

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides a summary of literature review related to the research. This chapter begins with the description of literature review, review of relevant studies, and theoretical framework of the research.

2.1 Literature Review

The literature review in this study starting with the definition, then the researcher provides some references to the implementation of the information gap. Describes some theories related to the study.

2.1.1 Information Gap Activities

Harmer (1991) says in Defrioka (2016) that the terms of the gap means unequaled knowledge and communication perceived as an option to close the gap. Raptou (2014) stated information gap requires the solving of the problem, gather information and making decisions. In the same way, they are communicating to gain the information they do not possess. Information gap activities provide an activity for solving the problem, sharing and collecting information with the highlight each person must actively asking a question and

answering in order to complete the missing information (gap) by using the target language (Afrizal, 2015).

Theoretically, information gap activities are expected to facilitate the learners for sharing, discussing, and encourage learners to speak willingly. It aims to close the gap and avoid misunderstanding. Refers to the certain beliefs, when two or more people have the gap of knowledge it can be possible to create a misunderstanding. Moreover, information gap activities aim to facilitate the people as a bridge to close the gap.

“The researcher describes the implementation of information gap activities by the expertise.” Information gap activities are useful activities which every person has information to share and they have to use the target language while they are sharing (Putri, 2014). Based on the fact that generally, people communicate in order to gain information, it means that people are already familiar with the information gap concept (Asrobi, Seken, & Suwarnajaya, 2013). Harmer stated in Asrobi, Seken, & Suwarnajaya (2013) that through information gap activities students complete the missing information by communicating each other. The statement above supported by Thornbury (2005) cited in Putri (2014) that the knowledge gap between the students can be bridged by using language.

Information gap activities are very beneficial for students because they will try practice interaction in the real communication context to exchange information or to share knowledge by using the target language (Ismaili & Bajrami, 2016). Defrioka (2009) as quoted in Ismaili & Bajrami (2016) said that information gap activities implementation in

the class influence the students' speaking skills and students' interaction. When the students have reason to speak more (e.g. sharing, arguing, asking, and answering), it drives the students to speak willingly than usual.

As stated above, information gap activities can build up the atmosphere in the class to be more active. It may motivate students to speak English actively. Furthermore, Bernard stated in Asrobi, Seken, & Suwarnajaya (2013) that motivation is very essential in language learning, because the students enjoy the activities and make them acquired the target language in real context easier. The main point is the students is practicing by doing, which is that is very effective to improve their speaking skills and boost their confidence to speak by using the target language, quoted by Utomo & Margana (2016). Based on the advantages of information gap activities above, Son (2009) cited in Sujana (2012) presents more the advantages of using information gap activities below:

Table 2.1 The Advantages of Information Gap Activities

More communication takes place	Motivation can be high	Build students' confidence	Develop other sub-skills
- Extending speaking practice	- Give the reason for students to speak	- Less intimidating than presenting in front of the entire class	- Clarifying meaning
- Make students concentrate on the communication of the information	- Keep the concentrating / thinking	- Comfortable, casual and non-threatened atmosphere	- Rephrasing
	- Represent real communication and factual learning	- Free interaction with peers	- Solving problems
			- Collecting information
			- Making decision

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- Students talk a lot/produce more speech
 - Students help one another
- Equal opportunities for learning or mixed ability classes
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The Information gap is an activity that demands the students to communicate actively by using the target language in a real situation. Information gap has varied techniques with the same purpose to close the gap knowledge among the students, said Brown cited in Saputri (2010). The Information gap is being popular as the way to practice speaking skills for communication. It provides the students with being an active speaker in order to gain the information and beyond speaking. The students also required to understand the topic for sharing, discuss the topic and argue with the other students' opinion.

The table 2.2 below is presented the characteristics of information gap activities from three researchers.

Table 2.2 *The Characteristics of Information Gap Activities*

Kitao&Kitao (1996)	Prabhu (1987)	Hasibuan (2012)
Pair Work	Transfer Information	Expressing Opinion
Sharing Information	Pair work Information Selection	Obtaining Information

Those researchers agree that information gap activities are designed for group discussion. Kitao& Kitao (1996) stated information gap activity is used as communicative task that facilitates the students to work together. The task requires

students to ask and give information they do not possess related to the context and then the knowledge will be equaled. They give an illustration about information gap implementation. The activity involves more than one student to exchange the information by using simple context. For instance, the context is about buying a tape recorder. They exchange the information on the context of buying tape recorder.

