CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter explains about the description of the importance of doing this research. It also covers the research problem, the objective of the research, the operational definition, significance of the research, and scope of the research.

1.1 Background of the Research

Speaking is one of the important and essential skills that must be practiced to communicate orally. Speaking is a crucial part of foreign language learning and teaching which plays an important role for human beings. As the development in this era, speaking needs to be improve effectively, especially for the student. Therefore, the student not only understand what the English speaker said but also they can speak English well in teaching and learning process or in their daily communication. The students who have ability in speaking will be better in sending and receiving information or message to another.

Although speaking is one the important skills to master, developing speaking skills among the students still can be a problem because some teachers may not use the appropriate strategies in teaching and learning process to promote the students to master the speaking skills. The teachers continue to teach speaking just as a repetition of drills or memorization of dialogue. As Kayi (2006:1) states that for many years English language teachers have continued to teach speaking just as a repetition of drills or memorization of dialogue. Those also happened in

SMP N 2 Jelbuk where the research will be conducted. However, the appropriate strategy is needed to reach the goals of teaching speaking because only that way students can develop their speaking ability.

In fact, many interesting teaching and learning strategies which can use by the English teacher in helping the students to improve their speaking ability in reaching the target does not implement yet by some teachers because they still use the conventional method, therefore the students can not catch the materials correctly. Although the conventional strategy has used by the teacher is not always bad, but it is important to teach the student with other variation in teaching and learning process, so that student do not feel bored in learning English. At least, they can express their own feeling to deliver. It means that the teacher should not teach speaking by repetition of drills or memorization only, but also they have to improve students speaking or communicative skills.

Information gap activity is one of the teaching and learning strategies which is the students sharing with their partner in certain information. According to Harmer (2007:129), information gap is where two speakers have different bits of information, and they can only complete the whole picture by sharing the information because they have different information. The activity of information gap is an activity which requires at least two different versions of material. Students work together in pairs and each student has different information on their card, hence they have to talk each other by using the target language in order to complete the task, it is directly train the students' speaking ability. This kind of activity can be applied to improve students' speaking ability because information gap is effective to create students' participation in speaking. As Harmer (2001:85)

states that information gap is a key to enhancement of communicative purpose and the desire to communicate.

Regarding the explanation above the researcher decided to apply information gap activity to improve students' speaking ability of eighth grade of SMP N 2 Jelbuk.

1.2 Problem of the Research

Based on the background of the research above, the problem of the research formulated as: "How can Information Gap activities improve the eighth grade students students' speaking ability at SMP N 2 Jelbuk in the 2015/2016 academic year?"

1.3 The Objective of the Research

The objective of this research is to know how information gap activities can improve students' speaking ability at SMP N 2 Jelbuk in the 2015/2016 academic year.

1.4 Operational Definition

To avoid misunderstanding in interpreting the research, the researcher defines operationally speaking ability and information gap.

1.4.1   Speaking is the action of the students' ability in conveying information or expressing one thought and feeling in spoken language which must be considered about speaking components such as word choice (vocabulary), language structure (grammar), pronunciation, and fluency.

1.4.2   Information gap is technique in language teaching which students are missing the information they need to complete a task and need to talk to each other to find it.

1.5 Significance of the Research

The study has some benefit that can be defined into:

1.5.1   Practical Significance

1. For the English teacher, this study can enrich their techniques in teaching speaking skills.

2. For the students, through this study, they can improve their speaking skills.

3. For other researchers, this study can enrich their references if they want to conduct a research for the same and related topic.

1.5.2   Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this study provides contribution in giving knowledge of the way to improve speaking skills by using information gap activities.

1.6 Scope of the Research

The research is focused on the speaking ability of English teaching and learning through information gap activity. This technique applied to the eighth grade of SMP N 2 Jelbuk in the 2015/2016 academic years.

The limitation of this research is only on the VIII A class of SMP N 2 Jelbuk.