost students' confidence and motivation to practice their speaking English because spinning wheels can also support an engaging and exciting atmosphere. In this research Spin wheel game stimulate spontaneous verbal responses by randomly assigning topics or tasks, making to push all of the students to think and speak on the spot without over-relying on one strategy as a memorized phrase. Together, these activities create a low-anxiety and interactive classroom atmosphere that can promotes fluency, confidence, and desire to communicate in English.

Although both strategies show potential in supporting speaking development, the effectiveness depends on how students perceive and respond to it. In this research, CLT and Gamification Learning Theory guide the exploration of students' perspectives on the use of Spin Wheel and Role Play in speaking lessons. Therefore, investigating students' perceptions toward the use of Spin Wheel and Role Play is important for understanding whether these strategies create a motivating, supportive, and communicative learning environment that encourages students to develop their speaking skills. Such evidence highlights the need to consider more engaging strategies such as Spin Wheel and Role Play and, more importantly, to examine how students perceive

these strategies because their perceptions influence motivation, participation, and overall speaking development.

There several previous studies in this research, first one is from Lele (2019). The researcher of this study aimed to find out the type of media used by the teacher in teaching English and the students' perception of the media used by the teacher in teaching English. The result of the students' interview is that most of the students gave positive perception toward the media used by English teacher in teaching and learning process, they were being happy, being more active, being more excited/spirit in learning English. In addition, they were easier to understand the materials, they can repair their pronunciation, vocabulary, find new ideas, express their opinion and they can practice it in daily life. Therefore, even though the context are the same (Students' Perception of the Media Used by Teacher in Teaching English) the researcher intends to examine explicit context which are Spin wheel and Role Play.

The previous study conducted by Razan & Ulfa, (2025) The researcher of this study investigated the students' speaking skills by using the Spinning Wheel Game media. The result that shows consistently positive findings, although they are examined separately. The students were active, enthusiastic, and focused on the material, and they comprehended it well. The Spinning Wheel Game media also helps students improve their fluency and confidence in speaking the English language. Therefore, in this study the researcher intends to re-examine and add role play as a media and combine it with spin wheel games.

Another previous study was conducted by Wijaya et al., (2024) The study aimed to find out how are the perception of students regarding to the use of role play technique in learning speaking skills Although helpful, some learners still experience nervousness or lack of confidence when performing roles, especially those not familiar with speaking in English. Together, these studies indicate that both strategies contribute meaningfully to speaking development and positive classroom engagement. Therefore, in this study the researcher intends to re-examine and add spin wheel as a media and combine it with role play in the same context of games.

Despite the positive findings, a gap remains in the existing literature regarding the integration of Spin Wheel and Role Play in EFL speaking instruction. Previous studies examine the Spin wheel and Role Play separately and do not investigate how students perceive the integration of a game-based tool with a communicative technique in one learning approach. Most studies focus on improvements in fluency, vocabulary, or participation, but only a few provide an in-depth qualitative understanding of students' experiences when both strategies are used together in a single speaking activity. This gap shows the need to examine how students interpret, feel, and respond to the combination of Spin Wheel and Role Play in EFL classrooms.

To address this gap, this study integrates Spin Wheel and Role Play within a single speaking activity and explores students' learning experiences and perceptions through a descriptive qualitative approach. Rather than focusing primarily on speaking achievement or the effectiveness of a single

strategy, this study provides an in-depth understanding of how students experience, interpret, and respond to the combined implementation of gamified and communicative learning strategies. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of more engaging and student-centered speaking instruction in EFL classrooms, particularly at the junior high school level.

Based on this gap, the present research aims to investigate students' perceptions toward the integration of Spin Wheel and Role Play in speaking activities at MTsN 3 Kediri. This research aims to understand how students experience the combined strategy, how they view its benefits, and how it supports a more engaging and communicative learning atmosphere that in line with Kurikulum Merdeka. Therefore, this research is entitled: Students' Perceptions Toward the Use of Spin Wheel and Role Play in Developing Speaking Skills at Class VIII-A MTsN 3 Kediri.

B. Research Questions

1. How do students experience the integration of Spin Wheel and Role Play during learning speaking at MTsN 3 Kediri?
2. What are the students' perceptions of the use of Spin Wheel and Role Play in learning speaking at MTsN 3 Kediri?

C. The Objectives of the Research

1. To describe students' learning experiences with the use of Spin Wheel and Role Play in learning speaking at MTsN 3 Kediri.
2. To explore students' perceptions of the use of Spin Wheel and Role Play in learning speaking at MTsN 3 Kediri.

D. Scope and Limitation

This research mainly focuses on exploring students' perceptions toward the use of Spin Wheel and Role Play in learning speaking at MTsN 3 Kediri. The scope of this research is to understanding how students view, experience, and respond to the integration of these two strategies in speaking activities related to imperative and prohibition expressions. The limitation on this research does not measure the effectiveness of Spin Wheel and Role Play quantitatively or evaluate students' speaking scores. The participants consist of eighth-grade students, and the data are collected through semi-structured interviews supported by documents in the form of lesson plans. Therefore, the findings may not be generalized to all levels or other schools with different learning environments.

E. Significance of the Research

1. Theoretical Significance

This research contributes to the existing literature on speaking instruction by providing insights into students' perceptions of interactive strategies such as Spin Wheel and Role Play. The findings enrich the theoretical understanding of how game-based and communicative approaches are interpreted by learners in EFL contexts.

2. Practical Significance

For teachers, the results of this research offer valuable information about how students respond to the integration of Spin Wheel and Role Play, which can guide teachers in designing more engaging and supportive

speaking activities. For students, this research is expected to promote learning conditions that motivate them to use English confidently. For schools, the research may serve as a reference for developing creative, student-centered instructional practices aligned with the principles of Kurikulum Merdeka. For other researchers, the findings can provide a useful reference and foundation for further studies related to interactive learning strategies, students' perceptions, or the integration of gamified and communicative techniques in EFL speaking instruction with another focus.

F. Definition of Key Terms

1. Students' Perceptions

Students' perceptions refer to students' views, interpretations, feelings, and responses toward learning activities based on their experiences. Schunk (2012) states that learners' perceptions influence their motivation, engagement, and participation in the learning process. In this research, students' perceptions refer to how students perceive the use of Spin Wheel and Role Play in speaking activities.

2. Spin Wheel

Spin Wheel is a game-based instructional tool containing randomized prompts, topics, or tasks used to increase students' engagement and participation during learning activities. Deterding et al. (2011) explain that gamification integrates game elements into learning activities to enhance learners' motivation and involvement. In this study, Spin Wheel is used to support students' speaking practice.

3. Role Play

Role Play is a communicative learning technique in which students perform certain roles or situations to practice language use in meaningful contexts. Richards and Rodgers (2014) state that Role Play encourages communicative interaction and active language use in the classroom.

4. Speaking Skill

Speaking skill refers to the ability to express ideas, opinions, and information orally in English. Brown (2004) defines speaking as an interactive process of constructing meaning through spoken language, while Harmer (2007) explains that speaking involves several important components such as fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension.

5. EFL Students

EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students are learners who study English in a non-English-speaking environment (Richards & Schmidt, 2010). In this research, EFL students refer to the eighth-grade students of MTsN 3 Kediri.