Prabhu (1987) stated that information gap is one of three meaning-focused activities and this activity involves asking and giving information. Information gap can be conducted in pair work. The main focus in this activity is the gap has to be bridged by share in any constraint between students. Information gap activities involve sharing information from one person to another. He gives an example to do information gap in pair work when both students exchange the information. One student seems to be a resourceful person and another student is a clueless person. They have unequal knowledge about the tape recorder, furthermore one student asks another student in order to obtain information about that.

Hasibuan (2012) stated that one student closes the gap of another student by giving or filling them with information. Students complete the task by obtaining the missing information by using timetable. It means that student needs a partner while conducting information gap activity. Students are filling the timetable with different blank space. To fill the blank space, students have to ask questions each other.

Nation & Newton (2008) mentioned some activities that similar with information gap activities. These activities are integrated with speaking to emphasize the students to be active speaker. The activity stimulate the students in negotiating meaning, that is required the students to comprehend the context and speaking comprehensively. They stated that information gap can be used as a technique to encourage students in negotiating meaning. Through negotiation of meaning, the students would be interacted during the learning process by using the target language. That interaction helps language learning by providing the students more reason to speak and exchange their information in order to fulfill the task (Nation & Newton, 2008). It would consequently build up students' awareness about the information they do not know and develop their speaking skill through negotiating meaning.

In order to fulfill the activities that encourage students in distributing information, the students need to work together. Some techniques that used in encouraging negotiating meaning and information distribution according to Nation & Newton (2008) are (1) *Split information activities* (2) *Completion activities* (3) *Ordering activities* (4) *Ranking problem solving* (5) *Modify the statements*. Those activities mentioned encourage students in negotiation meaning and distributing information. Those activities called two-way-task, and the students need to be

cooperative in order to distribute information that other students do not have. Therefore, pair-work is really suitable to be implemented during this activity.

Information gap activities generally take some procedures and it involves information-selection and negotiation of meaning (Prabhu, 1987). In short, information gap activity involving students in starting meaning which is given to them from other students. By doing this activity, the students will get new insight from other students through interaction. Interaction helps in language development by facilitating students to talk to each other (Nation & Newton, 2008). During learning process, student interacting each other and students will analyze the information they got and negotiate meaning in order to close the gap. Bridge their thought through negotiating meaning, thus Nation & Newton (2008) claimed it plays an important role in assisting language development. It can be concluded that negotiation meaning as a part of information gap activities.

The theories perceived that speaking as difficult skill to be mastered by EFL student. It caused by many factors, students feel hesitant to speaking in front of other students and students still lack in vocabulary. Information gap activities occurred as solution for the issues. In contrast, it would be difficult to encourage students to speak actively. Concluded by Rahimi (2016) that information gap is communicative activities requires pair of students, they have to connect and share information in order to fill the gaps. The point is students do not work alone in order

to fill the gap between them through negotiating meaning, clarifying information and many others by using target language.

2.1.2 Information Gap as Communicative Language Task

EFL learners usually have limited knowledge and facilities in order to developing their speaking skill. It could be that they have less exposure about English (Zhang, 2009), or because they still lack in confidence and have anxiety about making errors (Boonkit, 2010). It could be the reason for many teachers to create activities that focus on learning speaking.

The ability to use language means facilitate more communication communicate as one of successfulness in learning speaking. This success is detected when students actively speak to express their ideas, feeling and thought (Manurung, 2014). Ur (1996) stated some problems in speaking class. There are four problems; (1) Inhibition, students are avoiding to be the center of interest, because the fear of failure. (2) Nothing to say. Related to the point number one, fear of failure yields the students to think longer but at final they keep quiet and say nothing. (3) Low or uneven participation. The advanced student tends to be superior in the class by speaking actively. Meanwhile this affected other students which are not at the same level to feel hesitant and intimidated them. (4) Mother tongue uses. When students

find it hard to speak in the target language, they preferred to use their first language as communication.

