

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Research

English is an international language used to communicate with other people around the world. English is very important to learn because it can facilitate communication with foreigners from different countries. By speaking English fluently, somebody can communicate easily with foreign people because English is universal, which is widely used by everyone around the world. The use of English make it as a language that must be studied, in schools from elementary school to university level, English is used as a subject. In oral or written communication, language skills are needed to convey the message from the sender to the receiver. Therefore, English language skills are needed, there are at least four language skills that must be mastered, namely: reading, writing, listening and speaking.

Speaking is the productive oral skill which is consists of producing systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning (Nunan, 2003: 48). Speech activity usually involves two people, namely the speaker and listener. The component that support success in speaking are (1) pronunciation, which includes stress, intonation. (2) grammar, (3) vocabulary, (4) fluency, (5) comprehension.

According to Thornbury (2005:1) speaking is so much a part of daily life that we take it for granted. The average person produces tens of thousands

of words a day, although some people – like auctioneers and politicians – may produce even more than that. So natural and integral is speaking that we forget how we once struggled to achieve this ability – until, that is, we have to learn how to do it all over again in a foreign language.

Therefore, speaking is important because through speaking skills people can produce and convey direct ideas or messages orally to others in everyday life. In speaking skills there are several components that can determine success and fluency in speaking, namely intonation, grammar, vocabulary and understanding. However, some students find it difficult to speak in English.

According to Suwartono (2006: 119), success in learning English as Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia is generally hard to achieve. The fact is that most Indonesians who learn English have poor mastery of English. One important factor that needs to be reviewed is the inadequate presence of exposure.

Difficulty in speaking English is experienced by some people including students at the university. This happens because English is a foreign language and they are not used to speak it as a language of communication in daily activities. In addition, vocabulary, grammar and how to pronounce English words that are very different from mother tongue also make it difficult for students to speak in English. Heriansyah (2012: 44) found that the difficulties often faced by students in speaking English were in the lack of English vocabulary, not being confident to speak, not being used to talk in English Class, and difficulty expressing words or sentences.

In the research, they revealed several factors that became the reason why speaking became the most difficult skill to be mastered, such as: lack of vocabulary in English, difficulty in memorizing, difficulty in pronunciation because it is very different from Indonesian, afraid of making mistakes, afraid of being laughed at by friends, and lack of knowledge of grammar. Some factors that cause student difficulties lie in the affective or psychological factors of students. According to Juhana (2012: 101-103) these factors include: anxiety, fear of mistakes, shyness, lack of confidence, and lack of motivation. However, the difficulties in speaking English can be overcome with several strategies.

Each student has a different strategy in dealing with difficulties in speaking English. Oxford (1990) defined learning strategy as specific actions, behaviours, steps, or techniques, such as looking for partners in conversation or giving encouragement to overcome a difficult language task that are used by students to improve their learning. The strategies used can help them to overcome difficulties in speaking English and make it easier for them to speak English fluently and correctly.

According to Oxford (1990), learning strategies are classified into: Direct Strategies, which include: memory strategies (relating to how students remember language), cognitive strategies (which enable students to understand and produce new language by many different means) and compensation strategies (which enable students to make up for limited knowledge), then Indirect Strategies, which include: metacognitive strategies

(relating to how students focus, manage, and evaluate their own learning), affective strategies (relating to students' strategies to develop self confidence) and social strategies (which involve learning by getting interaction with others).

Some researchers had conducted research on speaking English difficulties and strategies to overcome them. Heriansyah (2012: 44) conducted a study to describe speaking problem faced by English Department students in Aceh. He found that the students had difficulty in expressing words or sentences, lack of vocabulary, not being confident to speak, and not being used to talk in class. Goktepe (2014: 1877) also conducted a study to examine the speaking problems in Turkey high school learners. Based on his study, he found that the students were afraid of making mistakes, lack of vocabulary and grammar.

Besides, some researchers also conducted a study about strategies employed by students with speaking performance. Hanifa, Fajrina and Gani (2016) found that students used some strategies in developing their speaking. In accordance with enhancing the pronunciation, the students mostly asked their friends to pronounce the words correctly, trained to pronounce the words repeatedly by watching English movie, looked up dictionary to know the correct pronunciation and paid much attention to the way teacher talks in English. To enrich vocabulary, they chose to memorize the words encountered from various sources such as movies, songs, books, and list of words in dictionary.

Meanwhile, to have a good understanding to use correct sentences, the students reviewed their school lesson, memorized the formula of the sentences and practiced to arrange simple sentences, and asked their friends' help if they faced difficulties. Furthermore, the strategies used to make them fluent in speaking English were memorizing sentences, trying to repeat some sentences over and over again, and practicing to speak with friends.

The last were strategies for getting better comprehension on English talks. When they tried to understand others, they tended to ask help from their friends, tried to pay more attention to their partner's articulation of words, their partner's lips, and body language. Then, the student asked for clarification if he was not sure of things being said. While to make their partners understand, they used common words, switched the language to their mother tongue, used gesture, spoke slowly, and repeated the words.

According to the explanation above, difficulties in speaking English are still experienced by some students. Therefore, this study is designed to find out students' difficulties in speaking English and the strategies that are used to overcome those difficulties. This study is conducted at Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto by using 4th semester students of English Department as the respondents.

B. Problem of the Research

Based on the background of the research above the writer of this thesis formulates the following problems, they are:

1. What difficulties do students of English Department face in learning speaking?
2. What are their strategies in overcoming speaking difficulties?

C. Purpose of the Research

The purpose of the study is to find out:

1. The difficulties faced by students' of English Department in learning speaking.
2. The strategies used by the students' of English Department in overcoming those difficulties.

D. Clarification of the key terms

To understand the research more easily, the key terms of study are clarified as follows:

1. Speaking difficulties

Speaking English difficulties refer to the students' problems faced in speaking English. In general, speaking English difficulties are defined as problems or difficulties that speaker could have when dealing with speaking skill. (Al Nakhalah, 2016).

2. Speaking strategies

Speaking strategies is an important component of language learning strategy training is that of speaking strategies. Oral strategies are referred to in the literature as communicative strategies, communication strategies, conversation skills or oral communication strategies; for the purpose of this article *speaking strategies* are those devices used by

students to solve any communication problem when speaking in English. (Lopez, 2011).

E. Contribution of the Research

1. For Teacher

It is used for giving information as related to students strategies to overcome speaking difficulties in English and teacher can apply teaching strategies and methods to improve students' speaking skill then find solution to overcome students' difficulties in speaking.

2. For Student

It can make the students to overcome their difficulties in speaking and find out the appropriate strategies by themselves, so they will be more confident and enthusiastic to speak in English.

3. For other researchers

It can give information related to students' strategies in speaking and other researchers can continue this study more deeply to find out other strategies used by students to overcome speaking difficulties.