**CHAPTER I**

**INTRODUCTION**

* 1. Background of the Study

Language as the tool of communication has an important role to reveal an intention to someone else. People will be able to express their through and feeling  
by using language. Language, communication and life can not be separated.  
Language can be applied in many aspects, such as education, society, politics,  
economics and culture. One of the ways in communication is through speaking  
(Nursyamsi 2006:1).

For indonesia, english as a foreign language. Learning a foreign language is an integrated process that the learner should study the four basic skills:  
listening, speaking, reading and writing. We use it to understand our world through listening and reading to communication our felling, need, and desires through speaking and writing. By having more knowledge about language skill, we have much better chance of undestanding and being understood and getiing what want and need from these around us (Jamlan 2008:1).

Speaking is identified to be difficult to learn, where as speaking is very  
important in human life . By speaking, people can communication with other  
someone usually face some troubles in social interaction like he or she cannot  
produce his ideas, arguments and feeling communicatively. One sometimes can  
understand what others say but he or she not able to communicate it. This may  
happen because of low pratice, low motivation, less of communication

competence and also self confidence. Ideally, if one could understand an  
expression, should be able to produce it.

For many years, teaching English to young learners, as stated by McCloskey (2014), has had eight principles that a teacher should take into account: offering learners enjoyment, activating roles in learning experience, helping students develop and practice language through collaboration,using multi-dimensional, thematically organized activities; providing comprehensible input with scaffolding; learning vocabulary: an active approach; integrating language with content,validating an dintegrating home language and culture,and providing clear goals and feedback on performance.In the Indonesian context, English is learned as a foreign language in which there is a limited chance for students to use the language actively with their surroundings. The subject is only learned in the academic area such as schools and courses. They tend to learn English through textbooks and focus on only sentence structure or grammar. Additionally, they rarely use the language outside the school, while the key to master English is not only to learn it passively but also to use the language as often as possible communicatively in the real life.

Meanwhile, teaching speaking to young learners may give some difficulties to the teacher especially in Indonesia since they also consider speaking as a great challenge so that it requires them to speak andthink at the same time (Pinter,2000). Besides, they are not necessarily competent communicators even in their mother tongue, and it reveals an idea that teaching speaking in Indonesia must be developed in young English learners context.

Moreover, it is very important for children to acquire speaking skillinm their language development(Linse, 2005). Linse further says that it would be better if teachers teach speaking skillfirst to students than the other skills since it is a foundation to develop other language skills. Brown (2001) states that this skill helps students toconvey their ideas or opinion. It means that if they have achieved the speaking skill, it would be much easier for them to master other skills. Therefore, it is obvious that speaking plays a crucial role in other skills. In supporting teachers to have a better way in teaching speaking, researchers have discovered many strategies.

A class atmosphere is sometimes boring during the teaching and learning English. A teacher should be able to boost students' spirit in learning English and find effective strategies to make them interested, so that the goals of the learning process can be achieved. This research is aimed (1) to investigate English teaching strategies for young learners in the international primary schoolin terms of teaching planning, implementation and assessment, and (2) to investigate the students’ responses to the implementation of the teaching strategies.

These strategies are believed to be able to help students improve their speaking ability, such as studies conducted by Brown (2001), Linse (2005), Geoffrey (2006), and Szpotowicz (2012) that reveal many interesting strategies in teaching speaking skill to young learners. But then, another problem emerges. It is related to the assessment made by the teachers. Georgiou and Pavlou (2003) have found that most teachers are not able to make an assessment that is appropriate with the strategies they use in teaching process. Appropriate assessment is very crucial for teachers in evaluating their students. Přibilová(2008) points out that assessment leads to students’development. It is one of the important aspects of teaching-learning process that influences students' learning. It is concerned with the teaching and learning qualities.

Therefore, teachers must have an appropriate assessment that will not interfere with their students' language development.Obviously, assessing speaking skill is a challenge in language teaching (Weir, O’Sullivan & Horai cited in Boxer & Cohen, 2004), especially, when it is related to young learners. McCauley (2004)explains that conducting an assessment for young learners is a quite difficult task since they have higher activity levels and they are easyto be distracted by others.

They also have a shorter attention span, wariness of strangers, and inconsistent performance in unfamiliar environments. It is in accordance with what Grieve (1992)states that assessment for young learners is more complex than that for the other learnersbecause theyhavean uncertain temperament that may affect their cognitive ability. Katz (1997) also points out that teachers need to have a great sensitivity in deciding the best assessment strategies. Young learners have unique characteristics. They are considered as poor test takers. It will be hard to assess young learners who are easy to produce errors.To overcome this problem, experts have conducted several studies in recent years. Smith (2006), Kallonen (2011), Ovalles and Mata (2011) advise that teachers conduct an informal assessment of speaking skill since they often encounter difficulties in organizing oral testing. It can be done by observing and listening to oral performance.

It is inaccordance with (Harmer 2001) who proposes three major reasons forgetting students to speak and to acquire new vocabulary in a classroom: 1) Speaking activities provide rehearsal opportunities, 2)Speaking tasks in which students try to use any or all of the languages they know provide feedback for both teachers and students, and 3) the more students have opportunities to activate the various language elements they have stored in their brains, the more automatic their use of these elements to become.

Teachers must prepare accurate and consistent instruments. It is important to know what abilities they want to assess and why they do the assessments. Therefore, it is obvious that they must understand the purpose of assessments they have used, so they will have more accurate data after they have assessed their students. This study wants to exploremore about how speaking assessment is conducted foryoung learners. Hopefully, findings of this study will provide an insight for teachers in applying appropriate assessments for young learners. It is also expected that this study will give useful information about how to assess young learners in teaching-learning process.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the explanation above, the following questions are carried out to guide the study.

1.What is the purpose of teacher to know about speaking assessment in English young learners?

2. What strategies do they use in assessing young learners’ speaking skill?

1.3 Aims of the Study

The aims of this study will be elaborated as follows.

1. to know teachers’ understanding of speaking assessments, especially for young learners.

2. to identify teachers’ strategies in conducting speaking skill assessments.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This study is concerned with speaking assessment strategies that are used by Young English Learners teachers in assessing their students’ speaking skill at the MIS Nurul Huda, Tanjung Morawa

1.5 Significance of the Study

The results of the study are expected to give contributions to young english learners teachers in assessing their students so that the sudents’ skill can be measured effectively.In addition, this study can hopefully give contributions to the government regarding the assessment training program that is obviously rarely conducted for Young English Learner teachers. This study is also expected to be able to provide an insight on how young learners should be assessed.

* 1. Clarification of Terms

1. In this study, the researcher defines young learners as unique persons. Sometimes they are sensitive; therefore, they need to be praised and encouraged.
2. The meaning of strategies in this study is generalized plans for a lesson or lessons made by teachers which include structure and desired learner behavior, in terms of the goals of instruction and an outline of tactics necessary to implement the strategy.
3. Speaking is an interactive process of constructing meaning that involves producing, receiving, and processing information.
4. Assessment is defined as any method used by teachers in testing students’ understanding of current knowledge.
5. Speaking Assessment tests are used to determine the extent to which learners are able to speak.