Considering the characteristics of successful speaking activities by Ur (1996) first, students talk a lot; students speak actively during the class. Second, participation is even; all students participated in the class fairly. Third, motivation is high; the students are highly want to speak and interest to contribute to the class. Fourth, language is of an acceptable level, students speak comprehensively and appropriately. Having this in mind, information gap activities required students to use target language in order to complete the task and fill the gap. Besides, by interacting with other students, it will motivate them and giving students more reason to speak up during learning process. In short that information gap activities that promotes communicative competence, considered as an optional technique in facilitating students to practice speaking.

Communicative task is influenced by the techniques employed in teaching and learning speaking. The technique used in learning speaking has an important role because it has to facilitate students to practice speaking. By using communicative task, the students not only gained the language structure but acquire language usage in real context. Kitao & Kitao (1996) stated that communicative language tested have to measure how the students are able to use language in a real situation. Involving the students in many activities and engaged them to interact

with other students will help them in order to enhance their speaking skill. Make the language situation and language material as realistic as possible is a part of communicative task (Abbaspour, 2016). The communicative task contains not only about cognitive skills but also psychomotor skills (Manurung, 2014). Therefore the communicative task should be organized to facilitate as much as possible for students in practicing speaking to develop their communicative competence.

In terms of communicative task, information gap activities considered as one technique of communicative task. It is a type of activity that requires students to exchange information and ideas (Watamni & Gholami, 2012). Information gap activities are alternative approach to be implemented in the classroom, because it seems very beneficial for practicing speaking (Ismaili & Bajrami, 2016). Some researchers also proved the positive impact of information gap activities by getting students work together; they will interact with their friends, having a new situation without the gap. It is important to enhance students' willingness to speak and being active in the class. Therefore it requires the teacher not only to create a warm situation but also provide each other students to speak (Ismail, 2014).

Meanwhile, according to Raptou (2014), information gap is an activity that the people have to communicate to make a decision. In terms of discussion and prepared talks, information gap facilitates to discuss a topic by using the target language and aims to make a deal or decision. It means then, people already have a

topic to discuss and prepared what they want to talk about. Highlight the Afrizal's (2015) statement that information gap facilitates the students to speak actively and build up a conversation to collect or complete the missing the information.

In order to make students more interesting to practice speaking, generally, students communicate to gain information they don't possess by using information gap activities. It can be a technique to boost students' motivation to improve speaking ability and also practice to discuss something in real context. Moreover, this activity trains students to have a deep understanding of what they are going to say. Bernard in Asrobi, Seken, & Suwarnajaya (2013) stated that motivation is essential to make students enjoy the learning process in speaking by using real communication.

Speaking English fluently comes up as a goal in learning speaking skills. It is supported by Richards (2003) that speaking class can be managed by using information gap activities, which has been proved it is effective to engage the students speaking actively. In addition, learning to speak by using group discussion is comfort students to speak more rather than speaking in front of the class. The students may feel uncomfortable and be intimidated by the other students.

Conceptually, information gap activities contain many aspects of communication in communicative task. This activity designed that make students to be interacted during learning process through communication. in this case,

information gap activities considered as one of alternative technique in facilitating students to practice speaking, which is expected the students not only acquiring speaking skill but build up students' motivation too in learning speaking.

2.1.3 Speaking Skills

Speaking is one of productive skills to communicate to other people. Brown (1994) in Ismail (2014) stated that speaking skill is not only utterance but a tool for communication. Richards (2008) as cited in Putri (2014) speaking is the situations about what people said or done. It focuses on how people interact with the society. In addition, speaking is the ability to communicate more than knowledge about language features but also the capability to process information and language spontaneously Harmer (2007) cited in Wahyuni (2016). The essential goal of speaking is to maintaining social interaction by sharing information and ideas, hence facilitating students with meaningful communicative situation is needed (Abbaspour, 2016).

Basically there are five types of speaking according to Brown (2004). (1) *Imitative*, this speaking type focuses on pronunciation and for speaking proficiency level is imitating word, phrase or sentence. (2) *Intensive*, this type of speaking tends to be like assessment related to the oral production such as intonation, pronunciation, and stress. (3) *Responsive*, it tends to stimulate the students in order

to create short conversation, that makes different with the next type of speaking (interactive speaking). (4) *Interactive*. This speaking type is more complex than foregoing types. It is designed to facilitate the students speaking the target language comprehensively and accurately. It aims in maintaining social interaction and exchanging information. (5) *Extensive*. This type is preferred to focus on speech and monologue text. The students need to comprehend the material and English. For the language style is usually formal than casual.

Concerning the theory above, the nature of information gap activities fit the types of speaking that is responsive, intensive and interactive (Brown, 2004). The characteristic of information gap activity involve exchanging the information and speak comprehensively. This activity perceived as solution for those who try to practice speaking and interaction because it requires the student to use the target language and get their meaning across (Ismaili & Bajrami, 2016). Speaking skill is necessary to be integrated in the development in communication. it caused by English as target language that really demanded for communication said Zaremba (2006) as cited in Boonkit (2010).

Therefore, it requires an activity to train the students to speak and also interact in their group activities. It supported by Harmer cited in Defrioka (2016) that the goal of learning speaking is to enable the students to communicate in English. Furthermore, speaking skills should be practiced not only in the classroom

but the best way to practice is through communicating in a real situation. Based on some research, speaking can be improved through many ways; games role-play, etc. It has been proved that students speak more willingly through interactive activity, such as group discussion. Therefore in terms of speaking activities, students focus on the language use.

Richards (2008) as cited in Putri (2014) listed the main issues must be considered for planning speaking activities;

1. Determining the focus of the speaking skills
2. Identifying the teaching strategies to teach
3. Teacher need to determine the expected level of the speaking task and the criteria that will be used to assess the performance

Plan the speaking activity, there are 3 points to be considered. The first is focus on the speaking skills. The instructors or teacher must be known what the focus of the speaking is; it can be for public speaking (speech), or daily communication. The second is identifying the teaching strategies. After the focus of the speaking is known, then teacher identify what the most effective way or method that suitable for the focus of the speaking. The last is determining the level of the speaking and make a guideline to assess the speaking performance.

According to the theory mentioned above, there are three types of speaking that established in learning speaking that effectively encourage students to speak to

the target language. Those types are responsive, intensive and interactive. Facilitating positive atmosphere is essential for the students to encourage them to speak in the target language, including collaborative work, authentic material, and task, and share information Kayi (2007) cited in Defrioka(2016).

2.2 Review of Relevant Studies

This sub-chapter contains some related studies of information gap activities in attaining speaking skills.

The first is conducted by Defrioka (2016) in *The Use of Information Gap Activities in Teaching Speaking*. He did an action research study, and the procedures were used to complete this study included plan, act, observe, and reflection. The participant of this study was 3rd-grade high school students consisted of 23 students. This study collaborated with an English teacher of SMK Negeri 1 Padang. The teacher assisted the implementation of information gap activities and evaluated the outcomes of this study. This study conducted in two cycles which are four meetings for each cycle. The data collected from classroom observation, test, and interview. The data from the second cycle took as the final result of this study. The outcome indicated that information gap activities were effective to enhance students' speaking ability. The students enjoyed during activities in the class. This study

helped the teacher and students to reflect on their successes and failures in the teaching and learning process.

Meanwhile this research focus on higher education, the researcher presented the implementation from the previous research in junior school. It proved that information gap activities considered to be implemented at any level, even this case rarely found in Yogyakarta, especially in formal school.

This study conducted by Randha, Fadly, & Nababan (2015) titled The Use of Information Gap Activity to Improve Speaking Ability of the Second Year of SMPN 34 Pekanbaru in Making Information Questions. This study conducted based on the students' problem in making information question orally. This study is classroom action research was conducted in two cycles. The researchers divided this study into three parts (1) classroom observation, (2) pre-test and post-test, (3) evaluation the data during the research. The researchers did pre-test with the average score only 35.92. After that researchers found students' problem through classroom observation. Researchers used information gap activities to make the teaching process more effective. When the first cycle was done, the score enhanced to 77.19. Also at the end of cycle two, students' score increased to 85.5. This improvement proved that information gap activity were effective to enhanced students' speaking ability and encouraged students to be more active during the learning process.

Watamni & Gholami(2012) conducted an experimental method of implementing information-gap tasks effect students' speaking ability. The objective of this study to

investigate the effect of implementing information-gap tasks for in English class. The participant was 50 female students at Tasnim Language Institute in Mahabad, divided into 2 groups randomly. One group treated by information-gap tasks (experimental group) and the other was not treated by information-gap tasks (control group). Even though they treated by the different technique, both groups tested by the same level. Researchers gave them pre-test to determine students' speaking level. After that researchers taught them with the different technique. The experimental group taught by information-gap tasks and control group without information-gap tasks. The task presented seventeen sessions, and twenty-five minutes each session. Researchers used communicative tasks based on the information-gap principle adopted from Levy & Murgatroyd (2009). Researchers assessed students' speaking ability by using the oral interview for both groups as the result was analyzed using t-test. The finding of the study concluded that (1) information gap activities effective to enhanced students' interaction with the teacher and other students, (2) information gap activities facilitates the students to speak more during the class, (3) information gap activities provides students' practice opportunities to presenting in various tasks.

Another research conducted by Sugiarti (2014) focuses on improving the students' speaking skill by implementing the information gap activities. This research is undertaken at one of vocational school in Yogyakarta, specifically at SMK Negeri 3 Yogyakarta. The researcher claims that information gap activities can grab students' attention and build up the learning atmosphere in the class. The aim of this research is obviously to examine the

students' improvement toward speaking skill by using information gap activities. The researcher uses the schedule of English class of XI KR (*Kendaraan Ringan*) 4 on Wednesday, Fridays, and Saturday. This research was action research and used mix method (qualitative and quantitative method). The qualitative data collected by the interview the students and observations. Meanwhile quantitative data obtained by students' score from speaking test. The researcher uses pre-test and post-test to collect the students' speaking score. Hence for the rubric, researcher adapted from J.M O'Malley and L.V Pierce. From the rubric, there are 4 elements to assess students' speaking task; namely fluency, accuracy, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Due to there were pre-test and post-test, then the researcher planned the actions to be done in two cycles. At the final, information gap activity succeeded to enhance students' speaking skill.

Another study conducted at Muhammadiyah 2 Senior High School of Yogyakarta, that the problems are related to the students, the English teacher, and learning media. But in this case, Utomo & Margana (2016) highlights the problem related to the students who have difficulties to speak English. In this study, the researcher focusing on enhancing the students speaking skill by using information gap activities. The researcher using the action research's model of Kemmis and McTaggart that consisted of reconnaissance, planning, acting, and observing and reflecting. Reconnaissance used to find out the existing problems. Researcher held 2 cycles that using pre-test and post-test as instruments. After

the second cycle, the finding of this study is information gap activities proves effective to enhance students' speaking performance.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

Students who study English as foreign learners usually have limited access in developing their speaking skill (Zhang, 2009). Speaking as one of the basic language skill requires communicative competence to build up good communication. It means that the teacher needs to provide students with kind of communicative task to facilitate them in learning speaking. However, learning speaking skill perceived difficult by students as foreign learners. The students in terms of foreign learners used speaking for many purposes. Therefore, in order to fulfill students' purposes, especially in acquiring speaking skill, the teacher should use the appropriate technique to help student practicing speaking skill.

In this case, communicative task is needed to help students enhancing their speaking skill. Even communicative activities have several different types, but all shares the same features and the teacher have to ensure the task facilitated students enough in order to achieve the learning objective. Concerning that the ultimate purpose of learning speaking is students able to carry out English beyond classroom in order to develop students' communicative competence.

Among several types of communicative task, information gap activities would be the one technique that considered in helping students to learn speaking. This is type of activity that requires students to use target language to exchange some information and get their meaning across. In short, it makes students use target language to accomplish the task and concentrating on meaning than language structure. This activity brings the target language to life for students because students have many opportunities to use target language in real context.

Speaking for communication is being goal especially among EFL learners. In order to achieve that goal, information gap considered in providing activities for speaking practice. Information gap activity included as communicative task which means the students required to work together in pair or more. Information gap activities involved transfer information and information selection (Prabhu, 1987). Information indicated as an authentic communication because during sharing information, each student had information that the other student does not have. Hasibuan (2012) stated that information gap activities involved expressing opinion and obtaining information. In order to achieve their purpose, students have to clarify the meaning or asking more confirmation of their own understanding.

Son (2009) stated some benefits by using information gap activities in speaking class. Those benefits are more communication, build students' confidence and motivation be high. Effective communication usually yields some benefits for students in achieving

their purposes. The outcome of this activity beside expected to facilitate students in speaking practice, it would be directly enhance students' motivation and confidence in communication. Also through this activity, the students will get new insight from other students based on their experiences and though sharing opinion or information.

This research is directed to perceive the characteristics and benefits of information gap activities in learning speaking at Englishopedia. By presenting information gap activities as one of communicative task that considered facilitating students in learning speaking. This research presents the information gap activities as the way to learn speaking for college students. There are two main points of information gap that has presented in this research; the characteristics of information gap activities and the advantages of information gap activities. Technically, those activities are implemented while using information gap in learning speaking.

2.4 Analytical Constructs

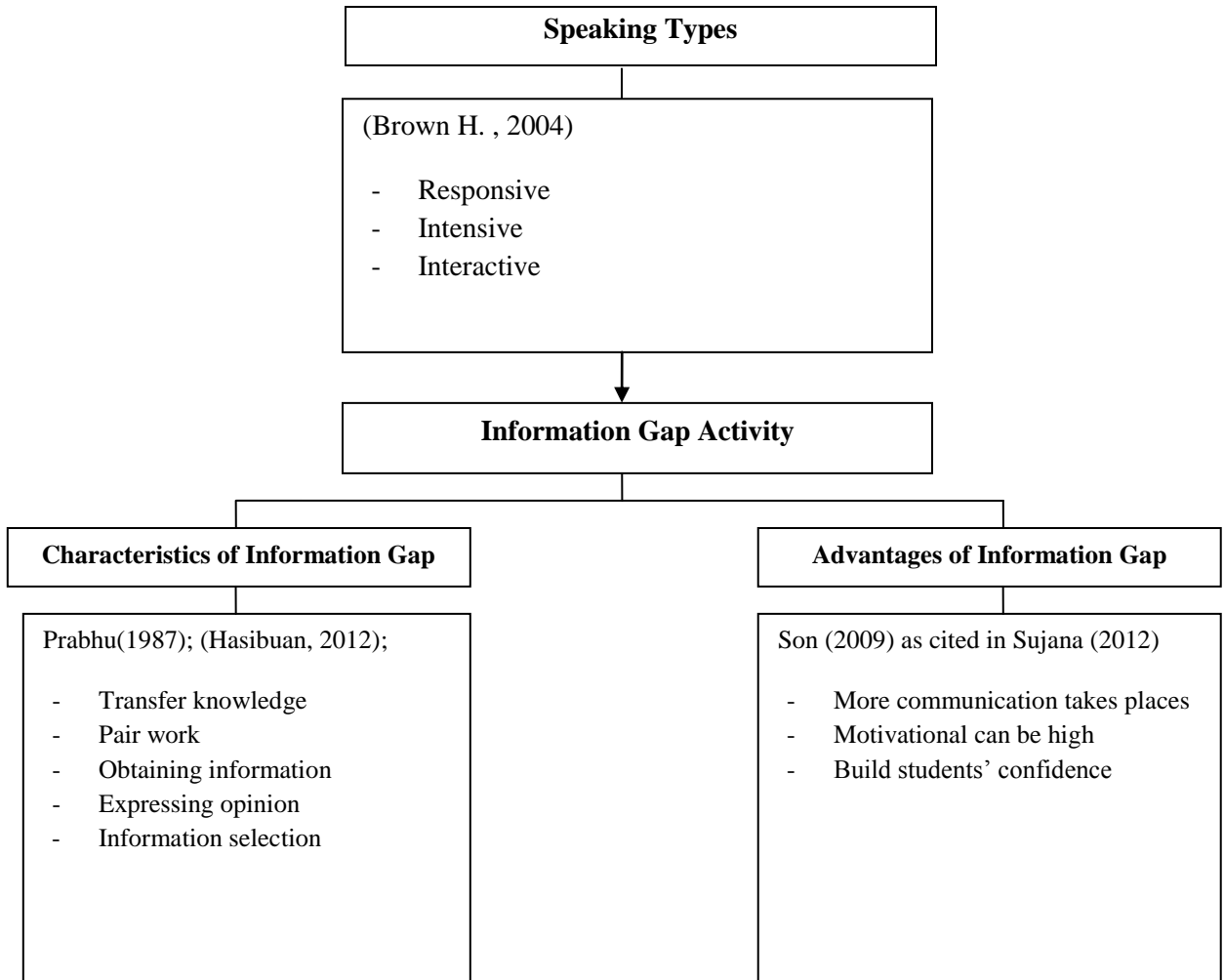


Figure 2.1 Analytical Constructs